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**GRT** **ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF COMMON BELIEFS AND NOTIONS IN THE CULTURE OF PEOPLE OF CHARDAVAL IN ILAM(IRAN) PROVINCE**

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**Abstract:**-Beliefs are interesting and attractive subjects in every culture and have engaged minds of lots of people; and since one does not know about their validity, he imagines that they are contrary to human common sense. This makes human mind scrutinize them. This study deals with the beliefs of people in Chardaval region. The objective of doing such a study is to get familiar with the regional beliefs and their positions among the local people. For collecting data, we applied ethnographic and fieldwork methods; and in addition to interviews with knowledgeable people about the subject, direct observation and collecting documents were also applied to complete the work. The result we can get from this study is that although the beliefs in the contemporary society, compared to their existence in the past, are less and their function has decreased, this does not mean that they have disappeared. People's mentality always holds to them, although people apply them less in their lives.

**Keywords:** Belief, Culture, Anthropology, Chardaval, Ilam.

#### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Culture, as a means of connection and an identifier, is significantly important in human life. Culture could be defined as a set of acquisitive behavioral and ideological features of members of a specific society (Coen, 2007: 39).

**Culture includes four elements:** belief, value, norm and technology. Belief is an important part of the spiritual culture and this term in Amid Dictionary is equal to 'faith' and 'certitude'. Belief is the collection of fundamental and original thoughts, ideals, goals and credence which form the basic layer of culture and other cultural elements are built upon it. Ideology also means the content of the individual's awareness, which could be defined without any judgment about its validity (Rash, 2008: 186).

**Beliefs and notions include a wide spectrum of subjects such as:** belief in earth, sky, trees, days, genies, fairy, ghost, etc.

Lots and various forms of beliefs and notions are common among people, but this commonality is not the same among all members of a society; for example, because of lacking abstract way of thinking, children have no attitudes towards it, and since beliefs and notions are heritage of the predecessors, consequently, older people have more adherences to them and consider violating them contrary to the norms of the society. Symbols related to beliefs and notions are more visible among the villagers than among the citizens. In Ilam, as a part of the Iranian region, lots of beliefs are common which are functional and useful in the lives of people. The region of Chardaval is also no exception to this; and the common beliefs in this region are typically peerless and attract every observant towards

themselves so that they can explore them. The stated problem of this study also is that these beliefs are being forgotten, and therefore, they need to be explained, studied and collected.

#### **Importance and Necessity of Research**

Culture is an inseparable part of every society which makes the society more harmonious, enduring and sustainable, and brings together different members of the society with various values, beliefs and ethics and gives them a united and uniform identity which cannot easily break up. The existing beliefs and notions of cultures in every society as the connecting elements between the members of that society are significantly important (Lahsae Zadeh, 2007: 70).

Beliefs and notions have survived through so many generations and reached us as part of the past cultures. We also should try to keep these beliefs and notions which are parts of our spiritual and cultural heritage safe for the coming generations. These beliefs and notions are important for the individual both mentally and socially and bring peace and decrease tensions.

#### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

**Major Objective:** anthropological investigation of common beliefs and notions in the culture of the people of Chardaval region.

#### **Minor Objectives:**

- Identifying the present beliefs and notions in the culture of the people of Chardaval
- Identifying the function of beliefs and notions among the people of Chardaval

#### **Research Question:**

- How are the existing beliefs and notions among the people of Chardaval?
- What functions do the beliefs and notions of the people of Chardaval have?

#### **Methodology**

According to the type of survey, all of these methods are used in accordance with the survey subject. Generally, in the anthropological studies, descriptive studies and fieldwork methods are applied. In this research, the researcher has used descriptive and fieldwork methods and the researcher has attended the research field and has questioned people who have knowledge about the subject. Generally in this study, interview, observation and study of books and documents, too, have been utilized.

#### **Research Literature**

##### **General Introduction of Chardaval Region**

Chardaval region which is the central part of Shirvan Chardaval City is located at the north of the province. People of this region are like other Kurdish speaking people of the province and have old culture and long lasting traditions. This region is colder, compared to other parts of the province and has more rainfall. It is on the Turkish plateau of Manesht and Bankol. Rivers filled with water run in this region, like River Chardaval and forest trees like oak, turpentine and wild plum are plentiful. Animal husbandry is also very popular. Agriculture is observable both in irrigational and without irrigation forms. Important crops of this region are wheat, barley, rice, pea, lentil, cucumber, tomato, okra, hay, etc. There are lots of natural and historical places in this region which show the old historical background and potentials of this region, natural and historical places like Tang Ghir, Tange Shamshe, Ghale Sam, Char Taghi Moshakan historical building, Bankol amusement park and historical bridges of Kor and Duit. Plenty of holy places could be found in this region, like Imamzade Bagher, Kosavar, Imamzade Ghasem, Imamzade Pir Hussein and Imamzade Jafar (PBUH). People of the province have got a high opinion of these Imamzades and whenever it is possible for them, they pay visits to these sacred places. Handicraft is also popular in the region, especially among women; they weave rugs after getting free from daily works. Rugs with reliefs are invented by the artists of this region; and since these people have an originally rich culture, there are lots of beliefs and notions popular among them which will be specifically dealt with in the following parts.

## Beliefs and Notions

### Beliefs about Marriage and Wedding

-It is believed that good girls should be kept for one's own tribe, and in fact, most Kurd people's marriages are tribal and proposal is not very much formal.

-Also the first girl who wears the brides ring or wears her shoes is the next bride.

-It is believed that the hand of newly married bride is blessed and if she touches heads of single girls, they will also get married soon.

-On the day of wedding, when the bride enters the groom's home, a sheep is killed before her. In Kurdish, this sheep is called war pai. In Chardaval region, the bride at first puts her feet in the blood of the sheep. According to their beliefs, this brings good luck and removes disasters. When the bride sits in her special place, they give her an infant boy, and the bride gives they boy some money for good luck; people believe that by doing this, their firstborn will be a son.

-In the meantime of the wedding, they burn wild rue seeds many times and they believe that it smokes out evil eye effects.

-The newly married bride is taken to a spring or a river three days after the wedding and she should fill and empty seven leather containers or seven bowels. They believe that in this way she will give birth to seven sons. After doing this, the present people are served a type of Aash (food) (of course, this belief and the previously mentioned one have lost their functions among people, but these customs are performed symbolically among the people).

-It is believed that if the bride prays for other girls while the wedding sermon is being performed, many other girls too will marry soon after that.

-Single girls should not put on rings on their special fingers which are for wedding ring only, because the public belief is that this blocks the girls luck and she can't get married.

According to the theory of structural functionalism, the function of beliefs about marriage is that they bring interrelationships among people and reduce the tensions and conflicts in a society, or prevent appearance of probable tensions in future, and bring peace for them.

Also according to the functional perspective, whenever a belief loses its function in the society, its performance also disappears.

### Beliefs about Pregnancy and Childbirth of Women

-The woman who gives birth to a child should not be left alone until one week, because it is believed that genies might disturb her and this might lead to depression after childbirth.

-In the past, when childbirth was difficult, they brought a handkerchief from a person called bašdar and tied it around the waist of the woman so that childbirth could be easier.

-If some salt is poured on the head of the pregnant woman without telling her and she touches her hair, it is believed that she would give birth to a daughter, and if she touches her nose or behind her lips, she would give birth to a son.

-When someone cleans the head of a killed sheep and pulls the animals mouth to split it open, if the corner of the cheek remains smooth, the pregnant woman for whom he/she has done this, will give birth to a son, and if the corner of the cheek gets folded, her child will be a daughter.

According to functionalism, function of such beliefs is that following such customs bring the peace resulted from having a healthy and good child and cause reduction of tensions and anxieties. Of course, with the increase of development in life, the roles of many of these beliefs have faded, but people still believe in them.

### Beliefs about the Infant and Child

-The infant is never left alone after its birth until forty days, because they believe that genies will exchange the infant with their own infants.

-The infant is not taken outside or near a river in the sunset; because they believe that genies are found more in this time.

-They never lay the baby's clothes on the rope at night, because they believe that a bad person might take the clothes with a bad intention and that might make the baby sick.

-It is believed that the baby should not be held higher than the holder's head at night, because they believe that in this case, the baby will have both shorter height and also shorter life.

-Rocking a baby's cradle, which is called haluleg in Kurdish, while the cradle is empty, is ominous.

-When the baby is in the early months after birth, it is sensitive to different smells, for this reason, the Kurd people rub a sticky, brown, wax-like material on the baby's hair and believe that this material repulses bad smells to which the baby might be sensitive and might lead to sickness of the baby. This material is mostly used in the months of spring when it is time for the pollination of flowers.

- Blue beads which are called miareg kâw are hanged on the baby's clothes to protect the baby from evil eye.
- When the baby is about to grow teeth, his/her mother cooks a type of Aash (sort of food) called denân rukâna and distributes it among relatives and neighbors. She puts a lot of Aash water on the baby's gum. It is believed that this makes the teeth grow faster and with less pain.
- People believe that when the baby starts articulating meaningless sounds like dada, baba, nana, etc. if he says baba, the baby after him will be a son, and if he says dada, the baby coming afterwards will be a daughter.
- When after a daughter, a son is born to a family, the daughter is called pâCega zarin and her feet is placed in hiza; they believe that this daughter brings blessings.
- They never put overused clothes of another baby, which might have become old, on the baby; because they believe that it affects the mentality of the baby and prevents the baby from convenient growth.

According to the distributional theory which says: "cultures have remained from long ago", people sometimes know very little about cultures and learn them mostly through imitation. It is the same about beliefs and notions. For example, many of the people with whom we made interviews did not know the reason of the forty-days taking special care of a baby after birth as well as many other customs, and only mentioned that they have learnt them from their elders. Also according to the concept of functionalism, the beliefs related to children are the reasons for taking better care of them, and the family feels more relaxed. These lead to protection of the baby from dangers and remove the tensions that the family might face.

#### **Celawer**

Another belief about children is Celawer, because people believe that the baby in the first forty days after birth is very vulnerable. The dangers that threaten the baby, and people use Celawer to keep the baby safe from them are as followings:

- If two or several babies are born within a few days and one of them gets sick, the sickness might get transferred to others as well, and make all of them sick.
- If someone comes home after daily work, his tiredness might affect the baby.
- Sometimes someone might unintentionally affect the baby with the evil eye, or some similar cases like this might happen.
- When many babies are born at the same time and their Celawers influence those of the others.
- When someone has died newly and the baby is born in those days.

In order to keep the baby safe from these harms, the parents go to a person called dawakar and this person writes and gives some special prayer called Celawer to the parents. They, too, put the prayer in a white or green piece of cloth and attach it to the baby's clothes on the shoulder with a pin. By doing this custom of Celawer, other babies and other causes cannot harm the baby.

#### **Beliefs about Prayers**

Among the common people, belief in prayers is remarkably popular. Prayer mainly includes writing of a short verse or chapter of the Holy Quran which is written on a piece of paper in long and narrow forms, then the paper is folded in triangular form, followed by doing special things that the writer, called "Seyyed" or "Mulla" tells to do. It is usually hanged from shoulder or from the neck and sometimes put in the pocket (Parnian, 2000: 190).

In Kurdish language, the prayer-writer is called "dehwaker". He puts the written prayer in rosewater and makes the patient drink it, and then, the prayer is wrapped in a piece of white or green cloth and a little wax is put inside it and then stitched to the clothes with a black and white string. These are instructed by the prayer-writer and the prayer receiver follows them.

#### **Prayers are mostly written for the following purposes:**

- Healing different types of sicknesses and having simulations
- Calming down animals when they don't let anyone milk them
- Healing and recovery of people who have mental problems
- Increasing the blessing for the family

Sudden sickness of a person which, according to people is because of invisible creatures is called Dase mazerat.

The Kurd people's belief in prayers is mainly displayed with the symbol of green cloth. This symbol is used regardless of whether the prayer is for a baby, a youngster or an adult. Even when Kurd people go on pilgrimages to



the sacred places, they take with themselves these cloths which they believe have been blessed. They tie them to their own and others' hands and arms, and believe that their problems will be solved.

When someone makes pilgrimage to the house of God, Karbala, Najaf, Mashhad and to the shrines of other sacred Imams, the best souvenirs they can bring with themselves are these pieces of green cloth blessed by the shrines of Imams (PBUT). People take these blessed cloths with a lot of interest. In the Chardaval region too, such beliefs are popular among people. When they face a problem, or want something to happen, they go on pilgrimage to the holy places and say prayers and tie the green pieces of cloth to the grilles around the tomb, or place a lock in between the bars. They believe that if someone unties these knots, their problems will be solved. Sometimes, some of these Imamzades are covered with gravels, like Imamzade Bagher, Imamzade Jafar and Kâw suwâr. People tie the green cloths around the stones, and by untying of their knots, they commonly believe that their problems will be solved.

Near some of these Imamzades, there are trees and people believe that they are blessed; they tie the green cloths to the branches and leaves of these trees. Those who untie these knots believe that both their prayers and the prayers of those who have tied the cloths will be answered. We must add that there is another form of prayer among Kurd people which is contrary to the ordinary prayers and is called Nur. It has a negative meaning and in fact, it is a curse. Nur includes: praying for death, destruction, sickness, getting into disaster, hatred, etc. If someone has committed a sin and another person curses him with Nur, it is believed that Nur will affect him and will lead to misery and scandal of that person, but if someone has not committed any sin, Nur will not affect him. Another belief about prayer is that if it is said in the rain, it will definitely be fulfilled. According to functionalist views, prayer and beliefs related to them have lots of roles and functions in the lives of people such as: decrease of people's anxiety and stress, stability in the behaviors of people in their lives, easiness of tolerating difficulties, and hopefulness and solution of future problems in their lives.

#### **Beliefs about Illnesses and Methods of Treatments**

Always in human life, there are some physical and some mental illnesses and everyone selects a special method for treating them. In Ilam and in Chardaval region as well, there are some beliefs about treating them which lead to recovery of the patient. We will mention some of these methods.

Lots of these methods are taken from religious teachings and many of them have scientific roots. For example, when a child gets fever or other diseases, it is believed that if he is taken to an Imamzade near his place, he will get well. Also people believe that sleeping in such holy places is useful for treatment of diseases.

There is an Imamzade called Pir Hussein in the village of Zanjire Olia. People believe that it has a special ability to heal bone and muscle diseases. When someone gets ill with some of these diseases, it is believed that if he goes on pilgrimage to this Imamzade on Wednesday and sacrifices a rooster there and prays for recovery from that disease, he will soon get well. Sometimes due to some reason, one's bone or muscle could get dislocated or some part of his body could get swollen or injured. One method of treatment is that they put a substance on the dislocated or swollen part which in Kurdish language is called "nima namak". It is something similar to bread, made of mixture of water and flour in a paste-like form, baked like bread. After putting this substance several times on the injured part, that part gets to its previous form and the person gets well again. When someone gets muscle spasm or muscle pain, or some of his vertebra or vessel in his body gets dislocated, it is believed that he should go to a person called "beitâl". This person eases the pain by massaging the painful area and by moving his fingers, and placing the dislocated vertebra or vessel. Everyone believes that hand and fingers of *beitâl* are healing but if someone does not believe in such a power, going to *beitâl* will not benefit him. Sometimes one part of arm or leg gets swollen. It is believed that if he puts leaves of plane-tree on that area and read chapter Tohid and repeat doing this several times, the pain and swelling will disappear.

When someone gets headache, he feels that his head has become heavy. In the Kurd-settled areas, it is believed that in this case, the person's hair should be rubbed with henna; by doing this, the headache will disappear and the head also gets lighter. Old women go to prayer-writers when they get long-lasting headaches and wrap the prayer which they are given in a green or white piece of cloth and place it on their heads under a "sarwan" and believe that their headache gets well.

-**"Anjama"**: in the past, when someone got frequent headaches, people believed that his blood has become thick and that extra blood has to be brought out of his body so that his headache will disappear. One way of treatment was that they went to a person who was skilful enough in this work. He first cut the head of that person with a blade, and then he made a hole in it with a goat horn which had been cleaned before and sucked the extra blood out of the patient's body and the patient got well. This is called *anjama* in Kurdish language which is very much similar to *Hijamat* (treatment by cutting the body and sucking blood with a device or by leaving a leech to do it).

-**Zardei** is one of the diseases that everyone might get it in his life. It is the same jaundice or hepatitis A. when someone gets this disease; he is taken to a person called *Beheshdar*. He directly stares at the eyes of the patient and murmurs a prayer quietly. No one knows the prayer that *Beheshdar* reads but they believe that if he reads it aloud or

tells other people, Beheshdar will no longer have the force to heal the disease. After that, Beheshdar touches the patient's face many times and again murmurs something quietly. If the patient is a baby, there is no need for any special diet, but if the patient is an adult, he should avoid eating fat.

**-baŞe kolanji:** some people have special abilities in healing scorpion bite. This special ability is called baŞe kolanji in Kurdish language. It is believed that Beheshdar can treat the scorpion bitten person by reading a prayer which is a verse of the Quran and can prevent its consequent effects. People believe in Beheshdar; even if a Beheshdar sees a living scorpion moving and reads the special prayers, the scorpion cannot move further. It is believed that no one should know about the content of the said prayer; otherwise, it will lose its effect.

**-nâwk kaften:** another belief among the Kurd people is the falling of navel, which is called nâwk kaften in Kurdish. People believe that navel gets out of its place, or there is something that moves around it and has unpleasant effects on the person. According to the signs of this situation, the affected person gets stomachache, around navel gets creepy, the person has no appetite but feels very hungry, his mouth gets bitter and tastes bad, feels weak and inert, and infirmity and dizziness overtakes him.

To treat this problem, the patient goes to someone who is able to heal it. The way of treatment is so that the healer puts his hand on the navel so that it goes to its own position, then; he ties a handkerchief around the patient's waist and massages it. Another method is that the patient lies on his belly and puts an upside down bowel under his navel so that the problem is solved. They believe that if someone does hard physical work or jumps from height, this problem will appear. They also believe that mostly the thin people face this problem and heavy people face it very rarely.

**-Âgera:** sometimes the skins of people get swollen. This is called âgera in Kurdish. To treat this disease, they go to a person called beheshdar. This person stares at the swollen part and murmurs some prayer and blows at the swelling part. After that, the swelling on the skin disappears within a few days.

**-Balik:** another disease that appears on the skin is called balik in Kurdish language. People believe that if someone pours water on a dog or a cat, this disease appears on his skin. For treating this disease, people believe that a chicken should be killed and its intestines should be buried and while burying them he should say: "May balik too gets dry and disappears by disappearing of the intestines". They also believe that if they drop resin of fig tree on warty skin before sunset, the wart will disappear.

**- Bubalyni:** another disease that affects children is bubalyni which appears when the child starts eating like other members of the family. It happens when the child starts walking and makes him weaker. The symptoms observed in this disease are as followings: the child gets so weak that he cannot open his eyes properly and the eyes become itchy, body gets fever, the child gets diarrhea, loses appetite even to drink mother's milk, and gets very thin. For healing this disease, people go to beheshdar, and he blows on the face of the child several times and sometimes spits on the child's face and tells the parents not to kiss the child for three days, till the child gets well. Then he writes the specific prayer for the child and the child's mother puts the prayer in a piece of green cloth and attaches it to the child's clothes on the shoulder. The parents take a rooster with themselves when they go to beheshdar. He takes a look at the rooster and murmurs a prayer. Then the parents return home and sacrifice the rooster. They remove the rooster's windpipe and bury it with the intention that the disease disappears. After this, the mother gets up and moves forward without looking back and addressing the disease, tells "I have no business with you and do not come after you; you too, do not have any business with me and do not come after me". They believe that by doing this, the child gets rid of the disease.

In the past, there was a plant in the hillsides of Chardaval region which was similar to pea bush. It is called meiaranexa in the local language. According to them, this plant has an odor which is harmful for children. They believe that this plant's odor, especially when it is dry, is so strong that even it might kill children. If a child fevers or the odor of this plant sickens him, it is believed that this plant must be boiled in water and the child should be washed in that water so that the child gets well. According to the local people, if someone was doing this for his child and its odor reaches another child, that child too, should be washed in that water; otherwise, the latter child dies. For this reason, in order to keep their children safe, people took their children outside very little when this plant grew.

According to the functional perspective about the role and function of such beliefs in the lives, it can be mentioned that in addition to treatment of diseases and making people well, these beliefs play their roles as reducers of pain and suffering resulted from disease, and extend the patient's pain threshold. They give people hope and bring them peace.

#### **Beliefs about Evil Eye**

One of the dangers that people think threatens them is the evil eye. According to the beliefs of Kurd people, one can survive every danger except evil eye. In order to prevent it, different symbols are used according to the



beliefs. Some of these symbols are miragkaw –black and white string-, using verses of the Quran, utawi, etc. According to the beliefs of people, every part of a person's life is in the danger of evil eye effect. Women's jewels in the nomadic regions still include beads which belong to the ancient times and are applied to prevent evil eye effect.

According to the beliefs of Kurd people, children are more subject to the ills of evil eye than adults. Therefore, the symbols of preventing evil eye effects and their tools are more observable among children. Usually, children's cradle which is called haluleg is decorated with different forms of blue beads that have different color spectrums, white strings, green cloths, etc. They blacken the child's cheeks and the child's mother, chelhine, burns wild rue seeds every evening, and they believe that by doing these, the child stays safe from evil eye effect. Another tool, which is made of Tabak wood and is called Chowatawimi in Kurdish language, is also influential for protection against evil eye. Tabak is made in different sizes and hanged from the baby's cradle, vehicles, animal's neck, on the gates and other places.

One of the activities of the nomadic women is shaking a leather container called meshk. In the past, there were big leather containers called gaws which were shaken by many women together, and a lot of butter was produced. In order to avoid the effect of evil eye, women decorated the leather container and its three-legged bench with green cloth, black and white string, and miragkaw (blue beads). They believed that in this way, evil eye has no effect on the leather container and its butter. But nowadays, these big leather containers (gawses) are not available; however, belief in the evil eye and the related symbols to smaller containers still exist.

#### About Days and Months

There are many different beliefs in the culture of Kurd people about days, months and seasons, some of which will be mentioned here. Kurd people have different ideas about weekdays. For example, they do not hold wedding ceremonies and important events on even days. They never hold weddings on Saturdays, and there is a proverb about it which says: "Şama kêr Şama bâr Şama vei wa mâl niâr". It means that "on Saturday, everything could be done except bringing home a bride". In the Kurdish beliefs, this is ominous and they postpone it to odd days. They also regard Wednesday as the best day for going to sacred places and believe that on this day, the gates of heaven are opened to people and God gives them whatever they want. Lots of people do not start doing things like agricultural works, going on trips, etc. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

**-Panja:** they count the last five days of the year out of the annual days. These five days are called panja. Doing every type of important things in these days is ominous. In these five days, people rub pastry on their doors and on the foreheads of their cows and believe that this keeps away evil eye, diseases and hardships. They believe that in these days, a wind called wây panja blows which causes happiness and liveliness of people and if this wind blows on the sheep and cows or any other creatures that reproduce on these days, that creature will have less milk.

**-Bezen qotega:** on the 21st day of Bahman, which coincides with the 21st day of Kurdish spring, goat gets out of the barn; it becomes happy because it is spring and teases winter and says: "it is spring". But when it wants to return to the barn, it freezes out of cold. This day is called "Bezen qotega" in Kurdish. On the first day of Bahman which is the beginning of Kurdish spring, a wind blows; the local people believe that the weather gets very cold on this day, and this day tells winter: "you didn't make it very cold, if I hadn't had spring behind myself, I would have made it so cold that old women would have frozen in the kitchens." This very cold day is known as Xakalewe among Kurd people.

**-ager nâwruzi:** on the day of Charshanba Souri (the last Wednesday night of the year), they prepare a big fire which is called ager nâwruzi and those who have the ability jump over this fire and after jumping over the fire, they say: "your redness is from me, my yellowness is from you" and they break pieces of wood equal to the number of family members and put them in fire and believe that if they do so, the family members will stay safe from disasters.

**-ma g sie zemesan:** the second month of the Kurdish winter is known as ma?g sie zemesan and according to people's beliefs, it is far colder because in terms of rainfall, snowfall and chill, this month is really hard. In the seasons that it rains, a wind blows which is called "wây Şamâl". Like other winds, this wind blows in the northwest and southeast but because people think that this wind blows in the northern direction, they have given it this name and believe that after this wind blows, it rains and the environment and nature freshen.

**-Şelemele:** in the past, at the beginning of the Kurdish spring, children used to go around the neighborhood to every door and enunciate to everyone the coming of spring and read poems like: "ËmŞaw avale wahara Xeir dey mâla buare" which means "tonight is the beginning of spring, may blessings and tidings rain on this house" and "Şelemele xeir we mâla bepele" which means "may this house be filled with blessings and tidings". Then the house owner used to give things like nuts, raisin, dates, etc. to the children and believed that this will increase abundance and felicity. This custom is called "Shahlahmahle". Similarly, in the holy religion of Islam, Safar is one of the Haram months; the Kurd people also believe in this and avoid unnecessary trips or long trips, they neither hold ceremonies of happiness.

On the first day of this month, they give some money or something else as charity so that unpleasant events that might happen in this month could be stopped. They give charity at the end of this month too, and thank God that nothing bad happened to them. Before the beginning of the New Year, people plant different types of green plants like wheat, barley, pea, lentil, etc. Plants are both the symbols of greenery and liveliness, and also the symbols of agricultural lives of the people in the region. The public belief is that every one of these plants that grow better, in the New Year, that special plant should be planted on the farms because it is going to grow better than the others.

On the first day of the New Year, far relatives also come together and cook a type of local bread called "Pehpege". They put a blue bead in the pastry; then, they bake the breads and distribute them among themselves. To whomsoever the bread with blue bead is given, it is believed that this year's blessings and felicity will be because of that person's destiny.

### **Beliefs about Dream Interpretations**

The people of Chardaval, like the people of all over the country, have various beliefs about interpretation of dreams. Some of these beliefs are as follows:

- Breaking glass in the dream is ominous and means that the dreamer will lose someone.
- Dreaming of rain and snow, according to people's beliefs, is a sign of sorrow and grief.
- If a dead person asks for something in the dream, this is ominous and means that one of the dreamer's relatives will die.
- If a pregnant woman dreams that she is besides a clean river or a spring, in the Kurdish beliefs, his child will be a boy.
- Receiving something from somebody is the sign of blessings and felicity.
- Dreaming of a black snake is ominous of receiving bad news, and killing snake in the dream is the sign of victory over enemies.
- It is believed that women's dreams should be interpreted contrarily.
- Dreaming of shaving beard and cutting nail is the sign of disappearance of sorrow and grief.
- Removal or falling of tooth in the dream is a sign that a child or one of the person's relatives will die.
- It is believed that when someone has a bad dream, he shouldn't tell anyone about it, and if that person who had a bad dream opens a tap or goes besides a river or spring and describes his dream, the bad omen of the dream will go away with the running water.
- Dreaming of having a wedding means that one of the relatives is going to die.
- If someone wears socks while he sleeps or there are socks above his head when he is sleeping, it is believed that he will see bad dreams.
- If someone sees a dream with a bad interpretation but in his dream he sheds tears, or if there is bloodshed in his dream, it is believed that because of these two things, the dream's bad omen will go away.

### **Beliefs about Death and the Dead Person**

- If a dead body remains at home, some people guard the dead body till morning, because they believe that a dog called "Hahuhash" comes after the dead body (Parnian, 2000: 170-71).
- If someone dies and if his wife is probably pregnant, in the funeral, they get the woman pass from under the coffin several times so that everyone knows that she is pregnant.
- About men, it is believed that when a dead body is washed, the corps opens his eyes many times to see the persons who are washing him.
- A dead body that is buried next to another dead body is said to be the latter's guest for three days, because of this, his living relatives give food to the poor as charities on behalf of the dead person and read and send Fatiha for him.
- On the first night of a person's death, they kill a sheep and cook some food, in the Kurdish language, this food is called "Shewashim" and it is distributed among the guests; they believe that this food and Fatiha, which are sent for the dead body, benefit him more than other good deeds and Fatihas.
- When people go to a graveyard for burying a dead body, it is believed that he shouldn't visit his own relatives' graves before burying this dead body, because they believe that this will increase the grave tortures of the newly died person.
- When a dead body is buried, it is believed that while returning, they should look behind; they do this so that the dead person does not feel lonely in the early moments of his presence in the grave.
- After bringing out the dead body from house, the house should not be swept for many days, because it will lead to death of other members of the family.
- In the first three nights after someone's death, they go on his grave and turn on lights and recite the Quran and believe that grave tortures will be reduced in this way and his sins will be forgiven.
- It is believed that before burial, the dead person feels alive and present among the living and he will come to know about his death when he wants to get up and return home with them but his head hits the grave ceiling.
- When a person loses someone, they pour some soil on his shoulder on the day of burial. They believe that soil

reduces the person's desire for the dead person and he admits his death.

-When people want to send Fatiha for a dead person in the grave, they put their fingers on the grave and believe that by doing this, the dead person realizes that someone is sending Fatiha for him.

-The Kurd people of the region believe that everyone has his own special star and by his death, his star will disappear.

According to the structural functional theory, such beliefs have lots of functions in the society and lead to maintenance and strengthening of structures and institutions like family in the society. For example, pouring soil on the shoulder of the person or sending Fatiha lead to comfort and decrease of the person's sorrow, and going to the dead person's family lead to maintenance of family as an institution and as a result, it prevents the family from collapsing. These are some of the functions of these beliefs.

### CONCLUSION

In the Chardaval region, there are lots of common beliefs and notions among people and people are consistent about them and have positive attitudes towards them. Many of these beliefs, along with the special customs and traditions, have remained the same and are followed by the people. Beliefs and notions have their influences in the different aspects of human lives, and the main issue about their effectiveness is the intention and positive thinking about them.

Also the position of beliefs and notions in different classes of people and the influence of lifestyle in admittance and consistency on them and the influence of technology in their transformations were studied. We reach these conclusions that among different classes regarding the ages, genders, urbanization, living lives in villages and the nomadic lifestyles, beliefs and notions have different positions; and, these beliefs and notions are more observable among the older people, women, nomadic people and villagers, compared to other classes of the society. Of course, this does not mean that other people lack beliefs or notions, but due to some reasons, they apply them in their lives less observably; and the technological developments and changes have not been ineffective in the changing of their beliefs and notions. We stated some beliefs and notions from other cultures comparatively and the results showed that although the rituals related to them are different, there are many similarities beyond these differences. Culture also has a close relationship with local beliefs and notions, and the general conclusion of this study is that there are various beliefs and notions among people about different subjects, and although they are less observable compared to the past, this does not mean that they have disappeared from the society.

The main function of these beliefs is applying them in daily lives in order to achieve peace, and to establish relationship with nature in the people's lives. They also will be observable for the future generations as vernacular and verbal knowledge, a vernacular knowledge which is among the most authentic practices of our predecessors.

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