



A Study of Pre-Islamic Religions in Afghanistan

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Abstract

The magical and vast nature of Afghanistan has been one of the most essential factors in the implementation of strategic plans of great powers throughout history in this part of the world including its strong economy in the Middle Ages and the tall mountain ranges, plains, and flats, desert areas, rivers and the special geopolitical situation showed the magnificence of the country to the explorers. Therefore, yesterday's Khorasan and today's Afghanistan hosted them at certain times, and the powers came and went, or they were dissolved among the native people with their cultural and ideological mixing. The arrival of pre-Islamic religions is one of the consequences of those movements, whose remains include golden cups from the treasure of Flaul Hill, Greek works of Ai Khanum, vases with Roman sheaves, small Indian plates found in Bagram, and luxurious jewelry. Tala Tepe and thousands of other remains talk about the artistic, cultural, and religious mixing of this ancient region. Receiving works from many places such as Hoda, Bamiyan, Bakhtar, Gandhara region, etc. in Afghanistan is a clear expression of the existence of Greek-Bactrian civilization and the spread of Greek culture and ideas with our religious mixtures, before the spread of the holy religion of Islam, as Gandhara was the main route of trade caravans and the passage of Buddhist missionaries to the eastern lands of the country, it was considered the first place to build Buddhist statues. In Bamiyan, Salsal is 55 meters high and Shamameh is 35 meters high, and it stamps the seal of Buddhism on the forehead of the time. The art of high-quality paintings indicates the existence of another religion called the religion of Mani, which was inspired by the Indo-Greek style in the spirit of the industry of the Sassanid period. Shivaism and Brahmanism in Kabul and the coronation of Rayan Kabuli in the region of Shiyuki (Shiva's place) and Andaki (Andra's place) in the southwest of current Kabul, and Shiyuki idols of Shiva and Andaki idols of Indra and Brahma existed because these two are considered to be the lords of the Brahmins. Here still possible to visit those places and hold special ceremonies there, which indicates the existence of this religion in Afghanistan before Islam.

Keywords: *Greco-Buddhi; Zoroastrian; Manichaeen; Brahmanical; Mithraic; Veda; Avesta*

Introduction

History should not be subject to politics because these two serve two completely different purposes, politics is about the distribution of power within society, but history is an attempt to reach the truth about the past, power, and truth that are incompatible with each other. However, in order to reach the truth, we need to know that: Afghanistan is the birthplace of conquerors such as Alexander the Great, the son of Philip the Greek in (337 BC), Temuchin the son of Yesuka the Mughal who was later named Genghis the Great Emperor in (1206 AD), and Firoz the Sassanid Shah of Iran and other countries were subjected to military attacks, but they were faced with the brave resistance of the men of this region, and the results declined. They invaded the country or affected it or imposed their interests and beliefs on them. The spread of Avestan, Greek or Greco-Bactrian, Kushan, and Buddhist civilizations was one of the pre-Islamic civilizations, and a pattern of different religious, artistic, and technical schools and its integration with native art had a significant impact on the ideological formation and civilizations of this land. Therefore, it is necessary to categorize these beliefs with depth and precision and present them to our dear readers.

Pre-Islamic Religions in Afghanistan

Although materialist historians have written the reason for the emergence of religions before Islam as follows: At first, the fear of loneliness and fear from the surrounding environment forced humans to believe in order to support them against a stronger force, but today, this way of thinking has been removed from the human encyclopedia, because the progress of science, especially the supernatural sciences, has clearly stated the roots of religions, which can be summarized as follows: New psychology and metaphysics has proven that four emotions form the dimensions of human existence: the sense of self-realization, sense of origin (**etiology**), sense of perfection and aesthetic sense. The sensation that manifests itself after growth and puberty is a sense of self-realization. It means, when a person reaches the age of (5), he/she becomes aware of his/her existence and says: I am. Then the sense of etiology shows its effects, thus man perceives everything around him that is a cause for that object, so as soon as he has reached the stage of full physical development, the effects of his perfection will appear, then aesthetics. The scholars of new metaphysics rely on facts and say that when the early ones became aware of their existence and observed their surroundings. According to the same sense of etymology, they realized that: this world must have an origin and source which is other than these external beings.

The religion of the Aryans was the Vedic religion, Veda means knowledge that is obtained through the ear, not over the eyes, and this term shows that the Aryans were not yet familiar with writing, and their ideas were spread orally, as in the holy scriptures phrases like have been heard exist instead of have been written.

In this religion, many gods and natural elements were worshiped, such as (Dyaus) gods from the sky, (Indra) from the nature of thunder and lightning, rain and storm, (Varuna) from fire, (Soma) from wine (Mumtahn, 1991).

Because their self-aware understanding had not yet reached the stage of perfection Therefore, when they saw the sun, they thought that the sun was the origin and the first cause, so they worshiped the sun. Gradually, their understanding of etiology became stronger until they believed in the only God as the cause of all things. (Khalkhali, 1985).

Bakhtar was the birthplace of the ancient Aryan beliefs, the Avesta religion, which took the place of the Vedic beliefs first in the north of the Hindu Kush and then in the whole country and lasted for a long time. The Achaemenids accepted it with their encroachment on the lands of Ariana and spread it to the lands of Fars. During Alexander's conquests, Ariana's religion was Avestan. If Alexander tried to eradicate it, he could not destroy it. Naturally, it became much weaker and the reason for its weakness

was not only military actions and wars but also the arrival of new ideas that spread from the West with the Greeks and later the East from India with Ashoka's missionaries. As Diodotus I and II that were father and son, had minted Zeus Promachus on their coins, and Heliocles, the last Greek and Bactrian king who reigned in the north of the Hindu Kush, also did this, Similarly, the silver cup that was obtained from Badakhshan and preserved in the "British Museum" has the image of Dionysus, the lord of wine and grapes. (Dionysus) was famous and had his followers in Kapisa, Nangarhar, Bakhtar, Badakhshan, and Sogdians in the north and south of the Hindu Kush (Kehzad,1946).

Religion and the style of religious architecture in Ai Khanum: brought about the biggest changes in the style of religious architecture. The existence of a magnificent building with three side prayer rooms was built outside the city and near its entrance gate. It proves that the main location of the map of the Western Greek temple was there. This view is questioned when we pass over these buildings that are a little Greek and look at the religious ceremony of worshipping the "Panton" (assemble of lords) or the complex of Greek gods that have been placed in them the Greek House of Lords is the only symbol that can be seen on the coins minted by the kings of Greece and Bactria. Another witness of the worship of Hermes is Herakles. Although the eastern character of the temple building conveys more of Eastern Greek theism. Perhaps, the worship of Zeus and Mithras is seen on the Indo-Greek coins with the Persian hat, thus the religious architectural style with an eastern aspect assumes religious mixing between the Greek settlers and the natives of the region (Kamban, 2007).

In the age of Xuanzang 's journey in Afghanistan, there were eighteen religions whose subjects conflicted with others to prove their character, and each had separate followers and leaders. In Afghanistan, there were two Buddhist religions, the Great and the Minor. The famous and popular Buddhist books are Vinaya (Liu), discourses (Lun), and Sastras (Kong) and the teachers of these books had six orders and the one who went through these six stages reached the position of teacher and went to the temples on an elephant decorated with precious jewels such a person should have fluency in the language, correct logic, research, and the influence of words, but if someone claimed this position and did not have such qualities, they would put him in the corner with a special name called unworthy, and they smeared his face and body with mud and dirt, and if someone deviated from the position of teaching and religious life and indulged in luxury, they exiled him from the spiritual circles forever. The professors of religious sciences were highly respected by the rulers, and the people believed in Buddhism and its leading religions (Habibi, History of Afghanistan after Islam, 2011).

The Parthians usually called the king the brother of the sun and the moon, and this point is imprinted on some coins of this era, and they believed that the god of dowry resides in the existence of kings. Perhaps, in their opinion, the king was among the gods after his death, which is the same as the beliefs of primitive peoples. The Sassanians did not consider the Parthian family to be followers of the Zoroastrian religion, and apparently, this was also the case. In the Parthian empire, there were other religions as well. During the Parthian period, astronomy and astronomical rules were of particular importance (Mohammadi Far, 2010).

Mithraism

Mitra, Mithra, Mehr, or Surya means the sun and reminds of the ancient Aryan elementalism of the Vedic era, and gradually reached the point where became the owner of religion and followers. (Kehzad A. A., 1389) Mithra was one of the natural elements that had a great position in the Avesta era. In the Vedic period of our history, there is a hymn with the same name (Mitra) and he is one of the lords of the species, who, like Anahita, was famous in Ariana and Western Asia from the Chalcolithic period (The Copper Age) onwards. During the history of our country, his name was mentioned as a combination of the accent (T) and (Ta), this is one of the general language characteristics of these two eras of our country. So, there is no difference between these two names, and both expressions of the same kind

translate the word (Mitra), especially in the form of its Vidi pronunciation (friend) and in the Avestan language, they have interpreted it as a (contract, treaty, and agreement), but the first meaning is considered more correct, and it is from this name that in relatively recent times, the word (Mahr) in Dari language for the sun came into being. In the Vedic poems (Mitra) is mentioned as more connected with (Varuna) and (Andhra) and in Avesta it is stated in the sentence (Yazata) and it is mentioned that (Ahura Mazda) is on the mountain (Harabarzati), (Pamir) that the sun rising above it he had built a house for (Mithra) because brightness is the symbol of truth, Mithras was considered to be the genie or God of the sun, truth and justice. The important thing that is vital for our country from the point of view of the history of the industry is another brief Avesta fabric in which it is noted that Mithra was moving on a vehicle drawn by four white horses. (Mithra) or the god of the sun with a vehicle and four white horses mentioned above is displayed on the roof of the arch of the (35) meter structure in Bamiyan and is still available. Worship of (Mithra) also followed this path step by step. Vedic and Avesta era has established his name, position, and praise more than ever in Ariana. During the time of Artaxerxes II (Ardeshir II), Mithras was mentioned for the first time after Ahura Mazda, and it shows that this god of the Vedic and Avesta became famous in Fars in a relatively recent period (Kehzad A.E., 1946).

Zoroaster and Its Religion

Zoroaster was the prophet of the fire worshipers, it is the name of a man who is believed to be prophethood by the Maghan cult, and it seems that (Jehangiri) is the same Zoroaster as the fire worshiper (Dehkhoda, 1965). Zoroaster was the prophet of Zoroastrians, it is the name of a man who is believed to be a prophet by the Maghan cult, and it seems that (Jehangiri) is the same as Zoroaster of the Zoroastrian religion (Dehkhoda, 1966). Zoroaster means (owner of a yellow camel). Their holy book was Avesta. The seed of the important principles of Zoroastrian teachings, the belief in God "C", the only one, "monotheism", as well as the existence of Ahrman against Yazdan, "dualism" and the salvation of the individual and the world can be seen in the oldest part of the Avesta, the Gathas. Zoroastrians respected fire and tried to maintain it (Qutabi, 2009).

Zoroaster's father was (Pourshesab) and his mother was called (Daghdo) or (Daghdoye). According to Bertoldi's theory, it had a heavenly color, and it was such that his guardian angel went into the plant (Homa), and with the sap he took from it, he became a priest who was making a holy sacrifice. At the same time, a ray of heavenly glory descended on the chest of a girl who had a noble and honorable lineage. The priest married the girl, and the two prisoners of their bodies, the angel and the light, mingled with each other, and Zoroaster was born. He laughed out loud on the day he was born. In the religion of Zoroastrianism, they believed in the Sarat Bridge centuries ago in Takharistan, which they called (Chinood) and according to their belief (Chinood) is a bridge that the good and the bad cross, and the good people go to heaven and the bad people go to hell (Talaghani, 2010). According to Abul Hasan "Tanhayeh", Zoroaster was born in (1080 BC), and according to another narration, he was born in (1010 BC) and laughed during his birth. Some other historians determine the year of his birth in the first millennium and around (600) BC, about three decades before Alexander the Great, at the same time as Pythagoras and Thales, or a little before Heraclitus. The Zoroastrian era was close to the era of the Manuchehris and Zabellis. (Tanhayeh, 1994).

The author of the book (General History Volume I) written by Hossein Ali (Momtahn) writes: The Greeks believe that Zoroaster was born in (5500 BC). Brussus, the Babylonian historian, considers the time of his birth to be closer and the date (2000) BC. Some of the new historians who believe in the existence of Zoroaster express that he lived between the (10th) and (6th) centuries. When Zoroaster was born, people worshiped animals, the earth, the sky, and their ancestors. For example, Mitra is the goddess of the sun, and Anahita is the lord of earth and fertility. Zoroaster rose to reform religion and society (Momtahn, 1991). Zoroaster had three daughters named Farni, Tahiriti, and Purochist, and three sons named Ist Vastra, Urost Nera, and Hur Chishtra (Wasiq, 1953).

Avesta contains religious poems and is considered the oldest Aryan work. It has been said in this book that: Zoroaster's teachings were recorded by (Jamasep) who were his son-in-law, disciple, and successor. Two official versions were transcribed (copied) from the original version that was written with gold ink on cowhide and kept in the royal treasury but it was lost after the invasion of Alexander the Great. Its scattered parts were collected by the order of Balash Parthian King in the year (51-75 BC) and Ardeshir I in the year (224-24 AD), the founder of the Sassanid dynasty, which includes five parts: Yesna (worship and praise), Vesperd (a collection that was sung during religious rituals), Vendidad (recommended morals, purity, and truth), Yashta (song of praise), Small Avesta (prayer) (Mahmoud, 1998). When Zoroaster reached the age of (30) he made findings, the first of which was the discovery of intuition. Historians and researchers consider the Zoroastrian religion to be monotheistic (Khalkhali, 1985).

Some historians have considered the first appearance of Zoroaster in the century (7-8 BC). Zoroaster was the messenger of the new religion of the Aryans and the creator of the Avesta book and the continuation of the first generation of Zoroastrians whose ancestors also had spiritual and religious influence on Aryans (Moradi, 1389). Zoroaster was born in the year (6316 BC) and historians have different opinions about Zoroaster's birthplace. Orientalists considered Bakhtar as his birthplace more than Balkh, some other historians such as Khodad, Balazri, Ibn al-Faqih, Masoudi, Hamza Esfahani, Yaqut, Qazwini, and Abolfada have considered Zoroaster to be from Azerbaijan, and some historians like Tabari and his followers like Ibn Asir and Mirkhund considered Zoroaster to be from Palestine and believe that he migrated to Azerbaijan from there. Ancient Greek and Roman writers such as Cephalon, Tion, Justin, Arnobius, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Ammianus-Marcelinus, Arusius, Augustine, Isidorus, Hugo Saint Victor believe that Zoroaster was from Balkh. These authors believe that Zoroaster was not only a spiritual magician but also a general who ruled Balkh. Mills, another orientalist, said that Zoroaster was from Balkh. Root, a Sanskrit scholar, studying the Avesta calendar, considers Zoroaster to be from Bactria, Hern and Thiel, Avestan scholars, have also confirmed Root (Taloqani, 2010).

Mir Abdini, the author of the book (Balkh in Persian History and Literature) writes: Zoroaster from the Medes went to the West, they think that the magicians contaminated the religion with magic and Zoroaster wanted to make reforms because the magicians rebelled against him, he went to the West and found benefits there. The point is that Zoroaster was a Medan, and in this view, according to the traditions of the late Middle Ages, they believe that Zoroaster was from the Medes. On the other hand, most authors of the Old Testament call Zoroaster a magician, and Med and they rarely count as Persians (Mir Abedini, 2011).

Mir Gholam Mohammad (Ghobar) informs about the variety of beliefs and religions during the Kushan period and Zoroastrian, Buddhist, and Brahmin ways, and he also said that they were equally respected and supported by the government. The book of Avesta was created by Zoroaster or Balkhi Zoroaster in 1000 BC. For several thousand years, under various historical events, Avesta could not remain pure and complete in its original order and compilation. Here are some examples of Zoroaster's poems: (I ask you, Ahura, what is the punishment for that person who works and tries to do evil and lie for the sake of kingship? That evildoer does not do anything else except hurt the cattle and peasant workers. Although he is not harmed by the peasants, none of you should listen to the words and rulings of the liar. Because he will make the ladies, the city, and the village needy and corrupt so, drive him away with your weapon).

It is written in Zoroaster's Gathas: Anger must be restrained, defend yourself against oppression, O those who seek the reward of their pure character by the truth, from the truth that the holy man is one of his friends, his grave will be in your house, O Ahura (Ghobar, 2008).

The religion associated with the name Zoroastrianism has achieved a prominent position in the history of religious beliefs in the world. The basis of the Zoroastrian religion is the belief in duality, which is precious in terms of moral impact, that is, the belief in the struggle between good and evil in the whole world. Avesta is the holy book of Zoroastrians according to Edward Meyer: Zoroaster is the first person who left original works in the history of religion. (Vasily Vladimirovich Bartold, translator: Hamzeh Sardavar, 2016).

Historians and other commentators know that Zoroaster was alive many years ago, even many years before Cyrus and the Medes. Still, we do not see any mention of the Medes and Persians in Zoroaster's words. The Greek historian Xanthos believes that Zoroaster appeared in 1080 BC (Tanahi 2008).

Zoroastrians considered fire and earth sacred, therefore, according to them, the bodies of the dead were unclean and impure, so they did not bury them in the ground in order not to make the earth impure. Therefore, they put the bodies of the dead (in the Silent Tower) so that the animals and birds would eat them and the earth would not be polluted by them, as today's fire worshipers still perform this ceremony. Mazdasena narrates from the author (Tabserat al-Awam) that Zoroaster was well-versed in astronomy and magic. Zoroaster built a house underground and collected alimony for several years there, then he told his son that when he was about to die, dig a grave next to the same ground and make it so that he can see that crypt, then Zoroaster died, and the son did as he said. When the people returned, Zoroaster went to that crypt and retreated there for a while, and then he came out and brought with him a book called Zand, and its variation is called Pazend, and from now on he preached. As he used to say: God brought me back to life and sent me to preach to you, Magus is my religion and you should follow it (Of course, the religion of Islam called him a liar, and Muslims consider his words to be a denial and contrary to our belief) but some people accepted his preaching and merged his religion. When Gashtasib the governor of Bakhtar and Esfandiar heard this, they imprisoned him. Finally, Zoroaster (according to Mazdasena and Zoroastrians' beliefs) showed his disdain and in the end, Gashtasib released him from prison. At the age of 42 and in the year (618-BC), Zoroaster gained a lot of power and turned to the court of Gashtasib bin Lahrasib and invited them to the Zoroastrian religion.

It is said that at that time Gashtasib and Esfandiar asked him for decisive proof. Zoroaster immediately prepared himself and ordered them to melt the copper and then pour it on his head, then they did it. Before they poured molten copper on his head, Zoroaster made a medicine to ward off it and rubbed it on his body to fend off harm.

When Gashtasib and Esfandiar saw this incident, they were astonished and had a firm belief in Zoroaster, and finally, they joined his nation and became so fond of this religion that anyone who turned his head during the invitation of the Magi, Gashtasib prescribed various punishments for him. (Wasiq, 1953).

Parallel to the rise of Islam, Herat, and its branches had Zoroastrianism. The discovery of a human bone inside a clay jar from Borjigi and Jirghi shows the existence of the Zoroastrian religion, and signs of the Zoroastrian religion have been seen in the Kazak Sarai Sang Taloqan, the center of Takhar province. Zoroaster died in the year (583-BC) and at the age of (77) years old (Taloqani, 1389). The name of one of the gods of the Aryans, who were considered demons in the Mazdasena religion, in the beginning, demon, and diva meant God and one of the lords of all kinds, Zoroaster brought him down from the position of divinity, and from that day on, he got an ugly meaning (Javid, 2013).

Bahrudin (Shariq), the author of the book (Brief History of South Turkestan) writes on page (13) that the Zoroastrian religion was promoted and propagated by Zoroaster Sepantman in Balkh in the millennium BC. Research has been done about Zoroaster's birthplace, but the final result which everyone agrees on him has not yet been reached. The reliable source of the Zoroastrian Bible is the Avesta, in the

discussion of the Gathas, we find that: the Zoroastrians lived around the old city of Balkh (Bukhdi) and were considered a noble family of that land. For this reason, Zoroaster's family records had kinship relations with some influential ministers and rulers at the time of the announcement of intellectual reforms and propagation of the new religion (Bawari, 2015).

Brahmanism

Brahmins refer to (Hindu priest) . In the society of that time, like other Indian Aryans, there were four classes of people called Brahmins, which included (po-lo-min) which means priests, Kshatriyas (Tesa-Ti – Li) which mean military rulers, Visaya (Fa – Shi – Li) which mean merchants and tradesmen, Sudras (sho – to – Lo) that means intangible (Habibi, History of Afghanistan after Islam, 2011).

Brahmin religion in the 9th or 8th century BC, to establish their status, they brought out religion from the Vedic religion, which is called the Brahmin religion. Brahmanism or Hinduism believes that there is an absolute and abstract soul in the world that has been and will be forever and that he is the main source of existence. This eternal spirit has appeared in the world by the three gods and has made its deeds appear it is from the divine goddess and is related to the trimotor Sanskrit and there are one or two temples by this name in India (Mumtahn, 1991).

The ritual must also be an institution of the thoughts and teachings derived from Zoroastrianism and the beliefs of ancient Hinduism and the process of evolution of religion and philosophy in India. Indian myths usually bring to mind a particular view of the forbidden pantheism, which considers the idea of being a creator and a creature as a principle. The myth of the creation of the Indians found in the old Brahmani myths indicates a pantheism that although they begin with confrontation and plurality, we apparently read that in the beginning there was a lonely and depressed creator who sought a pair. According to them, She was as tall as a woman and a man in her arms." So, she cut herself in half, then a husband (Pati) and a wife (Patni) emerged from it.

Therefore, every segment is half separated, so this place is filled with a wife. They blend and thus a human being is born. Then the woman thinks to herself, how will she mingle with me now that she has made me like herself. So let me hide myself. She came in the form of a cow, He also became a bull, so he mixed with him again, then a herd was born. The woman became a mare, he became a horse, she became a donkey, and he became an ass, and thus he created everything, all pairs, from the most important to the ants. He knew and said to himself that I am the creation itself because everything that exists was born from me, so the creation appeared (Tanahi, 1999).

Archaeologists led by Yoguchi and Kwa Yama from Sikandertepe, 25 kilometers north of Kabul, found the statue of Uma Maha Shiva, which has a Brahminical inscription written in it, and its translation is as follows: There are three principles in one body, including Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara.

Vishnu is the doer; Brahma is the action and Maheshwara is the truth. The origin and principle and the great Mahadeva express the deities of God (Maheshwara) Vishnu and Brahma. Those who do not have a clear vision and a pure heart will not be able to access it. For sure, it is based on the Brahmin script, which is common in India and is related to the 7th-8th century AD (Azizi, 2013).

Rig Veda, the book of Brahmins, was written between 1500 and 2500 BC in Afghanistan and was later completed in India. Zoroaster's poems were memorized orally. Because the Avestan literature of Afghanistan, which also had verse poetry, was oral literature (Ghobar, 2008).

At the same time as Xuanzang's trip to Takharistan in (644-630 AD), a small number of people practiced Brahminism. The main duty of a Brahmin is to study and teach the Vedas and perform religious ceremonies. The origin of Brahmins is unknown, but they have had power over India since ancient times.

Brahmins did not have the right to engage in work aimed at gaining wealth and they did not own anything and divided their lives into four stages: In the fourth stage, they are completely cut off from this world and its interests and devote themselves to good deeds and thinking about divine affairs (Taloqani, 2009). Archaeologist Grishman conducted research in Kapisa in 1342. He said: a thousand Brahmin monks lived in this area (Zhaker, 2012). In the south of the Hindu Kush, the Brahmin script was used, which was written from left to right (Ghobar, 2008).

Shivaism

Shiva came to the throne in the Kushan era during the reign of Kujula Kadphises around the years (65 AD) and captured Balkh. During his reign, he spread the Shivai religion in the West and minted gold coins weighing 8 grams. (Mir Abidini, 1371) Shiva, the creator and at the same time the destroyer of creatures, has been continuously praised and worshiped by Hindus in the north and south of the country during the last three thousand years, and he has been one of the basic sects of their religion (Momtahn, 1991).

Manichaeism

Manichee is attributed to Mani, in relation to Mani, they say Manani, and Manavi is analogous to someone who is a follower of the painter Manichee (Dehkhoda, 1345). A garden was placed on him with four sections, full of patterns and colorful like the artang Manichee "Farrokhi" Manichee is the name of a famous Aryan painter whose mother belonged to the Parthian family. He fought as a prophet and was killed by the order of Bahram I, and the famous books Manishapurgan and Arjang contain paintings and pictures attributed to him (Khan Leri, 1987).

Manichee created the way and method of Zandiqah, and in the Pahlavi language, Zandiqah referred to those who rebelled against the book of Zand which is the description of Zoroaster's Avesta. The followers of this religion are known as (Sadiqun) and (Samaun) that the first group regulated the religious affairs of the Mani religion and the second group are pure followers. The first group, which is considered the clerical class of the Manichee religion, follows a very closed and exhausting life regime, they are prohibited from marriage, drinking intoxicants, and eating meat, and must avoid lying, dishonesty, greed, idolatry, and witchcraft. And Samaun, who are pure followers, also abstain from some acts such as adultery, witchcraft, miserliness, lies, and idolatry. Mani religion is a collection of ancient Iranian, Buddhist, Indian, and Christian beliefs that later expanded to China, Algeria, Syria, Egypt, Turkmenistan, and Mongolia and flourished in the West. Then there was a massacre of the Manichaeans in North Africa. In the 13th century, the Manichaean religion was destroyed in the West and the property of the followers of this religion was confiscated. It seems necessary to know the sign of the face of one of the followers of Manichaeism more than others, that he is (Muzdak) in the year (460 AD). Mazdak, impressed by the struggle of light with darkness, realized that the origin of all evils and crimes on earth is two things: The desire to have sex with women and the desire for wealth and treasure, so the solution to these two evils is to declare both of them as common and wealth and women are not the property of any specific person. (Ebrahimi M. A., 2015).

His father's name was Pātik Babak bin Abu Barzam and his mother's name was Maryam. He was born in the year (216 AD) in Madiner village near Babylon. Mani was skilled in spiritual medicine. One of the Sassanid Shah's relatives was not cured in this way, he was imprisoned and died in 277 AD. Then they cut off his head and hung it next to the gate of that city and stuffed his skin with straw. Manichaeans are called heretics and infidels. The name of his book is Arjang or Artang, which contains beautiful paintings and religious instructions of Mani (Khalkhali, 1985).

Mani was born into the Parthian family at the end of the Parthian dynasty and the beginning of the Sasanian dynasty, and lived in Iran and neighboring countries during the first three-quarters of the century of the Sasanian rule. According to another story, Mani is accused in Ctesiphon after the discussion with Bahram Shah that: He is no longer able to treat anyone and he is not a person of hunting and fighting, so he is imprisoned and chained and he dies under torture in the year (273 AD). After his death, Mani's head was cut off from his body and hung at the city gate, and his body was mutilated. Mani's predicament was due to the impersonality of the Sassanid kings and the influence of the nobles and clerics of that time (Tanahi, 1999).

In the 3rd century during the time of Shapur I, a person named Mani created a religion that was a mixture of Iranian thoughts and Christianity and wrote a book called Arjang or Artang (Akhtaryan, 1996).

What is certain for us is that Mani and his religion have caused the prosperity and spread of painting and the elevation of the beautiful art of book design. In order to express the philosophy of his religion, Mani had ordered to build halls called Nagaristan and on the walls of these halls, the story of the creation of man and his destiny based on the beliefs of his religion would be painted, and his followers would find the philosophy of his religion in the paintings of this Nagaristan. The foundation of painting and miniature of our land is based on the Mani school of painting. The design and color of the Manuscript painting play a significant role. The colors in the painting of this school are sharp and polished, and more than red, dark green, and light purple colors are used in the sky-blue background (lapis lazuli) by using a lot of gold and silver for polish. Fortunately, the paintings of the Mani school have been found in several other palaces belonging to the Sassanid era in Soviet Turkistan in recent years. It should be said that the style and style of Aryan painting after the Arab invasion until the Mughal invasion is the same as that of the Mani School, and there are many examples of Aryan wall paintings and books from the Dilami, Ghaznavid, and Seljuk eras (Azhar Heravi, 2011).

Zarvanism

The late Ali Akbar Dehkhoda says in his dictionary: The Zarvanian sect whose members followed the Zarvan religion was popular during the Sassanid period. Belief in Ashe and Mehr is evident from their names, which is probably related to the Zarvani religion. One of the Parthian kings named Volakhsh also did a great service to collect Avesta texts (Mohammadi Far, 2010).

Buddhism

The word Buddha means wise and philosopher, the time of its origin is the 6th century BC in India and its bringers are (Sidhata-Ganotama). The religious book of Buddhists (Tri -Pi -Ta -Ka) means three baskets of knowledge. Buddhism is a philosophy of self-sacrifice and Sufism. Its main basis is to leave behind the outward and material pleasures of the world. From Buddha's point of view, life is nothing but suffering, fatigue, and hardship. One must overcome oneself in order to reach the real world, beauty, and the ultimate goal. It has billions of followers. The holy city of Buddhists is called (Lhasa), which is located in Tibet. Their great religious leader is (Dani Lama) (Qutabi, 2009).

During the time of the Kushans, many temples were built in connection with Buddhism, and these temples are all over the highways, but a little far from civilization in the maze of mountains and places that have a quiet space for the clergy to access their daily needs. Also in Kabul, in the branches of Jabal Khaja Safa and Shah Shahid, Vader Khord Kabul, Shiyuki, Tepe Maranjan, Surubi, Chakri, Charkh Logar, Gol Dara, in several valleys of Bamiyan, especially its center, which can be said with certainty It formed a very important corner of the Buddhist triangle. Kanishka's fiery love for Buddhism brought him to the position of Chakravartin and conqueror of Jambudvipa. which the Chinese tourist had heard from the people in the 7th century. The Kushans built Buddhist temples beyond the borders (Salahi, 2006).

This religion arose from the land of ancient India and was spread to our country Ariana or today's Afghanistan in the age of Mauryan king Ashoka in the third century BC, and its founder is Si Dhartaghurtama Buddha. It caused the creation of a great culture. Buddha's father was Suddhudana and his mother was Queen Maya. Buddha was from a family named Kshatriya, from a religious sect, and was a warrior. Buddha's birthplace is now called Romindai (Ebrahimi, 2014).

Buddha lost his mother in 563 BC and his father raised him in a luxurious palace with all facilities until he left the palace at the age of 29 he saw old age as the result of life, and illness as the result of health, and death as the end of life, and lastly, he saw a monk who lived his life calmly and indifferently to what was happening. So Buddha practiced austerity for seven years, and at the age of 36, when he was deep in thought under a fig tree, it is said that on the night of December 8, the truth was revealed to him, and from then on he was called Buddha (Tanahi, 1999). Mir Abdul Rauf (Zakir) writes in his work, according to Ahmed Ali Kohzad: In the temples around Bagram or Kapisa, there were three parts of Buddha's being: Buddha's baby tooth, Tathagata or Buddha's skull and Buddha's head hair (Zaker, 2011).

The astonishing statues of Buddha in Bamiyan, which are considered to be among the largest statues in the world, called Salsal (53 meters) and Shamameh (35 meters), used to amaze the viewers. Stupas and ruins of temples discovered in the south and north of the Hindu Kush are also one of the characteristics of the Greco-Buddic school of art.

Religious scholars were respected in the court and Kushan society. Buddhism spread from Afghanistan to China and Central Asia, whose traces have been discovered around Samarkand and the ruins of the Khotan Temple. The ancient artifacts discovered from the temples (Shutrak and Shamshir Ghar) with Buddhist statues and temples are all from the first Christian century and belong to the Kushan period.

Religious works were written on a type of tree bark that resembled paper with black and sometimes red color. From the beginning of the first century AD, the Greek and Bactrian industry gave way to (Greek and Buddhist) industries, which was a branch of the Greco-Bactrian industry. This new school was created from the difference between Buddhist religious thoughts and the Greek industrial spirit (Ghobar, 2008).

Chinese tourist Juan Zhang visited Bamiyan in the first half of the 7th century. He says that: from the point of view of belief, they followed the Henayana method, meaning the small way of Buddhist salvation, and two golden statues with ornaments stood in their porticos. In addition, he mentioned the reclining Buddha statue, which was a thousand steps long and was in a state of nirvana (dead or sleeping). He also says that at that time there were ten Buddhist temples in Bamiyan and several thousands of followers who lived in caves. And there was a kingdom in this place, which was called Shir (lions) of Bamiyan. Later, another tourist named Hui Tchao entered Bamiyan in the year (727-AD). He mentioned the abundance of Buddhist temples and priests. The fame of Bamiyan Shirs (lions) has been seen in the works of Arab historians until the 4th century AH. (Zaker, 2012).

The important Buddhist centers in Afghanistan are Hadda Buddhist temple in Jalalabad, Hadda Tepe Shetr, Pat Khobshaneh (Pat Khoshaneh) in Logar, Chakri Minar, and Surkh Minar, Khum Zargar is located near Shaikhan or Shikhankhel plain.

Kapisa and Bagram Buddhist Temples, Shalokasrike and Yahara or Shutrak Temples in Bagram, Paitaweh Temple in Kohdaman, Fundiqstan Buddhist Temple in Ghorband, Hazar Sam Samangan, Shah Bahar Buddhist Temple in Ghazna, Nobahar Buddhist Temple in Balkh, Chom Qala Baghlan, etc. (Ebrahimi, 2004).

Thousands of Buddhist monks from faraway places to receive Buddha's teachings, to reach Bamiyan, they endured the difficulty of the road and the difficulty of path, and even today, after the ashes and ruins, when tourists step into this land, filled with wonder and splendor, they tie their travelogues to the forgotten history of Bamiyan. This civilization, attraction, and the same Bamiyan in distant times caused the immature world of that time to feel such a strong need for the civilization of this region the thirst and eagerness to see all the glory forces many travelers to endure the hardships of the journey to be satisfied with the art and civilization of Bamiyan. Therefore, Bamiyan was a safe place for self-cultivation, and for this reason, the embrace of Bamiyan Valley became a suitable platform for accepting Buddhism. Afghanistan was considered the second most important Buddhist center in the world after India today Afghanistan was the first land that accepted Buddhism outside of India (Azimi, 2009).

Xuanzang, a Chinese traveler, traveled in Afghanistan for 14 years in 644-630. He says that the religion of most people was Buddhist, and their clerics were from the (Tokyo) tribe of Turks. At that time, Tardo Shad, the son of Khan Yilduz, was ruling in Takharistan, he was killed by an internal conspiracy, and his son took over the reins of affairs and treated the Chinese traveler with kindness. He asked Xuanzang to meet with the scholars of the country and interview and discuss with them. The Chinese tourist accepted this request and got to see some of the great scholars of Buddhism in Kunduz, Balkh, Bamiyan, and Bagram, and in Kunduz, the capital city of that day, he met a scientist named (Dharma Sina) who had a lot of knowledge apart from his own country, he also studied in India, and his fame reached the lands beyond the Pamirs, and in the province of Sink Yang, he has nicknamed the master of laws. The scholars of Kashghar and Khotan believed that no one could debate with him. This Chinese tourist met another scholar named (Prajanakara) in the Nobahar Temple of Balkh, who was the head of the group of monks and scholars in his land, and he accompanied Xuanzang to Ka Pisa. In addition to this, there were two other scientists in Nobahar Balkh, and there lived two great monks who had a lot of knowledge of religious philosophy and religious laws. He had seen many statues of Buddha in Bamiyan, one of which was very big and their appearance was covered with gold, jewels, and various paintings. Buddhist rulers in Bamiyan converted to Islam during the Abbasid period. The great temple of Buddhism was there until the 3rd century when Yaqub Leith "Safar" destroyed it and sent its idols to Baghdad. (Talaghani, 2009).

Another Chinese Buddhist monk named Shi Fahian left Chankan in 399 AD to provide rare religious books and returned to Nankan after 14 years of travel in 414 AD, he translated many Buddhist books into Chinese and also wrote his travelogue. From Kashghar, Fahian visited the upper reaches of the Indu Sea, Gandhara province, Peshawar, and Benun with the present temples of Jalalabad. (Habibi, Historical Geography of Afghanistan, 2010).

Abdul Ahmad Javid says in his book under the title Avesta on the page (58) that: Yaftalians were Buddhists. In the 4th century AD, Alexander the Great entered Afghanistan twice in order to enter Central Asia, the last time was before the occupation of the Indian continent, and he stayed in this region for about eight years and married Rakshana in Balkh. He founded Alexandria as Hari or (Herat), Arakozia (Kandahar), and Alexandria of the Caucasus or (Kapisa) in his name. Civilization of Buddhism in Afghanistan was introduced by Indians in the 3rd century BC. It reached its peak during the Ashoka period, and with the mixing of these two different cultures, the period of civilization (Greco-Buddhism) emerged, which lasted for almost two centuries. (Ghoryani, 1996).

Libraries were transferred from palaces to temples because temples were better and safer than palaces, religious leaders and clerics gathered in temples and tried to attract their followers, so libraries helped the visitors as a center of religious treasures. In 1930, during his efforts in Bamiyan, the archaeologist Musi Hagen managed to discover the documents that showed the existence of the library from the eastern part of the 35-meter Buddha statue. Bamiyan was one of the important Buddhist centers

in the Hindu Kush area during the Kushan period, from which missionaries poured into Balkh, Faryab, Jawzjan, and even China, Central Asia, and called people to convert to Buddhism. (Rahimi, 2001).

In the book of the History of the Kings (Han), which records the events of the year (113 AD), it is said that: Khan Zang, a Chinese traveler, visited a temple built on the slopes of Palawan Mountain in Kapisa in 632, and based on the request of the monks of the temple, the amount of gold, pearls, and jewels that one of the Chinese hostages during the time of Kanishka Shah Kashgharzamani had surrendered his son (Shen Ban) with a number of his family members as hostages. They were buried at the foot of the great statue of Mahakala during the dedication of the temple, which was done for the hostages until the destruction was restored by the same capital. Therefore, the monks asked the Chinese tourist to open the head of the temple so that the temple can be repaired and restored. Chinese tourist says: In the inscription that was discovered from this place, it was written: "Whenever the temple or Sangharama is destroyed, the people can take out the treasury and use it to restore the temple." In this way, the Shalokia temple or Srike Viharaya, the residence of the Chinese hostages, was fully inhabited until the first half of the century (7th - AD), and the damage that had been done in it was restored, because he was a Chinese tourist, the topic was interesting to him, so he stayed there for a month. (Zhaker, 2012).

According to Kohzad, Buddhism entered Eastern Afghanistan with Ashoka's missionaries in the second half of the second century BC, and gradually the scope of its spread expanded, and in the eastern half of Afghanistan, both in the north and in the south of the Hindu Kush, it lasted for more than a thousand years until around the 9th century. But the vestiges of the Avesta religion did not disappear completely during this period, but both religions fought each other for centuries until the era of Kaneshka and later (at the end of the second Christian century), the Buddhist religion prevailed in the eastern parts of the country, and the center of the Avesta religion was moved to the southwest of Ariana in the Lower Hirmand area and remained there until the arrival of the Islamic missionaries. (Kohzad, 2005).

There are more than one and a half billion followers of Buddhism, who are concentrated in China and Central Asia. Gautama Buddha was one of the princes of India who withdrew from his religious interests and guided the people for a long time. Inner peace, self-sacrifice, and struggle with ego are the contents of Buddha's thoughts. (Akhtaryan, 1996)

Buddhism in the east of the Parthian empire gradually gained a wide influence and, in the year, (260 BC-AD) Ashoka, the great king of India, converted to Buddhism and sent many preaching groups to Balkh land. In the second century BC, there was a great schism among the Buddhists. A group called Hinayana (small circle) remained authentic and loyal to Buddhism, and another group called Mahayana (big circle) mixed Buddhist beliefs with popular beliefs of other Indian religions. It was the latter religion that came to Central Asia in the north, and the Kushan king Kanishka accepted it along with other religions in his court in the second century AD. Kanishka defined the principles of the new religion and its rules and erected two Buddha statues in Bamiyan. The Parthians soon became familiar with this religion, and according to Chinese documents, the Parthian prince translated Buddhist texts into Chinese for the first time. (Mohammadi Far, 2010).

The Vihara Buddhist temple was built or restored and rebuilt during the time of the Kushans (Qoshkhanians) of Turk descent in Balkh. Its traces remain around this old city, at that time Balkh city was a Buddhist center and a huge temple was built there. It is possible that this temple was originally built by the Sumerians or the Elamites to keep the god of the mother statue and other sacred things. (Shariq, 2009).

Conclusion

Afghanistan is an ever-living and open-air museum of the world, where historical attractions and different religions before Islam arise from a mixed culture and taken from different civilizations in the world, because the most powerful countries attacked this land and transferred their beliefs and beliefs among the people of this region, and in the history of the ancient world, Greeks, Indians, and Persians have been creators of superstitious thoughts and ideas, and they have even spread their ideas to China and Central Asia through this passage. There is no doubt that Afghanistan is the crossroads of Asia and different ethnic groups have lived there like a bunch of flowers with different beliefs and celebrated their religious festivals and local rituals with the presence of thousands of tourists and the gates of Balkh Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Manichaeans were open and glorified that Nobahar Temple or the Great School of Buddhism or Nava vihara of Balkh hosted visitors.

In its long history, Afghanistan has been a highway of conflict between the people of West, Central and South Asia. Many invaders and immigrants entered Afghanistan from this country to reach their final destination, and they passed that the Indo-Aryan people were one of those immigrants. However, in the Middle Ages, due to the multiplicity of religions, our country suffered regional fragmentation and intellectual chaos, and regional governments or tribal kingdoms were formed. That is, at the beginning of the first half of the seventh century before the spread of the holy religion of Islam, the state of the country needed a serious change and national unity, which did not exist. Different sects did not get along with each other ideologically, therefore, the field of intervention of foreign powers was favorable for the spread of new ideas. The Kushan kings accepted Buddhism and strengthened it, built temples, and organized the Fourth Jirga of Buddhism in which 500 of the most prominent scholars of Buddhism participated. The Yaftals opposed Buddhism until they reached India, but after the defeat of the Gupta Empire, when their remnants entered Khorasan (modern Afghanistan) again, they strengthened it and built the Salsal Temple in Bamiyan.

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