



## BULSARA, SOHRAB JAMSHEDJI

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**BULSARA, SOHRAB JAMSHEDJI** (1877-1945), Parsi scholar of Avestan, Pahlavi, Pazand, and Persian and Iranian history, born to a middle class family in Bulsar, Gujarat. He finished high school in 1896 and received his B.A. from Elphinstone College in 1900. In college, he turned his attention to the study of pre-Islamic Iran. He concentrated on Avestan, Pahlavi, Pazand, and Old Persian with increasing interest. In 1902 he received his Master's degree and in the same year established the Gatha Society for the propagation of the teachings of the prophet Zoroaster, with the active support of his college companions. In 1904, at the age of twenty-six, he published his first work, *God in the Gathas*. He was made a fellow in Old Iranian languages at Elphinstone College and in 1904 was appointed Honorary Lecturer at the Mulla Feroze Madressa, where he discharged his duties for the next twenty years. The Parsi Panchayat of Bombay appointed him to translate the Pahlavi *Nīrangistān* (published in 1915), and he served as examiner in Avestan and Pahlavi for Bombay University.

In 1923 he was invited to be the first principal of the M. F. Cama Athornan Institute at Jogeshwari. Though a layman, Mr. Bulsara was conversant with the Zoroastrian rituals and the requirements of the priestly order. However, his program of instruction for future priests aroused controversy, and he resigned in 1930. He settled in a Bombay suburb and devoted himself to study, which resulted in his edition of *Mādayān ī hazār dādestān* (1937). Because of his quiet, introspective nature some of his friends called him "the hermit of Jogeshwari." During the last ten years of his life, until his death on 20 May



1945, he delivered lectures on Zoroastrianism and Iranian history. He also edited a religious magazine, *Humata*, and, from 1931 to 1945, the *Iran League Quarterly*.

His works, published in Bombay, include: *God in the Gathas*, 1904; repub. by The Gatha Society, 1947. *Laws of the Ancient Persians as Found in "Matikan e Hazar Datastan": English Translation with Glossary and Index*, 1937. "The Teachings of the Later Avesta: How Far They Interpret Zarathustra's Holy Message," *Journal of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute* 32, 1938. *Religion of Zarathushtra as Taught by Himself and His Apostles*, 1938. "The Religion of Zarathushtra among Non-Iranian Nations," *Journal of the K. R. Cama Oriental Institute* 35, 1942, pp. 71-129. *Old Iranian Calendar: A Review of its History from the Most Ancient Times to the Present Day and a Suggestion for its Reform in the Future*, 1946. In Gujarati: *Ancient Iranian History: Achaemenian, Parthian and Sasanian*, 1914, 2nd ed., 1936. *Parsi Marriage Ceremonies*, 1932. *Stories from the Shahnama I*, 1937; II, 1939. *The Present Condition of the Parsis: Their Strong and Weak Points, and the Course They Should Take in Future for Their own Advancement*, 1937. *God in the Gathas. That is, the Deep Knowledge about God Embodied in the Holy Gathas*, 1939. *Details in the Zoroastrian Literature about Future Prophets and the False Claims of Some of the Founders of the Religion*, 1944. *Small Sacred Zoroastrian Prayers*, 3rd ed., 1954.

(Kaikhusroo M. Jamaspasa)