

Historical and Social Bases of Evil Symbols in the Avesta

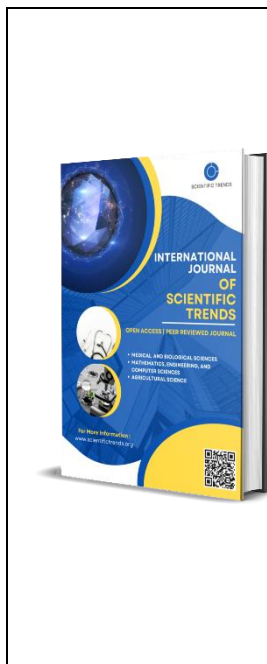
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Abstract:

The article discusses the historical-social roots, moral-philosophical interpretation of the forces of Ahriman, the chief of evils in the Avesta. Scientific analyzes have been carried out to show that Ahriman's giants, such as Apaosha, Saini, Buji, Bashi, Bushasp, Sij are the head of all the impurities in the world, the head of vices, the source of oppression, and they cause various diseases in humans (changes in human skin, pigmentation disorders, etc.).

All the symbols of evil distract a person from the path of Truth and prevent him from doing good deeds. Zoroastrianism, on the other hand, demanded absolute faith in religion and its practice from the heart and vigilance. Therefore, all phenomena of existence, whether natural or social, are presented in the Avesta as a contrast between good and evil.

In the Zoroastrian society, the responsibility assigned to a person is to be stable and firm in the path of goodness, to overcome any factors that distract him from goodness, not only to believe in the right of the good world of the creator, but also to serve the development of this world.

Keywords: zoroastrianism, Avesta, antropomorf, zoomorphic, Ahura Mazda, Axriman, Apush, Duruges, Buji, Saini, Baishi, Bushasp, Sij.

Introduction

Zoroastrianism describes the world through two opposite, mutually hostile poles. Existence is considered a battlefield between good and evil. In the beginning, Ahura Mazda created only the noble being [17]. However, Ahriman, the main cause of evil, continues to appear in the guise of innumerable evils against all virtues. In the Avesta, this monster is called “Anhra Mainyu” - Axriman. In Persian and Turkish, “Axriman” is defined as the enemy, the world of evil. According to the views of the peoples of the ancient East, it is one of the two original species [15]. Axriman is mentioned as a symbol of evil in all eras, literary and philosophical sources. In the “Younger Avesta” Ahriman is the leader of all the monsters, that is, of all evil forces. It is the beginning of the world's total impurities, vices, oppression. He narrows the sky, puts confusion and sadness in people's hearts. All ruse, trick, hypocrisy, cunning is his craft. His closest assistants are the beasts (“daiva”). Demons: Akamana - evil mind, Aishma - anger, demon of war, Araska - envy, Uda - prostrate, laziness, Aka - tasha - demon of ulterior interests, Bushyasta - laziness others are Ahriman's assistants. And the assistants of the monsters are the Duruges. They belong to the

category of angry women [10.11]. Ahriman is ultimately defeated in his battle with the forces of goodness. According to mystical sources, this battle will end at the end of twelve thousand years and Ahriman will be completely defeated. As a result, the age of Ashah-truth begins [1].

As mentioned above, the Zoroastrian ideas are the various forms of Ahriman, the manifestation of all evil, and at the same time, the forms of manifestation of “False” negative universal functions [16.160]. Below, we will try to analyze a number of expressions of evil according to their areas of concern. Apaosha monster is described as Apasha in Askar Mahkam commentary. Pahlavi (called “Apush” in Middle Persian texts).

It is its duty to create a dry appearance of Evil. The dictionary meaning of the word Apush (Aposha) is “covering, drying”. According to the context of the text, Vorukasha dries up all the waters of the sea (“source of water symbolizing the sea of life”). In Avesta, it means drought, lack of rain. In the Avesta, Tishtriya (Tishtri), the protector of life-giving moisture and the sea of Vorukasha, is opposed to Apaosha. In particular, the existence of a shrine dedicated to this deity shows that the tradition of belief in Tishtriya (understood as an example of the star Sirius) has ancient roots among the gods of nature [2]. Tishtriya-celestial shining star Vorukasha descends from its place in the form of a white horse to protect the water from Apaosha. In the guise of a black horse, Apaosha Vorukasha enters the battle against him. This cry of Tishtriya reaches the people in the early morning. Prayers and applause are said in his honor. Then Tishtriya finds strength and throws Apaosha a distance away from the shore of Vorukasha sea. The water of life survives Apaosha’s eroding and drying up. Then the waters of Vorukasha will connect with the waters of heaven. Rains fall from the heavy clouds that shed moisture. Red-blue is wet. Remembered Tishtriya climbs to the blue sky and returns to the bright place [3.76-77]. Thus, the demon Aposha will be eliminated. However, it is clear that this event is a cyclical event and that it entered into a figurative mythological interpretation in the Avesta [12].

In the Haurvatat (Khurdad Yasht) verse of the Avesta, there is a mention of Bujii monster [1.231]. This monster mentioned in paragraph 2 of “Khurdod Yasht”. “Whoever remembers Amshasipands and especially Khurdad in a fight with a thousand times a thousand, ten thousand times ten thousand, a hundred thousand times a hundred thousand monsters, Nasv, Hashi, Bashi, Saini and Buji will stay away from him” [1.231]. From this definition it is understood that these monsters are mainly disease-carrying giants. In the Zoroastrian society, it is said that all diseases are created by Ahriman. Avesta scholar Ibrahim Purdowood also confirms that the word “buji” means disease. In Avesta, from the list of evil forces, Buji, Hashi, and Ahriman are the manifestations of perception. In particular, Bujii devi is also a symbol of evil. This will be eliminated when prayers are made in honor of Khurdad in the line of monster Saini. Bujii monster also has disease-causing properties. It is Khaurvatag-(expression of health) to Khurdad contradicted. Therefore, Saini represented both disease (the opposite of health) and the disease-causing giant.

Among the symbols of evil, the demon Hashi also opposes Saini, Buji, and Khaurvatat. Based on the “health” essence of Khaurvatat, Hashi is also related to the meanings of demon and disease. [1.351]. In addition, Hashiy refers to something unclean. The expression Haram Harish in our language is a remnant of this concept. However, there is reason to say that the word harish in the phrase has undergone changes in the sequence like hash (y) hash+i+y > kha-r-sh > harish. In folklore, the word harish is preserved in one narrative. It is said that when Alexander the Great

conquered Yerkurgan (the current name of the ruins of the ancient fortress of Karshi), its ruler left the city in the form of “harish it” with the help of a spell. In this place “harish it” has the meaning of emaciated, sore, scabbed [9.12]. So, the word “hashi” combines scabies, sores, and the image of an evil giant that caused it.

Demon Bashi is also the name of one of the evil giants. Whoever recites the Khurdad (Khaurvatat) ode, recites it by heart without making a sound on the tip of his tongue, imagines it, recites it aloud, and then draws a karshvarza (line) around it while standing, will be freed from the evil influence of the demon Bashi [15].

Another idea about Buji is reflected in calling it “Ola Buji”. It seems that this phrase contains a remnant of an old idea about the type of disease. That is, the disease caused by Bujii is probably due to changes in human skin, pigmentation disorders. It is known that in Avesta (such as “Arđvi Sura Yashti”, “Ashi Yashti”) it is specifically stated that the donation brought by people with spots on their bodies (paysa-pes, lepers, emaciated people) is not accepted [3. 45-46].

When it comes to the Saini devi, it is also considered one of the evil types - a type of devi or disease. This species is mentioned only once, as a symbol of evil, in verses 2-3 of the fourth “Yasht” (alqov) of the Avesta, “Khurvatat (Khurdad) Yasht”. Avestan scholar Ibrahim Purdowood, who did great work in translating Avesta into Persian and providing scientific explanations, showed that Saini is not just a giant, but probably the name of one of the diseases [1.351]. This assumption can be approved. Because, Khaurvatat (Khurdad) is among Ahura Mazda's comrades-in-arms, responsible emanations with the quality of “health”. When describing it, adjectives such as “health, integrity of the four limbs” are used. Logically, in order to eliminate the demon Saini, it is ordered to recite prayers and perform prayers in honor of Khurdad. Therefore, Saini represented both disease (the opposite of health) and the disease-causing giant.

Among the symbols of evil, the demon Hashi also opposes Saini, Buji, and Khaurvatat. Based on the essence of “health” of Khaurvatat, Hashi also depends on the meanings of giant and disease [1.351]. In addition, Hashiy refers to something unclean. The expression Haram Harish in our language is a remnant of this concept. However, there is reason to say that the word harish in the phrase has undergone changes in the sequence like hash (y) hash+i+y > kha-r-sh > harish. In folklore, the word harish is preserved in one narrative. According to him, it is said that when Alexander the Great conquered Erkurgan (today's name of the ruins of the ancient fortress of Karshi), its ruler left the city in the form of a “harish dog” using a spell [9.12]. In this place, it is stated that harish means that the dog is emaciated, sore, scabbed. So, the word “hashi” combines scabies, sores, and the image of an evil giant that caused it.

Bashi devi is also the name of one of the evil giants. Whoever recites the Khurdad (Khaurvatat) ode, recites it by heart without making a sound on the tip of his tongue, imagines it, recites it aloud, and then draws a karshvarza (line) around it while standing, will be freed from the evil influence of the demon Bashi.

Bushasp - This giant with names like bushasb has the forms “Bushyasta” or “Bushasta” in Avesta. The meaning is “the one who comes before”, that is, the evil force that enters the human soul from the beginning. It is said that “bushasp” means “sleep, dream” in Persian dictionaries. In Zoroastrianism, oversleeping was condemned and applying lipstick to sleep was considered one of the worst habits. In fact, a sleepy person is weak in faith, indifferent to good deeds and prone

to sinful deeds. It was believed that a lazy person, who sleeps from time to time, will be distracted from doing good deeds by the demon Bushyasta, who surrounds him with his long arms. Among the people, the words “do not sleep easily” and “don't be careless” may were used in reference to this giant.

In Middle Persian, the demon Sij also used the meanings of “absence, suffering, oblivion” according to its function. In the Zoroastrian literature Bundakhishn (cosmogonical work) Sij demon is described as the same as Marishvana. Sij demon has a different aspect than Marishvana [6]. This is harming the babies in her household. For three years people who did not fasten their belt (of faith), did not recite the “Goh” (of Zarathustra), did not sing the “Arvi Sura” of Obon Yasht, and did not pray for his gratitude, he (Marishana demon) will be strengthened [2]. So, Marishana is a giant of amnesia that serves to forget the truth.

It is known that Zoroastrianism encourages a person to always live with a good intention, a dream of good, to speak and act with a good thought, and thoughtlessness, contrary to this or denial of the thought is considered as turning towards evil. In this respect, lack of memory (Marishvana), lack of thought, denial of mental quality (Tarumayati, Payrimayati) can be considered as a series of spiritual and philosophical-ethical issues located on the same line [5; 6; 7.25.].

In short, all the symbols of evil that we have analyzed above lead people astray from the path of Truth and prevent them from doing good deeds. Zoroastrianism, on the other hand, required an absolute level of belief in the religion and its practice, from the heart, with vigilance.

Therefore, all phenomena of existence, whether natural or social, are presented in the Avesta as the opposite of good and evil [4.11]. In this case, the responsibility assigned to a person is to be stable and firm in the path of goodness, to overcome any factors that distract him from goodness, not only to believe in the right of the good world of the Creator, but to serve the development of this world.

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