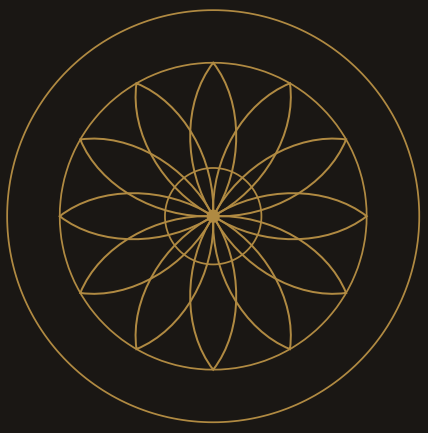


THE SACRED DIVIDE

THE FULL RECORD

Zoroastrianism

Persian-born family

HONOR THE FAITH · NAME THE MACHINERY

TEXT CHECKED 2026-10-03

Before you begin

This is the record of Zoroastrianism in *The Sacred Divide*. It has 27 sections, the same 27 used for every tradition, so that any section can be set beside the same section for another. Every fact is sourced.

Before each section, a short note says what the section is built to show, so you know what you are looking at before you read the detail.

After each section, a note headed *Why this matters to you* points at the part of the section most likely to touch an ordinary reader: a member, a donor, a parent, a voter, someone thinking about leaving, or someone outside forming an opinion. It usually ends with a question. The questions are not traps. They are the ones a careful reader would ask anyway.

The hard questions in section 23 are set out one at a time: the question, why it is asked, and an example already documented in this record.

Where a note states a fact, the fact comes from this record's own tables and cited sources or, in a few places, from a well-known research finding named in the text. Corrections are logged, with their dates, in the last section, *What changed on this page*.

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How to read this

Every religion in The Sacred Divide is laid out the same way, in the same 27 sections, so that any section can be compared across religions. This file examines institutions, offices, money and power. It does not judge anyone's faith or the truth of any belief.

EVIDENCE GRADES

Each of the 30 techniques carries a grade for how it is established in this tradition.

- **CODIFIED** Written policy, published rule, contractual requirement, or a procedure the institution has confirmed in its own documents. The strongest grade and the hardest to deny.
- **DOCUMENTED** Established by court judgment, government inquiry, regulatory action, or financial filing. Not the institution's own words, but a body with subpoena power.
- **TAUGHT** Repeated leadership instruction from platform, publication, or curriculum, without a formal rule. Deniable as emphasis rather than policy.
- **CULTURAL** Community enforcement the institution neither mandates nor prevents. Real in effect, unattributable by design — the highest-deniability grade. A volume graded mostly Cultural has not been cleared of anything: it means the page names no document that makes the institution responsible. Cultural does not mean minor, and it is not a finding of absence.

- CONTESTED Occurs in some parts of the tradition and is actively opposed in others. Generalizing this grade across a whole tradition is a misuse of it.
- REFORMED Documented historically and materially changed since — policy withdrawn, practice ended, or independent oversight accepted. Recorded because omitting it would be dishonest.
- UNGRADED Present in the source material without a grade assigned yet. Read as an unverified pattern claim, not as a finding.

RECEIPTS

Bracketed labels such as [OFFICIAL POLICY] name the kind of source a claim rests on.

- **Official policy.** The institution's own written rule: handbook, canon, policy letter, catechism, trust deed, temple recommend question. The strongest evidence available, because it cannot be attributed to a rogue individual.
- **Court record.** Judgments, convictions, filings, and testimony given under oath. Adversarially tested, which is more than most religious claims about themselves have been.
- **Government inquiry.** Royal commissions, grand juries, parliamentary and state investigations with subpoena power. Where these exist they are usually the best record of what an institution did rather than said.
- **Regulatory action.** Findings and penalties from bodies like the SEC or consumer-protection regulators. Narrow in scope, unusually precise in what they establish.
- **Financial record.** Filings, audited statements, tax returns, disclosed compensation, property transactions. Frequently the only place an institution tells the truth about its priorities.

- **Leadership statement.** Recorded sermons, conference addresses, published letters. The institution in its own voice, to its own people, on the record.
- **Independent investigation.** Reports commissioned by the institution but conducted externally. Weaker than a court and far stronger than a press release — and notable when the institution publishes them in full.
- **Academic source.** Peer-reviewed history, sociology, and demography. Best for context, structure, and scale; weaker for specific institutional conduct.
- **Former member testimony.** Firsthand accounts from people who were inside. Indispensable and interested at once — graded as testimony, never presented as documentary proof.
- **Pattern observed.** A recurring configuration with no single document behind it. Labeled as an observation rather than a finding, and the weakest claim type in this codex.

METHOD

- Separation of targets. This codex analyzes institutional control patterns, never the worth of believers or the truth of beliefs. Theology is out of scope; behavior, money, and power are in scope.
- Pattern over anecdote. A tactic is attributed to a tradition's high-control expressions only where the mechanism recurs — one bad congregation proves nothing; the same architecture in a hundred proves the architecture.
- Evidence weighting. Every factual claim carries a bracketed source-type label and should carry a grade (A–D). Claims marked SOURCE NEEDED or PATTERN OBSERVED are analysis, not established fact, and must not be published as fact.
- Steelman rule. Every tactic section presents the institution's strongest defense before countering it. If the defense cannot be stated in a form its adherents would recognize, the counter is not yet earned.

- Asymmetry honesty. Similar tactic does not mean identical severity. A shunning policy that costs your entire family is not the same as a community that cools toward doubters, and the codex must never flatten that difference.
- The mirror rule. Any framework this powerful can itself be misused — to smear traditions, flatter one's own, or manufacture grievance. The self-audit and language guardrails apply to this project as much as to any institution it examines.

CITATIONS

A small raised number in the text links to the matching item in this religion's Sources, near the end. Every source was checked, and the date of the last check is shown at the top.

01 At a glance

BEFORE YOU READ

The whole page on one screen: how big Zoroastrianism is, who sits at the top, how that person is chosen and whether anyone can remove them, where the money comes from, and what leaving costs. The disclosure scorecard underneath asks six yes-or-no questions any charity or public company would be expected to answer. Every later section expands one of these rows.

SIZE	The worldwide total was estimated at about 111,000–122,000 in 2012 (FEZANA), among the smallest of any tradition in this codex. ACADEMIC SOURCE
WHO'S IN CHARGE	The Bombay Parsi Punchayet, the central trust board of the Parsi community in Mumbai, is in charge. Its seven trustees are elected by the city's Parsi (Indian Zoroastrian) electorate and control the housing trusts, the Towers of Silence (the raised structures where Parsis traditionally lay out their dead) and, in effect, the boundary disputes over who is Parsi.
CHOSEN BY	Community ballot.
REMOVABLE BY	The next ballot — and trustee fights are fought accordingly.

MONEY IN ONE LINE	The community holds enormous communal trusts and charitable endowments (housing colonies, hospitals, funds), a benevolence that is also leverage, because access is conditioned on communal standing and marriage choices. **COURT RECORD** · BPP housing/intermarriage litigation
LEAVING IN ONE LINE	Intermarriage can cost temple access, communal housing, funerary rites (Towers of Silence), and children's initiation — exit penalties administered as boundary maintenance.
THE UNANSWERED QUESTION	Zarathustra taught free choice, so why is the child of a Parsi mother and a non-Parsi father still contested at the temple door?
EVIDENCE	One of the 30 techniques is sourced to a named document. The grades are Codified 9, Cultural 20 and Taught 1.
FAMILY	Persian-born — zoroastrianism, bahai
LAST CHECKED	2026-10-03

Disclosure scorecard

ACCOUNTS	PAY	SAFEGUARDING	EXTERNAL FIRST	REMOVAL	REPLY
PARTIAL	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO

Y Yes — established from a public source · **P** Partial — true of some parts of the tradition, or true in some jurisdictions · **N** No — not established from any public source · **?** Not assessable — no institutional apex exists to assess

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The glance table's answer to who chooses the top office is "Community ballot", and to who can remove its holder, "The next ballot — and trustee fights are fought accordingly". Read that as though it described the board of a pension fund holding your savings. Would you accept the arrangement there? The scorecard finds no public evidence of leaders' pay, a public safeguarding policy, allegations going to police first or on-the-record replies. It does find a written removal procedure, and that deserves credit. Each "No" is something the institution could publish tomorrow. Ask yourself why it hasn't.

02 A day inside

BEFORE YOU READ

One ordinary day, told from inside. The person is a composite built from documented patterns, not a real individual. The point is to make the structure visible at human scale: phrases like "removal mechanism" or "giving record" are easy to read past, but a Tuesday organized around them is not.

Freny · A Tuesday in Meher · A Parsi colony in Mumbai

Sudreh and kusti (the white undershirt and sacred cord worn by initiated Zoroastrians) at six, the knots and the words, and the fire in her mind that has been kept alight for three thousand years by people who chose to keep it alight. She is fifty-eight and she has never once found this boring.

The flat is a trust flat. Two bedrooms, a fraction of market rent, in a colony with a hospital and a school and a fund for school fees. It is one of the most extraordinary charitable arrangements any community on earth has built, and her grandfather's generation built it, and she says so to anyone who will listen.

Her daughter Zenobia married Rohan in 2019. Rohan is not Parsi. Zenobia's son Kayaan is three and has not had a navjote (the initiation ceremony) and will not have one, because Zenobia is the mother and not the father. If Freny's son had married a Hindu girl, the child would be initiated. Freny has done this arithmetic more times than she has done any other arithmetic in her life.

At eleven she goes to the fire temple. Zenobia does not come. Zenobia has not come since 2019, and has never made a scene about it, and has simply stopped, which Freny finds harder than a scene.

At lunch her neighbour mentions the housing list, and a case in the courts, and a priest in the suburbs who performs navjotes for children like Kayaan and who has been told not to. Freny says *hmm* and passes the dhansak (a Parsi dish of meat and lentils). She has the priest's number in her phone. She has had it for two years.

At night she sits by the window. She thinks: we are one hundred thousand people and we are getting fewer every year, and everyone says the community must survive. And then she thinks about a three-year-old who cannot enter the building where his great-grandfather's fire is kept, and she cannot make the two thoughts into one thought, and she has stopped expecting to.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Did any moment in that day feel familiar: a cost nobody questions, a door nobody can see how to open? The section of this page that explains that moment is the one to read first. If nothing felt familiar, ask whether that's because it isn't your life, or because the patterns have become normal to you.

03 The forefront

BEFORE YOU READ

The page's thesis in one place. First, the single question the documented record could not answer. Then the widest gap between what the institution says and what the record shows, one cost of leaving set beside how it is officially denied, and the strongest objection to this whole page, answered rather than dismissed.

> Your tradition puts moral choice at the center of its teaching — good thoughts, good words, good deeds, freely chosen. Which is why the mechanism at the heart of your community is so painful to look at: a rule that decides your child's religious existence based on which of their parents married out, and which sex that parent was.

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

Zarathustra taught free choice, so why is the child of a Parsi mother and a non-Parsi father still contested at the temple door?

The widest gap between word and record

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
We are dying out and must preserve ourselves.	The rule that excludes intermarried women's children is a documented driver of the decline.	ACADEMIC SOURCE

One cost of leaving, beside its denial

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Ritual and temple access	Yes	Fire temple entry and funerary rites are denied to those deemed outside the community.	The defence, paraphrased: these are religious requirements, not punishments.

The strongest objection, answered

The objection. You are criticizing a community of a hundred thousand people fighting for survival.

What is true in it. The community is genuinely endangered, was persecuted for over a millennium, and Iranian Zoroastrians remain a discriminated minority. The philanthropy is remarkable and real.

The answer. The claims here are unusually well-evidenced because the community litigates its disputes in open court — trust deeds, housing criteria, initiation rulings. And the central objection is Zarathustra's: a religion built on free moral choice cannot assign a child's standing by which parent married out.

Sources for this section: [4] [6]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Try answering the unanswered question yourself: *Zarathustra taught free choice, so why is the child of a Parsi mother and a non-Parsi father still contested at the temple door?* If you can't, who could, and would asking them be welcome? How an institution reacts to a fair question often tells you more than the answer does.

04 What healthy looks like here

BEFORE YOU READ

What genuinely works in Zoroastrianism, stated first and separately from any critique. That is a standing rule of this book: no tradition is reduced to its worst documented moments. Anything criticized later is measured against the best of what is described here.

> Zoroastrianism is one of the world's oldest continuously practiced religions, with about 111,000–122,000 adherents in 2012 [2] (Parsis of India, Iranian Zoroastrians and the diaspora). Its teaching is ethical dualism (the belief that good and evil are opposed and that each person chooses between them). It has fire temples and the triad of good thoughts, good words and good deeds.

Healthy practice here looks like reformist associations that initiate the children of intermarried women, and Iranian Zoroastrian acceptance practices that diverge from Parsi orthodoxy. It also looks like the tradition's own ethic of free moral choice, used as an internal critique of coerced boundaries.

Some of that standard is already on the record. The Bombay Parsi Punchayet's trustees are elected by an electorate of more than 25,000 [7]. Disputes over who counts as Parsi are litigated in open court rather than concealed [4][6]. The Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe files public accounts with the Charity Commission [10], and Iran's constitution recognizes Zoroastrians as a minority with one reserved parliamentary seat [9]. Each is a place where the tradition meets the standard this page applies, and each is recorded here as credit.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

A bias check before the critique. People tend to read criticism of their own group as an attack and criticism of other groups as simply true. Social psychologists call this in-group bias; it shows up even when the groups are assigned at random (Tajfel's "minimal group" experiments, 1971). If you belong here, did this section feel fair? If you don't, did anything in it surprise you? The surprise is a rough measure of what you had assumed.

05 History

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated timeline and a few moments where the direction changed. Dates matter because they show that most rules had a beginning. A rule that began in a particular year, for a particular reason, is a rule that can be examined, and sometimes retired.

The prophet Zarathustra taught in ancient Iran (dating contested, ~2nd–1st millennium BCE). The religion became the imperial religion of the Persian empires and was reduced to a minority under Islam. The Parsi migration to India built a prosperous, tightly-bounded community.

Timeline

HISTORY AT A GLANCE



Numbered markers match the timeline below; spacing is proportional to the years.

1 — C. 1500–1000 BCE (CONTESTED)

Zarathustra's teaching in ancient Iran

Ethical dualism and individual moral choice — a foundation notably hostile to coercion.

2 — 550–330 BCE

Achaemenid Persian Empire

Royal patronage; the faith of a world empire.

3 — 224–651 CE

Sasanian Empire; Zoroastrianism as state religion with an organized priesthood

State church with heresy enforcement — the tradition's own high-control era. ACADEMIC SOURCE

4 651–900 CE

Arab conquest; gradual conversion; jizya (the poll tax on non-Muslims under Islamic rule) taxation of remaining Zoroastrians

From establishment to persecuted minority within two centuries.

5 8TH–10TH C. (TRADITIONAL ACCOUNT; CONTESTED)

Migration to Gujarat; the Parsi community forms

Survival strategy: tight endogamy (marriage only within the community) and community boundary maintenance.

6 1600S–1800S

Parsi commercial prominence under Mughal and then British rule; Bombay Parsi Punchayet established

Enormous communal trusts created — benevolence with governance power. FINANCIAL RECORD

7 1800S

Priestly reform debates; Iranian Zoroastrians' jizya abolished 1882

Reform currents emerge in both communities.

8 1900S

Demographic decline begins; intermarriage disputes intensify; global diaspora forms

Boundary questions become existential.

9 1908–PRESENT

Indian courts repeatedly adjudicate who counts as Parsi and who may use community facilities; heard by a nine-judge constitutional bench in 2026

The state is asked to rule on religious belonging. COURT RECORD

10

2000S–PRESENT

Population decline continues; reformist initiations of intermarried families' children; Iranian community pressures

The tradition faces its boundary question with its own survival at stake.

Moments in the room

1908 — THE PARSI PUNCHAYET CASE

The Bombay High Court ruled in a long-running suit on who counted as Parsi and who could use the community's trusts and fire temples — locating the boundary question in a court and in a trust deed.

Why it matters. The tradition's boundary disputes have been litigated for over a century, which means they are documented, contestable, and not eternal. It also means the trustees hold the operative power over housing and facilities, alongside the priests who hold it over initiation and the rites.

1990S–PRESENT — THE TRUSTEE ELECTIONS

Bombay Parsi Punchayet trustee elections became genuinely contested, fought substantially over intermarriage, admission, and the disposal of the community's housing and funeral assets.

Why it matters. One of the few elected apexes in this codex, and the elections are hard-fought precisely because the office decides who is inside. Elected does not mean gentle — it means answerable, which is different and better.

2017 — THE SUPREME COURT HEARS THE INTERMARRIAGE QUESTION

India's Supreme Court took up the case of a Parsi woman excluded from religious spaces after marrying outside the community; the matter was resolved for the individual without settling the general rule. In 2026 the general question reached a nine-judge constitutional bench, which reserved judgment on 14 May 2026; at the last check on 27 October 2026 no verdict had been reported, and press reports expected one by about 6 October [16].

Why it matters. One woman got her answer; the community's own institutions still have not given theirs. The page's unanswered question is exactly this gap.

Sources for this section: [4] [6] [8] [16]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Pick one rule that shapes your week and look for it on the timeline. If it has a start date, it was decided by people at a particular moment, for reasons of that moment. Were you taught it as timeless? What would it mean for you if it turned out to be younger than your grandparents' grandparents?

06 Branches & variants

BEFORE YOU READ

Zoroastrianism is not one bloc. This section maps the main branches and variants, so that nothing documented about one community is read as true of all of them.

The main communities are the Parsi (Indian) and Iranian Zoroastrian communities. Reformist and orthodox positions differ on conversion and intermarriage, and other currents include Ilm-e-Kshnoom (an esoteric Parsi school).

COMMUNITY	SIZE AND PLACE	WHAT DIFFERS ON THIS PAGE'S QUESTIONS
Parsis (India)	The 2011 census counted 57,264 Parsis [1].	Trusts and panchayats (community councils) decide access to fire temples and Towers of Silence, and who counts as Parsi has been litigated since 1908 [4][6][7].
Iranian Zoroastrians	Iran's census counted 25,271, and demographers estimate fewer [2].	They are a recognized minority with one reserved seat in parliament [9].
Diaspora	The diaspora lives in the UK, North America and Australia, and the world total is about 111,000–122,000 [2].	Community associations and trusts organize it, often as registered charities [10].

Orthodox and reformist currents	These currents run across all three communities.	They disagree on conversion, and on whether children of women who marry out are Zoroastrian [4].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you know one community of Zoroastrianism, you know one community. Most bad generalizations about a religion, and most unfair defenses of it, come from treating one branch as the whole. Which branch is the one you picture when you hear the name? Is that picture yours, or one you were given by news coverage or by the community itself?

07 Structure

BEFORE YOU READ

The organizational chart: how many people and institutions there are, where authority sits, who holds the top office, and who holds what beneath it. The question to keep in mind is simple: if the person at the top got something badly wrong, what written procedure exists to correct or remove them?

Size and shape

Adherents	The worldwide total was estimated at about 111,000–122,000 in 2012 (FEZANA), among the smallest of any tradition in this codex. ACADEMIC SOURCE
Regions	Zoroastrians live in India (Mumbai and Gujarat, where the Parsi community numbers ~50,000–60,000 and is falling), in Iran (~15,000–25,000), and in North America, the United Kingdom, Australia and the Gulf states.
Trend	The decline is sustained. Its causes are very low fertility, late marriage, high intermarriage and, as a contributing cause, non-acceptance of intermarried women's children in the orthodox Parsi mainstream; the sources on this page do not measure how much each contributes. Indian government funding has supported fertility programs for the community. GOVERNMENT REPORT

Participation	Community identity is exceptionally strong; institutional authority over housing, charity, and ritual access makes standing consequential in a way most small communities cannot match.

Authority

- The priesthood is hereditary, and only sons of priests may be ordained. Community panchayats and trusts, notably the Bombay Parsi Punchayet, control housing, charity and the definition of the community.
- The core control lever is the definition of who counts as Zoroastrian, and the Parsi mainstream defines it by patrilineal rules (descent traced through the father) that exclude intermarried women's children.

OFFICIAL POLICY · trust rules; litigated in Indian courts — COURT RECORD

The top of the chain

> One of the only elected apexes in this codex — and the elections are fought precisely because the trustees decide who counts.

OFFICE	WHO SITS IN IT NOW	CHOSEN BY	REMOVABLE BY
Bombay Parsi Punchayet	Seven trustees elected by the city's Parsi electorate, controlling the housing trusts, the Towers of Silence, and — in effect — the boundary disputes over who is Parsi	Community ballot	The next ballot — and trustee fights are fought accordingly
The high priesthood	The Vada Dasturs (senior high priests) of the leading fire temples, holding gate authority over navjote and the temple-entry disputes in intermarriage cases	Hereditary and temple appointment	Not recorded on this page.

> **THE TELL**
>
> Zarathustra's own hymns put free choice at the center of the faith. The live disputes at the temple door are over whether a child of the 'wrong' parent may make that choice.

Who holds what

ENTITY	TYPE	HOLDER	HOLDS	WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU	RECEIPT
Communal trust boards	Endowment governance	Elected trustees	They hold housing, healthcare, education and welfare, and allocate them by criteria tied to communal standing.	They decide your flat, your hospital and your child's initiation.	COURT RECORD · housing and initiation litigation

Hereditary priesthood	Inherited office	Sons of priestly families only	They hold the exclusive right to perform the rites, and the supply of practitioners is shrinking.	They decide whether anyone can perform your parents' funeral rites properly.	ACADEMIC SOURCE
High priests and orthodox authorities	Religious authority	Named senior priests	They decide initiation and ritual access, which shapes who counts, and they sanction reformist priests who initiate intermarried women's children.	They decide whether your child exists religiously.	INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
Housing colonies (baugs)	Property	Trust allocation committees	They hold subsidized housing and withhold it on marriage grounds.	Where you live is decided by whom you married.	COURT RECORD
Funerary institutions	Rites	Community-controlled administration	They control access to the Towers of Silence and the last rites.	They decide whether you may take part in your own mother's last rites.	OFFICIAL POLICY

Sources for this section: 1 2 7 8

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This is one of the few religious authorities in the book that you can actually vote out. The Bombay Parsi Punchayet's seven trustees are elected by an electorate of more than 25,000. Those trustees control the housing trusts, the Towers of Silence and, in effect, the boundary of who counts as Parsi. If you are on the electoral roll, your vote helps decide whether your niece's children can be initiated. Do you know where your trustees stand?

08 Law & state here

BEFORE YOU READ

What states actually do. That includes how they fund, protect, regulate or enforce the tradition, and which outside body, if any, can compel an answer from it. For most readers, this is where the institution meets their own passport.

COUNTRY (continued)	WHAT THE LAW DOES	THE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTION
India — who is Parsi	*Petit v. Jijibhai* (1908) is the foundational ruling [6], and the Gujarat High Court held that a Parsi woman ceases to be Parsi on marrying out [4].	The Supreme Court let Goolrokh Gupta attend her parents' funeral rites (2017) and sent the question to a larger bench [4]. That nine-judge bench reserved judgment on 14 May 2026, and no verdict had been reported at the last check on 27 October 2026 [16]. In 2026 it asked the Nagpur panchayat whether a woman who married out could pray at an agiary (a Zoroastrian fire temple) [5].
India — trustees	The Bombay Parsi Punchayet's trustees are elected by an electorate of 25,000+ [7]	It is one of the few genuinely elected religious authorities in this book [7].
India — population	The *Jiyo Parsi* ("Live, Parsi") scheme (from 2013–14) funds fertility support, and 534 births have been supported since 2014–15, according to a ministerial reply in August 2026 [17].	It is a state programme to slow a community's decline [3].
Iran	Zoroastrians are a recognized minority (Article 13) and elect one member of parliament (Article 64) [9]	Not established from any public source.
United Kingdom	Charity law governs the community's trusts [10].	The Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe files public accounts [10].

Who can compel an answer

The community's own trustee elections — one of the few real internal levers in this codex — and India's charity-trust courts, which have been hearing Parsi trust disputes for a century.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Indian courts have been deciding who is Parsi since *Petit v. Jijibhai* in 1908. The Gujarat High Court held that a Parsi woman stops being Parsi when she marries out. In 2017 the Supreme Court let Goolrokh Gupta attend her parents' funeral rites, and the question has now reached a nine-judge bench. If you are a Parsi woman planning to marry outside the community, your legal status inside it depends on a case that is still open. Did anyone warn you?

09 Money

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the money comes from, how each flow is justified, how it can be used to control, and who benefits. Read it the way you would read any organization you give to: what is disclosed, what is not, and who decides.

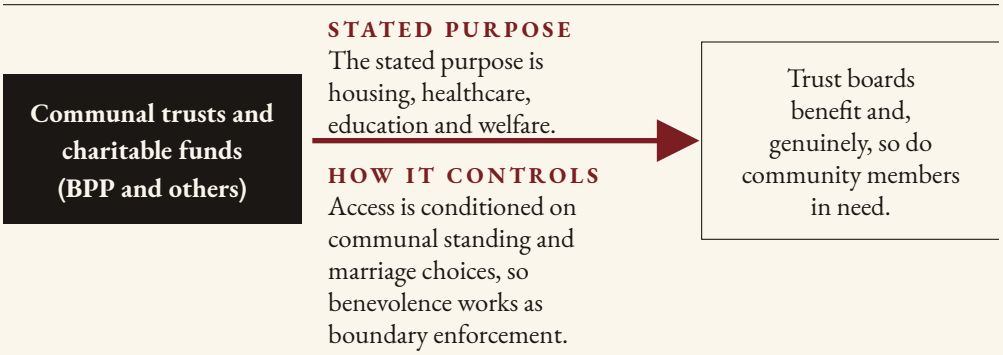
Where it comes from

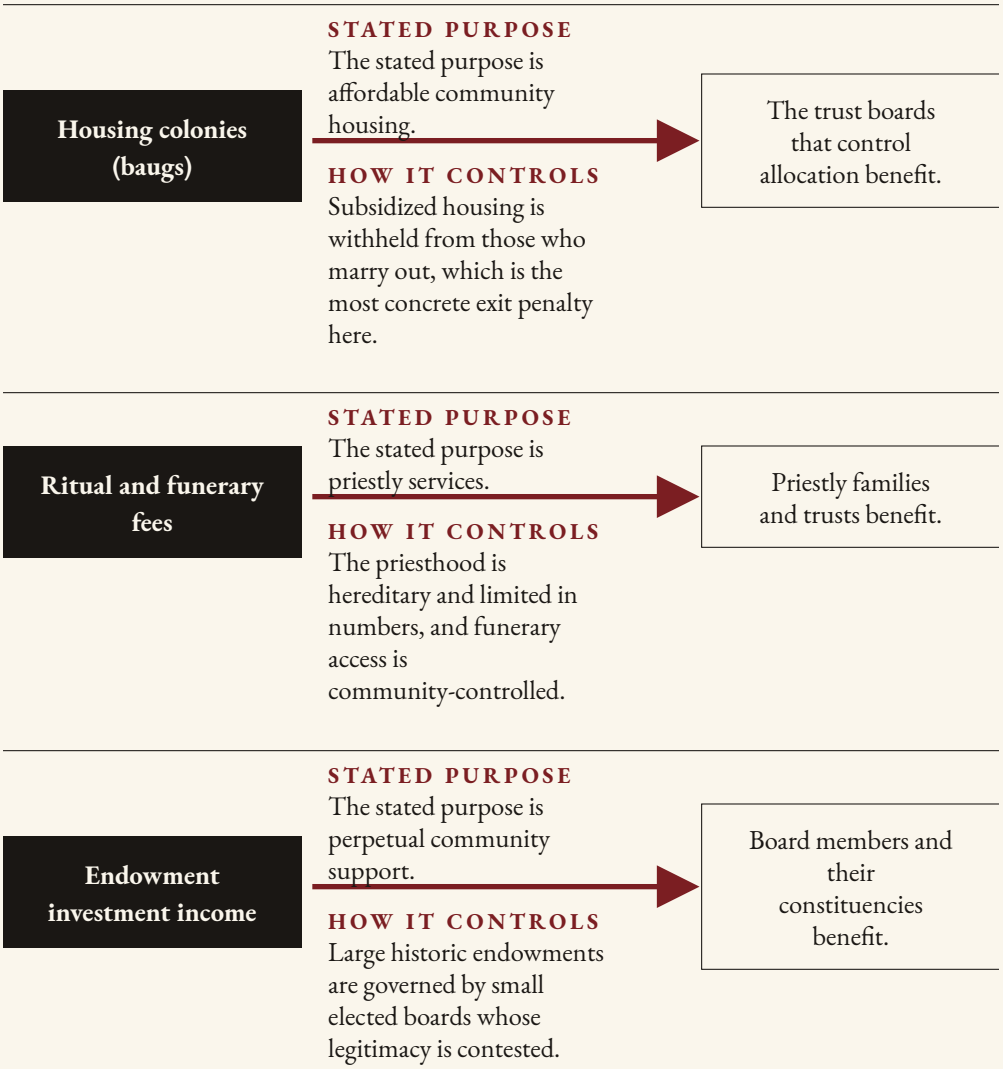
- The community holds enormous communal trusts and charitable endowments (housing colonies, hospitals, funds), a benevolence that is also leverage, because access is conditioned on communal standing and marriage choices. **COURT RECORD** · BPP housing/intermarriage litigation

Follow the money

FLOW	STATED PURPOSE	HOW IT CONTROLS	WHO BENEFITS
Communal trusts and charitable funds (BPP and others)	The stated purpose is housing, healthcare, education and welfare.	Access is conditioned on communal standing and marriage choices, so benevolence works as boundary enforcement.	Trust boards benefit and, genuinely, so do community members in need. COURT RECORD
Housing colonies (baugs)	The stated purpose is affordable community housing.	Subsidized housing is withheld from those who marry out, which is the most concrete exit penalty here.	The trust boards that control allocation benefit.
Ritual and funerary fees	The stated purpose is priestly services.	The priesthood is hereditary and limited in numbers, and funerary access is community-controlled.	Priestly families and trusts benefit.
Endowment investment income	The stated purpose is perpetual community support.	Large historic endowments are governed by small elected boards whose legitimacy is contested.	Board members and their constituencies benefit.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES, AND WHAT IT HOLDS





Not to scale. The table gives one figure, the German church tax of €6.75bn in 2025; the other flows are shown without amounts.

Pipelines this tradition shares

COMMUNAL TRUST TO CONDITIONAL WELFARE

Source. Historic endowments and community giving

Path. Trust board → Housing, healthcare, education allocation → Members in good standing

Disclosed. Trust deeds, because litigation forced it

Hidden. Discretionary decisions

RITUAL FEE LADDER

Source. Life passages — birth, marriage, death, blessing

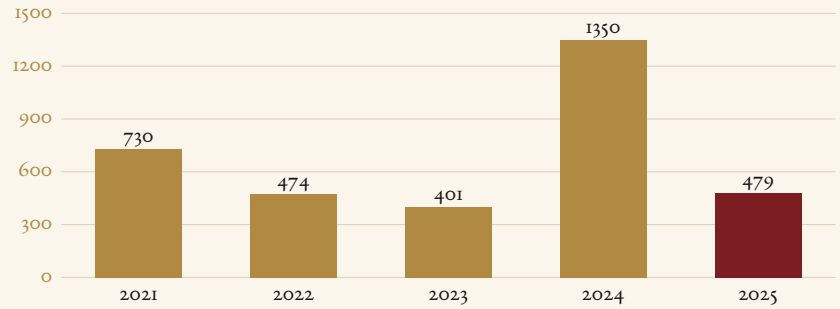
Path. Officiant → Fire temple or community trust

Disclosed. Nothing is recorded; no fee schedule appears on this page.

Hidden. Not recorded on this page.

Money in numbers

ZOROASTRIAN TRUST FUNDS OF EUROPE: INCOME



£ thousand, years to 31 March — The UK community's central charity, with a centre in Harrow and a burial ground; public because charity law requires it. [10]

- **ZTFE (the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe), year to March 2025:** Income was £478,900 and spending was £520,180 [10].
- **India:** The Bombay Parsi Punchayet's trusts control housing and the Towers of Silence (see Money above) [7].
- **Jiyo Parsi:** This is a government scheme that pays for fertility treatment and support [3].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The community's trusts are enormous: housing colonies, hospitals and funds. The glance table calls this "benevolence that is also leverage," because access can depend on communal standing and marriage choices. If your family lives in trust housing, ask for the allocation criteria in writing, and check whether marriage appears in them. Would you still give to a fund that might one day exclude your own grandchildren?

10 Genealogy

BEFORE YOU READ

Rules with a history. Each card asks the same three questions: what was this rule originally for, has that reason expired, and who benefits from the rule continuing anyway?

PATRILINEAL DESCENT DETERMINING MEMBERSHIP

Origin. Community boundary rules hardened after the migration to India, as a tiny minority sought to survive within a Hindu majority. ACADEMIC SOURCE

What it was for. Survival. A community of a few thousand under a foreign majority with no state protection maintained itself through strict endogamy. That reasoning was not paranoid; it worked for a millennium.

Why that reason expired. The community is now declining fast, and the rule is a documented driver of that decline. It also produces an indefensible asymmetry: a man's children by an outsider are accepted, a woman's are not. Same act, opposite outcome, decided by sex. COURT RECORD

Who benefits now. Trust boards and orthodox authorities who control who counts — and gatekeepers gain power as the gate narrows, even while the community shrinks around them.

COMMUNAL HOUSING AND WELFARE CONDITIONED ON STANDING

Origin. Prosperous Parsi families built enormous charitable trusts in the 18th–19th centuries: housing colonies, hospitals and funds. FINANCIAL RECORD

What it was for. It was genuine and remarkable philanthropy from a community that took care of its poor better than almost any comparable group.

Why that reason expired. When access is conditioned on communal standing and marriage choices, benevolence becomes enforcement. A woman who marries out can lose subsidized housing. That is not charity; it is a lever. COURT RECORD

Who benefits now. Trust boards, who control both the assets and the definitions that determine eligibility.

HEREDITARY PRIESTHOOD

Origin. The priesthood has been restricted to sons of priestly families since antiquity. ACADEMIC SOURCE

What it was for. It transmitted complex liturgical knowledge in a family-apprenticeship model.

Why that reason expired. With a shrinking population, the priesthood shrinks faster — and heredity means the community cannot recruit ability from outside the priestly families. It is an inheritance structure limiting the supply of the very thing the community needs to survive.

Who benefits now. Priestly families benefit through their status and ritual monopoly. The cost is a liturgical tradition running out of practitioners.

FUNERARY AND TEMPLE ACCESS AS BOUNDARY ENFORCEMENT

Origin. The origin is purity requirements around fire temples and the Towers of Silence.

OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. It served ritual purity in a tradition with a highly developed purity framework.

Why that reason expired. It now operates as the final sanction: an intermarried woman may be denied the rites for her own parents. Purity language is performing a membership function.

Who benefits now. The boundary itself benefits, and so do those who administer it.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The expired-reason test works on any rule. Take one you follow or enforce, name what it was originally for, and ask whether that reason still exists. If it doesn't, and the rule survives anyway, the section's last question is the one that matters to you: who benefits from it continuing?

11 Reach

BEFORE YOU READ

How far the institution's authority extends into three private areas: what members may read and hear, how children are raised and schooled, and decisions about their own bodies.

Information

- Priests hold authority over ritual correctness, and reformist priests who initiate children of intermarried mothers have faced sanction and exclusion from major fire temples. **INVESTIGATIVE REPORT**
- Community disputes are largely public and litigated rather than concealed — an unusual degree of transparency, enforced by Indian courts. **COURT RECORD**
- Debate over Towers of Silence practice and reform is vigorous and open within the community.

Children

- Navjote initiation in childhood (typically 7–15) enrolls the child, and eligibility depends on parentage — a child's religious status is determined by which parent married out. **OFFICIAL POLICY** · trust rules
- Community schools, scholarships, and housing colonies build strong childhood identity and material dependence.
- Children of Parsi women who married non-Parsis have been refused navjote and temple entry by orthodox authorities — the harm lands on the child. **COURT RECORD / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT**

Bodies

- The central inequality is patrilineal: a Parsi man's children by a non-Parsi wife are generally accepted, a Parsi woman's are generally not. Same act, different penalty by sex. OFFICIAL POLICY / COURT RECORD
- Menstrual seclusion practices persisted into the modern era and remain in some orthodox households. ACADEMIC SOURCE
- Women are excluded from priesthood in Parsi practice.
- The Bombay Parsi Punchayet's control over housing has meant intermarried women could lose access to community accommodation. COURT RECORD

Sources for this section: [4] [5]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a parent, this is the section about your children: what they may read, what they are taught about their bodies, and who else has a say in their schooling. Ask what your child would need to do at sixteen to hear the strongest case against what they were taught. Would they be allowed? Would they know it existed?



12

The 30 techniques

How the thirty techniques are established here

9	1	20
CODIFIED	TAUGHT	CULTURAL

STAGE 1 Idealize	1 Love Bombing CULTURAL	2 Weaponized Generosity CODIFIED		
STAGE 2 Hook	3 Future Faking TAUGHT	4 Hoovering CULTURAL		
STAGE 3 Devalue	5 Devaluation CULTURAL	6 Gaslighting CULTURAL	7 Double Bind CULTURAL	
STAGE 4 Confuse	8 Intermittent Reinforcement CULTURAL	9 Moving the Goalposts CULTURAL	10 Strategic Ambiguity CULTURAL	11 Projection CULTURAL
	12 DARVO CULTURAL	13 Normalization / Desensitization CULTURAL		
STAGE 5 Isolate	14 Isolation CODIFIED	15 Triangulation CODIFIED		

STAGE 6 Extract	16 Flying Monkeys CODIFIED	17 Smear Campaign CULTURAL	18 Silent Treatment / Stonewalling CODIFIED	19 Manufactured Consent CODIFIED
	20 Trauma Bonding CULTURAL	21 Learned Helplessness CULTURAL	22 Benevolent Control CODIFIED	23 Infantilization CULTURAL
	24 Identity Erosion CULTURAL	25 Spiritual Bypassing CULTURAL	26 Financial Control CULTURAL	
STAGE 7 Discard	27 Manufactured Crisis CULTURAL	28 Discard CODIFIED		
STAGE 8 Replace	29 Replacement CULTURAL	30 Plausible Deniability CODIFIED		

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle.

BEFORE YOU READ

A fixed checklist of thirty influence and control patterns from research on coercive control and social psychology, applied here to institutions rather than to individual people. Every entry carries an evidence grade. The grade matters more than the name of the technique: Codified or Documented means there is a paper trail; Contested means the claim is disputed.

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle. Each carries an evidence grade for this tradition.

Stage 1 · Idealize

You arrive with a need and are met with more warmth than you have had in years.

The welcome is built from ancient heritage, sacred fire, pride in one of the world's oldest faiths, and the message that you personally carry the flame forward.

What it asks of you: Being told you are essential to a people's survival is love and a job description at once.

1 · Love Bombing

Overwhelming affection on arrival to create emotional dependency before terms are revealed.

How it shows here

- A member or returnee may be embraced through heritage, ancient identity, sacred fire, family continuity, and pride in one of the world's oldest religious traditions.
- The emotional hook is preservation: "We are few," "Our people must survive," "You carry the flame."
- Love becomes conditional when marriage, conversion, funerary rites, identity, and communal legitimacy are controlled through ancestry, purity, and communal gatekeeping.

The strongest defense. A small endangered community has the right to preserve itself.

The counter. Preservation explains the pressure. It does not excuse it. When a person is loved as a vessel for communal survival rather than as an autonomous human being, the embrace becomes extraction across generations.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Heritage welcome and the framing of the newcomer as a carrier of the flame are communal.

2 · Weaponized Generosity

Giving help that installs unspoken obligation.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrian communities may offer strong heritage support: communal identity, rituals around sacred fire, family networks, funeral rites, education, and preservation of a small ancient tradition.
- The generosity is often framed as survival: "We are few. We must preserve the flame."
- That preservation can become obligation around marriage, conversion, children's identity, ritual access, and communal legitimacy.
- A member who benefits from the community may later be told that marrying out, leaving, or dissenting is not merely personal — it endangers the people.

The strongest defense. A small endangered community has a right to preserve itself.

The counter. Preservation is not a blank check. When a person becomes a vessel for communal survival, help becomes investment and marriage becomes strategy. The community may be small, but the pressure can be enormous. A sacred flame should not burn people alive to keep itself lit.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Communal housing and welfare eligibility conditioned on communal standing, in trust deeds.

Stage 2 · Hook

You are given a future that cannot be verified, and a rope for whenever you drift toward the door.

The future offered is the survival of one of the world's oldest faiths, resting partly on you, with the flame carried forward and the ancestors' regard. Retrieval requires undoing the marriage or conceding the child's standing.

What it asks of you: You are offered a place in a future that cannot be checked, and the way back in costs you your marriage or your child's standing. Ask who set that price.

3 · Future Faking

Promising a future that keeps you invested but never has to arrive.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrianism offers cosmic future vindication: good will ultimately overcome evil, truth will defeat the lie, creation will be renewed, and righteous souls will be judged.
- The individual is asked to participate in the cosmic battle through good thoughts, good words, good deeds, ritual identity, and communal preservation.

- In small communities, the future promise becomes survival: keep the faith, marry properly, raise Zoroastrian children, preserve the fire, do not let the ancient lineage disappear.
- Judgment after death and final renovation of the world can become deferred accountability: present hardship is part of the larger battle, and vindication comes later.
- Communal gatekeeping can turn survival into pressure: your private choices are framed as affecting the destiny of an endangered tradition.

The strongest defense. A small ancient religion has a legitimate interest in survival and moral continuity.

The counter. Survival becomes future faking when individual lives are treated as fuel for an ancient project. If someone's marriage, children, identity, or doubts are managed for the sake of a future community they may not freely choose, then preservation has become possession.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT The cosmic promise itself (good overcomes evil, souls are judged) is Zoroastrian teaching, and its use as pressure to marry in and keep the community alive is communal custom with no written demand.

4 · Hoovering

Pulling someone back after they've started to leave, through guilt, love, or fear.

How it shows here

- A Zoroastrian who distances from the community may be pulled back through survival language: "We are so few," "Do not let the faith die," "Preserve the fire."
- Marriage, children, rituals, funerals, and communal identity can become pressure points.
- If someone marries outside, stops participating, or questions gatekeeping, the response may be: "You are endangering the future of the community."
- The hoover often appeals to ancientness: one of the world's oldest traditions, ancestral continuity, sacred fire, and the duty to preserve what remains.
- Small-community dynamics make exit feel personally catastrophic: every departure is treated as a demographic wound.

The strongest defense. A small endangered community has legitimate reasons to encourage continuity.

The counter. Continuity cannot require captivity. If the community's survival depends on making individuals feel guilty for marrying freely, believing differently, or leaving, then preservation has become possession.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The survival appeals used to pull a person back ("We are so few", "Preserve the fire") are spoken by family and community, and no written rule sets them out.

Stage 3 · Devalue

You are taught that you are broken, that your perception is unreliable, and that both exits from the trap lead back inside.

Marrying out is failing the community. Not marrying is failing the community. Not having children is failing the community. The demand is demographic and it lands on women.

What it asks of you: You are being evaluated as a reproductive contribution. Say that sentence out loud and see how it sits.

5 · Devaluation

Reducing your sense of worth so you become dependent on the institution for identity.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrianism can devalue through communal survival pressure, purity boundaries, ancestry, marriage expectations, and preservation of a small ancient faith.
- The person may be treated less as an individual and more as a carrier of the flame.

- Marrying outside, raising children differently, questioning ritual access, or leaving the community can be framed as endangering survival.
- Small communities can intensify shame because every deviation is visible and symbolically large.
- The individual's choices become demographic betrayal.

The strongest defense. A small endangered community has a legitimate need for continuity.

The counter. Continuity becomes devaluation when a person's worth is measured by usefulness to preservation. A human being is not a storage vessel for an ancient institution. If love depends on carrying the lineage correctly, it is not love. It is inheritance management.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Insufficiency is demographic — marrying out, not marrying, not having children — and is enforced by reputation.

6 · Gaslighting

Making you doubt your own experience so you trust the institution's interpretation instead.

How it shows here

- Someone questions marriage restrictions, conversion debates, purity boundaries, or communal gatekeeping, and is told they are endangering an ancient faith.
- A person who marries outside may be made to feel like a demographic threat.
- Doubt becomes betrayal of ancestors and the sacred fire.

- Because the community is small, individual choices are magnified until personal freedom feels like communal destruction.
- The person's inner reality is overwritten by survival math.

The strongest defense. A small endangered community has legitimate survival concerns.

The counter. Survival concern becomes gaslighting when it makes individuals doubt their right to choose freely. A community can be endangered without turning its members into preservation equipment.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The charge that a person who questions the boundary is endangering an ancient faith is made in conversation and enforced by reputation, and no written rule requires it.

7 · Double Bind

A trap where both options lead to compliance. No exit serves you.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrianism exalts free choice between good and evil as its core — yet in some communities, choosing to marry out is treated as choosing evil, with children barred from initiation.
- The community fears extinction and pleads for commitment from the young, while gatekeeping who counts as Zoroastrian narrowly enough to guarantee the decline it mourns.
- Good thoughts, good words, good deeds — but a good deed done outside communal approval, or a good word spoken against a priest, is reclassified.

The strongest defense. Boundary-keeping preserved a micro-community through thirteen centuries of pressure.

The counter. Preservation that punishes the preservers' children for loving is not survival strategy; it is the bind institutionalized: stay and shrink, leave and be erased.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL One half of the bind is the tradition's teaching of free choice and the other is the exclusion of the children of those who marry out; the exclusion is written in trust rules (technique 28), but the way the two are lived together is communal.

Stage 4 · Confuse

The rewards become unpredictable, the standard keeps moving, the answers stop meaning anything, and the accusation gets turned around.

Raise the double standard and you are attacking a persecuted minority's survival. The community's real historical suffering is placed in front of a rule that harms its own daughters.

What it asks of you: Persecution from outside does not make a rule inside it just. Both can be true and one does not answer the other.

8 · Intermittent Reinforcement

Unpredictable reward that creates addictive emotional dependency.

How it shows here

- In a shrinking community, priestly and communal regard is intensely felt and irregularly given; the young experience alternating waves of 'you are our future' warmth and gatekeeping coolness keyed to marriage and observance choices.
- Fire-temple access and ritual inclusion function as metered belonging — fully open to some, conditionally open to others, closed to children of intermarriage — with the meter's readings arriving as welcome or chill rather than policy.
- Communal honors, trusteeships, and panchayat regard circulate among families on unwritten timing that keeps the whole community leaning toward the institutions that dispense them.

The strongest defense. A tiny community rightly celebrates commitment; warmth toward the committed is gratitude, not technique.

The counter. Gratitude that cools measurably when the young choose differently is a thermostat, and thermostats train. A community may choose this openly — but then it should retire the claim that belonging was unconditional.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The alternation of warmth and chill that meters belonging arrives as welcome or coolness rather than as policy, so there is no written rule to cite.

9 · Moving the Goalposts

The standard of success keeps shifting so you can never arrive.

How it shows here

- A member participates in rituals. Then expectations expand into marriage boundaries, children's identity, funeral rites, communal preservation, and loyalty to endangered heritage.
- A person supports the community but marries outside. Suddenly prior loyalty is insufficient; the new standard is demographic preservation.
- Children become the next goalpost: not only must you belong, but your descendants must belong correctly.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community must preserve continuity.

The counter. Continuity becomes moving the goalposts when membership is never enough unless one's marriage, children, and future generations also serve the institution. A human life is not a preservation instrument.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The expansion of expectations from ritual to marriage and then to children is a communal pattern, and nothing written sets the successive standards.

10 · Strategic Ambiguity

Language that sounds profound but means nothing specific — functioning as a shutdown to real questions.

How it shows here

- Community boundaries may be framed as theology, ancestry, survival, purity, custom, or practicality depending on criticism.
- Marriage expectations can be called personal choice publicly but treated as communal duty privately.
- Conversion debates may shift between spiritual principle and demographic anxiety.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community must navigate complex survival questions.

The counter. Complexity becomes strategic ambiguity when survival language hides control over marriage, children, and belonging. If the rule changes names depending on who is listening, the ambiguity is protecting gatekeeping.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL How the boundary is named depends on who is asking, and that shifting is communal practice rather than written policy.

11 · Projection

Accusing the outside world of the exact thing the institution practices.

How it shows here

- A small community may accuse someone who marries out or raises children differently of endangering the faith while placing the burden of communal survival on individual bodies.
- Gatekeepers accuse dissenters of disrespecting sacred fire while using sacred heritage to avoid discussing exclusion or control.
- A person is made to feel selfish for wanting freedom while the community's survival anxiety is projected onto their private life.
- The individual becomes the supposed threat when the deeper issue is institutional fear of demographic decline.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community has real survival concerns.

The counter. Survival anxiety may be real, but projecting it onto one person's marriage, children, or conscience is still coercion. A human being is not responsible for carrying an entire civilization alone.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The accusation that a dissenter endangers the faith is made through communal pressure and reputation, and no written rule prescribes it.

12 · DARVO

Deny the wrongdoing. Attack the person who raised it. Reverse victim and offender.

How it shows here

- A person questions marriage restrictions, conversion boundaries, ritual exclusion, purity expectations, or communal gatekeeping. The response may deny coercion and frame it as preservation.
- Then the person is attacked as selfish, irresponsible, or disrespectful to an ancient endangered faith.
- The community becomes the victim of demographic decline; the individual becomes the offender for choosing freely.
- A person marrying out may be treated as though they personally wounded the sacred fire.
- The anxiety of a small community is placed onto one person's body, marriage, and children.

The strongest defense. Small endangered communities must protect continuity.

The counter. Continuity does not justify moral reversal. If a community makes individual autonomy look like an attack on collective survival, then preservation has become a way to deny personal freedom.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The sequence of denial, attack and reversal is a pattern of communal response to dissent, and no written policy sets it out.

13 · Normalization / Desensitization

Practices that would seem extreme to an outsider feel normal to insiders because they were installed before critical evaluation developed.

How it shows here

- Small-community survival pressure becomes normalized: marry within, preserve identity, protect rituals, raise children correctly, maintain boundaries, preserve the flame.
- Members may grow used to having personal choices measured against demographic anxiety.
- Sacred fire, ancientness, purity, ancestry, and funerary practices can make gatekeeping feel sacred rather than institutional.
- A person who marries out or questions communal boundaries may be treated as a threat so often that communal anxiety begins to feel normal.
- The private life becomes a public survival project.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community has legitimate reasons to protect continuity.

The counter. Continuity becomes desensitization when people stop noticing that survival pressure is being placed on private lives. A community's fear of extinction should not be normalized into control over marriage, children, and belonging.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Normalization works through upbringing and communal expectation, and nothing written prescribes it.

Stage 5 · Isolate

Your world narrows until every voice you hear is inside the system, and everything you came for now runs through a middleman.

Housing, schools, healthcare, scholarships and social world are all communal, all excellent, all conditional on standing.

What it asks of you: Ask what part of your family's life does not touch a community trust.

14 · Isolation

Shrinking your world until the only voices you hear are inside the system.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrian isolation can occur through small-community survival pressure, marriage expectations, ritual boundaries, ancestry rules, sacred fire, funerary practices, and communal gatekeeping.
- A member who marries outside or questions boundaries may feel cut off from communal legitimacy.
- Children's identity becomes a pressure point: whether they count, whether they can participate, whether they inherit the flame.

- Because the community may be small, social isolation can happen quickly. Everyone knows who complied, who married out, who stopped attending, who challenged the rules.
- The outside world is not necessarily demonized; it is treated as the place where the endangered faith disappears.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community needs strong boundaries to survive.

The counter. Boundaries become isolation when they make personal freedom feel like extinction. If leaving, marrying freely, or raising children differently makes someone lose ritual belonging and communal legitimacy, preservation has become exclusion.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **CODIFIED** Boundary maintenance is written into trust rules and initiation criteria, and has been litigated in open court for a century.

15 · Triangulation

Inserting intermediaries between you and the thing you came for, so the institution is always in the middle.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrian triangulation can run through parents, priests, sacred fire, ancestry, marriage expectations, children, small-community survival, and ancient identity.
- A person marrying out may be told they are not just choosing a spouse; they are weakening an endangered people.
- Children are used as pressure: “Will they be Zoroastrian?” “Will they be allowed into rituals?” “Will they carry the flame?”

- Priestly or communal gatekeepers may triangulate through ritual access, funerary rites, conversion boundaries, and purity rules.
- The person is compared to faithful families who preserved the tradition despite diaspora, decline, and pressure.
- A small community magnifies every private choice into a communal survival event.

The strongest defense. Small ancient communities have real concerns about survival and continuity.

The counter. Survival becomes triangulation when demographic anxiety is placed onto one person's marriage, children, and conscience. A community can be endangered without making every member a hostage to its future.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Fire temple and funerary access administered by community authorities under written criteria.

Stage 6 · Extract

Now the harvest: your labor, your money, your identity, your silence, your children's schooling, your capacity to trust yourself.

Communal trusts control housing, healthcare, education and welfare, with eligibility running through standing and marriage choices. Ritual and funerary fees run through a hereditary priesthood. A demographic demand also lands specifically on women as a reproductive expectation.

What it asks of you: Charity that can be withdrawn for whom you married was never charity. It was a lever with excellent public relations.

16 · Flying Monkeys

The community enforces the institution's norms without being asked — mobilized by culture, not memos.

How it shows here

- A Zoroastrian who marries out, questions ritual access, or raises children differently may face pressure from parents, priests, relatives, community elders, and preservation-minded peers.
- The message becomes demographic: “We are so few,” “Do not let the faith die,” “Your children must carry the flame.”

- Priests or community authorities may become enforcement points around marriage, conversion, funerary rites, and ritual legitimacy.
- The person's private choices become everyone's survival concern.

The strongest defense. Small endangered communities need active preservation.

The counter. Preservation becomes FLYING MONKEY pressure when community anxiety is distributed through family and clergy onto one person's life. A community can be small without turning every relative into a demographic officer.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Housing, welfare, and ritual eligibility criteria are documented in trust deeds; the reproductive expectation is cultural.

17 · Smear Campaign

Rewriting your character after departure to protect the institution from the implications of your leaving.

How it shows here

- A person who marries out or questions boundaries may be smeared as selfish, careless, disrespectful to ancestors, or responsible for weakening a small faith.
- Raising children differently may be framed as betrayal.
- Community gossip may turn private decisions into public evidence of disloyalty.
- Dissenters may be portrayed as not caring about the sacred fire or communal survival.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community has real continuity concerns.

The counter. Continuity becomes smear when private freedom is portrayed as communal sabotage. A person is not immoral for refusing to become demographic infrastructure.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The smears are communal gossip and reputation, and no written rule prescribes them; the eligibility criteria in trust deeds only give the smear its target.

18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling

Refusing to engage with legitimate questions in order to maintain control.

How it shows here

- A person questions marriage boundaries, conversion rules, ritual access, or communal gatekeeping and receives vague appeals to survival, purity, and tradition.
- Small communities may avoid direct conflict while quietly excluding those who marry out or dissent.
- Questions about children's status or ritual inclusion may receive inconsistent, delayed, or gatekept answers.
- The community's anxiety replaces dialogue.

The strongest defense. Small ancient communities must handle continuity issues carefully.

The counter. Care becomes stonewalling when the person affected cannot get a clear answer about belonging. If your marriage, children, funeral rites, and identity depend on rules no one will state plainly, gatekeeping is hiding behind caution.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **CODIFIED** The eligibility rules that are withheld in conversation are written in trust deeds, and litigation was needed to make them public.

19 · Manufactured Consent

Creating the appearance of choice when the conditions of choice were shaped before you could evaluate them.

How it shows here

- A person "chooses" endogamy after being told the community is small, ancient, endangered, and dependent on their marriage choices.
- Children's identity becomes a pressure device: agreement is extracted through fear of breaking continuity.
- Ritual access and funerary expectations can make belonging conditional.
- Silence around communal rules is treated as consent to preservation demands.

The strongest defense. Small communities require active continuity to survive.

The counter. Survival does not equal consent. If demographic fear is placed on one person's marriage, children, and funeral rites, the community has manufactured consent by making freedom feel like extinction.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **CODIFIED** Navjote eligibility determined by parentage under trust rules, litigated repeatedly in Indian courts.

20 · Trauma Bonding

The wound and the bandage come from the same hand.

How it shows here

- A small community may create distress around survival: "We are few," "preserve the flame," "marry correctly," "raise the children properly."
- The person feels guilt over private choices, then relief when they align with communal preservation.
- Marriage and children become emotional pressure points.
- The community's fear of extinction becomes the individual's emotional burden.

The strongest defense. Small ancient communities have real survival concerns.

The counter. Survival concern becomes TRAUMA BONDING when communal anxiety is placed on individual bodies. If belonging is restored only when private life serves preservation, the bond is not just heritage. It is fear-relief conditioning.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The fear and relief around survival are communal, carried by family and community with no written rule; the trust-deed criteria that make belonging conditional are the background, not the technique.

21 · Learned Helplessness

Teaching you that your own judgment is unreliable until you stop trusting it entirely.

How it shows here

- A person tries to choose marriage, children's identity, or ritual participation freely but is met with survival anxiety.
- Every private decision becomes evidence of loyalty or betrayal.
- Community rules may be inconsistent, gatekept, or emotionally charged.
- Eventually the person stops arguing because the community's fragility always overrides them.

The strongest defense. Small communities face real continuity pressures.

The counter. Continuity becomes LEARNED HELPLESSNESS when the individual learns that no personal reason can outweigh communal survival. If your life is always too dangerous to let you choose, preservation has become domination.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The sense of futility is learned in conversation and from family; the eligibility criteria that members learn they cannot change are written in trust deeds, but that is the background, not the technique.

22 · Benevolent Control

Control wrapped in the language of care, so that resisting the control feels like rejecting the love.

How it shows here

- Marriage expectations, ritual boundaries, children's identity, and communal gatekeeping are framed as protecting an endangered ancient faith.
- A person may be told endogamy is not control but preservation.
- Ritual access and funerary customs become ways to manage belonging.
- The community's survival anxiety is presented as loving concern for heritage.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community must protect continuity.

The counter. Continuity becomes BENEVOLENT CONTROL when it claims authority over private life. If marriage, children, and belonging are controlled for survival, the person has become a preservation tool.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CODIFIED Trust deeds tie welfare and housing to communal standing, which is control through care; the framing as loving concern for heritage is communal.

23 · Infantilization

Positioning the adult believer as permanently childlike and dependent on institutional authority.

How it shows here

- Adults may be treated as irresponsible if they marry out, raise children differently, or question ritual boundaries.
- Community elders may frame private choices as naïve threats to survival.
- Belonging can be managed through ancestry, purity, and preservation rules.
- The individual is treated as a child of the community, not a full adult.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community must teach responsibility for survival.

The counter. Responsibility becomes INFANTILIZATION when adults are not trusted with freedom. If every private choice requires community approval because survival is invoked, preservation has become paternalism.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The paternalism the entry describes, adults treated as children by elders, is communal custom; the rule that only sons of priestly families may be priests is written, but it is a different fact from the technique.

24 · Identity Erosion

Gradually replacing your identity with a role the institution provides, until you can't separate who you are from where you belong.

How it shows here

- The person's identity may become tied to sacred fire, ancestry, purity, marriage, children, funerary rites, and survival of a small ancient community.
- Private choices become signs of loyalty or betrayal.
- Marrying out or raising children differently can feel like personal identity failure.
- The self becomes a carrier of endangered heritage.
- The person may feel less like an individual and more like a preservation vessel.

The strongest defense. Zoroastrian identity is fragile because the community is small and ancient.

The counter. Fragility becomes IDENTITY EROSION when the individual is made responsible for demographic survival. If belonging requires becoming a container for the community's anxiety, identity has become burden.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The identity tied to ancestry and the flame is communal and enforced by reputation; the eligibility criteria in trust deeds are the background, not the technique.

25 · Spiritual Bypassing

Using spiritual language to avoid engaging with real pain, real questions, and real accountability.

How it shows here

- Personal freedom may be bypassed through survival of the community.
- Marriage pressure is bypassed as preserving the flame.
- Exclusion is bypassed as purity or continuity.
- Dissent is bypassed as selfishness toward an endangered faith.
- Individual grief is subordinated to demographic anxiety.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community must protect continuity.

The counter. Continuity becomes SPIRITUAL BYPASSING when it avoids the person in front of it. If survival language prevents honest discussion of control, preservation has become evasion.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CULTURAL The use of survival language to avoid questions is conversational and cultural; the criteria it avoids discussing are written in trust deeds, but that is the background, not the technique.

26 · Financial Control

Extracting money through spiritual obligation while offering no transparency about where it goes.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrian financial control may involve fire temple support, community funds, ritual costs, funerary practices, weddings, schools, charity, and preservation campaigns.
- Small-community survival can create pressure to give, marry in, fund institutions, and raise children within the tradition.
- Donors may gain influence in small communal settings.
- Ritual access and identity can become entangled with family and community financial participation.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community needs resources to preserve institutions.

The counter. Preservation becomes FINANCIAL CONTROL when giving is tied to belonging. If people must fund the community to prove loyalty to the flame, identity has become a financial obligation.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The tie between giving and belonging, and donor influence, are communal custom; the entry describes giving, donor influence and ritual costs, none of which is set out in a trust deed (trust housing and welfare eligibility is written, but that is not what the entry describes).

Stage 7 · Discard

You become expensive — too many questions, too much independence — and the urgency ramps up until you are removed.

Temple entry is refused, navjote is denied to your children, funerary rites are withheld and housing is lost. In a community this small, that is nearly everyone you know.

What it asks of you: The penalties here are documented in open court filings — the least deniable in the codex.

27 · Manufactured Crisis

Creating urgency to suppress critical thinking and generate loyalty.

How it shows here

- Zoroastrian communities may manufacture crisis around intermarriage, children's identity, conversion, ritual access, funerary rites, and demographic decline.
- A private relationship becomes a survival emergency.
- The community's small size intensifies every individual choice.
- "Preserve the flame" can turn autonomy into threat.

The strongest defense. A small ancient faith faces genuine continuity concerns.

The counter. Genuine concern becomes MANUFACTURED CRISIS when it makes individual freedom feel catastrophic. If every marriage or child becomes an emergency referendum on survival, preservation has become panic governance.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The crisis framing of intermarriage and conversion is communal rhetoric with no written rule; the exclusions it is used to justify follow written criteria and are covered under technique 28.

28 · Discard

Removing members who become too costly — too many questions, too much independence, too visible a contradiction.

How it shows here

- A person who marries out, questions conversion rules, or raises children differently may be treated as weakening the faith.
- Ritual belonging may become uncertain.
- Children's status may be contested.
- The person is not discarded as evil but as a demographic failure.
- Small-community anxiety makes exclusion intimate and painful.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community must protect continuity.

The counter. Continuity becomes DISCARD when private life is judged as communal betrayal. If love narrows when someone refuses to become preservation infrastructure, the flame is being kept warm by burning people.

EVIDENCE GRADE

CODIFIED Trust rules and initiation criteria conditioning membership on patrilineal descent, litigated in Indian courts, including *Petit v. Jijibhai* (1908) and *Goolrokh Gupta v. Burjor Pardiwala* [64]. *(sourced)*

Stage 8 · Replace

Your seat is filled before the door shuts, and nobody is responsible for any of it because the authority was attributed to descent and ancient custom.

In a community of this size, nobody replaces you — which is the tragedy rather than the mercy. The boundary simply closes behind you, and the authority invoked is descent: ancient, inherited, not ours to change.

What it asks of you: A rule that excludes its own grandchildren while the community shrinks is not preserving anything. Ask who keeps it anyway, and what they retain.

29 · Replacement

Your seat is filled before the door closes behind you.

How it shows here

- A person who marries out may be replaced in communal hope by someone who marries in.
- Families may shift continuity expectations to siblings, cousins, or children who preserve identity correctly.
- Donors and endogamous families become the preferred future.
- The person who chooses differently becomes a demographic disappointment.

The strongest defense. Small communities depend on members who preserve continuity.

The counter. Continuity becomes REPLACEMENT when people are valued by reproductive or marital compliance. If the community replaces the free chooser with the preservation performer, belonging has become demographic utility.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The preference for those who marry in is communal; the descent rule that decides whose children count is written, but it is covered under technique 28.

30 · Plausible Deniability

The institution is never responsible, because the authority is attributed to descent and ancient custom, which cannot be cross-examined.

How it shows here

- Endogamy expectations may be described as personal choice, while marrying out marks someone as weakening a tiny community.
- Ritual access, funerary rites, children's identity, and community legitimacy may be gatekept through custom rather than explicit punishment.
- Leaders can say they are preserving, not excluding.
- Donor influence in small communities may be unofficial but powerful.
- Anxiety over survival allows the community to deny control while emotionally enforcing it.

The strongest defense. A small ancient community has legitimate survival concerns. Boundaries are about preservation. No one can be forced to stay.

The counter. Preservation becomes PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY when exclusion is renamed survival. Boundaries are coercive when they govern marriage, children, funerary rites, and belonging. A person is not free simply because the community does not physically block the door.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **CODIFIED** Authority attributed to descent, published in trust instruments and defended by named high priests.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Count grades, not names. A long list of Contested entries says something very different from a short list of Codified ones. A bias to watch for in yourself: people rate the same pressure as "normal" when their own group applies it and as "manipulation" when another group does. Before you judge an entry, try imagining it applied by a group you distrust. Does it look different?

13

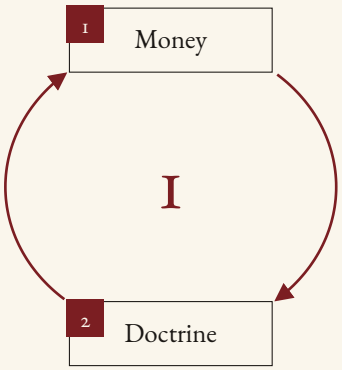
The loops

BEFORE YOU READ

How the techniques connect into cycles. A single practice can look harmless on its own. The loops show how one step feeds the next, so that, for example, a newcomer's welcome turns into an obligation.

> The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first. The loops are analysis built from findings recorded elsewhere on this page PATTERN OBSERVED; each step names the section where its fact is recorded.

1 · Money to Doctrine to Money



Trust wealth funds welfare distributed on criteria set by the boards that hold the wealth.

How it runs.

1. Prosperous Parsi families built enormous charitable trusts: housing colonies, hospitals and funds (section 10).
2. The trust boards hold the assets and set the criteria for who may draw on them, and those criteria are tied to communal standing and marriage choices (sections 7 and 9).
3. Housing and welfare go to members in good standing and are withheld from those who marry out (sections 9 and 15).

4. Standing depends on the boundary rule, which excludes the children of women who marry out (sections 7 and 11), so members who want to keep their housing stay inside the rule.

5. The same boards remain in place to allocate the next round on the same criteria (sections 7 and 9).

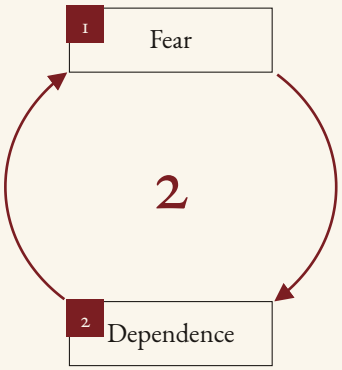
Techniques that feed it. 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 22 · Benevolent Control, 26 · Financial Control.

Why it closes. The boards that hold the wealth also write the eligibility criteria, and the criteria decide who may draw on the wealth. Housing, healthcare and welfare reach members through the trusts, so a member who marries out risks the flat as well as the temple (section 9).

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens wherever the criteria become visible. The trust deeds are public because litigation forced it (section 9), the trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet are elected (sections 7 and 8), and a member can ask a trust board for the allocation criteria in writing and see whether marriage appears (section 23, question 3). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. A woman who marries out can lose subsidized housing (section 10), and the composite day in section 2 begins in a trust flat let at a fraction of market rent.

2 · Fear to Dependence to Fear



Fear is demographic — the flame going out — and relief is conformity, transmitted as duty to the ancestors.

How it runs.

1. The community's survival is presented as being at stake: "We are few" and "Our people must survive" (technique 1; section 2).
2. The fear is attached to private choices. Marrying out, not marrying and not having children are each treated as failing the community (stage 3 in section 12; technique 5).
3. Relief is offered through conformity: marrying in, raising Zoroastrian children and preserving the fire (techniques 3 and 20).
4. Conformity is checked by parents, priests and elders and by reputation (techniques 4 and 16).
5. Each act of conformity confirms that survival depends on such acts, so the fear is renewed for the next generation (techniques 20 and 21).

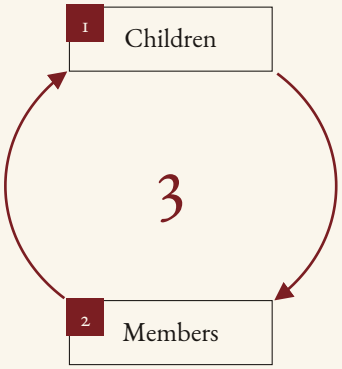
Techniques that feed it. 4 · Hoovering, 5 · Devaluation, 20 · Trauma Bonding, 21 · Learned Helplessness.

Why it closes. The relief on offer comes from the same community that frames the fear. A member who is told that a private choice endangers the people is relieved only by conforming, and conforming confirms the framing.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the survival argument is turned on the rule. Section 14 records that the rule excluding intermarried women's children is a documented driver of the decline, which puts the cause of the fear in the rule and not in the individual. Any member, and any trustee, can raise that record (section 7). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2, Freny thinks: we are one hundred thousand people and getting fewer every year, and everyone says the community must survive. Her daughter has stopped coming to the fire temple without saying why.

3 · Children to Members to Children



Navjote eligibility is fixed by parentage, so the boundary reproduces itself in the next generation automatically.

How it runs.

1. Eligibility for navjote, the childhood initiation (typically 7–15), depends on parentage (section 11).
2. A Parsi man's children by a non-Parsi wife are generally accepted, and a Parsi woman's children by a non-Parsi husband are generally not (section 11).
3. Children refused navjote are refused temple entry by orthodox authorities (section 11).
4. Children who are initiated grow up in community schools, scholarships and housing colonies that build strong identity and material dependence (section 11).
5. As adults they marry, and the same rule applies to their own children (sections 11 and 14).

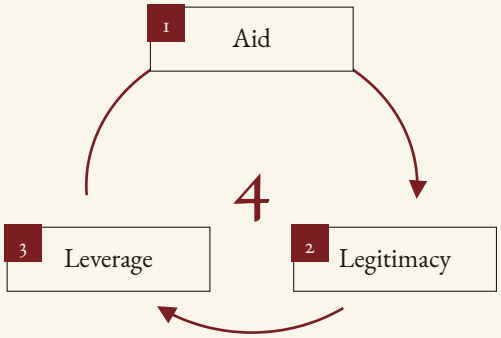
Techniques that feed it. 19 · Manufactured Consent, 13 · Normalization / Desensitization, 28 · Discard.

Why it closes. The rule is applied at a child's birth, before any choice is made. Section 14 sets the community's claim that its religion is founded on free moral choice beside the record: "A child's religious standing is fixed by a decision made before their birth." No one has to decide to continue the loop, and it continues unless someone decides to stop.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where initiation does not depend on parentage. Reformist priests who initiate these children (sections 11 and 20) and Iranian Zoroastrian acceptance practices (section 20) show the loop broken in practice, and the nine-judge bench described in sections 5 and 19 is where the general rule is being decided. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2, Zenobia's son Kayaan is three, has not had a navjote and cannot enter the building where his great-grandfather's fire is kept.

4 · Aid to Legitimacy to Leverage to Aid



Community philanthropy generates civic standing that protects the trusts and their criteria.

How it runs.

1. Parsi benefactors built hospitals, schools and housing over two centuries (section 20).
2. The philanthropy is remarkable and real (section 3), and it gives the community civic standing.
3. That standing is available in answer to criticism: the objection to this page is that it criticizes a community fighting for survival (section 3).
4. The trusts keep their protected position and keep their criteria, which condition access on communal standing and marriage choices (sections 9 and 10).
5. Members who benefit from the aid have reason to defend the trusts, and the giving and building continue (section 9).

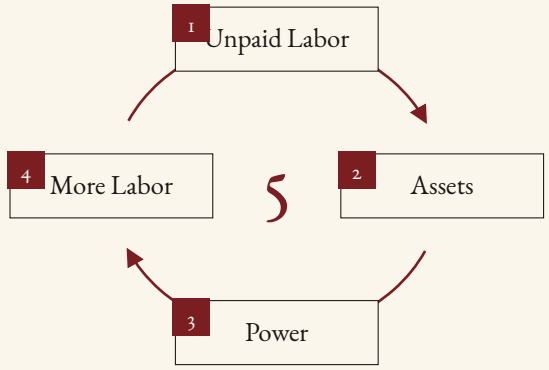
Techniques that feed it. 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 22 · Benevolent Control, 26 · Financial Control, 30 · Plausible Deniability.

Why it closes. The aid is both the source of the community's standing and the thing that standing protects. Each step makes the next easier, and the last returns to the first.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the criteria are examined as well as the aid. Indian courts have been asked to decide who counts as Parsi (section 19), and the trust deeds are public because litigation forced it (section 9). The electorate of more than 25,000 that chooses the trustees is also able to ask about the criteria (section 7). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. The colony in section 2 has a hospital, a school and a fund for school fees, and Freny says so to anyone who will listen, while her grandson cannot enter the fire temple.

5 · Unpaid Labor to Assets to Power to More Labor



Historic benefaction built the assets; small elected boards allocate them.

How it runs.

1. Prosperous Parsi families gave money to build the trusts (section 10).
2. The assets are governed by small elected boards whose legitimacy is contested (section 9).
3. Those boards allocate housing, healthcare, education and welfare by criteria tied to communal standing (section 7).
4. Priestly families supply the rites on a hereditary basis and in limited numbers (sections 7 and 9).

5. Community giving and priestly service continue to flow into institutions that control housing and funerals (sections 7 and 9).

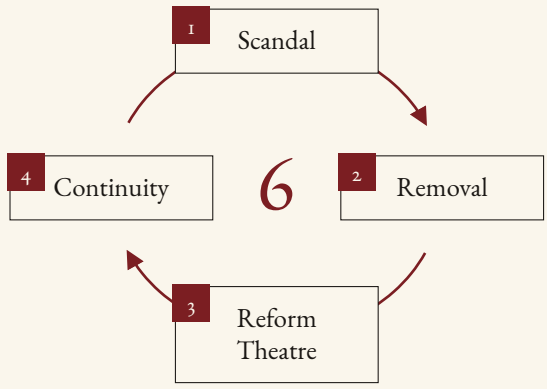
Techniques that feed it. 22 · Benevolent Control, 23 · Infantilization, 26 · Financial Control.

Why it closes. The people and families who give money and service to the institutions do not hold the offices that control the assets. The boards hold both the assets and the power to define who may use them.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the boards' accounts and criteria are public, as the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe's accounts are because charity law requires it (section 9), and where entry to the priesthood is widened (section 10 records that heredity limits the supply of priests). Those choices sit with the trustees and the priestly families. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. The Bombay Parsi Punchayet's trusts control housing and the Towers of Silence (section 9), and the elections for its trustees are fought over who counts as Parsi (section 5).

6 · Scandal to Removal to Reform Theatre to Continuity



The boundary dispute is litigated rather than resolved, and the rule survives each judgment.

How it runs.

1. A dispute over who counts as Parsi is brought to court (section 19).
2. The court decides the individual case. In 2017 the Supreme Court let Goolrokh Gupta attend her parents' funeral rites (section 8).
3. The wider question is sent to a larger bench, and the community's own institutions have not given their answer (sections 5 and 8).
4. Orthodox practice continues after the rulings (section 14).
5. The next case is filed, as the Nagpur petition was in 2026 (section 19).

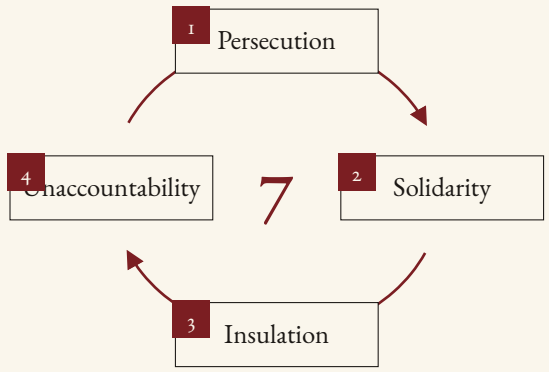
Techniques that feed it. 18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling, 25 · Spiritual Bypassing, 30 · Plausible Deniability.

Why it closes. Each judgment settles the case before the court without settling the rule. The rule survives every ruling, and the dispute is carried to the next case.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. Section 20 names the change that would break it: the community's own institutions settling temple entry for the children of Parsi mothers, rather than a court doing it. The pending nine-judge bench (sections 5 and 19) could also settle the general question. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Section 22 records the tell: women who marry out lose access in many places and men who marry out do not, which the 2026 Nagpur petition challenges.

7 · Persecution to Solidarity to Insulation to Unaccountability



A millennium of genuine persecution is invoked to place the community's survival in front of its daughters.

How it runs.

1. The community was persecuted for over a millennium, and Iranian Zoroastrians remain a discriminated minority (section 3).
2. That history is placed in front of criticism. Raising the double standard is treated as attacking a persecuted minority's survival (stage 4 in section 12).
3. Members close ranks around survival, and a person who questions the boundary is told they are endangering an ancient faith (techniques 6, 11 and 12).
4. The rule is defended as preservation, and the person who raised it is cast as selfish or disrespectful (techniques 12 and 17).
5. The rule stands, and the next criticism meets the same answer.

Techniques that feed it. 11 · Projection, 12 · DARVO, 17 · Smear Campaign, 27 · Manufactured Crisis.

Why it closes. The more history is recalled, the more any criticism can be read as a further attack on a people already attacked. Each criticism strengthens the solidarity that protects the rule from it.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. Section 12 states the point where it breaks: persecution from outside does not make a rule inside it just, and both can be true. The loop also weakens because the community litigates in open court (section 3), so the record the criticism rests on is public. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. The strongest objection in section 3 is that this page criticizes a community of a hundred thousand people fighting for survival. The answer there is that the claims are well-evidenced because the community's own disputes are in open court.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The loops explain why good people stay in arrangements they would never sign up for from scratch. The more you have already put in, the harder it is to walk away. Researchers call this the sunk-cost effect (Arkes & Blumer, 1985), and it works on time, money and relationships alike. Ask yourself: if you were starting today, knowing what you know, would you join?

The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first.

14 Say versus do

BEFORE YOU READ

Direct, checkable comparisons: a public statement on one side, the documented record on the other, and the receipt that links them. This is the most falsifiable section on the page, because each row either matches its source or it doesn't.

What they say, what the record shows

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
We are dying out and must preserve ourselves.	The rule that excludes intermarried women's children is a documented driver of the decline.	ACADEMIC SOURCE
Descent rules are ancient and unchangeable.	They track the sex of the parent who married out, which no cosmology explains.	COURT RECORD
Nobody is shunned; they simply married out.	Housing, temple entry, funerary rites, and a child's initiation are all withdrawn.	COURT RECORD

Our religion is founded on free moral choice.	A child's religious standing is fixed by a decision made before their birth.	ACADEMIC SOURCE

Accountability or theatre?

Last time the chair ran. The last time was a series of court rulings on membership, after which the orthodox practice continued.

Who holds the chair now. Trust boards and named high priests hold it, and they are unusually traceable, which is to the community's credit.

Prediction. The next case will be litigated publicly, the judgment will be partial, and the descent rule will outlast the community that keeps it.

Words used here

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS INSIDE	WHAT IT DOES	SAID PLAINLY
Who is a Parsi (the boundary of the faith)	The question of who is accepted as within the community.	It is the operative question in trust, temple-entry and intermarriage disputes. Trustees and panchayats set the membership criteria for housing and facilities, and priests decide initiation and ritual access.	'Whether you are one of us is decided by others.'
Purity	Purity means ritual cleanliness, which has historically been central to practice.	Its modern use in intermarriage disputes attaches a ritual category to a person's parentage.	'Your parents determine your standing.'

The last time was a series of court rulings on membership, after which the orthodox practice continued.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Test one row yourself. Pick a "they say" line you have actually heard said in person, then read the receipt. If the record matches the statement, this page is wrong about that row, and you should tell us. If it doesn't, what does it mean that you had never seen the receipt?

15 Cost & cover

BEFORE YOU READ

What leaving actually costs here, in family, work, housing, money and legal status, and how each of those costs is officially denied. Where the cost is low, the page says so plainly.

What leaving costs

- Intermarriage can cost temple access, communal housing, funerary rites (Towers of Silence), and children's initiation — exit penalties administered as boundary maintenance.

The ledger of exit

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Ritual and temple access	Yes	Fire temple entry and funerary rites are denied to those deemed outside the community.	The defence, paraphrased: these are religious requirements, not punishments.
Housing and welfare	Yes	Trust housing and benefits are tied to communal standing.	The defence, paraphrased: trust deeds specify beneficiaries.
Children's status	Yes	Navjote is refused to children of intermarried mothers.	The defence, paraphrased: descent rules are ancient.
Family and identity	Yes	In so small a community, exit means losing nearly everyone you know	The defence, paraphrased: nobody is shunned; they simply married out.

How the cost is denied

CHANNEL	LEVEL	NOTE
Explicit policy	Very low	Trust deeds and initiation rules are written and have been litigated in open court — the receipts are unusually complete.
Informal enforcement	Medium	Community gossip and reputation supplement the formal rules.
Leadership distance	Low	The Punchayet and named high priests make identifiable decisions — accountability is unusually traceable.
Doctrinal ambiguity	Medium	Reformists argue the scriptures support conversion and equality; orthodox authorities disagree, publicly.
Cultural outsourcing	Medium	The boundary is framed as descent and heritage rather than as religious rule.
Volunteer enforcement	Medium	Family pressure around marriage is strong and constant.
Sacred secrecy	Low	Non-Zoroastrians are excluded from some rites, but community governance is remarkably public.
Exit cost denial	Low	The costs are documented in court filings — this community's harms are the best-evidenced and least deniable in the codex.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

For a Parsi woman who marries out, the cost can include temple access, communal housing, funeral rites at the Towers of Silence, and her children's initiation. A Parsi man who marries out loses none of these. If you are a brother, a father or a trustee, does that asymmetry sit right with you? Who in your family would it fall on?

16 The ledger

BEFORE YOU READ

The balance sheet. It shows who benefits, who pays, and what leverage flows back to the institution in return for what it gives.

Who benefits

- Trust boards control the assets and the definitions, and the hereditary priesthood benefits too. The boundary itself concentrates power in its gatekeepers even as the community shrinks.

Money out, leverage back

- Communal trusts control housing, healthcare, and welfare, and eligibility runs through communal standing — the clearest documented case in this codex of charity operating as a boundary-enforcement mechanism. COURT RECORD
- Indian courts have repeatedly been asked to adjudicate who counts as Parsi, which means the state has been enlisted into the community's internal boundary dispute. COURT RECORD
- Government-funded fertility programs have supported the community's demographic goals, tying public money to a reproduction agenda that the descent rule itself undermines. GOVERNMENT REPORT

Who pays

- Parsi women who marry out pay, and they are the single most clearly identifiable class of people harmed in this profile.
- Their children pay, denied initiation and temple access.
- Reformist priests pay, sanctioned for performing those initiations.
- Iranian Zoroastrians pay as a persecuted minority under Islamic Republic law. GOVERNMENT REPORT

- The tradition itself pays, because its boundary rules are a contributing cause of its own demographic decline.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Find yourself in this table. Are you among those who benefit, those who pay, or both? Most readers are both. The question is whether the exchange was ever explained to you in these terms, and whether you would agree to it if it had been.

17 Who gets hurt most

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the weight lands hardest, and what it compounds with: poverty, childhood, gender, a lack of civil alternatives. This is the human stakes stated plainly.

Where the weight lands

The costs in section 15 do not fall evenly. They fall hardest on women who marry out and on their children, who had no say in the rule. The table names who carries the most, how, and what makes it worse.

WHO	HOW	WHAT IT COMPOUNDS WITH
Parsi women who marry out	Housing, temple access and funerary rites are withdrawn from them, and their children are excluded.	It compounds with the fact that their brothers who marry out lose nothing.
Their children	Navjote is refused to them, and their religious existence is denied by parentage.	It compounds with exclusion that continues into adulthood, permanently, with no route in.
Reformist priests	They are sanctioned and excluded from major fire temples.	It compounds with the loss of the only vocation their family line permits.
Iranian Zoroastrians	They are a discriminated minority under Islamic Republic law.	It compounds with the absence of any domestic protection.
The tradition itself	Its demographic collapse is accelerated by its own boundary rule.	It compounds with a decline faster than any external pressure has managed.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The table puts Parsi women who marry out first, then their children, excluded from the faith by parentage "into adulthood, permanently, with no route in." Then reformist priests who initiate those children and are sanctioned. The say-do table records that this rule is a documented driver of the community's decline. Which is doing more damage to a shrinking community: criticism of the rule, or the rule itself?

18 The middle tiers

BEFORE YOU READ

The people in the middle: local clergy, teachers, officials and volunteers who apply rules they did not write. The section exists so that an institution is not collapsed into a monolith, and so that people in the middle can see their own position in it.

Most of the institution's work is done below the trustees and the high priests, by people who see the decisions without making them. Reformist priests, trust allocation officers, diaspora association officers and priests who perform funerary rites each carry part of the load, and each stands at a point where the next decision could be declined. The table sets out what each tier does, what it sees, what it is asked to do and where it could refuse.

ROLE	DOES	SEES	IS ASKED TO	COULD REFUSE
Reformist priests	They perform navjote for children of intermarried mothers.	They see that they are sanctioned for it.	They are asked to stop.	They could refuse to stop.
Trust employees and allocation officers	They administer housing and welfare.	They see which applications are refused and why.	They are asked to apply the criteria.	They could refuse to apply a marriage test to a housing decision.
Community association officers in the diaspora	They run temples and programmes abroad.	They see which families the exclusions affect in their own congregations.	They are asked to defer to orthodox authority.	They could refuse to import an exclusion the local community rejects.
Priests performing funerary rites	They conduct the funeral rites.	They see which families are refused.	They are asked to follow the criteria.	They could refuse to turn a daughter away at her mother's funeral.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a local leader, a teacher or a volunteer, this section is about you. It is not an accusation: most of the people who carry out a rule did not write it. But the middle tier is also where a rule is most often quietly softened, or quietly enforced. Which do you do, and what would happen to you if you chose differently?

19 Documented cases

BEFORE YOU READ

Named, dated, sourced incidents: court records, government inquiries, regulators' findings and on-the-record reporting. Read the outcome lines in particular. They show what actually changed, if anything.

Parsi Punchayet intermarriage litigation

WHEN: 1908–present

WHAT: Indian courts have repeatedly been asked to determine who counts as Parsi, including whether children of Parsi women who married outside the community may be initiated and whether such women retain access to communal housing and funerary rites.

RECORD: Indian court records across a century

OUTCOME: Mixed rulings; the patrilineal asymmetry persists in orthodox practice. The community's harms are the best-evidenced in this codex because it litigates them publicly. In 2026 the question reached a nine-judge bench of India's Supreme Court, where a judge asked why a Parsi man who marries out keeps his religious rights and a woman does not; judgment was reserved on 14 May 2026 and, at the last check on 27 October 2026, no verdict had been reported [16].

TACTICS: 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 15 · Triangulation, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Sources for this section: [4] [5] [6] [16]

Married out, and shut out (India, 2010–present)

WHEN: 2010–present

WHAT: Goolrokh Gupta, a Parsi woman who married a Hindu man under the Special Marriage Act (the Indian civil marriage law that lets people of different religions marry without conversion), was barred by the Parsi trust in Valsad from Parsi institutions, and feared she would be kept from her parents' funeral rites; the Gujarat High Court held that she had ceased to be Parsi [4] [6].

RECORD: *Goolrokh Gupta v. Burjor Pardiwala* (Supreme Court of India) [4]

OUTCOME: In 2017 the Supreme Court let her attend her parents' rites; the wider question went to a larger bench [4].

TACTICS: 14 · Isolation, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

A prayer at the agiary (India, 2026)

WHEN: 2026

WHAT: A Parsi woman who married a Hindu man challenged a Nagpur panchayat rule that excludes women who marry out, and their children, while imposing nothing comparable on men [5].

RECORD: LiveLaw, 25 May 2026 [5]

OUTCOME: A bench led by the Chief Justice explored interim permission for her to pray at Nagpur's only agiary and asked the panchayat to respond [5].

TACTICS: 14 · Isolation

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Who counts as Parsi (India, 1908)

WHEN: 1908

WHAT: The Bombay High Court ruled on who counts as a Parsi for the community's institutions [6].

RECORD: *Petit v. Jijibhai* (1908) [6]

OUTCOME: The ruling set the boundary still argued over today [4 6].

TACTICS: 14 · Isolation, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

These are not hypotheticals. Four documented cases on this page rest on a named record. The most common reaction to documented cases is "that was them, not us." Before settling on that, read the outcome lines. Did anything change in the structure that allowed each case to happen, or did one person leave while the structure stayed?

20 Precedent

BEFORE YOU READ

What has already been broken once, somewhere, and what would count as real change here. It is a benchmark, not a prediction.

It has been broken before

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	WHAT IT COST
Reformist initiations of intermarried women's children	Priests who accepted sanction for it	Ongoing	They were excluded from major temples.
A century of open litigation over communal boundaries	Community members who went to court	1908–present	It cost public conflict, and it is why this community's harms are the best-evidenced here.
Iranian Zoroastrian acceptance practices	The Iranian community	Ongoing	It cost a divergence from Parsi orthodoxy.
Extraordinary community philanthropy — hospitals, schools, housing	Parsi benefactors	Two centuries	It cost nothing, and it is genuinely remarkable.

What would change this page

Temple entry settled for the children of Parsi mothers by the community's own institutions — not by a court — would revise the boundary findings here.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Some rows here record a change that has already happened somewhere; others name what would count as change here. When you are told something "can't change", it is fair to ask: can't, or won't? And who decided?

21 Voices from inside

BEFORE YOU READ

People from inside Zoroastrianism who raised the hard question publicly, often at real cost. They answer the objection that criticism only ever comes from outsiders.

- **Goolrokh Gupta.** She took her right to mourn her parents to the Supreme Court [4].
- **The Nagpur petitioner** asked to pray in her own community's temple [5].

- **The Bombay Parsi Punchayet's electorate** is made up of more than 25,000 voters who choose their trustees [7].
- **Reformist priests** who initiate the children of intermarried women have accepted sanction and exclusion from major fire temples for doing so (sections 11 and 20).

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Were these people traitors, or the most loyal members their tradition had? Most were treated as the first at the time, and some are honored as the second now. If someone in your community raised one of these questions tomorrow, how would they be treated, and by you?

She took her right to mourn her parents to the Supreme Court.

22 Regional variants

BEFORE YOU READ

The same tradition under different governments. What a member can say, leave, marry or inherit depends heavily on the state, and these cards show how differently it plays out.

India

APEX: The apex is the elected trustees of the Bombay Parsi Punchayet and local panchayats [7].

LAW: Trust law and the courts govern the community [4][6].

DOCUMENTED: The *Gupta* and Nagpur cases document the position [4][5].

EXIT: Leaving is free; marrying out can cost a woman access to temples and funeral rites [4].

REGULATOR: The Supreme Court and India's charity-trust courts act as regulators [4][5].

TELL: Women who marry out lose access in many places, although counsel told the Supreme Court that interim arrangements are already available to such women in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Pune; men who marry out do not — which is exactly what the 2026 petition challenges [5].

Iran

APEX: The apex is the community associations and the reserved parliamentary seat [9].

LAW: The law gives Zoroastrians recognized-minority status [9].

DOCUMENTED: The constitution recognizes Zoroastrians as a minority and reserves one parliamentary seat [9]; no case of an Iranian Zoroastrian is recorded on this page.

EXIT: Not established from any public source.

REGULATOR: The state is the regulator.

TELL: The constitution recognizes Zoroastrians and reserves one parliamentary seat [9], while Article 1059 of the Civil Code means a Zoroastrian man cannot legally marry a Muslim woman [15].

United Kingdom

APEX: The apex is the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe [10].

LAW: Charity law governs it [10].

DOCUMENTED Public accounts document it [10].

EXIT: Leaving is legally free.

REGULATOR: The Charity Commission is the regulator [10].

TELL: The diaspora's institutions publish their books.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page covers India, Iran and the United Kingdom. Your country changes what this tradition can do to you, and what you can do about it. If you live somewhere not listed, ask which of these cards your country most resembles. If you are a voter, note that each of these arrangements was chosen by a government.

23 The questions

BEFORE YOU READ

The six questions the documented record could not resolve. Each is set out below: why it is being asked, and a concrete example already on this page that it points back to.

QUESTION 1 OF 6

A Parsi man's children by an outsider are accepted; a Parsi woman's are not. Ask the high priest who says this is ancient to explain why the descent rule tracks the sex of the parent.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

A rule about ancestry that depends on which parent married out cannot be about ancestry alone. The question asks the high priests to explain why it tracks the parent's sex.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The say-do table sets "Descent rules are ancient and unchangeable" beside the record: they "track the sex of the parent who married out." One of the cases records a Nagpur panchayat rule that excludes women who marry out, and their children, "while imposing nothing comparable on men."

QUESTION 2 OF 6

If the community is dying, ask whether the rule that excludes its own grandchildren is preserving it or killing it. Then ask who keeps the rule anyway, and what they retain.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

If a shrinking community excludes its own grandchildren, the rule may be accelerating its decline. The question asks who keeps the rule anyway, and what they gain.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The say-do table sets "We are dying out and must preserve ourselves" beside the record: "The rule that excludes intermarried women's children is a documented driver of the decline." The law table records the state-funded *Jiyo Parsi* fertility scheme.

QUESTION 3 OF 6

Ask a trust board for the housing allocation criteria in writing. Note whether marriage appears.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Housing allocation is a practical test of whether marriage choices carry a penalty. The question asks for the criteria in writing.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The cases section records Parsi women who married out being barred from Parsi institutions and communal housing, with mixed court rulings.

QUESTION 4 OF 6

Reformist priests who initiate intermarried women's children have been sanctioned. Name what heresy they committed, using your own scriptures.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

If a priest is sanctioned for initiating a child, the charge should be nameable in the tradition's own scriptures. The question asks what the heresy is.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The day inside mentions a priest in the suburbs who performs navjotes for children of intermarried women "and who has been told not to."

QUESTION 5 OF 6

Your religion's central claim is free moral choice. Explain a child excluded from the faith for a decision made before their birth.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

The tradition's central idea is free moral choice. The question asks how a child can be excluded for a choice made before they were born.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The who-gets-hurt table lists the children of women who married out: navjote "is refused to them, and their religious existence is denied by parentage."

QUESTION 6 OF 6

You were taught that criticism endangers a fragile community. Ask honestly which is doing more damage: the criticism, or the rule.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

A community that feels fragile may treat criticism as a threat. The question asks honestly whether the criticism or the rule is doing more harm.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The forefront section notes that the claims on this page are unusually well-evidenced because the community litigates its disputes in open court, over trust deeds, housing criteria and initiation rulings.

In closing

Zarathustra's teaching is that a person chooses. That is not a peripheral doctrine in your tradition; it is the axis of the whole cosmology — the free mind selecting truth over falsehood. A membership rule based on parentage rather than choice contradicts the founding claim more directly than any critic could.

There are reformists inside your community doing exactly this work: initiating the children, arguing the scriptures, losing standing for it. They are not abandoning the tradition. On the tradition's own terms, they may be the only ones fully practicing it.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Choose one question and ask it this month, out loud, to a real person who could answer it. Then write down what happened. Were you answered, redirected, or told that asking was the problem? Whichever it was, the response is information.

24 Leaving safely here

BEFORE YOU READ

Practical, non-theological guidance for someone who needs to step back or step away safely. It is a safety document, not an argument.

Practical guidance, not legal advice.

1. **Marrying out** is legal in India and the United Kingdom. In Iran, Article 1059 of the Civil Code does not allow a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim man, so a Zoroastrian man cannot legally marry a

Muslim woman [15]. In India it can affect a woman's access to fire temples and funeral rites [4].

2. **Ask before you assume:** some trusts and temples have changed practice, and counsel told the Supreme Court in May 2026 that interim arrangements exist in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Pune; the Supreme Court is still deciding [4] [5].
3. **Find support** through the organizations listed in section 25 [11] [12] [13].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Even if this section is not for you, it may be for someone you know. Most people who leave a high-demand community say that the first person who listened without trying to argue them back mattered more than anything else. Could that person be you?

25 Where to get help

BEFORE YOU READ

Organizations that can help, each checked directly against its own site, with the date of the check. Nothing here is endorsed beyond that check.

Checked 2026-10-03. No help line for India or Iran has been checked.

ORGANIZATION	FOR	WHERE	CONTACT
Faith to Faithless	People leaving religion	UK	**0800 448 0748** (freephone; Monday 10:00–13:00, Wednesday 10:00–13:00, Thursday 16:00–19:00 UK time) [11]
Recovering from Religion	People questioning or leaving faith	US, Canada and online	**(844) 368-2848** (aims to offer a 24-hour service) [12]
Karma Nirvana	Honour-based abuse and forced marriage (fits this tradition only where a marriage is coerced)	UK	**0800 5999 247** (free; Mon–Fri 9am–5pm) [13]
Humanists at Risk	People persecuted for belief or apostasy	Global	Casework [14]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Save one contact now, before anyone needs it: **Faith to Faithless** (people leaving religion; UK). People in crisis rarely have the energy to research options. Having a name ready is one of the most useful things you can do for someone else.



26

Sources

BEFORE YOU READ

Every numbered citation on this page, with a named, checkable source. Spot-check a few before trusting the rest; that is the honest way to read any page in this book, including this one.

1. Census of India 2011 — 57,264 Parsis (Profile of Parsis, 2011). https://zoroastrians.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Demographics-2011-Profile-of-Parsis-as-per-Census-2011.docx
2. FEZANA, *The Zarathushti World — a Demographic Picture* (R. Rivetna, 2012) — world count ~111,000–122,000; Iran's census 25,271 (demographers' estimate ~15,000). https://fezana.org/files/Demographics/Zworld6Sep12.pdf
3. Press Information Bureau, Government of India — the *Jiyo Parsi* scheme (from 2013–14), more than 490 births supported (the figure in that release; a later count is in source 17). https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2222787&reg=3&lang=1
4. Supreme Court Observer, *Goolrokh Gupta v. Burjor Pardiwala* ("Parsi Excommunication") — Gujarat High Court held a Parsi woman ceases to be Parsi on marrying out; the Supreme Court permitted her to attend her parents' rites (2017); the question was folded into the nine-judge Sabarimala reference. https://www.scobserver.in/cases/goolrokh-gupta-burjor-pardiwala-parsi-excommunication-background/
5. LiveLaw, "Supreme Court Asks Nagpur Parsi Panchayat If Woman Who Married Outside Community Can Be Permitted To Offer Prayers At Agiary" (2026). https://www.livelaw.in/top-stories/supreme-court-asks-nagpur-parsi-panchayat-if-woman-who-married-outside-community-can-be-permitted-to-offer-prayers-at-aghyari-535618
6. Bombay High Court, *Petit v. Jijibhai* (1908) — the foundational ruling on who counts as Parsi — Oxford Human Rights Hub. https://ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/goolrokh-gupta-v-burjor-padriwala-a-chance-to-redeem-update-and-rationalize-the-law/

7. Bombay Parsi Punchayet — board of trustees elected by the city's Parsi residents (25,000+ electorate); Election Commission scheme. https://bombayparsipunchayet.org/election-commission/

8. *Encyclopaedia Iranica* / Britannica, "Zoroastrianism" — Zarathustra's contested dating; Achaemenid (550–330 BCE) and Sasanian (224–651) empires; the migration to Gujarat; the abolition of the jizya on Iranian Zoroastrians (1882). https://www.britannica.com/topic/Zoroastrianism

Further sources

9. Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1979, rev. 1989), Articles 13 and 64 — Constitute Project. https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Iran_1989

10. Charity Commission for England and Wales, Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe (Incorporated) (charity 277185), financial history 2021–2025 (income: 2021 £730,434; 2022 £474,278; 2023 £400,535; 2024 £1,350,097; 2025 £478,895, as shown on the register's summary and the OpenCharities mirror of it, read 2026-10-03; the register page itself returned an access error). https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/en/charity-search/-/charity-details/277185/financial-history

11. Faith to Faithless (Humanists UK) — helpline 0800 448 0748 (freephone; Monday 10:00–13:00, Wednesday 10:00–13:00, Thursday 16:00–19:00 UK time). https://humanists.uk/faith-to-faithless/helpline/

12. Recovering from Religion — (844) 368-2848. https://www.recoveringfromreligion.org/

13. Karma Nirvana — honour-based abuse and forced marriage, 0800 5999 247. https://karmanirvana.org.uk/get-help/helpline/

14. Humanists International — Humanists at Risk. https://humanists.international/what-we-do/humanists-at-risk/

15. International-Divorce.com, "Iran Family Law" — Civil Code Article 1059: "Marriage of a female Moslem with a non-Moslem is not allowed." https://international-divorce.com/Iran-Family-Law/

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17. IANS, "534 births since 2014-15 reflect success of Jiyo Parsi scheme: Rijiju" (10 Aug 2026) — written reply to the Rajya Sabha; Rs 37.43 crore spent. https://ianslive.in/534-births-since-2014-15-reflect-success-of-jiyo-parsi-scheme-kiren-rijiju--20260810155103

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Don't take this page's word for anything either. People tend to believe a claim more the more often they have heard it, whether or not it is true; this is the "illusory truth effect" (Hasher, Goldstein & Toppino, 1977). Spot-check three citations at random. If any fails, tell us, and it will be corrected and logged.

27 What changed on this page

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated log of what changed on this page: corrections, additions and new sources. Changes are logged in public rather than made quietly.

- **2026-10-03:** Corrected the chart of the Zoroastrian Trust Funds of Europe's income (2024 was £1,350,097, not £1,140 thousand, and 2021 was £730,434). Marrying out is no longer described as legal everywhere: in Iran a Zoroastrian man cannot legally marry a Muslim woman. Replaced the world population range with the sourced 2012 estimate, softened the claim that the descent rule is the decisive cause of decline, and dated the nine-judge bench's reserved judgment (no verdict reported as of 3 October). Four unsourced "official denial" quotations are now presented as paraphrase. Corrected the definition in the glossary (a panthaki is a priest heading a priestly district, so the entry now defines who counts as Parsi), removed two shared pipeline cards that did not fit this page, and noted that interim prayer arrangements for women who married out have been reported in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Pune. Nine technique grades were changed to custom and one to taught, because their entries describe conversation and custom rather than a written rule, and the tally was recounted. Updated the Jiyo Parsi count (534 births), the help-line hours, and added three sources.

- **2026-09-27:** Added Branches, Law & state, Money in numbers (ZTFE accounts 2021–2025), two more documented cases, Voices from inside, three regional cards, Leaving safely and Where to get help.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page keeps a public log of its own changes, mistakes included. Does the institution you belong to, give to, or were raised in keep one like it? If not, how would you know what it got wrong, and when?

Colophon

Set in EB Garamond (SIL Open Font License), regular, italic and bold, with true small capitals and old-style figures in text and lining tabular figures in tables. Laid out with Paged.js in Chromium from the same Markdown that feeds the website. US Letter, single-sided, tagged for accessibility and checked against PDF/UA-1 with veraPDF. Built 2026-10-27. Text checked 2026-10-03.

Palette: ink, oxblood, gold, cream, rule. Seven type sizes. Rules of 0.4 pt and 2 pt only.