



## Anthropological study of mythological beliefs in post-burial rituals in Sanjābi tribe of Kermanshah

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### ABSTRACT

#### Introduction

Death is the main mystery of human life; This is why it is one of humanity's concerns in a fundamental way in mythology, and it appears in a tragic way in the epic. Gilgamesh, as the oldest epic in the world, is based on the philosophy of death and human fear. As long as the human being is alive, he explores the hidden secret of death, but this effort is fruitless. Humans avoiding death, when they do not find a solution to death, by analyzing the world after death and its quality, by holding rituals for burial and mourning, they try to heal the soul of the deceased and his survivors. According to the worldview of different ethnic groups, the quality of holding these rituals is also different; But all ethnic groups have one thing in common, and that is the belief in rites of passage for the deceased and his survivors. The Kurdish people, who have a very ancient and mythical history, facilitate the passage of the deceased from this world to the next by holding special rituals.

#### Research method

The method of collecting information in this research is library and field, data analysis method, qualitative and inductive reasoning method (from part to whole). This research is a type of descriptive-analytical and field research, and interviews have also been used for discussion and as needed.

#### Research findings

##### Post-burial rituals

##### 1. Breaking the clay bowl or jar on the first day after burial

One of the post-burial rituals is performed in the morning of the first day after the burial in the form of breaking a jar or a clay container on the grave. In

different regions of Iran, the ritual of breaking a jar is mostly performed during the celebrations of Charanbashuri festival (look at: Blokbashi, 1346: 6); But among the Kurds, this ritual is performed in the mentioned way for the deceased to pass more easily. The ancient root of this ritual is the breaking of a jar or clay in the rituals of Chahar shanbeh suri to ward off the bad luck of the past year. This method is done by believing in the magic of transference and reversal. The magic of transferring evil is that by magically transferring a phenomenon to an object or a person, instead of the person or the original object, they would trap him and keep the evil away from the original person or object (look at: Fraser, 2012: 593); More precisely, the magic of transfer in such situations is a form of inversion.

## **2. Planting a tree on the grave**

One of the most common post-burial rituals in Kermanshah and among the Kurds is the ritual of planting saplings on the deceased's grave. Plantain and cypress are among the most important trees planted in cemeteries. At first glance, it seems that this work is done for emotional reasons, including keeping the memory of the deceased or to take advantage of the shade of the trees in the heat of summer and when going to the grave, but with more care and paying attention to the depth of the said ritual, the connection of this ritual with mythology is more clear. Among the myths of various nations, including in Iran, the tree has a sacred face. In the history of human civilization as well as in the mythology of creation, one of the mythological analyzes always emphasizes the vegetable origin of creation and also the connection with plant gods. Due to the great importance of plants in the first human civilizations and in the era of agriculture as food, humans considered plants as a source of life. The importance of the plant in mythology is so great that in addition to being related to the symbols of life and life, sometimes it is also considered the origin of the creation of man and the world.

## **3. Seeking a good look from the deceased**

One of the most frequent points in the rituals of visiting the graves of the dead among the Kurds of Kermanshah is to ask for a good look from the deceased person. The Sanjabi and Kalhor Kurds believe that the soul of a deceased person has many powers; Including the fact that he can come and visit his family at any time up to 40 days after his death. In addition, they believe that if the soul of the deceased is unhappy or angry with them, it can bring down many disasters for them. This issue is related to the belief of the ancient Iranians in the power of Farohars or Farhoshis.

## **4. Noeid**

One of the rituals of the Kurdish people after the death of a member of the family or relatives, is that on the first Eid after the death, they go to the house of the deceased person and his family for the funeral ceremony called Noeid. This mourning, like other mournings, is accompanied by mourning and best wishes, as well as mourning among women. This ritual is also a remnant of one of the ancient customs of ancient Iran, especially among Zoroastrians, which was and still is popular among Zoroastrians under the title of Perse Nowruz.

### **Conclusion**

Kurds are one of the ancient tribes living in Iran and neighboring countries. One of the Kurdish provinces of Iran is Kermanshah, which is home to various tribes, tribes and nomads. The focus of this research is on the Kurds living in Kermanshah province, especially Ilat and nomads, including the Sanjābi tribe. In this essay, we discussed the post-burial rituals in the Sanjābi tribe of Kermanshah and their mythological and cultural analysis. These rituals include breaking a jar or pottery at dawn on the first day after burial, planting a tree, especially a cypress tree, on the grave, asking for a good look from the deceased by offering fidya and holding a Nueid ceremony. The roots of these rituals are linked to mythological thoughts in ancient Iran. The ritual of breaking a jar or pottery is connected with the magic of transferring evil and is done to ward off the troubles and hardships of the deceased's journey to the afterlife. Planting a tree on a grave is related to the mythological thoughts about trees and their sanctity, and it is related to the belief in the power of the tree to bring the deceased back to this world, which is a mythological belief. The ritual of benevolence and attention to the emotions of the deceased is related to believing in the spirits and doing actions that make them happy, arouse their grace and blessings, and protect them from anger and the ritual of Noeid is a repetition of the Zoroastrian porseh of Nowruz.

**Keywords:** Mythological beliefs, popular culture, post-burial rituals, Kermanshah.