The Holy Drama

Mahani, Mahnia A. Nematollahi

Published by Leiden University Press

## Contents

**Preface** 9  
**Acknowledgements** 10  
**Studies on Persian Passion Play** 11  
**Translations in European languages** 19  

### Introduction 23  
A Short History of *Ta’ziya* 23  
   - The Movements after ‘Āšūrā and the Development of *Ta’ziya* 24  
   - Late Medieval and Modern *Ta’ziya* 26  
**The Devotional Contents of *Ta’ziya*** 28  
**Oral Tradition in *Ta’ziya* Texts** 28  
***Ta’ziya* Players and Devices** 34  
**Audience Participation in the *Ta’ziya*** 35  
**Zeynab in *Ta’ziya*** 37  

*‘Āšūrā, the Martyrdom of Imām Ḥuseyn*** 43  
   - A Crisis of Succession 43  
   - The Martyrdom of Imām Ḥuseyn 44  
   - The Concept of Imāma in Shiite Tradition 45  
   - Martyrdom (*Šahādat*) 47  

### Eschatology 53  
**Islamic Eschatology** 53  
**Eschatology in the *Ta’ziya* Texts** 55  
**The *Ta’ziya* Texts** 57  
**Time and Setting as the Background of the Events** 59  
   - The Theme of Day 60  
   - The Theme of Night 61  
   - Settings in *Ta’ziya* 63
Doctrines and Philosophy in Ta’ziya  67
The Legitimacy of Ta’ziya  70

Zeynab in the Passion Play  73
Veiling and its Supporters in the Ta’ziya Texts  73
Zeynab as a Role Model for Iranian Women  75
  Zeynab's Sermons  76
  Zeynab, Justice and Destiny  77
  Zeynab Inspired  79
  Zeynab's Spiritual Power  80
  Zeynab the Leader  81
  Zeynab as Saviour of the Shiite Tradition and the Line of Imâms  84
  Zeynab the Generous  85
Zeynab and the Protagonists  86
  Zeynab and Imâm Ḥuseyn  86
Zeynab and Sakina  88
  Zeynab as Mother  88
  Zeynab as Defender  91
Zeynab and the Mother of Qâsem  92
Zeynab and the Antagonists  92
  Zeynab and Yazid  92
  Zeynab and Šemr  94
  Zeynab and Ibn al-Ziyâd  96

The Transformation of History  101

Pre-Islamic Iranian Elements in the Ta’ziya Texts  103

Conclusion  105

Glossary: The Ta’ziya of the Damascus Bazaar  109

The Ta’ziya of the Damascus Bazaar  112

Bibliography  205

Index  213