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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ON THE ISSUE OF STRUCTURAL AND CONTENT CONTRADICTIONS IN THE TEXTS OF THE AVESTA

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with issues of logical and substantive contradictions in the texts of the Zoroastrian canon of Avesta. It also provides a comparative analysis of the levels of social relations of Vedic and Avesta societies.

Key Words:

Avesta, Vedic literature, Rig Veda, Creationism, Ahura Mazda, Zruvan, Chronos, Heptada, Yazata, Mitra, Veratragna, Houm, Hshatra Varya, Gats.

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INTRODUCTION

Avesta as a universal monument of the creative mind of mankind more and more deeply attracts the attention of world scientists. First President Islam Karimov has repeatedly drawn attention to the continued importance of the Avesta for studying the sources of the history of the people and its spiritual culture. The study of the Avesta is actively pursued by source historians, philologists - linguists and literary scholars, philosophers, ethnologists, religious scholars, physicians, biologists, etc. However, despite centuries of accumulation of experience and knowledge, Avesta studies are far from completely solving its problems. There is much more in this area of mutually exclusive approaches to the solution of certain issues, contradictory conclusions, incorrect interpretations, as a rule, which do not take into account the subtexts of the source materials. At times, the researcher is confronted with the deliberately perverted approaches of individual researchers to certain aspects of the study of Avesta.

Literature Review

In this research, "There is no future without historical memory" by I.A.Karimov, "Avesta in modern science" by L.A. Lelekov, "From the stories of Tajik-Persian literature" by I.S. Braginsky, "History of Persian-Tajik literature" by Bertels, "Avesto. Literary - historical translation" by Mirsadiq Is'hoqov, "Avesto.

Yasht's book" by Mirsadiq Is'hoqov, "New Parphian documents from south Turkmenistan" by V.A.Livshits, "History of Zoroastrianism" by M.Boyce, "Zoroastrians, their religious beliefs and practices" by M.Boyce, "Die Yaschtas des Avesta" by H.Lommel, "Avesta. Selected hymns" by Steblin - Kamensky and other works are used as main sources.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a qualitative research using the content analysis approach. About twenty scientific works are used to explain the theme titled "On the issue of structural and content contradictions in the texts of the Avesta" and given a reasoned conclusions. Besides that, the researcher had used journals and articles to collect data related to the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Avestalogy, the incorrect method of study, which was based on the ideas of modern religious teachings, was observed for a long time. In assessing the various issues of the problem, scientists proceeded from considerations of comparing Zoroastrianism with Christianity, Islam and other religions. With regard to the study of modern Zoroastrianism, scientists pay more attention to the issues of the social life of confessions, rites, rituals and their transformation (9). Nowadays there are hundreds of monographs, many thousands of articles, and a large number of scientific literature in various languages of the world in the arsenal of historiography in the field of Avestalogy (2). But no one has yet been able to assert

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that the Avesta, with a lot of conventions in its texts, has become fully understandable for the modern reader. The Avesta, as it is observed in practice, is often considered only superficially, without taking into account the subtext, allegories and conventions of many of its elements, which at one time among adherents of Zoroastrianism were understandable without detailed statements. They were based on the realities of the era of the development of Zoroastrianism and over the millennia after Zarathushtra were largely transformed, underwent changes and partially forgotten (6). Along with the numerous problems of Avestology, have long been the subject of heated debate around issues of internal contradictions in the content of the Avesta. This article is devoted to some aspects of this problem. In Avesta, the specialists of the apostologus distinguish four doctrines concerning cosmology and cosmogony, which determine the typological specificity of Zoroastrianism, on the one hand, and characterize the theological system, on the other. This question has been occupied by the minds of scientists for more than two hundred years, starting from Anketil Duperron, the founder of modern European Avestology, ending with specialists of our time. Meanwhile, the problem that we have named remains unresolved until the end.

Questions of Zoroastrian cosmology and cosmogony were posed by Plato, Empedocles, Theopompus, Hermippos and other ancient Greek scholars who felt the logical contradictions between different dogmas and doctrines of Zoroastrianism. So, for example, Plutarch in "Biographies", on the basis of the now-lost books of Theopompus and Hermippus, believed that the God of Zoroaster was beginning less and not created by anyone. Following Plutarch, Mary Boyes led the Avesta cosmogony into a unified system, based on Middle-Persian Pahlavi reconstructions, virtually eliminating differences in interpretations of the postulates concerning the creationist art of Zoroastrianism. In her "History of Zoroastrianism," Mary Boyes (10), also following the installations of H.Lommel (Lommel H), portrayed, first, the beginning less, unforced Zoroaster deity, and, second, "attributed this innovation to the Prophet personally, like no one before him unknown In this paper, M.Boys, as the late L.A.Lelekov (2,p.347-306) wrote about this, correctly emphasizes the refusal of Zoroastrianism from the Indo-European generally accepted model, according to which "all and even all sorts of gods were created, created or born by someone," that is, the world the gods, for example, in the Rigveda and other sources of Indo-European beliefs, logically should have had a beginning in time. This situation is clearly demonstrated by the ancient Greek system, where the gods in many cases are related to each other, born of each other. Against such a restriction, M. Boyce puts forward the idea of the all-encompassing creative function of Ahura Mazda, but does not reveal its limitations as compared with absolute infinity and infinity of time, called in Zruvana, which corresponds to the ancient Greek concept of chronos, power over time.

According to Zoroastrianism, it was believed that zruvana - the beginningless and endless time would eclipse the absolutism of Ahura Mazda and therefore the Avesta collectors in the system tried not to emphasize its essence. Moreover, there are opinions that zuruvanizm is a form of religious system. So, for example, V.A.Livshits at one time put forward the opinion of the science of zoovanism as one of the peculiar paths of the Dozor Aastrian, which influenced the formation of Zoroastrianism or as a local variant of Zoroastrianism in

Central Asia(8). Further, according to M.Boys, the Zoroastrian god Ahura Mazda acts as the creator of his emanations - the six archangels, who are collectively called Amesha-Spenta, i.e. forever living saints. Ahura Mazda himself, uniting with them and heading them, makes up the sacred seven - the Heptada. This seven deeply connected with the most ancient ideas about the sacred number "seven", was the result of the act of creation of the highest heavenly order. In turn, each archangel was charged with the responsibility to control certain areas of life. These archangels, therefore, were actually functions of Ahura Mazda himself. That is, they were considered the executors of the will of the supreme god, in other words, they were manifestations of the functions of the Creator. At the same time, Ahura Mazda is a self-creative god in the power of Zruvana Akarana - "infinite time". As for the zruvana, it does not claim to the function of creating a god infinity and the beginninglessness of the phenomenon objective in zruvana. And they in a dual form were considered as independent potencies, containing in themselves everything heavenly and everything earthly (6).

According to the opinion of M.Boys, at the third stage of creation from the Heptada - Seven of the Saints (Archangels), the generation of lower deities begins, called in the Avesta yazaty, i.e. deities that are commanded to worship, and in their honor to offer sacrifices, send rituals, counting on their mercy. Yazaty in the pantheon of Zoroastrianism are dozens of deities, including Mitra, Ardvi Sura, Ashi, Varahran, Druvaspa, Vayu, Hvarshed, Hvarno and even the sacred tonic of Houm, used during rituals to ensure the sincerity of prayers. At the same time, the Heptada itself, the seven archangels, especially six of them, Ahura Mazda, was instructed to be the spiritual principle of the six foundations that make up life on earth. In this series, Wahu Mana, the archangel of good thought, became the spiritual protection of the sacred bull, the holy spirit of being, and other useful animals. Spenta Armaiti as a feminine archangel, protects the earth and nobility. Art Vakhishta - fire, Haurvatat - flora and health, the integrity of all things, Ameratot acted as a protector of man, giving him the power of immortality, etc. This harmony of the Heptada - the sacred seven, according to L.A. Lelekova, in this case, is far from being substantiated, but interpreted as the desired system. However, the very structure and content of the Avesta speaks against such a question. For example, Amesha-Spenta - the six emanations of Ahura Mazda are not creators. Moreover, in the Gathas there is practically no system of lower gods - Yazat. Ghats operate with the concepts of Good Thought, Divine or Divine Spirit, Armayty, sometimes not even naming, for example, along with Good Thought - the name of Vahu Man. Or, when the name is called Hshatra Varya getih - (Lord of all things) - i.e. the just lord of the world disappears his specific emanational functions and acts as a direct allusion to Ahur Mazda. As we believe, during the time of the formation of the gathic sermon, Zarathushtra tried to proceed from the more or less familiar spiritual ideas of his contemporaries, tried not to be too intrusive in introducing the essence of the idea of the one God, Ahura Mazda, while retaining the further possibilities of processing public consciousness.

Another small nuance of the creative function of Ahura Mazda should be noted: it is impossible to attribute to Amesha-Spenta the function of creativity because Yazats themselves are considered to be created by Ahura Mazda in confirmation of his boundless possibilities in creation. Consequently, Ahura Mazda is the creator of not only the whole good world

(physical), but also the spiritual, including all sorts of divine beings. So, in Yashta there are lines:

I created Mithra like this
What I am
Worthy of reverence.

I created the formidable Varahrana
merciless fighter against the fiends of hell (6.p.47,94).
etc. On the basis of a rigorous analysis of the Avesta material, O. Vedendons, E. Benvenist, R. Cener, J. Asmussen, and others recognized the common dogma of Zoroastrian creation studies, i.e. idea of creation (2.p.237-244).

This dogma, as L.A. Lelekov wrote in the end, consisted in the undivided cosmogonic autocracy of Ahura Mazda. According to the ideas of Gat, the creative spirit belonged only to the supreme instance - Mazda. However, researchers, confused in the terminology of Ghats, often make incorrect conclusions about the distribution of the functions of Amesh Spenta. In fact, various epithets of the supreme instantium practically appear in the Gathas, retaining the chances for the future distribution of the functions of the Heptada. Complementing this provision, one can pay attention to one more fact: the Yazats (the deities in Yashtakh) are in no way connected with Amesh Spenta according to the system of Vahu Man, Art Vakhisht, Spenta - Armaishiy, Hshatra Varya, Haurvatat, Ameretoth. On the contrary, the Gathas do not mention the names of the Yazat, Yashtov deities, rooted in their mythological past. Yazats, unlike Amesh Spenta, who are the guardians of the higher spiritual spheres, are independent functionaries, guardians, guards, protectors of individual, more earthly social and natural phenomena. For example, Mithra a thousand-eared, a thousand-eyed protects the good world, takes care of the sun, fights against evil, etc. Similarly, Varahrana acts as a militant fighter, a fearless warrior against lies and her creatures in various guises; Tishtriya (Tire) fights against the drought maiden Apaoshi. Along with the warlike functions of Ardwi Sura Anahita, Ashi act as givers of desired benefits. But this is not a gift, but due to sincere wishes, sacrifices, for true faith, etc. Khurshed's function is more independent: his appearance brings prosperity, and general welfare on earth.

Here it is necessary to dwell on one of the moments of the interpretation of Khurshed Yasht. The text of this hymn is divided into two parts. In the first, the sun is praised. Its rays are likened to flying horses, golden arrows, in a moment reaching the limits of all worlds. This mythological good world, not tarnished by the intervention of Ahriman and his various manifestations (lies, virgins, Pairiks, all sorts of temple artists, etc.), in this case Hvanirata, was created at one moment at dawn by the spirit of almighty Ahura Mazda. As can be seen from this, the yazat are not created by Amesh Spenta. Moreover, as L.A. Lelekov aptly sneered, they do not have separate "departments" in the natural world, they also took care of the areas of their activity indicated by Amesh Spenta (2, p.238-239). At the Indo-European level, the question of creationism can be viewed on the materials of the Rigveda. Comparison of its data with the Avesta makes it possible to evaluate a higher level of organization of Zoroastrian views in relation to ancient Indian, based on communal principles. As can be judged by the Rigveda, in her system of worldview no instant is observed, with the function of a creator. Cosmogonic characteristics were carried by different characters of the Rig Veda, sometimes not even gods. And there are no accounts for

gods and deities of various levels in the Rigveda. Compared with the Avesta, which reflected the early class state of society with elements of early forms of statehood, the Rig Veda stood at the level of communal primitive religious ideas.

Avesta served more highly organized social, class relations, with some elements of the political system, although for precise localization, say, dahyu or zanta does not have a specific indication in it. In this regard, it should be noted that the Avesta reflects in itself a system of nanos, vis, zantu, dahyu, with the corresponding legitimate rights of management of these public organizational structures: nmanopati, wispati, zantupati, dahyupati. In this case, Marty "man", one individual with his sincere faith, selfless devotion to the ideas of Zoroaster, is a decisive factor in the triumph of Truth, Lies and the destruction of its all manifestations. In Yasna 31.7 (ie, 4-stanza "Ahunavad Ghats") expresses the idea of God's omnipotence, immensity of his power, which was not in archaic Greece and India. In short, nothing could precede the creation of Ahura Mazda. If the Rigveda cosmogonic act followed after the previous "raw material" in the words of L.A. Lelekov, the Avesta, the material world is considered to be the product of an intangible spiritual source, in this case fravashi - the very source of all the intangible elements of the material world. Moreover, fravashi mobilized to fill all the space, as well as being guardians of the good begun, the material being intangible. Fravashi act within the spirit created by God the benefits of peace, which includes people, wildlife, plants, water, earth, stars, etc. How many elements in the material world, so many fravashi.

Consequently, Ahura Mazda, as the creator of the physical and material world, begins its activity from the creation of the spiritual principle. The Fravashis, originally created in Granodmani by the will of Ahura Mazda, connect with their material incarnations and go through all the stages of his life with him, after the death of the physical "master" they return to Granodmani and remain there until the eschatological end of life. This dogma, widely known by other religions of the world, thus originates in Zoroastrianism. In Yasna 32.8 (Akhunavad of the Ghats, 5-stanza) Zarathushtra curses one of the cultural heroes of the dozoroastrian mythology, who created Var, who brought water to her, who expanded the earth three times to Yim for arrogance and disbelief, etc. In Houma Yasht, suddenly Zarathushtra is declared Yima as his successor. And in the second Fragard Videvdata Vara Yima, after he was expelled for his arrogance, is transferred to the care of Zarathushtra. In the 19th Yashta, the regalia, mythically, the king passes from the king-kshatriya Yima to Zarathushtra, the spiritual beginning of society. So, at least, he understands this 19th Yasht A.Sorno in his article "Zoroastrianism", published in the "Encyclopedia of Early Religions" (XII t) as early as 1921. In the 46th stanza "Yasny" (i.e., the 4th stanza of Ustavaiti Gat) there is another unexpected discrepancy with the general idea of the struggle of Zarathushtra with the pre-Zoroastrian hero Yima, which impedes the prophet's goals with his popularity. In this case, Zarathushtra inherits from Yima not only his Vara, but also the power over the bridge in the kingdom beyond the grave - Chinvad. This interpretation was proposed by B. Lincoln in his article "The herriman of the dead", published in 1980 in the journal Indo-European Studies (JIES, No. 8. - p 41-59). Thus, the above discrepancies in the content of individual parts, as in the case of the relationship between Yima and Zarathushtra, show deliberate priestly processing of particularly important

moments of the Avesta material, in order to reconcile it with the new conditions of social, political and spiritual life. The above materials, showing the internal discrepancy of some plots, postulates, ideas of Avesta, exclude the possibility of unified reconstruction of religious foundations, the mythological layer, theological system and other Zoroastrianism. From the last examples it is clear that the Zoroastrian clergy, when religion reached the status of the state, deliberately tried to eliminate the contradictions between the parts of the Avesta, smooth out sharp and clearly catchy moments. This is especially well demonstrated by the variability of Yasna and Videvdad on the one hand, Gat and Yasht on the other. Ghats almost deliberately do not want to know about Yazata, speakers in Yasht. Under the priestly editorship of Videvdad with his scrupulous and compulsory details of the Zoroastrian ritual, he did not even have the opportunity to pay due attention to the presence of spiritual principles in it.

Concluding Remarks: In general, we can conclude that the Avesta, regarded as an integral system of exposition of the foundations of Zoroastrianism, is in fact a multi-layered monument to the high intelligence of humanity. Despite the internal contradictions of the structural and substantive, as well as ideological plans, despite the loss of the greater part (17 of 21 books), the Avesta was and remains a phenomenal monument for studying the history of the spiritual culture of humanity.

As for the above examples, meaningful inconsistencies in parts of the Avesta, this question should constitute the subject of a special study.

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