



# **FROM OUR ANCIENT SOURCES: THE ISSUE OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN THE "AVESTA"**

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**Abstract.** On the territory of Uzbekistan, our ancestors left a rich heritage in the field of nature protection, preservation, respect for natural resources, maintaining a clean and pure environment, preventing climate change, and ecological culture; in the context of today's globalization, the problem of deeply studying the heritage left by our ancestors in the field of ancient and rich ecological culture, preserving the motherland, water, air, and nature, passing them on to future generations in a pure form, and forming an ecological culture among the youth is becoming increasingly relevant. This article discusses the current significance of the heritage left by our ancestors in the field of ecological culture in our ancient and rich historical heritage "Avesta."

**Key words:** Avesta, Vandidod, Ahura Mazda, Zarathustra, agriculture, ecology, culture, Motherland, heritage, nature, water

**Annotation.** On the territory of Uzbekistan, our ancestors left a rich heritage in the field of protecting Mother Nature, preserving and treating natural resources with care, maintaining cleanliness and purity of the environment, preventing climate change, and ecological culture; in the context of modern globalization, the heritage of our ancestors in the field of ancient and rich ecological culture is becoming increasingly relevant, and the problem of deeply studying and preserving the soil, water, air, and nature of our native land, keeping it clean for future generations, and forming an ecological culture among young people is becoming increasingly relevant. This article discusses the significance of our ancient and rich historical heritage "Avesto" in the field of ecological culture, the heritage left by our ancestors today.

**Keywords:** Avesta, Vandidod, Ahura Mazda, Zoroaster, agriculture, ecology, culture, Motherland, heritage, nature, water.

**Annotation.** On the territory of Uzbekistan, our ancestors left a rich heritage in the field of protecting Mother Nature, conservation, careful handling of natural resources, keeping the environment clean and pure, preventing climate change, and environmental culture; in the



context of modern globalization, the heritage of our ancestors in the field of ancient and rich ecological culture, the problem of in-depth study, preservation of native soil, water, air, nature, keeping it clean for generations, and developing ecological culture among young people is becoming increasingly urgent. This article discusses the significance of our ancient and rich historical heritage "Avesta" in the field of environmental culture, the legacy left by our ancestors today.

**Key words:** Avesta, Vandidod, Ahura Mazda, Zarathustra, agriculture, ecology, culture, Motherland, heritage, nature, water.

**Introduction.** Climate change negatively affects the upbringing of the younger generation as spiritually and physically strong individuals, as well as their longevity, primarily due to environmental degradation. For this reason, our ancestors tried to prevent environmental degradation, raised the younger generation to be physically strong, were extremely careful with nature, and protected it like the apple of their eye. Devotion to the sacred land has always been at the center of our ancestors' attention. Love for the Motherland, combined with a sense of the Motherland, has become a vital criterion for our compatriots. Pride in one's country, respect for the motherland, and respect for nature are the heritage left by our ancestors.

To form an ecological culture among today's youth, it is first and foremost necessary to study the climate of the historically formed ecological cultural heritage of our people. The term ecology is formed from the combination of the Greek oikos, meaning house, dwelling, and logos, meaning study, science, and doctrine.

Ecology is also interpreted as a science that studies the interaction between organisms and their environment.

Although ecology as a science or practice emerged in the 12th–19th centuries, it is correct to begin the history of ecological views from the earliest social period of human existence. In this sense, our people, like all nations, possess a very rich national ecological heritage.

In the second half of the 20th century, as a result of increasing negative, i.e., natural and anthropogenic, impacts on the biosphere, an ecological crisis emerged, and the need for large-scale environmental protection increased, the practical significance of ecology increased.

Currently, an ecological approach has become extremely necessary in solving issues of industry, agricultural production, transport, construction, as well as scientific, technical, and demographic problems, and in developing ways for the rational use of natural resources.

The drying up of the Aral Sea also had a significant negative impact on climate change in Central Asia. Firstly, the water of the Amu Darya and Syr Darya does not reach the Aral Sea. Secondly, agriculture in the Khorezm region and the Republic of Karakalpakstan is experiencing difficulties due to water shortages. Thirdly, the issue of providing the population with drinking water remains a very urgent and complex problem. Fourthly, as a result of the drying up of the Aral Sea, salt is rising in the air and covering the sown areas of the Aral Sea



region, even in the Bukhara and Navoi regions. Fifthly, many diseases are arising among people. Sixthly, nature is being harmed, plants are dying, and animals are suffering from various diseases.

Therefore, Uzbekistan acts as one of the most proactive countries in protecting the Aral Sea.

If we study history, we see that nature has always been at the center of humanity's attention. The sacred book of our ancestors, the "Avesta," is no exception. In the code of laws of our ancestors, the attitude toward nature, the motherland, ecological culture, and the upbringing of youth were resolved at a high level.

According to recent data from agricultural scientists, in economically developed European countries (Germany, England, France), special attention has been paid over the last two decades to the cultivation of agricultural crops without the use of mineral fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, and acaricides, which negatively affect the quality of food products. For this purpose, organic substances (fertilizer, compost, green manure) are used instead of mineral fertilizers; fungicides, pesticides, and certain herbal decoctions are used instead of repellents. Pesticides, fungicides, and repellents obtained from these plants allow farmers to grow environmentally friendly products used for feeding young children without additional costs.

Our ancestors cared for nature and protected it like the apple of their eye. The "Avesta" testifies to the deification of nature. If you think about it, they were absolutely right. Because nature is a necessary means for life, humanity, and all living things.

Motherland is an integral part of nature, which is why our ancestors had a special love for Motherland. They honored the Motherland and protected it. A great mystery, abundance, and miracle lie in the care of the Motherland, for the land is the foundation of all wealth and the source of life for all living things.

In the "Avesta," soil, water, and air pollution are included among the gravest sins. It was even customary to bury the bodies of the deceased in special ceramic vessels so that they would not poison the earth, water, or air. Ahura Mazda says that "there is no greater good deed than sowing good, strong seeds on the ground."

Our ancestors, who adhered to the Zoroastrian religion, honored the Mother Earth, which is the main source of human life and life, with great love and care, and did not allow it to become impure. Our ancestors worshipped Mother Earth, water, and fire with their entire being. Spiritual and moral fertilizers and instructions regarding the necessity of loving the earth are invaluable spiritual and universal teachings inherited from our ancestors.

Indeed, in the priceless historical monument of our people, the "Avesta," it is forbidden to pollute the waters of ponds, ditches, and wells. It is also said that a person who sows grain and creates sustenance for people is a person who sows the seeds of piety and nourishes their faith. Following this command of the Almighty was considered better than performing 10,000 prayers or sacrificing hundreds of animals. Planting crops means eradicating evil from the



earth. "The beauty of the world comes from the farmer," it is said in the prophecies - whoever has planted seed in the ground, he brings faith in humanity, the only way that has remained true is a mirage."

It is known that in the early days of the adoption of Zoroastrianism, it was customary to burn the dead or feed them to carrion eaters. For example, the corpse was placed on a special platform made on a mountain or high hill. After being eaten by predatory animals or birds, the bones were collected and buried or stored in a special place, in a container. According to Professor I. Jabborov, such a vessel or ossuary containing one of the bones of the deceased's organs or the skull was called "Ostadon" in science. Such specimens of Ostadon were found by archaeologists in the Khorezm, Fergana, and Tashkent oases.

As noted in the Avesta, the firewood collected for the cremation of the deceased was not used for other purposes; it was burned in vain, and the embers were quickly extinguished with soil and buried.

As society developed and science, culture, and spirituality rose, it was decided to wash the deceased, place them in a special shroud, and bury them at a certain depth; in damp regions, it was decided to keep them in burial mounds, as this custom polluted the air and caused the spread of various diseases when animals or birds that had eaten the corpse touched water bodies. Later, the custom of burning the dead was also forbidden in order to preserve the cleanliness of the environment and to prevent a shortage of firewood.

In the "Avesta," it is recommended that people always wash and comb their hair, wear a hat and a headscarf so that the breath of evil spirits does not touch them, and things in the air do not settle if they fall. It is specifically recommended to wash the face and hands several times a day, and to clean the teeth, nose, and ears. For example, it is recommended to store towels and toothbrushes in a special place, and to bury shaved hair and nails fifty paces away from human habitation, at a depth that cats and dogs cannot dig out. Because in Zoroastrianism, everything separated from the body was considered unclean. A janitor or a housewife who collected trash in front of the courtyard door or on the street was punished with 25 lashes.

Fruit trees were not planted on the banks of ponds, springs, and irrigation ditches. Because if a single fruit falls into water and rots, "one hundred thousand microbes" are spread. A menstruating woman was required to walk 15 paces away from water bodies.

O, Sipitmon Zarathustra! says the sacred source:

"Whoever brings joy to the purified one brings joy to the fire." The water will be pleasant. It will be pleasing to the soil. It will be pleasing to the trees. "Ashavan will please both men and women."

("Avesta." Vandidod, the ninth fargard, p. 149).

Furthermore, statements such as "the land of the cemetery returns to its original state of purity only after fifty years" and "a year after the body of a person lying under the sun falls to the ground, the earth returns to its original state of purity" are frequently encountered in



various parts of the sacred source. In particular, this situation is recorded in the historical source as follows:

"-O, Creator of the world! Oh, Truth!

After the human body is placed in the earth, how long will it take for the earth to return to its original state of purity?

Ahura Mazda replied:

- O Sapient Zarathustra!

After fifty years from the moment the human body is placed in the earth, the earth returns to its original state of purity.

"O Creator of the universe! Oh, Truth!

After how long will the soil of the mausoleum where the human body was placed return to its original state of purity?

**The means of maintaining environmental cleanliness and preventing diseases in the "Avesta" can be divided into the following groups:**

**1. Burying garbage, covering contaminated areas with soil, stones, and sand. In this way, the microbes were killed or reduced.**

**2. Destruction by fire, heat, and cold. In the "Avesta," fire is considered a cleansing and removing of calamities. It is even used to clean clothes from various microbes.**

**3. Chemical method: by burning ash, vinegar, wine, and various herbs (isfand-isiriq, michik, fif, sadaf, onion, aloe, sandalwood). Many of these are still used in the fight against microbes. Chapter 6 of "Vandidod" emphasizes the spread of various diseases through the wind, animals, birds, and flies.**

While calling for the elimination of animals and insects that spread diseases, the "Avesta" strongly calls for the care of domestic animals. In "Vandidod," a person who kills a domestic dog must pay a fine of 10,000 barsum and 10,000 leaves of a plant that invigorates the soul. He must also suckle 1,000 goats, kill 1,000 water beetles, and expiate his sin by killing a fly that spreads diseases. Among domestic animals, it is recommended to follow the rules of keeping cats and dogs, not to cause unnecessary pain to birds and animals, and not to cause their untimely death.

Chapters 5 and 11 of "Vandidod" recommend regular physical exercise, washing the face and hands several times a day, keeping hair clean, and frequently trimming and cleaning nails. It is emphasized that a person should always be full and eat meat in moderation.

The sacred source contains thoughts urging people to maintain cleanliness, adhere to sanitary and hygienic rules, and abandon vile practices that please the giants:

Zarathustra asked Ahura Mazda:

- Ahura Mazda! Oh, light of the universe!

O Creator of the worlds! Oh, Truth!



**What are the most heinous and heinous sins of men, which delight and honor the giants?**

**Ahura Mazda replied:**

**Whoever combs his hair, or removes it, or, after removing his nails, drops it into a pit or hollow without any ceremony, this abominable act is equivalent to blessing the demons with a prayer, strengthening them, and granting them help. (According to Zoroastrian beliefs, everything that is separated from the body is considered unclean; therefore, if the customary purification ritual is performed to purify each organ, the unclean demons retreat into the depths of the earth.)**

**Only a physically strong and spiritually developed person can serve their Motherland and create material wealth for their people. Therefore, each of us must leave behind gardens, prevent environmental degradation, pollution of the natural environment, land, and water, fight for air purity, be a true patriot of our country, and contribute to the upbringing of a spiritually harmonious, healthy generation that respects the values of its ancestors. The adoption of the laws of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Land Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan," "On Nature Protection," "On Water and Water Use," and "On the Protection and Rational Use of Flora and Fauna of Uzbekistan" plays an important role in preventing the sharp deterioration of the environmental situation.**

**Indeed, the exemplary work carried out in our country in recent years to improve land reclamation, the rational use of water resources, the widespread use of modern agricultural machinery, serious attention to crop rotation, the preservation of environmental cleanliness, and the cultivation of environmentally friendly products is yielding results.**

**Conclusion.** The instructive instructions in our great spiritual heritage, the "Avesta," regarding the clean and pristine preservation of the environment, nature, and the Motherland, have not lost their relevance today; on the contrary, they remain relevant and serve as an important source for raising a physically healthy younger generation in our country and fostering ecological culture by fostering feelings such as the rational use of natural resources and care for the Motherland and nature.

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