
Nakhl Handling of Moharram in Dorokhsh: An Anthropological viewpoint

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Abstract

The ritual of mourning in Moharram month has had special position in social life of Iranian people and it is held in special methods in each part of country regarding to its particular culture and geography. Among the rituals of Moharram is Nakhl handling held in a vast domain of our country. Dorokhsh as a village with a historical value is considered one of the centers of holding this ritual. Because of significant distinctions which exist between the form of Dorokhsh's Nakhl and other country's regions and also the method and special rites of Nakhl handling which is performed by precise division of social tasks, this issue was studied. The purpose of the present paper is the description and understanding of Ashura ritual in Dorokhsh and anthropological analysis of this symbolic custom as a part of religious and cultural heritage in the east of the country. The present study attempts to investigate Nakhl handling ritual of Moharram in Dorokhsh using qualitative research method of the kind of field study (ethnography) and applying the technique of interviewing and observation and based on interpretive views of Clifford Geertz.

The findings of the research indicate that ritual and rites of Nakhl handling in Dorokhsh, while maintaining the relationship of individual and society, causes strengthening social coherence, group identity, cultural correlation, strengthening group consciousness and generation communications in

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this village. On the other hand, it is effective on individual's worldview and formation of norms in his mind. Among the findings of this research is that this ritual is unique in South Khorasan and despite similarities to Nakhl handling in other regions of the country, it is different in terms of form, appearance of Nakhl, time and method of holding custom from other regions of the country.

Keywords: interpretive anthropology, South Khorasan, Darmiyan, Dorokhsh, Geertz, Nakhl Handling, Group Identity.