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An Anthropological Perspective: Totems in the Lives of the Persians

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ABSTRACT The aim of this paper is to explain totems and their roles in the lives of the Persians. The method used for gathering data was based on field research and library reference. Totemism is one of the main forms of the preliminary religions that manifested itself in the development of human mind and belief. The ancient man used to enjoy the language of nature, and he responded to the world through his dreams or totems. The ancient man knew that he was beyond human being. For instance, he believed that his ancestor was an animal that could die and then return to the life once again. In its old form, the human societies used to worship the animal's dead body or a plant that manifested that society's nature of existence. This is what anthropology intended to discuss throughout history. A totem is a sacred object or symbol that represents a group of people or a clan. In the Iranian culture and mythology, the evidence of totemism is present. Thus, such signs appeared in the epics of the nation, and on this basis, an attempt is made in the current paper to study animal and plant totems and the role they have played in the lives and cultures of ancient Iranian people.