

INTRODUCTION TO ZOROASTRIANISM

**HISTORY OF THE IRANIANS**

ca. 2100	Oxus civilization	
ca. 2100-1750	The Bactria-Margiana Archeological Complex (BMAC)	Population of Margiana and Bactria; massive fortifications with outer and inner walls.
ca. 2000	Splitting up of Indian and Iranian tribes??	
1900	End of Indus civilization	Arrival of the Aryan Indic tribes in the Indus valley??
ca. 1500-	Nomadic Iranians in southern central Asia-northern Afghanistan	Elevation of Ahura Mazdâ to supreme deity and composition of earliest Indian and Iranian, Old Avestan, texts 1. The Yasna Haptanghâiti (the sacrifice in 7 chapters) 2. The 5 Gâthâs ascribed to Zarathustra
9th cent. 800 -	The Persians (Parauwa) and Medes (Amâdai, Mâdai) are attested for the first time in (north)western Iran	The Gathic religion moves southward into Sistan(?), where it influences the Iranian heroic literature, which becomes encapsulated in a Zoroastrian framework. Composition of oldest Young Avestan texts in the area of Sistan.
700	The Medes under Deioces form first Iranian empire, center in NW Iran (capital at Ecbatana). His son Fraortes/Fravarti	Religion and literature starts spreading west. Continuing composition/compilation of Young Avestan texts.
614 612	Capture of Assur by Cyaxares Capture of Niniveh by Cyaxares	
550	The Persian Cyrus overthrows the Medes under Astyages, son of Cyaxares. He establishes the Achaemenid empire with center in southern and southwestern Iran, Persis.	Cyrus pursues policy of religious tolerance. Religion and literature starts spreading south into Fârs. Continuing composition and compilation of Young Avestan texts.
547	He defeats the Lydian king Croesus.	
539 530	Capture of Babylon. Falls in a battle against the Massagetae (Her.)	
530-522	Cambyses; conquers Egypt.	
522-486	Darius, whose family possibly originated outside Persis, usurps the power.	Restoration of the Gathic, monotheistic, teachings? Invention of the cuneiform script and composition of the Old Persian inscriptions.
490	Battle at Marathon	
486-465	Rule of Xerxes	Strictly imposes the worship of Ahuramazdâ on the conquered lands
479	Defeat at Salamis and Platea	
ca. 425	Herodotus's <i>Histories</i>	
404-358	Artaxerxes II: Rebellion of Cyrus the Younger. Xenophon's <i>Anabasis</i>	Restoration of the "Sistanian" pantheon and renewed interest in the Young Avestan texts?? Composition and compilation of the last Young Avestan texts??
331-330	Alexander topples the Achaemenid empire, burns Persepolis	The Avesta is allegedly burnt!
305	Alexander's general Seleucus becomes king of Iran (the Seleucid dynasty)	
247?	Arsaces (Arshak) founds the Arsacid (Parthian) empire.	
54-78 CE	Vologeses (Walakhsh) I	First effort to assemble the scattered religious texts led by the kings brother Tiridates a magus and high priest, invested by Nero as king of Armenia ?
224	Ardashahr (Ardashîr) founds the Sasanian empire.	Second effort to assemble the scattered religious texts supervised by the high priest Tôsar/Tansar.

HISTORY OF THE IRANIANS

242	Shâpûr succeeds Ardashîr.	Mani takes his religion to the king. Kerdîr initiates the restoration of Mazdaism.
273	Wahrân I is succeeded by Wahrân II	Mani is executed at the instigation of the Mazdayasnian clergy, among them Kerdîr.
293	Narseh accepts the crown from the dignitaries of the realm, who express the wish he may rule “ <b>to the time of the Perfectioning.</b> ”	The religion is still in confusion.
309	Shâpûr II	The high priest Ædurbâd î Mahraspandân undergoes the ordeal to prove the soundness of the Mazdayasnian religion. The Avesta is (allegedly) expanded by the <b>inclusion of Western and Eastern scientific literature</b> and codified.
350-359	Attacks by Chionites	
531-579	Khosrow Kawâdân	Invention of the Avestan alphabet and the Avesta committed to writing?
636	Battle of Qâdisiya, Muslim conquest of Iran.	Mazdayasnians go underground, emigrate to India.
9th cent.	Caliph al-Muʿmin	Final redaction of the great Pahlavi books.
ca. 1020		The earliest known Avestan manuscript, that of Mâhwindâd.
1258/78, 1323		Date of the earliest extant manuscripts.

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**COSMIC TIME**

I. THE INITIAL CREATION: 3000 YEARS

*Videvdad*: creation in world of thought  
*Bundahishn*: creation in world of thought

DURATION OF THE PACT: 3 x 3000 YEARS:

II. THE CREATION OF THE WORLD OF THE LIVING

*Videvdad*: in world of living beings without the Adversary  
*Bundahishn*: creation of the world of living beings in world of thought, unthinking, unmoving, intangible; with Opposition but according to the will of Ohrmazd

III. MYTHICAL AND LEGENDARY ERAS

<i>Videvdad</i> : from the coming of the Adversary to the coming of the Religion <i>Bundahishn</i> : with opposition, according to the will of both	1000 years: Entry of the Adversary to end of Jam (Yima)
	1000 years: Reign of Dahâg
	1000 years: Reigns of Frêdôn and the Kayanids until the appearance of Zardusht.

IV. MILLENNIA OF ZARATHUSTRA AND THE REVITALIZERS

<i>Videvdad</i> : from the coming of the Religion to the Final Body <i>Bundahishn</i> : during which Ahrimen would be undone	1000 years: From the appearance of Zardusht to the coming of Pishôtan.
	millennium of Ushêdar
	millennium of Ushêdarmâh

**MYTHICAL TIME**

FIRST AND SECOND MILLENNIUM OF THE MIXTURE: THE MYTHICAL PERIOD

3001	The Assault	
3030	Death of Gayômard, First Man. Birth of first two humans, Mashî and Mashyânî.	
3030-3070	40 years M and M grew up	
3030-3080	50 years M and M did not have intercourse	
3120-3213.5	93.5 years M and M had intercourse, until Hôshang came of age	
3213.5-3253.5	40 years rule of Hôshang	For 70 years Hôshang and Tahmûraf both killed demons.
3253.5-3283.5	30 years rule of Tahmûraf	
3283.5-3900	616.5 years rule of Jam (= Yima), until the khwarrah left him	
3900-4000	100 years flight of Jam	ending with the demons sawing Jam in two.
40001-5000	1000 years: rule of Dahâg (Azhi Dahâka)	Ending with Frêdôn seizing and chaining him.

TIME

THIRD MILLENNIUM OF THE MIXTURE: THE LEGENDARY PERIOD

5001-5501	500 years: rule of Frêdôn	Frêdôn divided his realm between Salm and Tûs.
5501-5520	12 years: rule of Êrij + 8 years ?	They were killed by Êrij, who destroyed their descendants and families.
5520-5640	120 years: rule of Manushchihir 12 years: Frâsiyâw 5 years: Uzaw 15 years: Kay Kawâd	Manushchihir took revenge for Êrij. Then Afrâsiyâb came and overcame Manushchihir and the Iranians at Padishkhwârgar. After Afrâsiyâb killed Manushchihir Iran was thrown into confusion and misfortune, keeping rain away from Iran. Uzaw son of Tahmâsp overcame Afrâsiyâb and made rain. Afrâsiyâb caused much misfortune until Kawâd became king.
5640-5790	150 years: rule of Kay Us (Kay Kâwûs) 75 years: before he went to the sky 75 years: after that	The demons became oppressive and came to kill Ôshnar. Kay Us's mind was deranged, and he went to battle the sky, but fell down, and the khwarrah left him. A Tâzig named Zêngâw became ruler over Iran. Frâsiyâb came back, killed Zêngâw, and again became ruler. Many people were resettled from Iran to Turkestan. Rôstahm came from Sagestân, released Kay Us, etc. Afrâsiyâb came back, and Kay Siyâwakhsh battled Frâsiyâb. Because of Sûdâbî, wife of Kay Us, he did not return to Iran, but went to Turkestan, where he married a daughter of Frâsiyâb. Their son was Kay Husrôy. They also killed Siyâwakhsh.
5790-5850	60 years: Kay Husrôy	Kay Husrôy killed Frâsiyâb, went to the Kangdiz (castle of Frâsiyâb), and passed on the rule to Kay Luhrâsp.
5850-5970	120 years: Kay Luhrâsp	
5970-6000	30 years: Kay Wishtâsp to the coming of the Dên	When Kay Wishtâsp had ruled for 30 years the millennium ended.

THE DATES OF ZARATHUSTRA ACCORDING TO THE PAHLAVI TEXTS

3000 years	The establishment of the world of thought ( <i>mênôy</i> ).
0-3000	The establishment of the world of living beings in the world of thought.
3-6000	The establishment of the world of living beings in the world of living beings ( <i>gêty</i> ). Entry of the Assault. Ohrmazd fashions Zardusht's pre-soul. 1000 years: From the entry of the Assault to end of the reign of Jam (Av. Yima) 1000 years: Reign of Dahâg (Av. azhi dahâka) 1000 years: Reigns of Frêdôn (Thraêtaona) and the Kayanids (kawis) until the appearance of Zardusht.
5955	45 years before Zardusht's conversation with Ohrmazd: Frênî bears Dughdôw.
5940	Dughdôw age 15 shines with Zardusht's khwarrah.
5970-6000	30 years: rule of Kay Wishtâsp until the coming of the Dên.
5970	Zardusht is born.
6-9000	Millennia of Zarathustra and his three sons.
6-7000	1000 years: From the appearance of Zardusht to the coming of Pishyôtan (son of Wishtâsp).
6000	Zardusht age 30: Wahman reveals himself to Zardusht on the shore of the river Dâitî and brings him to the assembly of the Seven Life-giving Immortals.
6000-90	90 years: rule of Kay Wishtâsp after the coming of the Dên.
6047	Violent death of Zardusht at the age of 77 years and 4 days.
6090-6232	112+30 years: rules of Wahman, son of Spandyâd, and Queen Humây.
6232-6258	Achaemenids:
6258	12 +14 years: rule of Dârâ son of Chihrâzâd and Dârâ son of Dârâ Arrival of Alexander (258 years after Zarathustra's revelation.

TIME

7-8000	1000 years: millennium of Ushêdar (Ukhshyaterta).
8-9000	1000 years: millennium of Ushêdarmâh (Ukhshyatnemah).
9000	Arrival of the Saoshyant (Sôshâns) and the Perfectioning.

FOURTH MILLENNIUM OF THE MIXTURE: ZARDUSHT'S PROPHECY

6001-6091	90 years: rule of Kay Wishtâsp	Zardusht received and brought the Religion from Ohrmazd. Kay Wishtâsp received and propagated it and fought a war with Arzâsp.
6091-6203	112 years: rule Wahman son of Spandâd	Much infighting in Iran.
6203-6233	30 years: rule of Humây, daughter of Wahman	
6233-6245	12 years: rule of Dârâ son of Chihràzâd	
6245-6259	14 years: rule of Dârâ son of Dârâ	Arrival of Alexander, who killed King Dârâ, destroyed the families of rulers and magi, extinguished a great number of fires, seized the books of the Mazdayasnians, which came to Rome, burned the Avesta, and divided Iran into 90 parts.
6259-6273	14 years: rule of Alexander the Roman	
6273-6557	284 years: rule of the Arsacids	
6557-7017	460 years: rule of Ardashêr and the Sasanians to the Muslim conquest	Arrival of Ardashêr, son of Bâbag, who killed the petty rulers, organized the sovereignty, propagated the Mazdayasnian religion.
		During the reign of Shâpûr (II), son of Ohrmazd, the Tâzîgs came, but they were overcome by Shâpûr.
		During the reign of Pêrôz, son of Yazdegerd, there was no rain for 6 years. Khoshnawâz, king of the Hephthalites came and killed Pêrôz. Kawâd and his sister gave the Hephthalites a fire altar as security.
		During the reign of Kawâd Mazdak, son of Bâmdâd established the Mazdakian law. He deceived Kawâd and promoted communal ownership of wives and children.
		Husraw, son of Kawâd, Anôsharuwân killed Mazdak and reinstated the Mazdayasnian religion.
		20 years: rule of Yazdegerd until the invasion of the Tâzîgs.
	yr. 447 PE (= 636 C.E.) Muslim conquest	Introduction of a the religion of sorcerers, weakening of the Mazdayasnian one. From the beginning of the creation to this day no greater calamity has befallen Iran, for on account of their misdeeds, and evil religion only Iran has been at the prey of nothing but disasters.
7097 ??	yr. 527 PE = NOW	

TIME

FIFTH MILLENNIUM: THE MILLENNIUM OF USHÊDAR

7000-8000	Ushêdar (Ukhshyaterta), son of Zardusht, will come from Ohrmazd bringing the Religion. Hard times and drought will disappear. The river Vâtaêni will flow the depth of a horse, and springs, and oceans, and the Kayânsê will flow again. For 10 days and nights the sun will stand still at the zenith of the sky, and the wolf species will perish.
	At the end of the millennium Malkûs, of the race of Tûr î Brâtrôresh, who killed Zardusht, will reappear and will produce the terrible Malkûsân winter lasting three years, and most men will perish. Men and animals will then be reorganized from the Jam's War (the Vara of Yima), which was built for this purpose.
	The curative power of the 1000 species of plants opposing 1000 kinds of illnesses will be assigned to two, and no one will die from sickness, but still from old age and if killed.

SIXTH MILLENNIUM: THE MILLENNIUM OF USHÊDARMÂH AND THE COMING OF SÔSHÂNS

8000-9000	Ushêdarmâh, son of Zardusht, will come from Ohrmazd bringing the Religion. For 20 days and nights the sun will stand still at the zenith of the sky. The trees will stay green for 6 years. The descendants of the Druz (snakes and noxious creatures) will perish.
	Toward the end of the millennium Dahâg Bêwarasp will run free of his chains, causing much damage.
	Then Sôshâns will appear guided by Êrmân. For 30 days and nights the sun will stand still at the zenith of the sky.
	The Resurrection will begin: First the body of Karsâsp, son of Sâm, who will smash Bêwarasp (Dahâg ) with his mace and kill him. Sôshâns will converse with the Spiritual beings for 30 years, and the action of Renovation will spread throughout the Seven Continents in 57 years.

### THE ACHAEMENID CALENDAR

The Achaemenid calendar as attested in the Old Persian and Elamite inscriptions was a farmer's calendar, with names of months referring to climate and seasonal activities. The order of the months is guaranteed by their Babylonian equivalents:

	<u>Old Persian</u>	<u>Elamite</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
1	Ãdukanaisha	Hadukannash	[month of] sowing?
2	Thûravâhara	Turmar	rejuvenating spring?
3	Thâigerchî	Sâkurrizish	[month of] garlic (harvesting)?
4	Garmapada	Karmabatash	station of heat
5	*Dernabâji	Turnabazish	[month of] harvesting
6	*Kârapâssiya	Karbashiyash	[month of] army review(?)
7	Bâgayâdi	Bakeyatish	[month of] worship of the (other?) gods/the god (Mithra)
8	*Varkashâna	Markashanash	[month of] the scattering leaves(?)
9	Ãssiyâdiya	Hashiyatish	[month of] the sacrifice by fire
10	Ãnâmaka	Hanamakash	[month of] him who is/those who are to be worshiped by name(?)
11	*Thâviyauva	Samiyamash	[month of] warming up(?)
12	Viyakhana	Miyakannash	[month of] cleaning the canals(?)

### THE AVESTAN CALENDAR

The Avestan calendar is first attested within the Achaemenid empire as the calendar of Cappadocia, which was cited by the Greek astronomers:

	<i>Cappadocian</i>	<i>Avestan</i> (genitives)	<i>Middle Persian</i>	<i>Mod. Persian</i>
1	Artana	Ashâ(u)nâm frawashinâm “[month] of the fravashis of the Orderly”	(Ardâw) Frawardîn	Farvardîn (March-April)
2	Artêuetê	Ashahe vahishtahe “[month] of Best Order”	Ardwahišt	Ordîbehesht
3	Aroatata	Haurwatâtô “[month] of Wholeness”	Hordâd	Khordâd
4	Teiri	Tishtriyehe “[month] of Sirius”	Tîr	=
5	Amartata	Amertâtô “[month] of Non-dying”	Amurdâd	Mordâd
6	Ksathriorê	Khshathrahe vairyehe “[month] of the Choice Command”	Shahrêwar	Shahrivar
7	Mithrê	Mithrahe “[month] of Mithra”	Mihr	Mehr
8	Apomenapa	Apâm *Napâtô “[month] of the Scion of the Waters”	Ãbân	=
9	Athra	Ãthrô “[month] of the Fire”	Âdur	Âdhar
10	Dathusa	Dathushô “[month] of the Orderer”	Day	Dey
11	Osmana	Vanghêush Mananghô “[month] of Good Thought (Heaven)”	Wahman	Bahman
12	Sondara	Spentayâ Ârmatôish “[month] of Life-giving Humility (Earth)”	Spandârmad	Esfand[ârmod°]

## THE LITURGICAL-COSMOGONIC YEAR

	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Frawardîn	Ardwahišt	Hordad	Tîr	Amurdad	Shahrewar
1 Ohrmazd	<u>SKY</u> 3/21	4/20	5/20	6/19	7/19	8/18
2 Wahman	22	21	21	20	20	19
3 Ardwhisht	23	22	22	21	21	20
4 Shahrewar	24	23	23	22	22	21
5 Spandarmad	25	24	24	23	23	22
6 Hordad	26	25	25	24	24	23
7 Amurdad	27	26	26	25	25	24
8 Day	28	27	27	26	26	25
9 Ādur	29	28	28	27	27	26
10 Abân	30	29	29	28	28	27
11 Khwar	31	Mēdyô- 30	30	Mēdyô- 29	29	28
12 Mâh	1-Apr	May 1	31	30	30	29
13 Tîr	2	2	1-Jun	July 1	31	30
14 Gôsh	3	zarm 3	2	sham 2	8/1	31
15 Day	4	4	3	3	2	9/1
16 Mihr	5	<u>WATER</u> 5	4	<u>EARTH</u> 4	3	2
17 Sôsh	6	6	5	5	4	3
18 Rashn	7	7	6	6	5	4
19 Frawardîn	8	8	7	7	6	5
20 Warahrân	9	9	8	8	7	6
21 Râm	10	10	9	9	8	7
22 Wâd	11	11	10	10	9	8
23 Day	12	12	11	11	10	9
24 Dên	13	13	12	12	11	10
25 Ard	14	14	13	13	12	11
26 Ashtâd	15	15	14	14	13	Pati- 12
27 Āsmân	16	16	15	15	14	shah 13
28 Zamyâd	17	17	16	16	15	14
29 Mahrspand	18	18	17	17	16	15
30 Anagrân	19	19	18	18	17	16



TIME

	7	8	9	10	11	12	
	Mihr	Âbân	Âdur	Day	Wahman	Spandarmad	5 epagomena
1 Ohrmazd	<u>PLANT</u> 10/17	<u>CATTLE</u> 11/17	11/16	12/16	1/15	2/14	3/16
2 Wahman	18	18	17	17	16	15	Hamaspah- 17
3 Ardwhisht	19	19	18	18	17	16	18
4 Shahrewar	20	20	19	19	18	17	maydim 19
5 Spandarmad	21	21	20	20	19	18	20
6 Hordad	22	22	21	21	20	19	
7 Amurdad	23	23	22	22	21	20	
8 Day	24	24	23	23	22	21	
9 Âdur	25	25	24	24	23	22	
10 Âbân	26	26	25	25	24	23	
11 Khwar	27	27	26	26	25	24	
12 Mâh	28	28	27	27	26	25	
13 Tîr	29	29	28	28	27	26	
14 Gôsh	30	30	29	29	28	27	
15 Day	10/1	31	30	30	29	28	
16 Mihr	2	11/1	12/1	Mêd- 31	30	3/1	
17 Sôsh	3	2	2	Jan 1	31	2	
18 Rashn	4	3	3	yâr 2	2/1	3	
19 Frawardîn	5	4	4	3	2	4	
20 Warahrân	6	5	5	4	3	5	
21 Râm	7	6	6	<u>MAN</u> 5	4	6	
22 Wâd	8	7	7	6	5	7	
23 Day	9	8	8	7	6	8	
24 Dên	10	9	9	8	7	9	
25 Ard	11	10	10	9	8	10	
26 Ashtâd	Ayâsrim 12	11	11	10	9	11	
27 Âsmân	13	12	12	11	10	12	
28 Zamyâd	14	13	13	12	11	13	
29 Mahrspand	15	14	14	13	12	14	
30 Anagrân	16	15	15	14	13	15	