

Avestan Texts, Solar Calendar and Eternal Fire: A Religious “Reformation” in Achaemenid Iran?

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The extant Avestan texts are almost exclusively the texts used in the rituals still performed today by the Zoroastrian communities in India and Iran. For a long time, these rituals have been considered as late productions based on the fragments extant of the Great Avesta after the Islamization of Iran. However, in the last years it has been shown that these rituals got their actual shape most likely in the Achaemenid times. In this presentation, I argue that the fixation of these rituals was part of a deeper reformation that took place in Achaemenid Iran including other aspects like the adoption of a solar liturgical calendar and the transformation of the old ritual fire into an eternal fire. The last transformation supposed, beside important changes in the ritual practice, the creation of the first fire temples.