

Original Research Article

Manifestation of Peri in the Iranian language and Art with Emphasis on Ta'zieh

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Received; 02/11/2021

accepted; 19/12/2021

available online; 01/01/2022

Abstract

Peri (in English Fairy) is a mysterious and equivocal concept in the Persian language. Some define it as a revered creature while others consider it a villain and wicked being who can hurt humans and make them mad. However, Peri has long been in the language and culture of Iran and has appeared in various forms. Examining the history of Peri shows that this creature used to be a Goddess of fertility and sexual attractiveness in the beliefs of pre-Zoroastrian. However, after the rise of Zartosht, he expelled this creature from the community of Gods and considered her as a devil. After the arrival of Islam in Iran, some new concepts entered into the language and thought of Iran that Iranians associate them with the old concept of Peri. These new concepts caused Peri to gain her adorable face again and play roles beside other sacred creatures in Iranian Arts like painting and Ta'zieh. Peri appears in the paintings at the peak of beauty but shows some of her devilish and deceiving aspects with some signs like the red color too. Peri plays a very important role in Ta'zīyeh and comes on stage four times with various rituals. She helps the holy heroes in various ways. These roles are a mixture of the ancient features of Peri with the new Islamic teachings that can be seen in words and ideas such as Malak, Jinn, and Hour-al-Ain. In the end, all of this manifests itself in the body of a mature and beautiful work of art and is presented to believing viewers. The recovered Peri is a beautiful and lovable creature who, if there are any traces of humor and charm left in her, is because of necessity feminine.

Keywords: *Peri, Ta'zieh, Philosophy, Iranian painting, Iranian art.*

Theoretical foundations and research methods

Humanities research has long faced the problem of method because the objectivity in external phenomena and leads the teachings of experimental or technical sciences and engineering to prove some topics or generalize general principles does not exist in the humanities and arts. If we misunderstand the method of art research, then we expect the same result from art as is expected from research in the experimental sciences. In this case, we impose statistics and wrong generalizations on art, which will not have a good

result. One of the methods of research in the arts and humanities is the philosophical hermeneutic method in which the interpreter looks at the phenomena and the world around him and is aware that he is influenced by his presuppositions and prejudices. He does not seek to gather his phenomena and observations under a general and imposed external order. Rather, he seeks his reading of the text, aware of the limitations of his perspective and historical time. Dilthey speaks of hermeneutics as a method whose observation is not merely text, as other human phenomena such as society, politics, economics, and works of art can also be considered and read as text

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(Oloomi, 2009). The emergence of structuralism, which itself emerged from Saussure's linguistics, gave the impression that a general logic or some rules governed the structure of language and other human structures. We can see works of art as text and try to discover their inner logic. But a full understanding of the rules of language or reaching a fundamental principle or principles in its structure is a crude and rudimentary notion. We speak the language ourselves and we are in the world of language, so we have been part of its system and we are even developing it. But we cannot generalize one or two mathematical principles to the whole of it. Both because we do not master it and because language is not a definite whole. And its face changes with changing history and changing geography and we can only see and comprehend one or more views of it with our historical, spatial, and facility limitations. According to Gadamer, we understand the world through language, so the purpose of interpreting the text is to produce a new meaning. The method of hermeneutic interpretation is aware that the result itself is a text and, like any other text, is historical. Therefore, he does not expect surprising or generalizable things from his research but tries to understand the text and phenomena with empathy. To achieve this empathy, we must put ourselves in the shoes of writers and readers at a different time. Although it is not completely or ideally possible, trying and moving towards it creates a new perception. Concepts in the structure of language are understandable and the approach of this research is philological and etymological, for example, the concept of Fereshteh and Malak are not the same. Because Fereshteh is one word and Malak is another word, both of which need to be interpreted in the text, and no two words can ever be the same in terms of meaning. To obtain the data of this research, we used documentary and field methods. In the field method, we attended Ta'zieh of Qudjan village and wrote the conversations between the actors and we took pictures of them and the setting.

Introduction and Research background

Peri is a strange word that has had different meanings in

Persian from the past to the present. Like various figures of Peri, its meanings are always in metamorphosis and displacement as if the word also has a magic power. Variation in the meaning of Peri is wide and stretching from a completely holy and Ahuraic being to a witch and a corrupt and demonic devil. "The imaginary creature has feathers, which is originally from fire and is invisible. Malak (in Persian Angel) is opposite the demon. Hamzad. Jinn. Jinny. Khafi. Khafiah. Malak. Houri. Spiritual." (Dehkhoda, 1998, V. 4, 5583). In search of the meaning of Peri, at first glance, we may consider this word equal to the female jinn and used it along with the jinn and say: jinn and Peri and thus attribute all the existing extraterrestrial characteristics of the jinn to the Peri. An invisible creature that lives and dies like a human being, but has strange abilities, and when it approaches a human being, it instills fear in his heart to the extent that it can conquer him. And in this way, man gets into a lot of trouble and pains from approaching the jinn, and the so-called man becomes demented by Jinn or Peri. Or conversely, if the jinn befriends man, it gives him many extraterrestrial abilities in such a way that man can dominate and excel everyone. Like Solomon, who became a great king by conquering jinns, demons, and Peris, and became so famous that even today he is remembered as a myth. But if we dig deeper, Peri cannot be the same as the jinn. Although jinn itself is a mysterious word, two fundamental differences between the two make them different. First, in the Persian-speaking mentality, a Peri is considered a female, while a jinn is like a human being and can be both male and female, so a Peri who always carries a female idea, cannot be all the same as the jinn. On the other hand, we know that jinn is an Islamic idea that has come to Iran and the Persian language with the advent of Islam, and Persian-language translators in the past centuries, by searching the historical treasures of their language, have chosen Peri to be equal to jinn; For example, Meybodi in the translation of verse 56 of Surah Zariyat in the Qur'an leaves the equivalent of Peri for the jinn (Meybodi, V. 9, 1992).

The history of Peri in the Persian language is much older

than the jinn and the time of the arrival of Islam in Iran. Sarkarati knows the root of this word in very ancient times and the time of the Mother-Gods. He considers the word “Peri” or “Pairkā” to be derived from the Indo-Iranian root *Per meaning to give birth, to produce, to train, and to bring up, which is related to words in other languages, such as Latin, where “Pera” means pregnant, “Parens” means father and “Parentēs” means parents (Hasandust, 2014, V. 2, 602). From this evidence, it can be said that “Peris were at one time the gods of fertility and childbirth, and in this role, they were thought to be very beautiful and seductive young women who were the embodiment of the desires of the body, and they had the power of deception and female charm. To conceive and give birth, they slept with the gods as well as kings and lords and seduced them by showing their beauty” (Sarkarati, 1971, 7). Hence, probably in ancient times, the Peri goddess was responsible for fertility, childbirth, and even love. This goddess was praiseworthy and good in the time before Zarathustra, but Zarathustra, by coming and bringing his ascetic view, reject the deeds of Peri and expelled her from the association of the gods, and put her in the list of demonic beings in her double. In Avesta, peris are “a group of filthy and petty creatures who are considered to be the collaborators of dements, witches, and sorcerers, and to overcome them and break their bites and enmity, we should worship the souls of some of the heroes and pious people” (ibid., 1). If Peri looks beautiful, her inner is “liar, deceitful and filthy petty” (Ekramifar, 2015, 52) and severely punishes those who are deceived by her beautiful appearance and approach her. We see an example of such a look at Peri in the fourth Khan of Rostam. In his fourth Khan, Rustam, after killing a dragon and passing a long way in the scorching heat, reaches near a spring and next to it he sees colorful tables of Guava food and drinks. First of all, he picks up the tambourine and tells his story of wandering and misery in a song. Here, Peri who is called the magic woman by Ferdowsi hears Rostam’s song and changes her face, and comes to Rostam with a lot of colors and good smell and sits next to him. Rustam

rejoices to see her beauty and youth and praises God who has given him this table of food and his beautiful companion is by his side. But Peri, hearing the name of God from Rustam, turns black and his magic is invalid. Rustam throws a rope and brings Peri to him and asks him who he is and asks him to show his true face to Rustam and the Peri becomes a very old woman with a very ugly face full of wrinkles and Rustam destroys him with a dagger. But on the other hand, in Persian literature, we see many verses and themes in praise of Peri, like this poem of Hafez: That friend by whom our house the happy dwelling of Peri was, Head to foot, free from defect, a Peri was. Such Peri can never be that demonic and criminal creature in Avesta or Khan IV. From this, it can be seen that the former Iranian mentality, which considered peris to be beautiful and lovable, did not suddenly collapse with the rise of Zarathustra, but changed and took place in the Iranian mentality and language in various faces until today. Because the power of the minds of a large group of people in history never disappears suddenly with the precepts of a new religion, no matter how powerful and dominant that religion is. Thus, the other face of Peri (praised and blessed) after Zarathustra, at least in Iranian folk literature, followed its path and found a new transformation with the arrival of Islam in Iran. Another word that is close to Peri and is derived from the same root * per and is not mentioned in Sarkarati article is “Pareh” meaning part and piece, which comes from the root * per meaning to sell and divide. This word is related to the Greek word πόρνη meaning prostitute, and Latin word, Pars meaning share, interest, and part (Hasandust, 2014, V. 2, 601-600). From this point of view, she is a very beautiful prostitute who sells herself and gives men sexual pleasure. She shares her love with a lot of men. Such a woman, although desirable for the male mentality, is equally frightening from a psychological point of view. The demonic face of a Peri may have found mythical effects on men in this way because on the one hand, her beauty and accessibility are desirable for a man, but on the other hand, It’s scary that she’s a prostitute and that she sleeps

with a lot of men. The force of femininity is never free in the way of life of traditional society, and men dominate women as commodities, lock them up in homes, and thus have no fear of their femininity; But a woman who is not in this category finds a superior force for the male psychological mentality and even a transcendental one who can kill or harm men. Pareh has a semantic connection with fire (a piece of fire) and Atash-Pareh means evil, insidious; everyone who is restless and she inherited sharpness and enthusiasm from fire (ibid.). Perhaps this is why Mala'ek or Hour-al-Ain (whom we will discuss in close connection with Peri in the following text) are mostly depicted in Iranian paintings in fiery red clothes (Fig. 1). With the advent of Islam in Iran and the disappearance of the teachings of Zoroaster, the value of Peri was added again, because, with the advent of the new religion, at least three extraterrestrial beings entered the Iranian mentality and language, jinn, Houri, and Malak and the Iranians, in translating these three with their linguistic and intellectual backgrounds, all linked them to the ancient Peri in various ways. About the jinn as mentioned at the beginning of the article, with the advent of Islam, the Peri was considered equal to the jinn in one of its aspects, and this closeness agreed with the positive face of Peri and opposed the negative face of her in Zoroastrian beliefs. Because in the teachings of Zoroaster, Peri was a completely demonic creature, but in Islamic teachings, the jinn is like a human being, and people of this type can be both good and unholy and filthy. "Jinn first appears as a huge, very long cloud or column, and becomes visible by concentrating on its being in any way it wants: for example, in the form of a human, a jackal, a wolf, a lion, a scorpion, or a snake. Some jinns are believers and some are infidels or harmers" (Borges, 1994, 90). The Muslims believe in the virtuous jinns too, and an example of this can be seen in Ta'zieh and the arrival of Za'far Jinni and his army to help Imam Hossein (AS). In any case, even the equality of a Peri with a jinn reduces her condemnation in Zoroastrian belief. The other extraterrestrial being is Malak, the plural of this word is "Mala'ek", and like the



Fig. 1. The Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Painted by Sultan Muhammad. Source: www.wickipedia.com.

jinn, she is mentioned many times in the Qur'an. This creature also is probably mixed with Peri in Iranian belief and its example can be seen in One Thousand and One Nights. One Thousand and One Nights is a text with Indian and Iranian roots, the first version of which has been lost and only the Arabic translation remains. But in the same Arabic translation, we see that in the story of "Hassan-e Basri and Noor-Al-Nisa", when Hassan goes to the land of Peris, there the Peris are called by the name of "Malakeh", for example, "Malakeh Noor-al-Huda" and "Malakeh Noor-al-Nisa", without being the king's wife in the literal sense of the word. From this, it arises that in the clash between the culture of Iran and Islam, Malak has also found a fusion with Peri, although this fusion is less than the fusion of the concept of a jinn or Houri. Mala'ek are present beside peris everywhere in the Ta'ziyeh and make this suspicion stronger, but this issue (finding the root and meaning of the Malak and the connection between Malak, Houri, and Peri) itself is a broad topic and we cannot discuss it in this article and It

could be the subject of another study. The third being is called Houri, which is a word made by the Iranians because, in the Qur'an and the Arabic language itself, the word Houri is not mentioned, but "Hoor" is mentioned, and Hoor is a plural word and its singular is "Hoorra". This word deconstruction, which has a second syllable as same as the second syllable in the word "Peri" and creates a melody and memory of that word in the mind, is not accidental. Hoor The plural of Hoorah and Ahwar refers to a person whose pupils of eyes are completely black and whose whiteness of eyes is completely transparent. Since the beauty of a woman is most in her eyes, here the eyes of Hoor-Al-Ain is described the beautiful" (Makarem Shirazi, v. 21, 2016, 212). Unlike the Jinns, who are positive-negative, houris are all-good and lovable creatures who quickly became popular among the Muslims of the Arabian Peninsula and then all the countries that converted to Islam. The meaning of Hour-al-Ain is the beautiful women of Paradise that God will reward the believers who are virtuous in this world. These women are at the peak of beauty, as no woman in the world can be as beautiful as them: "Houries' bodies are described as so white and shiny that their limbs are so delicate that even the nerves of their stems can be seen from seventy silk garments" (Bokhari, 1986, V. 4, 88). And "If a woman from heaven appears to the people of the world, her light and smell will cover the heavens and the earth, and if a drop of her mouth falls into the sea, its water will become sweet" (Sa'labi, 2001, 323). In the Iranian mentality, these heavenly women also found closeness and even equality with Peri, as we read in the story of "Hassan Basri and Noor-Al-Nisa" In A thousand and one nights that Peri that Hassan fell in love with: "When his sister heard this, she got up and came to the girl. He saw her crying and sad. Hassan's sister kissed the ground and greeted him. That woman said to the girl..." (One Thousand and One Nights, 2004, 1825) And another example is Ta'ziyeh, in which houris find the responsibility of Peris or Mala'ek and appear in the scene of Ashura and do many things, they are with the saints and constantly come from the higher world to the

earthly world to be the helpers of Imam in different conditions, If they were houris, they would never have come out of Paradise, and we do not see anything in the Islamic verses and hadiths about the presence of Hoor-al-Ain on earth. Thus, it can be seen that Horalain Beheshti, which is the reward of the virtuous, has been replaced or even replaced by peris in the minds of Iranians. This closeness or equality, much more than equating the Peri with the jinn, added to the value of the peris in the eyes of the Iranians because the jinns are half good and half bad, but Hoor-al-Ain are completely good and praiseworthy, and there is no evil in them.

The manifestation of Peri in Iranian painting

Painting extraterrestrial beings have long been seen in Iranian art. In various paintings of Shahnameh or Khamse-ye Nezami or Jame'-Ol-Hekayat or Javame'-Ol-Hekayat, we see both the image of demons and devils and the image of Mala'ek and saints. Demons in the painting are generally painted in the form of male, rough, large, dark-skinned, or spotted creatures with horns, and Mala'ek and saints, like beautiful, stylish women with wings on their shoulders. For example, in the picture of the Ascension of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) painted by Soltan Mohammad, we see a large number of Mala'ek flying around the Prophet and with him (Fig. 2).

In this painting, Mala'ek are depicted in the faces of beautiful, slender women, with wings and a crown on their heads and accompany the Prophet (PBUH) on his spiritual journey to help him; They guide him or give him a crown or a scarf or a fireplace or the fruits and food of paradise and various other means or they just praise him and pray. The important point in this and subsequent drawings is the abundance of red in pictures of Mala'ek, and most of them are dressed in red or a mixture of red and green (complementary colors).

These demons are half-naked and full of dark spots. The white demon itself has two horns on its head, but the other demons have one that has come out of their heads, and in the following, we will see in the images



Fig. 2. Rostam's battle with the White Demon. Source: <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/shahnama/1>

of Ta'ziyeh that the Ta'ziyeh jinns are taken from this example, and instead of a horn, a torch is placed on their head. In the painting of the court of Solomon, we see the demon and Malak together. The demon is naked with a blue body and two horns on his head and Malak is in red and she has a crown on his head and two wings have grown from his shoulders (Fig. 3).

In most of the paintings, Malak wears a red robe or a mixture of red and green, "red, which is the color of blood and has long been used as a symbol of revival. At the same time, anger, rage, war, and Jihad have also appeared with the language of blood, and devils and demons are in red. Despite this secondary perception of red, it is sometimes considered the best of colors in terms of beauty... Thus, a kind of dual symbolism of red has been induced" (Madadpour, 2011, 233) This duality is more appropriate with Peri than Malak because she is, on one hand, extremely beautiful and lovable, and on the other hand, can harm others by being angry with her great power and "The green color that complements red indicates the traits of cold and humidity, and the confident breath, with passive, contractile and dissolving

traits." (Moradkhani & Atighehchi, 2018, 14).

The presence of Peri in the stage of Ta'zieh

Apart from painting, another art that emerged and became stronger in Iranian culture was Ta'zieh. Ta'zieh was established in Iran in later years, so it owes to the entire history of the culture of Iran and is full of references to Iranian arts before it, such as painting, music, etc. In Ta'zieh, due to the special conditions of this art, a symbolic and imaginative look culminates and an atmosphere is drawn in which, while being artistic and believable for the believing viewers, all kinds of Ahuraian or demonic extraterrestrial beings take turns to present. The dead or saints speak in the past and the line between reality and surrealism, logic, and fantasy is blurred, but the system of thought that governs this work is such that despite all the diversity and infinity of the field of action, the work of art does not become chaotic. And with precise mezzanines and artistic management, complete, structured, and pure work that has an artistic form is created. A Peri also appears on the stage of Ta'zieh, but her name and meaning have changed, first in the form of Malak, which we have said are less closely related to the Peri, and second, Houri who is very closely related to the Peri. When the concept of Hoor-Al-Ain entered the culture of Persian speakers, they subconsciously reminded Peri, and therefore, in Ta'zieh, they gave many responsibilities to "Houri", which is similar to Peri.

A Peri named "Houri" comes to the stage of Ta'zieh four times in the scene of the Ta'zieh of Imam's martyrdom. The first time after all Imam Hossein's (AS) companions are killed and he is left alone, Imam wants to go to the war, but before leaving, he says goodbye to Zainab (PBUH) and when saying goodbye he asks her to put his head in her lap and sleep for a short time:

O my dear, I have a dream in my heart / that I sleep in your skirt for a short time (Esma'ili, 2010, 441) When the Imam sleeps, the houris arrive. Their leader is an adult man, but they are many girls. In bright and colorful clothes, they have a veil on their face, which shows that



Fig. 3. The court of Solomon. Source: <https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/shahnama/1>.

they are sacred creatures, and like the previous paintings, they have crowns on their heads, and sometimes two wings have grown on their shoulders (Fig. 4).

On their first arrival, they walk around Imam, and their leader sings:

*O Houries, hurry from heaven / to Karbala
See Hossein again / and pick flowers from his beautiful
face (Qudjan village Ta'zieh)*

In this section, we see a trace of the ancient idea of a Peri who, as we have described, longs to sleep with heroes and saints, as we described in the story of Khan IV Rostam and his encounter with a magical woman.

The difference is that in the modified version of Ta'zieh, the author cleverly put Imam to sleep so that Peri could not sleep with him. Because if the Imam is awake, he must invalidate Peri's magic by mentioning the name of God like Rustam or to prevent Peri from her wishing with a harsh reaction (such as killing in Rustam's example). In this way, when the Imam is asleep, the action of the peris in this scene is limited to circling him and symbolically shaking the flowers in their hands and whispering with the sleeping Imam. Then the leader of Peris sings:

*O Hoorrian, sing, tonight Hossein is asleep / Tomorrow,
with the death of his companions, he is sad.
Tonight, Zainab will look at his body with grief / and will
See his body tomorrow, shredded from resentment / O
Hoorrian, mourn (ibid.).*

And he transforms the space from a romantic state of intimacy to mourning and sorrow. At this time, the houris



Fig. 4. The arrival of Peris to Ta'zieh. Source: Shabestan.com.

leave the scene and the Imam wakes up and says about the dream he had and the meeting with the Mala'ek and saints:

*I was dreaming of fragrant gardens but you did not let
me / I was talking to my grandfather and father but you
did not let me*

*My mother used to say that Hossein would be our guest
tomorrow night / I had met my brother but you did not
let me (Majales-e Ta'zieh, 1999, 371).*

The second time that the houris appear on the stage of Ta'zieh is when the Imam leaves his family to set foot on the battlefield, but his wife Rabab comes to him and brings the thirsty baby, Ali Asghar (AS), who is dying of thirst and asks the Imam to do something for him:

*O beloved of Hazrat Zahra, look at Ali Asghar / He very
cried out of thirst and lost consciousness (Ta'zieh Dar
Khur, 2002, 209)*

In response, Imam says that he is going to get a drop of water for the baby from the enemies. At this time group of houris, each holding a water cup arrives and their leader sings:

To Houris:

*O Houris, come immediately / grab a cup of water
immediately*

To Imam:

*Peace be upon you, the King of Karbala / all these
colorful cups that you saw / in the hands of these playful
Houris*

It is for you to take your hand forward / take one of them

and water your baby with it (Qudjan village Ta'zieh)

But the Imam does not accept the water brought by the houris and replies that his baby is destined to be watered by the enemies. In this second presentation, we see a trace of an ancient peri, where the leader of houris describes the humor and beauty of houris to attract the Imam, and also that the ancient peris are associated with water, rain, and fertility, and in this scene, houris have brought water to give to Ali Asghar (AS) (Fig. 5). According to Beizai and Sarkarati, the idea of a Peri is a remnant of the very ancient times of the mother-gods. The great mother-god, who was the commander of all forces, and human beings had no choice but to look to her kindness in agriculture, love and procreation, fertility, and so on. This mother is most likely Anahita, the goddess of water and rain, and Peris who come to earth and live or even marry the heroes and champions are her representatives, and if one acquires them, it is as if he has rain clouds and have the power to defeat drought dragon (Beyzaei, 2004, 51-41 & Mohammadian Maghayer, 2007, 113)

This scene can be interpreted in two levels, the first and obvious level is the holy meaning and idea of Ashura and the mystical desire of Imam to sacrifice himself and his family in the way of God without even a particle of extraterrestrial forces to help him. But in the second and hidden level of this scene, it can be considered as a reference to the tales of peris and heroes, such as the story of the fourth khan of Rostam. When Rostam reaches the colorful table of the magic woman thirsty and hungry and she invites him to sleep with her, but Rostam breaks the woman's spell by calling God. In the second reading (which is farther away and its connection with the story of Ashura is lessened) if the hero takes advantage of the gifts of Peri, these benefits will soon convert to damage (for example, water becomes poison) and he will be destroyed. The houris come to the scene for the third time when Imam Hossein (AS) is dressed in battle clothes and is ready to go to the battlefield, but because he is alone and helpless, there is no one to help him to ride his horse. At this time, houris come on stage again, and this time, in addition to the Houri's name, they also have the name



Fig. 5. Bringing cups of water for Ali Asghar by houris in Ta'zieh. Source: Author's archive.

of Malak (they are with Mala'ek) and their leader sings: *O group of Mala'ek to the path of love and fidelity / Hurry to Karbala and calamity on the time that Hossein Shah-e Jahan is alone / and have not one person to help him to ride his horse O Salsa'il Be in front, / O Israfil take the horse pedal, O Houris line up in a hurry / O Michael grab his arm, Step on the body of Gabriel / go on the throne of Lord* This time, unlike the previous times, the Imam accepts the request of houris and rides his horse with their help, but the difference this time with the previous times is that Houries did not come to him alone, but were accompanied by Mala'ek. And even in the sings of the leader of houris, the chosen Mala'ek of God are called by name. After this scene, Imam has a preliminary battle with the villains, then the character of Darvish comes on the scene, and conversations and stories with the Darvish continue until Darvish get a license from the Imam to go to the Battlefield and is martyred. After the martyrdom of Darvish, Imam once again turns to the enemies alone and finish his argument with them and everyone in the world:

I will finish the argument, O people of the world / Is there anyone who can help Hossein? (ibid.)

In response, the houris arrive for the fourth time, with a large group of Mala'ek, saints, and other extraterrestrial beings who have all come to answer the Imam's request. The leader of Houries sings:

*... The spirits of the saints are rushing / O friends, Malak of the earth is coming / To help the thirsty king
Be silent, O prophets and saints / Malak of wind came from the kingdom*

Give up your lives, O people of the world / Malak of the sea came angrily

O people pour dirt on your heads / Malak-Ol-Mawt came from the heavens

Fotros who was liberated by the king of Din / came with a sad heart

Houris came from the paradise / with the weeping eyes and the burning chests

And the leader continues to sing and announce the arrival of each of the saints by their names. The five holy saints, former prophets, and even the dead rise from the graves and come to Karbala to help Imam. The Jinns also appear on the scene, they are wearing black clothes and sometimes they are naked up to the waist and they have blackened their bodies. There is usually a torch in the middle of their helmet, which has lighted with oil (this design is reminiscent of the demons' picture in Rostam's battle with the White Demon, Fig. 3), and they also have one or two torches in their hands. Jinns' faces are often blackened or sometimes have a scary mask (Fig. 6).

Then Za'far the Jinn, the leader of the jinn group, asks the Imam to give him a license to go to war with his enemies to help him with his army, but the Imam does not accept his help and then tells the stories of the killing of his children and companions to Za'far. Za'far and the other jinns mourn the pain of the Imam upon hearing this news. Then all the extraterrestrial beings, jinns, houries, and the spirits of the saints, along with the shrouded dead, walk around the stage of Ta'zieh, on which the Imam and his family are, to say yes at the request of the Imam. And they create a scene like the resurrection on the stage, which is one of the spectacular masterpieces and the culmination of the art of Ta'zieh.

Conclusion

In the ancient culture of Iran, Peri was a praiseworthy



Fig. 6. The jinns on the stage of Ta'zieh. Source: Author's archive.

and lovable being and was close to the goddess of water, fertility, and love, but with the arrival of Zarathustra and his strict and pious character, she was condemned and expelled from the list of ahura Mazda's companions and was joined to the army of demons. With the arrival of Islam in Iran and the disappearance of the teachings of Zoroaster, new Islamic beings and concepts that are neutral or positive, such as jinn, houris, and Mala'ek, are considered equal or close to Peri, and Peri regains her good face. In Iranian painting, ancient concepts have been used to depict extraterrestrial beings such as demons, jinns, and Mala'ek. In Ta'ziyeh, the ancient concept of Peri changes her face and appears with a different name: Houris; This Houris is very different from the Hoor-Ol-Ain of the Qur'an or Islamic traditions. Houris has important responsibilities everywhere in Ta'zieh, and her colors and clothes design are adapted from the images of extraterrestrials in Iranian painting. Houris are in charge of the responsibilities of the ancient Peri in Ta'zieh and help the honorable and holy heroes of Ta'zieh. However, at a deeper level, they sometimes

reflect the effects of the unfavorable characteristics of Peri. Believing viewers, having a mental idea in their collective consciousness of several thousand years, accept and like the presence of Peris in Ta'zieh of Imam Hossein (AS) because they have a close friendship with this creature and love her.

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HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Shakouri, H. (2022). Manifestation of Peri in the Iranian language and art with emphasis on Ta'zieh. *Journal of Art & Civilization of the Orient*, 9(34), 51-60.

DOI: 10.22034/jaco.2021.313228.1221

URL: http://www.jaco-sj.com/article_142661.html?lang=en

