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## MAZDAYASNI FESTIVALS

### *The Celebration of Truth in Nature*

*Fariborz Rahnamoon*

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The teachings of Zarathushtra reveal the Truth in nature, and the Mazdayasni festivals celebrate the Truth in nature. These festivals appealed to everyone, irrespective of national borders or ethnicity. Despite the efforts under Greek/Abrahamic influence to mystify them, the Truth coded in the names of the festivals has survived. Their names pinpoint the event in nature and identify the knowledge it wishes to impart. But, the myths later associated with them detract from reality towards fiction. Due to over-enthusiasm, multiple mythological characters and events sometimes get associated with a single festival. Some of the myths have a moral impact, while others promote patriotism. In either case, they limit the universality of the appeal.

Zarathustra recommends enjoying life and living a heavenly life on earth. Using occurrences in nature to enjoy life and spread happiness is paramount. The events in nature are universal; equinoxes and solstices belong to all humanity, and everyone can relate to them, irrespective of geographic location, skin colour or language. The main festivals celebrate events in nature, and just like the teachings of Zarathustra, they are for all humanity. The Avesta constantly blesses all the good people of "Haft Keshwar Zamin" Seven Continents.

During the last 1400 years of unrelenting cultural genocide, festivals like Gahanbars got converted into solemn prayer ceremonies in abandoned houses for the souls of the dead. With the massive numbers killed during the millennium-long genocide, Gahanbar has acquired a significant base in religion. With all original manuscripts destroyed, the only available recorded information is from the annals of the Islamic era. The writers, mainly Iranian converts to Islam, were privy to the festival's camouflaged form of celebrations. Those being the only known records, have established themselves as the "way of the ancestor". The oldest manuscript of consequence in hand is that of the Vendidad from 1323 CE, copied from an 1165 CE manuscript which no longer exists. It also shows that the Zoroastrians, who took refuge in India earlier, could not take with them any religious manuscripts.

A perfect example of a camouflaged cultural event established during the Islamic era is the character of 'Haji Phirooz'. This black-faced character wearing a red gown is out on the streets every Now Ruz, singing a particular song and dancing to the tune of his tambourine. Neither the singer nor the listener ponders on the song's meaning or the message in the blackened face and red gown. The fact that he gets paid by the passerby has sustained the character over the last 14 centuries. I invite all readers to Google this character and read the confusion presented by scholars and the laity. Before that, please read the history of this Iranian [national hero at the link provided below](#).<sup>1</sup> This exercise will cause a better appreciation of how a festival can lose its original message and meaning and how a false narrative can replace the Truth simply by repetition.

In the following few pages, we shall review the non-mythical origin of the festivals and their transformation into a celebration of myths. In the modern age, legends have become more appealing than Truth. They provide a patriotic appeal and help in the national sustainability of festivals. Truth is no longer of consequence, and

seeking is replaced by believing. Consequently, these festivals have lost the universality of their message. The legends have no appeal outside ethical and national boundaries.

We can divide the festivals into three groups for clarity:

#### THE THREE ARCTIC (*Airyānam Vaējah*) FESTIVALS

- 1- Saadeh ([Hiromba in Kadmi Calendar](#))<sup>2</sup>
- 2- Maidhyo-Shahem (Mid-Summer) Gahanbar
- 3- Ayeh Threm (Coming of Winter) Gahanbar

#### THE FOUR TEMPERATE SEASONAL FESTIVALS

- 1- Now Ruz
- 2- Tirgan
- 3- Mehregan
- 4- Yalda

#### THE FOUR TEMPERATE GAHANBARS

- 1- Maidhyo-Zarem (Mid Spring)
- 2- Paiti-Shahem (End of Summer)
- 3- Maidh-Yarem (Mid- winter)
- 4- Hamas-Path-Maedem (Everything is Equal, Middle) – Day & Night, Heat & Cold)

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## SADEH

*Fariborz Rahnamoon*

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Sadeh is a festival that has its origin in Aryana Vaejah, the arctic home of the ancestors of the Zarathushtis. Saad means hundred, and Sadeh is the celebration of the hundredth day of Arctic winter, which falls on the 10th of Bahman<sup>3</sup> (30 January). Winter in the Arctic begins 30 days after the Autumnal Equinox, marked with the celebration of *Ayeh Threm (Coming of Winter) Gahanbar*. The severity of the Arctic winter reduces after 100 days, and people start preparing for the Arctic summer.

In ancient days the farmer came together at a central location to celebrate, communicate and plan for the start of farming activities. Each family contributed twigs and wood to light a fire and keep warm while enjoying the day with food, dance and music.

Sadeh as a festival continued when the Iranians came down to the temperate region, where winter started two months later. After the hundredth day of the Arctic winter, the severity of winter reduces globally, legitimizing the festival's continuation. A fire was necessary to keep the party warm, so it became the festival's central feature. The Shahnameh attributed the Sadeh festival to Hoshang Shah and his accidental discovery of how to light a fire<sup>4</sup>. After that, Sadeh commemorated the ability to ignite a fire at will and the consequential human progress.

## **CELEBRATION**

In modern days Sadeh is celebrated by lighting a massive bonfire at sunset at a central location. At dusk, people gather around it while a group of Mobeds recite Atash-Neyayesh in reverence for fire and ignite the bonfire. Then the gathered crowd greets each other, distributes sweets and other delicacies among themselves and enjoys the evening with dance and music as long as the fire provides the heat. During the day, people gather branches, twigs and desert scrubs from the wilderness while children go door-knocking for firewood and then pile them all at the agreed location.

Iranians, Tajiks, Kurds, Uzbeks, Afghans and others celebrate Sadeh; some openly, others discreetly.



Sadeh Celebration in Yazd



Sadeh Celebration in Kurdistan Iraq



Sadeh Celebration by Tajiks <sup>5</sup>

## **SOME MISCONCEPTIONS**

Some count the hundred as fifty nights and fifty days to Now Ruz; this concept fails every four years when there are 51 days and 51 nights to Now Ruz due to a leap year. It is an attempt to distance the festival from its ancient scientific origin. Many repeat it without thinking.

Also, there is a song made-up by adversaries and associated with children's firewood gathering. The song blesses those that give the firewood and curses those that don't. It is very un-Zoroastrian to curse, and it is one of the narratives publicized to discredit the festival and the community.

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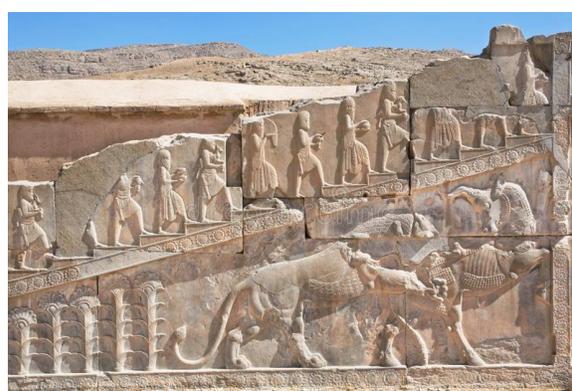
## NOW RUZ

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Fariborz Rahnamoon

Now Ruz is said to be one of the oldest festivals in human history, claimed to have been started by the legendary Shah Jamshid, who ruled during the Ice Age. He celebrated the first spring after the ice age, and thus the epithet Now Ruz-e-Jamshidi was coined. It is today officially celebrated in over twenty countries, irrespective of religion or ethnicity. UNESCO recognized it as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009.

The name consists of two words, Now meaning new, and Ruz meaning day. Embedded in the name is a depth of scientific knowledge also preserved in archaeology. Now Ruz has become a proper name, and no one thinks about the word's meaning or origin. In the Persian language, New Year is Sal-e-Now. To understand why it became Now Ruz, we must go to Persepolis.



Historians and archaeologists attest that the bas reliefs at Apadana Palace depict the celebration of the Now Ruz of 487 BCE. It was a unique year for the location. The sunrise (horizontal East-West) and the Vernal Equinox (vertical North-South) coincided at this location. Precisely at the moment of the equinox, the Sun rose, casting its first rays on a stone pillar erected in the Apadana palace courtyard. The New Year and the New Day started at the same **moment** in Persepolis. It is a once-in-a-lifetime event for a location, for it happens every year in different areas around the globe.



*The pillar is no more, but the stone pedestal exists in the Apadana palace courtyard.*

**Zarathushtra coined the word Now Ruz in 1725 BCE. Thirteen years after King Vistasp had accepted his teachings, Zarathushtra calculated that this astronomical phenomenon of the coinciding of sunrise (horizontal movement) with the equinox (vertical movement) would happen in Balkh. He reported it to the King, who proclaimed the New Year (Sal e Now) of 1725 BCE as the New Day – Now Ruz.**

The coinciding of the sunrise with the equinox at both these locations is a verifiable fact. The pedestal on which the pillar once stood in Apadana palace is still there. The locals visit this location every equinox to watch the sunrise, although it does not coincide with the equinox.

***In 2024, this phenomenon will occur in Erbil, Kurdistan, in Iraq, at 6:06 am local time. The equinox and the sunrise will happen simultaneously in this ancient city of Erbil.***

The Kurds have a custom of lighting a torch and going up the mountain to greet the rising Sun on new year's day. This ancient city has perpetually preserved this culture, and 2024 will be a memorable year for it, as Ruz-e-Now (New Day) and Sal-e-Now (New Year) will commence simultaneously at this location.

## ***NOW RUZ TABLE – Sofreh Haft SeenE – Seven Trays***



Sofreh Now Ruz, the Now Ruz table is the main feature of the celebration. It used to be a lavish 7-part spread for the guest to enjoy and was continuously replenished. It symbolized the seven steps of the ancient Way of Life in the Gathas of Zarathushtra. In the ancient past, they placed seven large trays on the table, each with numerous eatables for the guests' consumption and some symbolic items. It was famously called Haft SeenE – Seven Trays.

After the Islamic conquest, they camouflaged the message of the Now Ruz table to be allowed to celebrate it, hoping to one day gain freedom and revive it. Unfortunately, freedom never came, and today the coverup message has become internationally associated with Now Ruz. It diverts attention from the lofty philosophy originally embedded in the Now Ruz table. ***Today in the free world, it is time to make the original Gathic message known with the hope that it will trigger a paradigm change and save the world from impending global disasters.***

The Seven Trays – **Haft SeenE** represents the seven steps derived from the Gathas of Zarathushtra. They are as follows.

- 1- **Good Mind** (*BAHMAN- VohuMana*) **Use your Good Mind to inquire and learn the**
- 2- **Ultimate Truth** (*ORDIBEHST-Asha Vahista*) **the Laws of Nature- the Secrets in Nature -Use them to make**
- 3- **Good Rules** (*SHAHRIVAR- Khash Atra Variya*) **Good Laws- Good Products – Which will lead to**
- 4- **Lawful Desire** (*ESPAND- Spanta Armaity*) **Righteousness – that will pave the way toward**
- 5- **Wholeness** (*KHORDAD- Hurvatata*) **Mental, Physical and Spiritual – which will lead to**
- 6- **Immortality** (*AMORDAD*)- **(a) Being remembered for the good work for generations**  
**(b) Losing the fear of Death –resulting in oneness with**
- 7- Ahura Mazda- **Creation of Wisdom** *KHOD-AH – KHOD = Self AH = to come.*

To Realize God through **Self Realization**.

**These steps lead to a paradigm shift. Humans no longer strive for dollars and gold. They measure wealth by the good work done, the knowledge gained, and the good name earned. The aim in life is Immortality, by being remembered for generations for the good work done.**

*Ye Vaio Asha Ufyaní*  
Truly, the **Asha (2)** derived

*Manas ca Vohu*  
By the **Good Mind (1)**

*Apaourvim*  
Never before known

*Mazdam Ca Ahurem*  
Among the wise and all creation

*Yaeibyó Khashtrem ca Ayzaonvamnem*  
With it make **Good Rules (3)** and never waning

*Varedaiti Armaitish*  
Increasing **Righteousness (4)**

*A Moi Rafedrai Zeveng Jasata*  
Leading us towards **Perfection (5)**  
Zarathushtra – Gatha -Yasna Ha 28.3 (FR)

*At Yeng Ashaat ca Voista*  
And those who are righteous are known for

*VanGheus ca Datang Manongho*  
Good creations and use of the wise mind

*Eretweng Mazda Ahura*  
In harmony with Wisdom in Existence

*Aeibyó Perena Apanais*  
Their aim achieved

*Kamem at Ve Khas mai bya*  
Their desire assuredly **Happiness**

*Asuna Vaeda Khva raitya*  
Their reward, **knowledge** and **being known as righteous,**

*Vaintya Sravao*  
**faithful and praiseworthy. (6)**  
Zarathushtra - Gatha - Yasna HA 28.10 (FR)

In Asha (Nature, Universe), embedded is the Truth; by using our Good Mind, we can discover the Truth (Ashem Vohu - the good ones) and use them to make Good Rules and good products. It will lead to a Righteous society, a society in harmony with nature, where everyone has the possibility to achieve Wholeness, Perfection in whatever their ability and inclination are. Their desire is not to amass dollars and gold but the happiness of having gained such knowledge. Their reward is Immortality by being known and praised for generations for their contribution. At such a stage, the spiritually inclined can discover the God within through self-realization (Khod-Ah).

***With this change in paradigm, no more gouging people to amass wealth, no more underpaid labour, no more wars for natural resources, and no more global warming. Such was the message symbolized by the 'Sofreh Haft SeenE' - Haft SeenE Now Ruz Table.***

The Now Ruz table has acquired different names in different countries. In Afghanistan, it is called 'Haft Mewah'. In Iran, it is called *Haft-Seen* or *Haft Sheen*. It was also called *Haft Chin*, where seven types of grain were grown. All have preserved the Haft-Seven in their names. What is essential is to follow the seven steps in life and make the world a better place. These natural steps are not limited to any religion; in the ancient past, the Magis promoted it among humanity.

Jesus Christ, who received the first three steps<sup>6</sup> from the Magis as gifts, followed through and said, "The Father and I are one." (John 10:30). The Jews stoned him, and the Romans crucified him. ***It is time for the world to accept the gifts of the Magis and follow the steps as did Jesus and "be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect".***<sup>7</sup>

It is time to discontinue the now famed but erroneous depiction of the Now Ruz table camouflaged with petty philosophies attributed to individual items whose name starts with the letter S, for example.

*I am SUMAC, exotic in my way; I make your Kebabs have a tangy taste. I symbolize Taste.*

*I am SEER Garlic; I lower blood pressure; I Pacify; I symbolize Peace.*

*I am SENJED, the tasteless berry of the sorb tree. I am the fruit of a tree that provides shade in summer. I represent the shelter and security you need when you want to rest.*

*I am SERKEH the Vinegar; I am sour, but I am an excellent preservative; I symbolize Preservation. Etc.*



*Haft Mewah*



Instead, place Seven Trays (Haft SeenE) and fill them with numerous items irrespective of how their names spell. Now the Egg, the bowl of Fish, and the Pomegranate that don't start with the letter 'S' have a legitimate place. This presentation will highlight and draw attention to the Seven Gathic Steps towards progress, wholeness and spiritual oneness with the God within.

Gouging others to become millionaires and billionaires will no longer be the objective in life. The goal will be Good Deeds, good discoveries, and good products to acquire a good name leading to Immortality through the memory of generations. That will blossom the Heavenly Earth, and everyone will enjoy a heavenly life on this only Heavenly Planet in the solar system.

It is a shame to distort a benevolent way of life with superstition and the personification of the Amsha Spantas.

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## TIRGAN

### THE LONGEST DAY – THE SUMMER SOLSTICE

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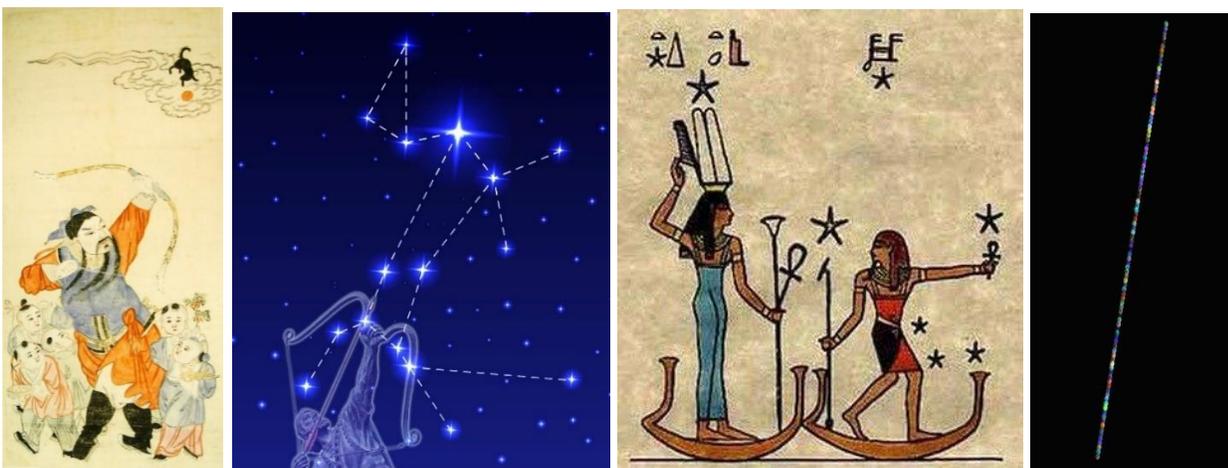
*Fariborz Rahnamoon*

The first day of summer, the longest day, the Summer Solstice, was celebrated as TIRGAN and what better way to rejoice on a hot summer day than to douse each other with the life-giving water? It is a day of picnics in the fields and parks and drenching each other with water. It is a day of fun and the enjoyment of nature. It is customary to tie a rainbow-coloured wristband called Tir-o-Bod, representing the colours of the star Tishtar as it flickers in the sky. It shows the ancient Iranians were more knowledgeable than modern-day historians and scholars can imagine.

The name of the first month of summer is Tir. Tir or Tishtar is the brightest star visible from Earth as the rising star before sunrise in summer. Its Greek name is Sirius, located in the Canis Major (Big Dog) constellation. Ancient Egyptians noted that when Sirius reappeared before daylight around the summer solstice, the annual flooding of the Nile River followed. The Nile got flooded because of the monsoon rains at its source in Central Africa. When Tishtrya or Sirius appears in the evening sky in winter, there is snow and rain. In summer, the heat turns water into clouds which would convert to rain later, initiating the epithet Rain Star. So in Tir Yasht, we read. *"We sacrifice unto Tishtrya; We sacrifice unto the rains of Tishtrya."* (Tir Yasht 6:12).

The night sky fascinated ancient civilizations, and many myths have developed. Several cultures associated Tishtrya with the bow and arrow. Hindu mythology associates it with hunting and bow and arrow. The Chinese visualized a large bow and arrow across the southern sky, formed by the constellation of Puppis and Canis Major. Similarly, the Egyptians depicted goddess Sopdet drawing an arrow at Sirius. Except for the Greeks, who saw it as a dog.

The Iranians saw in it an archer who they called Erekhsha or Arash. He was holding the bow aiming the arrow at Tishtar. This imaginative depiction found its way into Tir Yasht 8:6, indicating the star's direction. The constellation's shape created the mythological archer Arash and the distance of its visibility before sunrise the arrow's flight path.<sup>8</sup> *"We sacrifice unto Tishtrya, the bright and glorious star; who flies, towards the sea Vouru-Kasha, as swiftly as the arrow darted through the heavenly space, which Erekhsha (Arash), the swift archer, the Arya amongst the Aryas whose arrow was the swiftest, shot from Mount Khshaotha to Mount Hvanvant."*



1-Chinese Emperor Zang (75-88 CE) draws a bow and arrow toward Sirius.<sup>9</sup> 2- The constellation depicts Arash the archer. 3-Egyptian goddess Sopdet represented Sirius, who brought new soil and fertility to the land by flooding the Nile.<sup>10</sup> 4- Sirius flickers in multicolours across the sky. <sup>11</sup>

During the Islamic era, the Pahlavi text reinterpreted this verse by devolving scientific information and giving it a mythological perspective. Arash, the archer, settles the border dispute by shooting an arrow to demarcate the border between Iran and Turan during the reign of Manucher Shah. Since Arash had infused his arrow with his life force, he melted away as the arrow flew towards its destination. This melting out of Arash dramatizes the constellation's disappearance with the rising Sun's light. Once again, mythology replaces science and belief replace truth.

The Arabs had imposed upon the Iranians their lunar calendar. Within a few generations, trying to keep up with the legal calendar, the ancient Iranian calendar got bungled up. The once blueprint of nature no longer aligns with nature. The festival did not align with the season, so the logical alternative was to set a symmetrical system. The best choice was the alignment of the names of the day and the month. So out went the science, and in came a logic-strengthen superstition. The Iranians who had converted by force to Islam had more freedom; they managed to preserve their culture. They maintained Now Ruz and Yalda; they celebrated it on the correct day on the Vernal Equinox and Winter Solstice. That is why Zarathushtis also celebrate these two festivals on the correct date, not so with Mehregan and Tirgan.

**Conclusion:** Tirgan is the celebration of the Summer Solstice, the longest day, the first day of summer, and the first day of the month of Tir. Being based on wisdom and science, it has the potential for international celebration. Not so when based on the coinciding of the name of the month and the day.

What the Greeks saw as a Big Dog, the Persians, Indians, Chinese, and Egyptians saw as a bow and arrow. Arash-e-Kamangir, Arash the archer, is an Iranian asterism comprising seven stars instead of the Canis Major. The story of Arash-e-Kamangir is a beautiful and inspiring myth. It is a later development and is not from the Avesta or the Shahnameh, as many claim. As per the Shahnameh, Fereydun divides his kingdom among his three sons, Salm, Toor and Iraj. Iraj gets the lands of Iran; the other two brothers are not happy with their share. They kill Iraj in cold blood. Fereydun was very angry but did not want to wage war against his sons. The wife of Iraj, who was pregnant, gave birth to a baby girl. This girl grows up and gives birth to a baby boy. He is named Manucher, and Fereydun crowns him the King of Iran. Manucher goes to war against his maternal uncles, Salm and Toor and kills them both in a battle to avenge his grandfather. So there is no border dispute and no peace treaty. Manucher is a clear winner; he killed the two kings, and the situation does not warrant a peace treaty.

According to the Shahnameh: The peace treaty with the Turanians was during the reign of Kai Ghobad, and it was young Rostam's first combat. Rostam picked Afrasiab up by his belt and held him overhead when Afrasiab's belt broke, and he managed to escape, but it scared the hell out of Afrasiab. He advised his father, Pashang, the Turanian King, to initiate a peace treaty with the Iranians and retreated to the other side of river Jehun. There is no mention of Arash, nor does the situation warrant a contest. Arash as an archer gets mentioned in a few verses of the Shahnameh but for different reasons.

The now famous story of Arash-e-Kamangir is from a poem by Siavshah Kasrae written in 1959. It is not from the Avesta or Shahnameh, as believed.

The relation of Tirgan with science gets even more potent by the multicoloured wristband (Tir-o Baad) representing the visible colours of the star Tishtrya.



Tir O Bod

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## MEHREGAN

### THE AUTUMNAL EQUINOX

Fariborz Rahnamoon

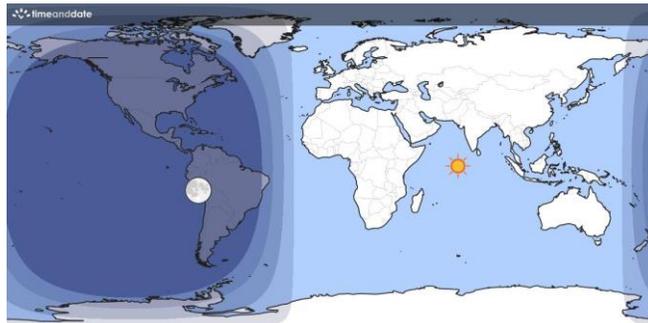
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Mehregan is the celebration of one of the four unique positions of Mehr, the Sun, in its relation to the earth. It is the celebration of the Autumnal Equinox, the first day of Autumn when trees start to shed their leaves and prepare for winter slumber. Likewise, farmers have gathered the crops and reaped the fruits of their collaboration with Nature. It is time to thank Nature and all who contributed to the endeavour. It is time to enjoy the outcome of working with Nature by sharing the bounties of Nature. Mehregan has a symbolic table spread like Now Ruz. It consists of Seven Trays adorned with the year's produce and shared with guests - the seven trays represent the Seven Eternal Laws per the Gathas.

Mehr is the manifestation of love. It symbolizes the growth cycle towards wholeness and perfection (Hurvata), from the seed sown to the fruits reaped. Mehregan is celebrated by sharing and spreading love and kindness among friends and neighbours. The celebration of equality manifested by the equality of the day and night, just like Now Ruz.

**According to Shahnameh, Faraydoon, a pre-Zoroastrian king and a follower of Mithraism (Mehr), crowned himself King on the auspicious day of Mehregan, on the first day of Mehr.**

The proof of the scientific character (Truth) of the festival is in Mehr Yasht, which mentions that when Mithra, the Sun, is at mid-day position at 63 degrees longitude, on the border of Afghanistan and Iran, it spreads its arms and holds the two corners of the landmass. In other words, there is sunshine (arms of Mithra) in the entire hemisphere, from Australia and Japan to Africa and Europe, which is a verifiable fact.



In the Islamic era, the animal sacrifice became part of the celebration to make it compatible with the Abrahamic sacrifice. Autumn was also the time to collect taxes, and some rulers preferred it to Now Ruz and celebrated Mehregan as the New Year.

Mehregan, like Now Ruz, Tirgan and Yalda, celebrate the Sun's unique position in relation to the earth and not a superstitious logic of coinciding names. These festivals remind us of the science of the Zarathustis compared to others who believed the earth was the centre of the universe. Ancient Zarathustis were in search of truth and celebrated the truth. Striving to leave a beneficial legacy and be immortal (Amordad) is what the Gathas teach; **celebrating the festivals on the wrong date or commemorating myths, however patriotic, is robbing the ancient Zarathustis of immortality and bestowing it on Galileo millenniums later.**

Mehr, Mithra, the Sun God, is a pre-Zoroastrian deity. Mithraism has formed a very sophisticated ritual over the centuries by portraying astronomy as symbols and rituals of the faith. Zarathushtra drew attention away from myths and rituals and promoted the Truth. Nevertheless, Mithraism never got eradicated, resurfacing whenever there was a weakness. After the invasion of Alexander, the Romans encouraged the resurrection of Mithraism among the Parthians. Their efforts backfired, and the Roman traders and soldiers fell in love with Mithra and introduced it to Europe as the religion of traders and soldiers.

Over the next six hundred years, Mithraism established roots in Europe, adding European features. Finally, the Sun God got replaced by the Son of God by adopting most of the deep-rooted Mithraic myths and rituals into Christianity. Like the date of birth of Christ, the twelve apostles, resurrection, the cross, crucifixion, and the bread and wine, to name a few. Similarly, modern Zoroastrianism incorporated many of its features. Fire is called the son of Ahura Mazda. The place of worship is called Dar-e-Mehr. Mehr Yasht became a prayer instead of the thesis that it was.

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## YALDA

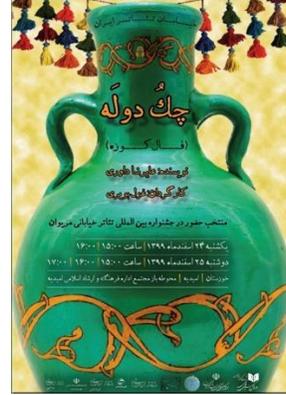
*Fariborz Rahnamoon*

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Yalda is the celebration of the Winter Solstice. It is also the celebration of the birth of Mithra, the Sun ("Zayesh E Mehr"). It later became the birth of Jesus Christ by adding two nights and three days to the Winter Solstice. Due to the 23 degrees tilt of the Earth, the Sun seems stationary for three days when it reaches the southernmost point as seen from Earth. After that, the day starts growing, perceived as the birth of the Sun (Mehr).

The word "Yalda" is a Syriac word meaning birth. It is a festival that the Zarathustis did not celebrate after the Arab invasion. The Iranian convert to Islam had more freedom, so they observed it. When the Zoroastrians were able to celebrate it, they copied the Muslim compatriots, but they adopted various names for it, like "Shab e Chella" and "Khorram Ruz" (Joyful Day). The original name is not known.

The longest night of the year is celebrated by reading the poetry of Hafez, the 14th-century poet. Women perform the "Chak O Duleh" ritual, where each woman places a personal item in the Duleh (earthenware) and makes a wish. Then a random couplet from the divan of Hafez is recited while a young girl draws an item from the pottery. The interpretation of the couplet answers the owner's wish. The recitation goes on till the items in the Duleh are exhausted. Summer fruits like watermelon, pomegranate, and a mix of nuts keep them busy on this long winter night. The recitation of the poems of Hafez means this ritual is from after the 14<sup>th</sup> century CE. It is today copied by the Zarathustis and is one of the two festivals, the other being Now Ruz, celebrated on the right day by the Zarathustis.



Chak O Duleh

Chak O Duleh

During the Islamic era, the Zoroastrians did everything to prove to the rulers that their religion was not significantly different from Islam. They did this to avoid harassment by the rulers and be treated at least like the Christians and Jews. Today these changes are sworn to be the way of the ancestors and are followed ardently. On the one hand, they claim that Zoroastrianism is wisdom associated. On the other hand, they perform acts based on superstition.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ahura.homestead.com/files/FESTIVALS/HAJI\\_PHIROOZ\\_-TABARI.pdf](http://ahura.homestead.com/files/FESTIVALS/HAJI_PHIROOZ_-TABARI.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [http://ahura.homestead.com/files/FESTIVALS/STORY\\_OF\\_HIROMBA\\_2022.pdf](http://ahura.homestead.com/files/FESTIVALS/STORY_OF_HIROMBA_2022.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> According to the MazdaYasni Calendar

<sup>4</sup> A tradition which attributes to Hoshang the founding of the Sade festival in commemoration of his accidental discovery of fire is “obviously a rather late and popular account” (Yarshater, 1983, p. 421) and occurs only in the *Šāh-nāma* in a passage that Khaleghi (2001, I, pp. 38-40) has shown to be an interpolation.

<sup>5</sup> <https://mfa.tj/en/berlin/view/7075/the-feast-of-sada>

<sup>6</sup> Bible Mathew Ch 4 Luke Ch 4

<sup>7</sup> Bible Mathew Ch 5:48

<sup>8</sup> *Tishtrya* appeared before sunrise and as the sun rose it became invisible to the eye.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.starmythworld.com/>

<sup>10</sup> Pictures 1 & 3 Wikipedia Picture 2 created by author. 4 <https://earthsky.org/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://earthsky.org/brightest-stars/sirius-the-brightest-star/>