

Of Rites of Narration and Representation of Orient and Occident in Thomas Heywood's Fair Maid of the West

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Abstract : Thomas Heywood was an outstanding, prolific playwright of the period, writing both in prose and verse. Unlike Shakespeare in particular, Heywood could be considered as a playwright who was well informed about Morocco and wrote in greater detail about a possible dialogue among cultures. As it is a historical platform for power relations, The Fair Maid of the West recalled the heroism and excitement of English counterattacks against Spain in the Post-Armada period. This paper therefore pins down the acts of narration and representation of Morocco and Moroccans and examines how the Occident has contributed to the production of the Orient and finally attests to the metamorphosis the plot undergoes in Part I and Part II. As an adventure play, The Fair Maid of the West teaches about, informs of and confirms the existing patterns of virtue in European voyagers and at the same time it asserts how honor and chastity are European par excellence whereas villainy and wickedness are Oriental assets. Once taken captive, these virtues and traits are put into task as the plot disentangles. This paper also examines how the play in both parts generates a whole history of stereotypes about Morocco and unexpectedly subverts this stereotype; such a biased mode of narration of the Orient the playwright took up at first was played down at a later phase in the narrative.

Keywords : Heywood, Occident, Orientalism, Stereotype, Virtue

Conference Title : ICAHAH 2021 : International Conference on Arts, Humanities and Art History

Conference Location : Vienna, Austria

Conference Dates : June 21-22, 2021