

Nowruz Is the Resurrection of the Nature

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Nowruz is the beginning of a new revolution in the nature and the revival of human beings' living environment. Nowruz is the celebration of the nature's growth, the celebration of a new start and the celebration celebrated by the ancient Iranians. Nowruz is the most important celebration for Iranians and 300 million more people in Iran's neighboring countries who celebrate arrival of spring and rebirth of the nature together, which have been popular in Iran since 3rd millennium BC.

Nowruz is a social ritual which heralds the New Year across the Iranian plateau. Customs and traditions related to Nowruz have been handed down from a generation to the next generation and are considered as elements which identify the identity of Iranian society and its neighboring countries. It must be noted that rituals are rooted in beliefs and ancient values of the societies and are categorized as elements which strengthen cultural convergence among people. Therefore, Nowruz plays a key role in launching cultural relations among Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Azerbaijan Republic, Pakistan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and even Zanzibar, because it is based on a celebration beyond lands and ethnicities and have been entwined with the cultural elements of these societies.

Since early time, mankind has been aware of rules of circles which adjust the life rhythm. Repetition of traditions and rituals in the exact times of the year will somehow represent this cycle. In general, such cultural rituals and traditions rooted in certain cycles such as birth, death and/or reconstruction across the nature and/or society. Along with these traditions, rituals enter the daily life and calendar of people.

Cultural ties independent from geography, language and ethnicity will survive more than indigenous culture and will survive even more through acknowledging cultural factors from other nations. Cultural symbols and factors of Nowruz have been institutionalized in these ethnics and it is considered as an effective and influential cultural tradition, even if you fail to fathom it as a herald for the New Year.

In other words, the synchrony of the Iranian New Year with the beginning of spring has extended its social outcomes in the living of the mentioned societies and has developed

a value-based action. The same feature was resulted in integration of Nowruz customs and tradition with the Islamic teachings, so a unique composition of Iranian-Islamic Nowruz was born. Such cultural shifts are fruits of human needs, who try to develop meaning through struggling in the life.

As it has been declared in the social science literature, the key feature of culture is its gradual changes in order to be able to meet social and cultural needs of people given specialties of each epoch. Therefore, after appearance of Islam, rituals of Nowruz experienced changes over time and somehow became Islamized. Such developments have occurred by ordinary people and made a condition in which Nowruz in Iran took a hue of Islam and its spiritual dimensions enriched more than ever.

In other words, Islam's flexibility to deal with the indigenous culture of different societies on the one hand and cultural inclination of the Iranian society to acknowledge Islam on the other hand paved the way for Nowruz to be identified today as Iranian-Islamic tradition and a combination of national and religious rituals. Visiting relatives, paying Eidi, money or gifts people give to each other during Nowruz days, and showing kindness and affection to each other are among the Nowruz customs which are all considered as examples of *Seleye Rahem*, which had been advised by Islam. The prophet of Islam and Shiite Imams had praised Nowruz as a beautiful and honorable tradition and had described it as their own and their Shiits days.

In fact, it must be said that traditions, as social phenomena entails their own rules and rationale, which it can be seen in all societies across the history since ancient time till now. Traditions have been full of fundamental applications for the human societies.

A society is free to consider traditions as sacred events, as moments which are against the daily life. Hence, traditions can split the current of the daily life and direct the living excitement in the lethargy of routine life. Thus, supporting by their religious life, Iranians' thinking foundations try to approach Nowruz to Islam as a religion.

Nowruz is a symbol of resurrection, so it is not just limited to Iranians, but it belongs to all dynamic human civilizations, especially monotheistic religions. Some nations have forgotten it, but others believe in this resurrection and think about its signs in the nature. Accordingly, to his companions, Imam Sadiq (AS) says, "Nowruz is amongst the blessed days of us, Persians have saved and commemorated it, but you underestimate and forget it."

Therefore, Nowruz is not just a celebration, but is a new reading of resurrection and to be navigated towards divine and godly route. Relying its infra-border and infra-nation nature, Nowruz is one of elements which can be used to strengthen unity and coherence among nations living in Asia and the Middle East.