

A Comparative Analysis of Two main Characters in the Iranian and Turkish drama history: Pahlavan Kachal [The Bald Hero] and Karagöz [Black Eye]

Fahimeh Mirzahosein

MA in theater, Faculty of cinema and theater, Tehran University of Art

Abstract

Amongst all traditional puppet shows of the whole world, the Iranian puppet show "Pahlevan Kachal" and the Turkish play Karagöz are two samples that have various similarities, in spite of their significant differences, the most obvious one is their techniques. Pahlevan Kachal is a hand puppet, while Karagöz is a shadow play. The current article takes an analytical approach, based on the French school of comparative literature to study the structure of two plays also through the character analysis finds the bases of Pahlevan Kachal and Karagöz's popularity in the origins of their societies and compares them with each other. Both characters are born and lived in the context of the mass society up to this moment, and both try to find a way to the future. So according to their numerous resemblances, it is possible to discover common cultural roots in the Iranian and Turkish audiences. Pahlevan Kachal and Karagöz are two national heroes who both develop religious-moral, political-critical, and cultural-social teachings in addition to their behavioral and outward similarities. They are aware that irony, either in speech, face appearance or in music, and eventually in creation of happy atmosphere is the method to use for building a connection with the audiences. The methodology used is a mixture of descriptive and analytical methods, and is benefited by library and internet research, in addition to the personal experience of the author regarding a number of "Pahlevan Kachal" shows through several years and attending various Karagöz plays which both add an experimental method to the two other methodologies. In the end, the research studies the contemporary audiences of the shows in order to suggest an evolution for their future, since both plays are in a similar state of disregard and eventually "failing to remember" by the audiences.

Keywords: marionette, Pahlevan Kachal, hand puppet, Karagöz, shadow play