



WITH THE WATER CULT IN THE ANCIENT RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF THE KHORAZM OASIS UZBEKS SOME RELATED ISSUES

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ANNOTATION

In this article, the researcher researched the importance of water cult in the daily life of Khorezm Oasis Uzbeks, that water is not only a source of life, but also the greatest, priceless and incomparable miracle of life based on historical materials. At the same time, he revealed that water has been sanctified by mankind since ancient times, reflected in the beliefs, customs, and rituals related to the water cult in ancient religious beliefs, as well as in our modern lifestyles, views, and rituals.

KEYWORDS: *Amudaryya, Avesta, Anakhita, Zoroastrianism, water cult, pandemonium, fairy, exorcism, water - sacred cleaner.*

INTRODUCTION

Humanity's activities in the process of taking a decent place in society were closely related to natural phenomena. According to the results of archaeological research, BC In the 6th and 5th millennia, water sources played an important role in the way of life of the peoples of Central Asia (Joytun, Hisor, Kaltaminor). Water occupies an important place in the life of the creature that has found its place on the ground. Our ancestors first mastered the borders with water sources and settled in order to develop different areas of the economy (mountains, foothills and spring areas). Water has played an important role in the activities of our ancestors, who lived in the foothills of the shores of the many water basins formed as a result of the water flowing from the mountains of Central Asia and the rise of the water level of the Amudaryya and Syrdaryya. therefore, in their spirituality, concepts of knowing water as sacred and believing in it were formed.

DISSCUTIONS

The oasis of Khorezm, located in the lower reaches of the Amudaryya, the largest waterway of Central Asia, occupies an important place in the history of Central Asia. The location of the oasis in the Aral Bay region is very important. Because Khorezm "is a place where the ethnic elements of the Eastern Mediterranean, Indian and Northern Eurasians united" [1, P. 341]. Khorezm is one of the ancient centers of sedentary irrigated farming culture. As early as the middle of the 1st millennium BC, a complex system of irrigation facilities appeared here. The existence of beliefs related to water in the life of peoples who have acquired economic directions in the regions of the world [2, P. 130-135] is noticeable.

G. P. Snesarev, who studied the Khorezm oasis ethnographically for almost 30 years, has a special place in science as a scientific monograph, "Rites and customs of the people of Khorezm before Islam" due to its breadth in terms of volume, wealth of remarkable and unique evidence, and based on deep scientific and theoretical ideas. Some information about the Amudaryya worship traditions is reflected in the monograph of Yahya Gulomov [3, 1959], which reflects the history of the irrigation of Khorezm.

Famous historians S.P. Tolstov [4, 1948], K.A. Inostransev [5, 1877], N.I. Veselovsky [6, 1877], K.L. Zadikhina [7, 1952], M.V. Sazonova [8, 1952] and others, the pre-Muslim water of Khorezm partially researched the rituals and traditions related to it in the ethnographic direction.

When we talk about the spiritual culture of the period before the introduction of Islam to Khorezm and it became the dominant ideology, we begin with the most primitive types of religion, animistic views, fetishism, magic, worshipping the spirits of ancestors and Khorezm pandemonium (supernatural spirits) [9, P. 23].



A type of Khorezm pandemonium (supernatural spirits) popularized by the water cult are fairies. There are two types of ideas about this spirit: a fairy can harm a person and do good. If it causes harm, it is considered as a demon.

A fairy is mainly imagined in human form, in most cases it is depicted as a beautiful girl or boy, in some cases it is depicted in the form of an animal, bird, or fire.

Fairies are divided into Muslim and infidel types, infidel fairies harm humans. They have male and female species, and they grow old and lose strength like humans.

Judging by the Khorezm legends, fairies play a crucial role in shamanic practice, and they are presented in connection with the water deity. In most places of Khorezm, it is emphasized that the abode of fairies is water. By the way, it is not for nothing that they have a type of mermaid. In most cases, their image is depicted as a mermaid.

Among the series of fairies, the mullah fairy is the most unusual. If there is a person among the people who can interact with this type of fairy, he will be promoted to the level of a healer. According to informants, there is an order of subordination among the fairies, and special armies are at the disposal of those who are considered geniuses. The names of two powerful fairies are known throughout Khorezm. These are: Torso fairies and Sumyon fairies. Their names are mentioned many times in the appeal of shamans [9, P. 29].

Fairies, like all spirits, require sacrifice. The main food for them is the blood of animals and birds.

Regarding the genetic connection of fairies with ancient Iranian cults, it should not be forgotten that this image is connected with the motif of water, which is considered a sacred disaster in Zoroastrianism. We talked about the mermaid above.

There is also a belief that the water disaster in Khorezm is the place of fairies. It is interesting that a person who is called to shamanism by a fairy turns to water in a bowl when talking to her.

The connection of the fairy with water is very remarkable. This phenomenon indicates that the sources of this mythical image belong to the layer of ancient cult beliefs of Central Asia, and before the appearance of anthropomorphic deities of water (for example, Anakhita), people imagined water as a separate spirit. Their circle also includes arangs (arals), one of the main spirits of Central Asian animism.

The Zoroastrian tradition is mostly manifested in residual imagery associated with the sacred impurity of the deceased. There is another ritual related to rituals, aimed at protecting people from supernatural forces, which is called "eye contact".

One of the antidotes against the destructive effect of "eye contact" is an important place in Khorezm customs. In Khorezm, there is also a ritual of exorcism. The extraction of suq in Khorezm is carried out by means of grass and water, which is related to Zoroastrian cults in Central Asia. Because both water and grass are considered a disaster in Khorezm. Based on the idea that they have supernatural power, those powers are used against evil spirits that cause harm [9, P. 42].

Among Zoroastrians, water is considered a sacred element, and first of all, they are very concerned about its purity. For this, water sources - rivers, lakes or wells - are strictly protected from any impurities. If something ritually impure had to be washed, the water was collected in a special place, so that the impure objects were not washed directly with water. In this case, the impure thing was first washed with cow's urine, dried in the sun or sand, and then washed with water for final purification [10, P. 90].

It is much more difficult to see the practice of cleansing the deceased with water as a Zoroastrian inheritance. Because we find its roots in various peoples of the ancient East. At the same time, there are cases similar to this udim in the information in "Avesta". Not only was the deceased cleaned with water, but with the urine of a bull. By the way, the tradition of cleaning the deceased with water is known in the pre-Muslim era, that is, from Zoroastrianism. In Khorezm, the body is cleaned with water in the deceased's own house. Previously, a pit was



dug in one room of the house. Sticks are placed on it and the corpse is washed with water on them. After the purification ceremony, this pit is buried again, leveled and it is forbidden to step on this place, a taboo (prohibition) is declared. Because there was a belief that the place where the dead was washed was considered impure and could cause accidents.

According to Zoroastrian custom, touching a dead body is impurity and a sin. The same ritual is used for the stick and other equipment used during washing, yuvizgo (waste water).

In Khorezm mourning ceremonies, according to the old tradition, no one except the body washer can touch the corpse. Only the ghassal, when the washing process is finished, takes the yuvizgo (waste water) to a “no-man’s-tread” place, usually a cemetery. In Khorezm, one can hear many stories about diseases and misfortunes caused by the violation of this ritual (sometimes unknowingly, sometimes knowingly).

According to the philosophy of Zoroastrianism, water taken from a well or a ditch in the early morning, when the sun has just risen from the horizon and spreads its golden rays over the ground, is considered blessed and holy [11, P. 48].

Rituals related to the water cult are important in Khorezm. Of course, in the past, waterways and water reservoirs were at an excellent sanitary level. However, in some cases, a whole complex of rituals was organized for the purification of running water, reservoirs and wells. This situation happened when the body of the dead body touched the water for one reason or another or when the dead body accidentally fell into the water. In Mabo, if this situation happened in a well, it was very difficult to clean it. Initially, 20 buckets of water were removed from the well. Then a stick was dipped into the water, the level was measured, and the water was removed three more times until the mark on the stick was 4 fingers wide. In short, the water in the well was poured out until it was full.

If a dog fell into a well, two witnesses were called and estimated how many buckets of water were in the well (for example, 200, 300). After an idea was reached, that supposed water was pumped out of the well. After this measure was implemented, well water was considered halal [9, P. 141].

When a body is found in a pond, there are different attitudes towards its halal. On the right bank of Amudarya (Shabboz-Beruni) this situation was not paid much attention, the body was just removed. Elsewhere, the pool was drained and refilled.

Around Khanka, the ancient custom is strictly followed in this matter. According to the words of the elderly, if a dead body fell into a well or a pond, it was forbidden to take water from that source, and the well and the pond were buried. No serious action was taken to prevent the dead body from falling into the canal. Only the body was removed from the canal. Running water is not considered unclean.

According to the testimony of the old mirob of Hazorasp, if a dead body fell into the solma (ditch), after the body was removed, water was drained for one night, and the flow was directed to the lake. Only after that water was considered halal and its use was allowed [9, P. 141].

Of course, such rituals can also be found in Sharia laws. But it is doubtful to say that these situations happened under the influence of Iranian traditions. In this regard, it is necessary to refer to “Avesta” again. In it, the issue of desecration of holy water is developed in great detail. The sixth fargard of the Vendidad says: if a dead body is found in stagnant water, it is necessary to remove half of the water, then a third, then a quarter (taking into account whether it is possible to remove it). Only then will the water be ready for use [12, P. 46].

The issue of running water is singled out. In running water, a dead body impures the water at a distance of three steps downstream, nine steps upstream, and six steps in either direction. After taking the body, he should flow through this place three times. Only then is the ditch cleaned [12, P. 47].

In Khorezm, even if a dead body is found in a cultivated land, special rituals are used.



If such a situation occurs in the vicinity of Kokhna Urganch, a part of the harvest of that area will be donated to poor families. The influence of Islam can also be seen here. If a dead body is found in the cultivated land around Shabboz (Beruni), that place is considered unclean. To prepare the land for planting, it is required to wash it five times. Only after that it is allowed to plant a crop. According to another information, the unclean land is surrounded by a low chel (marza) and nothing is planted. For two or three years a person is allowed to sow the land as long as the demons do not harm him. If such a situation occurs in the Gurlan region, a layer of earth is dug up from the dead place and thrown to a distant place and the land is planted. According to the informants in Shavat, there is no need to take any action on the forbidden land. The sun itself cleanses such a land from all evil [9, P. 142].

We also come across the inscriptions in “Avesta” about the fall of a dead body on the ground and its desecration. According to it, if a human or animal corpse is found in a place, it is strictly forbidden to drain or plant water from that place for one year. Anyone who violates this rule is punished for committing a sin in front of water, in front of the earth, in front of a plant, and is given 200 lashes [12, P. 45]. When whatever is dead, it defiles the earth. Whoever believes in Ahura Mazda must clean the land from bones, hair, blood and excrement before plowing, watering and planting [12, P. 45]. However, in terms of its foundations, it can be assumed that water is more emphasized here as a sacred cleansing agent.

Geographical and cultural-economic conditions of Central Asia have given rise to water disaster cults in religious ceremonies since the earliest times. In most parts 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 Ardivisura 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-Ardivisura according to the Avesta tradition. It was Anakhita who was the god of water along with fertility and fertility [10, B. 94].

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

As the cult of Anahita, and water in general, has been developing since the earliest times, it is natural that all this leaves its traces in the rituals of the present inhabitants of Central Asia. This event is even more important for Khorezm, which cannot live without Amudarya water. Various examples collected from Khorezm confirm this. Beliefs related to water are extremely archaic in nature, with the elevation of the water god to the level of a state religion.

In the general analysis of the relationship to water, no clear expression about the sacred essence of water has been preserved. Such a vision can be understood only with the understanding that water in household rituals has a purifying quality.

In Khorezm, as well as in the whole of Central Asia, you can find holy springs, wells, and ponds at every step, almost all of them are located near cemeteries. Beliefs in the canals that bring life to the fields of Khorezm have been around since ancient times. Here it is necessary to pay special attention to one thing.

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. In addition, there were deities, cults and traditions related to water in various nations.



CONCLUSIONS

Water is the source of life, the foundation of the universe, the soul of the earth, flora and fauna, and as a drink for humans, faith, purification, power, strength, energy, wealth, purity, light, medicine for humans, profession and career, but also sometimes in a negative sense, that is, it can be a source of calamities that cause various disasters and catastrophes.

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

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