A Comparative Study of the Now-Rooz in the Countries of Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan

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Abstract

This study has been conducted under the subject of the comparative Study of the Now Rooz culture in the countries of Iran, Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The ratio of its clarification as a cultural, integrative and effective phenomenon could have a crucial role in the self-realization of the tribes and Arian nations. The necessity of integrity of these nations in today’s world, regarding the relationship between Persian Language and Now-Rooz rituals considering its historical roots in the reinforcement, security and connection between the nations is under careful quarry and analysis. That is the reason why; it has a common fortune as one of the greatest Iranian customs and a common ceremony among the lands of Iranian cultural domain including Central Asia, Afghanistan, Caucasus, and some parts of Indian subcontinent and the Kurdish language lands. The main aim of this research is to introduce the significance of the attention to Now-Rooz as a unifying variable at the national and transnational levels between Iranian alliances and the countries in the region. The rituals like Now-Rooz because of the spatial scope that is beyond the political borders can cause integrity, solidarity and the connection between the nations. The research method of historical description is conducted using the documents and credited resources of libraries. The main question of the research is to answer the regeneration causes of the cultural, beliefs, language, rituals, and Now-Rooz related rites among the tribes dependent on it.

Keywords: Ceremony, country, cultural integrity.
Introduction:
«Now-Rooz» is considered as the greatest ceremonies of Iranian. Perhaps half a century before that, there has been no such knowledge about Iranian alliances, but with the contribution of the communications there has been a world wide spread of the related information. The immigration of Iranian alliances to the Asian countries, Europe and America and Australia in recent decades and their presence in the University and scientific congregation and coexistence with people and the cultures of other different lands led to the acquaintance and knowledge of various races and tribes with Iranian Culture and above all the Now-Rooz ceremony (Amouzegar, Jale, 1389). Now-Rooz is among the rarest rituals, through thousands of years in passing of ages of incidents, that all though the history of our country along with calamities, it has still been reserved. In the darkest days of Iranian history, Now-Rooz has been the essence of life, identity and revival of national culture among Iranian (Niberg, Ancient Iranian religion, 1359). Now-Rooz is one the important common symbols for the people who live in the lands along the range of Iranian culture, this ancient ritual every year has refreshed the customs and the ancient culture of Iranian and in fact, cause the Renaissance of Iranian civilization and its freshness. In the current study, this ancient ritual conduct has been dealt in most parts of the world with the Iranian civilization regarding three countries Iran, Tajikistan and Afghanistan. This issue apparently shows this truth that the age of communication, despite the dominance of the media the Iranian rituals still have reserved its position and even has the capacity to have a higher degree in the today world, in the world that all the facilities and instruments have been used to bring about happiness and cheerfulness, the rituals that while it is a refreshing as a great ceremony as well as containing the ethical and spiritual culture and civilization constructor and it has a nature-based essence, it can easily not only have its old significance but more than ever it can be effective on people’s lives of Iranian lands and more so over the world scope it has stories to say about the Iranian culture (Amouzegar, Jale, 1389).

Statement of the Problem
The expression of «culture» in Persian literature and language has various meanings. In the work of the ancient the word «culture» has been used to convey the meanings as such: knowledge, courtesy, education and training, art, technique, wisdom, intelligent, solution, prudence (Bahar, Mehrded, 1374). the application of the expression of «culture» on the contrary as the meaning and concept of «collector» and «culture» in French and English languages are among the new concepts of this word in the field of social sciences that has entered the Persian scientific and research scripts from the beginning of the 14th century (Bloukiashi, Ali, 1387). In the present era, the alienation that is considered as one of the challenges that human communities are confronting especially, the undeveloped societies, and the revival of the ancient noble culture of every tribe can contribute the present generation to pass this crisis (Amouzegar, Jale, 1370). The Now-Rooz ceremony or in other words the culture of the lay man is impossible without the reference to the basis of its formation and origin, i.e., the popular crowd with a specific cultural feature and rituals and customs and common beliefs, especially that in this regard there has not been any serious research and investigation done (Amouzegar, Jale, 1370). The Culture has an
extensive construction in material and spiritual parts; One of its implications is to satisfy the need for common activities of human being and to this purpose constitutions are going to be formed and culture is the inseparable totality that the institutions are placed within it. From the cultural responses that are conveyed to eradicate some of the needs, we can name some of the dances and ceremonies (according to the theory of functionalism) in fact every ceremony is crystallization of the beliefs and specific interpretation of a nation in the long run of the history, its underlying basic foundation and the construction or to say its philosophy has gained new feature under the impression of different factors like geographical condition, synchronous contrast of two culture with each other and sometimes in the long run of history have lost features, too. Meanwhile, to gain a philosophy of these rituals inevitably should get access to the remaining myths of the past, and like Malinovski attend to the relationship of nature and the myths. The myth is the narration that would revive a noble reality and would satisfy a strong religious need that would accommodate with the ethical tendencies and the social rules and practical demands, in the early communities the myth satisfies a need, expresses and organizes the beliefs, is the protective the principles of ethics and makes them dominate. It guarantees the efficiency of the ritual customs, expresses the practical rules and regulations that are useful for human lives. Therefore, the myth is and essential part of the human culture and civilization (fakouhi, Naser, 1381). Dorkhime believes that it creates and keeps the alliance rites and the social integrity. It doesn’t matter why the members of a group gather together, the important issue is that gather to do something collectively. In other words, the crucial matter is that people get together, and experience common emotions and in a way expresses a collective interaction. Therefore, Dorkhime says the thing that matters is the collective interaction, and not the reason for the gathering but the social aspect of the ceremonies is important (mirzaie, Khalili, Lotfizade, Ab as, 1390). Thus, Dorkhime explains the implication of rites in the framework of collective interaction and consequently the alliance and the social integrity.

**Now-Rooz in Iran**

The ancient Now-Rooz which has been held from thousands years ago so far is the ceremony of the resurrection of the nature and renewal of the life, the ceremony of the movement and prowling and work and attempt and the ceremony of nature. The Now-Rooz Eid and its commemoration for the Iranian is archaic and ancient. Now-Rooz is known as one the ancient Iranian ceremonies recognized in the geographical plateau region of Iran. Now-Rooz is the beginning of the New Year and the spring season that’s why it has ceremonies along with it. Now-Rooz is the ceremony of the New Year in Iran. Today, the Iranian have forgotten many of their predecessors’ rituals or they have changed them, including Now-Rooz Narrations or carnival of “Haji Firooz”. Also, adding many new rituals, like the detailed Now-Rooz purchases, the shooting of the canons, enduring the heavy traffics on the last days of the year! Now-Rooz is along with the “Haft sin”, cleaning the house, making an eating vegetable rice dish with fish on the night beginning the new year, visiting, giving and receiving gifts, preparing cookies and nuts, traveling and.... (Amouzegar, Jale, 1370). In his book entitled “History of Now-Rooz” Master Abdol Azim Rezaie writes: A calendar as the like we have today has emerged 73 years ago in Iran and Solar calendar recognized to be the official calendar of Iranian i.e., the revolving of the
year is counted from the beginning of the arrival of the Spring and considered “Kabise” and Now-Rooz in each year established it at the beginning of the first day of Spring which was revolving, lasting (Rezaie, AbdolAzim, 1373). Before that in Iran, the Moon Calendar was considered as the basis of the history and the start of the year and then the historical phenomenon in Iran, was the migration year instead of solar year and the Iranian months, the Moon months and the Moon year have emerged but the Zoroastrians and also the Sasanid Calendar was kept and the counted the solar month and the solar year was counted. In the year 1304 SH equals 1343 AH, based on the act issued on the 11th day of Farvardin. The beginning of the year by coming of the new year somehow officially was announced as the official beginning of the Iranian year instead of Islamic one and Iranian months was used (Razi, Hashem, 1380). It should be mentioned that considering the Now-Rooz as the beginning of the year, was established from the time of Malek Shah saljughid(465 to 485 AH) that was called after the name of its creator( Jalali Calandar- Maleki Calendar). At that time by the order of Malek shah, the astrologists such as Oman Khayam, Hakim Loukary, Meimon ibn Najib Vaseti, Abu Al-Mozafar Asfazasi and many others were set to correct the calendar. It should be noticed that before that, Now-Rooz was navigating and was never placed at its main place i.e., the Aries month and the beginning of the Spring day (Razi, Hashem, 1380).

Now-Rooz in Afghanistan

The beginning of Now-Rooz ceremony that coincides with the first day of Farvardin, is not only an anniversary day that marks a new cycle in the Earth orbit, but it is a symbol of the whole culture and rituals that have been passed from generation to generation of the people of Afghanistan. Now-Rooz ceremony in Afghanistan is along with especial rituals for each day. Now-Rooz in the history and the culture of Afghanistan is an indication of the glorification of the life, nature and the human values that have deep roots in the poetry and literature, art and the family and social customs of this country though regarding to the manner of emergence of Now-Rooz there researches have gone farther than hunches and there are no trustworthy documents available, but it is said to be known aging before Arian race (Javid, Ahmad, 1999). Now-Rooz in Afghanistan or in other words in Balkh and its capital Mazar Sharif, is still held as glorious as before. On the first days of the year, all the fields of Balkh and the walls and the clay roofs are covered with flowers. As if Balkh is a basket of red flowers! It is customary that on the first day of Now-Rooz Eid, the flag of holy Imam Ali is established with a especial ceremony. With the establishment of the flag, the Now-Rooz ceremony officially starts and will continue till 40 nights and days. Within these 40 days the needy and the sick would reside under this holy flag and beseech for the miraculous treatment. People of this country believe that if the establishment of the flag is done slowly without any shake or stop, there would be a blessing and happy year ahead. from among Now-Rooz rituals and customs in the Balkh territory it can be said about the washing of the carpets and dusting the houses before Now-Rooz coming and performing different races including carrying goats, fighting camels, camel riding, fighting goats, and wrestling specifically done in this region (Javid, Ahmad, 1000). Now-Rooz in Afghanistan or in other words in Balkh and Mazar sharif is still held as glorious as before. On the first days of the
year all the fields of Balk and the walls and the roofs are full of flowers. Balkh is a basket of flowers or an oven that all these tulips are burned in it. This kind of flower is found in abundance and that is why Now-Rooz ceremony and Red rose ceremony have been used interchangeably. Among the customs and the rituals in the land of Balkh it can be mentioned about the carpet washing and dusting before Now-Rooz coming and holding races such as carrying goats, fighting camels, fighting goats and especial wrestling of this region.

**Now-Rooz in Tajikistan**

Now-Rooz Eid in Tajikistan and some other areas in central Asia is called «Eid of the beginning of the year» or «Eve». Tajikistan like any other Iranian races has customs and rituals specifically for themselves. The Now-Rooz day in Tajikistan starts with Dehghani calendar at the beginning of Aries month counting with Christian calendar starts on the 21st of 22nd of March that is famous by the name of «Khadi Ayam» (Ahmadof, Roozi, 1978) The Now-Rooz ceremony for the people of Tajikistan especially Badakhshani people is the national predecessors ceremony and is remembered as the key to friendship and revival of the whole creatures and it is known as Khadi Ayam i.e., great feast. People of Tajikistan especially badakhshanids during the Now-Rooz Eid clean their houses idiomatically shake their houses, and also the dishes are all clearly washed to dust the remnants of the last and according to ancient custom of Now-Rooz before the beginning of Now-Rooz the housewife of the house when the sun rose up about the size of an arrow puts two brooms collected from the mountain during the Fall and colored red and kept in the house to be used at Now-Rooz time, at the door of the house since the red color is a symbol of victory, blessing and kindness. After the sun rise each family tries to set out of the house as soon as possible and hangs a red cloth above the threshold of the house which is the same meaning as kindness, and happy days of year inside the arranged house and by opening the door and the window somehow the Spring and Now-Rooz air believed to carrying blessing and happiness, enters the house (Ahamadof, Roozi, 1978). In this country baking especial cookies and various foods is part of the customs of these days. As well as holding races such as swinging, egg-games, fighting partridge, brawler rooster, carrying goats, and local wrestling is also adding to the joy of these days and one of the famous dishes in these days is Baj that its ingredients is the leg of sheep cooked with wheat and the other people are invited to the feast. Tajiks almost also like Iranian have the 7 elements (Haft Sin) at their table that is called «Dastar Khan». Contrary to the Iranians the Now-Rooz ceremony they come to the streets so that all share the Now-Rooz ceremony and in fact Now-Rooz does not come to the houses but to change the whole city.

The rituals introduced in the above regions regarding the cultural approach including the collective ceremonies Now-Rooz could be counted as such. The ceremonies usually can be held collectively. Some groups get together and with regard to a specific issue mutually and emotionally interact. These kinds of ceremonies have their own procedures and regulations. From these perspectives among the collective ceremonies and religious rituals, there is common point. That is to say both phenomena are law-abiding and procedural and holding these ceremonies is not without specific rules and regulations. But the collective ceremonies, in spite of religious rituals that are hold and less inflexible, can more easily adapt the needs of human
life. From the other aspect holding collective ceremonies while leading to a collective interaction, considering the emotional and psychological aspect will bring with itself cheerfulness and decreasing the emotional stress, eradicating the misunderstandings between people and reducing the social struggles (Fakouhi, Naser, 1381). The collective ceremonies, usually, weakens the common social classes that causes the classifications of the members of the society and creates a firm lining between them and primarily eliminate them. Posts and other official positions and social statuses while holding ceremonies are not considered the main principle (Ibid). Therefore, it can be said that holding ceremonies like religious rituals are the causes of the integration and alliance factors and the social coordination as such. In addition, in these ceremonies there is much more variety. Meanwhile, the collective ceremonies are at the service of reserving the collective benefits because the social integrity is guaranteed and creates psychological and emotional happiness (Ibid). Collective ceremonies have integrative implications, so creating joy and vitality among the members of the society consequently attaining the integrity of the society which is due to specific attention. This issue includes the main question of this research and it is aiming to explain the philosophy of its existence.

The Research Methodology

In this research, the method of historical description is used on the basis of the documentary or library method of credited resources. Referring to the documents and the credited historical scripts which is the most significant instruments of this kind of method, i.e., in collecting data the method of using flash notes has been used. In this qualitative method, using the comparative study and referring to all the identified sources ahead of time, the important and the needed subjects are written on the research flash notes including the specific features of the resource and arranged and the necessary data was collected, then in a logical arrangement it was classified.

The Methods of Collecting Data (Instruments of Collecting Data)

The Instrument of collecting data in this research is taking flash notes of all published documents that included books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, journal, the newspapers, weekly magazines, periodicals, thesaurus, and the printed interviews, scientific congregation books, published scripts in data bases and internet and intranet.

Conclusion:

From ancient times, Now-Rooz is one of the occasions that have widely spread among Kurds and Persian speaking nations and other nations and tribes with its especial customs and rituals. Its coincidence with one the most important natural phenomena, that is the origin of the deep revolution and change on the face of extensive part of the Earth, has caused it to be the center of attention of different groups of people; in these days a great number of people, while having a nice and happy time, traveling and visiting, they hold the ancient rituals and customs. The beauty and adornment of the Earth and its mystery and hidden secrets, has made the poets’ and the lecturers’ mind occupied with itself and the scholars and the jurists of religion have also argued
about and discussed on the manner of the mutual interaction with the Now-Rooz rituals from a theological perspective.
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