



DESCRIPTION OF CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS IN SHIA COMMUNITIES

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: 26 th May 2024 Accepted: 24 th June 2024	This article describes information as to the customs and traditions of Shia communities and their unique characteristics. Together with this, in this article gives information about Navruz holiday and the history of its origin, "Haft sin" table which is considered a tradition of Navruz holiday and its characteristics.
Keywords: Iranian, Shia communities, imam, holiday, customs and traditions, ceremony, Navruz, "Haft sin".	

INTRODUCTION

Today, the Shiite holiday is of deep religious importance. It relates to events in Islamic history and reflects the fundamental principles of Shiite beliefs and practices.

Important Iranian holidays include Navruz (New Year's Day), Eid al-Fitr (Eid of Ramadan), Eid al-Adha (Eid of Sacrifice). They celebrate Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and his daughter Fatima's birthday, Imams' birthdays, and the victory day of the Islamic Revolution.

Like all Muslims, Shiites fast during Ramadan. In addition to general holidays, Shiites also have their own holidays, which are: the birthday of Imam Ali (r.a.), the birthday of Imam Hussein, the birthday of Imam Reza, the birthday of Imam Mahdi, Ghadir Khum is a holiday associated with the incident in Ghadir Khum during the last pilgrimage of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).

RESULTS

In the religious life of Shiites, in addition to general Muslim holidays, their own holidays - the birthdays of Caliph Ali and his descendants are also celebrated with great solemnity. At the same time, Shias also attach great importance to days of mourning. These mourning days are associated with the death of Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) and Shia imams. For example, the twenty-eighth day of the month of Safar is the day of Muhammad's death, the interval from the first to the tenth day of the month of Ashura is associated with the death of Hussein, the nineteenth day of the month of Ramadan is the day when Caliph Ali was wounded and the twenty-first day is the day of his death, and the first day of the month of Shawwal is the sixth Imam Ja'far. On the day of al-Sadiq's death, on the twentieth day of the month of Safar, that is, on the fortieth day after Husayn's torture and death, special prayers are held. On the days of Eid and mourning, Shiites visit the tombs and graves of famous imams, especially Caliph Ali,

Husayn, Imam Reza, Musa al-Kazim and Muhammad al-Taqi, Ali al-Jawad and Hasan al-Hadi, as well as other Imamzades, Sayyids, some Sufis and Dervishes. they do.

"Shome gharibon" (Persian - night of strangers) ceremony is held on the night of the 11th-13th of Muharram after the end of "Ashura".

According to the Islamic calendar, Shia Muslims celebrate one of the main religious holidays of Eid al-Ghadir (عيد الغدير) on the 18th day of Dhul-Hijjah. In Iran, where Shia is considered the state religion, this holiday has state status.

According to Shia teachings, the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) announced his son-in-law Imam Ali (ra) as his successor in front of many of his followers on his way to Mecca.

Eid al-Ghadir is celebrated with various religious activities, recitation of prayers and presentation of gifts. Shias can also prepare a festive table on this day and share joy with others. This holiday represents the importance of Imam Ali (r.a.) in Shia tradition and highlights his role as a spiritual leader for Muslims.

Shia Muslims recognized Ali ibn Abu Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), and his descendants as the only legal heirs and spiritual successors of the Prophet. Eid al-Ghadir is dedicated to the transfer of power from the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) to the first imam, Ali ibn Abu Talib.

Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.) returned from his last pilgrimage and stopped in the city of Ghadir-Khum between Mecca and Medina. Here he delivered a sermon to his sahaba (companions) and declared Ali ibn Abu Talib as his guardian. Sunnis and Shiites interpret this sermon differently. Sunnis believe that this sermon is only to acknowledge the merits of the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.). The Shiites consider this as proof that Ali ibn Abu Talib is the successor of the Prophet and the first imam. That is why the 18th



day of Dhul-Hijjah (the day of the sermon at Ghadir Khum) is one of the most important religious holidays for Shias.

Navruz is a national holiday, the origin of which dates back to 648-330 BC, that is, during the reign of the Achaemenid dynasty. To this day, Navruz carefully preserves all the traditions associated with this event in Iran and neighboring countries.

In ancient Iran, the first month of the solar calendar - the first day of Farvardin (March 21), the Navruz holiday, which began to be celebrated during the equinox, is also associated with the name of the legendary Iranian king Jamshid. Many people attribute the celebration of Navruz to Jamshid, especially according to the narrations from Firdausi. Accordingly, Navruz holiday is celebrated in memory of Jamshid being brought from Mount Damavand to Babylon in the divine royal chariot.

Umar Khayyam in his work "Navruznama" traces the narrations about the celebration of Navruz to the time of King Jamshid and also mentions that King Kayumars decreed: "Let the first day of the month of Hamal be considered as the beginning of the year". For example, Omar Khayyam says about Shah Jamshid: "Jamshid decreed that this day (the beginning of the month of Farvardin) should be called Navruz, and he ordered people to celebrate the arrival of Farvardin every year, to consider it as a new year".

In general, it can be concluded from the narrations that the first one is the view that most of the narrations related to Navruz consist of events belonging to King Jamshid, and the second one is that these narrations follow the astronomical principle in determining Navruz.

Abu Rayhan Beruni, in his books "Qanuni Mas'udi" and "Kitab at-tafhim" about how many days the Navruz holiday lasted, says that the first month of the Iranian year - the first day of Farvardin - is called Hormuz, and it is King Navruz, that is, the new year. He recalls that the sixth day of the month - Khurdod was celebrated as the great Navruz". According to Iranians, Beruni writes in "Qanuni Mas'udi", "Jamshid rode a wheeled cart and went to the south to fight the devils... (and from there) he returned victorious on the great Navruz".

So, in ancient times Navruz was celebrated for a week, or rather for six days. Beruni's "Relics from Ancient Nations" describes the week-long Navruz holiday in more detail: "The king (on the first day) opens the Navruz holiday and informs people that he has ascended the throne in order to receive the people and receive donations from them; on the second day, he sits down to receive very high-ranking people - family

members; on the third day he sits for his cavalry and great sages; and on the fourth day, he sits down to (receive) those in his house, his sons and dependents. As an explanation, it can be said that no matter how the kings organized Navruz festival for themselves, the people celebrated it for several days.

Navruz, which began to be celebrated on the first day of Farvardin (March 21), lasted for six days. The first day of these six-day holidays, which coincided with the first day of the new year, was called the small Navruz or People's Navruz, and the sixth day was called the Big Navruz or Asil Navruz (Navruzi has).

Navruz celebration in Iran continued after Islam as it did during the Sassanid period. Although the general structure of Navruz holidays did not change during the rapid spread of Islam in Iran, some comments related to Navruz were interpreted. For example, Navruz day was seen as the day when Adam (as) was created and Ibrahim (as) destroyed the idols. It is also believed that Navruz is the birthday of Ali (r.a.), the day of the Prophet's (p.b.u.h.) marriage to Fatimah, and the day he was declared Caliph by the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.).

"Haft sin" will fix the table. Seven types of blessings beginning with the letter "sin" (s) were drawn to him: sabza (grass grown from wheat, barley and lentils - sabze, seb (apple), saman (sumalak), garlic (garlic), sanjid (jiyda), vinegar (totim). Green is a symbol of rebirth and new birth, apple - beauty and health, sumac - blessing, garlic - healing, jiyda - love, vinegar - patience, totim - sunrise. In addition, other items are placed on the "Haft sin" table to complete and decorate it. Including a mirror, books such as the Koran or Hafiz Shirazi's Divan, Ferdowsi's Shahnama, candlesticks (in some places, candlesticks equal to the number of children in the family), coins, painted eggs, flowers, sweets, dry fruits, such as a bowl of water with red fish can be listed.

In Navruz, seeded flowers are grown in households to see greens, which are a symbol of spring. A part of the sprouted seed is placed on the "Haft sin" table, and the other part is placed on the windows and in the appropriate places of the house.

For several thousand years, the tradition of decorating the Haft sin table in Iran has not changed much. Currently, several new items have appeared on the New Year's table, such as sumbul - a symbol of youth and spring, sekke, i.e. gold coins - a symbol of attracting wealth in the coming year, volumes of the Qur'an and Hafiz, two of Iran's main books, a live fish - one fish for each family member, a painted egg - one for each child in the family, a mirror - a symbol of the



diversity of the world, fire - a symbol of purification, an orange in a bowl of rose water - a symbol of the Earth.

Navruz traditionally lasts thirteen days in Iran. The last day of the holiday is called "si dah badar", which means "go out" in Uzbek. This means that on this thirteenth day, all Iranians go to the bosom of nature. Whether it's raining or windy outside, people leave their homes for the green expanses. This day is also considered as nature day. And on Navruz day, all loved ones will be lost.

After the arrival of the new year, Iranians traditionally start visiting each other, relatives and friends, giving gifts and preparing delicious food. On the 13th day of the month of Farvardin, the holiday weekend ends, on this day people take a break from the intense festivities, go for a walk and try to be closer to nature. They give it as a reason to gather strength and start the new year with a new wave of energy.

Despite the fact that Navruz holiday does not have religious roots, with the advent of Islam in Iran, the ancient traditional holiday of the new year became more connected to spiritual and religious ceremonies. Today, in the homes of Iranians, the Quran is read on New Year's Eve, which has become an integral tradition of Navruz along with the ancient customs associated with this holiday.

The holidays celebrated by the Shias are considered one of the most important and sacred events in their culture. Preparation for this holiday begins long before it begins. The first of them is cleaning the house. Shiites believe that the purity of the soul is reflected in the cleanliness of the house. Therefore, before the holiday, they try to wash and clean all the rooms and things in the house. Shias wear new or clean clothes for the occasion. They strive to look elegant and dignified in honor of the holiday. On the day of the holiday, Shiites prepare special dishes and delicacies, special pies, which are considered a symbol of prosperity and abundance of the harvest. It also includes preparations for the holiday, as well as religious ceremonies and prayers. Shias visit the mosque and pray there. All these preparatory activities create a special atmosphere for the upcoming holiday. Shias strive to make Eid special and memorable so that they can celebrate it with their family and loved ones.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Shi'a have certain peculiarities in their religious practices, including the veneration of imams and the celebration of certain events and traditions, which distinguish the Shi'a from other Muslim groups. The Shia tradition and rituals are similar in many respects to the traditions of other Muslim

communities, but they are considered to have their own characteristics. they celebrate the "Ashura" holiday in memory of their martyrdom. This holiday is accompanied by mourning rituals, prayers and various rituals. Also, Shias attach great importance to imams from the house of the Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h.), especially imams who are considered direct descendants of the Prophet through his daughter Fatima and son-in-law Ali. Their lives, teachings, and works hold an important place in Shia religious practice. Shias visit holy places such as mausoleums and mosques associated with imams and other holy figures. Mourning rituals are important in Shia tradition, especially in commemoration of Imam Husayn and other martyrs. These are just a few of the ways in which the traditions and rituals of the Shia sect differ from those of other branches of Islam.

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