

Manekji Limji Hateria, (1813-1890 A.D.)

## A Man Who Made The Difference



Marble Statue at the Secretariat Office of the Naseri Zarathushti Anjuman of Kerman, Iran

During communal celebrations as well as on solemn occasion of remembering the dearly departed, the Zarathushtis of Iran listen as a long litany of individuals from the past who made great difference towards betterment of the lot of their fellow men are remembered by the priests of the faith. Rulers, champions of the Mazdysna faith, defenders of the motherland, learned people of renown and social workers of notable contributions from times ancient to more recent are remembered and tribute is paid to them. Included in the long list, one hears the names of Cyrus, Darius, Adurbad Mar-Aspand, Arda-Viraf, Jamasp the chancellor, Yazdgerd III, Rustam Farrokhzad,

Who was Manekji Hateria? What did he do that has earned him so much respect and recognition from the Zarathushtis in Iran and elsewhere. Much has been written in celebration of his life and in remembrance of his great endeavors that ensured the flame of Zarathushtrian religion was never extinguished in the birth land of Zarathushtra. He acted, at the most trying times, when Zarathushti community of Iran was severely diminished, as their mother land was going through one of the most difficult phases of its nationhood. A historical perspective is necessary, to gain a fuller appreciation of the significance of Manekji Hateria's contributions.

## Historical Background of the Zarathushtis in Iran Leading to the time of Manekji Hateria

Sassanians, the last pre-Islamic Iranian dynasty (224 – 637 A.D.) that administered the vast stretch of the Iranian plateau made an unprecedented move of making the religion of Zarathushtra an instrument of the state.<sup>[6]</sup> This move although entailing significant political windfall for the Sassanians, in turn meant the welfare of the institutionalized religion of Zarathushtra of the Sassanian era became very much tied to the political fortunes of the house of Sassan and its Kings and Queens who ruled Iran. On few occasions when the attacking Byzantine armies were successful in penetrating Iranian territories, highly regarded Zarathushti temple of Azur-Gushasp as well as other temples in the proximity of the Western borders took the brunt of Roman acts of vengeance.

The prominence given to Zarathushtrian religion by the Sassanians at time resulted in tumultuous relationship with other religious groups in Iran, in particular the Christians.<sup>[6]</sup> The appearance of splinter groups such as the Manichaeans and Mazdakies was more indicative of social upheavals of the Sassanian era rather than evidence of any theological challenges faced by the Zarathushtiran establishment.

Culmination of events sealed the fate of Sassanian Iran at the hands of nomadic Arabs energized by the fervor of their newly found Islamic faith, and call to action by the issuance of a decree of Jihad (Islamic holy war) against the neighboring states.<sup>[2]</sup><sup>[7]</sup> With the defeat of the imperial Sassanian army at Qadissya<sup>[2]</sup> and Nihavand, and the assassination of Emperor Yezdgerd III, the fate of Zarathushtrian Iran was sealed. Each Satrapy (province)<sup>[8]</sup><sup>[9]</sup> and almost each family was left to fend for themselves<sup>[10]</sup> against the invading Arabs. Destruction of the Persian culture, of the religion of Zarathushtra and plunder of the citizens' wealth became a reality in the aftermath of the end of the Sassanian authority.

With the fall of Iran to the Arabs, the once united country fell in the hands of local chieftains who had converted to Islam and owed allegiance to the Arab Caliphs. Zarathushtis (also known as Zoroastrians) found themselves treated as second class citizens and deprived of much of their basic civil rights.

One Arab Governor of Iraq took the step of appointing a commission and dispatching them on a winding tour of captive Iran with the mission of destroying Zarathushtrian Fire temples.<sup>[11]</sup> In addition to the destruction of temples and holy sites, libraries containing wisdom of the Sassanian era were laid to waste. Many Zarathushti temples were converted to places of worship of the new religion.

A head tax imposed on Zarathushtis and followers of religions other than Islam known as Jizya in time became a crushing burden on the diminishing Zarathushti community in their ancestral land. As Islamic rule on Iran became stronger, the Zarathushti were denied protection of the State. Inheritance laws were instituted whereby if one member of a Zarathushti family converted to Islam, they would automatically inherit the entire wealth of the family at the exclusion of their siblings keeping faith with their ancestral religion.<sup>[12]</sup>

The devastation of Eastern Iran at the hands of attacking Seljuk Turks and Mongols in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and their subsequent embracing of Islam with great fervor dealt a serious blow to Zarathushtrian religion in Iran which was concentrated in the Eastern region.<sup>[11]</sup>

By the time Iran was emerging from the ravages of Timur Khan and Genghis Khan, the Safavids were emerging as a new power house able to unify the battered country in the 14<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>[12]</sup> the Zarathushtis in Iran were diminished but still numbered in millions. Almost 9 centuries into the fall of Zarathushtrian religion from official grace in its homeland, and despite much suffering and numerous massacres they were subjected to more than one third of the Iranians still adhered to the faith of their ancestors rather than yielding to the religion from Arabia.

To consolidate their power base over all of Iran and to insert the unique identity of Iran as distinct from Ottoman Turks on the West, and Islamic Western India on the East, the Safavid advanced Shi'ism as the brand of Islam to be instituted in Iran, and took the step of making that institution closely aligned with the interest of the State. This step was somehow reminiscent of the Sassanian's action in making Zarathushtrian religion an instrument of State. The followers of other belief systems found themselves in dire strait. Zarathushtis, Sufis,<sup>[13]</sup> Jews and other minorities were subjected to systematic persecution, and had no recourse to the protection of the State.<sup>[14]</sup>

Early in their rule, the Safavids had to move their capital from Western Iran which was under constant threat of invasion from the Ottomans to Isfahan in Central Iran. For over a century before the time of Safavids, Isfahan that in Sassanian time had considerable concentration of Iranian Jews, was serving as a center for Iranian Zarathushtis. With the adoption of Shi'ism as the State religion by the Safavids and the move of their Capital to Isfahan, the Zarathushti priesthood had no choice but to flee Eastwards. By the time the Safavid rule was over, Zarathushtrian in Iran had been diminished to a community of a few hundred thousands concentrated mostly in Yazd and Kerman. An event unfolding in Isfahan before the overthrow of the last Safavid in 1723 A.D. saw the massacre of over two hundred thousand Zarathushtis in that City.<sup>[14]</sup>

In a span of just over two hundred years, Zarathushtrianism its in birth place had been diminished severely through systematic killing, forced conversion, and loss of livelihood. Heavy Jizya tax imposed on per-head of Zarathushtis new born to the very old, was a crushing burden to be borne by the youth and the middle age segment of the community. Loss of their basic rights, and systematic

disenfranchisement by the State took a heavy toll on the remaining Zarathushtis. Not only were they struggling economically, they were also suffering on other fronts such as education.

All this time, a growing number of families were fleeing Eastward to the friendly shores of India to join those who had left earlier.<sup>[15]</sup> The flight of one Zarathushti family from Isfahan to India at the beginning of the Safavid rule was to have a great significance in the context of saving and the uplifting of the few thousand surviving Zarathushtis in Iran in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>[16]</sup> A descendent of this migrant family from Isfahan was to be named Manekji Limji Hateria.

The gradual flight of another Zarathushti family from Kerman to the shores of India centuries later brought several beautiful Zarathushti brides (sisters) to be married into Parsi families (descendent of Zarathushtis who had fled Iran) of wealth and prominence in Colonial India.<sup>[17]</sup> These daughters of Iran, Gulestan Banu and her sisters were to play a critical role in financing the rescue mission undertaken by Manekji Hateria, at the time the plight of the Zarathushtis in Iran was almost reaching the point of no return.

By mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Iran had seen the fall of Safavids, the rise of Nadir Shah, the fall of his family from grace, the rise of his general Karim Khan Zand and the shifting of the Iranian power base to Shiraz. This was followed by the bloody termination of the Zand dynasty at the hand of the Qajars Turkic clan following the murder of Lutf-Ali Khan Zand (Karim's son) in Kerman. While the fortunes of the various dynasties in Iran rose and fell, it was a steep decline for the Zarathushtis in Iran pushed to the edge of extinction by ever increasing hardship and poverty.

At the same time, the fortunes of the Parsis of India was on the rise in the context of that British colony.

The entanglement of Qajaric Iran in European power play was at great cost to Iranian national pride and sovereignty.<sup>[18]</sup> One concession extracted by the British and Russian power bases in the Middle East from the ever corrupt and weak Qajar central government was special privileges and exemption from Iranian court system for their citizens traveling or residing in Iran. Manekji Hateria being from India was considered a British subject and was accorded the privileges and the freedom of movement granted to the British by the Qajars. The Zarathushtis of Iran were denied their basic rights.

### **Conditions of Zarathushtis in Iran and the Iranian Political Situation at the time of Manekji Hateria's Arrival**

The crashing tax burden, the constant humiliation<sup>[20]</sup> and physical abuse,<sup>[21]</sup> the lack of educational and economical opportunities, and their absolute vulnerability brought on by the loss of their civil rights and being degraded to second class citizens had taken its toll on the once proud and prospering Zarathushtis in their homeland.<sup>[22]</sup> Measures instituted against them included lack of retribution against any Moslem found to have murdered a Zarathushti, their having to wear a special costume<sup>[23]</sup> for easy identification as a Zarathushti. They could not leave their mud-brick<sup>[24]</sup> houses on rainy days, and had to dismount their donkey whenever a Moslem appeared on the scene. Edward Browne reports witnessing an official in Yazd having tied a Gaber (Zarathushti) man to one tree and a dog to another tree for public lashing of both.<sup>[21]</sup> The hard pressed community was in need of a miracle to be pulled out of its misery.

The Qajars who ruled Iran during that period, were a Turkic tribe. They did not show much respect for the Persian populous over whom they ruled, and their point of reference was always their own Qajar tribe. They did not constitute any federal army (likely not expecting to get any loyalty), and relied mainly on the warriors of the Qajar tribes for their own protection. The Qajars viewed Iran as their personal possession, and would typically auction the governorship of the provinces to the highest bidders. The founder of the Qajar dynasty, Agha Mohammad Khan was a ruthless individual. He was followed by the inept Faht-Ali Shah who lost large stretches of territory in Northern Iran to the Russians.

Nassir-ul-Dinshah whose rule coincided with the arrival of Maekji Hateria in Iran, was very much helped by his wise and nationalistic prime-minister, Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir.<sup>[19]</sup> Compared to the Qajar rulers before him Nassir-ul-Dinshah seemed more amenable to improving the lot of the Zarathushtis and other minorities in Iran. Although his lavish trips to Europe and extravagant spending pushed the economy of Iran to the point of bankruptcy. As a rule, the Qajars maintained good relation with the Shiiat clergy establishment and did not take any steps to interfere with the clerics' activities in return for their endorsement.

It was a steady decline for the Qajar dynasty past Nassir-ul-Dinshah until the replacement of Ahamd shah, the last Qajar (lived most of his rule in self-exile in Switzerland) by Reza Shah Pahlavi. The constitutional reform aimed at replacing the absolute power of the Qajar rulers with a parliamentary system of government came about in the aftermath of Nassir-ul-Dinshah's assassination. The Zarathushtis of Iran<sup>3</sup> played an active role in ushering in reform. The Jahanian trading house was one of the financiers of the revolutionary movement that brought about constitutional reform.

## **Manekji Hateria's Arrival in Iran**

Manekji was born in Surat, India, in 1813, and was only 5 years old when his family left for Bombay.<sup>[16]</sup> He received quality education in Bombay and mastered a number of languages including Farsi. The love of the ancestral land of Iran was woven into the fabric of his being. He was particularly touched by the heroic struggle of the Zarathushtis who had stayed behind in Iran, and was always lingering to reach out and help them in whatever way he could.

In 1853, the wealthy Parsi businessman, Sir Dinshah Petit at the urging of his wife, Gulestan Banu (referred to above) founded the Society for Amelioration of the Zarathushtrians of Persia, and created a Persian Zarathushtrian Fund. The first delegate to be sent by the Society to Iran was Manekji Limji Hateria.<sup>[23]</sup>

Manekji undertook two trips to Iran. His trips to Iran launched him on his long and arduous rescue mission of the Zarathushtis of Iran and lasted through the last day of his life.

In the year 1854 sailing on a British freight ship at a young age, Manekji for the first time set sight on Iranian soil and landed at the Persian Gulf port of Busher. From there he traveled to Shiraz, and then to Yazd and Kerman where he stayed for a considerable period of time. He traveled on to other parts of Iran such as Isfahan, Tehran, Tabriz, and acquainted himself with the prevailing conditions in Iran before returning to Bombay.

Manekji seem to have well prepared himself for the trip to his ancestral land. During his first tour of Iran, Manekji gathered a lot of intelligence about the plight of the Zarathushtis, became better acquainted with the political realities of Iran, made the acquaintance of influential people. He financed the construction and restitution of a number facilities for Zarathushtis of Yazd and Kerman. Soon into his first trip, Manekji realized that the heavy Jizya tax was the most problematic issue faced by the Zarathushtis in Iran. In reporting back to the Society for Amelioration of Zarathushtis of Persia, Manekji singled out the Jizya tax as the biggest evil faced by the Zarathushtis in Iran.

In Tehran he purchased a house close to the British embassy and endowed it for the use of Zarathushtis whom were to come to the Capital. With the help of Sir Henry Rawlinson, the British ambassador he was finally successful in getting an audience with the Shah after many days of waiting. Nassir-ul-Dinshah engaged Manekji in a prolonged conversation and showed interest in finding out what Zarathushtis believed in. His line of questioning revealed his misconceptions of the Zarathushtrian religion. Manekji was successful in getting partial relief from the Jizya for the Zarathushtis of Iran.

In Tabriz, Manekji met with the then crown prince Muzafar-ul-Dinshah. He purchased copies of many literary books in Iran and took them back with him for safe keeping in Bombay. Being an enterprising person, Manekji seem to have been prepared for contingencies encountered on his trip.

Back in Bombay, Manekji reported to the Society on the plight of the Zarathushtis of Iran, and made passionate pleas on their behalf. He also authored two books on his findings before returning to Iran for his last tour with considerable funding for his rescue mission. Economy of colonial India being tied to the British economy in comparison to the weak economy of Iran of that period, meant the funds raised in Bombay would go along way in Iran.

Independent of Manekji's activities, Nassir-ul-Dinshah traveled to Austria, Germany, France and England, thereby becoming the first Iranian Monarch to set foot on modern Europe. While in London, he met five prominent Parsi political figures including Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji,<sup>[25]</sup> the first member of British parliament from India, and Shapurji Saklatvala who was also elected to the house of commons.<sup>[26]</sup> The Parsis lobbied Nassir-ul Dinshah to improve the lot of his Zarathushti subjects still residing in their ancestral land of Iran. They appealed to the Shah to repeal the much dreaded Jizya tax that was a crushing burden to the few remaining Zarathushtis, and also to restore their civil rights and afford them educational and economical rights and freedoms.

Back in Iran, Manekji got another audience with Nassir-ul-Dinshah and with reference to the favorable views towards the Zartotshties of Iran he had indicated in London, the kind consideration of the Shah towards the Zarathushtis, particularly with reference to restructuring the Jizya tax, and granting them civil rights was sought. Manekji with help from British and French emissaries<sup>[12]</sup> was able to prevail over the Shah and convince him to be viewed by the world as a magnanimous ruler he needs to safeguard the welfare of all his subjects. The plea seem to have worked on Nassir-ul-Dinshah. In time Nassir-ul-Dinshah came to view Manekji as a confidant, giving Manekji easier access to the king, thereby enabling him to carry out his reforms aimed at ameliorating the conditions of Zarathushtis of Iran. It must be noted, that Manekji used his influence to improve the lot of all minorities including the Jews and Christians. To better appreciate the full scope of activities of Manekji Hateria, highlights are given below.

- **Removal of Jizya Tax:** Adequate coverage has been given to the evil of Jizya head tax imposed on the Zarathushtis of Iran, which was a crushing burden on them. Not only the magnitude of the tax was overwhelming given the economical conditions of the deprived minority, but the annual method of collection was even more problematic. The local tax collectors abused their authority, often engaging in verbal and physical abuse and beating of the defenseless Zarathushtis. The tax collectors would routinely loot the household of the Gabers and subject them to beating and abuse with impunity.

Although a sum total for the Jizya tax had to be sent to Tehran from Kerman and Yazd, the local governors were responsible for collection and it was at the mercy of those individuals and their officials that the treatment of the defenseless Zarathushtis rested.

Manekji's first action was to get Nassir-ul-Dinshah to grant an immediate reduction by almost 11%. The second step was to get the Shah to agree that in lieu of collection from individual Zarathushtis in Kerman, and Yazd, the annual total sum would be paid directly from Bombay by the Society for Amelioration of the Zarathushtis of Iran. Nassir-ul-Dinshah finally relented. Manekji realized Nassir-ul-Dinshah's agreeing to repeal the direct collection would not necessarily mean that the local authorities in Kerman and Yazd would discontinue the annual collection. The harassment pattern of the Zarathushtis which had come to be constitute a source of income for the local tax collection officials would not come to a sudden stop. As such, Manekji undertook trips to Yazd and Kerman, carrying gifts for the local governors and officials, and arranging for some direct payments to them from the Society. Going that extra mile meant that important relief was finally in sight for the Zarathushtis of Iran. Finally Manekji was able to prevail on the Shah and in 1882 a Royal decree resulting in the abolishment of Jizya for all minorities of Iran was issued.<sup>[23]</sup> It was the undoing a great injustices imposed on the non-Moslem population of Iran for the preceding 1200 year.

- **Educational Initiative:** The diminished Zarathushti community in Iran lacked educational opportunities. There was limited schooling possibilities to Iranians at large, with the instructions limited to Islamic studies taught by the Mullahs. Zarathushtis were denied the right to schooling, and the only education they could receive was through home schooling.

One of the other high priorities on Manekji's list of initiatives in Iran was availing educational

opportunities to the Zarathushtis based on Western style educational approaches involving the study of modern sciences, literature, religion education, etc.

Manekji's initiative to avail educational opportunities to the Zarathushtis in Iran had three points of focus, establishment of schools, training of qualified teacher, and enabling the Zarathushti youth to get schooling on a full time basis.

Manekji was able to secure a decree from Nassir-ul-Dinshah, granting permission to Zarathushtis for establishing schools. Other minorities were beneficiaries too. Up to 30 schools for boys and girls were established in Yazd and Kerman through Manekji's direct or indirect efforts, with most funding coming from the Society in Bombay. One measure of the impact of Manekji's initiative, was that in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were only 974 schools (all for boys) of all sorts in Iran for a population of 15 million (roughly 1 school for every 15000 people). At the same time 10,000 Zarathushtis had over 30 schools (both boys and girls) translating to 1 school for every 334 Zarathushtis.[\[27\]](#)

The initiative to find and train qualified teacher meant finding local teachers, getting qualified teachers from Bombay, identified qualified local Zarathushtis who could go to Bombay for training. Arbab Keikhosro Shahrokh[\[3\]](#) (Kerman school teacher and national leader), Master (Ustad) Khodabux,[\[4\]](#) Mirza Borzu Amighi (renown school principal of the Iran-Shahr Zarathushti High School for Boys in Kerman) were amongst the ones who received educational training and returned to Iran and served the educational needs of generation of Iranians, Zarathushtis and non-Zarathushtis. Mirza Soroush Lohrasp (received his schooling in Beirut),[\[28\]](#) the renown school principal in Yazd was another fine example of educators who came in the same tradition and helped educate many Iranian minds both Zarathushti and non-Zarathushti. Master Pistonji and Mr. Master were example of educators who came from Bombay to teach at the Zarathushti schools in Yazd. As for the local teachers who were recruited, a few of them turned out to have Bahii sympathies, and when it was uncovered there were abusing their access to the young Zarathushti minds to win them over to Bahiism, controversy broke out and some of them had to be dismissed. In time Manekji's initiative to train qualified teacher for the Zarathushti schools paid off as generations of qualified Zarathushtis went to work with the goal of educating the upcoming Zarathushti and non-Zarathushti youth of Iran. Keshvar Khanum[\[16\]](#) (the renown school master of Keikhosro Shahorkh Zarathushtrian Girls High School, Kerman's first High Schools for girls), Banu Khanum Behzadian[\[16\]](#) (the renown school master of Tehran's Anoshiravan Dadgar, Zarathushtrian Girl School to whom even the royalty would trust their daughters for education) were just a sampling of the many well known Zarathushti educators to come in the wake of the Manekji's educational initiatives. Some of the Zarathushti High-Schools have the distinction of being the first ones to have been established in those cities.

Manekji's third education related challenge was to enable Zarathushti children to attend school on a full time basis. Due to abject poverty many Zarathushti families had no choice, but to have their children work as farm hands or in other minimal jobs to help with the payment of the Jizya tax and living expenses. Manekji had to pay from the Society's purse to many of the Zarathushti parents in compensation for the income their children would have earned by working.[\[16\]](#) That was the only way some Zarathushti children would be able to go to School on a full time basis. Manekji arranged for some youth to be sent from Kerman to Yazd and Tehran to be educated.[\[16\]](#) This initiative of Manekji paid in a big way judging by the number of medical doctors, engineers, educators and other professionals that subsequently emerged from that small community.

- **Establishment of Community Infra-structure:** Realizing the importance of setting up formal community infra-structures, Manekji was able to get Royal permission for the establishment of two Zarathushtrian Associations, one in Kerman and one in Yazd to look after the interest of the Zarathushtis of those locations. These two associations were to be recognized by the government. Following the Royal consent, the Naseri[\[29\]](#) Zarathushti Anjuman of Kerman[\[30\]](#) and the Naseri Zarathushti Anjuman of Yazd were established. Manekji served as the first president of both associations with a group of elders of the communities. The Anjumans became the formal arm of the community in running the affairs of the upcoming communities, and in making representation on behalf of the Zarathushtis with

the governmental bodies. The Anjumans replaced the informal elder council that existed before. As the fortunes of the Zarathushtis in Iran rose the charitable donations to these associations grew considerably and they became well endowed institutions that could pay for the upkeep and running of Zarathushti schools and other non-profits establishments. Sister Zarathushti Anjuman in other cities, such as Tehran,<sup>[20]</sup> Shiraz, Karaj, Isfahan, Ahvaz, and the Zarathushti villages close to Yazd were subsequently established.

- **Restitution and Establishment of Temples, and Towers of Silence:** Manekji was very sensitized to seeing the towers of silence used by the Zarathushtis in and around Kerman, Yazd in disrepair and inadequate to meet the needs of disposing the dead bodies. He allocated funds for the construction of new towers in Kerman, Yazd and close-by villages, and in South East of Tehran to meet the needs of the Zarathushtis moving to Tehran. As a measure of ensuring that ownership will not be taken away from the Zarathushti community, Manekji took the step of getting high ranking Moslem Ayatollahs and cleric in the localities to certify that the ownership was with the Zarathushti community. Such certificates bearing the stamps of high ranking Moslem clerics was the closest it came to guaranteeing that ownership of the properties would be recognized. These documents are of great historical significance to the community. Other activities of Manekji included getting Zarathushti temples established in Kerman and Yazd.
- **Community Reforms:** Manekji Hateria spent a considerable amount of time amongst his coreligionists in Iran, the Zarathushtis of Kerman, Yazd & nearby villages, Shiraz, and the growing community in Tehran. He observed certain unfortunate trends had set in with a portion of the Zarathushti community. The consumption of meat had become more commonplace, some men had multiple wives. The death observation of dearly departed had become an overwhelmingly joyous occasion<sup>[20]</sup> with attendees dancing.<sup>[31]<sup>[32]</sup></sup> Manekji spoke against these trends, created awareness and brought about reversal of the last two trends. Another trend that had set in: an increasing number of Zarathushtis in Iran were not wearing the traditional underwear and cord (Sudreh and Kushti) considered as outward manifestation of a Zarathushti person. The explanation for this behavior was a likely result of fanatical Moslems bent on harming and converting the Zarathushtis would always pick on them and try to displace their Sudreh and Kushti. In fact when a Zarathushti would be converted to Islam, he had to spit into the Fire, tear up their Sudreh and Kushti as proof that they had given up on the old religion. Manekji urged the Zarathushtis to go back to the use of the traditional Sudreh and Kushti.

There were other improvements that came in the wake of Manekji's overall initiatives including availing medical care to the Zarathushtis and non-Zarathushtis in Iran, too many to enumerate here. He was a personification of the good qualities, Zarathushtra had wished for all humans to possess. A combination of factors made the work of Manekji so miraculous and effective. Other individuals assisted Manekji in his mission. But ultimately it was Manekji's superb execution, his effective planned course of action, his fast thinking and resilience, his perseverance and positive outlook towards all people, his sincerity and genuineness that made his miracle work of saving and resurrecting the small Zarathushti community of Iran such a success story. If he were still around to witness the fruits of his life of dedication, Manekji could surely take comfort in witnessing how far that community he helped back on its feet has gone in the short time span since his rescue mission was launched. Manekji would have delighted in seeing the great strides the Zarathushtis of Iran have made<sup>[33]</sup> and how they managed to become the vanguards of building the economy and developing the resources of their motherland in the short span of time since his rescue mission was launched giving them a chance to exert themselves.<sup>[34]</sup>

**Manekji Limji Hateria was one man who made a difference,  
and it was such a big difference to so many people.  
May the example set by him inspire others.**

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[27] "Savad Amoozi va Dabirri dar Deene Zarathushtra," (Farsi text), Jamshid Soroushian, Fountain Valley Printing, CA, 1988, 275

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[29] The addition of the term Naseri is acknowledgement of Nassir-ul-Dinshah having granted the Zarathushtis the right to organize the Anjuman

[30] [History of Zoroastrians of Kerman: Tarikh e Zartoshtian e Kerman](#) (Farsi text) Jamshid Soroushian

[31] Although the religion of Zarathushtra lends itself more so to celebrating people's life and contributions upon their demise rather than mourning of their death, the excessive celebration must have been an expression of relief by the survivors that the departed person would not need suffer anymore the humiliation and the dreadful discrimination the Zarathushtis were subjected to.

[32] [Zoroastrian Studies in Europe through the 19th century](#), Keikhosrow Mobed

"The Memoirs of Keikhosrow Shahrokh," edited by Shahrokh Shahrokh & Rashna Writer, The Edwin Mellen Press, 1994

"Triumph Over Discrimination: The Life Story of Farhang Mehr," Lylah M. Alphonse, Regal Press Canada, 2000, 229-236

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