

Frye, Richard N., The Heritage of Persia (The World Publishing Co., Cleveland & New York) 1963

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p. 18 The religion of the ancient Indo-Europeans has received much attention of late and controversy about it is rife among scholars. The theory of Max Müller and his school, which proposed that celestial phenomena lay behind the myths and religion of the Indo-Europeans, is no longer accepted although some of his many ideas have been, with very little change.

p. 19 Meillet expressed it well when he said that more than any other history, the history of religions had need of texts written in the language of the people under study, which in effect precluded a study of the religion of the Indo-Europeans.

Footnote 6 A. Meillet, 'La religion indo-europeenne,' p. 323 in Linguistique historique et linguistique generale (Paris, 1921)

p. 26 It is highly probable that Zarathushtra is not a figment of the imagination and that he did exist. Arguments that he was created to match prophets in other religions, or that the Avesta was a late forgery, are really unacceptable and we only need to follow history to refute them. . .

To determine the date of Zoroaster we have no historical data to help us, and we can only say that most probably he lived before the Achaemenid empire. To further determine the time we should look at the evidence of the Gathas, Greek sources, and late Zoroastrina tradition subdivided into the tradition of the Pahlavi books and the tradition as found in Islamic sources. These we should try to bring into harmony, or at least we should come to a probable estimate of his dates from all of them,

p. 27 The Gathas, 'verses or poems', were undoubtedly preserved by memory for centuries before being written down. The seventeen verses or five groups of verses, known collectively as Gatha, belong together by virtue of similarity in metre and archaic language. Certain features of the language of the Gathas and of the Younger Avesta as well are more archaic than corresponding features in Vedic Sanskrit, but this, of course, does not mean that the gathas are therefore older in time than the Rig Veda, since as a parallel in Altaic languages modern Mongolian in many features is 'more archaic' than the oldest Turkish, and Arabic is in the same relation to Hebrew. . .

p. 34 p. 33 Much has been written about the place of origin of local epic traditions or of various motifs in an all-Iranian epic tradition. This has led to a general conclusion about the Iranian epic, that it is really composed of two epic traditions, but there is some difference about the classification or nomenclature of these two traditions.

p. 35 The sources for the Iranian epic are the Avesta, the Pahlavi books and New Persian or Arabic works. . . Here we are not concerned with the 'historical' versus the 'religious' tradition and disengaging elements of both, because only what was considered as ancient history by the Persians is germane to our task of re-constructing the history.

p. 151 The history of the development of the text of the Avesta cannot be traced with certainty but we may presume that in the Seleucid and early Parthian period no fixed canon of the text existed, rather that various ~~Yashts~~ Yashts were being brought together by various communities in the syncretistic spirit of the age.