

HISTORICAL SCIENCES

ПОЗИЦИЯ ЗОРУЙСКОЙ РЕЛИГИИ В ИСТОРИИ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА

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THE POSITION OF THE ZOROASTRIAN RELIGION IN THE HISTORY OF AZERBAIJAN

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АННОТАЦИЯ

В разные периоды истории в Азербайджане существовали разные религии и системы верований. Зороастризм занимал важное место среди религий, распространенных на территории древних азербайджанских государств Атропатены и Албании. Эта религия связана с именем ее основателя Зороастра.

Зороастризм стал одной из основных религий не только в Азербайджане, но и в Иране, Средней Азии, Индии и других районах. Зороастризм и связанные с ним религиозные и философские системы, несомненно, оказали определенное влияние на иудаизм и христианство.

Учение зороастризма нашло отражение в Авесте. Авеста является одним из литературных памятников и книг, считавшихся священными древними народами Средней Азии, в том числе предками азербайджанского народа. В этой книге художественно отражен ряд аспектов религиозных, нравственных, социальных, политических и философских воззрений древнего населения нашей страны.

Эту религию, сохранявшую свое значение вплоть до распространения ислама в Азербайджане, можно назвать проявлением многовекового мировоззрения нашего народа. Эти составляющие нашли отражение в наших традициях и национальных праздниках.

В современное время количество представителей зороастризма очень мало. В мире их около 130 000.

ABSTRACT

Different religions and belief systems existed in Azerbaijan during different periods of history. Zoroastrianism (Magianism) occupied an important place among the religions spread on the territory of the ancient Azerbaijani states of Atropatena and Albania. This religion is associated with the name of its founder Zoroaster.

Zoroastrianism has become one of the main religions not only in Azerbaijan, but also in Iran, Central Asia, India, and other areas. Zoroastrianism and related religious and philosophical systems undoubtedly had some influence on Judaism and Christianity.

The teaching of Zoroastrianism is reflected in the Avesta. Avesta is one of the literary monuments and books considered sacred by the ancient peoples of Central Asia, including the ancestors of the Azerbaijani people. This book artistically reflects a number of aspects of the religious, moral, social, political, and philosophical views of the ancient population of our country.

This religion, which retained its significance until the spread of Islam in Azerbaijan, can be called a manifestation of the centuries-old worldview of our people. These components are reflected in our traditions and national holidays.

In modern times, the number of representatives of Zoroastrianism is very small. There are about 130,000 of them in the world.

Ключевые слова: религия, Ахура Мазда, Ангра Манью, Авеста, камин.

Keywords: religion, Ahura Mazda, Angra Manyu, Avesta, fireplace.

In order to form an idea about the historical past of the Azerbaijani people, it is important to study the ancient religions worshiped by our great ancestors. The religious beliefs of our people have ancient historical roots. In different periods of history, different religions and belief systems existed in Azerbaijan. Religion is a phenomenon arising from the human need to know the invisible reality that cannot be perceived by the senses. Religions have existed since the time of human existence.

It is known that a number of religions and sects have historically existed in Azerbaijan. Zoroastrianism is the oldest of these religions. Before the spread of this religion, there were various religions in the world that could not cross the borders of the region where it was created. When Zoroastrianism first emerged, it became important religious teaching, not only as a perfect religion but also as a set of moral and spiritual principles.

The religion of Zoroastrianism is also called Mazdaism because of the name of Ahura Mazda (the only god that Zoroastrians believe in). At the same time, Zoroastrianism, a religion of Iranian origin, is also known by the name "Majusilik" (related to the name of the group of monks called "Majush" or Maji, an Iranian community). Magic can be divided into four periods in terms of historical development:

1. The first period of belief, began with Zoroaster and worshiped the single god Mazda.
2. The period that began in the time of Darius and lasted until the first half of the III century.
3. The Sasanian era, lasted until the VII century.
4. The last period ended with the fall of the Sassanid state and continues to this day.

Ancient Greek and medieval Muslim historians, as well as many later researchers, considered Azerbaijan the Motherland of this religion. It is known from historical sources that Zoroastrianism was established in South Azerbaijan in BC. It began to spread in the first centuries of the 1st millennium. [5; page-12]

Based on the information provided by a number of researchers, dualism has been accepted as a worldview in Zoroastrianism. Zoroastrians believed in the existence of Zurva, who is considered the source of time, a divine being. It was suggested that Ahura Mazda (Hormuzd) and Angra Manyu (Ahriman) were two brothers created by Zurvan. Zoroaster believed that all beings emanated from Ahura Mazda.

The Ahura Mazda and Angra Manyu dualism of Magus emerged after the Sassanid period. In occultism, the course of the world is divided into four equal periods from the beginning to the end. According to this belief, the fourth period will coincide with the end of time, and near the end of time, the savior Saosyant will appear.

The members of this religion called their faith "mazdayasna" or "wahvi-daena", and themselves "behdin". The name of the religion is related to the name of its founder, Zoroaster. The word Zoroaster is translated as "possessor of beautiful camels". It is not known exactly in which century Zarathustra lived. However, according to the information of a number of researchers, he was born in B.C. He lived in the second

half of the 7th century - the beginning of the 6th century. According to information, he was born in Azerbaijan in a family with a name and number. It is speculated that he was given prophecy at the age of 30.

Zoroastrianism was the basis of the spiritual culture of the population of Atropatena, one of the ancient states of Azerbaijan. The people of Atropatena worshiped fire. It can be said that the center of fire worship was Atropatena. It is no coincidence that 4 of the 6 great temples of fire worship, including the main temple - the Gazaka temple, were in Atropaten. Zoroastrianism was the ideology of the peoples of the eastern part of Asia in ancient times.

"Avesta" is considered the holy book of Zoroastrianism. Information about Zarathustra's life can be obtained from the oldest part of the Avesta, the Qat.

Zoroastrianism was one of the first monotheistic vocations to synthesize a large number of progressive ideas. It is no coincidence that the literal meaning of the word "Avesta" meant "first news", and "first call". Zoroastrianism united existing multicultural values, pluralistic ideas, and diversities, even the existence of evil, under a single idea.

"Avesta" consisted of 21 parts. Its version that has reached us consists of 4 parts: 1) Yasna 2) Yastlar 3) Visprat and 4) Videvdat. [7; p-58]

The original "Avesta" was written in B.C. There is enough information in the sources about the burning of ancient Persepolis by Alexander the Great in 330. But today, the fact that this teaching calls people to unity, vividly expressed true multiculturalism, tolerance towards other ideas, and very high liberalism towards sectarianism and cultural pluralism is the subject of debate. [2; pg-43]

There are many cults in Zoroastrianism. Cults such as "Dadodahesh and Ashudad" were of special importance among them. These cults glorified the importance of mutual aid among people, helping those in need, and mutual support of people.

Various religious days and holidays were celebrated in Magus. Among these holidays, the New Year holiday called Nowruz is chosen. This holiday is celebrated on the first day of Farvardin (March 21), the first month of the solar calendar, in honor of the revival of nature.

The funeral ceremonies of the Caspians, who are among the oldest inhabitants of Azerbaijan, and the presence of Zoroastrian elements in their personal names confirm the spread of Zoroastrianism among the Caspians as early as the Achaemenid period (6th-4th centuries BC).

In Zoroastrianism, fire is considered sacred, and in Zoroastrian temples, the fire was not allowed to go out. Temples were built in honor of fire. Fire temples in Caucasian Albania were often called "ateshgah".

Many researchers and travelers who have visited the territory of Azerbaijan have given information about the fire temples that exist here. Surakhani temples occupy a large place among them. From the information of the English traveler Hanway, it appears that there were several ancient fire temples in Surakhani as early as the 18th century. Zoroastrians used only one of these temples.

Fire and earth should not be defiled with corpses. Therefore, they put the bodies in rocky places on heights, or in stone structures called huts (towers of silence) reminiscent of such places, so that they would be food for wolves and birds. Bones were kept in special places so as not to pollute the soil.

The scope of this religion was not limited only to the historical territories of Azerbaijan and the Middle East, it had a serious impact on the West, especially on the ancient Greek and Indian culture. Historical facts, as well as the works of Greek historians and philosophers that have come down to us, prove that Avesta, the holy book of Zoroastrianism, especially the Magians who created this book, played a great role in the development of Zoroastrian Greek culture, who reformed their teachings and the religion of fire worship. Perhaps, that is why the English researcher Mary Boyce claims that Zoroastrianism has influenced humanity more than any other type of belief. [3; pg-51]

The genius Azerbaijani thinker, poet Nizami Ganjavi, based on the essence of mythological ideas of all religious-philosophical teachings before him, put forward conceptual ideas about human morality.

It is known that Zoroastrianism was one of the main religious-philosophical lines passing through Nizami Ganjavi's creativity. Even today, many Iranian scholars continue to call it the leading line in the poet's work. Indeed, in Nizami Ganjavi's "Khamsa" it is obvious that most issues are repeatedly used, from the socio-political nature of Zoroastrianism, its religious rites, and moral principles to its mythological epics. As we mentioned above, if Nizami Ganjavi's "Khamsa" did not begin with an appeal to God and the Prophet, it could be called the final encyclopedia of all religions, philosophies, mythologies, and sciences up to the 12th century, rather than being a monument of the Islamic era. [6; p-32]

Zoroastrian communities existed in Northern Azerbaijan even during the period when Islam rose to

the dominant position. Arab geographer and traveler Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Istakhri (850-934) wrote in the "Book of the Roads of the Countries" that there are villages near Baku where Zoroastrians live. The famous geographer and historian Abul-Fida Ismail Hamavi (1273-1331) talks about the villages where fire worshipers live in Mughan province.

We can call this religion, which retained its importance until the spread of Islam in Azerbaijan, a manifestation of the worldview of our people formed over many centuries. These components are reflected in our customs and national holidays.

Despite the fact that Zoroastrianism has lost its importance in Azerbaijan since the Middle Ages, signs of ancient beliefs are still evident in the way of life of people today. Currently, Zoroastrian communities are known to exist in Iran and India. A small group of Magians living in Iran is known as Gabrs (gabars).

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