

Image of the Arab Woman in Chapman

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Abstract

The Elizabethan attitude towards the Arabs throughout the English Renaissance was gracious than towards Other Orientals. The Arabs, geographically distant, represented no danger to the peace of Europe. George Chapman's (1559–1634) *Revenge for Honour* echoes the Elizabethan interest in Arabia with an Orientalist discourse focussing on the representation of the royal harem² of Arabian court of the caliph Almanzor. The core argument of the article is about the vexing relation between female desire and male jealousy in a patriarchal Arab world peopled with lustful depots at the top echelons of society. On thematic level Chapman has treated varied strands of emotions like love, lust, anger and revenge. Here regarded virtue as essentially unsustainable in an immoral court setting, but that he perceived some form of commitment in public life as being a moral obligation on the righteous man to protect virtue.

Key words: Caliph, Arabia, honour, ambition, jealousy, lust, revenge, and murder.

Introduction

The Renaissance was a period of increased Western interest in the people and matter of the East. The English travelers covering to various parts of the so-called Orient perceived and portrayed the East in terms of their own preconceived notions. Their assumption, that the Middle Eastern societies suppressed and subjugated women, drove them to offer such fictionalized accounts of the Oriental women as would accentuate their position of suffering and portrayed the Oriental males as essentially disqualified and despot. Chapman's *Revenge for Honour* (1603) is an intellectual tragic play set in Arabia.³ According to Louis Wann, about forty-seven Oriental shows by major dramatists were performed in the Elizabethan period. More significant is the ground which accounts for such an enthusiastic interest in the Near Arab East because "the Elizabethans considered the East as the domain of war, conquest, fratricide, lust and treachery" (427).

The production of *Revenge for Honour* on London stage was excited for the Elizabethan audience since its theme is about killing for honour. The historical material of the play derives from the Abbasid Caliph Almanzor (754-775) in Bagdad.⁴

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²Harem is especially in the past in some Muslim societies, the wives or other female sexual partners of a man, or the part of a house in which they live.

³J. H. Walter found that the original story of Chapman's *Revenge for Honour* was in Sr. Walter Raleigh *The Life and Death of Mahomet, the Conquest of Spaine together with the Rysing and Ruine of the Sarazen Empire*. pp. 188-255.

⁴The Arab Caliph Abu Jafar Al-Mansur (754-775) is the second Abbasid Caliph. His name is Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Abdullah bin Al-Abbas, the uncle of Prophet Muhammad. He has taken the title of Almanzor or *Al-Mansur bi Allah* which means the Victor of God; or, Victorious by the Grace of God. Almanzor, the second of the dynasty of the Abbasids, whose reign commenced A.D. 754, and lasted twenty-one years, was among the first of the Arab princes to foster learning and the arts. His

Thomas Newton's book *A Notable History of Saracens* (1575) was a great Renaissance source of information about the Arabs and the Arab World. Moreover, there was a popular understanding among the Englishmen about the Arabian courts. Like Chapman, other Renaissance playwrights were curious about Arabs and harem. The Arab Kings' appearance was desirable. Though they were represented on London stage as very rich, they were personally weak, unethical and abundantly lustful. The following are a few examples: King Rhesus of Arabia in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587); King Crocon of Arabia in Greene's *Alphonsus* (1590); King Rhesus of Arabia in George Chapman's *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* (1596) and Caliph of Arabia, Almanzor in *Revenge for Honour* (1603); Prince Mustapha and Princess Donusa in Massinger's *Renegado* (1624); and the Sultan of Baghdad in Dekker's *Old Fortunates* (1647).

The representation of corrupt Arab characters evokes the negative tradition of the Oriental monarchs. For instance, King Rhesus of Arabia offers a negative portrayal in Marlowe. Rhesus appeared spineless, heathenish and cowardly. He was unable to save his fiancée from Tamburlaine who shortly murdered him and married her. Naji Oueijan's comment is worth considering: "Marlowe presented to his Elizabethan audience a picture of the East they desired to see" with an Orient filled with false doctrine and rulers (1996:19). Chapman's *Revenge for Honour* (1603) is merely following the popular Arabian coloring of lust, unfaithful brothers, and tyrannical father. Consequently, the struggle of lust and treachery made the younger Prince Abraham to poison his father [Almanzor the Caliph of Arabia] and to plot the murder of his elder brother crown Prince Abilqualit. Abraham saw full lust for Caropia made her at the end to awake her revenge of honour and react against male subjugation.

The Traditional Portrayal of the Arab woman

The Elizabethan portrayal of the Arab woman conforms to the traditional description of Oriental women as in *The Songs of Geste* and *The Song of Roland*. Cyril Meredith Jones points out that "the image of Muslim women is depicted in the context of sexuality with Christian knights" (219). Some Elizabethan dramatists falsely depicted a harem as unfaithful women. The Arab woman is tagged with pejorative terms like 'whore,' which was often used by Elizabethans to describe Oriental dames. In Peele's *The Whore of Babylon*, Arabian Iraqi women are identified as whores. In Philip Massinger's *Renegado* (1624), Paulina says, 'I will turn Turk [means Muslim];' Gazet answers, 'Most of your tribe do when they begin in whore' (4, 2, 43). Massinger draws in the mind of the Elizabethan audience a misconception about the Islamic sexual repression. Massinger tries to draw a contrast between Christian purity and Muslim sensuality. Donusa, a Tunisian princess, falls in love at first sight with an Englishman, called Vitelli. She tenders her body to him, for 'her religion allows all pleasure'. Driven by her promiscuity, she calls Vitelli to her private room and asks him keenly for the second entertainment the next day (Kidwai, 1995: 145).

The Arabian jealousy has been a theme in Elizabethan drama. The Moorish Othello was described as "barbarian" and naïve who "is of a free and open nature/That thinks men honest that but seem to be so" (*Othello*, act I.iii). Honour for Othello is all in his life. And so for native Arabs, it is a symbol of reputation. When Arabs are dishonored, they deem to purify themselves by revenge and killing for their honour. Killing for honour has been a tribal convention in Arabia. Although such a killing for honour in the Arab dominions might have been instrumental in the male power of the seventeenth century, George Chapman found in killing for honour a theme for his play. His excitement of Arab women marveled at the secrecy and danger of their personal freedom which was definitely apart from the European women's liberty at the end of the sixteenth century. But neither Chapman was looking at Arab women as models for Christian counterparts, nor would the image have been impossible in a period when women were pleasure plots for kings in the early modern age. The institution of the harem fascinated the European imagination, and was a significant icon of Orientalism in the arts. The Arab harem and the style of life within it were to be described and observed as an Oriental exotic phenomenon. In his play, Chapman has established prototypical harem which belonged to a world not even remotely related to Christian Europe. The author seems praising the docility and subjugation which Arab men imposed on the woman which saves them from dishonour. It is important to note that Renaissance writers in England and elsewhere in Christendom linked killing for honour to men but Chapman made the opposite by having a woman kill a man for her dishonour. Therefore, Chapman makes a contrast with the institution of the harem which governs the relationship of the Oriental sexes.

power was a marvel; his justice was a proverb. He was in noble natures. He was a brilliant financier; a successful favourite; a liberal patron; a stern disciplinarian; a heaven-born courtier; an accomplished general; and no one of the great commanders of Abbasid Arabia. He was more uniformly successful in the field (Hitti, 297-8).

Caropia's Sexuality

Chapman's lascivious Caropia in *Revenge for Honour* established a model of female submissiveness among the Arabs. Caropia is white, sexualized, cheeky and flirtatious with the sons of the caliph. Chapman described in detail how such woman like Caropia is treated in the Arabs' harem. In contrast, he appreciates the behavior of women in England. The social status of the Arab and the English women had engaged the dramatist Philip Massinger to compare between them in *The Renegado* (1624). Vitelli, an English slave, is made to reflect before the Tunisian Princess Donusa about the differences between the status of women in England and in the Arab World. The dialogue begins with the princess protesting against the lack of freedom for women in Islamic states. She is envious of her counterparts in Christendom:

... Christian Ladies live with much more freedom
 Then such as are borne here. Our jealous Turkes
 Neuer permit their faire wiues to be seene
 But at the publique Bannias, or the Mosques
 And euen then vaylde, and garded. (I.ii. 17-21)

Social restrictions on Arab women are not objectionable and emphasize that women should accept this mode of behavior because they submit to the Holy Qur'an which bans them to indulge in immorality of any kind. Because of their religious piety, Muslim women were morally and socially chaste. Chapman indirectly contrasted this description of Muslim women with English women. He has described an actual account and example of Arab women who were continuing to submit to the Arabian tradition of chastity, humility, piety, and patience. Because English women were relatively free to do what they wanted, they disrespected their husbands and freely indulged in sex outside the pale of marriage. Though Chapman's Caropia admired this social freedom, it was leading to moral degeneration which did not occur in Arab women who were confined to their lodgings. In satirizing English conditions, therefore, Chapman was showing that the price of women's honour in England was family disorder.

Hardin Craig sees Chapman as "the psychological dramatist *par excellence*," and examines his ethics in this light" (29). Ennis Rees describes Chapman's writing as a "Christian humanism" (2). Lawrence Stone has also described Chapman's moral and spiritual welfare as 'the ideal of conjugal affection', and 'spiritual intimacy' which was gaining hold through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and often voiced in 'both Puritan and Anglican theology' (100-101). The dramatist has made a connection between immoral and tragic themes. Although this connection bears no direct association to the rest of *Revenge for Honour*, the expression of female desire sparks the conflict between Almanzor's sons. Such kind of power conflict was created by a royal lustful lady in Dekker's *Lust's Dominion* (1600). Dekker's lascivious Queen Mother possessed a carnal lust for life, sensation, and experience. She lusts after a black Moorish slave, Eleazar who enticed her to destroy Spain. In Chapman's play, Caropia's lust matches the lascivious Queen Mother in Dekker's *Lust's Dominion* (1600) but Caropia is prompted by ambition more than lust, she has become valiant enough to take revenge for her sexual exploitation by Abilqualit.

Arab women were more dutiful and faithful to their husbands and gave their husbands the reverence of masters. Arab women did not seek lovers or liberty or a private friend. They were decent women who kept their place both in society and inside the house. Among the Muslims, men and women kept their distance. All women, English and Arab alike, could prove untrustworthy, but only the Arabs had found a way to avoid women's tricks. Joannes Boemus, writing in *The Manners and Costumes of All Nations* (1611), noted that in the Islamic World, women did not "come where a company of men be gathered together." He added that women were separated from men, and it was viewed as "monstrous" among the Muslims should a man ever "sit or ride with a woman" in public.⁵ Robert Burton observes that Arab husbands "try to keep their wives away from all communication with men lest they prove unfaithful to them" (283).

⁵Haideh Moghissi, in his book *Women and Islam: Images and Realities* (published by Taylor & Francis in 2005) refers to this information as known in the book of Joannes Boemus, *The Manners and Costumes of All Nations* trans. Edward Aston in London: n.p., in 1611) in page 148.

In fact, for many Arabs, the social separation between men and women among many Arabs preserves honor and dignity among families. The deceptiveness of woman provoked the jealousy of their guardians which led to male controlled societies in many Arab communities. It is the corruption of the male superiors who violate the social order in societies. In the play, Caropia is significant in sexual rivalry which abounds between the regal courtiers. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick finds that the relationship between rivals can be 'as intense and potent as the bond that links either of the rivals to the beloved' (21). It is remarkable that Chapman's antagonists prove through exploiting the sexual desires of the woman in a noble club.

The convergence of sexual desire and social ambition was something which could be more thoroughly explored in the context of honour. The first act of the play catches on sensuality. In a scene of hot hugs, Abilqualit embraces Caropia with much intimacy that agitates a sexual desire between the mute Mesithes and Caropia's maid Perilinda. Mesithes is a eunuch but he can please ladies. Perilinda unfortunately describes Mesithes as "a dead man;" she says to him: "You are the coldest creatures in the bodies; \No snow-balls like you" (I.ii. 10, 12-3). Caropia's romance is warm and exploits in her an unchaste love with the crown Prince Abilqualit. She describes her sexuality in saying that:

In love's hot flames to languish by refusal
To a consuming fever than t' infringe
A vow which ne'er proceeded from my heart
When I unwillingly made it. (II. ii.27-45)

In the Arab World, woman is imposed against her will in romance which is satisfactorily off-balanced for the benefit of males. Arab males freely enjoy all types of romance and entertainment. Chapman portrays Caropia as shrewd and imaginative because of her marriage to a man she does not love, and as being confined in harem and treated as property by her husband. Hence, Caropia's dreams are intended to establish her dignity and authority through the institution of the upper class of harem. Caropia's feminine identity represents the limits of the free space in the Oriental feminine oppression and masculine fantasy. Caropia's submission to Abilqualit's affection appealed to Chapman. It is believed to be a female practice among the Ottoman harem, because she can have a power and a royal status if she masters the Caliph's affection. Caropia thinks that her sexual exploitation is the key to her sovereignty. Evoking a familiar scenario, Chapman's Caropia asserts her political power over the Caliphate, which is based on her sexual power over the crown emperor. The woman's ambition is to rule the Caliphate by ruling the Caliph.

The interference of power and sex is common for women in the corrupt monarchs. Richard S. Ide reviews five 'heroic' tragedies in a comparative study of Shakespeare and Chapman, arguing that in "their divergent treatments of the protagonist whose ideals of honour lead him into conflict with society" (18). The conflict between 'honour' and 'adultery' is socially appealing to Chapman who promotes honour to prevail in the end of the play. Miller MacLure describes Chapman as "pious and unsocial contemplatives" (84). Huntington writes:

The Chapman whom we discover when we tease out the social agenda is strikingly different from the stolid moralist of common criticism. He is witty, angry, and ingenious, and he takes pleasure in speaking in an entirely ambiguous way that requires us to use what he calls our 'light-bearing intellect' and our sympathy with his social situation to find his meaning. (15)

MacLure finds Chapman fascinated by power wondering whether it is the gift of Fortune or Virtue (84). Jonathan Goldberg states that Chapman has great fantasies in "appropriating royal power" (155). The erotic Caropia compares her ambition for power and her lust like that of 'the amorous turtle' who strives to express in murmuring notes about her sinful love but when she agrees to enjoy affection, she chirps like a bill bird (I.ii.2-6). Abilqualit has enjoyed Caropia's sexual pleasure. He admires her white skin, softness, her feathered arms and her gaudy neck (I.ii.1-2). Abilqualit depicts the purity of Caropia's soul as "the chaste, virtuous wife" (I.i.262). She explains to Abilqualit her suffering and ambition that led her to breach the matrimonial faith in making a relationship outside the bond of marriage. She unwillingly vowed to work to reach to the top of the state by spoiling herself to Abilqualit's temptations. Caropia says:

Then the thraldom
 Will be as prosperous as the pleasing bondage
 Of palms that flourish most when bow'd down fastest.
 Constraint makes sweet and easy things laborious,
 When love makes greatest miseries seem pleasures.
 Yet 'twas ambition, sir, join'd with affection,
 That gave me up a spoil to your temptations.
 I was resolv'd if ever I did make
 A breach on matrimonial faith, 't should be
 With him that was the darling of kind Fortune
 As well as liberal Nature, who possess'd
 The height of greatness to adorn his beauty ;
 Which since they both conspire to make you happy,
 I thought 'twould be a greater sin to suffer
 Your hopeful person, born to sway this Empire. (II.ii.27-41)

The lascivious Caropia portrays her relationship with Abilqualit as 'unworthy to be titled lovers' (II,1.56). In fact, she feels insecure about her reputation. She fears her husband lord Murad disturbing her happiness. Abilqualit does not care for Caropia's suspicion and asks her for more pleasure. Abilqualit does not want to cause any harm to Caropia from her husband's violence. Caropia asks Abilqualit to withdraw from her life. In contrast, Abilqualit does not want Mura to touch Caropia. He thinks it would be better for Mura to 'act a sacrilege on ... Prophet's tomb\ Than to profane this purity with the least\ Offer of injury' (III. i. 45-7). In Oriental writings, blasphemy is a typical response of Oriental characters in despair.

Chapman's play is displaced from its intended referent to the female characters whose sexuality renders them suspect to Western and Oriental men alike. Normally, Caropia would have been disqualified as the prince's sexual partner after he would become the Caliph. Caropia's natural beauty and white skin seems attractive to the two princes. She has elegant beauty, for the most part ruddy, clear, and smooth as the polished ivory. For Caropia, she respects her husband and she does not want to cause disgrace and dishonor. It was not that Western women were more untrustworthy than their Arab counterparts: with unusual psychological insight, Chapman had made her indulge in sexual relationship as a relief on her sexual interest which was banned on harem. It is only her desire to be an empress which makes her to play wrong to accomplish her aim. Thus, she took revenge for her honour when she unfulfilled her dreams.

Killing for Honour

The theme of revenge for honour can be found in Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603) and Francis Beaumont's *Cupid's Revenge* (1612). Chapman draws attention to reminiscences of *Othello*. Othello's reference to Arabia relates his Arabian origin and draws attention to the extreme jealousy in Arabs' nature. The theme of jealousy in Chapman's *Revenge for Honour* parallels those in Glapthorne's *Albertus Wallenstein* (1639), and Carlell's *Osmond, the Great Turk* (c. 1639). Chapman's material about honour touches the status of the Oriental woman reputation. Caropia in Chapman is accused of adultery, and consequently she suffers. For instance, Caropia falls dreadfully ill when she is falsely accused of dishonour by her one-sided lover, Abrahen who demonstrates a male insecurity about female sexuality. It seems that Chapman's Caropia is judged by her sexuality even when she remains faithful to her lover Abilqualit.

Abilqualit commits adultery with Caropia and, through the intriguing of Abrahen, Almanzor is informed of Abilqualit's sin. Almanzor delivers a long tirade against Abilqualit and orders him to be strangled in a punishment apparently carried out in Arabia. Apart from his rank and his action as an informer, Abrahen has all the subtle villainy of Lesle, the chief conspirator against Abilqualit. Abrahen affirms his sexual desire to Caropia (I. i. 438-439). He exhorts his victim to rebel against his accomplices to make her his empress, but she rejects his advances (I. i. 433-434). Abilqualit protests against their father's tyranny: "You'r a Tyrant, \ One that delights to feed on your own bowels" (IV. i. 236-7.). The tyrant Almanzor is then filled with remorse:

a sudden chillesse,
 Such as the hand of winter casts on brooks
 Thrills our ag'd heart. I'll not have thee ingross
 Sorrow alone for *Abilqualit's* death:
 I lov'd the boy well, and though his ambition
 And popularitie did make him dangerous,
 I do repent my furie, and will vie
 With thee in sorrow. (IV. i. 245-252).

Abrahen is the evil character in the play. He has designed the plot of dishonour of his brother in the palace of Almanzor. He has detected his brother in the house of Mura, Caropia's husband. Abrahen is the only witness of his brother's private love with Caropia. She admits her sin which cannot be washed out by repentance. Therefore, she feels that she cannot live to enjoy Abilqualit's love. She decides to commit suicide in which Abrahen realises that she is now weak and he can employ his horrifying ambition. In this psychosomatic weak point, he has interwoven his plot to acknowledge the deep affection of Abilqualit for Caropia as turned into a sexual rape. Abrahen plays on the feelings of Caropia over her honour loss. To gain his victim's confidence Abrahen reveals that Abilqualit conspired against Caropia and destroyed her honour (III.ii. 152-6).

Caropia suffers the mere passion of promiscuity. Nothing can repair Caropia's honour rage. Her womanhood has thrown her on all dangers which prompt her to think over a noble vengeance. Mura is burning with the desire of revenge. He says that his need for revenge is like to awake the sleepy deities or like the ambitious giants waging new wars on heaven itself (III.iii. 206). He pleads to Almanzor instantly to apply justice, which is death sentence, on his son. Mura is resolved to have justice for his honour as violated by Abilqualit. Caropia's husband officially charges Abilqualit with his wife's rape. Abilqualit stands determined to defend Caropia's honour, though his own reputation is ruined. To protect his dearly beloved, he accepts to death sentence, and is resolute to die for his innocent love sacrifice. This kind of sacrifice is one of the great images of love. The lover is truthful enough in his affection to face challenges. The adultery charge is unacceptable to most of the characters. The chief commander of Arab forces, Tarifa describes the death sentence as barbarous. He reminds Mura to consider that Abilqualit is their Prince, and his death will not restore Caropia's honour:

...the Empire's hope, and pillar
 Of great Almanzor's age." (III, ii, 105).
 ...if you do purchase
 From our impartial Emperor's equity,
 His loss of sight, and so of the succession,
 Will not restore Caropia to the honour
 He ravish'd from her. But so foul the cause is." (III.ii. 115).

Chapman's own stated theory of tragedy is united in the theme of virtuous men pitted against corrupt society (MacLure, 103.). For sociable people like Tarifa, matters can be done to avoid the tragic consequences. The petition of Tarifa to save the prince goes in vain. Almanzor asks the Mutes to capture Abilqualit. In a room in the Court, Almanzor expresses his anger over Tarifa who appeals to forgive Abilqualit. Abilqualit confesses and accepts the punishment. Almanzor describes his son as an unworthy traitor. To implement the act of justice, he calls in a surgeon and his Mute to execute Abilqualit. Almanzor is inexorable to cut any petition out rather than wound his justice. He justifies the case as a rape upon his honour more than on Caropia. The Mutes strangle him immediately and Abilqualit falls.⁶ Tarifa disgusts this fatal punishment which is to save the lady's honour that he has assumed her rape upon him, though it was with her consent. Abrahen pretends his deep sorrow about the killing of his brother but he drops the poisonous handkerchief on Abilqualit's body before he leaves. Tarifa accuses the Caliph of being a tyrant in killing his own son.

⁶Chapman's *Revenge for Honour* draws on the theme of father's jealousy from his son and killing him in the story of Soliman and his son Mustapha in Knolles's *History of the Turks* (1603). It is also supported by the same theme in Goughe's *The Offspring of the House of Ottoman*, (1570), and Smythe's *Straunge, lamentable, and Tragical Histories* (1577).

He describes Almanzor as not being worthy of a very virtuous son (IV, 1, 238). He tells the Caliph that the Prince declared to him his innocence and that Caropia had promiscuously yielded herself. Almanzor is shocked by this information. His heart is overwhelmed by the extreme sorrow about Abilqualit's death as he loved him very much. In a penance scene, Almanzor wishes to weep till he becomes a statue. Tarifa accuses the rashness which has robbed the Empire of the greatest hope by killing his son. At the same moment, Almanzor realizes the breathing of Abilqualit, so he falls on the body. While Almanzor was on the body of Abilqualit, the poisonous handkerchief kills the Caliph.

Tarifa realizes the repentance and sorrow feelings of Almanzor whose body stayed calm on the body of his son. The Emperor is declared dead (IV. iv. 276). Lacey Baldwin Smith argues that such political plots were deliberate messages to Elizabethan government to "demonstrate the existence of treason or to the political machinations of court factions" (4). In the soliloquy, Abrahen admits that he poisoned his father. Abrahen is announced as the Great Caliph of Arabia. Abrahen is stunned by his accomplishment to be great Caliph of Arabia. He says to himself:

I am saluted King with acclamations
 That deaf the heavens to hear, with as much joy
 As if I had achiev'd this sceptre by
 Means fair and virtuous. 'Twas this handkercher
 That did to death Almanzor, so infected (IV.i.316-20)

 Its least, insensible, vapour has full power,
 Applied to th' eye or any other organ
 Can drink its poison in, to vanquish nature,
 Though ne'er so strong and youthful.(IV. i.368-371)

Mura describes Abilqualit as the lustful prince that, like a foul thief, robbed Caropia of her honour. By his ungracious violence, he met his royal father's justice. Caropia was shocked by the news of the killing of Abilqualit. She informed Mura that Abilqualit was dearer to her than him who was foul and odious. Subsequently, she stabbed her husband, Mura and puts his body behind the arras (IV.i.63). On the other hand, Abilqualit unexpectedly rises from his silence. He thanks well the Mutes who proved faithful to help him out of the punishment. In this moment, Abilqualit describes his heart as weeping tears of blood, to see his aging father falling like a lofty pine fall. For the Arabian army, she has caused the death of the noble Prince Abilqualit. The Arabian commander Osman and other commanders were shocked by the murder of their Prince (IV. i. 181-199). They seek to take revenge from Caropia.

Caropia is now very confused by her first sinful ambition to become an empress through Abilqualit's lust and finally by murdering her husband. She is very sensitive to her honour as she has lost it for worthlessness. She describes Abilqualit's death as caused by her falsehood. She accused herself as his murderess. Thus, she desires to be brave enough to take revenge for Abilqualit's slaughter. She is determined to Abilqualit's love and take revenge on Abrahen who made her accuse Abilqualit for raping her. She thought of using even craft and mystery. In this point, Chapman refers to the use of superstitions among the Oriental people when they lose hope of a change. In a Camp outside the city, Abilqualit appreciates his good, faithful soldiers. He thanks the divine power which has brought him back to them in safety. He has accused his brother to have poisoned his father Almanzor. Abilqualit promises to take a just vengeance on Abrahen.

Caropia is deceived by Abrahen thinking of him as her saviour. Abrahen finds in her pure feelings an opportunity to tease Caropia's beauty and sweetness. He expressed his lustful love for her. He depicts the flames of his lust as being more hot and piercing. Though he is lustful and motivated for her sex, he metaphorically describes his lust as it would be burnt like sacred frankincense (II.ii.120). Abrahen calls Caropia's new life with him as precious as the prime virgin of the spring and as the violet when it first displays its early beauty till all the winds in love do grow contentious with kisses to Caropia (IV.ii.145). She rejects his approach and describes his advances as unexpected and unwelcome. However, she considers the impertinent dialogue as a mockery on her grief. Chapman enriches the scene with natural examples for animals like turtle.

Therefore, in this approach of sex in grief the author compares Caropia as a virgin turtle who hates to join her pureness which contains widowed turtle mates (V. ii.120-1). She repels Abrahen's advance to seduce her. The new Caliph Abrahen wants to succeed his brother in glory and in love with Caropia. He wants her acceptance to be with him in love, empire, and whatever may be held glorious. Abrahen's temptations for Caropia are strong enough to achieve her ambition for pleasures of life which should make her to put off her morality again and forget her previous wrongdoings. For Caropia, she rejects his seduction and to be so merciful and gracious to take a woman filled with afflictions, and a true sorrow, and a religious penitence. For her wrong deeds, her life should not deserve Abrahen's love.

Abilqualit appears in the last scenes as he survived to take revenge on Abrahen who becomes an ill-natured monster by committing inhuman acts and inhuman villainies. When he attends in the court, Abrahen is suddenly choked and seizes Caropia. Abrahen is full of anxiety over the discovery of his plot. He admits to his brother Abilqualit about his ambitious thoughts to be the Caliph of Arabia when he planned to strangle Abilqualit by those Mutes and sent his father to eternal rest (V.ii. 215-20). Abrahen gives his brother an offer to try over their strengths and fortunes over Caropia's love and the monarchy. In the same scene, Tarifa appears and blames Abrahen over his wrong doings and asks the soldier to separate Caropia from Abrahen. Abrahen remains defiant as Abilqualit asks him to yield himself from the sight and gain his liberty. Abrahen rejects all the options and stabs Caropia and kills himself by taking a deep breath from the poisonous handkerchief.

In the same scene, Abilqualit cries crazily in looking at Caropia and asks for surgeons to save her life. He promises to give half of his Empire to save her precious life. Caropia has been crucially injured. She feels hopeless and realizes no human can save her life. She felt a kind of pleasing ease in the embraces of Abilqualit. She believes that she should make something about her honour revenge on Abilqualit and her murder to her husband. In this soft passion, she stabs Abilqualit who is shocked at being slain by Caropia's hand. He accepts this death as justice since it is a revenge for her honour which he had violated before. In being sinful, Caropia is resolved in claiming that she was not a woman. When the patronage relationship breaks down irrevocably, Caropia concurs with his false conclusion of death and admits that she has been in a sole ambition to live as an empress which fate did not allow. In this black festival of sorrow, they all die.

The heroine was incapable of resolving the paradox between her idealistic self-image and her actual rather disgusting behaviour, and in many ways Chapman forced spectators into a similar position of hesitation with affection to Caropia's true worth, in order to experiment his audience and force them to accord with his own moral scheme and social attitude about honour. Caropia's confusion over the role of her sexuality to gain power destroyed her future. She has gambled on her sexuality in an attempt to gain nobility and further her ambition. Byron's complaint is perhaps echoed in Webster's *The White Devil* (1612), where Vittoria accuses her accusers of being the origin of the charges levelled against her in her trial for her husband's murder:

For your names,
Of whore and murderess, they proceed from you,
As if a man should spit against the wind,
The filth returns in his face. (III.ii.148-51)

Caropia's relationship is adulterous and sinful yet the climactic execution scene seems to demand that the audience infer her guilt and approve his punishment. In other words, she prostitutes herself, even using a well-known procuress to broker the deal.

Conclusion

The Arabian material of the play reflects on the Elizabethan exoticism in Arabia. Chapman was interested not just as a sign of sexual oppression but as a resource of exploring the peculiar power of Oriental woman. However, Arab woman remains schemer, sexual object, and besmirched victim. Chapman saw a form of artistic prostitution with lustful top echelon of society. The idea of dishonour intensifies the Arab jealousy and highlights their tyranny over women. The play proposes the troublesome relation between female and male desires at the top echelons of the Arab world. The author describes the Arab mistress as white, exotic, passionate, and sexually experienced woman. She is a favored fair, witty, and rich ingénue woman in Arabia. Moreover, she resisted the bonds of an arranged marriage by maintaining a demonstrably sexual relationship with her first love.

In the play, all the characters including Caropia, the Arab heroine, condemn themselves for "adultery" which is a crime in the Islamic Arab jurisdiction, traditionally punishable by death.

The play shows Chapman's explorations of treachery as a key word in dynastic succession and sexual desire. Arab men are corruptible elements and woman is an insignificant creature in the Arab world. The female characters are deceived by men on the upper echelon of the society. The sexual availability of noblewomen is as an exclusive perk of the elite Arab men of the court. Sexual boastfulness is seen as the preserve of the nobility but her success in achieving a place at the top of her society only comes by successfully marketing herself as the object of sexual desire in order to gain material reward. The theme of the play foregrounds honour, justice, selfhood, space, sexuality and manliness. For Arabs, honour is a factor of superiority in the Arabian tradition. Those Arab characters have more freedom, highlighting the lack of social liberty for women in Chapman. The author eagerly assured the audience that Arab women were restricted in communication and movement, and that they were not insensitive to love. To summarize, in the honour episode, Chapman attempts to address the deleterious influence of women's exploitation of sexual charisma in the harem of the state. The play is associated with sexual and social betrayal among Arabs. Caropia's sexual experience seems like Scheherazade's patriarchal sexual, political, and discursive violence in the *Arabian Nights*. The sexual-imperial fantasy of the Arab sultans remains in the Western representation of the conventional view of social relations among the Oriental people.

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