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- 1 This interesting article discusses the introduction process of the New Year celebration, Nowrūz, as an official function in the Safavid court, as well as its political and ideological motives. The author acknowledges that some cases of the Nowrūz celebration at court had sometimes occurred even in the earlier Safavid era, when Tabrīz was the capital, but also argues that it remained basically the ruler's private observance, with little political color. It was only after the transfer of the capital to Qazvīn that a royal palace, 'Āchēl sotūn', was constructed in the city and began to function as a place for official Nowrūz celebrations as well as coronation ceremonies. Thus a sumptuous feast was organized for the New Year festivity, and attended by royal family members and the ruling classes, which provided the ruler with a perfect opportunity to demonstrate his supremacy over his followers. The celebration also involved the populace: during the Nowrūz, bazaars were decorated and access to the palace district was open to the public. Thus the festivity was likewise used to show the royal sovereignty to the masses. Another good point in the article is its comparison with the case of the Mughal court. The author notes that Akbar, the third Mughal ruler, instituted the Nowrūz celebration as a court ceremony in the latter part of the 16th century; this period coincided with similar ritualization of the same festivity in the Safavid court.

- 2 A related and perhaps more interesting change is the historiographic transformation as court chronicles, almost simultaneously in both courts, began to use the Spring Equinox as the first day of the year.
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INDEX

Thèmes : 4.2.1. Safavides et Qâjârs

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