

Professor Edward Granville Brown view of the Naseri age

Farshid Rahi¹, Masoumeh Ghare Daghi^{*2}

¹ Department of History, Shabestar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shabestar, Iran

² Phd, Department of History, Shabestar Branch, Islamic Azad University, Shabestar, Iran

*Corresponding Author Email: Masoumeh_g@hotmail.com

Received: 10 February 2015

Accepted: 21 March 2015

Published: 07 June 2015

Abstract: The title of this research is “Edward Granville Browne view of the community”. Edward Brown, a famous English Iridologist, orientalist and a physician in the Qajar period, traveled from Turkey to Iran and wrote several works on the history of Iran. By studying these works, the interest and fascination of him to the people of Iran becomes clear. Through writing a book on the history of Iranian literature, he achieved a special place in the history of Iran as a scholar. He was also known as a liberalist in the constitutional revolution and had a close cooperation with the intellectuals and opponents of the Qajar dictatorship. This is an analytical- descriptive study and after describing the data, they will be analyzed. The results of this study make it clear that Edward Browne offers a detailed and complete description from despotism of Naseri era and the murder of the Bábí despite three trips of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar to Europe which had little impact on the administration of the country. This study will assess them in detail.

Keywords: Edward Brown, Age of Naseri, the Bábí, Tyranny.

Introduction

Professor Edward Granville Brown (1826–1926) is an English scientist and physician who is interested in Iran literature and offered extended services to Iranian liberalists and history. Brown says that by traveling to Iran, he wanted to study the diseases in Iran and complete the Farsi language. Although some Iranian scientists called him a representative of British colonial government and affiliated with the Masonic lodges, Brown, because of the dominance of the language of Persian culture, is considered more than other orientalists. Brown used some form of formal and scholarly recognition which is still considerable in Iranian studies. During the Constitutional Revolution and political activities of the liberalists, he was in the political activists side and performed in favor of the democratic forces until he found some problems with Sir Edward Gray on the 1907 Convention against Iran. His book, constitutional revolution, is full of his support from the conventionalists and liberalists and it describes his one-year living

among the Iranians, the people's customs, the cultural and social-economical status of people in the age of Naseri. It also criticizes the tyranny and corrupt government of Naser al-Din Shah in detail and without any fear. This research assesses the Edward Brown views of age of Naseri.

Biography

Edward Granville Brown, a famous Iridologist in 1862, was born in Utley village, Dorsey, in England and his father, Benjamin, headed a shipbuilding and machine building institution in the UK for a long time. In 1877, due to the invasion of Russia to Ottoman people and because of being interested in Ottoman people, he decided to learn Turkish and other Oriental languages. As a twenty-one-year-old boy, he traveled to Istanbul and tried to study the history and the language of the Turkish people. He became fascinated by Ottoman literature and poetry in Iran so that he decided to travel to Iran. In 1887, Brown entered Iran. Brown did not want the British intervention in the internal affairs of Iran and such a person could not be favored by the British Foreign Office. Despite all the information of Brown about Iran and its problems, they did not use his information. Without any material and spiritual, Brown loved Iran and Iranians and this is evident in all his books (Brown, 1996).

The political situation of the Naseri age from Brown view

Although the Qajar kings, Naser al-Din Shah had a good political understanding and due to traveling abroad, he was aware of the other countries' administration, but he still delayed in political and social reforms. To achieve the power and use it, Shah (king) used many tools and practices such as bribery, fraud and deceit and the policy of "divide and rule" so that people were concerned with their problems and had no free time to criticize the government. The most important way of power focus in the Qajar was heavenly splendor (Brown, 1996).

Bribery and corruption of the state were dominant everywhere and it led people not to trust the government and they were not interested in cooperation with it. European travelers were under the influence of authoritarian power in the court of the Qajar and the king was called the king of kings, man of the world and the shadow of God on earth (Brown, 1996).

Brown wrote about Amir Kabir's services to Iran that due to jealousy competitors and officials, he was murdered in 1268 Hijri (Bierou, 1987). Brown uses the terms this age, including the establishment of the telegraph, the development of the printing office, wide spread distributing of literary books, journalism and the establishment of Dar- Al- Founon, a European science and training methods (Ervand Abrahamian, 2011).

In his book, Constitutional Revolution of Iran, Brown writes about the murder of Nasser al-Din Shah in 1303 Hijri by Mirza Reza Kermani, the director of Jamal al-Din al-Assad Abadi for a long time, Assad Abadi's attempts for the unity of the Muslim world which was useless, the impact of Assad Abadi on the people of East. Brown also reminds this point that Assad Abadi did not pay attention to worldly affairs and had extensive knowledge, especially in philosophy and history (Brown. 1997). Brown believes that the interests of Shah and the Iranian people are not the same, but they are in contrast with each other. Some mistakenly think that the Shah of Iran is an enlightened leadership and only thinks about the welfare and progress of the people. He mentions that Nasser al-Din Shah trips to Europe were useless and he also laments that the corrupt government rules these people (Brown, 1996).

Brown's view of the social situation of Naseri Age

Edward Brown dedicated one chapter of the book " one year among the Iranian " to the topic of smoking opium and because of the eyesore, he stayed in the city of Kerman among Qalandars and used opium so that he could not leave them until 27 September, 1887, he left Iran and went England (Doulat Abadi, 1992).

Brown also addresses the Iranian people's uprising against the tobacco contract, especially Tabriz uprising and the Russians opposition against this contract. He says that the uprising gradually spread to other cities because most people used tobacco and this problem was concerned all people. He points that the uprising of Tabriz people was so revoked that Naser al-Din Shah asked the Russians to intervene in the affairs of Azerbaijan and calm it down but the Russians did not accept it. Therefore, Naser al-Din Shah used the Azerbaijan people instead of the foreign forces. But the people of Tabriz wanted the concession to be canceled until the king was forced to surrender. Brown says that the concession canceling had a negative

consequence for the dignity of the United Kingdom, while it increased the Russian influence in Iran (Brown, 1997).

Brown's view about the Bábí

Brown can be seen as the Bábí sect fan and he stresses that the Qajar killed a large number of innocent Iranians, especially Babis whom were faithful and virtuous people. He disgusts Nasser al-Din Shah, who killed a lot of people (Brown, 2008). He met a few of Bobby and debate about the Babi and Bahai sect in Shiraz and discussed about Baby and Bahai sect (Brown, 2008). In 1852, the followers of Bab tried to kill Nasser al-Din Shah and it became the turning point because after this incident, torture and execution of many Bobby, especially the female Bobby poet, Qurrat Ain, began (Brown, 1918).

In fact, the baby movement challenged the political and religious order of its time and opposed scholars who had a close relationship with the government. The main reason of people's tendency towards them was that people were socially fed up with the lack of changes in the community and religion (Avery, 2010).

The cultural situation of Naseri age from the perspective of Brown

About the culture and language of Naseri age, Edward Brown writes: among the urban elite and the some rural areas of Azerbaijan are people who speak the Persian language. But as a second language, pronunciation of the letters K and G represents the Turkish-language of the passengers. The Turkish territory has been expanded till Qazvin and in the south of the capital, Qum so that the majority of people could understand the Turkish language (Brown, 2008).

Brown believes that when Nasser al-Din Shah became king, he was completely a Turkish speaking person and due to his stay in Azerbaijan, he was not familiar with the Persian language. However, he gradually learnt it and even wrote poems in Persian. Brown was also interested in Naseri customs and says that they were widely accepted the customs of Europeans. The women could not be seen at events and parties and hookah, wine or soft drinks were offered. While eating food, they did not talk and eat the food quickly (Brown, 2008). Brown speaks of government mourning ceremonies which showed the martyrs and stories of the Shiite Imams and believes that they were like the Christians shows in the Middle Ages (Brown, 2008).

Discussion and Conclusion

Edward Brown is the most prominent English scientist and Iridologist who has left considerable works about Iran. Brown works show his interest and fascination on the people of Iran. Despite his expertise in the medical field, he followed the Iridologist studies and had deep and extensive studies about the culture and customs of Iranian carried. His works are among the Persian masterpieces. With some of the leaders, including Babbitt, he had discussed and studied the Babbitt movement in Naseri age. He is outraged from the massacre of Babis by Naser al-Din Shah government. Without any fear, he calls Naser al-Din Shah government as a corrupted and dictatorial government and feels sorry for the Iranian people and having such a government.

References

- Abrahamian E, 2011. Essays in Political Sociology of Iran. Tehran: Pardis Publication.
Avery P, et al., 2010. The history of Iran in Zand, Qajar and Afsharieh periods. Tehran: Jami Publication.
Bierou A, 1987. Social Sciences Encyclopedia. Tehran: Keyhan Publication.
Brown EG, 1961. Materials for the Study of Babi Religion. 200-271.
Browne EG, 1996. The history of Iranian literature. Tehran: Morvarid Jahrom Publication.
Browne EG, 1997. Iranian Constitutional Revolution, Tehran: Kavir Publication.
Browne EG, 2008. One Year Among the Iranians. Tehran: Akhtaran Publication.
Dolat Abad Y, 1992. Yahya's life, Attar and Ferdousi. Tehran: Amir Kabir Publication.