

**HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF  
IRANIAN KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI FROM QAJAR DYNASTY  
TO PRESENT**

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**CULTURAL CENTER UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

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TO PRESENT**

**SABA ASLIAN**

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER  
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**CULTURAL CENTER UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA  
KUALA LUMPUR**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Kheymeh Shab Bazi is the name of Iranian marionette puppet theatre that goes back to at least 800 years ago. It is usually performed in a small booth at night.

“Historical and cultural development of Kheymeh Shab Bazi from Qajar dynasty to the present” is a qualitative historical research according to Cultural Memory Theory. This current research is conducted to investigate development procedure in Iranian marionette puppet theatre in three aspects; application, elements and structure of performance. A historical and cultural review of Kheymeh shab bazi before Qajar dynasty is also presented. Changes in elements including puppets and puppetry, actor (Morshed), story and music band are studied from Qajar dynasty to the present. Valuable historical evidences are reported and studied to find out the structure of performance during Qajar period. Also, a list of puppets and puppetry instruments and Iranian musical instruments that are used in Kheymeh Shab Bazi are reported to introduce all parts of Kheymeh Shab Bazi.

This research shows connections between Kheymeh Shab Bazi and Iranian culture from the past to the present.

## **Abstrak**

Khemeh Shah-Bazi merupakan sejenis teater patungan tali (marionette) Iran yang berusia lebih 800 tahun. Lazimnya ia dipersembahkan di dalam pondok kecil pada waktu malam.

“Perkembangan Sejarah dan Kebudayaan Persembahan Khemeh Shah-Bazi Iran Dari Dinesty Qajar Hingga Masakini” merupakan kajian bercorak sejarah mengikut teori Cultural Memory.

Tesis ini merupakan hasil kajian dan penelitian mendalam ke atas teater patungan ini dari tiga aspek: iaitu aplikasi, unsur-unsur teater tersebut dan corak atau susunan persembahan. Ia adalah kajian terhadap Khemeh Shah Bazi yang mengambil pendekatan sejarah dan budaya sebelum zaman Qajar sehingga masakini. Perubahan-perubahan terhadap unsur-unsur seni termasuk patung, watak, (khususnya Morshed) lakunan, serta repertoire cerita serta peralatan muzik dikaji dengan tujuan untuk menunjukkan perkembangan dan perubahan yang dialami teater patungan tersebut dari zaman Qajar sehingga masakini dihuraikan dengan terperinci agar dapat suatu gambaran lengkap bagi aspek-aspek teknikal serta estetika pada persembahan Khemeh Shah-bazi dari seluruhnya,

Bahan-bahan yang dimanifestasikan melalui kajian ini juga menunjukkan perhubungan antara Khemeh Shah-Bazi dan kebudayaan Iran dari zaman asalnya teater tersebut sehingga zaman moden.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CM	Cultural Memory Theory
HR	Historical Research
IPT	Iranian Puppet Theatre
KSHB	Kheymeh Shab Bazi

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Iran (also known as Persia), is the 18th largest country in the world with an area of 1,648,195 km<sup>2</sup> and 75 million population. It includes Fars, Azari, Kurdish, Mazandarani, Gilaki, Baluch, Lur and Arabic races. (United Nations Population Fund. Swiller 2005). Iran is one of the ancient countries in the Middle East with at least 8000 ago. (Porada 1965)

4 forms of arts have been common in Iran during its historical art periods {Beginning 8 to 1 thousand B.C.) Historical period (1000 B.C. to 632 A.D.), Islamic conquest (7<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century), Modern art (14<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> century)}; visual arts, architecture, literature and performing arts. Figure 1.1 shows hierarchies of Iranian art forms.

Figure 1.1 shows that traditional performing arts in Iran includes Dance, Tazieh (ritual and symbolic tragic theatre about Hossein Ibn Ali's life story), storytelling in three main arts forms; Ghavali (performed by female who played music), Naghali (performed by male), Pardeh Khani (by Male and based on a painting that is put up behind storyteller), Iranian comedy play (Namayesh Roo Hoz/ Takht Hoz) and puppet theatre.

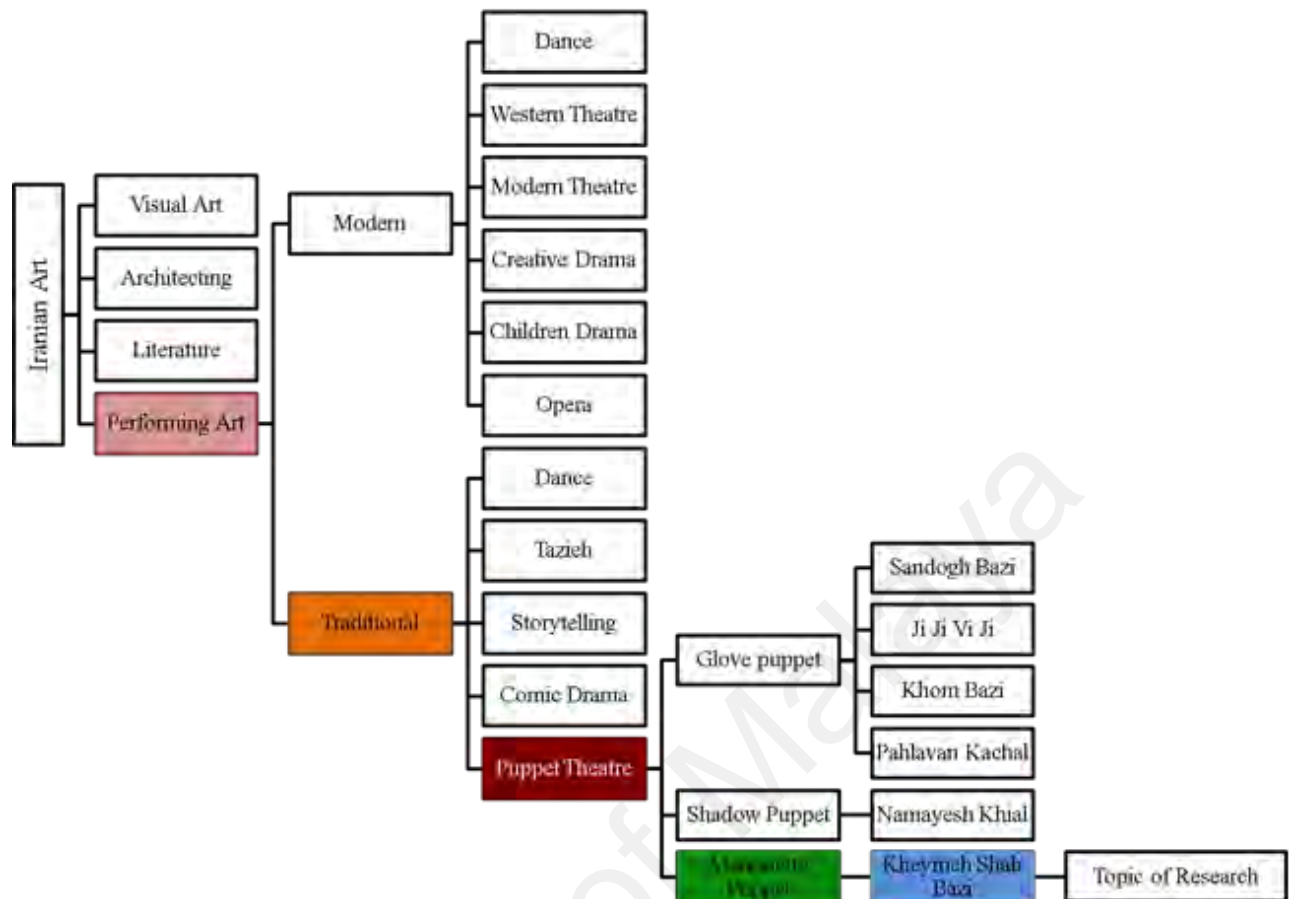


Figure 1.1 Iranian Art Hierarchies

Paul McPharlin explains a significance of puppet as one theatrical figure that is controlled by a person (McPharlin 1969) and Bill Baird believes that a puppet is an inanimate object that is made by puppet maker to be moved in plays (Baird 2002). Director of the State Central Puppet Theatre of Moscow, Sergey Obraztsov, gave a modern definition of puppet. He believed that everything, even a Ping-Pong ball, may be a puppet and puppetry is the art of representation (Baird 2002; Ghosh and Banerjee 2004). Also, in the book, *Indian Puppets*, Sampa Ghosh and Utpal Kumar Banerjee mention that the first puppets were ritual masks and cave-paintings by ancient human long time ago (Ghosh and Banerjee 2004).

According to the book *The Home of The Puppet Play* by Richard Pischel, the birth place of puppetry is India and then Indian puppeteers transferred this art to Middle

East (Pischel 1902). David Currell also mentions that puppet theatre originally started in India 4000 years ago (Currell 2008). Kathputli of Rajasthan, *Kheymeh Shab Bazi* (KSHB) of Iran, *Wayang Kulit* of South East Asia and *Bunraku* of Japan are some of well-known forms of puppetry in Asia. The list of most popular classical puppet theatre has been shown in the world has been indicated in the appendix B.

Generally, puppet theatre in Iran is one common style of theatre that is named *Lobat Bazi* that refers to three main styles that are explained as follow; Glove puppet (like *Ji Ji Vi Ji*, *Sandogh Bazi*, *Khom Bazi*, *Pahlavan Kachal*), Shadow play (*Namayeshe Khyal*), Marionette puppet (*Kheymeh Shab Bazi*).

*Ji Ji Vi Ji* is a special name for Iranian glove puppet show in Shiraz that is performed in small booth and have a special set of glove puppets but technically is same with *Pahlavan Kachal*. *Sandogh* means a box and *Sandogh Bazi* refers to a glove puppet show that is performed by a puppeteer who hides inside the box which is almost same to *Khom Bazi*. The report of *Khom Bazi* by Adam Olearius indicates continuation of this style until 11<sup>th</sup> century and its unique technique of portable booth that was named *Kheymeh Kamar* by Bahram Beyzayi, was interesting for theatre researchers and historians. (Beyzayi 2000; Floor 2005) The image of *Kheymeh Kamar* is shown in appendix C. *Pahlavan Kachal* in some cases, as *Thalasso* mentioned, named *Panj* which means Five due to number of main characters which includes *Pahlavan Kachal*, *Hamsar* (*Pahlavan Kachal's* Wife), *Sheytan* (Satan), *Rostam*, *Akhund* (Mullah) (Azimpour 2010). *Namayesh-e-Khial* means a show of imagination that refers to shadow play of Iran.

Marionette puppet form includes puppets that are controlled through wires or strings that are connected to a handle. Marionette puppet show of Iran is named *Kheimeh-Shab-Bazi* (KSHB) that is a compound name (meaning play in small booth at

night) and consists of three words; Kheimeh (small booth), Shab (night) and Bazi (play). The beginnings of Kheymeh Shab Bazi is not clear, it seems that KSHB entered to Iran from India during 12 century. (Beyzayi 2000)

Research on Iranian theatre started in 1980 by Bahram Beyzayi who published the result of his research in his book four years later. Beyzayi's book became a source for subsequent Iranian researchers like Yousof Sedigh (2004), Shirin Mahdavi (2007), Shiva Massoudi (2009) and Poopak Azimpour (2010). The present research is a continuation of previous studies that has been conducted specifically to investigate the development of KSHB from Qajar dynasty to the present.

The Qajar dynasty (1795-1925) is the second last monarchy before the *Islamic Revolution* in 1979 that considered as one important period in Iranian history due to fundamental changes in political and educational systems, art, and science.

Studying historical and cultural background connects the past to the present and vitally, to the future. Kheymeh Shab Bazi as one element of Iranian culture has been selected as topic of the present research to investigate its development.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Kheymeh Shab Bazi, traditional Iranian Puppet theatre (IPT), goes back to at least 600 years ago. Previous researches on KSHB were based on reviewing historical evidences from the beginning of KSHB (12 century) to the start of Qajar dynasty (1795) and KSHB development from Qajar dynasty to the present is uncovered. This research is conducted in order to indicate development process of KSHB from beginning of the Qajar period to the present.

## **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH**

This research is undertaken to:

1. To investigate the development of Kheymeh Shab Bazi as an art form from the early Qajar dynasty to the present.
2. To investigate changes in puppets, actor, music, structure of performance and functions of Kheymeh Shab Bazi from Qajar dynasty to the present.
3. To investigate the cultural background and significance of 4 KSHB puppets.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are the elements of kheymeh Shab Bazi?
2. How did Kheymeh Shab Bazi develop during Qajar dynasty?
2. What are the technical and functional innovations that came into Kheymeh Shab Bazi during Pahlavi and Islamic Republic of Iran Period?
3. What are the connections between 4 selected Kheymeh Shab Bazi puppets and Iranian Culture?

#### **1.5 SCOPE OF RESEARCH**

This research is limited to the Iranian marionette puppet theatre known as Kheymeh Shab Bazi (KSHB). The functional and elements of KSHB are discussed. Developments in technical aspects (puppets, puppet making, structure of performance, music and actor) from Qajar dynasty to the present (1795-2014) are studied. In addition, cultural connection between 4 selected puppets which are culturally important for Iranians and are chiefly manipulated in all shows, and Iranian culture are investigated.

#### **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Historical Research (HR) is the process of discovery and comprehension of background and development progress on the field of study that can be applied through qualitative and quantitative methods (Brundage 2013). In this research HR is methodology is applied to answer questions about developments and changes of KSHB from the Qajar to the present (18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>th</sup> century).

Basically, Historical research (HR) is conducted in 5 main steps:

1. Distinguishing the research objectives and categorize research questions
2. Data collection
3. Critique of materials
4. Data synthesis
5. Preparing the report

For this research I used these following methods:

- 1- Library research
- 2- Interviews
- 3- Close observation of puppet collections
- 4- Review videos of performances

Collections of seven Libraries in Iran and Malaysia have been visited online and offline in this research. The list of library research is shown in table 1.

16 interviewers (in two groups) have been selected to interview according to their age and their skills:

- 1- People with at least 65 years old who remember their childhood very well and live in 6 different cities of Iran.
- 2- Masters of puppetry of Kheymeh Shab Bazi, lecturers in Iranian traditional theatre and lecturer in cultural studies.

Interviews were in two forms; face-to-face and by phone during 2 month. List of two groups of interviewers have been given in table 2 and 3. Two samples of interview questions have been shown in Appendix A.

#### Close Observation:

Four puppet collections in two cities, Tehran and Kashan, visited during 10 days that have been listed in table 4. According to the table 4, one video is recorded of the KSHB that performed by Mr. Khamseyi and 80 photos are totally taken from puppets, performances, puppet box, booth and instruments of performance. Two of the selected collections are personal archives and other 3 collections are public museums.

All Historical collected data (through library research, close observation and interviews are categorized as Primary source and secondary source information. Primary source refers to books and articles that have direct involvement with historical topic like dairies of kings and travelers who watched KSHB and interviews with people who have memories of KSHB shows or were one member of KSHB performance group. Secondary sources include all publications that referenced to one of primary sources like travel reports or interviews that mentioned about KSHB (Garrahan 1964).

Four movies of KSHB performances from 1990, 1994, 2012 and 2013 reviewed and reported in table 5. Two of these KSHB shows (1990 and 1994) performed in traditional form in Tehran by Mr. Ahmadi (puppeteer) and Mr. Khamseyi (actor). The video of modern KSHB performances in 2012 and 2013 were recorded in Malaysia. The 30 minutes KSHB show in 2012 performed in University Technology Malaysia for Iranian New Year celebration. The second modern KSHB show named *Morovvat Nameh Pahlavani* and performed in Festival of Puppets and Puppetry in Bali and theatre production was under supervision of Professor Ghulam Sarwar Yousof. The reviewed videos of performances belong to collection of Sooreh Art University, performing art center of Tehran and personal archive of Saba Aslian.

All collected materials (photo, video, interview, books and articles) are studied to prepare the result and conclusion. The structure of research from the start to the result

preparation has been indicated into figure 1.2. This research conducted in one academic year (2013-2014). Literature review and data collection finished during first half of year and during second half of year all collected data studied to investigate development of KSHB from the Qajar dynasty to the present.

Table 1.1 Library Research Sites

Country	Name of Library	Address of Library	Website address of library	Access		Field of study	Duration of Library access
				Online access	Direct (Offline) access		
Malaysia	University of Malaya	University of Malaya 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	<a href="http://www.umlib.um.edu.my/">http://www.umlib.um.edu.my/</a>	✓	✓	History of Iran, Art History of Iran, Methodology	2012-May 2014
	National Library of Kuala Lumpur	Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia 232 Jalan Tun Razak, 50572 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	<a href="http://www.pnm.gov.my/">www.pnm.gov.my/</a>		✓	History of Iran, Art History of Iran, Methodology, theory of Cultural Studies, painting of Iran	2013- May 2014
	Library of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)	P.O BOX 10, 50738 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia	<a href="http://www.iium.edu.my/lib">www.iium.edu.my/lib</a>		✓	History of Iran, Art History of Iran, Methodology, theory of Cultural Studies, painting of Iran	2013- May 2014
Iran	National Library of Iran	After Mirdamad Subway Station, Haghani Highway, Tehran, Iran	<a href="http://www.nlai.ir/">www.nlai.ir/</a>		✓	History of Iran, Art History of Iran, Methodology, theory of Cultural Studies, Puppet theatre of Iran, KSHB	2013- May 2014
	Library of University of Tehran	central Campus of UT on Enghelab Avenue, Tehran, Iran	<a href="http://library.ut.ac.ir/">library.ut.ac.ir/</a>	✓	✓	History of Iran, Art History of Iran, Methodology, theory of Cultural Studies, Puppet theatre of Iran, KSHB	2013- May 2014
	Intellectual Development of Children and Young	Hejab Street, Fatemi street, Tehran, Iran	<a href="http://www.kanoonparvareh.com/">www.kanoonparvareh.com/</a>		✓	History of Iran, Art History of Iran, Methodology, theory of Cultural Studies, Puppet theatre of Iran, KSHB	2013- May 2014
	Sooreh Art University	NO.1 , corner of Kamyaran Ave. Azadi Str. Tehran, Iran	<a href="http://www.soore.ac.ir/">http://www.soore.ac.ir/</a>	✓	✓	History of Iran, Art History of Iran, Methodology, theory of Cultural Studies, Puppet theatre of Iran, KSHB	September 2013, 1 month direct access OCT 2013-May 2014 Online access



Table 1.2 List of Over 65 Years Old Viewers

	Name	Place of Birth	Age
1	Javad Aslian	Hamedan	77
2	Zinat Torab Zadeh	Tehran	80
3	Heshmat Torab Zadeh	Tehran	70
4	Fatemeh Ahadi	Hamedan (Moved to Tehran after birth)	73
5	Esmail Sadeh Khou	Arak	77
6	Delshad Hoseyni Moakher	Khouzestan (Behbahan)	66
7	Fereydoun Imankhan	Orumiyeh	70
8	Mojtaba Abdul Rezayi	Golpaygan	91

Table 1.3 List of Interviewers (Masters of Puppetry and University Lecturers)

	Name	Profession	Subject
1	Mr. Adel Bezdoude	University Lecturer	Puppetry and Puppet making
2	Dr. Bahman Moradian	University Lecturer	Traditional culture and ancient language
3	Mr. Behrouz Gharib Pour	Director	Marionette puppet
4	Mr. Davoud Fath Alibeygi	University lecturer, researcher	Traditional theatres of Iran
5	Dr. Mahmoud Jafari Dehghi	University Lecturer	Traditional culture and ancient language
6	Mrs. Poupak Azim Pour	Researcher	Traditional Iranian theatre , Iranian customs
7	Mr. Reza Khamseyi	Puppetry master	Kheymeh Shab Bazi
8	Dr. Yousof Seddigh	University lecturer	Puppet making, puppetry

Table 1.4 Close Observation Sites

NO.	Place	Date	City	Field of Observation	taken Photo	Video
1	Puppet museum of Tehran, Creation of cultural and artistic center of the Intellectual Development of Children and Young (مرکز آفرینش های فرهنگی و هنری کانون پرورش فکری کودکان و نوجوانان)	2013	Tehran	Puppet of Kheymeh Shab Bazi	20	_____
2	Personal collection of Mr. Khamseyi	2013	Tehran	Puppet and Performance	30	1
3	Personal Collection of Mrs. Poopak Azimpour	2013	Tehran	Puppet of Kheymeh Shab Bazi	10	_____
4	Museum of Puppets and Toys of Iran	2013	Kashan	Puppet of Kheymeh Shab Bazi	20	_____

Table 1.5 List of Reviewed Movies of Kheymeh Shab Bazi

	Name	Date	Venue	Subject of theatre	Puppeteer	Morshed	Archive
1	Bargahe Salim Khan (palace of Salim Khan)	1994	Tehran	Wedding of Farokh Khan ( Salim Khan's son)	Ostad Ahmadi	Ostad Khamseyi	Sooreh Art University
2	Bargahe Salim Khan (palace of Salim Khan)	1990	Tehran	Wedding of Farokh Khan ( Salim Khan's son)	Ostad Ahmadi	Ostad Khamseyi	Performing Art Center
3	Morovvat Nameh -ye- Pahlavani	2013	Malaysia	Teaching Pahlavani principles	Saba Aslian	Mahmoud Dehghan Harati	Personal Archive of Saba Aslian
4	Mobarak in overseas	2012	Malaysia	Criticism of Student's condition in university campus	Saba Aslian	Javad Abbas Zadeh	Personal Archive of Saba Aslian

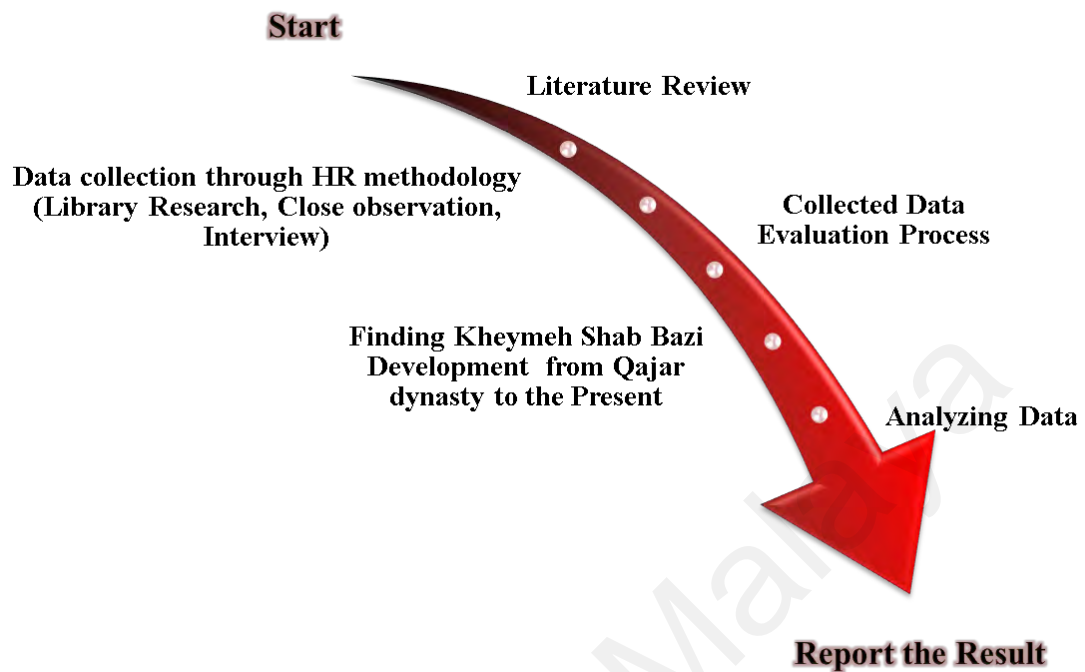


Figure 1.2 Structure Of Research

## 1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research is based on Cultural Memory Theory (CM) that has been driven from the Collective Memory theory which was introduced in the book *On Collective Memory (Heritage of Sociology Series)* by French philosopher and sociologist, Maurice Halbwachs, during the second half of the 20th century. Collective Memory, in contrast to Individual memory (personal memory) discusses memories that are same between groups of people. Individual memory can be the collective memory through recounting it for group of people (Figure 1.3) (Halbwachs 1992).

Collective memory includes social memory, historical memory, communicational memory, cultural memory and etc. that have been shown in figure 1.3. Cultural and communicative memory introduced by Jan Assmann (Johann Christoph

Assmann 1983), German Egyptologist, and his wife, Aleida Assmann in 1990 (Plate and Smelik 2013).

After Assmann's research on cultural memory, it has been used by historiographers (e.g. Pierre Nora, Richard Terdiman) and researcher of cultural studies (e.g. Susan Stewart) (Plate and Smelik 2013).

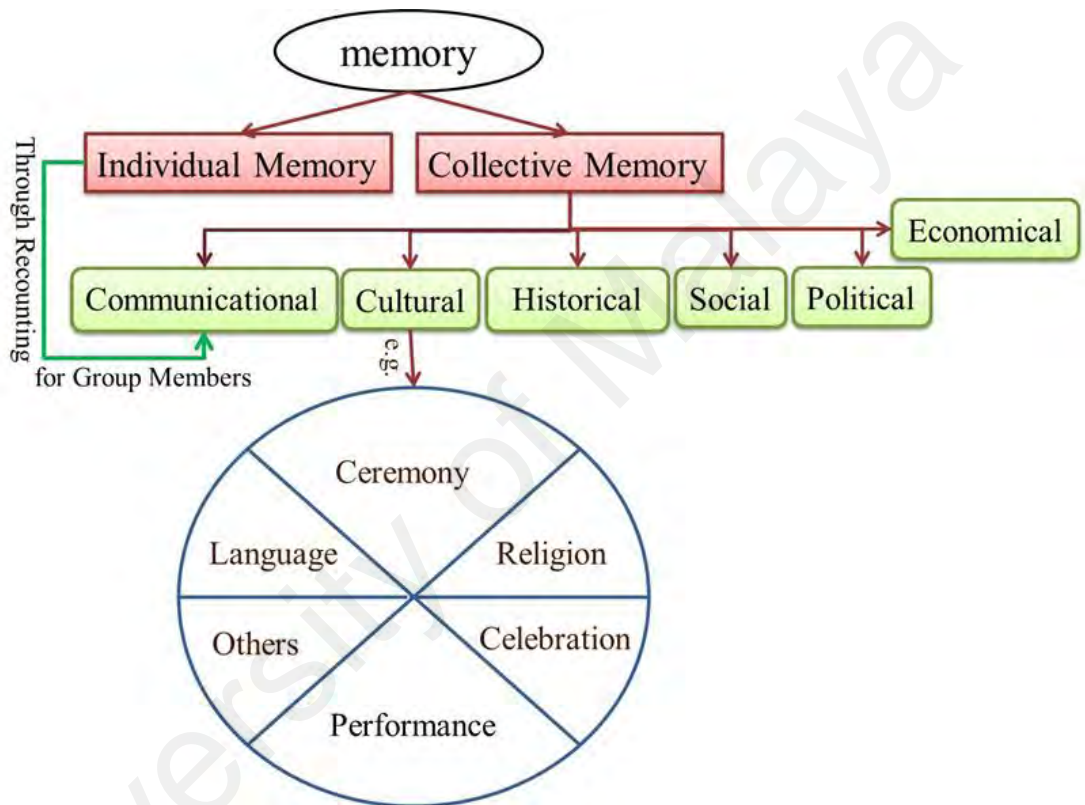


Figure 1.3 Collective and Cultural Memory

Generally, CM means analyzing data according to historical, cultural or literature approaches to make sense of the past. This theory is about studying cultural materials such as performances, ceremonies, historical or political happenings to investigate cultural connection to create a complete image of a particular culture (Plate and Smelik 2013).

Culture is dynamic and cultural materials that include religion, ceremonies, performances, history, language, literature and so on, are changing by time. Figure 3 indicates developments of KSHB as one part of a cultural material (performance) analyzed during three periods, before Qajar, during Qajar and after Qajar till the present. Cultural Memory has approaches that include historical, literal and cultural. In present research historical approach is used to investigate development of KSHB from the Qajar to the present. Historical approach of cultural memory helped me in present research to investigate development in Functions and elements of KSHB during Qajar period and after Qajar dynasty. Figure 1.4 shows the process of analyzing KSHB in this research.

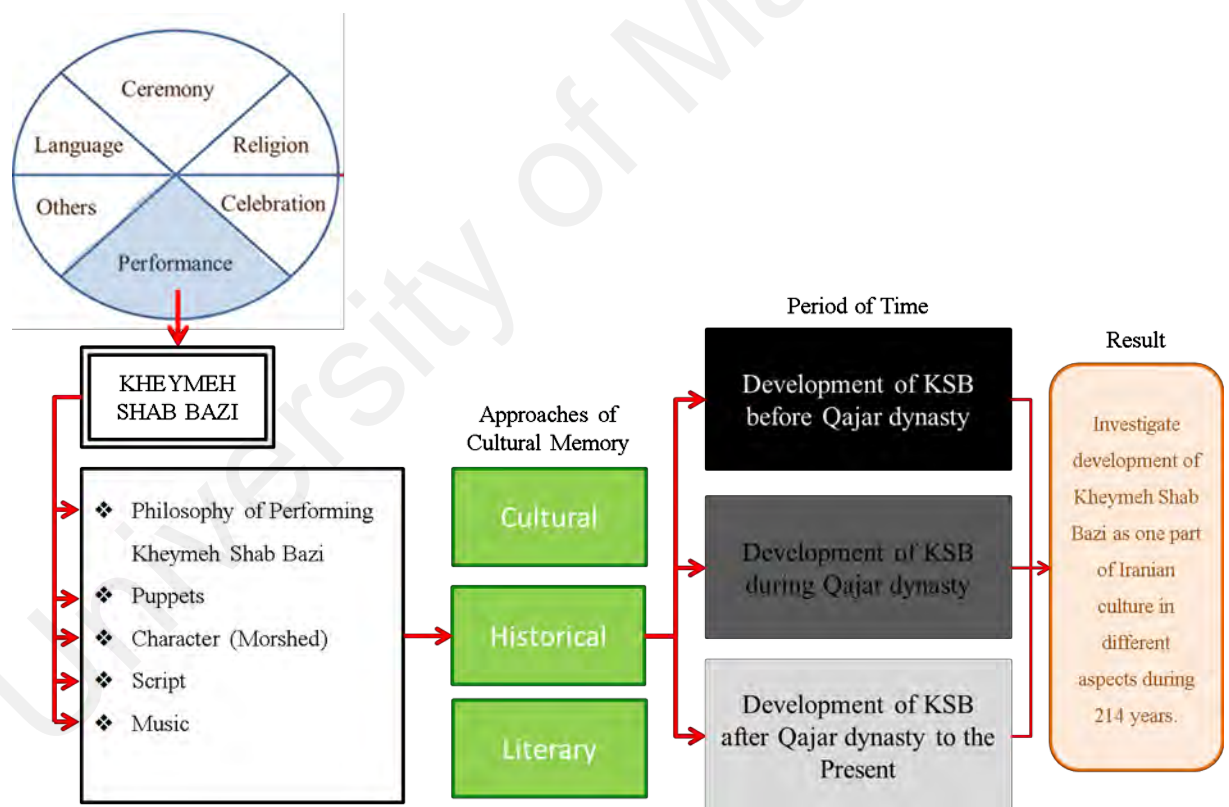


Figure 1.4 Process Of Conducting This Research

## CHAPTER 2 INTRODUCTION TO HISTORY AND CULTURE OF IRAN

### 2.1 HISTORY OF IRAN

The Iranian Plateau was suitable land to stay from at least 6000 B.C.(Porada 1965). Residents of *Neolithic village, Arrata, Sialk and Susu* are four civilizations of Iranian Plateau before the arrival of the Aryans that have been listed in appendix D. The Aryans chose 3 lands to stay include India, Iran and Europe (Morad Beygi 2001). As can be seen in figure 4.1, Aryans who stayed in Iranian plateau one thousand years B.C divided into Medes, Assyrians, and Persians and Medes could establish their Empire after attack to Nineveh (Durant 1942). The region of Medes Empire covered land of Tajikistan, the area between two rivers (Amu Darya and Sir Darya, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, both side of Caspian Sea, Iraq and Turkey (Razi 1998 (1374 Persian))).

The summary of Iranian history after the fall of Mede Empire (550 B.C.) that is divided into 3 periods (Historical, Islamic and Modern) is listed in appendix E. Table of historical period shows that Achaemenes with 8 million square kilometers region, ruled for over 220 years. Alexander attacked Iran in 330 B.C. and after death of Alexander, his Generals ruled Iranian plateau for 35 years which led to the establishment of the Parthian dynasty. Parthian Empire continued for 471 years and finished through foundation of Sassanid Empire in 224 A.D. The last Iranian Empire of historical period finished in 651 by conquests of Muslims during rule of the second Muslim's caliph, Umar.

After death of Umar, 2 other caliphs ruled and then the government passed from the last caliph *Ali Ibn Abi Taleb* to the founder of *Ummayah* dynasty in 661. Ummayah period finished in 750 by attack of Abbasid caliphs. Some Iranian families struggled to get their independence during Abbasid dynasty. *Al-E-Buyah* family is the most important governors that defeated by Mahmuud Ghazna after 92 years governorship.

Ghazna kings ruled for over one hundred years that finished through invasion of Seljuk in 1160. Seljuk Empire declined gradually and their region divided among three governments after death of last emperor. Ata Begs family rule Iran until the conquest of Mongols in 1263. The first monarchy after invasion of Mongols was Ilkhani that lasted tranquility for over one hundred years. Timurid dynasty was the next dynasty that founded by Timur Lame. After 130 years of Timurid dynasty, Shah Ismail could change the monarchy to Safavid that was beginning of modern period

Shia Safavid kings governed Iran for 223 years and Nadir Shah Afshar found Afsharid dynasty after killing the last Safavid king. After 11 years governorship of Afsharid kings, Zand dynasty started in 1750 through which Iranian inhabitants experienced peacetime for a forty four-year period. Zand period gave its place to Qajar by attack of Agha Muhammad Khan Qajar who moved the capital city from Isfahan to Tehran after coronation. Qajar period continued for 130 years through which diplomatic relationship between Iran, French, Russia and United Kingdom improved markedly but when Pahlavi dynasty took the place of Qajar, diplomatic relationship with USA considered as first priority. Reza Khan (founder of Pahlavi dynasty) was succeeded by his son who was the last king before Islamic Revolution. In 1979 political system of Iran changed to Islamic Republic through Islamic Revolution.

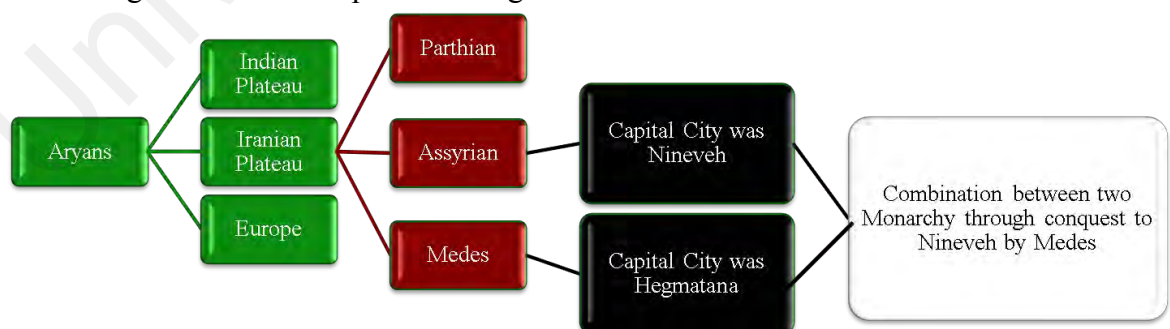


Figure 2.1 Aryans in Iran

## 2.2 CULTURE OF IRAN

There are various definitions for the word Culture due to its complex concept. As an example, 19-20 century anthropologist, *Edward Tylor* believed that culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by human (Tylor 2013). Also, James Geertz (1926-2006) defined culture as framework of beliefs, expressive symbols, and values in terms of which individuals define their feelings and make their judgments (Geertz 1977).

Some attributes of culture are listed as follows:

- Culture is learned (education or family teaches)
- Culture is unconscious (people do it without thinking about it)
- Culture is shared (it is shared between people of one particular society)
- Culture is integrated (religion, customs, language, law, etc.)
- Culture is symbolic (like the flag of one country)
- Culture is dynamic (it is changed through passing the time)
- Culture is relative (the values of one culture is not standard to evaluate the behavior of persons from outside that culture.)
- Culture is a way of life

On the other hand culture has 9 elements:

1. Language (is same between people of one particular culture and they are familiar with vocabulary proverbs and...)
2. Literature (poems, topic of stories and dialogues of plays)
3. Religion (shows people's beliefs toward the meaning of life, theology, and anthropology.



4. History (shows the background and development of a culture)
5. Daily life (basic requirements such as food, costume and house)
6. Economy
7. Art (performing art, architectures, visual art)
8. Government (different types of governments like democratic)
9. Inventions and technology (through inventions and technology culture will be changed like invention of telephone)

Some of these elements which are directly related to KSHB are explained as follow;

#### Language:

Based on Stuart William, the Persian language that used the ancient wedge-shaped script of cuneiform began during the Achaemenes Empire. Two important invasions of the Persian plateau by Alexander the Great and Muslims, altered Persian language structure enormously (William 2010). Historical evidences and Persian literature show that Farsi (the Persian Language) has been used in administrative letters, educational system, news reports, and formal communications since at least the 7<sup>th</sup> century. It is very noteworthy that various languages like Azari, Kurdi, Gilaki, Mazandarani, Baluchi and Luri are still used in different part of Iran.

Language of Kheymeh Shab Bazi performances are normal Farsi and in some scenes, dialogues are presented in the form of simple Iranian poems. Although dialogues of KSHB are changed according to script and social condition, language of dialogues is still simple colloquial Farsi and common proverbs and phrases are used.

## Literature:

Iranian literature is classified into three types; Classical, Modern and Folkloric and all these forms include various styles like short story, poetry, novel, and so on (Arberry 2004). Classical literature is internationally famous due to books like *Mathnavi* (by Molauna Jalal Aldin Rumi), *Shahnameh* (by Ferdusi), *Asrar-Al-Tohid* (by Ssheykh Abi Alsaeed Abi Alkheyr), *Tazkerat-Al-Olia* (by Attar Neyshabouri) and so on (ذبیح الله، دکتر صفا Dr. Safa 1981). Modern literature started during the Constitutional Revolution (19<sup>th</sup> century) by different writers and poets such as Aliakbar Dehkhoda, Mohammad Ali Jamalzade, Sadegh Hedayat, Nima Youshij, Ahmad Shamlou, Forough Farokhzad and Sohrab Sepehri (Dehbozorhi 2007).

The term “Sineh Be Sineh” (from one person to another) refers to the process of transmission of Folk literature from one person to another in the Persian language. Folk Literature includes poetry and short or long stories and the name of poet or writer are not known. Moreover, Iranian Folk literature usually includes moral advice for children and youth. *Hasan Kachal*, *Khale sooske* and stories of KSHB are some examples of folk stories in Iranian literature (Bakhtiari 2007).

Stories of KSHB can be categorized as folk literature because they have been handed down orally from one master to next. In addition, there are different moral advice in KSHB story for children and young adults. As an example, in one KSHB script that performed in 1998 when Morshed advises Mobarak to say “Hello” when he enters every places, one important fundamental moral principle is taught indirectly to children who are watching the show. This part is discussed more in chapter 4.

## Religion:

90 percent of Iranians are Muslim and their sect is Shiite but before the Islamic invasion, most of inhabitants of Persia were followers of Zarathustra.

There is any direct Islamic instruction in KSHB performances but the existence of puppets like Mullah (religious teacher in Islam) and Moazen (person who says Azan) is an obvious sign of indirect Islamic instructions for audiences.

#### Art:

Art is one essential part of all cultures due to its connection with people's daily life. In this part art is divided into two parts; 1- Visual arts and architecting 2- performing arts.

Although KSHB is categorized as performing art, it includes visual arts in puppet making, curtain of booth, costume and structure of booth. To introduce Iranian arts, a short of history of Iranian art is explained as follow:

The oldest masterpieces of Iranian plateau like "Sat Venus" of Neolithic village (6000 B.C.), painted clay bowls of Sialk (5000 B.C.) and stone bowl from Arratta (5000 B.C.) obviously indicate the connection of art and daily life. (Frankfort 1954; Porada 1965). History of Persian art is divided into three periods; Historical (from 600 B.C.), Islamic (from 634) and Modern (from 1499). All artistic works during the Historical Period are categorized into 10 main forms; Pottery, Carpet weaving, Textile producing and designing, Tiles making and enameling, Casting and metal working, Architecting, Stone carving, Dance, Music, Storytelling (Ghavali) and Iranian comedy drama.

The Muslim Invasion of Iran replaced Zoroastrianism with Islam as the religion of the Iranians. Zoroastrian customs were replaced by Islamic ceremonies, performances of dance and music were not allowed for several years (although private entertainment in palaces continued), and the concept of visual arts was adjusted according to Islamic laws (Rubissow 1954). Verses of the Quran, book designing and calligraphy were added to previous arts due to the importance of designing the holy Quran in Islamic culture

(Rubissow 1954). Moreover, new tale poetries added to previous stories that used in storytelling and Persian literature advanced markedly (Reed 1893).

The Modern period of Iranian art started with the foundation of the Safavid dynasty (1499). Art in all fields, architecture, painting (for walls and books), designing of tiles and metal working advanced and Isfahan as the capital city was transformed into an art center of Iran (Giovanni and Scarcia 2007). The Zand dynasty (1750) is well known for the influence of Indian culture in architecture (Giovanni and Scarcia 2007) and “Flower style” (Maktab-E-Gol) is the most well-known style of painting during Zand period that changed previous method of painting on boxes or frame and cover of mirror or Quran (Marzban 2013).

The highest artistic influence of Europe on Persian art had happened during the Qajar dynasty because of the Qajar king’s passion for modern European art styles. In addition to the king’s interests, the establishment of *Dar-Al-Fonoun School* encouraged youth to learn modern European art and national styles together. Dar-Al-Fonoun established during *Naser Aldin Shah* Qajar and under supervision of his minister *Amir Kabeer* in 1851. Art, science, Army techniques and medicine were majors that were taught by European lecturers to students. Although the invention of photography and cinema decreased the popularity of painting, the religious painting and *Ghahveh Khaneyi* painting continued to the present. Religious painting is used for designing windows and walls of Masques and other holy places. *Ghahveh Khaneyi* painting is used for designing *Ghahveh Khaneh* (Iranian tea shop) and also for painting one part of stories on the curtain which is hanged to the wall behind storyteller (*Parde Khan*) to help *Parde Khan* to introduce characters and explain story (Marzban 2013).

During *Pahlavi* dynasty doors of Iran opened to Americans and Europeans more than the Qajar period which increased construction of buildings like *National Museum*

of *Tehran* based on Iranian elements and modern techniques of architecture (Avery, Hambly et al. 1991). Between 1941 and 1970 popularity of modern Art increased sharply due to the establishment of *National Art Schools, Academy of Fine and Dramatic Art*. Beside development of modern arts, traditional arts such as Iranian painting (Miniature) have been continued and taught to new generation of artists until now. After Islamic Revolution of Iran new styles of arts like started and continued as two sorts of contemporary art styles of Iran (Godard 2006).

#### Performing arts:

Willem Floor believes that Iranian drama has its roots in ritual festivals like *Kuseh Bar Neshin* that renamed to *Mir-E-Norouzi* after Islam and has performed on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of new year (Floor 2005). Bahar Mokhtarian in her article mentioned that *Kuseh Bar Neshin* is the changed form of making sacrifice in ancient period which is five days festival. At first day of festival king switches his place with one offender who sentenced to death. During five days offender rules and uses all royal facilities and at the end of fifth day he is killed (Mokhtarian 2000). In 1970, Anjavi Shirazi finished collecting data of performing *Kuse-Bar-Neshin* in three cities of Iran that shows that performance was based on three characters; *Kuse*, Bride (*Kuse's wife*) and an antagonist and masks and costumes were essential. Moreover, evidences of performing "Persian dance" at the end of Achaemenes have been noted by Xenophon which is categorized as Mime due to the structure of performance (Floor 2005).

*Marekeh* or *Tamasha* means entertainment that has played an important role in Persian life before and after Islam. During the Sasanid Empire entertainers were called *Pat-Vaz-Guy* and worked under the supervision of *Khoram-Bakhsh* who was in charge for all entertainers of monarchy (Boyce 1957). *Khoram-Bakhsh* means a person who make situation pleasant for others. After Islam, the group of entertainers named

*Mareke-Gir* which consisted of several men with various skills such as storytelling, acrobat, jugglery, performing with trained animals, playing different musical instruments and puppetry. These skills were taught to youth orally and simultaneously with performances since childhood. As an example, one of the most famous entertainers, *Luti Ramazan* learned his skills from his father since he has been 4 years old (Beyzayi 2000)

Although the practice of performing pre-Islamic dramas in public was forbidden by Muslim governors, there exist historical evidences to indicate performances of drama in private for Muslim caliphs during Iranian New Year, *Norooz* (Floor 2005).

According to Heribert Horst, Persian entertainers were divided into two groups in 11<sup>th</sup> century; 1- Musicians (including music players, *Motreb* and storytellers, *Ghavvalan*) 2- Actors and acrobatics (Horst 1964). *Masud Sa'd-E-Salman* (poet 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century) mentioned the name of various musical instruments, dancers and actors and the importance of their jobs in his poems that indicates performing these entertainments in 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Historical documents by Ruy Gonzalez of masked dancing, acting, storytelling with music from the Timurid dynasty indicate that amusement was essential in 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century (Gonzalez 2009) and based on Molla-Husain-Vaez-Kashefi, writer and Islamic researcher of Timurid period, entertainers or “Ahle Marekeh” were divided into three main groups; 1- Declaimers (Ahle Sokhan) 2-Strong men (Ahle Zur), and 3- Acrobats (Ahle Bazi) (Kashefi Sabzevari 1971).

Fortunately, reliable historical evidences of performing of various forms of drama during Safavid dynasty are more substantial than for previous times. Through these it can be established that in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Epic Story Reciters (*Shahname Khan*), Storytellers (*Gheseh Khan*), Conjurers (*Hoghe Bazan*), Jugglers (*Taas Bazan*), Puppeteers (*Khial Bazan*), and *Tazye Khanan* performed in public and royal ceremonies

and women started playing roles, dancing, playing musical instruments and singing and storytelling on the streets (Chardin 1988).

The Qajar period is the golden age of Persian drama due to noticeable developments in performances, techniques and structure. Comical performances such as *Ru-Hozi* or *Takh-E-Hozi*, and *Tamasha* became popular more than in the past and *Tazihe*, a ritual drama style improved markedly (Beyzayi 2000). With the establishment of the Qajar dynasty, all entertainments mentioned above were performed in countless villages and cities around Iran by itinerant groups. For this situation, reports have come down from different cities by different writers at the same time. As an example, Benjamin describes baboons dance show in Tehran, Grothe reports his observation of jugglers in Lurestan and Moore notes Swallow Glass show in Semnan. Moreover, mime dancing that originally came from pre-Islamic period became common during the Qajar period and singing, dancing and the incidence of acrobatics by women in public increased. Western theatre started from 18<sup>th</sup> century in Iran through performing translation of Moliere's scripts (Floor 2005). Western theatre production advanced during Pahlavi dynasty. Building the National Theatre Hall, *Theatre-E-Shahr* and *Rodaki Hall* (renamed to *Tallar-E-Vahdat* after the Islamic Revolution) prepared the situation for performances of Ballet, Classical Concerts, Opera, western theatre and dance festivals. Moreover, Persian drama continued its work in other halls, on streets and at functions like weddings or birthday celebrations. *Tazieh*, was officially forbidden during the reign of first king of Pahlavi period (*Reza Shah*) (1925-1941) but Mohammad Reza Shah (1941-1979) allowed it again and following the revolution *Tazieh* has been performed until the present.(Beyzayi 2000)

Iranian Researcher and lecturer of National University of Tehran, Dr. Nazerzade Kermani divides all types of Persian Drama into nine categories:

1. Ritual performances ( like Samacheyi Dance, Kuseh Bar Neshin)
2. Caravan dramas ( Like Souge Siavash)
3. Storytelling drama and narrative dance (like Gousan, Ghaval, Naghal)
4. Street drama (conjuring, Acrobatics and so on)
5. Puppet theatre (shadow, Kheymeh Shab Bazi, Sandogh Bazi and so on)
6. Traditional comics (Fars, Taghlid)
7. Tazieh
8. Western Theatre (since the 18<sup>th</sup> century and into the present)
9. Combined drama (combination between traditional and modern theatre)

Some of kinds of mentioned Drama like Samacheh Dance and Kuseh Barneshin had been forbidden or at least performed clandestinely after the invasion of Iran by Muslims, in contrast to *Tazieh*, the Islamic ritual drama which performed during one-month, *Moharram* (the First month of Islamic Calendar) (Dr. Nazer Zadeh Kermani 2006).

#### Innovation and technology:

The last element of culture is innovation and technology that can lead to cultural changes if the discovered information or invented object are accepted and used by people of particular society through which changes will appear gradually. As an example, invention of the wheel and discovering the fire improved life style through with the first systems of transportation and metal forming started and then advanced sharply that influenced on culture of daily life and communication (Meyerson and Martin 2007).



Introducing light projectors, mechanism of moving stage decoration and portable grand drops and main valance technically improved theatre performances which led to performance of operas and theatre productions with complex decoration and light design.

Research on developments of a cultural form like KSHB indicates the influence of innovation and technology on it.

University of Malaya

### 3 CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Puppet theatre both in terms of its philosophical and technical aspects has been an interesting research topic for many writers and researchers. There are many books and articles about puppet theatre. Including:

- *The Art of the Puppet* by Bill Baird (Baird 2002)
- *Puppet and Puppet Theatre* by David Currell (Currell 2008)
- *Puppet Theater in Contemporary Indonesia* by Jan Mrazek (Mrazek 2002)
- *Making and Manipulating Marionettes* by David Currell (Currell 2005)
- *Asian Theatre Puppet* by Robin Ruizendaal and Wang Hanshun (Ruizendaal and Hanshun 2009)
- *Dramas and Dramatic Dances of Non-European Races* Ridgeway by William Ridgeway (Ridgeway 1964)
- *Panggung Inu* by Ghulam-Sarwar Yousof (Yousof 2004)
- *The Stage, Stage Decoration and Costume Design* by Mohammad Hossein Naser Bakht (Naser Bakht 2011)

There are few published documents about Iranian puppet theatre.

Available books on puppetry may be classified into the following categories:

- Puppet making and puppetry techniques
- History of puppet theatre
- Concept of puppet theatre

In 1956, the book *Theatre in The East: A Survey of Asian* by Faubion Bowers was published. It is a survey of theatre in South East Asia, India, China, Japan, Philippine, Hong Kong and Thailand. According to the title, all countries in Asia, including Middle East countries should be included in the book. However, the writer does not mention Iranian theatre.

David Currell published two books that are technically about puppet making process and controlling marionette puppets. Although the techniques that Currell mentioned are the same in some puppets of KSHB, he did not discuss about KSHB puppets directly (Currell 2005; Currell 2008).

Bill Baird tried to report all collected data about the start and development procedure of puppet theatre in the East and the West but he did not mention about IPT in his book. In 1985, Javad Zolfaghari translated Bill Baird's book into Farsi. He realized that Bill Baird did not mention IPT as one of the Asian puppet forms. So, he started compiling one chapter on IPT and added it to the book's second edition. Javad Zolfaghari argued that the limited range of information about IPT was the cause of a gap in Baird's book (Baird 2002).

The book *Asian Theatre Puppets* by Robin Ruizendaal and Wang Hanshun includes information on Asian puppet theatre and puppetry in Taiwan. In addition, a collection with 300 photos of puppetry in Taipei is added to the book that allows readers to understand Taiwan's puppetry styles better. Unfortunately, Robin Ruizendaal and Wang Hanshun did not document information on puppet theatre in the Middle East and Iranian puppet theatre (Ruizendaal and Hanshun 2009).

*The Malay Shadow Play: An Introduction* by Dr. Ghulam-Sarwar Yousof is a book about the Malaysian puppet theatre. The book explains different styles of Malaysian Shadow play, technical aspects of *Wayang Kulit* performance like the booth

*Panggung*, material of puppets, process of puppet making, music and the important role of the puppeteer (*Dalang*) and Symbolic aspects of *Wayang Kulit* performance. Information in the book helps reader to understand all aspects of Malaysian *Wayang Kulit* better. This is one of the best books that are related to puppet theatre with emphasis on South East Asian shadow play (Yousof 1997).

Most Iranian publications of traditional Iranian drama are focused on Iranian ritual drama, *Tazieh* and comedy drama *Siah Bazi* or *Takht Hози*. As an example, Mohammad Hossein Naser Bakht conducted research on stage and costume design for Iranian traditional drama but he limited the scope of his research on *Tazieh* and *Takht Hози* drama (Naser Bakht 2011).

On the other hand, Willem Floor, author of the book *The History of Theatre in Iran* introduced IPT in one the second chapter. This chapter starts with historical materials of mask dance with goat's masks and costumes in ancient Persia. Floor divides all sorts of Iranian puppet shows into three groups; glove puppet, shadow puppet and marionette puppet (Kheymeh Shab bazi). Although, most of the valuable historical evidences of IPT before and after Islam are reported in Floor's book, the writer does not explain about name and visual detail of puppets, development process of KSHB during Qajar and after Qajar and the cultural background of the puppets (Floor 2005).

*Iranian Ritual and Traditional Puppets and Puppet Shows Dictionary* by Poupak Azimpour is the result of extensive research on Iranian ritual and traditional puppets conducted during 10 years (Azimpour 2010). The book includes 6 chapters and the second chapter is especially about traditional puppet forms that includes all different styles of Iranian puppet theatre. Willem Floor provides historical evidences for the development of all Iranian puppet theatre styles. When he comes to KSHB he does not

mention the name of KSHB puppets, Morshed or scripts. However, these are specifically introduced in Azimpour's book. Although a wide range of ritual and traditional puppets of Iran is briefly introduced in this dictionary, cultural background of KSHB puppets and development process of KSHB performances are not reported in it because Azimpour tries to cover brief information of all ritual and traditional puppets of Iran. Although most of Iranian puppets are introduced in Azimpour's book, innovations of KSHB and photos of modern KSHB performances are not included in it.

Another research on Iranian theatre was conducted by Bahram Beyzayi who published the first edition of his book in 1984 (Beyzayi 2000). This volume, *A Study of Iranian Theatre* includes all kinds of Iranian theatre like comedy drama (*Takht Houzi*), ritual performance (*Tazieh*) and puppet theatre such as marionette and glove puppet theatre. The chapter of Puppet theatre in Beyzayi's book includes literary evidences from Nezami Ganjavi's book, *Haft Peykar*, about the arrival of Indian puppeteers and dancers to Iran. In comparison with William Floor's book which begins with historical evidences about Iranian Mask Dance from Greek and European writers, Beyzai's book contains Iranian literary evidences from Iranian poets such as Nezami Ganjavi, Khayyam and Hafez during the Islamic period. Although little information of KSHB during Qajar dynasty and a short introduction on normal structure of KSHB performance is included in Beyzayi's book, technical and functional changes of KSHB are not explained in it.

Yousof Seddigh is another author who did some study on KSHB performances and published the result in his book, *A Research on Kheymeh Shab Bazi in Iran* (Seddigh 2004). His book includes a review of previous historical evidences of KSHB from Iranian poets and texts and Beyzai's book and new research on different puppets as well as brief information of puppetry techniques. Although Sedigh's book includes

some new information about KSHB, development and changes that came into KSHB are not reported in the book.

Sholeh Shariati chose *Pahlavan Kachal* as the research topic for her thesis in 1994 (Shariati 1994). Although this dissertation encompasses historical evidences about the beginning of glove puppet show in Iran and development and innovations in performances and puppet making, the scope is limited to one form of Iranian glove puppet play, *Pahlavan Kachal*. Shariati's dissertation includes previous information about the existence of puppet theatre in Iran in the literature review chapter and the background of *Pahlavan Kachal* specifically is explained in the chapters that follow.

In September 2007, Shireen Mahdavi published an article about amusements in Qajar in Iran in *Iranian Studies Journal*. Mahdavi's article introduces various kinds of amusements during Qajar dynasty and divided them into four groups; general and public, women, men, and children. Mahdavi categorizes KSHB among public amusements of the Qajar dynasty and gives a short introduction about KSHB that refers to Beyzayi's book (Mahdavi 2007).

"Kheimeh Shab Bazi: Iranian Traditional Marionette Theatre" is title of an article by associate professor, Shiva Massoudi in *Asian Theatre Journal* in fall 2009 (Massoudi 2009). This article starts with a short introduction and literature review on historical references of Kheymeh Shab Bazi and other sorts of IPT. She reports historical evidences and gives a brief introduction of contemporary performances. Also a short introduction of KSHB element such as group members, booth and puppets is including in Massoudi's article. Although this article includes a short explanation of puppet's background and Morshed's responsibilities in performance, it is not complete and cultural background of puppets and group members, development of puppet making techniques and performance structure are not included in article.

In September 2013, Simin Amirian presented her paper “Kheimh Shab Bazi-Traditional Iranian Puppetry” at the Bali Puppetry Festival and Seminar –Puppetry for All Times. Her article includes a brief introduction to Kheimh Shab Bazi and its elements and the author reviews some historical evidences of KSHB from 12<sup>th</sup> century to 17<sup>th</sup> century. The development of KSHB and the cultural background of puppets are not included in the article.

There are many general as well as specific studies of Asian puppet theatres from different countries including India, China and South East Asia. However studies on Iranian Puppetry including KSHB are still rare. Some of the materials available are not academic in nature although such material is useful. This research is conducted to investigate cultural and historical development of KSHB from Qajar dynasty to the present. This is missing in previous studies and the present study will thus fill the gap in the study of Iranian puppetry as well as Iranian Theatre.

## CHAPTER 4 KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE QAJAR DYNASTY

The present chapter is divided into five parts; 1- Historical evidences of KSHB from 12<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of Qajar dynasty; 2- Elements of KSHB; 3- Cultural background of 4 selected puppets; 4- Functions of KSHB before Qajar period; 5- Structure of KSHB performance;

### 4.1 HISTORICAL EVIDENCES:

As mentioned in the introduction, masks are categorized as puppets (Baird 2002). The first evidence of mask dancing in Persia belonged to Armenia in the North West of Persia. These were used by *Gusans* (Storytellers and Singers) for mask dancing in funeral rites for the kings. Also, in 421 BC puppetry is mentioned as the most interesting entertainment during a Persian dinner party that included masks and puppets which indicates the popularity of puppets in Persia around 2300 years ago (Floor 2005).

On the other hand, Willem Floor, author of the book “the history of theatre in Iran”, believed that Indian culture influenced Iranian puppetry during pre-Islamic and Islamic periods. This statement can be accepted through a comparison between *Kathputli* puppet theatre from Rajasthan and Iranian Kheymeh Shab Bazi according to Bill Baird’s book. The most important scene of *Kathputli* is name “The Court” which is same as the title of the most common KSHB story *The Court of Salim Khan*. Moreover, marionette puppets of *Kathputli* are controlled with two strings; one for the head and the other for the back of the puppet which is the same with the controlling system of KSHB puppets. In both styles of puppetry, the puppets stand beside each in background other when they are not active. The next similarity between *Kathputli* and KSHB is the whistle voice of puppets that is the result of handmade equipment which is placed in the mouth of puppeteer. Furthermore, *Kathputli* and KSHB are performed with the help of a person who sits in front of booth and speaks with the puppets and plays a musical



instrument (Beyzayi 2000; Baird 2002). In addition, the exchange of art form between two countries mentioned is noted in the poem *Haft Peykar* of the well-known Iranian poet, Nezami Ganjavi (12<sup>th</sup> century) that is first literary evidence for the existence of puppet theatre in Iran. Figure 4.1 indicates a Kathputli and Kheymeh Shab Bazi performances (Nezami Ganjavi 2001).



Figure 4.1 Kathputli (left image) and Kheymeh Shab Bazi (right image)

According to previous information, IPT is divided into three main styles (Glove puppetry, Shadow Puppetry, Marionette Puppetry) and although Kheymeh Shab Bazi generally referred to all these three styles (Mahdavi 2007), gradually it became the specific name for marionette puppetry which is performed at night. Besides Kheymeh *Shab Bazi*, *Shab Bazi*, *Lobat bazi* and *Parde Bazi* are alternative names for marionette puppet show (Azimpour 2010).

According to Bahram Beyzayi, although there are literary documentations of Iranian puppet shows, it is difficult to distinguish which puppet styles were mentioned by poets or writers due to use the word *LOBAT BAZI* for all kinds of puppet shows that is not because of lack of poet's information concerning puppetry techniques but it is result of writer's spiritual attitude instead of realistic attitude toward puppet shows (Beyzayi 2000).

As mentioned, Bahram Beyzayi based on poems of *Nezami*, believed that Iranian KSHB started after emigration 6000 artist from India in 12<sup>th</sup> century which is in contrast with Schafer's statement about entrance of KSHB to Ch'angan (or Jangan) village in north-west of Iran from Turkestan (Schafer 1985).

The account of marionette puppet show in 13<sup>th</sup> century by Attar Neyshabouri, and the report of performing KSHB for the son of Jingiz Khan, Oktai Khan by Ata Almulk Joveyni are next literary documentation of KSHB existence which is noted in *History of Drama in Iran* and *History of Theatre in Iran* both (Beyzayi 2000; Attar Neyshaburi 2001; Floor 2005).

Furthermore, the book *The Successors of Genghis Khan* includes documentation of performing KSHB in 1310 (Fazl Allah 1971) through which the time line of KSHB passed from 14<sup>th</sup> century and during next hundred years poems of Hafiz and Assar Tabrizi became two literary sources that contain scattered information about performing KSHB and its structure (Beyzayi 2000).

As noted before, the book of *Mulla Hoseyn Va'ez Kashefi* is one trustworthy source from 16<sup>th</sup> century which explained structure of performing *Rooz Bazi* and *Shab Bazi*. Starting 17<sup>th</sup> century was contemporaneous with travel of foreign ambassadors, travelers and even artists to Iran like John Chardin who reported KSHB performance in his book (Chardin 1988). Chardin's report of KSHB puppetry is the last historical evidence before Qajar dynasty.

## **4.2 ELEMENTS OF KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI**

Kheymeh Shab Bazi performance is a combination of four important pillars; puppet and puppetry, actor (*Morshed*), story and music band. These entire elements are studied specifically.

#### 4.2.1 PUPPETS AND PUPPETRY

There are 70-80 KSHB puppets in a puppet box and usually, more than half of these puppets are used in one show (according to story and duration of show). Puppet's heads are usually made of wood and bodies are made by fabrics that are filled after sewing with wool and piece of fabrics. Traditionally, the height of puppet is 20-30 centimeter and varies according to their role. As an example, the puppet of the king, 29cm, is taller than that of the water carrier or drummer that are approximately 22 cm.

The puppet's movements are controlled by a small stick or in some cases like a small cross that is made of wood. Table 4.1 indicates the list of the name of most popular KSHB puppets with their name in show, gender and role. Some of these puppets are in a set of two or four puppets which are connected together like nurses or group of staff who are responsible for punishing.

As shown in table 4.1, the highest percentage of puppets are males. Some puppets are entered on stage and located in background without dialogues while others have dialogues with Morshed. Generally, the puppets are divided into two main groups; realistic puppets like staff of court of royalties, unrealistic puppets like daemon (Div). Realistic puppets are divided into five groups; 1. Royalty; 2. Court's personnel such as servants, doctor and nurses and Mullah, punishing staff, Moazen, driver and so on; 3. Bride and bridesmaids and carrier of bride's trousseau; 4. Entertainers and athletics; 5. Guests;

Although the stories of KSHB shows are episodic and puppeteer manipulates puppets in any sequence that he prefers, some puppets are chiefly shown in all KSHB shows including Mobarak, Pahlavan, Amou Asad Jaroo Kesh, Sagha or Ab Pash, King and one or two entertainers.

The images of mentioned puppets are put in figure 4.2 in order of list of table 4.1. Name of puppets with \* in table 4.1 has no photo in figure 4.2.

Table 4.1 The List of some puppets of KSHB

NO.	JOB	NAME OF PUPPET	M/F	RESPONSIBILITY
1	Best men	Hamrahane Damad / Yengeye Damad	M	A group who Enter with the groom and help him in his wedding.
2	Bride	Aurous	F	The girl who's getting married to Farokh Khan
3	Bridesmaid	Hamrahane Aourous / Yengeye Aourous	F	A group who Enter with the bride and help her in wedding.
4	Carrier of Brides trousseau on the tray	Tabagh Kesh / Hejleh Kesh	M	A group who bring bride's trousseau on the tray while they're dancing.
5	Champion	Pahlavan (Pahlavan Kachal, Pahlavan Por Khor, Pahlavan Panbe)	M	Showing Iranian sport and doing wrestling
6	Daemon	Div	M	In some cases comes on stage to punish people who are not following rules.
7	Dancers	1. Kord bach 2. Gorouhe Raghasan	M / F	Usually come on stage during wedding to dance
8	Doctor	Doctor Bashi	M	He comes on stage when one puppet injured.
9	Driver	Shoufer	M	This puppet is attached to the car and comes on stage when king or other royal people want come to stage.
10	Drummer	Tabbal	M	He play drum and announce the news of court
11	Entertainers	1. Baba Taher Mohreh Baz	M	A juggler player who plays with marbles
		2. Fanous Baz	F	Young lady who dances with lanterns
		3. Choub Baz	M	A man and a little boy who play acrobat with stick
		4. Shishe Baz	M	A juggler who plays with glass
		5. Luti Antari	M	A trained monkey and a man who shows different acts of monkey
		6. *Luti Khers	M	A trained lion with a man who shows different acts of lion
12	Foreigners	*Vazir Mokhtar E Russia and UK	M	They stay beside king and shows the influence of other countries on Iranian monarchy

13	Guests	*2 Torkman	M	They attend to wedding as guests
		2 Turkish	M	
14	Lady with donkey	Khanome Olagh Savar	F	She is coming on stage to dance with donkey
15	Midwife	Zivar Khanoome Ghabele	F	In some shows come just to invoke the memory of famous midwife of Tehran in that time
16	Muezzin	Moazzen	M	Call people for preyer
17	Mullah	Molla, Akhond, Aghed	M	Advice people and weds Arous to Farokh Khan
18	Nurses	parastaran	M	They come with stretcher to take injured puppet out
19	Protection of castle	Gazameh	M	He is responsible for protecting castle
20	Responsible for punishing cconvict	Farashane Choobo Falak	M	They come on stage only in performance which is about judgment about a criminal behavior
21	Royalty	1. Salim Khan/ Ahmad shah	M	The king and father of groom who comes and sit on the royal seat
		2. Farrokh khan	M	Crown prince and the groom
22	Street- Cleaner	Amou Asad Jarou Kesh, Amou Asad Sopour	M	He comes on stage and clean the court for wedding
23	Servent	Mobarak	M	He is one of the most important puppets of KSHB. He is the servent of Salim Khan's court.
24	Trumpeter	Sheypourchi	M	He plays trumpet and announce the news of monarchy
25	Water- Carrier	Sagha Bashi	M	Although Sagha Bashi was a person who brought water to villages that did not have water, in this show he is responsible to sprinkle water before wedding



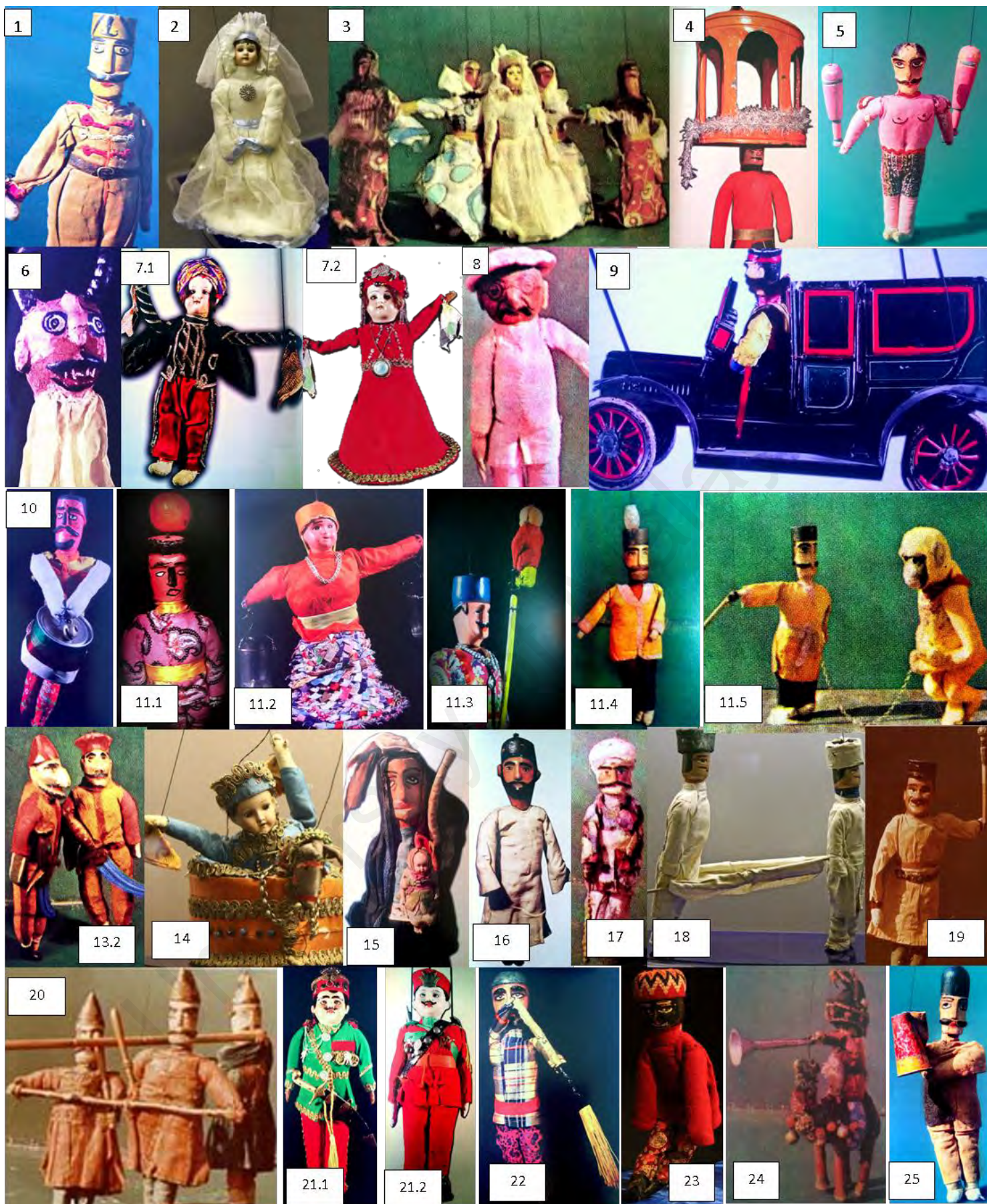


Figure 4.2 Puppets of Kheymeh Shab Bazi



Puppets are kept in one small box and group take the box everywhere. Some of these boxes are dedicated from one puppeteer to the next and now one of these boxes belongs to Mr. Reza Khamseyi, old master of puppetry. Figure 4.3 shows Khamseyi's puppet box. As can be seen, one part of poem of Khayyam, Iranian poet, is written on the door of box that says:

We are puppets and destiny is our puppeteer .....



Poem of Khayyam,  
translation is:

We are Puppets and  
the predestination is  
our puppeteer.....

Figure 4.3 Box of Puppets of Mr. Khamseyi

The handle of puppets in KSHB is named *Pasayi* and based on puppet's movement form was made in 2 forms; a piece of small stick that threads are hanged to top and end of it. A small cross that connected with some rope and three threads hanged on this *Pasayi* for moving hands like Champion (*Pahlavan*). Figure 4.4 shows two kinds of traditional puppet's handle that are made by Mr. Khamseyi.

Generally, KSHB puppets are moved through 2 hanged threads; the first one to top of head and the second one to the back of puppet. The most important factors in choosing suitable technique of hanging puppet to handle are the anatomy of puppet and the expected movement on stage. As an example, the anatomy of dancers puppet (women) of KSHB do not have legs like men which influenced on the method of

movement and hanging. In addition, to show exercises of champion one more thread requires to be added to Pasayi. So, puppets hanged in 3 ways according to their movements in traditional KSHB performance. 1- The original form with one thread to head and one to back of puppet; 2- Hanged through one thread to center of head which helped puppeteer to just turn puppet; 3- Hanged through three threads which made puppeteer able to move to move two sides of dancers' hips;



Figure 4.4 Two Kinds of Pasayi, Made by Mr. Khamseyi (old man in photo)

A puppeteer uses a hand-made equipment, *Safir*, to change his voice during a KSHB show. This is usually made from 2 pieces of brass, felt (to make it more soft for putting in the mouth) and a piece of ribbon which is located in the middle of two brasses. Puppeteer used the *Safir* for all puppets and the actor *Morshed* mostly repeated puppeteer's sentences to improve the connection between dialogues and facilitate understanding of text by audience members. The figure 4.5 is a hand-made *Safir*.





Figure 4.5 Hand-Made Safir

The hand-made Safir is placed in mouth, at the end of the tongue and near the oral cavity. Puppeteers practice for a long time to control Safir in their mouth and control their breath due to the risk of swallowing Safir during talking and breathing. Figure 4.6 shows the place of Safir in mouth.

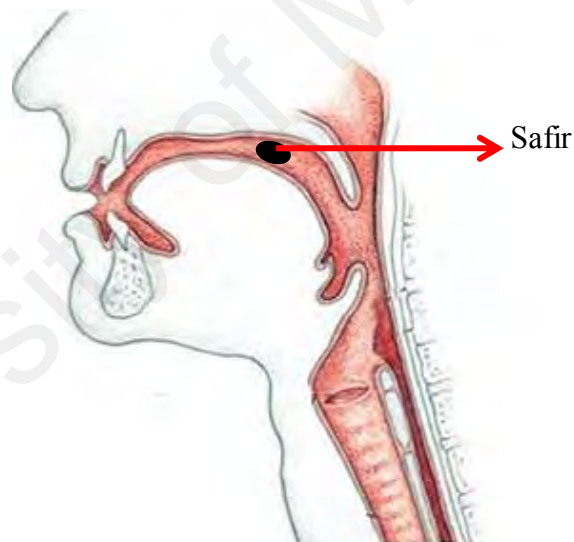


Figure 4.6 Location of Safir in Mouth

One important element in puppetry is the structure of the booth. The structure of KSHB booth is based on a small room in which puppeteer hides from audience and hangs the puppets to the wall of the room. There is a small stage in front of this room about 30cm high that is connected to booth through the background fabric which is named *Tajir*. Puppets are brought to the stage through a small space between *Tajir* and wall of the booth. The figure 4.7 explains the structure of usual KSHB booths.

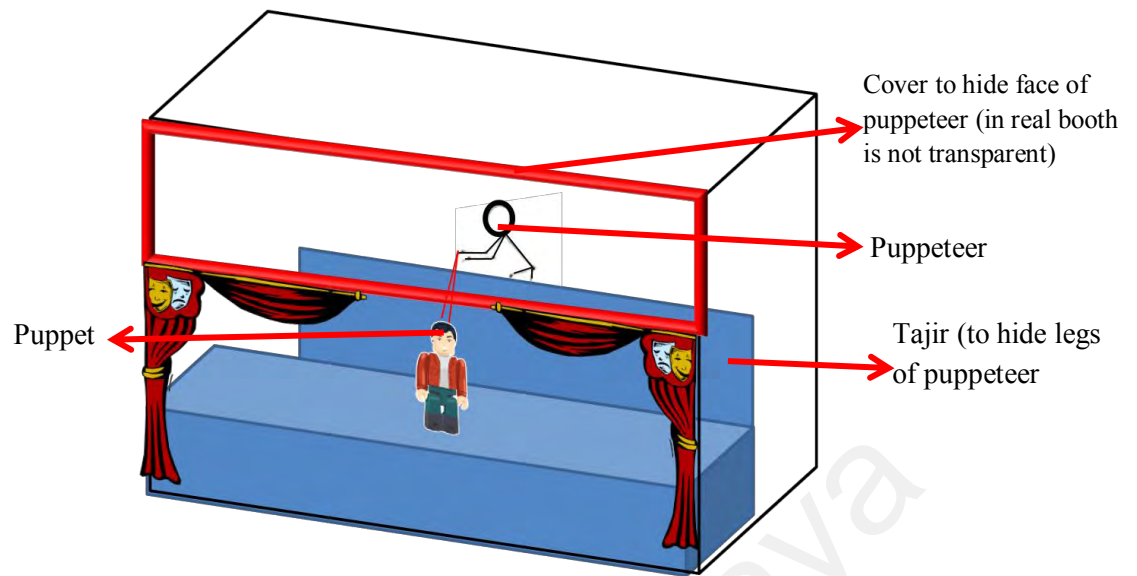


Figure 4.7 KSHB Booth

#### 4.2.2 MORSHED

Morshed, who is known as *Babaye Paye Kheymeh* (Father or owner of the booth) and also as *Luti* (means chevelrous) is responsible to open Kheymeh and start the performance. He opens dialogue with the puppets, clarifies their dialogues to audience and orders them to stay on stage or to leave. Morshed sits beside the Kheymeh and sometimes plays a musical instrument like a tambourine. Morshed in general, plays an important role in KSHB.

The word Morshed means a person who advises people and guides them and it is exactly what Morshed does under cover of story and funny musical performances. Morshed who is usually an elderly man, corrects Mobarak's spoken words and acting mistakes through which he conveys some fundamental moral principles to children and young adults. As an example, Morshed teaches Mobarak to say Salam (Hello) when he comes on to the stage as his first action due to a belief among Muslims that saying Salam keeps them healthy. Conveying this culture to children seems important to

Iranians and Morshed accepts this responsibility because Morshed knows which puppets and funny stories are effective in conveying basic knowledge and social principles to youth.

Moreover, it was common among Iranians in the past that the oldest person in one family who was called “*Bozorg-E-Khandan*” or “*Bozorge-E-Famil*” intervened in disputes between youth to resolve it peacefully. Morshed also take this responsibility and when Hamrahan-e-Arous (bridesmaids) argue with the groom and best men, Morshed talk to both groups and solve the problem in order for the wedding to take place. This action shows the importance of aged people, reconciling the peace among Iranian.



Figure 4.8 Morshed Is Talking to Mobarak

Morshed is one vital element in the KSHB performance due to the connection of his responsibilities with Persian culture. Morshed in general is like a father who tries to train children to be polite and teaches them fundamental moral principles through a puppet show.

### 4.2.3 STORY

Kheymeh Shab Bazi performances were oral tradition in the past but theatre researchers who work on cultural, ritual and traditional performances of Iran have made some transcripts from live performances or recorded videos since 1970.

There is no historical evidence of any story connected to KSHB before Qajar dynasty. However, according to Bahram Beyzayi, it is acceptable that the KSHB titles of Qajar period came down from the Safavid period due to handing down of the KSHB puppetry from previous masters (Beyzayi 2000). There are two stories that were performed during Qajar dynasty; *Wedding of the King's Son* and *the Trial Meeting*. These two stories are given in summary in chapter 5 and one version of *Wedding of the King's Son* is also given in translation in appendix G.

### 4.2.4 MUSICAL ENSEMBLE

KSHB performances are accompanied by a small musical ensemble that includes Iranian musical instruments such as Tumbak (Iranian drum), Kamancheh (a musical instrument that is based on friction of strings like violin) and in some cases Ney (Iranian flute) and Tar (a musical instrument that is based on hitting strings like guitar).

According to Herodotus and Xenophon, two historians from Greek, during Achaemenid period music was used in three forms including Martial music, Lyrical music and Religious music (Xenophon 1978; Herodotus 2011). Figure 4.9 indicates the discovered plate with carving of music band (known as music plate, now in British Museum) that shows some of musical instruments were used during the Sassanid Empire (the last Empire before Islam).



Figure 4.9 Music Plate 7<sup>th</sup> B.C.

In addition, music before Islam was used by Ghavalan (women told stories through the accompaniment of musical instrument). The most important musical instrument for telling stories was the harp. Figure 4.10 is a stone carving in Taghe Bostan (west of Iran) during Sassanid Empire that shows a group of ladies who are playing the harp for the king.

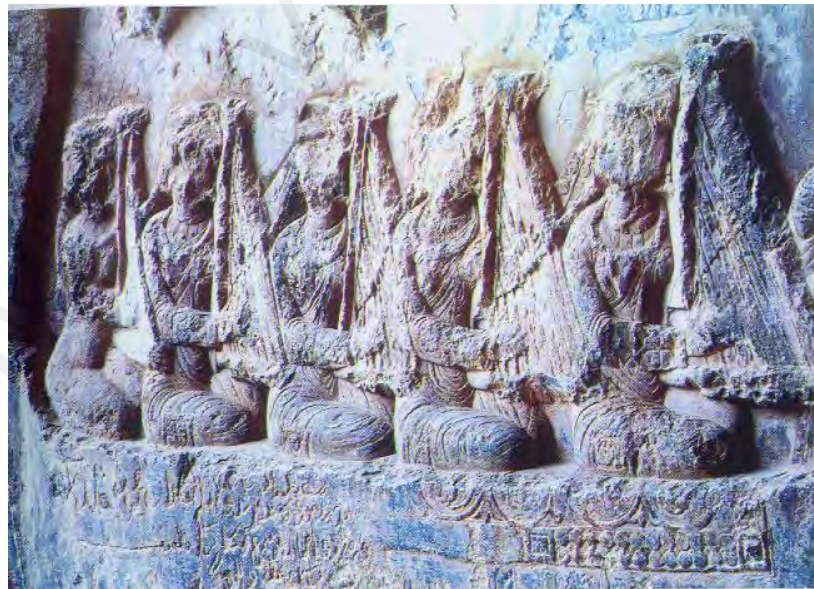


Figure 4.28 Music Band During Sasanid Empire

Although after Islam music playing was forbidden, it was continued in private parties. Iranian miniature paintings of different periods show playing music and a variety of musical instruments after Islam such as Dayere or Daf, Kamancheh, Tombak,



Tar and Nei or Flout. As can be seen in figure 4.11 (wall painting of Chehel Sotoon castle during Safavid dynasty) *Kamanche*, *Ney*, *Tar* and *Daf* were used in one party as musical instruments.

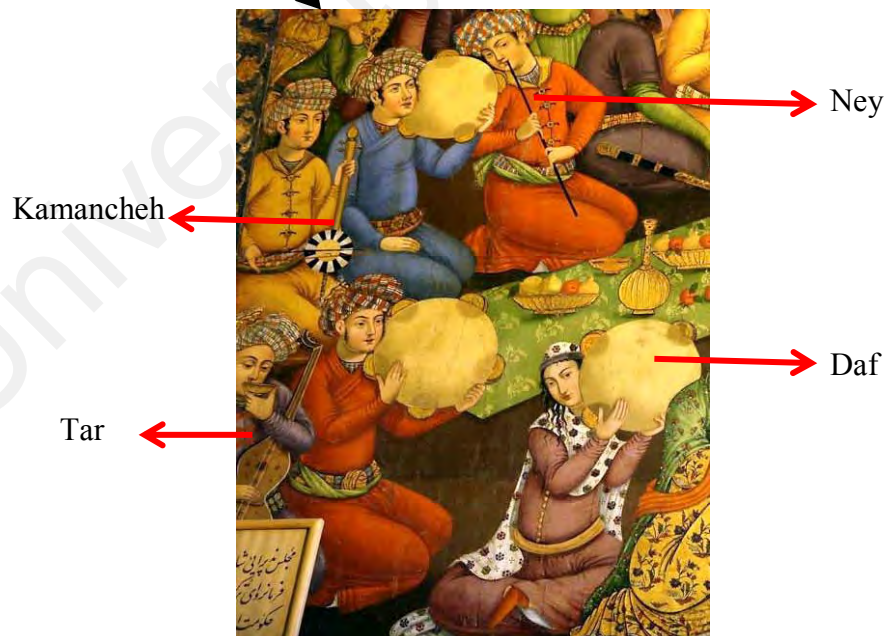


Figure 4.11 Music Band in Persian Party During Safavid Period, Chehel Sotoon Castle, Photography by Saba Aslian

KSHB performance is a musical comic puppet show in which music is used from the beginning to the end. There is no music score for playing and trained music players play according to rhythms of poems that they know due to their previous experiences. Morshed sometimes plays Dayere Zangi (Tambourine) to help music ensemble in keeping rhythms. Figure 4.12 shows a KSHB group including the figure of Morshed , Puppet (that is controlled by puppeteer) and music ensemble.



Figure 4.12 KSHB Group

### 4.3 CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF 4 SELECTED PUPPETS

Four puppets from KSHB are selected for the study. Four selected puppets are:

- 1- Carrier of Brides trousseau on the tray (Tabagh Kesh or Hejle Kesh)
- 2- Champion (Pahlavan)
- 3- Mobarak

#### 4- Water- carrier

These characters have been selected because they are historically and culturally important due to:

- Frequency of using them in different performances and stories (80% approximately)
- The importance of these jobs and characteristics in Iranian culture

##### 4.3.1 TABAGH KESH OR HEJLEH KESH

A Persian wedding ceremony is intricate and divisible into 3 main parts; 1- pre-wedding ceremonies 2- wedding ceremonies 3- after wedding ceremonies

*Khastegari* (proposal), *Bale Boroun* (receiving official approval), *Namzadi* (engagement), *Parche Boroun* (sewing bride's cloths), *Kharide Arousi* (shopping for wedding day), *Band Andazoun* (removing hair from bride's face), *Hana Bandan* (preparing bride and groom for wedding) and *Jahaz Boroun* (taking bride's trusses) are ceremonies before the wedding and wedding day is just for *Aghd* (to conclude the marriage contract) and *Arousi* (wedding party). The day after consummation, ladies celebrate *Patakhti* (party for giving gifts to new couple) and two days later, new couple goes to bride's parent's house for dinner which is named *Maadar Zan Salam* (Hello mother -in -law). Following that all close family members invite the bridegroom in order from oldest to youngest to their house. This special invitation is named *Pa Gosha*. These ceremonies mentioned are general in all races of Iran which are added to specific customs of each particular city or village (Asadi 2012 ).

Among all ceremonies, *Bale Boroun*, *Hana Bandan*, *Jahaz Boroun* and *Aghd* have an additional tradition which is carrying off the gifts on trays (*Tabagh*, *Khoncheh*, *Hejleh*) to the bride's or groom's house. As an example, the trays of *Bale Boroun* include a unbroken cone of sugar, beautiful fabric as a gift to bride, two decorated plates



of traditional cookies and fruits and a ring to show the girl is selected for the groom (Asadi 2012 ).

The trays are usually carried to the bride's house by a group of people which includes several men known as *Tabagh Kesh* or *Hejleh Kesh* (in some villages women). They are expert in carrying trays safely and even dancing with the trays on the head. Traditionally, the group of *Tabagh kesh* is usually accompanied by music players (*Neghare Navaz, Dohol Navaz, Daf Navaz*). Figure 4.12 shows a collection of five kinds of *Tabagh Keshi* from two different ceremonies.

*Tabagh* means a tray, mostly made from different metals like copper or Zinc with carvings like Iranian calligraphy or portrait of Iranian lovers or heroes. Such trays were used for serving food and fruit in large parties in the past, but these days such items are considered as luxury masterpiece but they are still used. During wedding ceremonies are covered by colorful fabrics and pleated nets.

*Khoncheh (Khoanche)* verbosely referred to table-cloth which in Iran was spread on the floor for serving lunch and dinner long time ago. Khonche now days is used during the wedding ceremony like for *Aghd* ceremony (conclude marriage contract). *Khoncheh Aghd* includes a mirror (known as horoscope mirror), two candlesticks and one Quran which all are gifts to the bride from the groom. The Mirror, candlesticks and Quran with rest of *Khoncheh Aghd* like a glass cup of honey, traditional bread (*Sangak*), ring for the bride, rock candy, walnut and so on are taken to the bride's house on the *Tabagh* or *Hejleh* one day before *Aghd*. Figure 4.13 indicates a cooper Tray and designed *Tabagh* which is prepared for *Hana Bandan*.



Figure 4.12 Tabagh Keshi in Five Different Places in Iran



Figure 4.13 Copper Tray and Decorated Tabagh

*Hejleh* is originally from the Arabic language (*Hajaleh*) which refers to: 1- building with dome roof; 2- designed house through set of bed, curtains and flowers for bride and groom. Additionally, in Persian culture *Hejleh* refers to 2 instruments. 1- fixed *Hejleh* that in Iran is mostly used for announcement of a single boy's sudden death. This fixed *Hejleh* is symbol of his future wedding *Hejleh*. This *Hejleh* is stand near the house of the boy who is dead. Photographs of the young boy are placed on *Hejleh* and festooned through flowers and color lights. 2- Portable *Hejleh* that is used to move bride's trousseau to the groom's house and is carried by strong man known as *Hejleh Kesh*.

The structure of stable *Hejleh* includes six side by side windows with crescent arches that form a hexagonal shape. This structure is made of metal and covered by collage of small pieces of mirrors. Figure 4.14 indicates a traditional marriage *Hejleh* in southern Iran and a stable *Hejleh* for the death of young athletic.

The puppets of *Tabagh Kesh* and *Hejleh Kesh* which are presented in figure 4.15 have the responsibility to bring bride's treasures to the court. The puppet maker tried to increase the proportion of similarity between the real *Tabagh Kesh* or *Hejleh Kesh* and puppets through body position of puppet, design of clothes and shape of the Tray or *Hejleh*.





Figure 4.14 A. Marriage Hejleh, B. Death Announcement Hejleh

As can be seen in left side of image 4.15, the body of puppet shows his great strength and clothes include long coat that is tightened at the waist through the use of the golden belt, pants, shoes and special hat of Qajar dynasty. The tray is designed like real trays with fabric, nets and gifts which are covered with colorful fabrics and ribbons.

The puppet of *Tabagh Kesh* that is controlled through two threads and comes on stage, turning with rhythm of music which is same as that use in real dance of *Tabagh Kesh* in front of the bride's house.



Figure 4.15 Puppets of Tabagh Kesh and Hejleh Kesh

The right image of figure 4.15 indicates puppet of *Hejleh Kesh* who is carrying a portable *Hejleh* on his head. The clothes of *Hejleh Kesh* puppet are like the clothes of *Tabagh Kesh* puppet and mustache is same as that *Tabagh Kesh* puppet. In addition, the puppet maker tries to copy most of details of real *Hejleh* to miniature one on the head of puppet. As an example, the pattern of 6 side by side windows and crescent arches which are mentioned in stable *Hejleh*, are copied in *Hejleh* of the puppet. Moreover, the puppet maker tried to increase the similarity between the real *Hejleh* and the puppet through putting small colorful bowls and boxes in the miniature *Hejleh*.

Puppets have educational and historical functions beside entertaining people. As an example, the puppet *Tabagh Kesh* or *Hejleh Kesh* shows a low class worker who socially is respected due to his expert in dancing with *Tabagh*. Introducing low class jobs like *Tabagh Kesh* beside royalties showed all parts of society to children and helped them to know their society better. Historical function also, helps us to know about some forgotten jobs like *Tabagh Keshi* in Iranian society that was more common in the past.

In conclusion, *Tabagh Kesh* and *Hjleh Kesh* are categorized as popular puppets in KSHB due to the importance of marriage as general topic and transferring one of traditional Iranian ceremonies through KSHB performance to the next generation.

#### **4.3.2 PAHLAVAN**

*Pahlavan* is an athlete and champion man with polite manner who helps poor people with braveness and courage and also defends his country in the war and is respected and interesting character among Iranians since thousands years ago (Ensaf Pour 2007).

Iranians have been involved in athletics and sports since three thousand years ago. Herodotus, Grecian historian, explained that how boys were trained in Persia since the age of five to ride, use weapons and discipline in all conditions (Herodotus 2011).



Figure 4.16 Starting Pahlavani Training Since 5 Years Old

Being honest with people, generosity, worshiping God and having great stamina were qualities required for physical and mental aspects of a *pahlavan*. Various Persian poets composed poems about these features of famous *pahlavans*. As an instance, *Ferdosi*, mentioned:

یکی پهلوان زادم بود دقان نژاد  
لشکر و بزرگ و خرمند و راد

He was from a champion (*Pahlavan*) extraction of farmer descent  
Brave, strong, sagacious and gentleman

As mentioned, the *pahlavan* is respected by Iranian people. Even nowadays, people admire such characters which to present a strong man with highest ethical and moral standards, they name him *pahlavan*.

*Zurkhaneh* is the name of a place that Iranians do traditional exercises, *Pahlavan* (Champions) gather together to do training physically, mentally and behaviorally to

become stronger, implementing wrestling techniques and how to behave honestly (Figure 4.17). The first evidence of *Zurkhaneh* has been found in 13<sup>th</sup> century (Ensaf Pour 2007).



Figure 4.17 Teaching Principle of Pahlavan

Three sport tools that are used in *Zurkhaneh* are very similar to arrow, shield and mace that were used in ancient wars. Sportsmen in *Zurkhaneh* learn to throw up the club (Mil) and catch it while it is coming down. The figures 4.18-A show one kind of exercises in *Zurkhaneh*, *Mil Zadan*, 4.18-B another exercise, *Mil andakhtan* and 4.18-C the game between two *Pahlavans*, wrestling (*Koshti*).

Louise E. Sweet addressed Iranian custom in going to *Zurkhaneh* in his book entitled *People and cultures of the middle East* (Sweet 1970). J.S. Buckingham explained in detail about *Zurkhaneh* and some characters of *pahlavan* in 1828 when he travelled to Iran (Buckingham 1971).

As mentioned in the first chapter, culture is educational and cultural elements are taught from one generation to another. KSHB performers added *Pahlavan* to their performances to keep this culture and convey it to the next generation. Imitation of these figures led to adding all visual and behavioral elements of original wrestles to the puppet of *Pahlavan*. Figure 4.19 shows puppet of *Pahlavan*. The form of usual clothes of *Pahlavan* in *Zurkhaneh* that includes medium long pants and one of the most popular

sport instruments, Mil, is copied to puppet by puppet makers. Moreover, *Pahlavan* is a respectful puppet in KSHB and *Morshed* or *Luti* (a person who has direct dialogue with puppets) respects him markedly.

Functionally, puppet Pahlavan is shown to introduce respectful group of people who are known as trustworthy, brave and kind people. It encourages children to follow behavior of this group of people in the past and even now. Teachers explain about positive attitude of all people toward Pahlavan after KSHB show to encourage them to be like a champion in society.

To sum up, *Pahlavan* and his characteristics are interesting and respectful in Persian culture and new generation is encouraged to follow *Pahlavan's* behavioral pattern at the present.



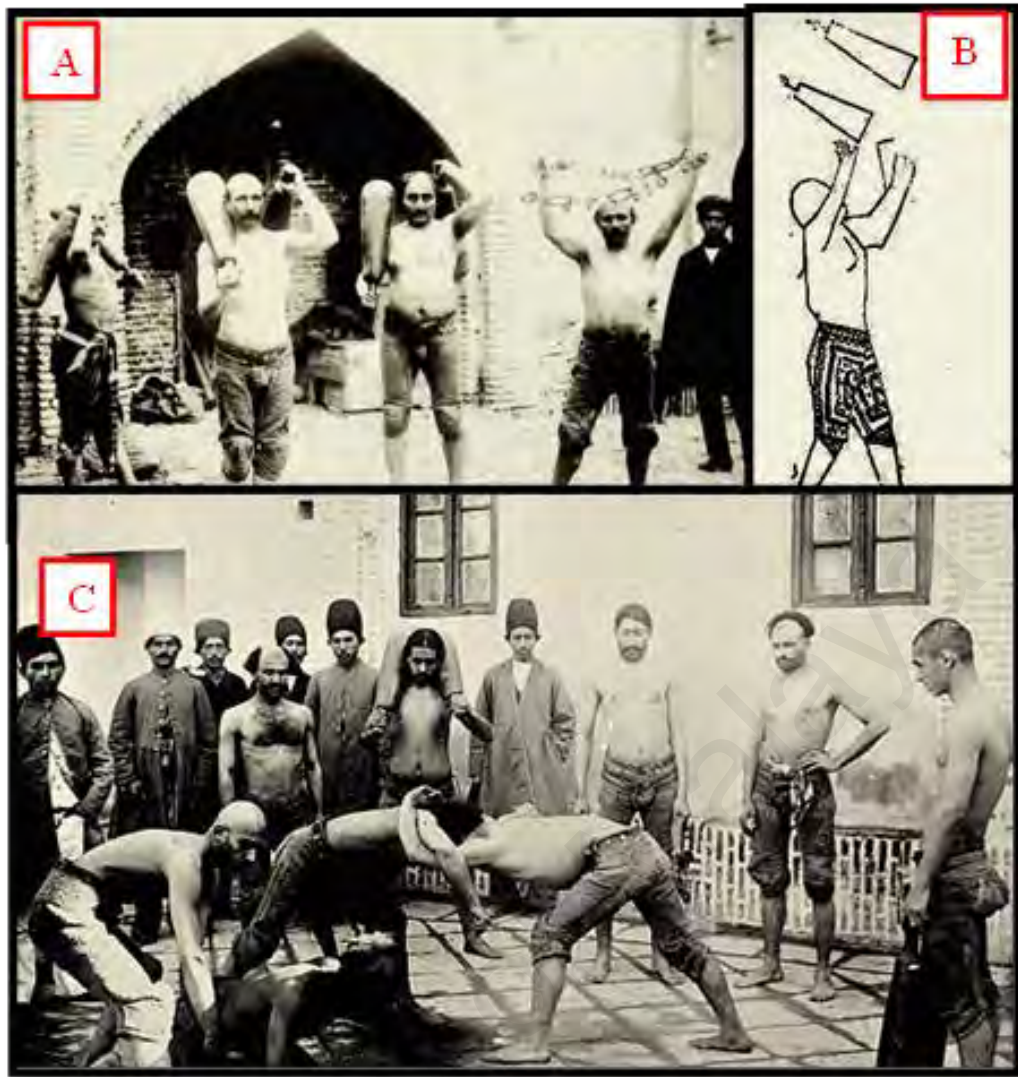


Figure 4.18 A-Mil Zadan B-Mil Andakhtan C-Koshti



Figure 4.19 Puppets of Pahlavan

### 4.3.3 MOBARAK

*Mobarak* is an important character in KSHB performances. There are three different historical hypotheses about the existence of *Mobarak* in KSHB performance that are specifically explained as follow:

#### 1- Aryan Belief

*Mehrdad Bahar* discussed in his book, *A Research on Myths of Iran, Siavosh*, the son of *Kavus*, who is introduced in detail by *Firdausi* in *Shahnameh* (Book of Kings), is coming back to the earth (the ghosts of other dead people are accompanying him) every year during 5 days before New Year, since he was killed. His face is black and his cloths are red because when returning he brings Spring and new life to the earth. Symbolically, black face refers to returning from world of the death and red clothes indicate blood (the most important life's factor) which together shows the existence of life and death in close proximity. *Firooz* that is named *Haji Firooz* after Islam, wears red clothes, colores his face in black and comes on the streets during last week of Winter. He plays a simple musical instrument (Tambourine) and celebrates the change in the season as well as New Year. *Firooz*, based on the analysis on all similarities, is remnant of Aryan belief and still repeated as one important custom of Persian New Year (Bahar 1998). Figure 4.20 shows the style of *Haji Firooz* and his dancing on the street during last week of winter.

#### 2- African Slaves

Although black faced *Firooz* existed in ancient Persia, indicating the arrival of African slaves to Iran improve the role of this figure in Persian drama. According to Paul E. Lovejoy, approximately 25000 African slaves had been shipped to Persia, Arabia and India from Zanzibar in the early 19 century (Lovejoy 2000). On the other hand, *Zabih Allah Khan Maheri* explained his imitations of funny movements and the

accent of African slave who worked in *Golestan* castle which help him to advance in Persian comedy drama (*Siah Bazi*) (Saber Khorzoughi 2009). According to available information, some historians believe that three black characters in Persian drama, Mobarak in KSHB, Siah (in Persian Comedy Drama) and Firooz who gives the glad tiding of New Year, have the origins in the immigration of African slaves to Persia (Beyzayi 2000; Massoudi 2009; Azimpour 2010).



Figure 4.20 Haji Firooz Costume and Dance on Street



Figure 4.21 Sculpture of African Slaves in Zanzibar



### 3- Jesters of Persian court

The last theory about creating character of Siah in Persian comedy drama and Mobarak in KSHB refers to jesters in the Persian court. Jesters had been named Dalghak during Qajar dynasty who frankly criticized royalties and acted more freely in the court. Jesters complained of social policies and political decisions in funny way which let them to be direct toward king and members of royalty while entertaining them. One of the most famous jesters of Qajar period was Karim Shireyi who was well known for his techniques in criticizing and entertaining the king. The behavior of Siah and Mobarak is quite analogous to Dalghak which seems the source of creating these two characters. Figure 4.22 indicates the most popular *Dalghak* of Qajar dynasty, *Karim Shireyi* and his performing group.



Figure 4.22 Karim Shireyi and His Group

According to analyzing documented information, although the existence of a character with red clothes and black face as Firooz is proved in ancient Persian culture, accommodation of black African slaves in castles of Persian kings and adding Dalghak

to royal positions advanced the characters of *Siah* and *Mobarak* apparently and behaviorally. They are believed to be from one family due to considerable visual and behavioral parallel between all three of them.

Apparently, *Mobarak*, *Siah* and *Firooz* have almost same clothes that include red shirt that is tight at the waist through use of the belt, red pants, and a hat (red or black color) and their faces are colored black through chemical or natural color. *Firooz* mostly has a *tambourine* through which makes rhythms for his songs. The *tambourine* has been among traditional Persian musical instruments that has been played in different kinds of performances like *Siah Bazi* (Takht Houzi or Rou Houzi drama) and KSHB by music groups. Physically, the backs of these three characters are occasionally bent to improve their style as servants. Bending the back of *Mobarak* puppet is possible through changing the position of puppet's handle from horizontal form to diagonal in order to push the head of the puppet to down and bring the back up. This physical position of *Mobarak* and *Siah* is shown in figure 4.23.



Figure 4.23 Puppet of Mobarak of KSHB and Siah of Takht Houzi

Performance

From behavioral point of view, although Mobarak, Siah and Firooz are all comic characters with ability to sing and improvising comic scenes, Mobarak and Siah have some especial characteristics which are rarely seen in Firooz. These listed as follows:

- 1- Mobarak and Siah are social and political critics who are highly sensitive about their society's conditions.
- 2- Mobarak and Siah are candid, direct and frank even toward king and members of royalty.
- 3- Mobarak and Siah are really smart especially in selecting techniques for criticism and comedy.

These three personalities increase their popularity among Persians because these two comic characters explain political and social problems directly and frankly which is interesting and pleasant for Persian audience and is similar to Dalghak's behavior with Qajar royalty in the Qajar court. Moreover, these two characters run away from punishments in performance through playing a trick smartly. These are the best parts of these two comic performances. Sadi Afshar was one of the most creative actors in Takht Houzi performance who played the role of Siah for over 60 years and created new comic parts according to various scripts (passed away 2 years ago) and Reza Sheykh Ahmad Khamseyi is contemporary puppeteer with over 60 years experience in puppetry in KSHB. Figure 4.24 shows *Sadi afshar* (with makeup of *Siah*) and *Reza Khamseyi* with his puppets.



Figure 4.24 A- Sadi Afshar (Persian Comedy Drama Actor) B-Reza Sheykh Ahmad Khamseyi (Puppeteer of KSHB)

#### 4.3.4 SAGHA BASHI

The word *Sagha* refers to people who carry water in leather water skin and sell the water or donate it. Iranian's religion before Islam was Zoroastrianism and based on this religion Water, Wind, Soil and Fire are four main substances in the world that are very important. Herodotus believed that water was very important for Persians (Iranians) and wrote that:

“And into a river they neither make water nor spit, neither do they wash their hands in it, nor allow any other to do these things, but they reverence rivers very greatly” (Herodotus 2011).

Islam also, encourages people to be clean and neat and these features are a sign of their adherence to Islam. The respectfulness behavior toward water, rivers and fountain of water influenced on Persian techniques of architecting before and after Islam that can be seen in building ponds in center of yards in mosques, castle and even small

houses (Giovanni and Scarcia 2007). Figure 4.25 indicates applying the philosophy of respecting water to architecting buildings in different cities.

House of Ameri Family  
in Kashan



House of Behnam Family  
that changed to Department  
of architecting of engineering  
Faculty in Tabriz



Figure 4.25 Water Pond in Persian Building

According to Iranian beliefs, the act of giving water to someone who is thirsty is commemoration of the life story of third Shiite Imam, Hossain son of Ali and grandson of Prophet Mohammad who was killed in the battle of Karbala. In the past, one of the most popular techniques of war was besieging lake, river or wells to interrupt the enemy's access to water. *Hossain's* enemy applied this technique as first action. Many of women and children accompanied *Hossain* who suffered of thirst after finishing all the water they had. There was a strong and brave man among *Hossain's* companions named *Abbas Ibn Ali* and, was *Hossain's* step brother. *Abbas Ibn Ali* was named also, *Ghamar -E- Bani Hashem* (Moon of *Hashem* family), *Abul Fazl* (someone who has grace), *Saghaye Dashte Karbala* (water carrier in *Karbala* plain) and *Alamdardar-E-*



*Hossain* (flag bearer of *Hossain's* army). During *Karbala* war he was in charge to protect family of Imam *Hossain* and other soldiers. So, when he heard children crying for some water, took one empty water leather skin, rode his horse to *Forat River* and fought with those who had besieged the water and finally could reach the river. Although he was personally thirsty, could not drink water due to remembrance of the children's tears. So, he filled the water leather skin with fresh water and rode tents of children but the enemies attacked him and cut off his right hand at first. Abbas passed the water leather skin to left hand and enemies cut his left hand and Abbas hold the water leather skin with his teeth while ridding to children's tents. Unfortunately, enemy soldiers killed him before he arrived at the tents. These happenings and Abbas Ibn Ali's action led to his be named *Saghaye Dashte Karbala* (water carrier in *Karbala* plain).

The story of killing of Abbas markedly influenced Persian culture. Although *Sagha* had been a common job due to lack of fresh and drinking water in Iran in the past with this incident the position of *Sagha* became much more important in Iranian culture. In this process giving water to children was particularly emphasized. In addition, it is common among Persians to make a vow to give drinkable water to people for free. This has led to putting some water cooler in small room on the streets to relieve wayfarer's thirst that traditionally designed with some short prayers, paintings of Abbas and candles. This small room with water cooler is called *Sagha Khane* (the home of *Sagha*). Figure 4.26 shows one of the dedicated water coolers (*Sagha Khane*).

At the present time, although drinking water is accessible for everyone in all villages and cities, giving free water to people is seen differently. In religious ceremonies, especially *Ashura*, charitable individuals and people who have made vows offer usual sherbet to wayfarers. Figure 4.27 shows offering sherbet during *Moharram* to people.

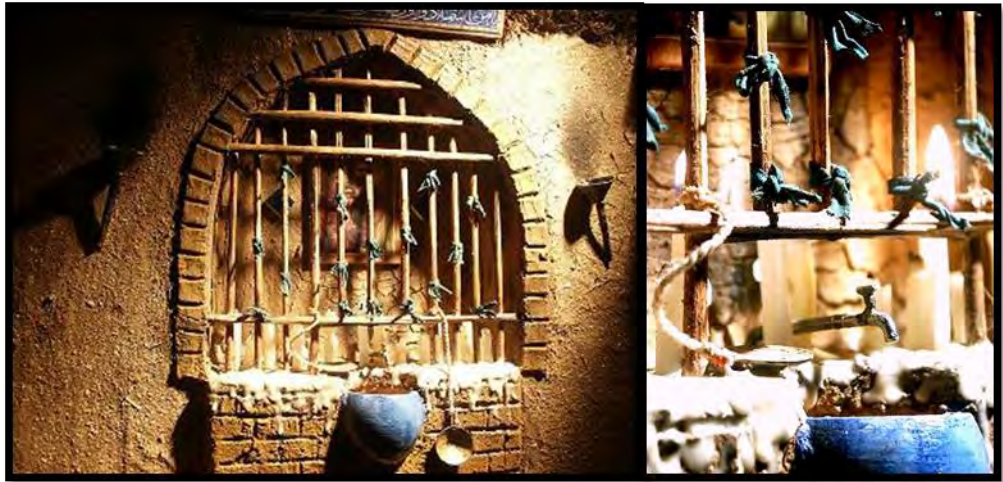


Figure 4.26 Sagha Khane (House of Sagha)



Figure 4.27 Offering Sherbet to People

Sagha had a water leather skin named Mashk which was carried on the shoulders through its handle. The puppet of Sagha is designed to reflect this practice. Figure 4.28-A shows a Sagha during Qajar dynasty with a water leather skin (this photo was taken by Antoin Sevruguin). The puppet of Sagha has the same water leather skin, moustache and hat as the real Sagha that indicates the puppet maker's attention to details during making the puppet of Sagha.

Although details of puppet are same to real Sagha, the responsibility of Sagha is quite different from original Sagha. In Kheymeh Shab Bazi performance, Sagha is coming on stage before starting the wedding ceremony and pouring water on the floor to clean it for guests and bridegroom entrance. This action goes back to Persian culture of

hospitality toward guests which recommends people to clean the houses and yards with brooms and pour water in front of the gate to be sure there is no dust when guests arrive. This culture is taught to new generation and even at the present people sweep their floors and pour water in front of the gate before a Hajji comes back from Mecca, bride and groom enter to their new house and when guests come to a party. Figure 4.29 shows pouring water as a hospitality culture.



Figure 4.28 A-Real Sagha B-Puppet of Sagha



Figure 4.29 Iranian Culture of Cleaning the Way of Guests

The name of this puppet and its role in the story of KSHB convey the deep meaning of Sagha to young generation and historically introduce one common job that is forgotten now.

In conclusion, Sagha is not just a job among Persians and this word has deep meaning which is taught to the new generation and KSHB performers try to keep this character in cultural memory of Iranians through adding this puppet to his the puppet box.

#### **4.4 FUNCTION OF THE TERM KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI IN LITERATURE**

Sir John Chardin and Jean Batiste Tavernier explained in their travel reports that Kheymeh Shab Bazi was performed in public places including the main squares like Naghsh-E-Jahan Square to entertain people (Chardin 1988; Tavernier 2004). It shows that the main function of KSHB was entertainment before the Qajar dynasty.

On the other hand, in KSHB shows various jobs and different levels of society introduced that shows educational function of KSHB performances.

In addition, literary, the concept of controlling movements of puppets by puppeteer behind the booth was used by Iranian poets to show that our life is controlled by predestination. Nezami Ganjavi (12<sup>th</sup> century), Mawlana Jalal Ad Din Rumi Balkhi (13<sup>th</sup> century), Khaghani (12<sup>th</sup> century), Khayyam (12<sup>th</sup> century) and Saadi Shirazi (13<sup>th</sup> century) who lived before Qajar dynasty usually used the word Lobat Bazi (puppet theatre) in their poetry to draw a parallel between controlling puppet through thread by puppeteer and the influence of predestination on human's life which is a common philosophy among Persians (Nezami Ganjavi 2001; Shirazi 2012).

#### **4.5 STRUCTURE OF KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI PERFORMANCE**

Although there is no historical evidence to show the structure of KSHB performing before Qajar dynasty, according to travel report of Sir John Chardin, KSHB performers were members of great groups of entertainers and KSHB was performed after or at the same time with other entertainments like acrobatics in main squares of cities (Chardin 1988). Moreover, puppeteers and their groups did not have regular salary for their performances and audiences paid as much as they preferred at the end of show. Old puppets like Gazmeh, Pahlavan, Tabagh Kesh, Sagha, drummer and dancers (ladies) were made according to the real model of these jobs and characters in Iranian society before Qajar (Chardin 1988; Ensaf Pour 2007). Popularity of musical instruments of KSHB performance like Kamanche among Iranians before Qajar (wall painting of Safavid castle) shows that the music should be one element of entertainments like KSHB.

## **CHAPTER 5 KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI DEVELOPMENT FROM THE QAJAR DYNASTY TO THE PRESENT**

In first part of present chapter KSHB historical evidences of KSHB puppetry during the Qajar dynasty is reviewed and in the second part development of KSHB during the Qajar dynasty are studied. Innovations in different aspects of KSHB from Qajar dynasty to the present are reported in third part of this chapter. Changes are studied in terms of 6 aspects; puppets and puppetry, actor (Morshed), story and music ensemble, function of KSHB performance and structure of performance.

### **5.1 HISTORICAL EVIDENCES**

Bahram Beyzayi, Jafar Shahri, Poupak Azimpor, Shiva Masoudi and Willem Floor noted almost the same documentations of performing KSHB with short explanations of structure and techniques from Qajar period which include:

- 1- Report from the book *Geography of Isfahan* by Ibrahim Tahvildar Isfahani which contains a short description of KSHB the suitable time of the day for performing KSHB and its normal techniques (Massoudi 2009; Azimpour 2010).
- 2- Baha Allah, the son of court minister wrote his memories of attending in a wedding party and watching KSHB performance. The most important information in his memory is structure of KSHB performance and a summary of story that he watched. This story is explained in the elements of present chapter (Beyzayi 2000; Massoudi 2009).
- 3- The statement of Aubin about the importance of KSHB during the Qajar dynasty and in Kurdistan that is explained in his travel report. Aubin traveled to Iran for one year (1906-1907) and in his report

explained KSHB puppetry as one interesting puppetry with many puppets and started to explain some of these puppets and the story briefly. This report is mentioned in element part of present chapter (Floor 2005; Aubin 2011).

- 4- The book *Sharhe Zendeganie Man* that is about condition of Iranian society during Qajar and includes a short brief of some puppets and story of KSHB (Mostofi 2005; Azimpour 2010)
- 5- Two photos of puppetry masters who are standing beside their KSHB booth and puppets that are taken in 1920 (Floor 2005).

## **5.2 DEVELOPMENT IN KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI DURING THE QAJAR DYNASTY**

Development and changes in KSHB are categorized into 3 parts; 1- Elements that is including puppets and puppetry, Morshed, story, music ensemble. 2- Function of KSHB performances, 3- structure of performances.

### **5.2.1 DEVELOPMENT IN ELEMENTS OF KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI**

#### **5.2.1.1 PUPPETS AND PUPPETRY**

During the Qajar dynasty three 3 new puppets were added to the puppet boxes of KSHB. The three puppets are:

Driver (Shoufer):

Transportation in Iran was based on carriage with mostly one horse (except royal carriage with 4 horses) until beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century and all carriage drivers (Doroshkeh Chi) followed principles of the *private company of drivers* which was founded in 1890 by Mirza Javad Khan. These carriages parked in the most crowded

squares such as Toupkhane, Sabze Meydan, Sarcheshmeh (Issawi 2009). Figure 5.1-A shows an image of a carriage and carriage driver and 5.1-B of the royal carriage of Naser Aldin Shah. These photographs were taken by Antoin Sevruguin, a famous photographer of Qajar dynasty.

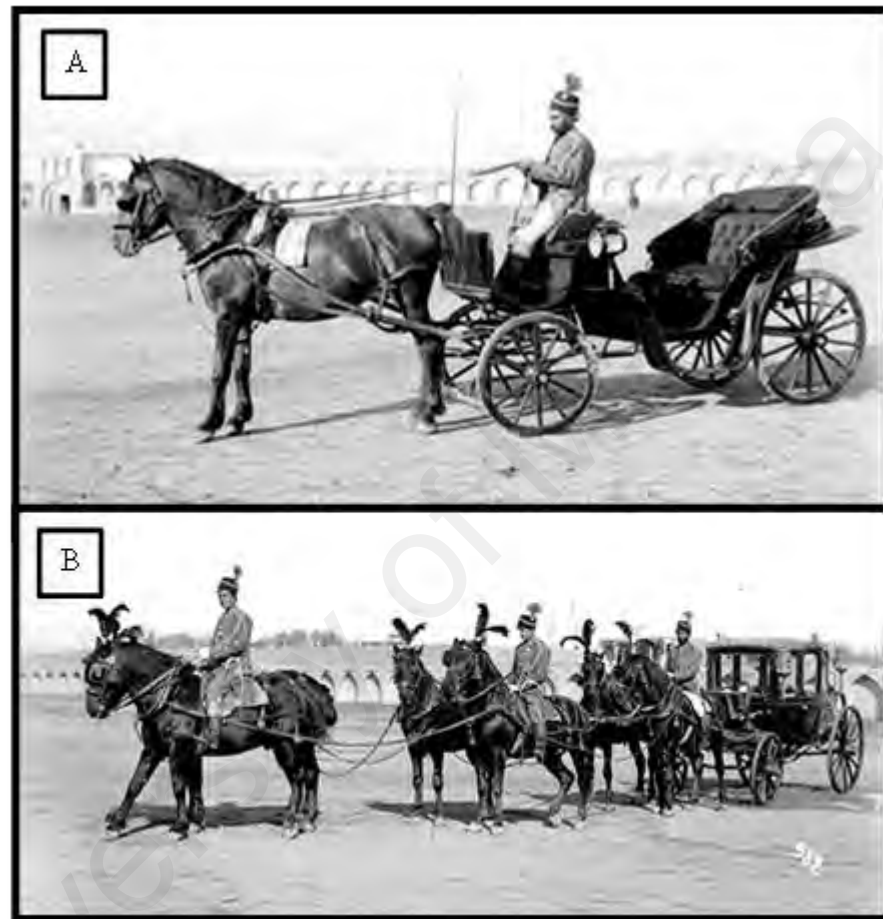


Figure 5.1 A- Carriage and Driver B-Royal Carriage of Naser Aldin Shah

The Qajar kings were interested in innovations in science and technology in European countries. This led to the importation of various inventions like the photo camera and car to Iran. The first car was imported from, Renault factory in France to Iran upon the order of the fifth king of the Qajar, Mozaffar Aldin Shah in 1902. The first bought care was used rarely and was kept in the garage of the court. Figure 5.2 shows Mozaffar Aldin Shah with the first imported car to Iran.



Shoufer (driver) was not among Iranian jobs before the importation of cars to Iran and even during government of next two kings (Mohammad Ali Shah and Ahmad Shah) there was a small community of Shoufers in Iran.



Figure 5.2 Mozaffar Al Din Shah with His First Car

The puppet of Shoufer was added to the KSHB puppet box after the import of a car into Iran at the end of Qajar period (1904). Figure 5.3-A indicates puppet of a Shoufer (driver) with a car and Mobarak inside the car. This photo is taken by author from museum of Azarbayzan and figure 5.3-B is a model of a car from Renault Company in 1904. As can be seen, the puppet is a plastic miniature form of model T of Renault Company merchandise that was produced in 1904.

The puppet maker used a plastic toy (the car) which was controlled through 4 threads and the top of the car was cut to increase the reality of picking up the passengers (Figure 5.3-A). There is any puppet of carriage in a puppet box to show before purchasing the first car and adding the car to the puppet box, the puppet of Salim Khan and other members of royalty entered to stage by carriage.

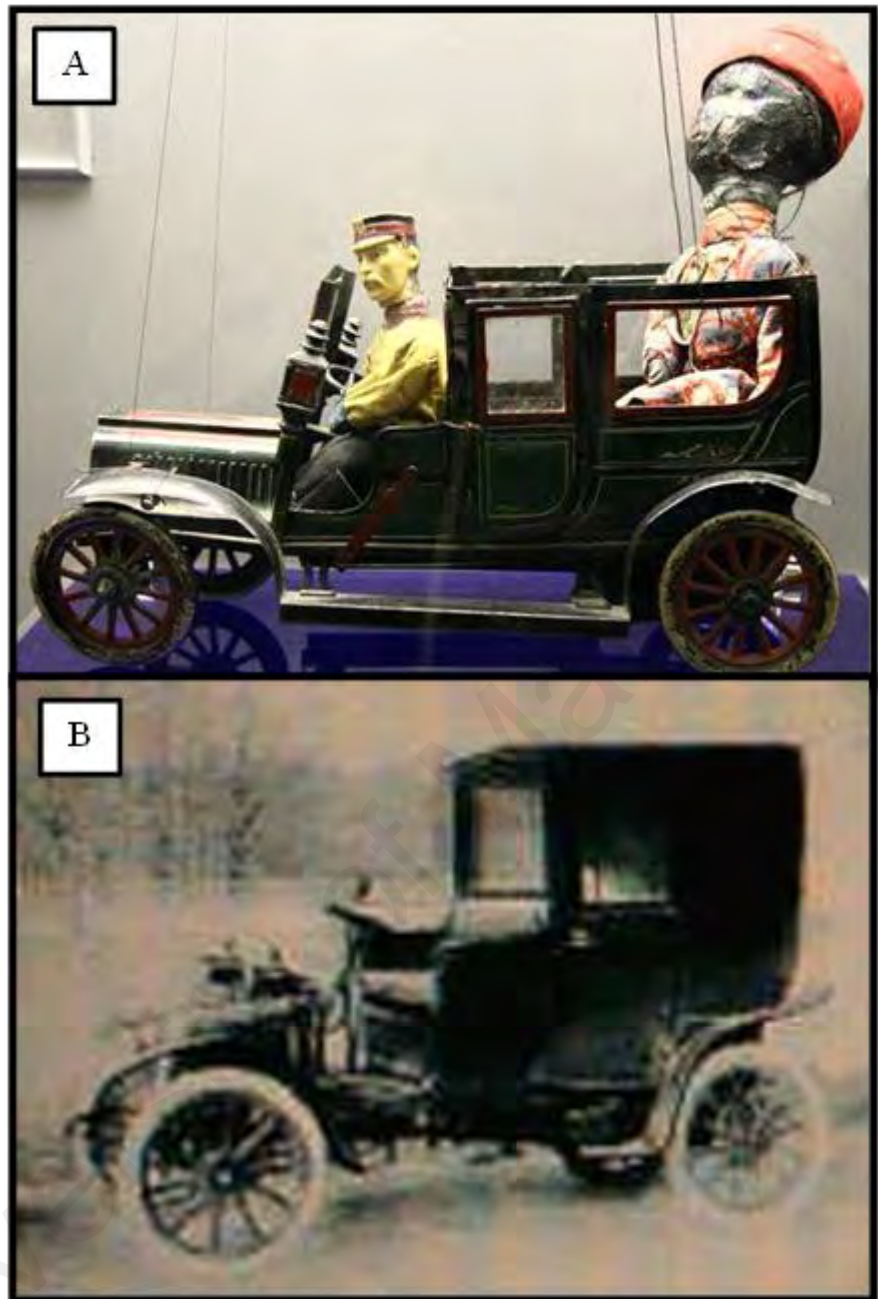


Figure 5.3 A Puppet of Shoufer with Car and Mobarak Inside the Car. B- Model T of Renault Company in 1904

Nurses:

Nurses are a set of puppets that is including two puppets that are connected to each other through a stretcher. The Puppet maker designed clothes for the puppets like the clothes of nurses and some of them have a cross on their hats. These two puppets enter to stage together when one puppet (usually street cleaner) injured and take the

patient to hospital. Moreover, the technique of moving these puppets is based on showing puppets to audience in profile all the time. These puppets were added to the puppet box during the Qajar dynasty due to the influence of the foundation first the nursing school in Iran in Orumieh 1916 and one year later in Tehran (Azar Mi and Farsi 2011). Figure 5.4 shows two different sets of nurses.

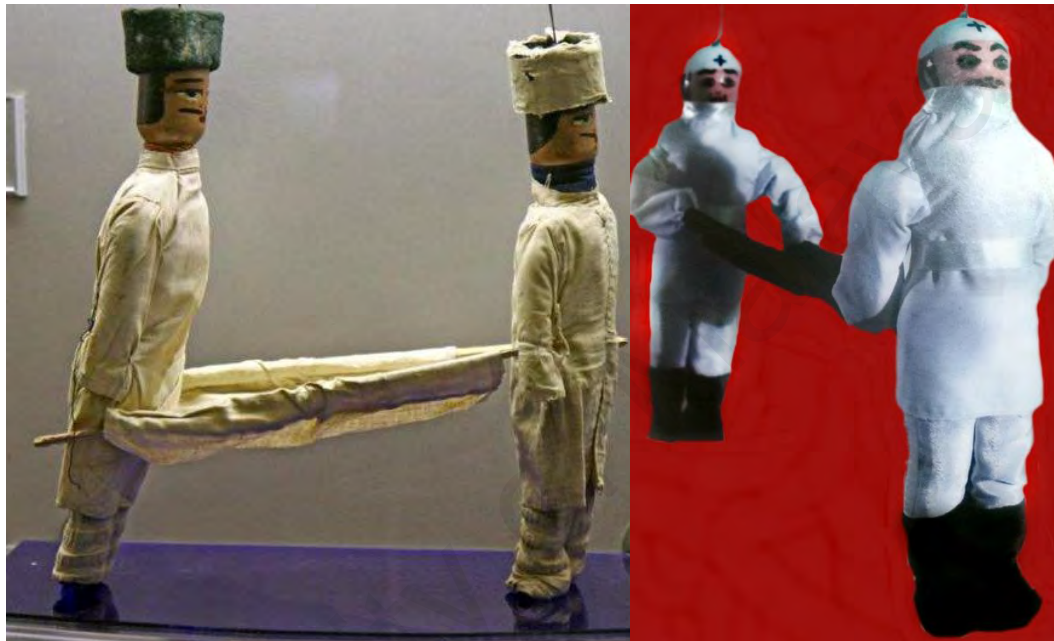


Figure 5.4 Nurses

Minister plenipotentiary of England and Russia:

A couple of puppets who come on stage by driver after the king are known as Vazir Mokhtar –E- Engelis (Minister plenipotentiary of England) and Vazir Mokhtar –E- Rus (Minister plenipotentiary of Russia). The existence of two additional puppets during Qajar dynasty to previous puppets with the positions of Russian and English Minister plenipotentiary indicates puppeteer's intention to depict social and political conditions in Iran during that time (Azimpour 2010).

Although two puppets of Ministers are among those group of KSHB puppets that don't have dialogues, they have higher position than other puppets. The puppets of

two minister plenipotentiaries don't enter to stage like other guests before the king and they are brought in by a royal car after the king as special characters. Moreover, the location of the puppets of two ministers is different from other guests (like guests from Turkey and India). The puppets of minister plenipotentiaries are stand two sides of the puppet king.

Eugene Aubin explained in his travel report (1906-1907) that the last puppets that came on stage were the king and the Minister Plenipotentiaries of Russia and Ottoman Empire and these two puppets stand beside the king. (Aubin 2011)

Figure 5.5 shows set of puppets of KSHB during Qajar. Photo is taken by Antoin Sevrugiun (1830-1933). The car in left side shows that the photo was taken after the purchase of the first car by Muzaffar Adin Shah.



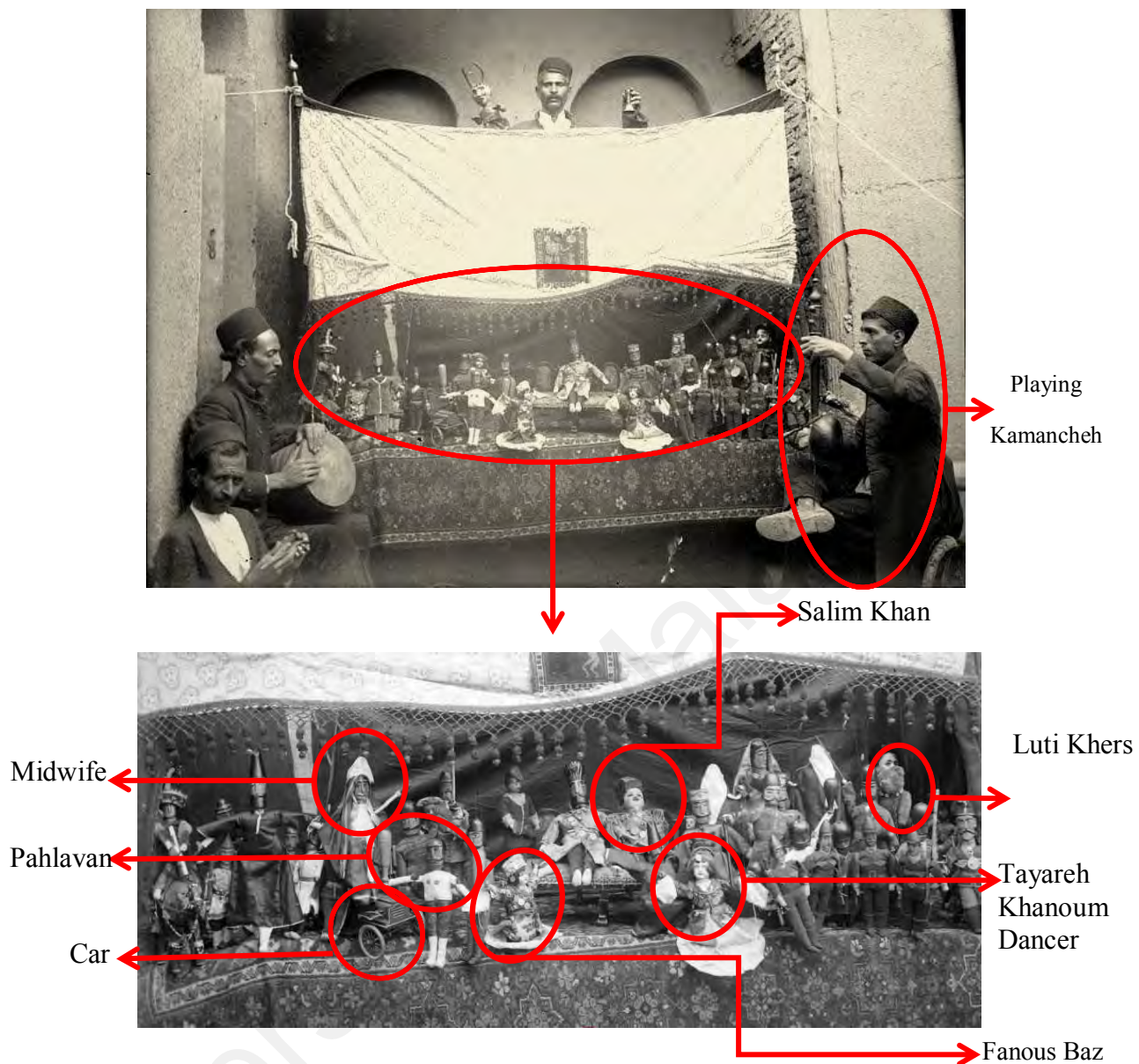


Figure 5.5 Puppets of KSHB During Qajar Dynasty, Photo by Antoin Sevrugian (1830-1933)

### 5.2.1.2 MORSHED

The existence of new additional puppets increased some parts of Morshed's dialogue but in general the position and responsibilities of Morshed still remained the same. As an example, in one part Mobarak fights with Jarou Kesh and punches him. Morshed intervened in disputed between them and tried to resolve the problem but Mobarak punched him again and Jarou Kesh collapsed. Morshed at this time called for the doctor and nurses (two new puppets). This part of his dialogues changed due to

these new puppets. Also, Morshed repeated the puppet's word and advised Mobarak and some other puppets as usual to explain aspects of Iranian culture to children.

### **5.2.1.3 STORY**

Stories of KSHB performance, based on Baha Allah, Abdullah Mostofi, Eugene Aubin and documented scripts of Mr. Ahmady performances, are divided into two groups:

- 1- The trial of the Offender (Beyzayi 2000; Mostofi 2005; Aubin 2011)
- 2- The Wedding of Salim Khan's son (Beyzayi 2000; Azimpour 2010)

The plots of these two stories are:

- 1- A trial in the court which in a criminal who is captured for fraud (or stole money in another story) is sentenced to be bastinadoed in front of the king. After the punishing daemon flies down to caution people who are against the king that they will be punished which lead to punishing two puppets and flies again.
- 2- It's the wedding day of crown prince and everybody including international guests, soldiers, entertainers and bridegroom are gathering together to wed them. There is a small argument between groom and bride, best men and bridesmaids that is resolved by Morshed and wedding is finished.

Aubin (French ambassador of Qajar dynasty) reported the plot of trial story that he watched. He said:

*"Before entrance of puppets, Morshed sang poems of Hafez in melodic form and then first puppet entered and introduced himself as messenger of the king. He said that king ordered everybody be quiet until he comes. Then soldiers located in the background and street-cleaners (Jarou Kesh) cleaned the stage and water carriers (Sagha) washed the stage. After that, royalties, armies, Hajis and...entered and he last puppets were the king and Minister Plenipotentiaries of Ottoman and Russia. First there were some entertainments for the king like, wrestling, acrobat, dancing and playing with animal (luti antari). Luti Antari requested to money and Morshed asked that the king gave you special money, didn't he? Luti said: yes but not cash and gave it to Jensol Tojar who take money for himself. King immediately ordered to enter Jensol Tojar and after trial he was punished by group of servants who were responsible for punishment (Farashane Choobo falak). After finishing this part Div (Daemon) entered and said I came to punish everybody who is against the king and after punishing two puppets flew to up." (Aubin 2011)*

According to travel report of Aubin, in the story *trial of the offender* three puppets come on stage that are specially for this story; 1-Daemon (Div), 2- Farashane Choobo Falak (a group of puppets who are responsible to punish the offender), 3- Criminal or Mojrem (here is Jensol Tojar)

The story of *Trial of the Offender* is reported by Baha Allah. It is also reported in Beyzayi's book with little changes. (Beyzayi 2000)

There is a record of the *Wedding* story by Roman Galaunoff, Russian researcher in the field of Iranian studies that shows the order of puppets and their dialogues (Azimpour 2010). According to the records KSHB performance, started with singing poems of Hafez or Jalal Ad Din Mohammad Rumi at the beginning and then one servant announces that tonight is the wedding of the king's son. Again all servants start working one by one or in groups. Then, guests and members of royalty enter are stood in background and at the end the king comes to stage by car. Following the entrance of the king, the ceremony starts and Tabagh Kesh, dancers, and the Bride with Bridesmaids enter and finally bridegroom goes to their house and ceremony ends.

The structure of two above stories is linear. Story starts with one announcement which leads to raising action part (wedding or trial). In both stories, the entrance of the King move the story one step up that goes to next stage (beginning of the wedding or trial). Argument between bride and groom or punishing the criminal in front of the king are both the most important and energetic part of stories which leads to calm an happy ending.

Next development in both reported stories during Qajar period was that the name of the puppet representing the king was changed from Salim Khan to Ahmad Shah, King of that time due to emphasis on the political situation. Thus it was much easier for audience members to understand the main events of the performance through the

changes in the costume of the puppeteer, who now wore a British suit, and the name of the king to Ahmad Shah.

The story of KSHB is simple and like classical structure of drama is starts with a brief introduction by Morshed and then the herald or Mobarak announces that something important is going to happen in the court-- a wedding and in some texts a big royal party or meeting. This start leads to bringing most of puppets on stage gradually and at last the wedding scene, reaching to the most exciting moment of drama that is pretty close to the end.

There are three important physical challenges during the wedding story that includes fight between Jarou Kesh and Mobarak, a wrestling match between two champions and then between Mobarak and Pahlavan. In addition, oral challenges of Morshed with Mobarak, Morshed with drummer and bride with groom increase the excitement and comic parts in drama.

A happy ending is one standard element in KSHB performances. Weddings, playing of rhythmic music and singing of songs are common in the final scene in all performances. The happy ending, comical dialogues and activities, musical start and singing of many songs during the performance have led to KSHB being categorized among musical comedy shows.

#### **5.2.1.4 LANGUAGE**

Kheymeh Shab Bazi scripts are tied to Iranian culture through two aspects; 1- Poetry of Kheymeh Shab Bazi; 2- Importance of arranging positions in superior order, something explained as follows.

The poetry of KSHB can be divided into three types: 1- Romantic poems at the beginning and end of a performance; 2- Poetry for introducing jobs; 3- Comic poetry of



Mobarak. These poems are related to Iranian culture in different ways. As an example, Persian Literature includes countless romantic poems about love, beauty of the lover and difficulties of love due to the usual pattern of relationship between lovers in Iranian culture. According to Iranian culture, an Iranian beloved lady should be spurned and the lover should pass through numerous hurdles to get his beloved lady. One great example showing this relationship is seen in a poem of the popular Persian poet, Sadi Shirazi who says:

آن نه عشق پس تکه از دلبه زبان می آید  
و آن نه عشق که ز مشغول و قیبه جان می آید  
*Expression by words is not deeply love*  
*A person who is irritated by beloved lady is not real lover* (Shirazi 2012)

Poems that are sung by Morshed at the beginning of a performance are connected to the relation of lovers and are based on this attitude and culture among Iranians. Two other kinds of poems in KSHB are simpler and have been sung in order to introduce common jobs in Iranian society during the Qajar dynasty and b to improve the comical aspect of KSHB performance.

The second connection between KSHB and Iranian culture is about the importance of arranging positions in superior order that is very important in Iranian culture. According to Iranian culture, older people like grandparents, masters, champions and lecturers should be offered to sit in higher place than others due to their higher positions in the society. For example, in formal parties like wedding ceremonies oldest members of family are respectfully treated and have special place to sit. This culture is seen in *Zurkhaneh*. When old champion (Pahlavan) who is retired enters to *Zurkhaneh*, everybody stands up in front of him and offers him the heist place to sit (Ensaf Pour 2007).

In KSHB performance, the culture of arranging positions in superior order is shown in two forms: 1- the throne of Sultan Salim Khan, 2- the entrance of people on stage.

The throne of Sultan Salim Khan is moved to the stage by a servant (Mobarak) and located in the center before Sultan Salim Khan enters. Other guests or staffs in KSHB performance do not have any chairs to show the contrast of position of king to others. Moreover, puppets are brought to the stage from the lowest ranks to the highest in order. The first puppets include Mobarak, Jarou Kesh (Street Cleaner) and Sagha; these are staff in lowest position. Then champions, who are one level higher than the previous ones, enter. Following that the special guests remain on stage. The highest position belongs to the king and he is the last puppet that comes on stage. This arrangement shows the ascending trend of social positions of positions during Qajar dynasty.

The studies on connection between KSHB script and Iranian culture indicate that the story of KSHB has been tied to Iranian culture.

One famous script of KSHB that was performed in 1990 by Mr. Khamseyi and his group is translated and presented in Appendix G. In the translated script there is a key phrase between puppeteer and Morshed which lets audience members know when characters come onto the stage or exit. This sentence is; “Yek Do Khabardar” which means “One, Two, Be aware!” This phrase is not translated and repeated exactly. In addition, the sentences that are underlined are songs that are usually sung during a KSHB performance. Moreover, characters that are culturally analyzed in the present research are indicated with red color in this translation and for better understanding the text, pages are divided into two parts. The left part is puppet’s dialogues and right side is for Morshed’s dialogues.

### 5.2.1.5 MUSIC ENSEMBLE

Based on two photographs of KSHB during Qajar dynasty, the music ensemble still included a Tonbak Pleyer, a Kamanche Player and a Tambourine which was usually played by Morshed. As can be seen in Figure 5.5, Tonbak and Kamancheh were played during Qajar dynasty in KSHB performances. Figure 5.6 is another KSHB performance during Qajar dynasty that shows the place of Tonbak player and the Tonbak.

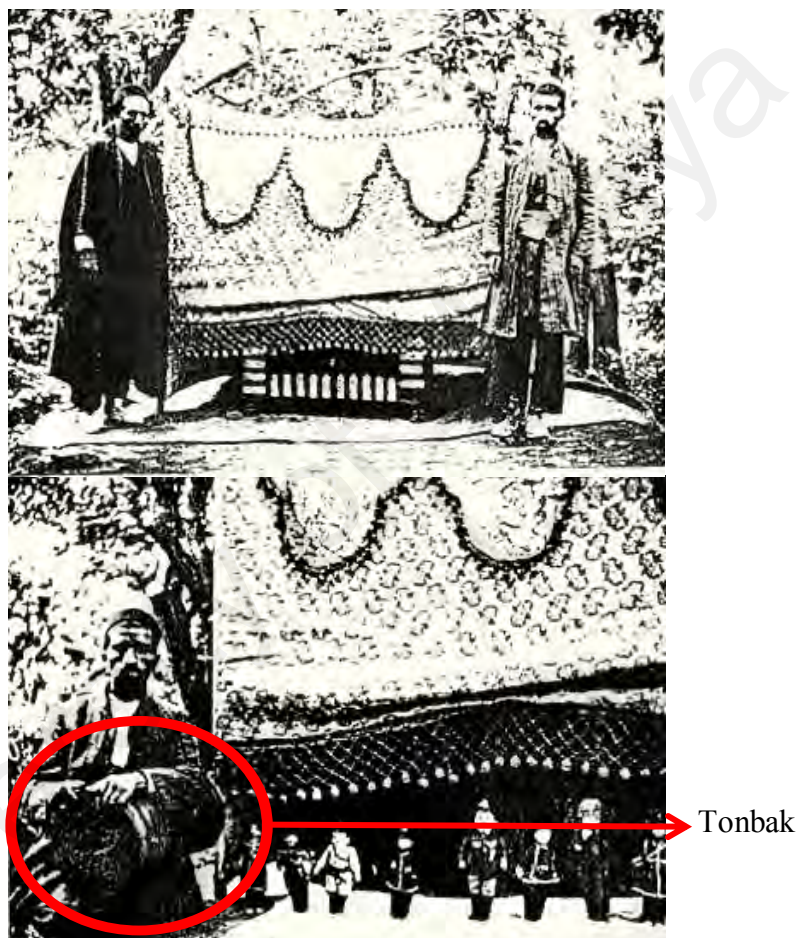


Figure 5.6 KSHB Performance

### 5.2.2 FUNCTION OF KHEYMEH SHAB BAZI

As mentioned in chapter 4, although one common philosophy among Iranian poets was based on the influence of predestination on human's life and poets used the concept of controlling puppets by puppeteer in KSHB to emphasize their attitude, KSHB was performed to just entertain people while during Qajar dynasty KSHB performers used their material to improve Iranian's knowledge about political situation during that time.

Qajar dynasty is one of the most important periods of Iran history due to crucial political changes that influenced people's daily life directly. In 1896 Mozaffar Din Shah, Naser Aldin's son, came into power and during his reign liberation movements rose with direct help of intellectuals and Muslim ecclesiastics which led to great political changes such as signing the constitutional law by the king Muzaffar Al Din Shah (IRAJ 2010). All classes of society were involved in these social movements and Kheymeh Shab Bazi performers used KSHB as the only material that they had to emphasis political conditions in Iran and to improve people's knowledge about political developments. To emphasis the influence of foreigners on political decisions of the king, KSHB puppeteers wore western suits like English politicians, came out of their booths and took the handle (Pasayi) of puppets to show in Qajar time foreigners especially Minister plenipotentiary of England and Russia intervened in internal affairs of Iran directly. (Beyzayi 2000; Azimpour 2010). Figure 5.7 indicates a sample drawing of a puppeteer wearing a British suit.

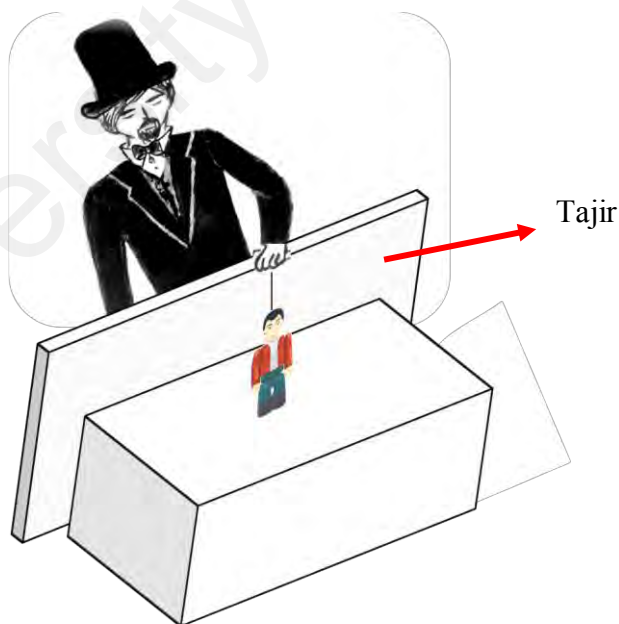


Figure 5.7 Sample Drawing of Puppeteer with British Clothes

As can be seen in figure 5.7 puppeteers used two new techniques of performing during the Qajar dynasty to change people's attitude toward political situation:

- 1- Wearing western suits like foreign politicians in Iran
- 2- Switching previous booth to a short *Tajir* (a small cartain to separate puppeteer from the stage) to hide only legs from audience and to uncover the puppeteer's body

### 5.2.3 STRUCTURE OF PERFORMANCES

In traditional performances, a KSHB show is started with the playing of music and singing of poems of Hafez in melodic form by Morshed. In some cases, one puppet dancer dances during singing the song. After that, Morshed starts the show with a short greeting to the audience. The main story is started with an announcement of one puppet about a great event taking place in court. From this, according to the script, based on based on a variety of stories, the structure is changed.

#### Trial meeting:

According to a report of Aubin, Abdullah Mostofi and Baha Allah, story of *Trial the Offender* is started with announcement of entrance of the king in the court. Figure 5.8 shows the structure of performance

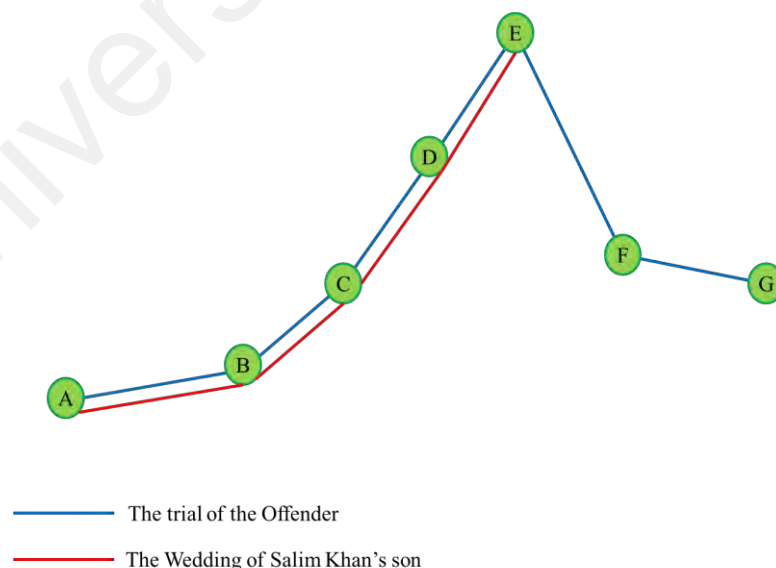


Figure 5.8 Structure of Performance

As can be seen in figure 5.8, the Blue line indicates the structure of KSHB performance according to the *Trial of the Offender Story*. In this story the

announcement is point A which goes up to point B when servants start preparing the court for the entrance of the king. The next stage (point C) is the entrance of guests and members of royalty which moves up to point D (entrance of the king). After king comes on the stage, entertainments start (point E). During entertainment one entertainer complains that their manager does not give them the salary which leads to starting trial meeting of the manager. The next step involve the punishing of the offender that is shown in point and with the entrance of Daemon and the punishment of people who are against the king the story ends at point G.

#### Wedding of Salim Khan's son:

The structure of KSHB performance according to the story *Wedding of Salim Khan's Son* starts with the announcement of an important party in the court. Same to the story *Trial of the Offender*, at first, the puppet of street cleaner, water carrier puppet and servants come on stage to prepare the court for the wedding. Then (point C) the guests come on stage. At the end King and his son come and stand on stage that is shown in figure 5.8 in point D. Wedding is the most important part of story and last part that is shown in point E. In the story *the Trial of the Offender*, point E lead to entrance of punishment group (F) and then Daemon (point G) whereas in the story *Wedding of Salim Khan's Son* after agreement (*Aghd ceremony*) between bride and groom, story is finished with song and music.

### **5.3 INNOVATIONS IN KHEYMEH SHAB BAAZI FROM QAJAR DYNASTY TO THE PRESENT**

The first evidence of KSHB performances after the Qajar dynasty belongs to 7 years after foundation of Pahlavi period which shows that KSHB was performed as entertainment in parties like birthday parties. According to Sadegh Hedayat, the numbers of puppets in a set was still 70-80 and were made of wood and fabric (Hedayat 2009).

Two most important developments that are reported by Sadegh Hedayat are changing the clothes of puppets of solders and changing melodic poems to common poems of that time (Hedayat 2004). Based on Sadegh Hedayat, hats of puppets of solders changed to new model of soldier's hat in military service in Pahlavi period known as KOLAH PAHLAVI. Hats during Pahlavi period were in two models; 1- Kolah Pahlavi that in comparison to hat of Qajar period is a little bigger and has a curved part sticking out at the front; and 2- Kolah Shapo that was straw hat and usually was in black color. Figure 5.9 shows Reza Khan (founder of Pahlavi dynasty) with new model of hat (Kolah Pahlavi)(Hedayat 2004).



Figure 5.9 Reza Khan with Kolah Pahlavi

During the reign of Reza Khan and his son, Mohammad Reza, the last king of Iran, people and royalties were interested in American and European arts and modernism in all social activities (Karimi 2006). This led to the building of the *National Theatre Hall*, *Roudaki Hall* (1967), *Roudaki music school* (1967), *the City Theatre Hall* (1972), *Academy of Fine Arts* (1940), *Dramatic Art Center* (1964) and performing many western theatres and Ballet during the Pahlavi dynasty. Figure 5.10 shows a piece of *The Times* newspaper that reports on *Roudaki Hall* and its programs in 1968.



## A new heart for Iranian ballet

THE TIMES,  
WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 7 1968

Last July I was watching Iran's National Ballet Company rehearsing in the ramshackle old buildings scattered among the trees next to the shell of a building for years shrouded in scaffolding in the heart of Teheran.

But when I returned from Europe for the Coronation in October, I was astonished to find that the old buildings had disappeared, and in their place, as if by magic, smooth green lawns and terraced gardens with splashing fountains surrounded the magnificent new Rudaki Hall, set like a many-faceted diamond in a crystal jewel-box. Floodlit at night, its marble foyers with their traditional mosaics and fabulous crystal chandeliers were thronged with a far more elegantly evening-gowned, tiered audience than you'd find in most western capitals.

A few nights ago, with a completely full house, I watched a programme that began with an enchanting and superbly produced

panies", says burly Nejad frankly. "So when we perform before visiting heads of state, or abroad, we keep to our traditional folk themes—we have a long way to go yet, but now that we have a chance to perform regularly, and, we hope, to see visiting companies here, we should progress much faster."

Dame Ninette de Valois has greatly helped the company get established, and Nejad described how, on his way back from a visit to the U.S.A. about 11 years ago, the British Council invited him to stop off in Britain.

"I visited many British ballet companies—Ballet Rambert and the Royal Ballet among them, and there I first met Dame Ninette and invited her to visit us here", he said.

"Dame Ninette first came out in 1958 and at once developed a strong personal interest in the new-born company; she has been back every two or three years since and is hoping to come here this season."

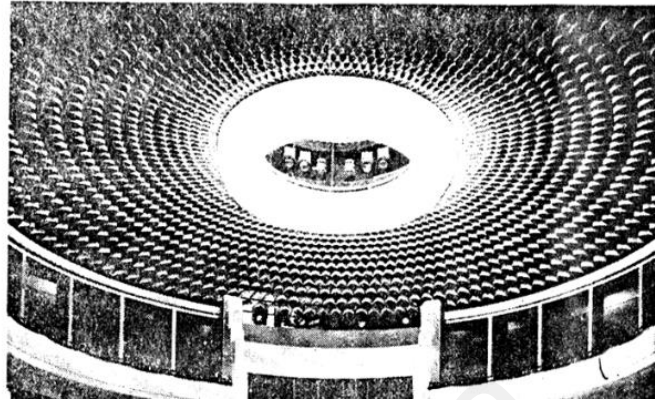


Figure 5.10 Article in The Times Newspaper About Roudaki Hall

Although western theatre improved sharply, Iranian theatre like Iranian comedy theatre was active in special places such as Lale Zar theatre in southern Tehran (Fardust and DAREINI 1991 April) and on national television. Based on interview, during the reign of Mohammad Reza Shah, KSHB was one of the children's entertainments that was shown from national television. The story of this KSHB television show is *the Wedding of Salim Khan's Son*. The movie of these performances have been still kept in the collection of *National Television of Islamic republic of Iran*. These were borrowed and reviewed by the present researcher. Figure 5.10 is a photo that is taken from the movie of KSHB in national television in 1976.



Figure 5.10. KSHB in National Television



After the Islamic revolution of Iran, traditional art improved again and a new generation of art and theatre students started learning basic traditional arts from previous masters and getting experiences through applying innovations in traditional performances. Innovations in KSHB after the Iranian revolution are categorized in three aspects; puppet and puppetry, acting, script

### 5.3.1 PUPPET AND PUPPETRY

Puppets of KSHB are made according to new stories which lead to new puppets in the puppet boxes. As an example, in new story *Mobarak Va Dive Sefid* by Javad Tavalomi new character known as *Ververeh Jadu* exists.

Techniques of puppet making also developed after Islamic Revolution. KSHB puppets are made by two techniques at the present; 1-Traditional techniques, 2-Modern techniques. Traditional form of puppets are made from wood and fabric like in the past while in new form of puppets, Styrofoam is one common basic material for making a puppet's head. This material is covered by modelling paste and after drying it becomes smooth through sandpaper. These sorts of heads are lightweight and the process of puppet making is faster. Figure 5.11 shows a process of making puppet's head by styrofoam.

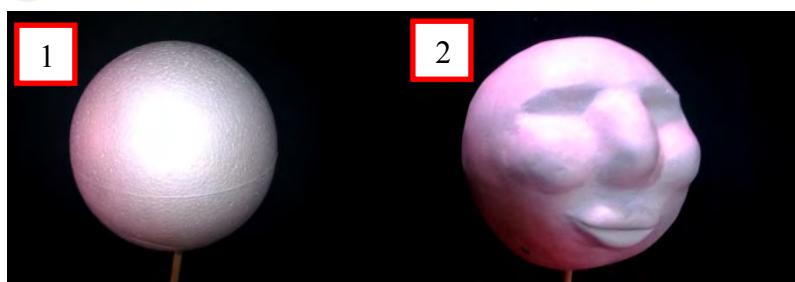


Figure 5.11 Process of Making Head of Puppets with Styrofoam

In addition, traditional form of puppet handle in KSHB changed to new forms with features such as moving hands, legs and back of puppet. Figure 5.12 is a sample drawing of a new handle. As an example, for modern KSHB show *Morovat Nameh*

*Pahlavani* in *Bali Puppetry Festival and Seminar-Puppetry for All Times 2013* the puppets were made by modern technique. The high of puppets for this modern show was approximately 70-80 centimeter high which was 3 times higher than traditional puppets. In addition, the basic material of puppets was Styrofoam, modelling past and fabric. The handle of these puppets were made according to new methods of handle making that is shown in figure 5.12.

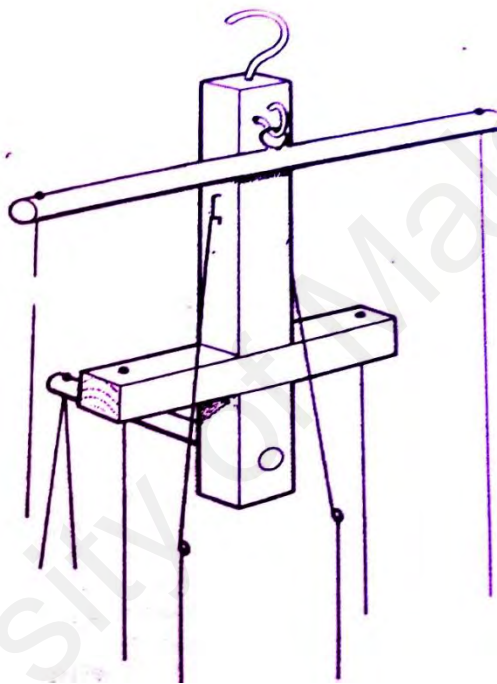


Figure 5.12 New Handle that Is Used in Controlling KSHB Puppets

### 5.3.2 ACTING

The role of Morshed was for played by male in traditional form. Changing usual male Morshed to a female was a fundamental change. For first time, a female played the role of Morshed in one modern KSHB performance in Festival of traditional arts in Tehran in 2009. The director of show, Saba Aslian, explained that this small change can open a way to perform KSHB in schools and kindergartens by teachers to keep this traditional puppetry alive. After that, women enter to KSHB performances in different

positions like music playing and acting. Figure 5.14 shows one modern KSHB performance.



Figure 5.13 Morovvat Nameh Pahlavani Puppets



Figure 5.14 Modern KSHB Performance

### 5.3.3 SCRIPTS

New KSHB performances are usually based on written scripts by new writers like Mehdi Saffari Nezhad, Ali Shams, Behnaz Mehdi Khah, Saba Moloudi and so on. Some of these modern KSHB scripts are listed in table 5.1. In these new scripts the

number of puppets, themes and also name of characters are changed. Some of these scripts are written for combination of KSHB and stage theatre like Chahar Sandogh Shadi written by Naser Azhand. Also, the traditional characteristics (Visual or behavioral) of Div or Champion (Pahlavan) are changed in some of these new KSHB shows (like Bazichegan directed by Hasan Ravande). Morovvat Nameh Pahlavani is a new script written by Mehdi Safari Nezhad in 2009. This script has only 4 characters and is based on conveying Pahlavi principles. This new script was directed by researcher, Saba Aslian in 2009 in Iran and 4 years later in Malaysia. Figure 5.13 shows the puppets of Morovvat Nameh Pahlavani in the performing booth.

Table 5.1. Modern Kheymeh Shab Bazi Scripts

NO.	Name	Script Writer	Director
1	Chahar Sandogh Shadi	Naser Avizheh	Naser Avizheh
2	Na Dige In Vase Ma Dars Nemisheh	Behnaz Mehdi Khah/ Gia Davodi	Behnaz Mehdi Khah/ Gia Davodi
3	Morovvat Name Pahlavani	Mehdi Saffari Nezhad	Saba Aslian
4	Bazichegan	Govan Mehr Esmaeel Pour	Hasan Ravande
5	Aroosi-E- Pesare Salim Khan	Saba Moloudi	Samira Yazdan Pazhooh
6	Mobarak Va Nasle Jadid	Hamidreza Haji Molla Hoseini	Reza Bahrami
7	Mobarak Va Terafik	Majid Alam Beydi	Majid Alam Beydi
8	Haft Khane Mobarak	Ali Shams	Meysam Yousofi
9	Golbaghali Yeki Yedooneh	Behnaz Mehdi	Behnaz Mehdi

		Khah/Meysam Beydaghi	Khah/Meysam Beydaghi
10	Ghesehayeh Mobarak va Tabestan	Mona Sarbandi	Mona Sarbandi
11	Mobarak Ashegh Mishavad	Amir Hossein Shafiyi	Amir Hossein Shafiyi

University of Malaya

## 6 CONCLUSION

The present research has been conducted according to CM and historical research methodology which led to the study components of Kheymeh Shab Bazi as one part of Iranian culture through analysis of historical evidence in order to find out why Kheymeh Shab Bazi remains in cultural memory of Iranians. Library research, interviews and close observation of Kheymeh Shab Bazi performances were the material of present research.

In this research development of Kheymeh Shab Bazi from Qajar dynasty to the present from different aspects including elements, function and structure is studied. Historical evidences of KSHB performances reviewed and cultural background of four puppets (Tabagh Kesh, Pahlavan, Mobarak and Sagha) is studied. In this research development of all elements of KSHB (puppets and puppetry, acting, story and music ensemble) from 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present is investigated through which additional puppets during Qajar dynasty, changes in stories and acting and new functions of KSHB performance reported.

According to present research, during Qajar dynasty the function of KSHB performance changed to criticize the political condition of Qajar period. Functional changes led to changes in KSHB elements such as adding 2 puppets (Minister plenipotentiary of England and Russia) to the puppet collection.

The cultural background of 4 selected puppets is studied that shows these 4 puppets that are important in KSHB performances due to frequency of using them in different performances are connected to Iranian culture since long time ago. Study on Mobarak, Pahlavan, Sagha, Tabagh Kesh, Nurses, Ambassadors of Britain and Russia and Shoufer shows that Kheymeh Shab Bazi is a miniature of Persian culture and is one great medium of teaching cultural elements to children and young adults.

According to present research, KSHB had different functions like entertainment, and criticize from Qajar dynasty to the present and educational function can be added to previous functions at the present. New stories that are teaching different aspects of Iranian culture can be applied in KSHB to help teachers in introducing Iranian cultures to new generation.

The objectives of the present research were to investigate the developments of KSHB from Qajar dynasty to the present, to find out the changes in KSHB elements and structure of performances and to find out the connection between 4 selected puppets and Iranian culture. Through present research I could achieve all these objectives.

Theoretical framework that was based on theory cultural memory has been applied in this research. Functions of KSHB, 4 selected puppets, the position and responsibilities of Morshed, scripts and music are analyzed according to historical approach of this theory which led to find out development of KSHB before Qajar dynasty, during Qajar dynasty and after that.

Cultural studies on five selected puppets of Kheymeh Shab Bazi could be a start for future studies on rest of Kheymeh Shab Bazi puppets and even puppets of other sorts of puppet shows of Iran. In addition, Kheymeh Shab Bazi as medium of teaching can be studied through which this sort of drama would be entered to the educational system in the future.

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