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Nowruz Calendar and Its Emergence from Different Perspectives and Its Impact on Various Aspects of People's Lives

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Abstract

This paper is a brief research about the meaning of Nowruz from different perspectives and its impact on people's interactions, which is celebrated at the dawn of spring in this ancient Iranian land. In different periods this ancient holiday has been seen with different opinions and its effects are all reflecting new life, happiness, love, blessing, birth, and growth, which are visible beautifully in nature. This paper is done by library and field studies and investigates the meanings and spiritual influences of this tradition in the culture, poetry, literature, philosophy, religious beliefs of the people of this land from the different perspectives (Islam - Zoroastrianism, etc.). By reviewing these theories on Nowruz and comparing it with present-day life, valuable results can be achieved so they can be used in the ups and downs of life.

Keywords: Nowruz, Culture, Religion, Zoroastrianism.

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Introduction

This ancient holiday is one of the memorable traditions over centuries happens with the same glory by the beginning of New Year and makes Iranians happy. This great memorial is linked to the hearts and souls of Iranians. Every year with the passing of the seasons and the beginning of winter (February) Iranians greet the New Year and spring. March is the month of cleaning and preparing the house and buying new clothes to welcome the spring and the New Year, and according to ancient belief, in these days when nature has rebirth, the spirits of ancestors monitor their actions, so people make changes in their lives and quest for peace and in the last Friday night, people visit the graves of their loved ones, by praying and reading the Quran. Zoroastrians celebrate five days before the Nowruz by reading religious books and praying because they believe that their ancestors watch and monitor their descendants' actions for ten days on this earth.

The last day of the year ends and at night people go to the rooftops and start fireworks, this could mean that spirits of their relatives could come down (this led to the ceremony called Wednesday night party). Then from the morning to the next thirteen days they celebrate and travel and visit relatives to be prepared for a new busy year. Transposition of this ancient holiday, foundation, and associated beliefs has been argued over years that are discussed in this paper.

Discussions

Nowruz Date Calendar

Ancient Iranians had been celebrating the beginning of spring when the length of the day was equal to night and believed that the earth had lived for four thousand years. It was known as Nowruz, or Firouz by Arabs and three Zarathustra has seen it: First, astrologer and philosopher Zoroastrian; second, guidance Zoroastrian; and third, Zoroastrian prophet. Iranians divided the year into two hot and cold halves. The cold half was named Mehregan and the half hot was celebrated by Nowruz and other celebrations called Tirgan and Yalda were added for the beginning of summer and winter.

They considered a year equal to 360 days and these two celebrations (Mehregan and Nowruz) have been the most famous among Aryans. The celebration of Nowruz first appeared in the spring of each year by the ancient Iranians before the Sassanian era and when making the first part of the Avesta.

In the Sassanian period, this holiday had been changing seasonally. In fact, it was like other holidays such as Eid al-Fitr of Muslims circulating in different seasons. In the first year of Yazdgerd date, Yazdgerd accession (the last Sassanid king) was the Nowruz celebration coincided with sixteen June (1) and almost in early summer. Every four years thereafter this day remained behind and around the year 292 AH New Year celebrations was on the first date of the Aries month and in the 467 AH it was on Pisces twenty-third; i.e. seventeen days before the end of winter. Seljuk Sultan Jalal al-Din Malik Shah commanded to create the Jalali calendar. Therefore, the New Year coincided in the spring of each year with the sunrise to the Aries. For this purpose, it was decided that one day be added every four years to increase the number of days of the year and the fourth year was count to 366 days. And after twenty-eight years (seven four-year terms) since the eighth four-year term begins, rather than adding the day to that year, it will be added to the next year, the period. In fact, the true solar year consisted of 365 days, 5 hours and 48 minutes and 45 seconds. (2)

The first solar Nowruz according to the accurate information and astronomical accounts happened in the year forty-third, Zarathustra. In that year, the New Year was at noon on Tuesday, Khordad 9th. Thus it can be concluded that it was 2346 solar years before the Hegira of the prophet Mohammed and 1725 years before the birth of Christ. As mentioned in the chronicles, when Jam (Jamshid) came and brought a new religion, it was called Nowruz. (3)

The Term “Nowruz” and its Emergence in Poetry and Literature

Nowruz (4) is composed of two components that together means a new day. It is the celebration of the Persian-Iranian New Year, which is on the first day of Farvardin or March 21, which is held in the beginning of spring.

- As stated in some of the works (Farsi at) of Abu Nawas:

وفرخروز ايسال الكبيس

و جشن گاهنبار

به حق المهرجان و نوکروز

النوکروز الکبار

- Biruni asks: what are the traditions of the Nowruz? It is the first day of Farvardin and it is called as a new day because it is the beginning of the New Year and from that day and five days later are all celebrations.

- In Arabic, this tradition is called as Niruz; as can be seen in a poem by Jarir Khatafi:

تودی جزى النيروز خضعار قابها(6)

عجبت لفخر التغلبى تغلب

- Most historians believe Jamshid (Pishdadi King) as the founder of Nowruz and other traditions (7).

- Masoodi states: "many people believe that Nowruz was aroused his era and became a tradition in his kingdom. Although in the oldest Iranian book (Avesta), the name of this holiday is not mentioned, but Jamshid (8) is mentioned and his innovations are mentioned".

- In a book by Mohammad ibn Jarir Tabari titled "Alamam and al-Muluk" and its translation by Abu Ali Mohammad Balami, it is stated: and he (Jamshid) asked the scholars that the day I become a king, you question the injustice and ask me to do everything which is fair. The day he became a king was the day of Hormuz in Farvardin. After that day, and it became a tradition. (9)

- Ferdowsi in the Islamic period believed the roots of Nowruz in Jamshid era and had some poems:

مر آنروز را روز نو خواندند

به جمشید بر گوهر افشانند

برآسود از رنج تن دل ز کین

سر سال نو هرمز فرودین

(10)

به نوروز نو شاه گیتی فروز

- Close to the same theme (Biruni) in Asaral-baqie stated: when Jamshid made the king chair. He was riding on it and he was brought from Damavand to Babylon in one day and the people were astonished and this day became a holiday. (These quotations, have been changed and been told based on the legendary and mythological traditions). (11)

Nowruz Philosophy from the Perspective of Zoroastrians

Celebration, which in Farsi means national and public happiness, derived from the Avesta term "Yessen / Yesneh". The word in Pahlavi means "Yazshen" which means praise and education. Essentially for all ancient Iranians, holidays had been religious. They believed that Ahura Mazda created the spiritual world before the creation of the material world, and created the universe in its variety of forms (12). He runs the world with the help of six Mahin Angels "Amesha Spenta", in which he is at the head of them. So this Amesha Spenta or "Yazt" (13) are the gods of "Fare Vashi" or the guards, and they are many and they covered all Iran's sky. The day that Zoroaster had been chosen as a prophet in ancient Iran was considered as the religious which is Nowruz. In Zoroastrianism, it is believed that Ahura Mazda created a material world in six periods that it is called "six Gâhanbâr". So people should celebrate and

praise God. The last Gâhanbâr which is 10 days long and begins from 26th Esfand lasts five days until the New Year (15), and it is believed that man was created in this day and since the creation of man come to an end, it was called Nowruz which is attributed to Ahura Mazda. (16)

Zoroastrian who is accepted as a prophet asked to greet this day (Merhregan) and Nowruz day (17). Doctor Farah-Vashi states: "in principle, Nowruz is a celebration on the occasion of the creation of the races." The happiness of this blessed day in many other countries (Turkey, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Turkmenistan, etc.) have specific traits; a superior philosophy in which the day of human creation is celebrated. (18)

Muslim Beliefs and the Nowruz

Some groups believe that Nowruz is the revival celebration of the world as Abu Rayhan noted that: some Iranian scholars believe that this day is called Nowruz because Tahmores Saebeh became apparent and as Jamshid became king, he renewed religion. And that day was a new day, however, before that it was Nowruz. (19)

During the Islamic period, Nowruz was attributed to Prophet Solomon; as he lost his ring, his kingdom went out of hand and he found it after four days and return to her former glory. Kings went to him and the birds had returned to him. Thus, Iranians said "Nowruz" had come, respectively. Shiites believe that the day Imam Ali bin Abi Talib was chosen as the first imam and the successor of the Prophet Mohammad is called Nowruz. The day of Ghadir in 10 AH, when the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) introduced Imam Ali as his successor to the Muslims coincided with the first day of Farvardin (20).

Conclusion

Nowruz, this great and national tradition has still been maintained from past centuries to present, from generation to generation (despite hardships and difficulties, superstitious beliefs, wars and conquests, and the victories or failures and changes). Holding this celebration after all these years represents a rich taste and refreshed sensibility and joyful spirit of people in this ancient land, as four seasons are all exist and in all areas with little difference in reality, the spring begins with growth, which has deep sense of spirituality in entire universe and is associated with waking up from hibernation. So every year Iranians celebrate nature's rebirth and new life. So that the growth and vibrancy begin from the New Year, and a real belief in the concept of the New Year flow in our lives along with blessings.

Postscript (PS)

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6. Divan Court. Quoted by doctor al-Sayyad. Page 53 and 253.

7. Moravej al-zahb:1. Page 223.

8. Jamshid

9. Translation of Tabari History. Pp. 21-22.

10. Shahnameh. Borukhimpublication. 1. Page 25 (c).

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13. YAZET.

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