

## Morier; the Writer or the Translator of *Hajji Baba*

Akram Pouralifard<sup>1</sup>, Noritah Omar<sup>2</sup>

Department of English,  
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication,  
Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia.

---

**Abstract:** James Justinian Morier's<sup>3</sup> *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* (1824) is commonly recognised as documentary rendering of the Persian Muslim life. Ever since the appearance of the book, the question has been raised that whether Morier is the author of the book or its translator for which no definite answer is provided. This paper attempts to indicate that Morier can hardly be the author of the novel and consequently, the representations of the Persian Muslims delineated in this narrative may rarely have any scientific or historical base. Drawing on the author's life details, concentrating on the history of reception of the work, and the analytical reading of the text are the strategies of this study to help it achieve its objectives. Historical-biographical literary theory and, New criticism, therefore, are the critical approaches this study employs to analyse its data in order to expose the accuracy of social, historical, political, etc. events of the novel to serious questions.

**Keywords:** *Hajji Baba of Ispahan*, Morier, Representation, Translation.

---

### 1. INTRODUCTION

James Justinian Morier (1780-1849) is far and wide appreciated as the author of *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan*. C. W. Stewart in his introduction to the 1963 edition of *Hajji Baba*, refers to Sir Walter Scott's appreciation of the work in the following lines: "When Hajji Baba appeared in 1824, good judges of fiction, among them Sir Walter Scott, immediately recognized it as a fine piece of picaresque literature, worthy to be compared with Gil Blas, the masterpiece that had suggested to Morier the mould into which to pour his knowledge of the East" (v). The overreaching and yet surprising feature of the author and the work is that the novelist's records in this narrative are often considered as indisputable facts about the life of Persian Muslims which are the output of his association with the Persians during his diplomatic life in Persia through the years 1812-1818. George Curzon's (1892) acknowledgement of Morier's factual judgment on the Persians is a telling instance: "Morier's Hajji Baba represents an account of the unchanging characteristics of a singularly unchanging people" (ix).

Similar to most international works praising Morier's work and acknowledging it as a document of facts, *Encyclopedia Iranica's*<sup>4</sup> entry of Morier's work provides the following explanation notwithstanding its biased tone:

Morier (1782-1849), a former diplomat who had resided in Persia for nearly six years (1808-1809 and 1810-1814) at a critical juncture during diplomatic entanglements with European

---

<sup>1</sup> English Department, Tabriz University, Tabriz, Iran. hpourali@tabrizu.ac.ir(Akram Pouralifard)

<sup>2</sup> Assoc. Professor Dr Noritah Omar, Deputy Dean Thesis and Publication Unit, School of Graduate Studies, 43400 Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia, Tel: +603 8946 4203/4204, nomar@fbmk.edu.my (Noritah Omar)

\* Corresponding author

<sup>3</sup> J. J. Morier, (1780-1894), served as a British diplomat in early 19<sup>th</sup> century Persia.

<sup>4</sup> *Encyclopedia Iranica* (ed. 2012).

powers, fashioned his novel on his personal observations and direct knowledge about Persia, but with a decidedly hostile and satirical overtone.

In view of the above, this paper tries to provide evidence for the claim that Morier can hardly be but the translator of the book from Persian into English and that Morier's authorship of the novel cannot have any scientific or historical base. Two objectives, therefore, are pursued through the course of this study: 1. To indicate that Morier is improbable to be the author of *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* (henceforth Hajji Baba), and 2. The events delineating the life of Persian Muslims in the novel, which are commonly taken as the eye-witnessed facts, may hardly have any historical and scientific base. This study's hypothesis will be supported on the basis of the following major reasons. Firstly, a survey of the doubt-raising ideas of critics questions Morier's talent for producing such an eloquent and articulate work as *Hajji Baba* in the span of six years. Secondly, Morier has had difficulties in translating the words, expressions and sentences of the original book (in Persian)<sup>5</sup>. He has experienced, moreover, problems concerning the pronunciation, and transliterating the Persian and Arabic expressions of the Persian copy of the novel. In the third place, a common sense challenges the possibility of obtaining such a huge amount of information and asks questions like "Is it possible to visit and get sufficient familiarity with so many cities, villages and tribal regions as are mentioned in the novel? How many local customs are mentioned in the novel? How many social classes, guilds and jobs he has become familiar with and has professionally used in the novel. The fourth, and the final argumentation brings to light the meaningful difference of style apparent in composition of *Hajji Baba* and the two other novels of Morier, namely, *Ayesha the Maid of Kars* and *The Mirza*. According to the above arguments which will be presented in detail below, the accuracy of social, historical, political, etc. events of the novel will be exposed to serious questions

## 2. CRITICAL RECEPTION

A survey of the doubt-raising ideas of critics which question Morier's talent for producing such an eloquent and articulate work as *Hajji Baba* in the span of six years is the first step to help back up the hypothesis of this paper.

Ava Inez Weinberger<sup>6</sup>(1984) is the most recent researcher who has raised doubt on Morier's capabilities in writing *Hajji Baba*: "Indeed it does seem paradoxical that a western writer could portray Persian Life so faithfully that he earns the admiration of Iranians themselves" (p. 6). Weinberger refers to the fact that for many years after the publication of the novel, the Persians thought that its author should be a Persian due to the fluency of the book as well as the encyclopaedic information it encompasses.

Sarah Searight is another investigator who has had a doubtful look at Morier's authorship of *Hajji Baba*. She emphasizes the point in her documentary work *The British in the Middle East*: "It is all too apparent that Morier was riding around with an armed escort and English companions" (1970, p. 189). Searight implies the self-evident fact that under Morier's life condition in Persia, the possibility of intimacy with numerous local people and familiarity with their regional customs and cultural constructions is far from reason.

Edward Granville Brown the eminent British Iranologist (1862-1926), has a reference to this fact in his introduction of *Hajji Baba*:

Maurier, it must be remembered, though he obtained an extraordinary insight into the life of all sorts and conditions of Persians lived chiefly at the court and mixed most freely with the official classes. Not among these, as a rule, would one seek for the noblest types of national character [he means Hajji Baba]. (1947, vi)

To emphasize this idea he adds in the introduction: "I find in the narrative of this *First Journey* no explicit statement that he was able to speak it at all readily" (vi). Brown's criticism is justified and authentic in that he confirms his idea by referring to Morier's own account in his *First Journey*

---

<sup>5</sup> The native Persian proverbs, idioms, expressions, names ... provide enough proof to the book's original production in Persian.

<sup>6</sup> Ava Inez Weinberger has done her Ph. D. research study on Morier's Middle Eastern writings.

*Through Persia and Asia Minor*. He posits in this regard: “Indeed at p. 248, he expressly disavows any such intimacy with the literature and amusements of the people as would justify him in attempting to delineate the national character”(1947, viii). The improper translations of proverbs and expressions, therefore, are justified to be done from the Persian copy and it is far from reason to think that he has used the proverbs, idioms and expressions as they are used in Persian first –hand, for a person who is unable to speak a language easily, evidently, cannot use its complex structures such as idioms, expressions and proverbs as a native speaker does. Morier himself, confesses this fact in the words of his imaginary character in the detailed introductory Epistle of the novel, Reverend Fundgruben :

Even if a European were to abjure his faith and adopt Oriental manners he could never so exactly seize those nice shades and distinctions of purpose in action and manner, which a pure Asiatic only could... neither education, time or talent, could ever give to a foreigner, in any given country so complete a possession of its language as to make him pass for a native. ( *Hajji Baba*, ed. 2007, Introductory Epistle)

At the end of the same epistle, moreover, Morier confirms that he is ‘a humble translator’ of the novel after he provides an account of the manner through which he came to possess *Hajji Baba*’s manuscript.

Lord Holland the fourth<sup>7</sup>, a contemporary of Morier who kept an acquaintance with him, is the next contestant to Morier’s authorship of the novel. He says that, “Morier’s conversation is sensible and totally unaffected, but neither wit nor eloquence makes one judge him capable of having written that delightful book *Hajji Baba*.”<sup>8</sup> Lord Holland seems to refer to the incompatibility of the book’s fascinating nature with Morier’s capabilities in Persian language and his familiarity with the cultural and national texture of the country despite his possible ‘eloquence and wit’.

The fact that *Hajji Baba* includes very few footnotes has accredited Morier by mastery of Persian language neglecting the alternative, considering the above mentioned ideas that , the true writer being a Persian and writing for the audience familiar with the cultural and social details of the story, has perceived no room for the extensive annotation.

### **3. TEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

#### **a. Translational Problems**

The mistakes Morier has made in translating the words, expressions and sentences of the novel abound in different parts of the work, yet for the limitations of the paper only a list of the selected cases will be presented.

“I’ll burn your father”<sup>9</sup> is a very common expression in Persian language which suggests threat and Morier seems to have missed its idiomatic signification and has taken resort to the word by word translation, otherwise he would have written ‘I’ll lower the boom on you’, for instance. “His place has long been empty here”<sup>10</sup>, on the other hand, is the word by word translation of the Persian sentence meaning; He has long been missed here.

Also, there are cases in which Morier has made a double mistake about one expression; one in understanding the right order of the words and the next in translating it into English. An example comes from page 43: “You father of a dog, if you lie.” The right translation will be: you, whose father is a dog and the possible English equivalent is: you, a rascal or knavish, if you lie. This is one of the most evident cases implying the bumbling translation Morier has done of the novel.

---

<sup>7</sup> Henry Edward Fox (1802 –1859), fourth Baron Holland, was a British Whig politician and later an ambassador.

<sup>8</sup> Fourth Lord Holland, *The journal of Henry Edward Fox (Afterwards Fourth and Last Lord Holland, 1818-1830*: 37.

<sup>9</sup> *Hajji Baba*: 40.

<sup>10</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 41.

Another double mistake about one word is made on page 44. The word far-rash /fæʃ ā ʃ / which is meant 'servant', is transliterated /fērāsh/ which means bed and is wrongly translated as carpet spreader. This wrong and misplaced translation is repeated time and again in the following pages and chapters.

On page 59, a 'luti'<sup>11</sup> is talking of the love letter he has directed to a beloved from the royal family: "At the very outset it informed my mistress that I was dead and that my death was owing to the fire of her eyes that had made roast meat of my heart". The sentence, according to the Persian copy, means I am ruined because of your love and in Persian love poetry, to make roast meat of someone's heart means to cause great pain for heart or to affect with smarting grief for love which is incongruously translated word-by-word, most possibly for misunderstanding the case.

Another distinctive mistake goes to the translation of the Persian word khajeh, /khādʒeh/, the chief meaning of which is eunuch and Morier's choice of this meaning for all the cases in which the word is used indicates his lack of information about the other meanings of the word which are meant in different contexts. An example comes from page 198 on which the word is used as a man of distinction, appointed for a specific post and eunuch is the most incongruous equivalent for the word. "My liver is become water"<sup>12</sup> is another word-by-word translation Morier makes mistakenly for a Persian expression which means to have had a very hard time.

Morier's repetitious wrong translations of the most common Muslim expressions such as /bārikālah/, /māʃ ā ahlāh/, /lāʃlāhā īlālah/,...shows his insufficient familiarity with the prefatory necessities of Muslim discourse. All through the book he has rarely been able to pronounce the sentence //lāʃlāhā īlālah/, correctly. On page 174, as a case in point, the pronunciation he gives from this sentence is "Allah! Allah! Il Allah! ( there is but one God)". Neither spoken nor written records of Muslim texts include such an utterance of the expression. Morier's inefficient information of the Muslim contexts is incompatible with the technical and detailed information on the Islamic rituals included in the book such as the processes of washing and burying the dead<sup>13</sup>. On page 80 he wrongly translates /bārik ahlāh/ as "praise be to God", which means 'bravo' or 'Well-done' and on page 107 he translates /māʃ ā ahlāh/ as "praise be to God" once more, while it simply means 'what wonders God has wrought!'.

Expressions and phrases are another focal point of this part of my discussion which have rarely been correctly translated all through the book. On page 108, for instance, he writes "our faces will be black to all eternity" which means 'we will be shamefaced endlessly', and on page 109 he writes "we have ate salt together" that is a purely Persian expression and English has no such semantic content and it is the word-by-word translation of a Persian sentence expressing the necessity of loyalty for friendly associations. The instances of these word-by-word, and consequently, incongruous and irrelevant translations are easily to be found in the book of which pages 112, 121, 128, and 140 are a few to mention.

Despite such an inability in understanding and finding proper equivalents for the simple Persian words and expressions, many lines from different classical poetry of Persian literature are included in the book. Morier's poor information of Persian language shows that he cannot have such a rich store of poetry in mind, especially considering the fact that numerous mistakes can be traced in the citation of the poetic lines and that there are many cases in which lines are missed out, which appears when matched with the Persian copy. On page 105 only 6 out of 7 lines of Hafez's<sup>14</sup> sonnet are cited almost all of which are wrongly translated and one may rarely find resemblances between the English lines and the original ones.

Morier's translation of a piece concerning interment in Muslim culture is an outspoken error in translation which provides a plausible clue to support the hypothesis of this study. The rudiments of Shi'ite Muslim beliefs including the testimony to the oneness of God, Prophethood of

<sup>11</sup> A street knight.

<sup>12</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 100.

<sup>13</sup> *Hajji Baba*: 226.

<sup>14</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> century Persian Poet.

Muhammad (pbuh), the successorship of Ali, and his descendents, etc. is recited on the part of the dead as if he is reciting them in a ritual called /tælgín/ that means inspiring or inculcating. The transliteration Morier gives of this word is bluntly wrong, i. e. /tælgí/ and the translation he gives of this word, i. e. ‘another prayer’, reinforces the fact that he has dropped any part of the target text just to avoid taking pain of decoding the Arabic sentences. This point is of special importance to the premises of this study in that it is impossible for someone who is able neither to read nor understand a word, i. e. /tælgín/, to use it so timely and dexterously in his narration.

### **b. The Issues Concerning Transliteration and Pronunciation**

The frequent mistaken pronunciation and transliteration of the Persian and Arabic words and expressions indicates two facts: 1. Morier lacked the necessary intimacy with Persian language to give him the capability of delving into the delicate cultural and historical issues of the country as included in the novel. 2. The writer’s insufficient competence in pronouncing and transliterating the Islamic words and expressions indicate his too small chance of being in the Islamic world to provide him with the necessary skill in Islamic issues as he has rendered in the novel.

I will provide some instances of the mistaken pronunciations which indicate the fact that the writer has seldom had the opportunity of hearing them which has made him depend on his conjectures for the pronunciation of the words out of the Persian manuscript. On page 79 the word /Tællāē/, meaning golden, which is a quite common word in Persian is pronounced tellai /tel-lái/ indicating the fact that the writer has failed to hear the pronunciation of the word while the semantic use of this word here is done so skilfully that it suggests a strong connotative usage.

One of the differentiating features of Persian words is the resonance (double saying of one phoneme) in pronunciation which is not found in English and that is why it is not identified by English speakers unless the information is acquired through auditory situations. Instances of this case are ‘dalal’/dælāl/ <sup>15</sup> the correct pronunciation of which is dallal/dæl-lāl/, and ‘dalak’<sup>16</sup>/dælāk/ the correct pronunciation of which is dallak /dæl-lāk/. The point worth of consideration is that there is no signifier in the written form of such words to show the stress in pronunciation which has led Morier to the wrong transliteration of the words. An articulate instance of the case concerning the amiss pronunciation of Persian words may be found on Page 118: “until the one upon the musnud, or carpet of state...”. The Persian word masnad, /mæsnæd/, is wrongly pronounced /m□sn□d/. This way of articulating the word has no record in the history of Persian language and accentuates the fact that the word’s pronunciation is done based upon the translator’s conjecture.

Another example of this case may be found on page 214: “He says that he and you are hemdum, of one breath. Is it so?” Both the pronunciation and translation of hemdum, which is a quit common word in Persian, are wrong and anyone slightly familiar with the language is expected to understand and pronounce it correctly. The right pronunciation is /hæmdæm/ and the meaning is ‘companion’.

In the next case the writer adds misplacing of the words considering their grammatical order to the incorrect translation: “Young enough to be still called a khûb jûan. The appearance of the word young makes it be read as /t̪ ū̄ n/ while the Persian reads it as /t̪ æw̄ n/ which shows no resemblance to what the translator has conjectured. The writer’s poor information of Persian Grammar, moreover, has led him to the wrong ordering of adjective and noun.

The transliteration and translation Morier makes in the following is still of more significance to this study. On page 169 he writes: “Ruft ke Ruft. He is gone and doubly gone.” Raft, /ræft/, meaning went, is one of the verbs to be learnt in the very preliminary stages of acquiring Persian language and the wrong transliteration of it shows the level of information the writer possesses of this language. The wrong translation of the sentence, which means ‘he is gone never to come back’, may find no justification for someone who allegedly has a sweeping knowledge of a nation at his disposal.

---

<sup>15</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 81.

<sup>16</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 82.

There are cases of mistakes which are committed because of the dissimilarity of the rules of pronunciation in English and Persian and Morier has tried his best to read the words from the Persian copy based upon the rules of English pronunciation while the Persian word does not subscribe to the English rule. This case can convincingly help, once more, prove the hypothesis of this study. On page 181 it is written: “you must make out a fatteh nameh, the Persian pronunciation of which is /fæt-h nā mé). The secret lying behind the mistake is that Morier is ignorant of the fact that it is common in Persian for the consonants to follow each other without any vowel or diphthong to intervene, while it is almost impossible to read such a combination in English. The two consonants of ‘t’, and ‘h’ are included successively in Fat-h nameh, and the translator seems to have been inevitable of adding an ‘e’ between the two successive consonants to make it readable which has rendered it meaningless in Persian.

A case of distinctive contradiction between the information included in the book and the pronunciation and translation of simple words and expressions is the Islamic context. I have referred to this fact in part 2. a, translational problems, which encompasses adroit references to the Islamic discourse, culture, history and rituals.

Ma sha Allah, /māʃ ā ælāh/, for instance, is one of the most common expressions of Islamic discourse for which Morier offers a wrong translation<sup>17</sup> and notwithstanding these deficiencies, there are references to the most technical information of Muslim discourse such as penance (eye for eye)<sup>18</sup>. There is a mention of Zam Zam (the holy spring in Mecca) and repeated references to Islamic calendar and sayings from the Prophet of Islam (pbuh) are included whenever needed. Omar Ibn Khattab in the history of Islam is mostly known for valour and extending Islam to the different parts of the world. This is the idea offered on page 207 of the novel which demands rich information on the history of Islam.

The rituals concerning the burial of a Muslim dead body is another case which is of special significance for this study as it is so skilfully explained that even for the Persians it is impossible to have the information unless he is the clergy having acquired expertise in the field. 5 actions before washing the dead, 6 stages of washing and before burying it, 8 steps which are considered near the tomb, before burial and during it, are explained.

The argument of this study, with respect to the above mentioned facts, is that a person having difficulties in pronunciation, understanding and translation of the most familiar, simple and elementary words and expressions of a language, cannot, logically, write of hundreds of local names, jobs, geographical information, cultural customs, etc. of the country and nation. The mastery of Persian language is the first requirement of penmanship of an encyclopaedic novel such as *Hajji Baba* which encompasses information about the culture, society, economy, politics, geography, ethics, religious beliefs...of a nation in a span of a century.

#### 4. STATISTICAL FACTS

Morier’s stay in Persia has rarely extended to 6 years. Considering the short span of time and the court life he has lived in the country, it is far from possibility for him to attain such a deep acquaintance with the country’s culture, belief system, social, political, and economic texture to offer such extended information about them. In spite of this biographical fact, the novel talks of hundreds of local occupations and their belongings such as being a water carrier, talismanship, bleeding, being a Luti, tobacco selling, types of tobacco used in Persia, 10 instruments used by Dervishes and eight technical ways of applying them, trading lambskin in Persia’s adjacent countries, trading cotton stuff and copper ware between cities of Persia, etc. Concerning horse-trading he talks of the deficiencies of the horse under sale such as being Chup and having Ableh<sup>19</sup>, which are highly professional idioms of which the common Persian people have rarely any idea, let alone a foreigner, living a royal life for a short while in the country.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 107.

<sup>18</sup> *Hajji Baba*: 55.

<sup>19</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 77.

Persia's ancient history is another domain of information included in the novel. There are references to the reign of Agha Mohammad Khan Gajar<sup>20</sup> the founder of Gajar dynasty, rule of Khalif Haroun Al Rashid<sup>21</sup>, king Nadir of Afshar<sup>22</sup>, Kaiumars<sup>23</sup>, Nushirawan the just<sup>24</sup>, Abu Avicenna<sup>25</sup>, the Mountain of Light<sup>26</sup>, hot and cold diseases as the base of diagnostic system in ancient Persian medicine, each of which demanding years of specialized studies.

Persia's classical literature is the next area of which the novel renders an inclusive data. It talks of *Leili and Majnoon*<sup>27</sup>, *Shahname*<sup>28</sup> Mahmoud shah Ghaznavi<sup>29</sup>, Rostam<sup>30</sup>, and tens of other references to the ancient literary works of Persia each of which used to be taught and still is taught as independent courses in academic sessions of Persia and other countries. Tens of lines from the poetic works of old Persian literary works are recited on demand<sup>31</sup>, and short sayings of Saadi<sup>32</sup> are offered when necessary. On page 213 a whole narrative on ethics from Saadi is offered corresponding to the demand of the situation followed by a section including the curse of Rumi<sup>33</sup> and Attar<sup>34</sup>. The latter idea needs specialised information of Islamic approach towards Sufism as the philosophy of thought of both of the mentioned features is (mistakenly) considered the base of Sufism.<sup>35</sup>

Persia's cultural habit is another technical ground of which the author talks adeptly. Faal (augury) of Hafez<sup>36</sup>, Giss Sefid (duenna) for treating aches<sup>37</sup>, a man supposed dead to enter over roof instead of through the door on returning home in Persian belief<sup>38</sup>, weeping at burials<sup>39</sup>, and tens of other cultural references are mentioned in the book. It is true that Sufism is a universal phenomenon and some sects of it may be found in any country but the information *Hajji Baba* provides on Sufism is especially worth of consideration. It talks of the sects of Dervishes in Persia such as Nur Ali Shahi, Zahabias, Naghshbandies and Uwaisies<sup>40</sup>, and of the catch word of Dervishes, Hak! Hu!<sup>41</sup>, which are logically accessible merely through close acquaintance with the Dervishes or a scholarly study of the texts concerning the sects. On page 126 he names 39 types

---

<sup>20</sup> The dynasty that ruled Persia for about 200 years through 18 and 19 centuries.

<sup>21</sup> The Abbasid Khalif who ruled the Islamic countries in the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>22</sup> The founder of Afshari dynasty who ruled Persia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>23</sup> The first king mentioned in the Celebrated epic of Persia, *Shahname Ferdowsi*.

<sup>24</sup> The Persian king living in 6<sup>th</sup> century A. D.

<sup>25</sup> The Persian scientist, physician and philosopher of the 11<sup>th</sup> century A. D.

<sup>26</sup> One of the oldest known jewelries of the world.

<sup>27</sup> Persian classic love poetry by Nizami Ganjawi, 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>28</sup> The celebrated epic of the Persian poet, Ferdowsi, 11<sup>th</sup> century A. D.

<sup>29</sup> King of Persia 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>30</sup> The invulnerable hero of *Shahname*, Ferdowsi's epic.

<sup>31</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 105, 182, 185.

<sup>32</sup> Persian poet of the 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>33</sup> Persian poet of the 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>34</sup> Persian poet of the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

<sup>35</sup> Sufism is a Muslim movement the followers of which seek to find divine truth and love through direct encounters with God.

<sup>36</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 69.

<sup>37</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 73.

<sup>38</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 83.

<sup>39</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 104.

<sup>40</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 214.

<sup>41</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 71.

of especially Persian food and drinks and the ways of preparing them. Concerning the Persian bridal ceremonies, 16 requirements of a Persian or Eastern bride<sup>42</sup> and the information on Sheer Baha (gift to the bride's mother for having nursed her) and 15 stages in the procedure of a wedding ceremony in Persia<sup>43</sup> are introduced.

The information Morier provides of Persia in his book is not limited to the cities and villages and goes beyond to the deserts and plains. On page 111, for instance, he describes 15 technical actions about the moving of the Persian wandering tribes to a safer place which is definitely impossible for someone not living inside the community, especially a European diplomat living a court life.

The details of facts on the geographical borders and locations of Persia, and still more, beyond Persian borders rendered in the book undoubtedly needs years of scholarly study. The impotence Morier shows in the most elementary particulars concerning Persia such as pronouncing and understanding the most common words and expressions of Persian language, contradicts such an extended familiarity. There are dozens of details on Northern borders of Persia, Araxes, Agri Dahg<sup>44</sup>, Salt Desert<sup>45</sup> which require familiarity with a country's particulars while his abilities in Persian Language hardly goes beyond the introductory stages. This inclusive information is offered by an author who has difficulty in understanding, pronouncing and translating the most common words and expressions of Persian Language.

## 5. THE STYLISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

The brilliance of literary taste and linguistic eloquence manifested in *Hajji Baba* is absent from Morier's following novels. *Hajji Baba* exhibits the elevated capabilities of its composer in the realistic portraying of the poetic scenes and articulating the anxieties, felicity, loving and hating sentiments of the characters, while the rest of the novels entail an uneventful style and dull level of writing. The logical development procedure of a novelist's artistic mind demands the betterment of the works in the chronological order; Morier's deviation from the rule, however, questions his authorship of his first achievement. Contrasting some parts of *Hajji Baba* with two other works (*Aysha* and *The Mirza*) which have followed the first novel will be revealing in this concern:

We all kept a dead and breathless silence: even my five ruffians seemed moved—I was transfixed like a lump of lifeless clay, and if I am asked what my sensations were at the time, I should be at a loss to describe them,—I was totally inanimate, and still I knew what was going on. At length, one loud, shrill, and searching scream of the bitterest woe was heard, which was suddenly lost in an interval of the most frightful silence. A heavy fall, which immediately succeeded, told us that all was over. ...I hung over her in the deepest despair, and having lost all sense of prudence and of self-preservation, I acted so much up to my own feelings, that if the men around me had had the smallest suspicion of my real situation, nothing could have saved me from destruction. I even carried my frenzy so far as to steep my handkerchief in her blood, saying to myself, 'This, at least, shall never part from me!' I came to myself, however, upon hearing the shrill and demon-like voice of one of her murderers from the tower's height, crying out—'Is she dead?' 'Aye, as a stone,' answered one of my ruffians. ... I walked mechanically after them, absorbed in most melancholy thoughts, and when we had arrived at the burial-place, I sat myself down on a grave-stone, scarcely conscious of what was going on ... The night continued dark, and distant thunders still echoed through the mountains. No other sound was heard, save now and then the infant-like cries of the jackal, that now in packs, and then by two or three at the time, kept prowling round the mansions of the dead.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>42</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 156.

<sup>43</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 160.

<sup>44</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 171.

<sup>45</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 191.

<sup>46</sup> *Hajji Baba* : 188.

...then she would pass whole hours in looking at the ring which he had given her- inspecting the trinket which had so excited his astonishment- and giving way to a fond affection for the handkerchief which had called forth his ecstasy. She was constantly meditating upon every question which he had put to her concerning those objects...<sup>47</sup>

Hezzar Mushkil retired overwhelmed with feelings entirely new to his nature. Love had taken possession of his heart, and thoughtlessness was changed into solicitude. He became silent and pensive, and after the departure of the princess, having extricated himself from his hiding place, he could think and dream of nothing, but of her exquisite charms, and dwell with rapture upon every word she had uttered. Hassan was the only one with whom he could communicate, and with him he did not cease to form plans for seeing her again. But as he contemplated his melancholy position, and the difficulties which, he foresaw, would stand in the way of making himself known, his spirits drooped, and he exhausted himself with hopeless wailing (*The Mirza*: 163).

A stylistic comparison of the selected extracts will help display the fact that the lines from *Hajji Baba* belong to a more poetic and elevated tone of which the two other selections have no share. The poetic language of the first extract, for instance, has animated nature which strongly contributes to the sad scene and the destitute of the narrator. Contrastively, the homogeneous and descriptive language of the two other texts uses the cliché and worn out structure of love stories. The first excerpt, therefore, is representing its characters and events while the two others are reporting.

To go back to the issue of stylistics once more we find the prose of *Hajji Baba* vigorous, energetic and smooth the course of action of which gets the reader engaged in the emotive atmosphere of the events. In the two other excerpts, however, the descriptive and narrative style leaves small room for the emotive involvement of the reader. This evident stylistic disparity between the first novel and the other two ones persists all through the books.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Morier's *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* is commonly accredited by two exclusive characteristics which has made it particularly significant compared to the similar books of its time and beyond. Factuality is the first element with which the novel is associated as it is universally considered as the fruit of Morier's 6 year direct observation of the facts and actual life in Persia. The second factor to give the novel a worldwide fame is its unique role in introducing the Islamic East to the Christian West.

The evidence concerning different fields such as translation, pronunciation and transliteration, autobiography, stylistics, etc., however, has indicated that Morier is quite unlikely to be the author of the novel. The arguments presented in this study challenges attribution of the work to Morier and thereby the reliability of the claims, and his fame and brilliance for the authorship of *Hajji Baba*. Once he is denied the credit of authoring the novel, the judgments based on the factuality of the events of the story are called into question on the part of any fair reader. As a result, the Christian society had better put its reliance on more dependable sources and writers if they are interested in finding out facts about Islam and the East.

## REFERENCES

- Amanat, Abbas. (2003). "Hajji Baba of Ispahan". Iranica Online. Web. June 11, 2012. <<http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hajji-baba-of-ispahan>>.
- Curzon, George Nathaniel . Persia and the Persian Question. London: n. p., 1892. Print.
- Encyclopedia Iranica, ed. 2012.
- Morier, James. The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan. C. W. Stewart introduction and notes, London: Oxford University Press, 1963. Print.
- The Adventures of Haji Baba of Ispahan, 1947 edition. The George Macy Companies Inc. Google Books June 29, 2012. Web.

---

<sup>47</sup> *Ayesha the Maid of Kars* : 222.

- The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan. Edited with introduction and notes by C. W. Stewart. London: Oxford University Press, 1963. Print.
- A Journey Through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor to Constantinople, in the Years 1808 and 1809. Philadelphia: n. p. 1816. Print.
- Ayesha, the Maid of Kars. London: R. Bently, 1834. Print.
- The Mirza. Michigan: University of Michigan Library, 2009. Print.
- Polonsky, R. (2005). Hajji Baba in St Petersburg: James Morier, and Osip Senkovskii and Pushkin's literary diplomacy between East and West. *Journal of European Studies* 35. Retrieved from [http:// www.jes.sagepub.com](http://www.jes.sagepub.com)
- Holland, H. E. V. F. (1923). *The Journal of Henry Edward Fox (Afterwards Fourth and Last Lord Holland), 1818-1830*. London: Thornton Butterworth. Print.
- Sargozashte Hajji Babaye Esfahani, Mirza Habib Esfahani tr. Tabriz: Haghghat Publications, 1976. Print.
- Searight, Sarah. *The British in the Middle East*. U.K. : East-West Publications, 1979. Print.
- Weinberger, Ava Inez. *The Middle Eastern Writings of James Morier: Traveller, Novelist, and Creator of Haji Baba*. Ph. D. dissertation. University of Toronto 1984. Proquest. 10 April 2010.Web.