

Evidences of Unusual Interment and Aspects of Ritual Beliefs at Iran during Iron Age: A Case Study on Southern Coasts of Caspian Sea

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Abstract Although religious beliefs are among the most important aspects of the life of every society no sufficient attention has been paid to the immaterial aspects of the life Gilan people during pre-historic eras and before the invention of writing system. According to archaeological findings, which have been discovered from pre-historic sites of Guilan from Iron Age, these people believed in the life after death and existence of social classes and continuation of the conditions of the dead person during his life in the other world. They offered sacrifices to gods which included both animal and human sacrifices. This was probably done for acquisition of the divine satisfaction. Particular animals like sheep, goat and cow were chosen for sacrifice. At the same time they were afraid of the vicious creatures that could cause harms. In historical eras Guilan residents believed in authentic Aryan gods and resisted the acceptance of Zoroastrianism and instead insisted on their belief in such goddesses as Mitra and Nahid. Thus, in sacred scriptures of Zoroastrians and Iranian literature as well as the belief of the people of other regions they have been referred to as devils and liars.

Keywords Religious Beliefs, Graves of Iron Age, Sacrifice, Historic Era, Gilan

1. Introduction

We do not know exactly when did first beliefs concerning supernatural forces as well as the origin and end of the universe and its originator or originators and the way that world has been created emerge on earth. We even do not know if the past people were more religious than the contemporary men or not. However, statistics show that the number of religious people is declining in some societies particularly the western countries (Giddens 1992). According to the researches, no one of the early tribes lacked the notion of existence of supernatural forces which assist terrestrial man. The annual permission of the growing of green plants out of the soil, renewal of the trees in spring, rain fall and migration of birds and animals and sun rise and sun set and other natural events were not considered to be accidental affairs (Burland 2008, p. 24).

Religious beliefs have played so far a significant role in human societies as regards birth, marriage, and way of life,

death and burial rituals. Although there are two major approaches as to the emergence of religion – a group of scholars believe that religions have undergone through an evolutionary course from the early days of history to this day while some other scholars who believe in monotheistic religions contend that human individuals had been monotheists since the very dawn of human history – in the current essay we only focus on the archaeological data regardless of the aforementioned two approaches and seek to reflect on some aspects of the religious beliefs. Archaeologists and researchers who study the prehistoric time have always been struggling to identify the objects or structures that are in some way related with religion. Such objects as figurines and images on the archaeological objects are considered to be religious symbols. Of course, one needs to note that the context where the items are found is important and play a key role in the attribution of the discovered pieces to religion.

One might say that one of the most significant cases to which one can refer in the study of religion since prehistoric time until today and religion and beliefs have influence them is funeral ceremonies. In this essay we will study the funeral ceremonies in Gilan at prehistoric times. According to the archaeological findings, the history of settlement of humans in Gilan dates back to the early Paleolithic era. These evidences have been discovered from Ganjpor and

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Darband cave sites at Rostamabad in Roodbar County (Biglari et al. 2011). After this era until Epipaleolithic times no sign of human settlement was found in Gilan. This site which was dated based on few discovered stone tools is attributed to Neolithic or Epipaleolithic era (Biglari and Abdi 2001). The only Neolithic evidences which have been released are discovered from Arg Dasht site (Nokandeh 2005).

After this era until the Iron Age the conditions of Gilan are unknown. Thus the researchers have sought to come up with an explanation of these conditions. Kroll and some other scholars are of the belief that before the Iron Age some small population of nomads lived in Gilan (western Gilan to Ardabil) whose relations with the key centers of civilization around the globe were halted due to the existence of Caspian Sea, giant mountains and thick jungles in south (Kroll 1984).

Another group of scholars contend that Gilan before Iron Age (1400-1500 B.C.) was not habitable due to environmental and ecologic conditions of the region and only after the Iron Age Gilan suddenly begins to experience a new era. Among the features of this era one can refer to affluence and various emirates and numerous technologies. Falahian is also of the belief that the ecology of the region in prehistoric era has caused it not to be a habitable place (Falahian 2010). As to the people and tribes of this region throughout the historical era various sources are available in which the ethnicities who lived on the southern coasts of Caspian Sea are named. The aborigines of Iran Plateau when the Aryans immigrated to the west were people known as Kassu to whom referred Greeks as Kussiyân or Kissi while in the southwest Iran lived Elamides, in the north the Kadussiyân and Kass (Diakonoff 1966, P. 54). In Mazandaran lived Tapuriyân and among Kadussiyân and Tapuriyân Amardes or Mardes (Pirnia 1991, P. 157).

Some historical works name other tribes who lived in Gilan and Mazandaran when the Medes and Archimedean Empires were taking form or before them in a semi-independent way away from the supervision of the central government. Strabon the Greek historian and geographical scientist based on the words of Aristofanos argues that the tribes and nations who were settled on the southern bank of Caspian Sea from east to west consisted of Hirkanian, Amradan, non-Aryans, Kadusyan, Amards, Gels or Gelan. Also in other ancient books some other tribes like Anariens, Docovsions, and Derbiks are mentioned as people who lived in Gilan and Mazandaran regions (Eslah Arbani 1995, P. 519).

Due to the lack of sufficient written sources of the early residents of Gilan and also the silence of old historians as to their beliefs in prehistoric times and even in early historic era the current essay on the religious beliefs of these people should be prepared based on the existing archaeological discoveries and other available relevant sources. Thus we will study the religious beliefs of Gilan people in two parts from the beginning to Achamedians, i.e. first part deals with the prehistoric era while the second part discusses the

religious beliefs in historical era.

2. Religious Beliefs in Prehistoric Era

The study of religious beliefs of past people particularly the prehistoric era not only is of interest and importance it is also a complicated and difficult task. We can speak of the existence of religions, names of gods and religious rituals of the past societies as far as the written documents allow us with a relative certainty. As to the prehistoric era the researchers are heavily dependent upon the findings acquired through archaeological excavations and also the ethnographical studies on the contemporary nomadic tribes which are often referred to as the middle range theory. In other words, this method seeks to understand the life of past people based on a comparison with the contemporary nomadic people in order to have access to the spiritual aspects of past people's life. These immaterial aspects have been forgotten and should be regained through the study of the remains of the material findings.

One may trace the first material evidences and reflections of the existence of religious beliefs back to the middle Paleolithic era (40-200 thousand years earlier). Although such beliefs particularly the belief in supernatural creatures have probably existed before that no archaeological evidence has been found for it yet. During middle Paleolithic era besides the discovery of figurines of Neanderthal man for the first time we are witness to the intentional funerals and their specific rituals. These evidences have been acquired from the Qafzeh, Sokhul, Tabun, Amud and Kebara caves in Lavant region. The bodies of the dead persons were usually buried in a curved form and sometimes associated with parts of the bodies of animals (Nadel et al. 2013). From the Qafzeh cave a grave was found in 1971 in which a body of an (almost 13 year old) adolescent was retrieved. The body did lie on the back and in its hands was a horn of a deer (Bar Yosef and Vandermeersch 1991). From Kebara cave numerous stone tools and few bones were discovered (Bar Yosef et al. 1992). After this era we are witness to various evidences of religious beliefs throughout the world. From the Neolithic era in almost 10-12 thousand years ago we are witness to separate evidences of the burials which denote the existence of a type of Shamanistic ritual at Zawi Chemi Shanidar in which the bones of vulture and giant predatory birds were found (Solecki 1977). From Gobekli Tepe, Navali Chevri, Chatal Huyuk sites some evidences of the structures which with utmost confidence can be considered as a temple remains were discovered (Sagona and Zimansky 2009).

3. Religious Beliefs in Prehistoric Gilan

The basis of study of the religious beliefs of Gilan people in prehistoric era is the archaeological findings in the Iron Age sites of Gilan province. These cover various cases which are discussed below in an independent way.

3.1. Gifts

The gifts buried with the dead bodies show that these people believed in the life after death. Although some of these gifts were for the gods and some others for the dead person or for denying the vicious ghosts from the tombs they still represent a specific mode of religious belief. These objects include various things ranging from daily utensils to personal and professional objects and event ornaments which show that they are intended to be used by the dead person in the afterlife.

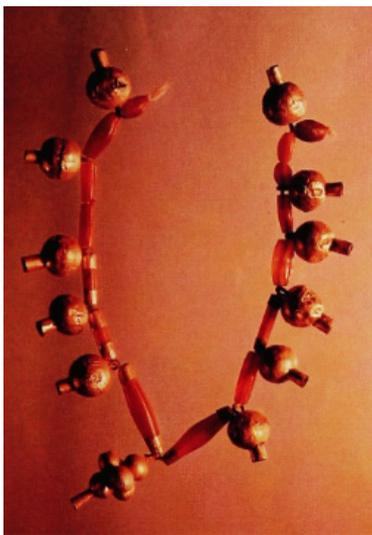


Figure 1. One sample of gold necklace from Marlik (Negahban, 1996. Plate XXVII: A)

3.2. Figurines

From the burial sites of the Iron Age human and animal figurines both from metal and clay were found. In Marlik hill where the majority of the figurines of Gilan were found animal figurines including humped cow, wild goat, deer, ovis, bear, jaguar, horse and dog. These figurines are also found in other graves of the Iron Age. Moreover, from this site the bird figurines were found among which the identifiable figurine was eagle (Negahban 1999, P. 477). According to the interpretation of Ucko and Vogit as to the functions of the archaeological figurines (Ucko 1962; Voigt 2000), given the context where they have been found and from the tombs of the grown up people the discovered animals are not surely play things or educational tools. These animals all of which are powerful can be interpreted in two ways: they are either goddesses or an idol or a totem for the families of the region.

It is interesting to note that rhytons are in animal or human forms. These rhytons were certainly intended to carry fluids in ritual occasions. Although we do not exactly know the nature of these fluids and they might have been inebriant fluids or alcoholic drinks, the insistence of ancient artisans on these rhytons being built in animal and human forms was of significance. If by drinking a fluid from a rhyton in an animal form they felt being associated with the spirit of that animal or the god which has that animal as its symbol?

Unfortunately, now we cannot offer any answer to these questions. However, it is clear that these animals as well as other animal figurines are the symbols of power, speed and majesty.



Figure 2. Animal Figurines from tomb number 18 of Marlik (Negahban, 1996. Plate VI: B)

3.3. Human Sacrifices

Offering human sacrifices was prevalent among the early tribes even until the late eras from various schools. Often these sacrifices were offered for the dead or the worshipped gods and secret sects. These sacrifices in Iron Age at Gilan are proofs of the existence of a dominant class that used to kill the slaves after the death of masters in order to serve them in the otherworld. Also these sacrifices were offered for the sake of satisfaction of gods on burial occasion. Clear evidences of this issue have been discovered by Japanese expedition that worked on Ghalekuti site in the tombs A-III, A-V, A-VI and C-I (Egami *et al.* 2017, P. 44). This task was done in various forms like beheading, strangling, and burning (Ibid, P. 45). Since these people were killed often in relation to the burial of the key person and also a number of gifts have been left over in the tombs one can conclude that the killed persons were not culprit convicts. Sometimes between the key burial and the sacrifice a layer of ash is seen which shows a complicated burial ritual was going on. From the tomb number 9 of Tamajan besides the main body three skulls were found that were buried in the tomb while in the Lasulkan cemetery two skeleton without skulls were discovered (Fahimi 2002, P. 112). It seems that the people of Iron Age were of the view that the slaves and maids who serve their masters in this world should continue to serve them even after this life.

3.4. Animal Sacrifices

In Marlik we are witness to three tombs with burial of horses (tombs no. 49, 51 and 53) (Negahban 1999, P. 133-134) which according to the excavators belong to the dead ones in the neighboring tombs. We are informed of the existence of such burials in Jubon at Roodbar Gilan (Hakemi

2017, P. 217-220) and the tombs no. 10 and 20 at Merian Talish (Khalatbari 2003, P. 88-105). This shows the importance of horse for people both in this world and the other world. In Avestaei texts like Aban Yasht: Paragraphs 49-50 and Darvasp Yasht: Paragraphs 21-23 this animal is an effective and symbolic animal for gods and was the symbol of goddess sun and before some goddesses only the horse was sacrificed:

For Hushang Pishdadi on the top of the mountain one hundred horses, one thousand cows, and ten thousand sheep were sacrificed and he was asked to give the prosperity in the world. Verily he is the most righteous and powerful. O' Nahid allow me to rule all lands...(Pourdavoud 2014, P. 243-245). The remains of the bones of horse have been found in other sites from the same era like Hasanlou in Western Azerbaijan, Babajan in Lorestan, Godin in Kermanshah and Khoramabad in Ardebil (Talai 2006, P. 110). The horse sacrifice seems to have been exclusively for the warriors (Mallory 1990, P. 130-136).

According to the reports of the excavation on Ghyathabad site, a turtle has been found in the tomb X which is cut into half with an ax which has been left on the turtle's shell (Fahimi 2002, P. 120). In addition to the above mentioned cases in the tomb no. 24 in Maryan the bones of birds are reported (Khalatbari 2003, P. 111) though unfortunately the excavators have not succeeded to identify the species of the birds. From Lasulkan the remains of the bones of ovis are reported (Fahimi 2002, P. 112) and in the excavations of the Tamajan cemetery the bones of a sheep are discovered (Ibid, P. 114). Upon the discovery of the animal remains one can say that at least horses were buried and like humans had their own independent tombs and bone remains of other animals like ovis and sheep as sacrifice for feeding or earning the satisfaction of gods and ghosts in some cases were killed and buried along with the dead persons.



Figure 3. Tomb No. 49 with horse remains. (Negahban, 1996. Plate 14: A)

3.5. Weapons Arrangement Pattern in Some Graves

In this case one can refer to the striking examples like the tombs X and XI in Ghyathabad in which 4 swords were placed in 4 corners of the tomb that pointed towards the sky. In the other burial in the Ghalekuti/ Lasulkan a strange case of weapons arrangement is seen. The dead person inside the

mentioned tomb has some objects buried with him from the western side of the tomb while nothing has been buried into the north, east and south of the tomb and the weapons buried with him are pointed towards north, east and south (Egami *et al.* 2017, P. 51). We do not know why these have been arranged in this way and which supernatural creature or creatures could have threatened the peace of the dead person.

The burial mode of the commanders and objects in Marlik graves demonstrates the belief of these people in the afterlife. By these people warriors and knighthood were respected. If one of the great commanders died who had military honors the people would put the body of the commander on his sword, dagger and bayonet and escorted him up to his tomb to eternalize his honors (Negahban 1999, P. 14). Burying the dead person on weapons and sword despite its being an ideal of a man is at the same time a symbol of a belief similar to the beliefs of Scandinavian people as to the way a dead body enters the tomb with a sword. Although these weapons were seemingly for denying evil from the tomb one example has been found in the tomb no. A-V at Ghalekuti.

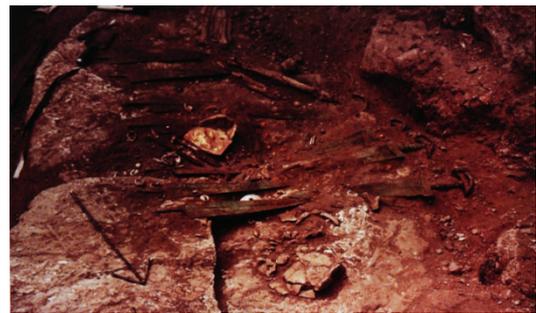


Figure 4. Tomb with weapons and gifts. Tomb No. 47 (Negahban 1996. Plate XI: A)



Figure 5. Burial on weapons. Marlik's number 52 tomb. (Negahban, 1996. plate X: B)

3.6. Images on Objects

The image of sun is frequently seen in the remained pieces of this era and this doubles the importance of the belief of the scholars who contend that the position of the head and face of the dead person in the tomb in relation to the position of sun during burial is very significant. A cup with the image of winged cows known as Marlik Golden cup was found in this hill. On the edge of this cup some geometrical ornaments in a chain form is seen. The image of this cup in its middle consists of life tree and on both sides of it two winged cows climbing the tree. On the bottom of the golden cup of Marlik

a beautiful ornamental flower is drawn on the center of which the sun lies that radiates its beams into all corners and around the radiated beams of sun the leaves of the life tree are geometrically presented. The artist in this scene of the cup has sought to show the importance of sun and the dependence of life upon a luminous object (Negahban 1999, P. 46). It seems that the depiction of sun on the bottom of the Marlik Cup had been under the influence of religious beliefs of the Marlik people and they have sought to show its importance in this way. The conditions of burial in Meryan and Tandovin cemeteries also endorse this point. They used to set the skeletons of the dead persons in the direction of sun light (Khalatbari 2003, P. 136).

The phenomenon of life and death has preoccupied human mind in the course of history. The beautiful images on a golden cup with the image of life myth in Marlik depict this issue well. This cup which is of 20 cm length and 70 cm width of the bottom has four scenes. The first scene from the bottom shows an ibex which is feeding its calf. The second scene shows a young ibex which grazing on the leaves of a tree. The third scene includes an image of a bore while the fourth scene depicts the corpse of an ibex on earth with vultures eating it. On the top of the cup there is an image of an animal like monkey which carries an object like a stick (Negahban 1999, P. 34) which seems to be the narrator of the scenes of life and death.



Figure 6. Scene of vultures eating dead ibex on gold beaker (Negahban, 1996. Plate XVIII: D)

4. Religious Beliefs in Historical Eras (331-708 B.C.)

Upon the arrival of Aryans to Iran Plateau they succeeded to defeat the aboriginals and by the assistance of Medes and Pars tribes they established the Medes and Achaemenid Empires. It is thought that the tribes who lived in Gilan were not under the domination of Medes and had political independence. The comments of the ancient historians as to the relation between Medes and tribes living in Gilan confirms this theory. Ketzias notes that during the reign of Medes (559-708 B.C.) the tribes of Gilan were their enemies (Diakonoff 1966, P. 608).

The emergence of a powerful government in the neighborhood of Gilan could cause troubles for these tribes.

Unfortunately there are not sufficient information in order to offer dependable ideas of the religious beliefs of Gilan people in Medes era. Worshipping natural symbols by Marlik people suggests that Gilan people in this era worshipped nature and its manifestations (Eslah Arbani 1995, P. 529).

It seems impossible to think that Zoroastrian beliefs had then permeated into Gilan region and probably the people of this region had retained the beliefs of their ancestors. Because from traditional point of view, Zoroaster in Medes era sought to reform the beliefs of the Moghs but he did not succeed and was forced to promote his own beliefs in the east (Pirnia 1991, P. 220).

After the formation of Achaemenid Empire (331-559 B.C.) by Korus II in 559 B.C., according to Ketzias, the people of Gilan for the first time accepted to obey the founder of Achaemenid Empire (Diakonoff 1966, P. 169). According to historical evidences and documents, it seems that during the hey days of Achaemenid Empire there were good relations between Gilan people and Achaemenid monarchs.

Unfortunately, no document has been acquired yet from the tribes living in Gilan based on which we could comment on their religious beliefs in Achaemenid era. The relatively good political relation between the people of Gilan like Kadosys and Caspians and Achaemenids seems to have paved the ground for the permeation of the religious beliefs of Pars people into this region. The similarities between the beliefs inherited from the ancient times in Gilan region and their comparison with Achaemenid religious beliefs confirm this theory. Pars people used to mummify the dead ones in order to keep the soil pure and placed it between the earth and the dead (Pirnia 1991, P. 1528).

The existence of effects or signs of the past beliefs in Iran in general and in Gilan in particular including the belief in "water is luminosity", and "burning a piece of garment in order to cure a newly married bride's infertility" can serve as evidences confirming the hypothesis of the possibility of worshipping of elements by Gilan people in this era. Except worshipping the natural elements, Achaemenid people believed in such gods as Ahuramazda, Mitra, Anahita and Artah. By Iranians of Achaemenid era, Ahuramazda or Wise Ahura represented the Greatest God. Arshamah has called it in his inscription the greatest of all gods (Kent 1953, P. 116). Xerxes I (465-486 B.C.) states: "The Great God Ahuramazda who created the earth and the sky as well as the peace for mankind. He is also the one who has created Xerxes the Great. He chose Xerxes as the king from among all people and he is one of the many kings ruling the earth" (Ibid P. 148-149) Ahuramazda the creator of all living creatures and it is he who supervises and guides the actions of the king to whom he himself has endowed the power (Girshman 1983, P. 171-172).

The fire is the symbol of purity and light and cleanness are both the signs of Ahuramazda and when people worshipped him they turned their faces towards the fire. The fire was made in open space (Pirnia, 1984: 168) and after the death of every king they turned off the holy fire as a sign of respect

and after funeral they lighted it up again (Pirnia 1991, P. 1528).

After Ahuramazda the Achaemenid people believed in immaterial creatures who were not as great as the god. These incorporeal creatures should be the Holy Eternals or Centuries goddesses (idem).

On his inscription Darius writes: "... Let Ahuramazda helps my family along with the other gods. Let Ahuramazda protects this country from army, from famine, from lie. And let no army, famine and lie enter this country. I ask Ahuramazda and the gods of the family this favor"(Kent 1953, P. 135-136).

Ahuramazda and incorporeal entities could not be seen and this is why no one can depict their picture. Then they cannot be worshipped in all places. They are pure. Then any sacrifice should be offered to them with neat cloth and on the top of a mountain where the air is healthy (Pirnia 1991, P. 1528). Besides what was said of the beliefs of Iranians in Achaemenid era in the inscriptions of Ardashir II (359-405 B.C.), Mitra and Anahita are discussed. In his inscription he states: "Ahuramazda, Anahita, and Mitra shall protect me before evil and what I have done and made" (Kent 1953, P. 155).

In Achaemenid era Ahuramazda has been described as the Great God not as the One God and this itself shows the importance of other gods which cannot be neglected in other places. A group of scholars believe that the indication of Mitra and Anahita by Ardashir II is a type of heresy and a striking transformation in religious beliefs of Achaemenid era (Zarrinkoob 1985, P. 192).

It is supposed that the influence of Anahita in Iran was the result of astronomical beliefs of the Babylon. Some scholars contend that Anahita had been prevalent among Aryans in old days. Anahita is known to be the goddess of waters and it was continued to be worshipped for a long while after the collapse of Achaemenid Empire (Pirnia 1991, P. 159). As to Mitra scholars believe that in Aryan religion before the time of Avesta this goddess was worshipped and a clear example of the indication of the name of Mitra can be seen on the Bughazkuy Inscription in Turkey where its name has been mentioned along with the names of Indera, Verona, and Nasita. This inscription lies between Subiliolioma Shah Hayti and Mata Vez Shah Mitani and it is interesting that in this inscription the name of Mitra is noted as the basis of an agreement (Kuzmina 2007, P. 322; Sami 2009, P. 66).

Mitra or the goddess of sun is the bridge through which the light dawns onto the dark terrestrial world. During Achaemenid time Mitra was the goddess of promise and agreement and in wars the warriors and commanders swore to its name (Pirnia 1991, P. 169).

The reason of resort of Ardashir II to Anahita and Mitra was the attention paid by them to him. In fact Anahita and its sacred temple was in Pasargad where Anahita saved the life of Ardashir II when his brother Korus decided to kill him. This shows the holiness of this place. It was under the protection of Mitra the goddess of promise and agreement that Ardashir II managed to defeat his brother Korus when he

was returning from Minor Asia (Zarrinkoob 1985, P. 192). As to the belief of the people of southern parts of Caspian Sea in Achaemenid and Parthian eras in Ahuramazda and Zoroastrianism there is no document and probably the people of this region were not Zoroastrian until Sassanid era though in Parthian era a delegation of Hirkanids travelled to Rome and during the trip they behaved like Zoroastrians.

Avesta itself suggests that during the compilation of Avesta part of the people of Gilan and Mazandaran did still believe in their only Aryan religion. In other words, they believed in a group of demons and gods. In Avesta some references have been made to the demons of Mazan (Mazandaran) and fake worshippers of Deilam and Gilan (Pourdavoud 2014, P. 13).

But as to Mitra and Anahita who are among the gods before Zoroastrianism one still find some evidences of public belief in them. Now there is a belief in Talish which has numerous similarities to Achaemenid beliefs in Mitra and Anahita. This leads us to the idea that the people of Gilan did also worship Mitra and Anahita even in this era. As we mentioned earlier, Mitra had a remarkable presence in the rituals before Zoroastrianism in Iran Plateau and its task was protection of the promise, agreement, truthfulness and punishment of those who breach an agreement. The people of Talish believe in an angel who protects promises and agreements. He gives rewards to those who do righteous actions and punishes the ones who do inappropriately. If a man seals an agreement with another man and acts against the conditions mentioned in the agreement he will be punished by the angel who takes care of the agreement. To protect himself against the anger of the angel the one who has breached the promise can do two things: providing the seven year old wine of Mazu and reading the particular prayer of the angel of agreement and promise without any mistake. In this prayer the one who has breached the agreement continuously recites the names of such animals as goat, sheep, cow, horse, dog and bee along with the exact date of their reproduction and the symbolic name of Nahid the goddess of cosmos and ask Mitra to forgive him (Abduli 1999, P. 235-239).

5. Conclusions

What can be offered as the conclusion of current essay is that the religious beliefs of the people of Gilan in prehistoric time and historical era enjoyed a considerable culture. They completely believed in the life after death. According to their beliefs, the dead person needs food in the afterlife and this is why some food was buried with the dead one. Moreover, the dead person needs his personal things for the otherworld. According to the beliefs of these people after the death individuals retain their social position. The maids and slaves were killed to serve their master in the other world. Thus, farmers remain farmers in the otherworld and this is also the reason why farming tools are found from the tombs or housekeeping tools in the tombs of housekeeping women. At the same time, the dead person was threatened by the devil

creatures and this is why some weapons like swords, daggers and so on and so forth were placed in the tomb. Figurines were placed in the tombs which represented probably the gods or totems of tribes. In historic era given the conflicts of the people of north with the religious beliefs of Zoroastrianism caused this region to be called the land of demons and fake worshippers. The people of this region either believed in the early gods or in original Aryan gods, i.e. demons particularly Mithra. The sacrifice and burial of horses would have been in relation to these gods.

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