



## COYAJEE, JEHANGIR COOVERJI

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**COYAJEE, SIR JEHANGIR COOVERJI** (b. Bombay, 11 September 1875, d. Bombay, 14 July 1943), Parsi economist and student of ancient Iranian mythology. The son of Rajkot Cooverji Coyajee, he studied at Elphinstone College, Bombay, and Caius College, Cambridge. After his return to India in 1930 he taught economics at Presidency College in Calcutta, which he served as principal in 1930-31. His erudition and skill as a teacher helped to make Calcutta a leading Indian center for economic study and research. He was knighted in 1928. In 1930 he was appointed to the Indian council of state and attended the sessions of the League of Nations in Geneva as a delegate in 1930 and 1932. His other government service included appointments to the Indian currency and finance royal commission in 1925 and to the Indian coal-mining committee in 1936. From 1932 to 1935 he was professor of economics at Andhra University in Waltair on the east coast, becoming principal and in 1933 vice-chancellor. In addition to a number of articles and pamphlets, Coyajee wrote several books on economics, distinguished by their scientific approach and objectivity: *The Indian Fiscal Problem* (Bombay, 1924), *India and the League of Nations* (Madras, 1932), *The Ratio Controversy in India* (Calcutta, 1930), and *The Indian Currency System, 1835-1926* (Madras, 1930; 2nd ed., *Development of Currency System in India*, New Delhi, 1983, 1984). He was also a correspondent of the Royal Economic Society. After his retirement he returned to his native Bombay.

In addition to his work as an economist, Coyajee took a keen interest in Parsi affairs. Among his published works in this field were *The Spirit of the Gathas*



(Bombay, 1903), *The Future of Zoroastrianism* (Bombay, 1936), and several articles on the social, political, and economic development of the Parsi community. He was also interested in ancient Iranian studies, especially possible influences of Iranian mythology on the mythology of other nations. His *Cults and Legends of Ancient Iran and China* (Bombay, 1936; reviewed in *JAOS* 57,1937, p. 198; tr. J. Dūstḳvāh as *Ā'inhā wa afsānhā-ye Īrān wa Čīn-e bāstān*, Tehran, 1976; 2nd ed., Tehran, 1362 Š./1983) is a collection of ten articles on ancient Iranian mythology, dealing mainly with parallels between myths of the two cultures and with Parthian materials in the *Šāh-nāma*. *Studies in the Shāhnāmeḥ* (Government Fellowship Lectures, Bombay, 1940; reviewed in *Review of English Studies* 16, 1940, pp. 332; cf. Rypka, *Hist. Iran. Lit.*, pp. 54-55; tr. M. Ġarawī as *Pažūheš dar Šāh-nāma*, Tehran, 2536 = 1356 Š./1977; tr., J. Dūstḳvāh as *Pažūhešhā-ī dar Šāh-nāma*, Isfahan, 1371 Š./1992), based on lectures given at the [K. R. Cama Oriental Institute](#) in 1938, was focused on the relationship between legends of the *Šāh-nāma* and Babylonian, Greek, and western European mythology, including the legends of the Holy Grail. Coyajee's other works include *The House of Sasan. The Last Phase* (Bombay, 1942) and "A Mithraic Psalm (Psalm XIX)," in *Jackson Memorial Volume* (Bombay, 1954, pp. 13-24). In general, his arguments were considered interesting, but reviewers complained that he had not paid sufficient attention to the ways in which Iranian motifs might have passed into the literature of other countries.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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*Indian Who's Who, 1937-38*, Bombay, 1938, p. 182.

*Who's Who, 1943*, London, p. 684.

(Kaikhusroo M. JamaspAsa)