

DESCRIPTION OF SOME TRADITIONS AND RITUALS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CULT OF WATER IN ZOROASTRIANISM.

Karimov Umrbek Davronbekovich -

Teacher of the Department of History

Mamun University Republic of Uzbekistan.

Abstract. *If you look at the history of mankind, you can see that water was not only a source of drinking for people in different historical periods, but also the basis of their economic culture, daily life, religious and worldly views, and an object of ecological education. This article analyzes some of the most ancient aspects of the mythological visions related to the water cult described in “Avesta”.*

Keywords: *water cult, “Avesta”, folklore, Zoroastrianism, Ardisura Anakhita, chilla*, taboo, childbirth.*

It is known that water has been of special importance in the life of the peoples of Central Asia, who have been regularly engaged in agriculture since ancient times.

Because abundant water is the most important and basic condition of agriculture. Since water is the lifeblood of the earth, the agriculture of ancient people was directly related to water.

That is why the water cult has a special place in the system of mythological views formed here. Mythological views based on the explanation of the origin of life on earth in connection with water were also created under the influence of the water cult. Scientists have noted that the water cult and its mythological expressions exist in the folklore of many peoples of the world⁴².

Water is the source of life, the basis of the universe, the soul of the earth, the flora and fauna, as well as being a drink for humans, faith, purification, power, strength, energy, wealth, purity, light, medicine for humans. not only that, but also sometimes in a negative sense, that is, it can be a source of calamities that cause various disasters and catastrophes.

In the period before the introduction of Islam to Central Asia, especially Khorezm, and before it became the ruling ideology, the water cult had an important place in Zoroastrianism. Among Zoroastrians, water is considered a sacred element, and first of all, they are very concerned about its purity. In almost all rituals of Zoroastrianism, water is praised in chants and prayers. Because water is considered a glorious blessing that

* chilla - the period of forty days after the birth of a child, the marriage of a girl, the marriage of a young man, the day of the burial of a deceased person: the most difficult, dangerous or responsible period of some events in marriage.

⁴² Франк-Каменский И. Вода и огонь в баблэйской поэзии // Яфетический сборник. М., Л., вып.3.1925. с130-135; Богомолова К. Следы Древнего культа воды таджиков // Известия отделения общественных наук АН Тадж. вып.2, 1952, с.117-121; Филимонова Т.Д. Вода в календарных обрядах // Календарные обычаи и обряды в странах Зарубежной Европы. М. 1983, с.130-144; Жуманазаров У. Ёмғир ва сув култи // У.Жуманазаров Тарих, афсона ва дин. Т., 1990, 19-30-бетлар; Мусакулов А. Сув култи // А.Мусакулов ўзбек халқ лирикаси. Т., 1995, 55-61-бетлар.

cleanses all things, gives life to plants on the ground, creates conditions necessary for animals to live, and provides abundant harvest.⁴³

Geographical and cultural-economic conditions of Central Asia have given rise to cults related to water disasters in religious ceremonies since the earliest times. In most places of Central Asia, including the Ancient East, in the worship of fertility cults, water was imagined as a folk deity.

Because in the agricultural regions of Central Asia, water sources and irrigation works were considered a guarantee of living. For this reason, the image of deities associated with water is combined with fertility cults. In this way, the image of the great goddess Ardisura Anakhita was gradually formalized in Central and Ancient Asia.

Among the ancient population, a positive attitude was formed to water as a symbol of fertility, and the deity of this faith was considered Anakhita-Ardisura according to the Avesta traditions. It was Anakhita who was the goddess of fertility and fertility, as well as water.⁴⁴

The worship of Anakhita formed a circle of complex and general cults in ancient times. In archeological excavations in various places of Central Asia, ceramic figurines and stone carvings of Anakhita were found, which indicates that she was highly revered among the ancient peoples who lived in this region.

This shows that in the ancient layers of Zoroastrian mythology, this deity was in some sense imagined as a mythical hero participating in the creation of the universe. According to Avesta scholars, this character related to the water cult originated from the image of the water goddess in ancient Indo-Iranian mythology.

Originally conceived as a mythological figure associated with a certain body of water, a spring or river, this character was considered by some tribes to be an anthropomorphic representation of the thunder before the rain.⁴⁵ Later, this mythological image began to be imagined as the goddess of pure water, and in Zoroastrian beliefs, the tradition of describing her as the owner of three horses living in the sea of Vorukasha arose. Mythological interpretations of such ancient visions related to the water cult are expressed in all parts of "Avesta". According to Zoroastrian mythology, the water that gives life to the earth comes from a sacred spring called Ardvi. The highest point of the heavenly mountain at Garonman, where Ardvi spring is located, is at the top of Hukaria peak. The word "Ardvi" is actually an Avestan lexical unit, which, according to I.V. Rak, means "moisture". In ancient Indo-Iranian mythology, this mythical river was consecrated as the symbol of Amudarya. According to legends, the peak of Hukaria connects to the heavenly places where gods and goddesses reside. Ardisura Anahita, the goddess of water, lives by the holy spring on this peak. In the "Praise of Ardisura" mythological ideas related to the glorification of water, which is considered a life-giving blessing, are reflected. In Zoroastrian mythology, the sacred river flowing from the peak

⁴³ Эшмурадов М. Авестода табиат култилари талкини. – Т.: 2002. – Б. 44.

⁴⁴ Аширов А. Ўзбек маданиятида сув. – Тошкент: Akademnashr, 2020. – Б. 90.

⁴⁵ Рак И.В. Мифы древнего и средневекового Ирана. – СПб., 1998. С. 447.

of Hukaria is also named after Ardivisura, the goddess of fertility and water. Ardivisura Anahita is the goddess of water.

The place where the Ardivi River flows is the name of the mythological sea Vorukasha, and some researchers compare it with the present Aral Sea, while others, for example, M. Ishakov, consider it “a trace of the memory of the ancient Tethys Sea in the place of the red deserts of Uzbekistan preserved in the Avesta”.

In Zoroastrian ceremonies and rituals, special attention was paid to the water cult. Determining the main functions of water in ceremonies and rituals is based on its purifying properties. In the third part of the seventh fargard in “Vendidod” “O Ashavan Zardusht ! The mythological perception of this important property of water is also expressed when it is said that the water of the spring named Ardivyusvar purifies the seed of husbands, the baby in the womb of a woman, and the milk in the breast of a mother”⁴⁶. Ardivyuswar spring refers to the sacred spring of Ardivi, which is believed to be located on the peak of Hukaria. Zoroastrians understood that the water gushing out of this spring is the purest, purest water, and it purifies everything in the universe.

In Zoroastrian rituals, in particular, in the rituals of childbirth and chilla period, water cult beliefs were followed. Vendidod has a lot of information on this. In the eighth section of the fifth fargard, it is said that when a pregnant woman's eyes light up in the house of a Zoroastrian, she is told that "the land is poor, the water is watery, there are fewer cattle and flocks of sheep, the son of Ahuramazda burns less fire, the religious rites of the barsam are performed less often, and the people of Ashavan rarely live there. They took him to the house of a Zoroastrian who rarely stopped. A woman who gave birth had to stay three steps away from fire, water, bunches of barsam and Ashavan people. They surrounded the house with a high wall and kept the woman there and fed her without taking her out. In Zoroastrianism, a woman who gives birth is impure for a certain number of days, and therefore she should not approach sacred objects. For three nights and three days, the woman who ate meat, bread and wine could not drink water. A woman in labor refrained from drinking water and going near water bodies because she was impure. Because they were afraid that such a woman might contaminate the holy water. Three days later, nine pits were dug in the temporary house where the woman gave birth, and the mother washed her body and clothes next to these pits and performed the initial ritual of purification. After that, the woman kept the chilla for nine more nights and then washed her body and clothes with water and kumis, i.e. purified cow's urine. Only after that, the woman who gave birth was considered purified. This udum is expressed in the custom of making chilla, which is still preserved among our people. Usually, a woman who has just given birth is understood to be symbolically impure in the eyes of our people.

According to ethnographer G.P. Snesev, the people of Khorezm believed that a woman who gave birth cannot go near water (like a well, ditch, canal, river), enter a barn, milk a cow, knead dough, get involved in boiler and furnace work, and go out at night

⁴⁶ Авесто. Тарихий – адабий ёдгорлик А. Махкам таржимаси. – Тошкент: “ Шарк”, 2001. 133-бет.

without a lamp for seven days. Because they were afraid that because it was “harm” it could contaminate water, fire, bread, milk, cows and other things. The historical basis of such a taboo related to the period of Chilla is based on Zoroastrian rituals. Chilla was kept for forty days in order to protect against evil spirits and to purify the body. Taking out of chilla is a special ceremony, in which mother and child are washed in specially prepared water. A coin, salt, and an eggshell were thrown into the water in the tub where the baby was washed. These items were believed to have magical properties and were used to wish the baby well.⁴⁷

Treating water as a source of life and a symbol of purity is still actively used in calendar and family rituals and traditions.

REFERENCES:

1. Снесарев Г.П. Реликты домусульманских верований и обрядов у узбеков Хорезма. – Москва: Наука, 1969. – С. 23.
2. Эшмурадов М. Авестода табиат кулътлари талкини. – Т.: 2002.
3. Аширов А. Ўзбек маданиятида сув. – Тошкент: Akademnashr, 2020.
4. Мусакулов А. Сув култи // А.Мусакулов ўзбек халқ лирикаси. Т., 1995.
5. Рак И.В. Мифы древнего и средневекового Ирана. – СПб., 1998.
6. Авесто. Тарихий – адабий ёдгорлик А. Махкам таржимаси.–Тошкент: “Шарк”, 2001. 133-бет.
7. Абидова, З. К. (2020). ОБРЯДИ СВЯЗАННЫ С ПОЧИТАНИЕМ КОЛОДЦЕВ КУЛЬТОВОЙ ПРАКТИКИ У НАРОДОВ ХОРЕЗМСКОГО ОАЗИСА. *EDITOR COORDINATOR*, 201.
8. Абидова, З. Қ. (2018). Хоразм воҳаси зиёратгоҳлари ва қадамжолари (тарихий-этнологик тадқиқот). *Тарих фанлари бўйича фалсафа доктори (PhD) даражасини олиш учун ёзилган диссертация*.
9. Абидова, З. К. (2017). СВЯЩЕННЫЕ ИСТОЧНИКИ И РУДНИКИ ХОРЕЗМСКОГО ОАЗИСА. *Актуальные научные исследования в современном мире*, (2-5), 73-76.
10. Абидова, З. К., Мажаминов Ж.Г. (2021) Хоразм воҳасида сув билан боғлиқ кулътлар ва маросимлар. “Ўзбекистонда илмий-амалий тадқиқотлар” мазусидаги республика 25-қўп тармоқли илмий масофавий конференция тўплами материаллари. 3 қисм, Тошкент, 25-26.
11. Abidova, Z. K. (2017). Natural Places of Worship of Khwarezm, connected with Water Elements. *European Researcher. Series A*, (8-2), 48-57.
12. Karimov, U. (2024). Some aspects of views and traditions associated with mirob in the Khorezm oasis. *Scientific Collection «InterConf»*, (187), 193-201.

⁴⁷ Снесарев Г.П. Реликты домусульманских верований и обрядов у узбеков Хорезма. – М., Наука. 1969.