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TA'ZIYEH

RITUAL AND DRAMA IN IRAN

Edited by

PETER J. CHELKOWSKI

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Foreword

It would be commonplace to say that tradition, both good and bad, is being swept away by the onslaught of technology and modernism. We need not concern ourselves here with the reasons except to inquire: is this because of a hatred for the impoverished conditions of yesteryear's living, or because of an eagerness to embrace new Western ways, or because of an inherent weakness of the traditions themselves—or possibly a combination of the three? What is definite is that the third world, with the exception of miraculous Japan (these monks that brew modern electronics) and to a certain extent India, is giving up its traditions.

I am certain that if students of anthropology had turned to Ta'ziyeh forty-eight years ago when it was banned by the Iranian Government for sociopolitical reasons, a major share of the Iranian National Theatre today would be plays (with or without religious subject-matter) directly derived from Ta'ziyeh: but much to our regret, this was not the case. Ta'ziyeh had almost been isolated in certain distant villages when individual Iranian scholars such as Bahram Baizai (1965), Mayel Baktash and myself (1971) began to turn their attention to it.

In the autumn of 1959 a Ta'ziyeh fragment was included in Parviz

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Ta'ziyeh: Indigenous Avant-Garde Theatre of Iran

PETER J. CHELKOWSKI

This title is deliberately controversial.[1] But it is, perhaps, the most accurate description of the only indigenous drama engendered by the world of Islam. The Ta'ziyeh of Iran is ritual theatre and derives its form and its content from deep-rooted religious traditions. But although it is Islamic in appearance, it is strongly Persian, drawing vital inspiration from its special political and cultural heritage. Its genius is that it combines immediacy and flexibility with universality. Uniting rural folk art with urban, royal entertainment, it admits no barriers between the archetype and the human, the wealthy and the poor, the sophisticated and the simple, the spectator and the actor. Each participates with and enriches the other.

The nucleus of the Ta'ziyeh is the heroic martyrdom of Hussein, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad. After the death of the Prophet (11 A.H./A.D. 632) the still young Muslim community was faced with the problem of providing new leadership. Almost immediately the community found itself divided into two bitterly opposed factions, those who espoused the ancient Arabic tradition of succession by election and those who desired succession by inheritance, through blood-relationship to the Prophet. The former are known as Sunnites; the latter as Shi'ites.

Three successive caliphs were elected; they had been companions to the Prophet. Then Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad and the leader of the Shi'ite partisans was recognized as the legitimate caliph. To Shi'ites, Ali, "the Hand of God," is so exalted that it is said: "Muhammad is a city of learning, Ali is its Gate." But Ali was assassinated and later his elder son, Hassan, was poisoned and the Sunnite governor of Syria took over the caliphate and moved its capital to Damascus. Ali's younger son, Hussein, however, persisted in championing the cause of the House of Ali and was asked by a Shi'ite group in Kufa, a city near today's Baghdad, to join them as their head.

Hussein accepted and set out from Mecca with his family and an entourage of about seventy followers. But on the plain of Kerbela they were caught in an ambush set by the Sunnite caliph, Yazid. Though defeat was certain, Hussein refused to pay homage to him. Surrounded by a great enemy force, Hussein and his company existed without water for ten days in the burning desert of Kerbela. Finally Hussein, the adults and some male children of his family and his companions were cut to bits by the arrows and swords of Yazid's army; his women and remaining children were taken as captives to Yazid in Damascus. The renowned historian Abu Reyhan al-Biruni states; ". . . then fire was set to their camp and the bodies were trampled by the hoofs of the horses; nobody in the history of the human kind has seen such atrocities." [2]

The siege began on the first day of the Muslim month of Muharram and came to its bloody end on the tenth day, called Ashura. It was in the 61st year of the Muslim calendar which corresponds to A.D. 680. Soon after, the battlefield and tombs at Kerbela became a place of sacred pilgrimage for Shi'ites throughout the Islamic Empire.

The word *ta'ziyeh* literally means expressions of sympathy, mourning and consolation. As a dramatic form it has its origins in the Muharram processions commemorating Hussein's martyrdom and throughout its evolution the representation of the siege and carnage at Kerbela has remained its centerpoint. Ta'ziyeh has never lost its religious implications. Because early Shi'ites viewed Hussein's death as a sacred redemptive act, the performance of the Muharram ceremonies was believed to be an aid to salvation; later they also believed that participation, both by actors and spectators, in the Ta'ziyeh dramas would gain them Hussein's intercession on the day of the Last Judgment.

Perhaps because of their tradition of hereditary kingship and strong nationalism, the people of the Iranian plateau were particularly hospitable to the Shi'ite form of Islam. According to Persian legend, the daughter of the last Persian king of the Sasanid dynasty was taken captive during the Muslim invasion and married to Hussein. From the beginning, the annual Muharram mourning ceremonies were observed with great pageantry and emotion. Veneration of deceased heroes had long been an important part of

Persian culture; the theme of redemption through sacrifice found parallels in such pre-Islamic legends as the death of Siyavush and in the ancient Mesopotamian ritual of Adonis-Tamuz. By the tenth century A.D. impressive Muharram processions were well established. The reliable historian, Ibn al-Athir, tells of great numbers of participants, with black painted faces and disheveled hair circling round and round the city of Baghdad, beating their chests and moaning the mourning songs at the festival of Muharram. It was at the time when the Persian Buyid dynasty ruled from Baghdad.

In the first years of the sixteenth century, when under the Safavid dynasty Persia, which had always been a strong cultural power, again became a political power, Shi'ite Islam was established as the state religion and was used to unify the country, especially against the aggressive Ottomans and Uzbeks who were adherents of Sunnite Islam. The Muharram observances received royal encouragement; commemoration of Hussein's martyrdom became a patriotic as well as religious act. Many accounts of the processions, written mostly by European envoys, missionaries, merchants and travelers, tell of characters dressed in colorful costumes marching, or mounted on horses and camels, depicting the events leading up to the final tragedy at Kerbela. Living tableaux of butchered martyrs stained with blood, their bodies showing simulated amputations, were moved along on wheeled platforms. Mock battles were mimed by hundreds of uniformed mourners armed with bows, swords, and other weapons. The entire pageant was accompanied by funeral music and spectators, lined up along its path, beat their breasts and shouted "Hussein, O Hussein, the King of the Martyrs" as it passed by.

Certain similarities between the Muharram processions and the European medieval theatre of the Stations of the Cross was obvious. An important difference is, however, that during the Muharram ceremonies the spectators remained stationary while the tableaux moved and in the theatre of the Stations the tableaux were stationary while the viewer-penitents moved. The Muharram processions are, perhaps, more similar to the Passion Week celebrations which can still be seen in such Christian countries as Guatemala.

At the same time as the Muharram ceremonies were flourishing and developing under the Safavid rule, a second important and popular form of religious expression came into being. This was the dramatic narration of the life, deeds, suffering and death of Shi'ite martyrs. Virtually always connected, though sometimes only slightly, with the Kerbela ambush, these stories were taken from a book called *Rowzatu'l Shuhada* or *The Garden of Martyrs,* written in Persian and widely circulated among Shi'ites from the early sixteenth century onward.[3] Unlike the Muharram processions, the *rowzeh-khani*—garden recitations—were stationary, the narrator usually seated on a raised pulpit, his audience gathered in a semicircle beneath his feet. Soon, readings from *The Garden of Martyrs* began to serve only as a

framework and a springboard for the professional narrators who improvised creatively on the suffering and deeds of the many Shi'ite heroes. Through choice of episodes and modulation of his voice, the narrator was able to excite and manipulate the emotions of his audience, to produce in them a unity of feeling of great intensity.

For about two hundred and fifty years the Muharram processions and the narrative recitations existed side by side, each becoming more complex and at the same time more refined and theatrical. Then in the middle of the eighteenth century they fused. A new dramatic form was born, Ta'ziyeh-Khani or, as it is more familiarly called, simply Ta'ziyeh. Interestingly, from the beginning, the antagonists recited their parts, while the protagonists sang theirs. The main theme was still the siege of Kerbela, but the focus was on individual heroes around whom separate plays were written. Martyrs who predated and postdated Kerbela were added to the repertoire.

Ta'ziyeh serves as an excellent illustration of the concept that the roots of drama are in funeral songs and commemoration of deceased heroes, and also that, in the development of the theatrical art, the text is one of the last elements to be added.

It is significant to remember that, in the entire Muslim world, Persia was the only country to nourish drama. This can perhaps be attributed to Persia's continuous attachment—in spite of religious prohibitions—to figural representation. Persia is justly famous for painting, sculpture, and the other visual arts. Nevertheless it must be noted that, although the Perisan literary heritage extends back over 2,500 years and is renowned for its carefully structured national and romantic epics, its only true drama is the Muslim inspired Ta'ziyeh, which took well over a millennium to develop. That this should be so, especially in view of Persia's close cultural and geographical ties with Greece and India, both of which had extraordinarily rich theatrical traditions, remains a puzzle. Indeed, no Greek amphitheatres have yet been discovered on the eastern bank of the Euphrates.

As a compromise between the moving procession and the stationary recitation, Ta'ziyeh was at first staged at street intersections and squares. Soon, however, it moved into the courtyards of caravan serais, bazaars, and private houses. By the nineteenth century, the nascent dramas were performed in arena theatres called *takiyeh,* built, usually by the well-to-do and the upper classes, as a religious and public service. Some *takiyeh* could seat thousands of spectators, but most were for a few hundred people. Simpler ones were prevalent in the small towns and villages. Many *takiyeh* were temporary structures erected especially for the Muharram observances. Even the British and Russian legations were drawn into the competition of arranging the most splendid *takiyeh* for the annual Muharram celebrations in Tehran.

In the beginning, Ta'ziyeh consisted of a few loosely connected episodes with long elegiac monologues followed by some dialogue. Hardly any

action was connected directly with these quite primitive recited and sung parts. In fact, the actors read their lines from scripts about two inches wide and about eight inches long which they held in their palms. This tradition continued and is practiced even today. It is perhaps at least in part an expression of the Muslim proscription against representation of living things; the script serves as a barrier to any suggestion that the actor actually becomes the person he portrays. In this respect it bears some similarity to the use of masks in the Greek theatre. The spectacle of the pageant rather than the text was most important. Nevertheless, within a century, this art form produced a corpus of several hundred lengthy dramas.

The design of the *takiyeh* preserved and enhanced the dramatic interplay between actors and spectators which was characteristic of the traditional Muharram rites. The main action took place on a stark, curtainless raised platform in the center of the building. Surrounding it was a narrow circular band of space used by the performers for sub-plots and to indicate journeys, passage of time, and change of scene. At the periphery of this space, extending into the audience-filled pit, small secondary stages were often erected. Scenes of special significance were acted upon them and sometimes players from these auxiliary stages would engage in dialogue or action with those on the central stage.

In addition, there were usually two or more corridors through the seating area, running from the central platform to the outer wall of the *takiyeh.* These provided access for message bearers, armies, and processions including horses, camels and vehicles. Skirmishes and duels often took place behind the audience in unwalled *takiyehs;* sometimes actors in their fervor literally plunged through the audience to gain the central stage. The *takiyeh* was indeed a model of the plain of Kerbela; it was a tradition that actors in plays about the Kerbela massacre never left the central playing area as a symbol of the martyrs encirclement by the enemy. It would probably not be going too far to say also that the *takiyeh* was a kind of Shi'ite omphalos.

The following synopsis of the Ta'ziyeh play from the Northern provinces, called *The Marriage of Qasem,* which was usually played between the fifth and the tenth day of Muharram as an introduction to the culminating martyrdom of Hussein, illustrates the dynamic interaction of audience and actor that took place in the Persian *takiyeh.*

Qasem is a son of Hussein's elder brother, Hassan, who was poisoned shortly after his father, Ali, was assassinated. It was Hassan's will that Qasem be married to Fatemeh, the daughter of Hussein. Both Qasem and Fatemeh are among the besieged at Kerbela. They are still in their teens, but Hussein, realizing that their deaths are imminent, desires to fulfill his promise to his brother and orders their wedding.

While Ali Akbar, the elder son of Hussein, is singlehandedly fighting off the attackers' army (the fight is not staged, but is referred to) both actors

and spectators make preparations for the wedding on the central stage and in the area surrounding it. Finally they bring in the colorfully beribboned nuptial tent and lead the bride and bridegroom through one of the pit corridors to it. Festive wedding music accompanies their march. Cookies are joyfully passed among the audience. Then suddenly, from behind the audience, the horse of Ali Akbar appears. It is riderless. At this sign of Ali Akbar's death, everyone in the *takiyeh* freezes into position. Qasem leaves the main stage and rushes into the battlefield behind the audience. Almost immediately he returns, leading the procession that carries the body of Ali Akbar, raised high on shields, to the central stage. As it is the custom of Muslim countries for the entire community to participate in the last rites of the dead, the whole audience rises to its feet and weeps. Since it is also customary during the funeral processions that everyone should strive to help carry the coffin, those of the audience who cannot push close enough stretch their hands in symbolic gestures.

Finally, the body is laid on the main stage opposite the nuptial tent. On one side of the stage, funeral rites are performed with interludes of mournful music. The spectators dishevel their hair and beat their breasts. On the other side of the stage, the wedding ceremony continues accompanied by jubilant music. There is a cacophony of sound, the audience turning from side to side changing from weeping to laughter.

When the marriage rites are concluded and Qasem is preparing to consummate the marriage, he is called to the battlefield. First he attacks the young sons of the besieging generals who, at the sight of the gallant son of Hassan, flee in a comical manner. Then at last he must fight the whole army and is slain.

The most famous and influential of the nineteenth century Ta'ziyeh theatres was the Takiyeh Dowlat, or Royal Arena Theatre in Tehran, (construction started 1304 A.H.). Under the patronage of Naser al-Din Shah, who ruled Persia from 1848 to 1896, Ta'ziyeh reached the peak of its development. According to many travelers, its dazzling splendor and its intensity of dramatic action overshadowed even the opera of the western capitals. The American envoy, Samuel Benjamin, who attended the Muharram celebrations, left this vivid description of the Takiyeh Dowlat.

> I was invited to attend on the fifth day of the Ta'ziyeh. We arrived at the Takiyeh toward noon. On alighting from the carriage I was surprised to see an immense circular building as large as the amphitheatre of Verona, solidly constructed of brick. Farrashes, or liveried footmen, cleared the way before us. Thrashing their staves right and left, they opened a way through the crowd that packed the great portal; and entering a dark, vaulted vestibule I groped, or rather was impelled by the throng, towards a staircase crowded with servants whose masters had already arrived. Like all stairs in Persia, these were adapted to the stride of giants.

> A succession of springs upward finally landed me on the first gallery, which led around the building. A few steps in the twilight and then an embroidered curtain was raised and I entered the box of the Zahir-e Dowleh (Shah's son). It was in two parts, the first higher than the other; stepping into the front and lower division, I was invited to recline at the left of my host upon a superbly embroidered cushion of velvet—the seat of honor is at the left hand in Persia. The walls of the loggia were of plain brick, but they were hung with cashmere shawls of price, and the choicest of rugs enriched the floor. A number of Persian gentlemen of lower rank occupied the back part of the apartment by invitation.
>
> On looking over the vast arena a sight met my gaze which was indeed extraordinary. The interior of the building is nearly two hundred feet in diameter and some eighty feet high. A domed frame of timbers, firmly spliced and braced with iron, springs from the walls, giving support to the awning that protects the interior from the sunlight and the rain. From the centre of the dome a large chandelier was suspended, furnished with four electric burners—a recent innovation. A more oriental form of illuminating the building was seen in the prodigious number of lustres and candlesticks, all of glass and protected from the air by glass shades open on the top and variously colored; they were concentrated against the wall in immense glittering clusters. Estimating from those attached on one box, I judged that there were upwards of five thousand candles in these lustres. . . .
>
> In the centre of the arena was a circular stage of masonry, raised three feet and approached by two stairways. On one side of the building a pulpit of white marble was attached to the wall. . . . But I soon discovered that all the architectural details of this remarkable building were secondary to the extraordinary spectacle offered by the assembled multitude. The entire arena with the exception of a narrow passage around the stage, was absolutely packed with women, thousands on thousands. At a rough estimate it seemed to me that quite four thousand women were seated there cross-legged on the earthen floor, which was made slightly sloping in order to enable those in the rear to see over the heads of those before them. . . .
>
> Refreshments were served in our box repeatedly, and cigars for myself. . . . But after the performance began, all smoking and refreshments were banned as indications of frivolity inconsistent with the tragical events of the dramas. . . .[4]

Ta'ziyeh, like other Muharram commemorations, was a communal event. Each individual contributed according to his means and ability. The men brought their most precious objects—crystal, lamps, mirrors, china, and tapestry—to decorate the walls of the *takiyeh.* Even the most humble objects were accepted as they were given or lent with religious devotion. Athletes

from the gymnasium eagerly donated their strength and agility to put up the *takiyeh*. The women provided refreshments; the children of the aristocracy served water, a symbol of the Kerbela martyrs' thirst, and sweetmeats to all spectators, rich and poor alike. Although the wealthy had their own gorgeously adorned loges, in accordance with the Muslim spirit of brotherhood, the poor could sit in them if there was space. The purpose of Ta'ziyeh remained true to its essence; participation was an aid to salvation, for the suffering and death of the martyrs of Kerbela were instruments of redemption for all believers.

Good actors were paid very well by their patrons and also received favors and bonuses from the audience. Their costumes and props were rich. At Takiyeh Dowlat many came from the royal treasuries. It is recorded that the Shah lent his own coach to carry Timur and later, a new royal automobile was used for King Solomon. Ta'ziyeh productions were lavish extravaganzas.

The texts of the Ta'ziyeh dramas were at first very simple with concentration on universal truths rather than on the dramatic power to be achieved through the skillful use of exposition, challenge and complication. Gradually, however, during the course of the nineteenth century, they became more developed and refined as literature. They also became more secular in content as the "high" court tradition, resplendent in its external aspects, began to filter down to the rural areas and the folk tradition, more organic and more natural, based on folk art, folk stories, and popular religion, and ingrained with social connotation, percolated up.

Digressions or *Guriz* were introduced to extend the scope of the Ta'ziyeh and to add variety and secular detail. These were based on episodes from Biblical or Koranic stories, and from national legend and tradition. Spectators were led to identify their own sufferings with those of these lesser heroes. For women especially, they served as a wound-healing agent, for the point was always made that all suffering was slight when compared to that of the victims of Kerbela.

Despite criticism by the majority of the religious authorities who considered it sacrilegious for mortal men to portray any holy personage, Ta'ziyeh became more and more beloved by the people. Performances, no longer restricted to the first ten days of the month of Muharram, lasted until the end of the following month of Safar. Plays commemorating the birthday of a saint or a prophet provided an excuse to extend the dramas to other months. Eventually, popular demand induced troupes to perform Ta'ziyeh throughout the year as an act of thanksgiving, celebrating such occasions as the happy conclusion of a journey, the recovery of health after sickness, or the return from a pilgrimage.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Ta'ziyeh was on the verge of giving birth to an Iranian secular theatre. But owing to fundamental social and political changes of the twentieth century, it lost its patrons. Ta'ziyeh

then became a commercial enterprise, centered not in the cities which at that time were given to imitating Western art forms, but rather in the rural areas. Troupes fought for the most lucrative places to perform and were often forced to lease them from the provincial governors. Actors collected contributions from the audience, usually interrupting the play in the middle of the most crucial episode. Rivalry among Ta'ziyeh troupes led to theft of manuscripts and shifting of actors from one troupe to another. Dissident political groups began using theatrical gatherings to further their own goals and subsequently the government imposed restrictions on the performances.

Although many critics have written that this retreat to the provinces had a swift and deleterious effect upon Ta'ziyeh as an art form, a strong case can be made to show that, to the contrary, it purified and preserved it. The Persian village tradition with its sources in popular religion is more simple, organic, and theatrical than the urban tradition. Its imagination is more closely attached to the essentials of life; it is less abstract and intellectual, less wedded to the spectacular effect. In the provincial setting, there is far greater potential for coherence and empathy between actor and audience.

In fact, it may be said that the twentieth century rural Ta'ziyeh is the unconscious avant-garde of the "poor theatre." It totally engages the participation of the audience and it has extraordinary dynamic flexibility. There are no barriers of time and space. For instance, Napoleon Bonaparte can appear on the stage along with Hussein, the Virgin Mary, Alexander the Great, and the Queen of Sheba. The text is not fixed; episodes from one play can be interpolated in another to suit the mood of the actors, the audience, and the weather. The producer is omnipresent, regulating the movements of actors, musicians and audience. He remains constantly on stage, giving the actors their cues, helping children and inexperienced actors, and handling props.

Costumes are contemporary, as they always have been in Ta'ziyeh and other visual arts. In the past strict division into symbolic colors was observed, e.g., green and white for protagonists and red for antagonists. Today, if no appropriate costume is at hand, any that differs from the usual dress of the audience is acceptable. But, when possible, costumes conform to certain symbolic conventions. Warriors wear British officers' jackets instead of coats of mail. Abbas, the standard-bearer of Hussein's troops, wears a long white Arabic shirt, embellished by a military jacket, Wellington boots, and a helmet. Bad characters often wear sun glasses, learned people wear reading glasses. The eminence of a character is signified by a walking stick. In the Western theatre, the use of everyday dress for historical characters has been practiced for some time as a shock device, but in Ta'ziyeh it had been traditional.

Props are casual, but often have symbolic meaning. Gabriel may carry

an umbrella to indicate he has descended from heaven. Automobile hubcaps used as shields have been seen by the writer. A bowl of water signifies the Euphrates river. Classical Persian musical modes form the basis of the interludes, but themes from currently popular songs and marches are often incorporated. The company makes use of whatever space happens to be available for its stage. None of these practices ever proves distracting to the absorbed audience and actors. On the contrary, they give each Ta'ziyeh performance special freshness and immediacy.

After the decline of high court patronage there remain at the present time two strong Ta'ziyeh traditions. The first is in the hands of professional troupes; its practices form the basis of this discussion. It is active throughout the year both in towns and villages. The repertoire includes Shi'ite stories with the Kerbela tragedy as its core and the plays based on digressions. Usually the backbone of the troupe is a family for whom Ta'ziyeh has been a hereditary occupation. The actors are trained from childhood.

The second is the non-professional Muharram village tradition. This Ta'ziyeh is usually organized on or around the day of Ashura by an ex-professional or semi-professional Ta'ziyeh actor who brings together a group of villagers to perform, most commonly, the martyrdom of Hussein. This is an act of communal piety and has very little artistic value; its aim is to provide an archetype framework into which the spectators can pour their own hopes and sufferings. It arouses their deepest emotions and permits them to express these physically and publicly. It is a primitive ceremony with frenzied shouting and chest-beating. The performance is not only primitive, but awkward, and is generally responsible for the criticism Ta'ziyeh has received from the progressive elements of twentieth-century Persian society.

The advancement of film and television in the post-World War II period, together with the decline of religious ritual, has brought about a crisis in the theatre throughout the world. In order to preserve theatre, innovative producers and directors have been trying to break down the barriers which divide the audience from the actors, for film and TV cannot recreate the excitement generated by the close working together of living organisms. The touch, even the odor of the actor's sweat, the blink of his eye, the rhythm and warmth of his breathing create intimacy between actor and spectator for which nothing can be substituted.

Grotowski, who exemplifies this effort as a producer, has developed what he calls the "poor theatre." By "poor" he means stripping the theatre of extraneous outward appearances and achieving a purity of interaction between audience and actor that is based on their common humanity. This is only possible by reinvesting dramatic action with ritual and establishing a common denominator or archetype, such as, in Ta'ziyeh, the redemptive martyrdom of Hussein at Kerbela. Grotowski seems to be striving for what

have always been the fundamental principles of Ta'ziyeh. The important difference is that Grotowski regarded the theatre as his laboratory and controls intimacy by limitation of space, number, and distribution of spectators; his is a chamber theatre. Ta'ziyeh, on the other hand, achieves the same goal in enormous spaces and with masses of spectators.

The actor-spectator confrontation in Ta'ziyeh and its archetypal themes induce self-analysis in all who participate and create in them an inner harmony. Ta'ziyeh is such a personal and serious drama that it captures the very essence of thought and emotions embracing life, death, the Supreme Being, and fellow men. To students of the history of theatre and to those who are engaged in experimental theatre, Ta'ziyeh holds the promise of stimulating new theatrical ideas and experiences.

There are still living Ta'ziyeh producers who are a good source of information on this drama form. There are still Ta'ziyeh troupes who perform in the traditional manner. There are still thousands of Ta'ziyeh manuscripts fading in dowry boxes. We have much to learn from them.

Notes

1. This chapter was written as a preparatory announcement for the International Symposium on Ta'ziyeh. Variations of this chapter appeared in the following publications: *Festival of Arts Series* (Tehran, 1975); *Performing Arts Journal,* II, No. 1 (New York, Spring 1977); *Dialog,* year XXI, No. 6 (242) (Warsaw, 1976), *'Iṭṭilā'at* (Tehran) 28th of Mordad, 2536 (Solar).

2. Abu'l-Rayḥān Muḥammad al-Bīrūnī, *al-Aṯhar al-Bāqiya 'an al-Qurūn al-Khāliya* (The Chronology of Ancient Nations) (London, 1879).

3. Mullā Ḥusaīn Vā'iẓ Kāshifī, *Rawżat al-Shuhadā'* (Tehran: Kitābfurūshī Islāmiyyah 1341 A.H./A.D. 1962-63).

4. Samuel Greene Wheeler Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians* (London, 1887), pp. 382-88.