
SADEH

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Many millenniums before **Copernicus and Galileo** the ancestors of the Zarathushties had a very precise knowledge of the revolution of the Earth around the Sun. They had a perfect calendar ¹ that charted the path of the earth and as a result, they celebrated the consequential positions of the Earth in relation to the sun and the resulting seasons as festivals. **Sadeh** is one such festival that originated when they lived in Airyana Vaeja in the Arctic region.

In the Arctic region, there are two seasons. The 216 day Arctic Summer, which starts on the Vernal Equinox (1st Farvardin 20/21 March) and ends 30 days after the Autumnal Equinox (30 Mehr- 22 Oct) and the Winter which starts on the 31st day after the Autumnal Equinox, (1st Aban – 23 Oct) and ends on the Vernal Equinox.

While in the Arctic the ancestors of the Zarathushtis celebrated the Vernal Equinox as New Year, and the two seasons by way of two Gahanbars. The name of the Gahanbars pinpoints the exact date on which they celebrated it and is also an indication of the region where they lived. The two Gahanbars were named Maidhyo Shahem (Middle of Summer) and AyeH Threm / Saarem (coming of winter). ²

Thereafter they celebrated Sadeh, which comes from the word SAAD meaning hundred. It was celebrated on the 100th Day of the Arctic winter, that is the 317th day after the Vernal Equinox (10th of Bahman- 30th of January). With two third of the winter behind them, Sadeh marked the start of activities in preparation for the coming summer.

Zarathushtra's teachings promote the enjoyment of life, so when they migrated to the tropics they continued the celebrations and enjoyed the festivals of the Arctic while adding new festivals to celebrate the four tropical seasons of their new home. Today these festivals help prove the history of the migration of the Aryans.

THERE ARE A FEW IMPORTANT POINTS TO BE NOTED:

- 1-That all the ancient festivals including the Gahanbars were named in such a way, so as to indicate the exact date of celebration.
- 2- That the festivals were in celebration of nature and not the celebration of divinities, gods or angles.
- 3- That all the festivals are an indication of the extent of the knowledge and science of the ancestors of the Zarathushtis.

CELEBRATION OF SADEH

In modern days Sadeh is celebrated by lighting a huge bonfire at sunset in a central location. During the day people go and gather twigs, branches and desert scrubs from the wilderness while children go door

knocking for firewood and then pile it all at agreed central location. At sunset, people gather around it while a group of Mobeds recite Atash-Neyayesh in reverence of fire and ignite the bonfire. Then the crowd that has gathered greet each other and distribute sweets and other delicacies among themselves.

After the Islamic revolution of 1979 this festival was condemned by the authorities. This Instead, drew the attention of non-Zarathushtis to this ancient festival and every year their attendance grew, to the extent that busloads of people from far and wide would attend the few central locations in Yazd, Kerman, and Tehran.

For the last two decades, the central location in Yazd was the ancient village of Cham which has a very small resident population due to lack of water for farming. The celebration at Cham attracted many people from far and wide and had even become a special tourist attraction for foreign visitors.

In 2016 the authorities took steps to ban the celebration for non-Zarathushtis. They argued that Cham with such a small population cannot have such a huge fire. They ordered that each village should have their own celebration and non-Zarathushtis should not be allowed to participate. They also send the Islamic police to monitor the attendees and keep non-Zarathushtis out.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SADEH

- 1- After the Arab invasion and the destruction of books and the forced conversion of the population, there is very little authentic information about the celebration of Sadeh and those that are there were written to discredit the people as fire-worshipers. **Repeating them gives it authenticity and should not be used as a reference.**
- 2- There is a common mistake, in relating the hundred in the name of the Sadeh to 50 nights plus 50 days before Now Rooz. **This is wrong and has no significance.**
- 3- Some have associated various myths and events in history to the origin of Sadeh, **which cannot be true though it seems patriotic.** In effect, the real origin of Sadeh which demonstrates the knowledge of ancient Iranians about the revolution of the earth around the sun is lost and the credit then goes to Galileo. Just like the ancient science and medicine of the Zarathushties, because it was translated into Arabic, is today attributed to Islam and Islam is credited for the renaissance in Europe.

May Mazda (Wisdom) prevail

Be a Seeker not a Believer

FOR MORE INFO VISIT <http://zarathushticalendar.com/>

¹ This calendar described in the Bundahishn has been recognized as the Perfect Calendar that needs no adjustment for 110,000 years. For details please visit <http://zarathushticalendar.com/>

² The Arctic summer is 216 days long, the Middle of Summer was celebrated on the 108th-day corresponding to 15 Tir/ 3 July. The Coming of Winter was celebrated on the last day of Summer on the 216th day, one day before the winter started (30 Mehr 22Oct).