



THE FIRST RELIGIOUS-HISTORICAL SOURCES OF ISKANDER THEME

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ABOUT ARTICLE

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Abstract: The genesis of Iskander theme is related to the distant past, and it has a history of twenty centuries even when compared to the period of Alisher Navoi (15th century). The basis of the topic is the life and work of the famous Macedonian ruler Alexander (356-323 BC). Most plot lines, characters, motives, episodes and interpretations are directly or indirectly connected with this core. But a group of experts and researchers who have studied the history of the issue believe that the genesis of the topic was even before the birth of Alexander. They hypothesize that a revelation (dream) in the prophetic book "Daniel" (Doniyor) in the third part of the Torah (Tanach) – "Holy Writings" (Ktuvim) – is the first prophecy about Alexander, in which it was reported that Alexander would lay the foundation for a great empire in the future.

In this article, the fragments considered as the foundations of the subject in the Torah are studied in detail, as well as the information about the history of Alexander recorded in "The First Book of the Maccabees" (2nd century BC) from the non-canonical books of the Torah is analyzed. There were researched the compatibility of the information found in these two sources with the Eastern ones, the tradition of khamsa writing, in particular, the interpretations in "Khamsa" by Alisher Navoi, or how they were changed in the process of transformation, as well as their causes.

INTRODUCTION

Jangnoma or Shahnoma is one of the eternal themes of world literature. Its essence is the life and work of famous rulers, generals or fighters, and there are not so many such heroes who had a strong influence on world literature and created traditions or series of works in the history of literature. One of the few heroes whose name is forever preserved in the pages of history and who has achieved literary fame throughout the world is Alexander (the man called Alexander or Alexander the Great in the East and Iskandar Dhul-Qarnain in the West), who is equally important to the literature of the East and the West. It's hard to meet such a figure shown by mystery. The fact that there are more than 80 versions of Alexander's novels in 24 languages alone gives an idea of how widespread the subject is in the world. [The Book of the gests... 1962, 1] The presence of Alisher Navoi's epic "Saddi Iskandari" in this series confirms that the topic is directly related to Uzbek literature.

The topic of Alexander has a syncretic nature, and its roots are scattered in four directions: Alexander's worldliness goes to historical sources, his prophethood or governorship to religious sources, his wisdom to philosophy or wisdom literature, and some motifs and episodes of the topic go to folklore. One of the complications of researching this topic on the example of Alisher Navoi's epic "Saddi Iskandari" is that information of these four types is mixed. In order to correctly understand and interpret them, to distinguish them from each other, it is necessary to know the genesis of each of them, to observe their historical evolution.

With the requirement of this goal, researching the sources on the topic of Alexander on a chronological basis leads to the intended goal, since chronology is very important for studying the genesis of a certain topic and turning it into fiction.

The first notes on the history of this topic are related to pre-Islamic religious teachings (Judaism and Christianity), and there are notes on two important foundations of the topic: Alexander and Gog-Magog. Therefore, we will begin by studying the first religious foundations of the subject.

THE MAIN PART

From a chronological point of view, the Bible is considered the first religious source containing information about Alexander (The Holy Bible 2000, 942-946). The Torah (Tanakh) consists of three parts – the Five Books of Moses (Torah), the Prophets (Neviim) and the Holy Scriptures (Ketuvim).) is found in the book of the prophet.

Daniel, who lived in exile in the Babylonian Empire and gained attention in the palace by interpreting the dreams of ruler Nebuchadnezzar, lived long before Alexander's campaigns, but it is believed that they met each other. The book of the prophet "Daniel" is the first of the apocalyptic books in the Torah, and its main idea is to convince that the savior of mankind will come in the future, establish the rule of God, and after that there will be no pagans left on earth.

It should be noted that most biblical scholars believe that the book "Daniel" was written long after the time when the prophet Daniel lived. Daniel lived in the 7th-6th centuries BC, but philologists confirm that the language of the book and the grammatical forms in it are very close to the language of the period after the 4th century.

One of the characteristics of the book "Daniel" is that the events in it are told about the future in a mysterious way, the allegorical character and symbolism are prominent in the narrative. These aspects are also crucial in understanding the messages about Alexander.

Chapters 6 and 8 of Daniel are directly related to the topic we are studying. In particular, at the end of chapter 5, Daniel prophesies that Belshazzar, the ruler of Babylon, will be succeeded by 62-year-old

Darius. Chapter 6 describes the relationship between the prophet Daniel and King Darius. Although there are records related to Darius in this part, there is no information related to Alexander.

Section 7 is also indirectly related to the theme of Alexander and one of its important motifs is the “horn” (muguz), and the story, fairy tales and some episodes about Alexander the Great in Eastern literature, especially folklore, show that Alexander has a horn, which distinguishes him from other people and it is told that he always tries to keep it a secret. Of course, in ancient times, kings were believed to have unusual signs that are not found in others, as a result of being patronized by gods and the heavens, and being viewed as possessors of mysterious power. On the other hand, among the people, such views did not appear by themselves, there were certain grounds for them. For example, in chapter 7 of the book “Daniel” we can see that the motifs of rulership, king and horn are imagined in relation to each other. [The Holy Bible 2000, 942 – 944][1]. In this section, Daniel’s dream is described as follows: 23 My interlocutor told me: “The fourth creature is a symbol of the fourth kingdom that will rule the earth. This kingdom is different from other kingdoms. He crushes and crushes the whole world. The ten horns of the creature are the ten rulers who rule the kingdom. Later, a new ruler will sit on the throne. This ruler separates himself from the previous ten rulers and deposes three rulers...” [The Holy Bible 2000, 942 – 944].

First, this dream came in the chapter before the one about Alexander. Secondly, the 6th part (verse) of the 7th chapter is also considered a prophecy about Alexander. In it, Daniel predicts that he saw a four-headed, winged lion in a dream and that in time the kingdom will be given to him. Thirdly, the fourth creature seen in the dream is a symbol of the fourth kingdom that rules the earth, that creature has ten horns, and that the ten horns will be torn off by a new horn, which is a sign that a new ruler will come to the throne later is being said. In general, the issue of the kingdom and the horn are described here as interconnected. Another interesting point is that in the next section, when the metaphorical story about Darius and Alexander is told, they are depicted as horned animals - a ram (Darius) and a buck (Alexander), the horn motif is again mentioned in connection with the adventures of these two rulers is taken.

This is how Daniel’s vision of the ram and the goat is described in chapter 8: 1 “In the third year of King Belshazzar’s reign, another revelation came to me. 2 In this vision, I am in Shushan Castle in the province of Elam *, I was standing on the bank of the Uloy river. 3 I saw a ram standing by the river. It has two long horns *. The second branch is longer than the first*. 4 Ram beat himself to the west, north and south, swimming everything he encountered on his way. No animal could stop him or save his victims. The ram was doing what he wanted, and his strength was increasing more and more. 5 While I was watching this, a buck appeared from the west. The hooves of this horse, flying like a horse, seemed to not touch the ground. He had a huge horn between his eyes *. 6 He ran frantically towards the ram, 7 angrily threw himself at it and swam. Due to the force of the buck’s blow, both horns of the ram broke off. The ram could not stop. Taka knocked him to the ground, and no one could save the ram from him. 8 Taka grew incredibly strong, but at the height of his power, his huge horn broke. Instead of the broken branch, four big branches turned to the four corners of the world *. ... 15 As I was trying to grasp the essence of the vision I had seen, and I was standing there with my head frozen, suddenly a human figure appeared in front of me. ... 18 While he was talking, I was lying face down on the ground, passed out. But he touched me with his hand and made me stand up, 19 and said: listen, I will reveal to you the things that will happen in the time of the end, in which time God has determined to pour out his wrath on the earth. 20 The two-horned ram that you see is the kingdoms of Media and Persia. 21 And Taka is a Greek kingdom. The huge horn between his eyes is the first ruler to sit on the throne of the Greek

kingdom. 22 The fourth ruler who ascends the throne will be weaker than the previous ruler. [The Holy Bible 2000, 945 – 946].

As we mentioned, the book of the prophet “Daniel” is distinguished by its symbolic-allegorical image style. The “four-headed bulls” and “four-horned ram” in it are allegorically considered to be prophecies about Alexander and his empire. The main thesis in these verses is the rulership, and it is noteworthy that it is described in all places by means of the symbol of “horn” (muguz, rog). In the interpretation of the dream, it is clearly stated that the two horns of the ram are an allegorical expression of the Kingdom of Media and Persia, that is, the kingdom of Darius, and the single horn (edinorog) of the buck is an allegorical expression of the Greek kingdom, that is, the power of Alexander the Great. A huge horn growing from the goat's forehead at the peak of its power, quickly breaking off and growing in its place a horn facing the four directions of the world – the rapid rise of Alexander's reign, but not long, his reign from himself It is said that it indicates that it will be divided into four. It is known from history that Alexander's empire in Greece was divided by his generals Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus and Seleucus. Another aspect should be kept in mind at this point, that is, “according to historical evidence, the Persian king, while leading his army, wore a ram's head” (a helmet in the form of a headgear), so the image of a ram must be related to Persian symbolism. [Dallas Seminary Interpretation, 8/27].

On the basis of such images and interpretations, the idea that Alexander has one horn, sometimes two horns, was transferred to Eastern literature, and new false ideas continued to appear. This motif spread widely among the peoples of the East, especially after the revelation of the Qur'an, which was caused by the name “Dhul-Qarnain” in the Qur'an. When the teaching of Islam came down, the word Dhul-Qarnain mentioned in the Qur'an as “two-horned” and he himself is believed to be the same person as Alexander, who was predicted in the book of “Daniel” in the form of a “one-horned” horse. as a result of this, in the Eastern peoples, in particular, in their literature, Alexander is called “Iskander the Great”, tales about the fact that Alexander or the Great had (two) horns, that the revelations about him in divine books indicate that he is the possessor of divine power, myths and legends arose. However, it was unreasonable to consider Alexander and Dhul-Qarnain as the same person, in particular, the word Dhul-Qarnain in the Qur'an means “two ends of the world, West and East”. There is no mention or allusion to the horn (muguz) in the Qur'anic verses. In short, the horn motif, as an important component of Alexander's theme, had a strong influence on the folklore and written literature of the peoples of the East, and even in the tradition of Khamsanavis there are references to it.

In this way, as important aspects of the book of the prophet “Daniel” related to the topic we are studying, it is possible to show that the issue is related to the rulership, the appointment of rulers by God, the horn motif, allegorical-symbolic image, etc. In later periods, the stories of Alexander created by the peoples of the East also have a special symbolic-metaphorical depiction of events, that is, the large number of episodes with symbolic-metaphorical content in Alexander's novels is, in our opinion, indirectly related to the above symbolic-allegorical depiction of the relationship between Darius and Alexander is done.

Three important points in Daniel's prophecies should be taken into account:

1. Alexander defeats Darius.
2. Surrender of Darius by Alexander without guile or treachery.
3. Alexander's defeat of Darius is God's will.

All of these three aspects are preserved as core motifs in the main epics about Alexander created in the East, only the second motif underwent a major change in the process of reception.

The First Book of Maccabees, the first of the eleven non-canonical books in the Bible, is also significant in its relevance to the topic we are studying. As we noted, researchers connect the writing of the book “Daniel” with the Maccabean revolt that occurred in the 2nd century BC.

In “The First Book of Maccabees” there are the following notes about Alexander:

a) 1- in sections 1-9 (verses) of the chapter (surah):

1. Alexander, the son of Philip of Macedon, who came from the land of Kittim, after his victory over Persia and Darius, the king of the Medes, and first establishing rule over Hellas (Ancient Greece),
2. He waged many wars, captured many strongholds, and killed the kings of the earth.
3. And he went to the ends of the earth and took spoils from many nations; the earth became silent before him, and he and his heart were exalted.
4. He gathered a very powerful army and ruled over regions, nations and rulers who became his tribute payers.
5. After he lay in bed and felt himself dying,
6. He called the nobles of his servants who had been brought up with him from his youth and distributed his kingdom to them during his lifetime.
7. Alexander ruled for twelve years and died.
8. And each of his servants reigned in his place.
9. And after his death they were all crowned, and their sons for many years after them; and they multiplied evil in the earth [First Book of Maccabees, chapter 6].

b) In the 1-2 parts (verses) of the 6th chapter (surah):

1 King Antiochus, having passed through the highlands, heard that there was a city of Elymais in Persia, famous for its wealth and silver and gold.

2 there was a very rich temple, in which were the gold coverings, armor, and weapons left by Alexander, the son of Philip, king of Macedonia, the first ruler of the Greeks. [First Book of Maccabees, chapter 6].

The information about Alexander in the “First Book of Maccabees” consists of the following, in which the following can be distinguished as important facts:

- Alexander is the son of Philip of Macedon;
- Alexander defeated the Medo-Persian king Darius and ruled Greece;
- He conquered many territories with a powerful army and subdued kings;
- He went to the ends of the earth and received tribute from the native peoples;
- Alexander died of an illness (malaria from being given to wine [Dallas Seminary Interpretation, 8/27]) and, anticipating his death, divided his kingdom among his generals;
- Alexander ruled for 12 years;
- In the temple of Elimias in Persia, there were gold and silver objects and weapons left by Alexander.

It should be noted that the event of the Maccabees took place in the second century BC, after the time of Alexander, from a chronological point of view. It is natural that information from primary sources on the history of Alexander was transferred to this book. But if we take into account that the sources of the real history of Alexander, which have reached us, are related to the 1st century BC and 1st – 2nd centuries AD, it is known that the information in “The First Book of Maccabees” is valuable from the point of view of history. This information about Alexander is historical in nature and contains points that define the core of Alexander’s theme. The first important issue here is whether Alexander is Philip’s real son. This fact was later preserved unchanged in the historical and artistic works of the West, and to this day there are almost no disputes about it. In the East, the question of the lineage of Iskandar (Alexander) has very controversial and doubtful interpretations.

As for Alexander's sense of impending death during his illness and division of his kingdom among his generals, in the Book of Daniel, the news that the single king on the head of the *taka* quickly broke off and four horns grew from the head of the *taka* symbolically indicated that Alexander's reign was much longer. It was said that it was a sign that it would not continue, that the empire would be divided into four. The "Dallas Seminar Commentary" shows that this division was made as follows: Ptolemy, the general, Egypt and the neighboring regions of Asia Minor, Cassander, Macedonia and Greece, Lysimachus, western Bithynia, Phrygia, Mysia, and Lydia in Asia Minor, For Seleucus, the rest of Alexander's empire is given, including Syria, Israel, and Mesopotamia [Dallas Seminary Interpretation, 27/8].

The motif of "Alexander's division of his state among his generals" was preserved with some changes in the Alexander manuscripts created in the east. For example, this motif was transformed into Alisher Navoi's epic "Saddi Iskandarii" [Navoi 2006, 372]. It should be noted that Navoi's images in this regard are also related to the term "Muluki Tawaiif" used in eastern historiography for the Ashkanites, who are the third class of four classes of Ajam kings. This name arose in connection with the division of the administration of the country into separate categories by Alexander [Dinovary 1361 (h.), 65].

The book of Daniel foretold that Alexander's "life would be short" and that the empire he had built would soon be divided by his generals. "The first book of Maccabees" clarifies this issue and mentions the fact that Alexander reigned for 12 years, since Alexander was already alive by the time this book was written. Both of the above information: the short life of Alexander and the details of his twelve-year reign have been preserved in the history and literature of the East. For example, Alisher Navoi did not write that Alexander ruled for exactly 12 years in his epic, but rather emphasized the view that Alexander ruled "for a short time" (XV). However, in the description of the sea voyage in the epic, it is said that Alexander's voyage lasted 12 years in one place, and 13 years in another (LXXVII). Both facts came in one chapter of the epic, and in Navoi's interpretation, these numbers represent the duration of Alexander's sea voyage. In our opinion, the notes about the "12 or 13-year sea voyage" should actually be related to Alexander's 12-year sea voyage recorded in "Oynai Iskandari" [Dehlavi 1988, 237-274].

Alisher Navoi knew Iskandar as a ruler who occupied the land and considered the things he had done too much, so he could not believe that he could do so many things in 12-13 years. Navoi wrote about this in *Tarikhi Muluki Ajam* [Navoi 2000, 217]. Alisher Navoi, relying on historical works, notes that Alexander lived for 36 years and ruled for 13 years [2].

It is known from history that Alexander lived in 356-323 BC, ascended the throne at the age of 20, reigned for almost 13 years, and Alexander lived for 33 years. The same historical fact was almost correctly recorded by Navoi in "Tarikhi Muluki Ajam". From this it is clear that Navoi knew the age of Alexander in accordance with historical truth and even had a clear idea of the period in which he lived. For example, at the end of the epic "Farhad and Shirin", Alexander noted that he lived "2,000" years earlier than him [Navoi 1991, 463].

CONCLUSION

Alexander in the East is the image of Alexander in the West, who has undergone corresponding historical and literary changes – transformations, and their mutual comparison shows how historical Alexander became Alexander, the level and scale of formal and substantive changes in this process, and also since the definition of goals and objectives is correct only from the point of view of determining the synthesis of ideologies of different peoples.

Based on the above analysis, we can say that the roots and foundations of pre-Islamic religious sources, especially in the Torah, and the Alexander theme are reflected in the works of Eastern artists, including Alisher Navoi. The preliminary conclusion in this regard is that the original foundations of the theme in the first religious sources reached the epic of Alisher Navoi without any changes, and he created interpretations that were close to the religious-historical truth, but also harmonious.

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