

Orientalism on the Margins: Inter-Subjective Space in Edward Granville Browne's *A Year amongst the Persians*

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study is to analyse the image of Iran, created by E. G. Browne (1862-1926) in his travelogue A Year amongst the Persians. In his representation, Browne vacillates between two poles of Romantic and scientific discourses. On the one hand, he is a Romantic wanderer, who embarks on a quest of Departure, Initiation and Return in the space of the Other (Campbell, 2004, p. 28). Based on such an idealistic perspective, in his one year quest in Iran which is mainly spend among the marginalized believers of the Bahai faith, Browne (1893) seeks for a rebirth of the decaying Iranian nation, "which slumbers, but is not dead" (p. 219). On the other hand, Browne (1893) regards himself as an "inquirer" who in his observations maintains a detached scientific perspective towards Iranian culture and society, and does not hesitate to question the principles which he finds unacceptable (p. 529). In the course of his journey, the tension between these two discourses leads to a subversion of both of them, which finally mirrors in a breakdown of Browne's conception of Self and the Other. Browne's recognition of the Self and the Iranian nation, at the end of his journey is through the space of inter-subjectivity. This final state of in-betweenness makes it possible for him to recognize the Other from the perspective of cultural difference, through which a possibility is created in his image of Iran to escape the "urge to possess" that the Orientalist discourse of travel writing entails. (Ashcroft, 2009, p. 230)

Keywords: representation; Self; Other; subversion; in-betweenness

INTRODUCTION

Edward Granville Browne (1862-1926) was an orientalist and lecturer of Persian in Cambridge, who in the final decades of the Victorian era proved himself to be a leading specialist on Iranian culture and society (Ross, 2009, 386). His perspective towards Iran, however, is far from a merely academic appeal. For Browne Iran is a country, which he loves only second to this own (Bosworth, 1995, 121). This enticement with the East begins from the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8, when Browne is at an early age. In the introduction to his travelogue, he explains that at the beginning of the war he had no sympathy for the Turkish side; however, when he witnesses the bravery of the Turks and the hypocrisy of British political leaders in justification of their defeat, he becomes interested in their cause. As he mentions,

It was the Turkish war with Russia in 1877-8 that first attracted my attention to the East, about which, till that time I had known and cared nothing... At first my proclivities were by no means for the Turks; but the losing side, more especially when it continues to struggle against defeat, always has a claim on our sympathy. (Browne, 1893 p. 8)

Bosworth (1995) describes Brown's sympathy for the Turkish cause as such:

He was impressed by the gallantry of the Turks in their losing fight with the Tsar's armies, and reacted strongly against the prevalent cant in Britain of the anti-Turkish party of Gladstonian Liberals and their "wretched attempts", as he puts it, "to confound questions of abstract justice with party politics". By the end of the War, he wrote, "I

would have died to save Turkey, and I mourned the fall of Plevna as though it had been a disaster inflicted on my own country”.
(p. 115)

Consequently, Browne plans to enter the British army, hoping that he would later on, after learning the profession resign and join the Ottoman forces. This is the beginning of his lifelong involvement with the East. Browne’s father is against his son’s decision to join the army, instead he sends him to Cambridge to study medicine, in which he pursues his passion through studying the Eastern languages. In addition, during his college years, Browne makes acquaintance with an eccentric Persian scholar, Mirza Muhammad Baqir, who teaches him Persian, and introduces him to the mystic poetry of Mawlana and Hafiz, which channels Browne’s interest towards the culture and society of Iran. Browne graduates from college in 1887 and is elected as a Fellow of Cambridge College, which makes it possible for him to fulfil his “dreams of visiting Persia,” which lasts for a year (Browne, 1893, p. 16). His *A Year amongst the Persians* is the result of this yearlong residence in the country, in which he provides an image of Iranian culture and society.

Browne’s representation of Iran in his travelogue is far more dynamic than the dichotomy of manifest/latent orientalism, which, as Said (2006) argues is based on the “confrontation felt by Westerners dealing with the East”(p. 202). In his work, instead of providing an image of Iranian mainstream culture, he engages chiefly with the believers of the Bahai faith, who are a marginalized group in the Iranian society. Based on such context, two discourses of Romanticism and scientific representation exist simultaneously in Browne’s representation of Iran. Behdad analyses these discourses in the context of Nerval’s *Voyage en Orient* (1851) and maintains that they are “the opposing poles of orientalist representation” (A. Behdad, Fish, & Jameson, 1994, p. 19). He further states that

The narrative of [Nerval’s] journey perpetually vacillates between being a naked representation of the modern Orient and a masked figuration of an Orientalist romance, between the blunt generalization of an “official” orientalist and the more subtle understanding of the oriental culture by an amateur traveller, and between unmasked repetition of the institutional discourse of Orientalism and veiled deflection of them.
(p. 19)

Browne’s stance toward the culture and society of Iran can be observed based on similar opposing poles. As a Romantic wanderer, in his quest, Browne is in search of originality in the space of the Other, which mirrors a revival of the lost grandeur of a decadent nation and promises its rebirth. Opposite to this Romantic infatuation, and similar to his contemporaries like George Curzon (1859-1925), Browne also tends to unveil the space of Other. This tendency is evident in his minute description of Iranian cultural and its special features, in which he keeps a distance between himself and the object of his gaze and attempts to provide an objective representation. In the present study, in the first part of the Discussion an analysis of these scientific and Romantic perspectives in Browne’s representation of Iran will be provided. In addition, in the second part of the Discussion chapter it will be argued that because of their inherent opposition, a deep tension is created between these discourses, which finally leads to the subversion of both of them. In addition, it will be argued that the breakdown of the Romantic and scientific discourses results in Brown’s subversion of his conception of the Self and the Other. In other words, on the one hand he is disillusioned with the Romantic idealism, which he has passionately championed so far; and on the other hand, the society of the mystics and his addiction to opium results in his self-alienation.

Unlike his predecessors, whose perspective towards Iranian culture and society is fixated on Orientalist principles of regarding the East based on “varying degrees of projected inferiority,” Browne is a developing character in the course of his adventure (Said, 2006, p.

202). As it will be explored in the final section of the Discussion, neither his primary conception of the Self, nor of the Other remain the same at the end of his one year travel in the country. The context, based on which Browne finally recognizes Iranian culture and society is the space of inter-subjectivity that makes an unbiased conception of the Self and Other possible. Consequently, Browne who regards Iran from either a scientific or Romantic perspective at the beginning of his journey, is transformed into a realist Subject, who regards the nation as what it is, with all her shortcomings and strengths, which as he mentions, “notwithstanding all her faults” he comes to cherish dearly (Browne, 1893, p. 567).

METHODOLOGY

As it was mentioned above, the present study seeks to explore the Romantic and scientific discourses, their subversion, and ultimately the state of inter-subjectivity through which Browne as a Western traveler, extricates himself away from the Orientalist discourse of travel writing. Based on this framework, the Romantic and the scientific discourses and their subversion, will be explored mainly in reference to the analysis of heroic quest in Campbell’s theory of mono-myth, Matthee’s historical analysis of Romantic discourse and Ali Behdad’s analysis of discursive transformation of orientalist representation. In addition, the final stage of Browne’s representation of Iran will be mainly analyzed in the context of Malpas’ notion of inter-subjective space and Ashcroft’s argument of the possibility of escape from Orientalist discourse of travel writing.

DISCUSSION

ROMANTICISM AND SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE

Rudy (1996) mentions that a pervasive theme in Romantic discourse is the quest motif, in which the traveller embarks on a perilous journey “in search of vocational independence and imaginative autonomy” (p. 57). Ridgeon (2004), reiterating Abbas Amanat in this introduction to *The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909* points out to similar a similar trend in Browne’s work:

Browne was deeply influenced by the romanticism of the Victorian era is correct. This legacy of romanticism may have contributed to Browne seeking out the downtrodden, the dissenters, the outcasts and undesirables in Iran, and it may have been the spark in his imagination which then ignited when he became, familiar with the non-conformism of Hafiz’s poetry, the struggle for self-expression among the Babis, and then the Iranian endeavor for freedom from internal tyranny and European imperialism. (p. 223)

The theme of the heroic quest in Browne’s travelogue is evident in his reference to Tennyson’s “Choric Song of the Lotos-eaters”, at the beginning of chapter XVII titled “Among the Kalandars:”

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other’s whisper’d speech;
Eating the Lotos day by day,
...
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy... (Browne, 1893, p. 486)

Tennyson's poem is a direct reference to the issue of the quest and its perils, which is carried out by Ulysses. Browne quotes this poem at the beginning of the chapter, in which he recounts socializing with mystic Kalandars and his addiction of opium in his journey in Iran. There are parallels between Browne and Ulysses: Primarily, both of them are on quests in a foreign land. In addition, as by eating the Lotos fruit, Ulysses might fall into a state of forgetfulness, and thus fail in his fulfilment of his quest, for Browne too, the society of Kalandars and his use of opium might prevent the completion of his quest in Iran. Thus, similar to Ulysses, Browne as the Romantic hero faces a duality, which with its violence and its mysterious seductiveness is pregnant with both pain and pleasure (Campbell, 2008, p. 72). In other words, it is possible that the dangers of such a quest "will recede before a genuine psychological readiness" of the wandering hero, or s/he "may be shamelessly undone" (Campbell, 2008, p. 77).

The following extract from John Bunyan's *Pilgrims Progress* is the epigraph that Browne quotes at the beginning of chapter VII of his travelogue, which recounts the outset of his journey from Tehran to southern provinces of Isfahan and Shiraz. It points out to a similar theme of heroic quest and its duality in the space of the Other:

CHR.- 'But what have you seen?' said Christian.
Men. Seen! Why, the Valley itself, which is as dark as pitch; we also saw there the Hobgoblins, Satyrs, and Dragons of the Pit; we heard also in that Valley a continual howling and yelling, as of a people under unutterable misery, who there sat bound in affliction and irons; and over that Valley hangs the discouraging clouds of Confusion; Death also doth always spread his wings over it. In a word, it is every whit dreadful, being utterly without Order. (Browne, 1893, p. 154)

The image, here, depicts Christian who in search of redemption, goes through the "The Valley of Shadow of Death" to reach the Celestial City. The allegorical implication of the religious allegory of Bunyan represents a hero, who goes through a spiritual journey to achieve salvation. Browne regards himself in the same light. Although, Browne visits many parts of Iran, he does not hide the fact that Shiraz is the main objective of his journey to the country. When he embarks on the journey from Isfahan to Shiraz, he maintains that

when I quit Isfahan, less than a fortnight will bring me to the glories of Persepolis, and that after that two short days will unfold before my longing eyes the shrines and gardens of "the pure earth of Shiraz," which has been throughout the goal of my pilgrimage.[emphasis added] (Browne, 1893, pp. 220-221)

Closing on to the city of Shiraz, Browne goes to the extent to maintain that not only the city has been the main goal in his journey, but also it has been the place, which he has regarded as the main goal of his life to visits for many years:

When I woke up in the morning all recollections of the disaster of the previous night were obliterated by the joyous thought that before the sun was down I should set foot in that city which, for seven years, it had been the chief ambition of my life to behold. (Browne, 1893, p. 258)

The reason, based on which Browne regards Shiraz as such is his perspective on domination of Iran by Muslin Arabs in the 7th century, which he describes as such:

The priests of Zoroaster fell by the sword; the ancient books perished in the flames... Truly it seemed that a whole nation had been transformed, and that henceforth the Aryan Persian must not only bear the yoke of the Semitic "lizard-eater" whom he had formerly so despised, but he must further adopt his creed, and almost, indeed, his language. (Browne, 1893, p. 123)

According to Browne, this domination was far from permanent. He further states that:

Yet, after all, the change was but skin-deep, and soon a host of heterodox sects born on the Persian soil- Shi'ites, Sufis, Isma'ilis, philosophers- arose to vindicate the claim of Aryan thought to be free, and to transform the religion forced on the nation by Arab steel into something which, though still wearing the semblance of Islam had a significance widely different from that which one may fairly suppose was intended by the Arabian prophet. (Browne, 1893, p. 123)

For Browne, Shiraz with its Persepolis, in addition to be the cradle of the ancient Aryan dynasties, is the Mecca of Babi religious movement and Bahai faith as its main branch, which he regards as closely connected with the heterodox religions mentioned above that Browne hopes would vindicate the Persian thought (Bosworth, 1995, p. 119). Thus, As the Celestial City in Bunyan's allegory promises a rebirth of the Self, Shiraz as the main destination and the chief ambition for Browne in his journey foreshadows a revival Iran, which he sought during much of his later years.

The quest of the Self who faces dualities, mentioned above, is also projected into the conception of the space of the Other in Browne's imagination. Ascending the mountain *Takhti-i-Rostam* and looking into the distance in front of him, he states as such:

The exquisite clearness and purity of the atmosphere in Persia, enabling one as it does to see for an almost unlimited distance, lends an indescribable charm to views such as the one which now lay before me, and I now gazed with admiration on the panorama westward. But when I glanced down in to the dark valley to the south of the ridge on which I now stood, towards which the mountains fell away so rapidly that it seemed as if one might cast a stone into it without an effort, a feeling akin to terror at its savage loneliness and utter isolation overcame me, and I was glad to commence the descent with all speed, lest some uncontrollable impulse should prompt me to cast myself down into this gloomy ravine. (Browne, 1893, pp. 203-204)

The contrast between the promising “unlimited distance” with its “indescribable charm” and the terrifying “savage loneliness” represents the Romantic duality, in Browne's imagination in his quest in the space of the Other. Campbell points to this issue in the context of the stage of Departure of the hero's quest as such:

The regions of the unknown (desert, jungle, deep sea, alien land, etc.) are free fields for the projection of unconscious content. Incestuous libido and patricidal destrudo are thence reflected back against the individual and his society in forms suggesting threats of violence and fancied dangerous delight—not only as ogres but also as sirens of mysteriously seductive, nostalgic beauty. (Campbell, 2008, p. 72)

Consequently, in Browne's imagination, Iran as the space of the Other is where the contraries are married; it is a land of philosophers and mystics; of fanatic Islam and most heterodox religions; of honesty and shrewdness; of unlimited possibilities and unsurpassable borders; of freedom and intolerance. The promise of such land is also to the extreme; it can provide either the unlimited freedom or the gloomy ravine, with no grey zone in the middle.

This contradictory image is common for Browne's predecessors. Matthee (2010) in this regard explains that in the 18th century the European's regarded Iran based on a similar Romantic image, in which it “became an imaginary country, an imagined realm that served to confirm and corroborate all kinds of arguments, hopes, fears, and anxieties”(p. 456). Matthee (2010), regarding the texts created by these travellers, further points out that

Their writings reflect the enduring mystery and fame of the sophy as well as the notion that wisdom and sophistication come from the East, but they also grappled with age-old questions about oriental despotism and its ingredients, arbitrariness, cruelty, and injustice They used Iran and its mysteries as the object of deep psychological pondering about the precariousness of life, the fragility and transience of civilization, and, ultimately, the possibility that life might have no fixed meaning. (p.548)

For Browne's predecessors, the dual image that Matthee presents go as far as a psychological pondering, which finally affirms a moral philosophy. Thus, the East from this perspective is comprehended based on a static image, in which the Other and his/her space is fixed in a timeless state. The dual image of the country in Brown's imagination, however, is far more dynamic. For Browne, who lives through the space of Other and actively engages with its culture and society, the notion of Iran as the space of contraries, is transferred into the present time of the nation, and divides it to a despotic mainstream, and the margins that promise a return to the old glory. This revolutionary stance, which is another aspect of the Romantic perspective in Browne's representation of Iran can explain Browne's mistrust of the dominant political and religious systems in the country. On his way from Isfahan to Shiraz, he expresses this perspective as such:

To construct edifices which may perpetuate his own name is of far more importance in his eye than to protect from injury those built by his predecessors, which, indeed, he is perhaps not sorry to see crumbling away like the dynasties which reared them. And so it goes on- king succeeding king, dynasty overthrowing dynasty, ruin added to ruin; and through it all the mighty spirit of the people "dreaming the dream of souls disentanglement," while the stony-eyed lions of Persepolis look forth in their endless watch over a nation which slumbers, but is not dead. (Browne, 1893, p. 219)

In this image, the essence of the nation, symbolized in the "stony-eyed lions of Persepolis" stands in contrast the despotic rulers (Browne, 1893, p. 219). In this dynamic image, the ancient duality penetrates the present time of the nation, in which the self-interested rulers of the country oppress the nation that is slumbering but still has the vigor for life. Browne maintains the same perspective towards Islam the official religion of the country. Recounting the history of the spread Islam in Iran, he describes an image of the fall of the country before the "warlike followers of the Arabian prophet" as such:

Where for centuries the ancient hymns of Avesta had been chanted, and the sacred fire had burned, the cry of the mu'ezzin summoning the faithful to prayer rang out from the minarets reared on the ruins of the temples of Ahura Mazda. (Browne, 1893, p. 123)

The Romantic discourse is one aspect of Browne's tendency, which would fall short of a full realization of his stance towards Iranian culture. In this regard, Behdad (2008) divides the motivations of the travellers into Iran in the course of 17 to 19 centuries into three divisions. He explains that "[the] seventeenth century adventurer travels for the pleasure of seeing other worlds, so places must be marvellous and unknown..." (p. 83). He further argues that the search for the exotic and the unknown ceded into a scientific approach for the travels in the 18th century, in which the traveller "viewed his journey as a serious educational experience, not a means of satisfying individual curiosity" (p. 85). Accordingly, although the motives and the objectives of the travellers changed, and the traveller regards himself as an observer who in objective terms regards the oriental, the distinction between the self and the other remains intact. In such a context, "the traveller is the *savant* who *knows* and has enough credentials to judge and make authoritative remarks about other people and cultures" (p. 86). Behdad further argues that 19th century with its developments of steamboats and railroads ushered a new age, in which "the tourist is a pleasure-seeker who privileges the slowly unfolding scene over study. As a hedonistic traveller, he is a consumer of sights and a passive observer of the already seen" (p. 91).

Apart from the level of engagement with the space of the Other by the traveller, the common ground between the attitude of the traveller as the *savant* and the pleasure seeking tourist is that in both cases there is an attempt for an *objective* representation of the Other. One aspect of Browne's tendency towards Iran can be explained in such a context, which is evident in his detailed description of the places, people and customs in Iran. The following

image in which Browne (1893) describes *Cháh-i-Murtazá 'Ali* in Shiraz is an instance of the tendency for minute observation:

The *Cháh-i-Murtazá 'Ali* (Ali's well) is situated about half a mile to the north-east of the *Kehvare-i-Div*, on the summit of the hills east of the *Tangi-i-Alláhu Akbar*. A building of considerable size, inhabited by the custodian of the shrine and his family, surmounts the "well," which is reached by descending a very slippery stone staircase of nineteen steps...At the bottom is a small case or grotto, wherein is a little well, such as one often sees by English roadsides, into the basin of which water continually drips from the rock above. Opposite this a tablet shaped like the tombstone seen in old churchyards is carved on the wall. In the center of this is a rude design, which appears to be intended for a flower growing in a flower-pot. On either side of this are two lines in Arabic, but these are so effaced by time and touch of visitors to the shrine that they are almost illegible. In front of this tablet is a place for the votive candles, which are brought hither by the devout... (pp. 286-287)

This description presented by Browne is a striking example of clarity and precision. Here, Browne provides the reader with a detailed image, in which the Romantic attitude that was mentioned above is absent. Browne work is replete with such images, in which people, customs and the geographic features of the country are represented in full detail.

The following extract is another example of his minute description of the Iranian culture. Regarding the religious ritual of *Ta'zieh*, we read in Bowne's travelogue (1893) that

The theatre is a large circular building, - roofless, but covered during Muharram with an awning. There are boxes (*takches*) all around, which are assigned to the more patrician spectators, one, especially large and highly decorated being reserves for the Shah. The humbler spectators sit around the central space or arena in serried ranks, the women and the children in from ... The acting is powerful, though somewhat crude, and it is impossible not to be influenced by the deep feeling evinced by both actors and audience. The *ta'zias* comprise at least some thirty or forty episodes, the representation of any one of which requires two or three hours. Some of them are drawn from the histories of the Jewish prophets, and these are less interesting because the spectators are less profoundly moved by them; the majority, however, illustrate the misfortunes of the Shi'ite Imams. Those connected with the fatal field of Kerbela, culminating in the death of the "Prince of Martyrs" (*Seyyidu 'sh-shuhadá*), the Imám Heseyn, are the most moving; but I fancy that the Persians are, as a rule, not very willing to admit Europeans or Sunnite Mohammadans. (p. 552)

In his image of the religious ritual of *Ta'zieh*, Browne presents a detailed description of the space, the play itself and the response of the audience. Here, (and as it was the case with the previous image) the time and space of the Other is described based on a perspective, which is Behdad's words (2008) "emphasize the importance of aloofness from one's object of observation" (p. 88). In such an approach, unlike the Romantic representation, the key element is to provide an image without affectation and free from involving oneself in the image that is made of the Other (Ali Behdad, p. 88). Consequently, even in the case of cultural clash, in which the Shi'ite Muslims "as a rule, not very willing to admit Europeans," the observer abstains from making any judgment (Browne, 1893, p. 552).

The above-mentioned approaches of Romantic and scientific representations are two voices that surface at the very beginning of Browne's travelogue. In the third chapter titled "From the Persian Frontier to Tabriz," looking into the city of Tabriz, he describes the perspective in front of him as such:

The view from the summit of the citadel is very extensive, and enabled me in some degree to realize the magnitude of the city, which lay before us like a map. From this height, in former days, the criminals were sometimes hurled into the ditch below. On one occasion, we were informed, a woman condemned to suffer death in this manner was so buoyed up by the air inflating her loose garments that she reached the ground uninjured. Whether this story is true or false I cannot say, neither did I pay much attention to the recital, my thoughts being occupied with the tragic death of young prophet of Shiraz,

Mirza Ali Muhammad, better known as the Bab, which took place on 9th July 1850, at or near this spot... (Browne, 1893, p. 58)

From this point onward, there occurs a split in the perspective through which the space of the other is observed. On the one hand, there is the actual, the historical, which reports the space of the Other, which lay before the observer “like a map”(Browne, 1893, p. 58) On the other hand, there exists the Romantic, the mythological and the idealistic. The tension between these two perspectives will be proved to be inevitable in his course of Browne’s journey. In the following chapter, this tension will be analysed in further detail.

SPLIT OF THE SELF AND THE OTHER

As it was discussed in the previous chapter, the Romantic discourse with its idealistic approach, and scientific discourse, with a tendency to present an objective image of the Other, are two voices that constitute Browne’s representation of the Iran in his first stage of departure into the country. The second stage of his quest is that of initiation, in which Browne as the Romantic hero goes through “a succession of trials,” based on which a deep tension is created between above-mentioned discourses, which ultimately leads to the subversion of both of them (Campbell, 2008, p. 89).

As explained above, one aspect of Browne’s Romantic approach to the culture of Iran is his support for Babi religion and Bahai faith as its main branch. Regarding the infatuation of Browne with the Babi religion Nash (2006) points out that

For the young Edward Granville Browne (1862–1926), attracted by Gobineau’s narrative of the emergence of the Babi religion, the fact that this originated in the ‘Aryan’ south of Persia whetted an appetite to travel to the sites associated with its birth and suppression. In these examples, a mix of aesthetic, political and (in Browne’s case) religious ideas operated as a means by which the now decaying but once glorious Oriental original was retrieved and incorporated within the imperial matrix, thereby accomplishing a completion. (p. 58)

Although he is infatuated with the advent of the new religion, Browne observes the Bahai followers beliefs in full detail and does not hesitate to point out to those, which he finds contradictory and unacceptable. On conversing with the Bahai believers, Browne (1893) maintains that

The answers which they returned made me realize once again how widely separate from each other our respective points of view. They seemed to have no conception of Absolute Good or Absolute Truth: to them Good was merely what God chose to ordain, the Truth what he chose to reveal, so that they could not understand how any one could attempt to test the truth of a religion by an abstract ethical or moral standard. (p. 406)

Such a recognition of the differences is far from the Romantic infatuation mentioned above. Here, Browne analyses and represents the differences. The contradiction between Browne’s principles and those of his Bahai believers culminate in a point, in which they embody God in material form, maintaining, “God is something real, visible, tangible, definite, go to Acre and see God!” (p. 492). To this statement, Browne responds very harshly: “Now God forbid,” I exclaimed in utter horror of the frightful anthropomorphism thus suddenly laid bare before me” (p. 492). At this point, Browne’s idealistic notion of seeking out a new faith that he hopes would revive the lost grandeur of Iran, crumbles down:

“Was this then” I thought to myself, “the root of the matter, the heart of that doctrine which promised so fairly, whereof the votaries whom I have hitherto met seemed so conspicuous for their probity, piety, sobriety, and devotion? ... And have I tracked it

onwards, step by step, only to find at last that its home is in this quagmire of antinomian anthropomorphism? Or are these indeed no more Babis than they are Muhammadans, but men who, in true Persian fashion, disguise atheism in the garb of religion, and bedeck it with the trinkets of a mystical terminology?" (p. 493)

Browne's meditation regarding "the root of the matter" signifies a disillusionment with the idealistic approach, which he has cherished so far and has made the object of his quest (p. 493).

The changes that occur in Browne's imagination regarding his recognition of the external world, is mirrored in his conception of the Self. In this state the external world is "'transferred' to the self that is being scrutinized," which finally lead to a point "where the inner and out world collide"(Blanton, 2013, p. 3). The "collision" here, is evident in the subversion of the principle of distinction between the Self and the Other, based on which the scientific discourse functions. In chapter, XVII titled "Amongst the Kalandars," Browne (1893) explains that in order to pacify the pain in his eyes, he chooses to use opium. He describes his first experience with the drug as such:

Ten minutes later my whole being was permeated with that glow of tranquil beatitude, conscious of itself, nay, almost exultant to its own peaceful serenity, which constitutes the fatal charm of what the Persians call *par excellence* "the Antidote" (*tiryak*). (p. 489)

This is the beginning of the estrangement with the scientific discourse, which culminates in Browne's self-alienation. In this regard, he presents the following image:

I had now no excuse for prolonging my stay at Kirman; yet still I could not summon up resolution to leave it. It seemed as though my whole mental horizon had been altered by the atmosphere of mysticism and the opium smoke which surrounded me. I had almost ceased to think in English, and nothing seemed so good in my eyes as to continue the dreamy speculative existence which I was leading, with the opium for my solace and the dervishes for my friends. Peremptory telegrams came from Shiraz, sometimes two or three together, but I heeded them not, and banished all thought of them with these two potent antidotes to action of which I have spoken above. Their influence must have been at its high at this time, for once or twice I neglected for a day or two even to write my diary which I had hitherto allowed nothing to keep me from accomplishing.

(p. 534)

The scientific discourse of travel writing, which is based on distinguishing between the Self and the Other, and a tendency for detached observation is subverted here. Browne (1893) is disconnected from the language of the Self, and continues "a dreamy speculative existence" in the space of the Other (p. 534). Behdad's analysis of Nerval's contradictory conception of the Orient, which explains the split between the Subject and the object of his gaze, can be applicable to the subversion of perspective that Browne goes through. Behdad (1994) argues that the travel writer in the mid-nineteenth century were caught between their fantasy of the East as a place in which their desires can come through and the East as an obscure, impenetrable space. He further maintains that

The split between the speaking subject and her or his discourse has clear political and ideological implications.. [and] eventually subverts the Orientalist certainty, marks the primal division (*Spaltung*, to use Lacan's term) of the subject and his discourse into a conscious (of official) relation to the Orient, and a veiled unconscious that can manifest itself only in the vacillations of the orientalist subject- and only at moments of discursive uncertainty. (p. 20)

Based on the abovementioned argument, the alienation, which Browne experiences goes into two directions. On the one hand, there occurs the discursive uncertainty towards the Other, which follows the subversion of Romantic and scientific discourses. On the other

hand, there is the split regarding Browne's conception of the Self, in which an estrangement between the Subject and his own culture seems to happen, and he almost ceases to think in English. Evidently, the split from both discourses is temporary. As it will be explored in further detail in the next chapter, the final stance of Browne regarding his conception of the Self and the Other is a return to the space of in-betweenness. Following the stages of departure and initiation, "in which the unitary self falls into suffering self-consciousness" on his movement from thesis to antithesis, this is the stage of return in which the Romantic hero finds his "way back toward a unification of its fragmented being"(Abrams, 1973, p. 225).

RETURN AS IN-BETWEENNESS

Ashcroft in his paper "Travel and Power" argues that there is a close connection between the desire to know and possession. Such a desire, as he maintains, is one of the principles, on which the discourse of travel writing is based. Thus, regarding the representation of the Other in travel writing he puts forward a fundamental question: "how can any writer escape the imputation of *knowing* that so powerfully impresses itself on the text? How can a writer escape the urge to *possess* that knowing entails?"(2009, p. 230) In order to answer this question in the context of Browne's travelogue, the connection between the space of the Self /Other and the discourse of travel writing needs to be analysed in further detail. Malpas (1999), regarding the Self and the space of the Other argues,

In order to identify some object as a common cause it is necessary to be able to locate that object in relation to the observers to whom it is causally, and so also intentionally, related and, of course, to have some grasp of the way in which that object, along with the observers, are embedded in a larger causal framework. (p. 143)

Being able to see the world from a perspective other than one's own, thus, is a steppingstone for an objective recognition of the space of the Other. Moreover, Malpas (1999) observes that the recognition of the subjectivity of the Other requires a similar context:

One grasps the subjectivity of other individuals, in fact, through being able to match one's own responses to those of others and through being able to locate others within an objective space to which each has access, and in relation to a set of common objects and events. (p. 149)

As a result, in the context of the Self, the Other and the space of the Other, being able to alienate is the key to have, objective, and thus unbiased conception of the Other. This state of otherness is the point between the Self, the Other and the space of the Other, which Malpas (1999) calls "the anonymous realm of objectivity" (p.149). In this regard, he further argues that

A creature that has an understanding of itself in this way is also a creature capable of a certain sort of self-alienation (though exactly what form that may take may well vary depending on culture and situation and may never even be given explicit expression); it is a creature that can think beyond its own subjective space into a multiplicity of other possible spaces. Such a creature does not lose a sense of its own subjectivity, however, for the capacity to think beyond one's own space is itself interdependent with the capacity to think within that space – a creature that has a capacity to grasp itself is thus a creature that has a capacity to grasp, not merely the anonymous sameness that obtains between itself and others, but the difference that also obtains there.

(pp. 150-151)

Malpas in his analysis of the space of the Self and the Other does not include power relations among the Subjects involved. Consequently, the possibility of inter-subjective

representation, in the Orientalist context which is heavily constrained, formed and directed by the discourse of travel writing, is further complicated.

Returning back to Ashcroft's argument (2009), he points out that travel writing in its representation of the Self and the Other cannot escape "the discourse of travel writing, with its rules of inclusion and exclusion, works to construct and reconstruct the transcultural text" (p. 234). He further maintains that, representation cannot function independent from the discourse of travel writing, which is based on the distinction between the Self and the Other unless it is made possible through "disruptive resistance that the writer can break out of, and in turn disrupt, the discourse of travel writing" (p. 235). The disruptive resistance, which Ashcroft refers to can be created through the performative act of deferral of meaning, in which the traveller as a subject resists the closure, which the discourse of travel writing enforces upon him/her. Here, the otherness, which occurs in the conception of the Self and Other, provides such a resistance. In this regard, he further argues that

Travel writing that reflects upon place so intensely, that stretches out time so thinly that closure becomes impossible, opens up a form of travel that constructs place as constantly new, unknowable, and dynamic. This is a new kind of intimacy: an intimacy that defamiliarizes, that sees every observable object as a gateway to further possibilities. This is the opposite of the exotic. And yet the defamiliarization of a place so utterly ordinary reproduces place as the location of an intense strangeness—a representation that contests representation itself. In the face of the intensely ordinary, the observer bears witness to place in a way that allows it continually to escape definition and, in doing so, bears witness to an epistemological powerlessness that radicalizes the position of the travel writer. (p. 237)

At this point, the inter-subjective space of Malpas and resistance to discourse of Ashcroft overlap one another. Referring back to the question at the beginning of this section, it can be argued that an objective representation of the Other requires the breakdown of the boundaries of Self and the Other that are the boundaries which the discourse of travel writing entails.

Browne's last phase of quest in Iran can be regarded based on the argument mentioned above. His journey in Iran starts with, to borrow Bakhtin's concept, a polyphony of Romantic and scientific voices, which is defined as "a plurality of independent and equally valid voices which are not subordinate to any single authorial hierarchy" (Herman, Jahn, & Ryan, 2010, p. 443). In addition, ultimately, due to their inherent opposition, there occurs a breakdown of his conception of the Self and the Other. Such a split of the Self and the Other cannot hold for long. As Campbell (2008) argues "when the hero-quest has been accomplished, through penetration to the source...the adventurer still must return with his life-transmuting trophy" (p. 179). The last month of Browne's quest in the country can be understood in this context. It is what may be called the state of in-betweenness, in which Ashcroft's concept of escape from the "discourse of travel writing" in the context of inter-subjective representation is made possible (2009, p. 235).

Regarding Browne's conception of the Other, the Romantic image disappears at the end of his journey. Unlike the infatuation that is expressed at the Departure stage of his quest and the disillusionment that he experiences during the Initiation, the Return phase of the journey cedes into a realistic representation. The following is an image of one of his last days in Iran:

I remained here for two days – days which passed pleasantly but uneventfully. There was the usual tea-drinking, smoking of opium and tobacco, and long debates in shaded rooms by day and in the moon-lit garden by the night - on religious and philosophical questions. There were several guests beside myself, some of whom had come to Kirman to meet. Amongst these was one, a dryer by trade, whose good sense and moderation especially impressed me... (Browne, 1893, p. 544)

The idealistic tone, which was evident at the beginning of his journey, here, is replaced by the factual representation of the Other and his/her space. In addition, Browne's explanation of his departure to his homeland, signifies the inevitability of his Return to the Self, and the language, which he has almost stopped to think in:

The return to what must, I suppose, be called civilization was anything but grateful to me... Seven months elapsed since I quitted Tehran for the south, and during this time I had been growing more and more Persian in thought and speech alike. The sudden plunge back into European life came upon me as a shock which was not mitigated even by the charm of novelty, and it took several days for me to reconcile at all to my surrounding.
(Browne, 1893, p. 550)

Recognition of the Self and the Other, in the space of inter-subjectivity following the stages of Departure, Initiation, and Return provides a space for Browne to recognize the Iran as it is. It is "a progress that leads from thesis, through antithesis, to a new synthesis," in which the objectivity of a scientist and the subjectivity of a romantic wanderer reach to a common point (Rudy, 1996, p. 57). In the last phase of his residence in Iran, Browne is both distant and close and both objective and subjective. The image, which Browne presents on his leaving the country, is a testament to such a perspective:

It was with genuine regret that I turned for a moment before stepping into the boat to bid farewell to Persia (which, notwithstanding all her faults, I had come to love very dearly) and the faithful and efficient Haji Safar. He had served me well, and to his intelligence and enterprise I owed much. He was not perfect – what man is? ...
(Browne, 1893, p. 567)

In this image of Iran, Browne who in his quest regarded the Other and his space in terms of the Romantic binary opposition of eternal oblivion/salvation or from a scientific perspective is absent. On his last look into the perspective in front of him, he regards Iran from an inter-subjective approach. Here, the Other and her/his space is accepted based on the reality of its existence. In other words, the Other is not regarded in terms of idealism of Romantic discourse or confrontational tendency of scientific discourse which is dipped in colonial motives. Here, the Other much like the Self is not perfect; s/he has its own flaws and beauties; s/he is human-like.

CONCLUSION

Browne's account of his journey, similar to other texts of the same genre, in Blanton's words (2013) includes "departure, adventure and return" (p. 2); however, his travelogue is far from a linear representation of the events in the space of the Other in an Orientalist context. Unlike the typical European traveller who "is a watcher, never involved, always detached," and represents the Other "as a living tableau of queerness," Browne searches, involves, meditates and challenges his Self and the Other as the object of his gaze (Said, 2006, p. 103). The external object of his quest symbolized in his initial heroic quest for authenticity fails upon his facing "the root of the matter," which is dipped in human greed and self-interest (Browne, 1893, p. 493). In addition, the observing Self, which tries to be detached, impartial and disinterested is simultaneously lost in the space of the Other.

Disillusionment with the Other and self-alienation signify a fragmentation in the discourses, based on which Browne travels. It is a sign of a split in the principles which first motivates the journey; a sign of the breakdown of "resemblance, analogy, identity and difference, taxonomic classification, organization and genealogical tree, order of reason, sense of sense, truth of truth, natural light and sense of history" (Derrida & Ronell, 1980, p.

81). A Return, however, is inevitable. In his return, the idealistic and the symbolic are replaced by a realist perspective, in which a full of image of the space of the Other begins to emerge. In this image, the space of the Other is populated by common people, wanderers, mystics, philosophers, religious fanatics, greedy politicians, heroes, despotic leaders, the poor, the rich, the honest... This picture, far from the Orientalist conception of the Other, which is based on the extremities of human traits, signifies that the only thing that can be recognized regarding the way that the traveller represents the Other is cultural difference. The inter-subjective representation of the Other from this perspective can embody “the perplexity of the living” which is the main attribute of human culture regardless of the racial, geographic, religious... features (Bhabha, 1994, p. 170).

As a unique image, Browne’s final perspective is far from the psychology of orientalist perfectionism, in which the Other is “viewed from a binary of good and evil”(Alosman, Raihanah, & Hashim, 2018, p. 60). In such an image, Iran, tired of vicissitudes of her bleak fortune, but hopeful for a rebirth which she deserves, looks forward into a future to come. Such an image deserves nothing but a deep respect of Iranians towards the Edward Granville Browne. As Bosworth (1995) mentions accordingly,

Certainly, his memory has remained fresh amongst Persians as one who loved their land only second to his own, and Michael Browne has written that he believed his father's statue in Tehran had been the only one of a European spared during the nationalist domination of Dr. Musaddiq in the early 1950s. (p. 121)

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