

The role of Zoroastrianism in the formation of the national mentality of the Uzbek people

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Abstract: The written record "Avesta" and Zoroastrian principles were regarded as the philosophy of their time, representing the primary aspirations of Central Asia's early civilizations. The Zoroastrian religion, along with the spread of fire worship beliefs, had an impact on the development of spiritual and moral norms in society, as well as the establishment and enhancement of people's worldview, character, and mentality. This teaching's moral foundation is "good thought", "good word", and "good deed". Similarly, good deeds in a person's life lead to prosperity. The Eastern phenomena of high morality, purity and maturity, pure ideas, goodness and kindness has been translated into an element determining man's essence. The article shows that from this time on, the dimensions that determine human behavior and relationships became the basis for the formation of the behavior, character and mentality of the peoples of Turanzamin, including the Uzbeks.

Keywords: Avesta, Zoroastrian ideas, Ahura-Mazda, Ahriman, contradiction, national mentality, national character, good and evil, good thought, good word, good deed.

Introduction: The initial modifications in the Uzbek people's worldview happened three thousand years ago, influenced by Avesta principles that have since become global values. The Avesta advocated monotheism and abolished polytheistic religions among primordial people. As the sacred book of the Zoroastrian religion, the Avesta, along with the spread of fire worship concepts, affected the construction of spiritual and moral norms in the development of society, as well as the formation and enhancement of people's worldviews, character, and mentalities. Monotheism encouraged disparate tribes and clans to band together around shared interests, such as a single faith, purpose, or concept.

Analysis of the literature on the topic

Zoroastrian notions of Avesta teaching have been examined by experts from many countries throughout the world.

Abu Rayhan Beruni initially tried to use ethnological research techniques to conceptually validate the Avesta and Zoroastrian customs and rites in the work "Relics of ancient peoples" [Beruni, 1968]. Later, in the 1880s, the orientalist from France. The process of scientific examination of the Avesta was initiated by

A. Duperron [Zaratustra, 1771]. Because of this, a lot of research was conducted in many nations in the 19th and 20th centuries to examine the Zoroastrian faith and the book "Avesta." Zoroastrianism's analysis of the book "Avesta" from the point of view of source studies and historiography is perfectly presented in L.A. Lelekov's monograph "Avesta in Modern Science".

The customs and rites connected to Zoroastrianism are described in depth in the research of Russian ethnographer G. P. Snesev. The Russian historian, archaeologist, and ethnographer Yu. A. Rapoport and the English scientist M. Boyce [Boyce, 1988] have examined the issue of the origins and customs of the Zoroastrian faith.

One might mention B. Gafurov as one of the Uzbek academics who studied Avesta and Zoroastrianism. N. Mallaev, H. Khomidov, A. Kayumov, Y. Djumaboev, M. Ishokov, A. Saidov, M. Rakhmonov, F. Sulaimonova, I. Jobborov, N. Djurayev, I. Khojamurodov, A. Irisov, M. Kodirov, T. Makhmudov, G. Makhmudova, S. Arifkhanova, S. Otamurodov, I. Karimov, T. Karim, and S. Hasanov provide detailed information.

METHODOLOGY

The principles of objectivity, historicity and logic,

analysis and synthesis, systematic analysis, and generalization were used as the methodological basis of the research.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Zoroastrianism, which became the official religion of all the peoples residing in Central Asia, has a connection to the region's ancient past. From the end of the second millennium BC to the latter years of the first millennium BC, the Avesta, the primary text of the Zoroastrian faith, is a valuable textual resource for researching our people's history and culture. Originating in Central Asia, this religion then extended to Iran and Azerbaijan.

"The Avesta, our most authoritative ancient manuscript, was created three thousand years ago." Our forefathers who lived on this region between two rivers thirty centuries ago gave us this unique book as a spiritual and historical heritage. "The Avesta is an indisputable historical record that attests to the existence of a great state, great spirituality, and great culture on this ancient land" [Karimov, 1998].

The teachings of Zoroastrianism and the written monument "Avesta" were regarded as the philosophy of their day, representing the core principles of the first Central Asian civilization. "Avesta" is a crucial and essential resource for researching the socioeconomic lifestyle, or more specifically, the mindset, religious beliefs, worldview, traditions, and spiritual culture of the pre-Islamic peoples of Central Asia, Iran, and Azerbaijan.

"Zoroastrianism represents the emergence in the pantheon of polytheistic gods of a single deity, the creator of both the other world and this world, while at the same time absorbing such primitive forms of religion as totemism, animism, shamanism, and magic—a religion characteristic of the period of transition from polytheistic beliefs to monotheism" [Makhmudova &16].

Zoroastrian teachings represent the conflict between two opposing powers. Ahuramazda is seen as a representation of virtue, compassion, generosity, and honesty. His adversary, Ahriman, is the embodiment of all evil and depravity. Zoroastrian philosophy holds that a person's inner world contains both virtue and evil. Because the angel of good always urges him to do good and the wicked Ahriman pulls him to do evil, a person might be on the side of either Ahura Mazda or Ahriman, and this fight lasts till the end of the person's life. The statement that the Avesta is a great moral text is not hyperbole. Zoroastrians prayed to the holy spirits known by these three names three times a day, and they deified good thoughts, good words, and good acts. Lying and dishonesty are seen as crimes that cannot be forgiven in the Jewish faith. Zoroastrianism holds that

in order to avoid wandering and staying in the dark, a person must ignite the lamp of honesty and truth in his heart. [Umarzoda, 1997] Similarly, a person's positive activities and behaviors in life bring him good. Man's nature is now determined by the Eastern phenomena of high morality, perfection and maturity, pure ideas, virtues, and goodwill. From that point on, the rules that governed people's interactions and behavior served as the foundation for the development of the Uzbek and other Turan area peoples' behavior, character, and mindset.

"Zoroastrianism encourages the concept of a single deity and denounces polytheism, the worship of fire, and the forces of nature. The Supreme Being, the creator and ruler of all beings, Ahura Mazda, appears in Zoroastrianism as a force that upholds morality and lights people's hearts [Ibrahim Karimov 2007]. Conflicts, disputes, and conflicts of interest between many tribes and clans were resolved by the oneness of divine power—through monotheism—which resulted in unification around shared ideals, beliefs, and objectives.

Consequently, it established the groundwork for the first phase of human civilization and had a significant impact on the development of the first political structure and state administration.

The central concept of Zoroastrianism is the individuality of man and his obligation to the world's established order. The person and his life had little importance prior to Zoroaster. Zoroastrian religious ideas are based on the new eschatological emphasis of individual awareness on the afterlife, which took the place of the old tribal values. Zoroastrianism was a really "priestly religion"—that is, it was an esoteric (closed) worldview of a small group and community—rather than a religion used by cattle herders. Some researchers concluded that Zoroastrian works, or "Special Poems," were written for priests and scholars who understood Zoroastrian teaching and the concept of a single god. Because the general public did not understand the true meaning of these works, special scholars clarified the meaning of the psalms and hymns before they were recited and performed, which led to the appearance of commentaries on the Avesta. [Hamidi, 2007].

Researchers have closely examined Zoroastrians' attitudes on the three sacred elements – earth, fire, and water. As a heavenly force that emits heat and gives life to the entire world, fire symbolizes Ahura Mazda's inner essence. Fire was regarded as a sacred deity that upholds people's religious lives, even though the god of fire did not create the cosmos. Thus, the primary moral principle of Zoroastrianism is the

preservation and purification of these components [Makhmudova &,2015]. The Avesta's Videvdod section lays forth the law, regulations, and standards of purification. Mother Earth, soil, water, wheat, and bread are all honored in the Avesta, which also frequently commends their growth and maintenance.

Agriculture and cattle rearing were the primary vocations of people throughout the Zoroastrian period. Our ancestors, who adopted a nomadic and cattle-breeding lifestyle, were instilled with a "warlike spirit" by these kinds of labor, and they created a national trait of "strong endurance" as a result of their involvement in irrigated agriculture.

Our people have used irrigated agriculture to cultivate the land since ancient times. "The construction of large main canals and the restoration of various water distribution and water intake structures developed rapidly in Khorezm, especially in the first millennium BC. Thanks to human activity, wild fruit trees, vegetables, and agricultural crops adapted to local conditions." "Wheat, which conquered the world, originally originated in Central Asia" [Jobborov, 2008].

Zoroastrianism stimulates creativity and invention, fosters notions of wealth, prosperity, and sustenance, and calls for virtue via a connection to and love for the environment. The sentiments of effort and comfort, kindness and virtue, well-being and abundance are the essence of this, elevating the cultivation of grain to a high degree of value that helps the people's table [Joraev, 2008].

- Oh, the world's creator!

- Hello, Truth!

- Who is the world's happiest man?

In response, Ahura Mazda said, "O, Sipiymon Zarathustra!"

Who has planted the most fruit trees, wheat, and grass? He is the one who turns the marshy areas productive and brings water to the dry regions [Avesta 2001, 114].

- Sipiymon Zarathustra, hello!

When someone uses both their left and right hands to plow the ground, the earth will address them as follows:

- Hey, man! Whose left hand and right hand, oh the one who forced me to plow!

Everyone who comes here asks for bread. I'll plant a lot of wheat and other sorts of food for you, and I'll gather the harvest here [Avesta 2001, 115].

According to the people of that era, all impurities were expelled from the body and spirit by peaceful, creative human activity; the only way to multiply the world of

light and joy is to work diligently and perform good actions; Truth, Peace, and the State can only be attained via labor.

The understanding of man's creative potential is evidence of the spiritual and intellectual prowess of our ancient predecessors.

The Eastern peoples' mentality has maintained this deep regard and veneration for the land and bread to this day. This is demonstrated by the ideas of "Mother Earth," "Motherland," and the meticulous moving of a slice of bread from the ground to a sanitized area.

The fundamental principle of Zoroastrian morality is the religious fulfillment of the Holy Spirit's vows, which leads to the establishment of a family, the birth of children, the use of fire, the growing of crops, and the attainment of peace and contentment in life.

"Good thought", "good word", and "good deed" are the cornerstones of Zoroastrianism's moral code. They realized that the path a person takes in the battle against Ahriman determines the moral picture that Ahura Mazda had constructed of him. He represents either a creative or destructive power, depending on this decision. Primitive people's morality was mostly based on their resilience to both bodily and spiritual illnesses, their high moral characteristics, their physical prowess, and their immoral actions. A crucial concept that was expressed in the Avesta in pre-Christian times caused the tenet of "Good thoughts, good words, good deeds" to become deeply ingrained in people's beliefs and ways of living. "Thus, life in the spirit of goodness and humanism, upholding these values became an important component of the mentality and spirituality of our people, the main direction of its life" [Mirziyoev, 2022].

The following moral precepts were accepted and propagated along the course of cultural and historical development:

1. Do not steal;
2. Do not invade or infringe upon another person's property;
3. Do not engage in any behavior that compromises the honor, dignity, or privacy of others;
4. It is forbidden to injure dogs, birds, or other animals, including domestic animals.

These ethical standards and precepts took on a socio-philosophical and legal significance in Zoroastrianism. In every circumstance, Zoroastrian ethics articulated human goals linked to virtue and inventiveness.

M. Boyce, who studied the Zoroastrian way of life in depth, claims that "Zoroastrianism imposed two special duties on its followers - to celebrate seven great

holidays and to pray five times a day." Sunrise, noon, and sunset are all times for prayer, while the night is split into two sections: the first half and the second half.

"Mid-Spring," "Mid-Summer," "Festival of the grain harvest," "Festival of the return of cattle from summer pastures," "Mid-Winter," and "Navruz" are the seven great holidays devoted to Ahura Mazda, which were observed on the eve of the spring equinox and were appropriated by Zoroaster for his religion [Boyce 1988, 24–25].

Each believer took off his belt before the ceremony and washed his face, hands, and feet with water, sand, and purified cow pee. Then, while holding the front portion of the belt in his hand, he put on the "sidra" and fastened his sacred belt. He is staring at the fire, which is a representation of piety. The pious Zoroastrian curses Ahriman, praises and extols Ahura Mazda, and reads particular prayers during the ritual. The prayer time extended for many minutes [Ashirov, 2007].

S.P. Tolstov's archeological investigations in Zhanboskal and Turakkale led him to conclude that the placement of "fire pits" between the gates and the main roadway was a crucial aspect of residential districts. He believed that hearths were a remnant of the so-called "men's houses" as one of the instruments of men's quest for a dominating position in society and as one of the archaic community institutions during the latter phases of the matriarchal system, when the mother's right had not yet perished.

"Such observations and conclusions of S.P. Tolstoy naturally give rise to suspicion that these "men's houses", that is, "fire houses", widespread among the peoples of the East, especially in Central Asia, are not the beginnings of modern teahouses - places where men gather in groups, have fun and exchange opinions about the fate of the neighborhood, street, city and even the nation" [Mahmudov, 2001]. "It should be noted that after the fires, teahouses became widespread among the Uzbeks and Tajiks, and that teahouses played a certain role in organizing the population of a certain region into a community" [T.Karim, 2003]. This demonstrates the collective habit, mindset, and way of life of the Turan peoples.

People who practiced Zoroastrianism were able to enjoy a full spiritual life, complete with worldly pleasures and rites, and were liberated from many legalized practices. This teaching's living foundation is to enjoy the realm of light rather than to urge others to give it up.

Zoroastrianism is a spiritual and educational gem that originated among Eastern peoples and spread over the world from the very beginning of human creation and growth. Zoroastrianism, which originated mostly in

Transoxania, later had a major influence on the creation and growth of Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.

CONCLUSION

The development of the Uzbek people's national identity and mindset was significantly influenced by Zoroastrianism and its teachings.

The Uzbeks developed their own distinct national identity as a result of being influenced by Zoroastrianism and its concepts of moral and spiritual purity and maturity.

The national feature of "strong endurance" was formed by our people, whose culture is built on irrigated agriculture, under the influence of Zoroastrian teachings. Additionally, the "warlike spirit" was established in the character of our people, whose way of life is centered on cattle raising.

Through high moral standards and a way of thinking, Zoroastrianism aims to express the noble virtues that are inherent in man, such as purity, good intentions, pure feelings, the sanctity of the soil, the preservation of flora and fauna, love for the homeland, and the application of creative work.

According to Zoroastrian, people can only have fruitful lives if they consistently commit to having good thoughts, saying nice things, and doing good things.

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