

THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE

360° SERIES

VIEWFINDER: FACTS AND PERSPECTIVES
ON THE PLAY, PLAYWRIGHT, AND PRODUCTION

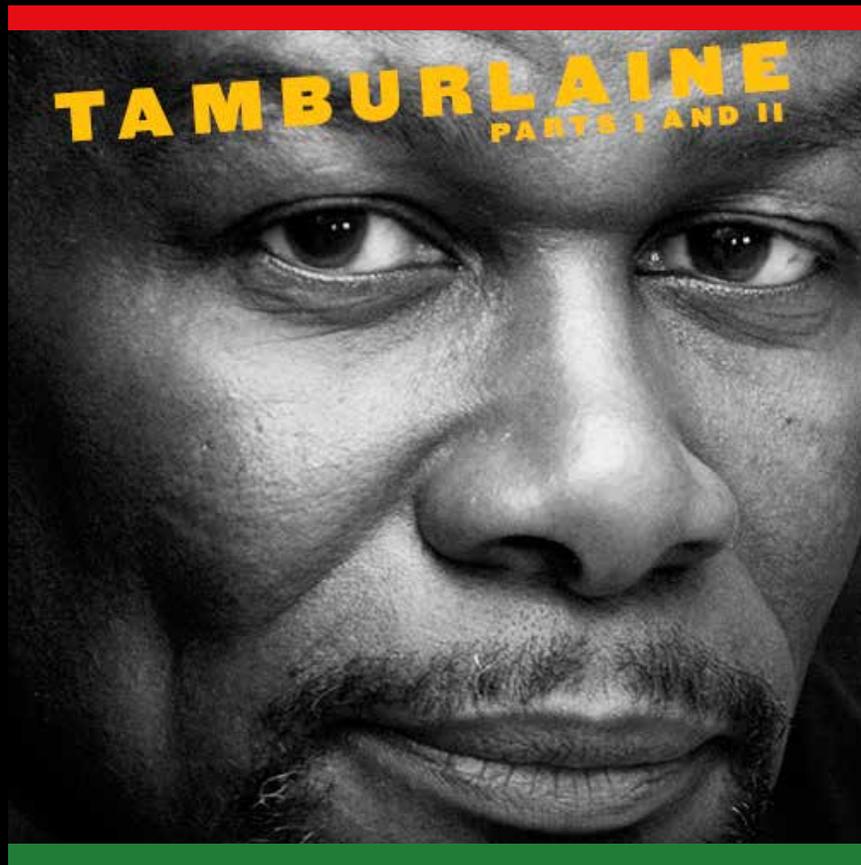


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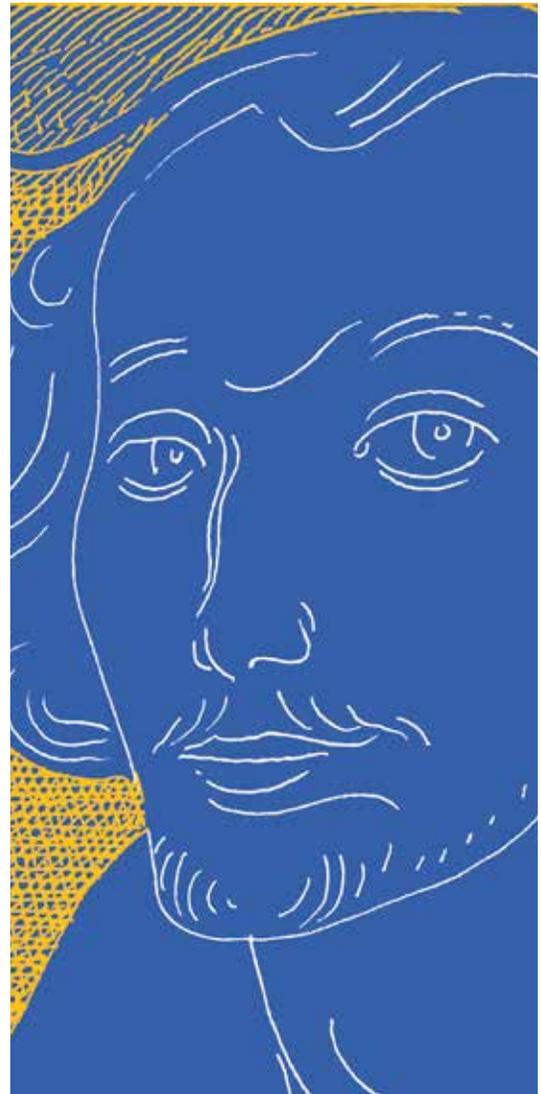
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DIALOGUES WHY TAMBURLAINE – NOW?

RICHARD C. McCOY

Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* was a huge hit in its own day, but it's less well known today and not often performed. Twenty-first century audiences may find it provocative and brutally cruel, hard to take and deeply disturbing.

So why bring this play to Polonsky Shakespeare Center now? Michael Boyd, this production's brilliant director, provides one answer when he says that *Tamburlaine* presents a "horribly familiar world." Current news reports confront us daily with comparable scenes of degradation and death, and our own period seems to be reverting to endless religious warfare. In Marlowe's play, Christians prove more treacherous than Muslims, breaking vows made in Christ's name, but it's not clear whether their defeat is divine justice or bad luck. The historical Timur the Lame was a devout Muslim, but Marlowe's character is most definitely not. *Tamburlaine* declares allegiance to and war on almost every conceivable deity, ranging from pagan spirits through the classical pantheon, and *Tamburlaine* assigns Jove, "the chiefest God" (I.4.2.8), almost monotheist Abrahamic powers. He briefly evokes, and then spectacularly denies "Mahomet." Skeptical references to Christ and the Bible could never get past the government official who licensed plays for performance, but Marlowe could have *Tamburlaine* burn the Qu'ran. Even then, Marlowe hedges his bets by having *Tamburlaine* fall fatally ill shortly after this final blasphemy.

Tamburlaine's provocative speeches and audacious hero thrilled its early audiences, but some contemporaries criticized Marlowe for "daring God out of Heaven with that Atheist *Tamburlaine*." Accusations of atheism proliferated before and after the playwright was killed in a tavern brawl under notoriously mysterious circumstances in 1593. His activities as a government spy and double agent may have led to his death; everyone there was an agent of Queen Elizabeth I's secret service. Invocations of *Tamburlaine* in public protests were probably also factors since these disorders prompted growing paranoia and persecution of thought crimes. Catholicism was deemed heresy, heresy was conflated with atheism, blasphemy

with anarchy, and Marlowe stood accused of all these and homosexuality too. Alarmed by his challenges to orthodox conformity, one detractor wrote, "all men in Christianity ought to endeavor that the mouth of so dangerous a member should be stopped," and after he was killed, preachers held up his murder as "a manifest sign of God's judgment."

Yet Marlowe was also fascinated with theology and the sacred. As a young man, he was awarded a Cambridge scholarship intended for boys who "were likely to proceed in Arts and afterwards make Divinity their study." No other playwright tackles religious questions so boldly. He was praised by another contemporary for valuing his life less than "liberty of speech." His *Doctor Faustus* is a doctor of divinity who dies cursing his diabolical bargain. His *Tamburlaine* is a ferocious warlord who claims for himself "the Power of heaven's eternal majesty" (II.4.1.156). Marlowe's plays address the deepest, most disturbing questions about human motives, emotions, and the abuse of power, whether worldly or, supposedly, divine. Raising such questions is always risky, and Marlowe may have paid with his life. TFANA believes this production of *Tamburlaine* will show why such drama remains worth the risk.

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THE PLAY SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

PART I

Inept King Mycetes of Persia sends troops commanded by Theridamas to apprehend the Scythian shepherd-turned-warrior Tamburlaine, who has become a marauding menace. Mycetes's brother Cosroe meanwhile plots with other Persian lords to usurp the throne. Tamburlaine's men capture Zenocrate, daughter of the Soldan of Egypt, and Tamburlaine vows to make her his wife. Theridamas no sooner arrives to confront Tamburlaine than he switches sides, dazzled by the warrior's words and bearing. Together they help Cosroe defeat Mycetes, but Tamburlaine then turns on Cosroe and takes the crown for himself. Nature has fated him for conquest, he says.

Bajazeth, emperor of the Turks, hears that Tamburlaine plans to attack him and lift his siege of Constantinople. Supported by the kings of Fez, Morocco and Argier, he sends a haughty warning. Tamburlaine verbally duels with Bajazeth before battle, and Zenocrate, who has fallen in love with Tamburlaine, does likewise with Bajazeth's queen Zabina. After Tamburlaine triumphs, Bajazeth and Zabina are led away in humiliation, and Tamburlaine bestows the crowns of Fez, Morocco and Argier on his followers Techelles, Theridamas and Usumcasane, saying "Your births shall be no blemish to your fame."

Tamburlaine's siege-policy is described. At first he pitches white tents indicating general mercy in exchange for immediate surrender. Then the tents turn red meaning that all surviving soldiers will be killed when the town is taken. Finally the tents turn black indicating that no one will be spared. The Soldan of Egypt and the King of Arabia, Zenocrate's former paramour, join the campaign to raise Tamburlaine's siege of Damascus. Fearing for her father Zenocrate begs Tamburlaine to relent. He refuses but promises that her father will be spared. With the tents black, the governor of Damascus sends a delegation of virgins to beg mercy. Tamburlaine has them impaled. The abused Bajazeth and Zabina commit suicide in their cages as Tamburlaine triumphs. The Soldan blesses Zenocrate and Tamburlaine's union, she is crowned queen of Persia, and he declares a "truce with all the world" before leaving to consecrate his marriage.

PART II

King Orcanes of Natolia debates with Muslim allies whether to attack the Christian King Sigismund of Hungary or join forces with him against their common enemy Tamburlaine, who is amassing forces against the Turks. The two sides parley and agree on a truce, but Sigismund is convinced by his allies to break his oath. Orcanes defeats and kills him. Zenocrate falls ill and dies, after which Tamburlaine orders her interred in a coffin he will keep with him on his journeys. Two of the couple's three sons, Celebinus and Amyras, share Tamburlaine's lust for war; the other, Calyphas, does not.

Bajazeth's son Callapine, imprisoned by Tamburlaine, escapes by promising to make his captor Almeda a king. Arriving home, he is crowned Emperor of

CHARACTERS

PART I

TAMBURLAINE, a Scythian shepherd
ZENOCRATE, daughter to the Soldan of Egypt
TECHELLES, follower of Tamburlaine
USUMCASANE, follower of Tamburlaine
MYCETES, King of Persia
COSROE, brother of Mycetes
MEANDER, Persian Lord
THERIDAMAS, Persian Lord
ORTYGIUS, Persian Lord
CENEUS
MENAPHON
AGYDAS, Median Lord
SUCEAVUS
BAJAZETH, Emperor of the Turks
ZABINA, wife of Bajazeth
ANIPPE, maid to Zabina
EBEA, maid to Zabina
MAGNETES, Median Lord
KING OF FEZ
KING OF MOROCCO
KING OF ARGIER
KING OF ARABIA
SOLDAN OF EGYPT
GOVERNOR OF DAMASCUS
CAPOLIN, an Egyptian
PHILEMUS

PART II

TAMBURLAINE, a Scythian shepherd
ZENOCRATE, wife of Tamburlaine
CALYPHAS, son of Tamburlaine
AMYRAS, son of Tamburlaine
CELEBINUS, son of Tamburlaine
TECHELLES
USUMCASANE
THERIDAMAS
ORCANES, King of Natolia
KING OF JERUSALEM
KING OF TREBIZON
KING OF SORIA
SIGISMUND, King of Hungary

THE PLAY SYNOPSIS AND CHARACTERS

Turkey by Orcanes and together they resolve to defeat Tamburlaine. Almeda, offered a crown by Callapine in Tamburlaine's presence, asks Tamburlaine's permission to take it. In the wealthy town of Balsera, Olympia, wife of a valorous Captain killed in battle with Tamburlaine, stoically kills her son and then tries to kill herself, but Theridamas is struck by her beauty and stops her, vowing to win her affection. Tamburlaine's forces meet the Turks at Aleppo, where he and Orcanes trade taunts before a battle in which Amyras and Celebinus fight bravely while Calyphas lingers behind playing cards. Tamburlaine's response is to kill Calyphas, calling him a "coward villain, not my son."

Olympia, beset by Theridamas's persistent advances, tricks him into executing her. In a chariot drawn by the captive kings of Trebizon and Soria, Tamburlaine assaults and conquers Babylon, then commits a series of breathtakingly savage acts. He orders the city's governor chained to the walls and shot; the exhausted kings released from harness, hanged, and replaced with Orcanes and the King of Jerusalem; the entire population of Babylon drowned; and the city's holy books burned. Then he suddenly falls ill. As Callapine's Turkish forces wait patiently to attack him, Tamburlaine briefly rouses himself to rally his troops before illness incapacitates him. He passes his title and crown to Amyras, and dies.

CALLAPINE, son of Bajazeth and prisoner to Tamburlaine

Lords of Buda and Bohemia:

FREDERICK

BALDWIN

ALMEDA, keeper of Baldwin

GOVERNOR OF BABYLON

CAPTAIN OF BALSERA

OLYMPIA, wife of the Captain of Balsera

OLYMPIA'S SON

ANIPPE

MAXIMUS

PERDICAS, a physician

THE PLAY SOURCES: TIMUR THE LAME

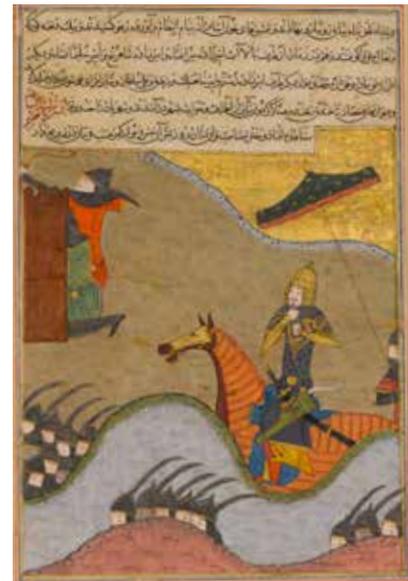
Although it is a tired old saw, it is, nevertheless, a true one—history is written by the victors. As regimes and dynasties change, each new ruler adds layer upon layer to the palimpsest of history, attempting to make their narrative the dominant one. An excellent example comes from Marlowe’s own time, in the aftermath of the Wars of the Roses. The Tudor monarchs, attempting to shore up a less than stellar claim to the English throne, vilified their predecessors, the results of which are seen most obviously in the legends surrounding Richard III. Even within the Tudor dynasty, each succeeding monarch took pains to establish themselves as somehow superior to the one before, particularly Elizabeth and Mary, who both suffered from questions over their legitimacy raised by Henry VIII’s marriage contretemps. Elizabeth proved herself to be arguably the most effective at this tactic, in part due to her patronage of the arts. Similarly, Timur¹, the historical basis for Marlowe’s Tamburlaine, worked consciously throughout his reign to shape his own image. Marlowe’s play employs some of the basic facts about Timur’s conquests, but the figure of Tamburlaine, distorted by prejudice, denigrated by later sources, and exaggerated for dramatic effect, bears little resemblance to the much more nuanced Timur of the historical record.²

Born sometime in the 1320s or 1330s in Transoxiana, a region straddling the nomad steppes and the Middle East³, Timur was culturally mixed, as suited the liminality of his homeland. Transoxiana was a part of the Chaghatai Khanate⁴ of the Mongol Empire, and although a member of the Mongol Barlas tribe, Timur spoke Turkic and Persian rather than Mongol, and was Muslim.⁵ Through both alliances and brute force, he gradually gained control over a large portion of the Chaghatai region, and went on to expand his empire from the lands of the Ottomans all the way to India. Because his origins were humble, however, he employed various strategies to legitimize his rule. Not being a descendant of Genghis Khan, he could not take the title of khan for himself, and instead established a puppet khan who ruled in name only, while he styled himself *amir*, or commander. Additionally, he married Saray Malik Khanum, a descendant of Genghis Khan, which allowed him to claim a connection to the Mongol warlord.⁶ Nor could he call himself caliph, as that title was reserved for members of the tribe of the Prophet Mohammed.⁷

Infamously, Marlowe’s Tamburlaine burns a Qu’ran, challenging Mohammed to smite him for blasphemy, and questioning his power (*Part 2*, 5.1). In reality, although his personal religious fervor cannot be ascertained, Timur “established



“Tamerlanes Tartarorum imper Potentiss” in *The General Historie of the Turkes* by Richard Knolles, 1603; © The Trustees of the British Museum, London



“Conquest of Baghdad by Timur” from a *Zafarnama (Book of Victories)* by Sharaf al-din ‘Ali Yazdi, 1435–36; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

1 Although many forms exist for the translated versions of the names contained in this article, I have chosen to standardize them throughout to the most common and recognizable, i.e. “Genghis Khan” instead of “Chinggis Khan.” “Tamburlaine” itself is an anglicized version of “Timur-i lang” or “Timur the Lame,” also spelled “Tamerlane.”

2 For a discussion of the evolution of European views on Tamburlaine, see Milwright, Marcus. “So Despicable a Vessel: Representations of Tamerlane in Printed Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.” *Muqamas* 23 (2006): 317-44. For a larger discussion the effect of the complicated relationship between early modern England and the Islamic world on English theater, see Vitkus, Daniel. *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean*. New York: Palgrave, 2003, or the works of scholar Nabil Matar.

3 On modern maps, this region includes parts of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan.

4 A designation for the section of the Mongol empire ruled by the second son of Genghis Khan.

5 Manz, Beatrice Forbes. “Tamerlane’s Career and Its Uses.” *Journal of World History* 13.1 (2002). p. 2.

6 Manz, Beatrice Forbes. «Sarāy Malik Khānum.» *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE*. Edited by: Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson. Brill Online, 2014.

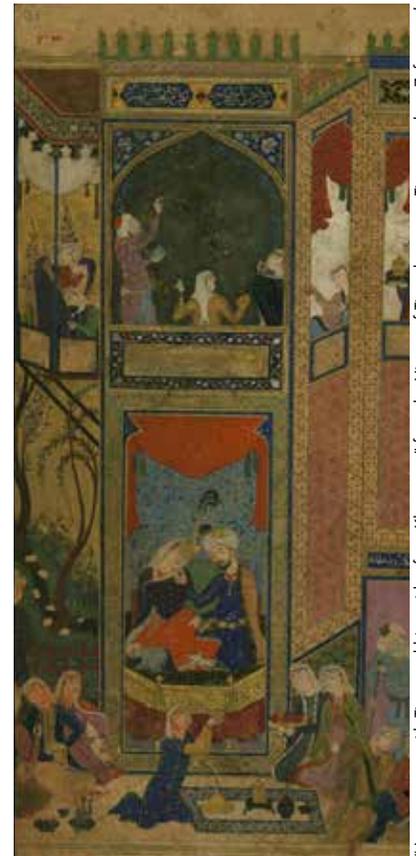
7 Manz, “Tamerlane’s Career,” 4.

THE PLAY SOURCES: TIMUR THE LAME

his position as a promoter of Islam through patronage of scholars, construction of religious buildings, and campaigns for the spread of the faith.”¹ Despite being illiterate himself, he famously debated with scholars and defeated great chessmasters, supporting both scholars and religious figures in his court in Samarkand.² Timur commissioned histories to be written about his reign, and successfully established himself as a folk hero, whose memory continues to be invoked in some areas of his empire.³ During Timur’s lifetime, he welcomed ambassadors from countries including England, France, and Venice, who saw him as a common enemy of the Ottomans.⁴

So where do the legends of his great cruelty and impiety come from? As a conqueror, displays of cruelty were inevitable, but Beatrice Manz writes that the infamous massacres took place rarely, and only in rebellious cities that did not submit to his rule.⁵ In that sense, Marlowe’s depiction of the white, red, and black tents, although drawn from garbled, second- and third-hand European accounts, has some basis in fact - he did offer cities the chance to surrender without major bloodshed.⁶ After subduing a city, Timur often left local rulers in power, expecting them to pay taxes and follow his mandates.⁷ To the Ottoman Empire, however, with which England shared so many trade connections by the end of the 16th century, Timur was a conqueror. Contrary to Marlowe’s depiction, Timur supposedly treated Bayezid well during his captivity.⁸ After Timur’s death, the four sons of the previous sultan, Bayezid, warred amongst themselves for control of the fledgling Ottoman Empire, which was poised on the brink of becoming the great power so familiar to Marlowe’s audience.⁹ The Ottoman rulers clearly had many reasons to vilify Timur in the wake of his death as they struggled to solidify their rule. Manz suggests that the famous massacres were designed to incite both fear and respect, meant to imitate the methods of the Mongol invasion. His actions, then, “put him into the ranks of world conquerors whose successes were so spectacular that they had to represent the will of God. The question of good and evil seems to be secondary in the histories of his exploits. Whether he was the scourge of God or a warrior for the faith was less important than the scale of his undertaking.”¹⁰

Timur died in 1405, having initiated what would have been his greatest undertaking—an invasion of China. Timur’s lack of interest in solidifying a powerful imperial government, and the struggle for succession among his sons, led to the disintegration of the empire after his death.¹¹



"A court scene with Timur and his maiden from Khwarezm", from the History of Timur, known as *Timurnamah* or *Zafarnamah* by 'Abd Allah Hatifi, c. 1500, copied by Pir 'Alī al-Jami, 16th century; The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

1 Manz, "Tamerlane's Career," 6.

2 Manz, "Tamerlane's Career," 5.

3 Manz, Beatrice F. «Timūr Lang.» *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*. Edited by: P Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs. Brill Online, 2014.

4 Manz, "Timūr Lang."

5 Manz, "Tamerlane's Career," 4.

6 Milwright, 320.

7 Beckwith, Christopher I. *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present*. Princeton: Princeton University Press (2011). p. 200.

8 Manz, "Timūr Lang."

9 Lindner, Rudi Paul. "Anatolia, 1300-1451." *The Cambridge History of Turkey Volume 1: Byzantium to Turkey 1071-1453*. Ed. Fleet, Kate. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. p. 133.

10 Manz, "Tamerlane's Career," 4-5.

11 Beckwith 200.

DIALOGUES ELIZABETH'S TURKISH TRADE AND MARLOWE'S *TAMBURLAINE* TRAP

JONATHAN BURTON



It is difficult to imagine a contemporary equivalent to Christopher Marlowe's choice of a fourteenth-century Turko-Mongol warlord as a subject for popular entertainment. The historical Timur had no immediate impact on English culture or history, and many audience members would have been entirely unfamiliar with him or the military campaigns that he undertook two centuries prior to the 1587 staging of Marlowe's play. Those English texts that had taken an interest in historical Muslims had, more often than not, described figures like Timur as barbarous and bloodthirsty, "princes of darkness," associated with tyranny, terror and the antichrist. What then might have drawn Marlowe and his audiences to this fascinating but seemingly remote subject?

In taking up the story of a long-passed Muslim conqueror, Marlowe tapped into commercial and diplomatic interests in Asian, Near-Eastern and Northern African markets as well as anxieties over the cultural exchanges accompanying

detail, "Europae" in *Theatrum orbis terrarum* by Abraham Ortelius, 1570; Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington, D.C.

such ventures. English joint stock companies in the last quarter of the sixteenth century were exploring trade in precisely those areas of North Africa and the Levant that Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays traverse. The English were eager to expand their economy but concerned, too, with maintaining their standing in what Sir Thomas More referred to as "the common corps of Christendom." After all, trading ventures in the Islamic world exposed the English to accusations of degeneracy and even heresy from domestic critics and competing continental powers.

Set two hundred years in the past, *Tamburlaine* offered a historically remote site for English considerations of the benefits, risks and cultural implications of English trade in non-Christian lands. This is not to say that Marlowe was rehearsing a rhetoric of legitimation to justify increased

ELIZABETH'S TURKISH TRADE AND MARLOWE'S TAMBURLAINE TRAP JONATHAN BURTON

contact with Muslims. Instead, Marlowe's plays seem most interested in laying bare the ways in which religious rhetoric could be strategically amplified or muted to serve economic and political interests. Moreover, in taking up his subject a second time in a sequel motivated, according to its prologue, by "the general welcomes Tamburlaine received, / When he arrived last upon our stage," Marlowe manages a brilliant and disquieting feat: He traps audiences into confronting the inconsistencies in their own beliefs.

For Marlowe, a model of shifting, politically expedient attitudes toward religious difference was available in the foreign policy of his own government. In the last quarter of the sixteenth century, English diplomats recognized that frayed relationships between the Ottomans and the French created an opening for Anglo-Ottoman trade. In his 1578 "Memorandum on the Turkey Trade," Queen Elizabeth I's spymaster and principal secretary, Sir Francis Walsingham, cautioned that an embassy to the Turks "is to be handled with great secrecy" and that "it shall be very well done to *give out* that in respect of the danger of the traffic her majesty cannot be induced that her subjects shall trade thither." Walsingham recognized that any alliance with the Ottomans could be perceived as an act of heresy, especially in the eyes of Catholic rivals that had called for Elizabeth's excommunication earlier in the decade. Thus, from its foundation, England's policy on trade with the Ottoman Empire depended upon saying one thing and doing another. It had no genuine concern with religious difference, only one that was sometimes *given out* depending upon the party to whom it was given or made available.

Anglo-Ottoman trade developed despite the protests of continental rivals and a domestic tradition associating Turks with the devil. Reporting on his inability to check English commercial advances, the French ambassador Jacques de Germigny reported that the English "brought in a large amount of steel and bits of broken images of brass and latten [copper] to cast ordnance, and promise to bring in a great deal more of it secretly in future, which is a form of contraband hateful and pernicious to all Christendom." If such promises were made, the English were careful not to make them public. None of the correspondence between Elizabeth and Murad mentions

this arms trade. However, Elizabeth's first letter to Murad was carried aboard the *Prudence*, a ship that Bernardino Mendoza, Spain's ambassador to England, alleged, in a report of December 1579, to be carrying a cargo of "bell-metal and tin to the value of twenty thousand crowns."

Where Mendoza and de Germigny's letters detailing dangerous "infidels" and acts "hateful and pernicious to Christendom" seek to expose, Queen Elizabeth's correspondence with the Ottoman Sultan Murad III is characterized instead by rhetorical obfuscation. Elizabeth's exchange of letters with Murad is striking for the ways in which both writers mute or qualify religious difference while emphasizing a specious doctrinal similarity. In other correspondence, Murad makes no effort to downplay his religious identity. So, for example in a letter to the French King Henri III, defending his admission of English merchants, Murad insists "our felicitous Porte is always open, with the praise of Allah, exalted be He!" Phrases like this are absent from his correspondence with Elizabeth where he conspicuously removes references to the divine as in his identification of himself as "Murad Shah, son of Selim Shah Khan, he who is granted victory always." The ambiguity about who is doing the granting is mirrored and complemented by Elizabeth's careful treatment of the divine. In requesting that Murad authorize the release of Englishmen held captive in Ottoman slave galleys, she assures him that she will seek for the Sultan the blessings of "God who only is above all things, and all men, and is a most severe revenger of all idolatry, and is jealous of his honor against the false gods of the nations." As she does elsewhere in this correspondence, Elizabeth emphasizes shared doctrine, rendering Protestants and Muslims alike in their opposition to polytheism and idolatry (a charge regularly levelled against Catholics who adorned their churches with statues and stained glass windows depicting Christ, Mary and various saints).

The same conditional activation and suspension of religious prejudice is apparent in and essential to Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays. So where critics have sometimes described the spectacularly violent and brilliantly eloquent *Tamburlaine* as "morally ambiguous," it may be more pertinent to consider *Tamburlaine* as a device constructed to explore the moral ambiguities in early modern English

ELIZABETH'S TURKISH TRADE AND MARLOWE'S TAMBURLAINE TRAP JONATHAN BURTON

ideas about religious difference. In other words, Marlowe's unstable and even contradictory representation of his title character is, in fact, no more ambiguous than his queen and country's curious relationship with Islam and the Ottoman Empire. Tamburlaine's religious identity simply shifts with the plays' shifting circumstances.

The historical Timur was a Muslim. Those pledging allegiance to him upon his coronation in Samarkand were asked to swear on the Qur'an. He kept with him an official Islamic counselor, and on two occasions massacred the Christian population while sparing the Muslims of a resisting garrison. This brand of detail is wholly missing from Marlowe's first play. Throughout the first two acts, issues of religious difference are significantly muted: Tamburlaine speaks anachronistically of Olympian gods. He is juxtaposed to the Sultan Bajazeth who claims Muhammad as a kinsman and swears "by the holy Alcoran" to make Tamburlaine "a chaste and lustless eunuch" for his attempt to oppose the Turkish siege of Constantinople. Rather than seeking to spare the lives of opposing Muslims, Marlowe's Tamburlaine defies Bajazeth and his faith, proposing to "rouse the him out of Europe...and then enlarge / [the Turk's] Christian captives." So, if Bajazeth is tailored to represent Islam's threat to Europe, Tamburlaine exemplifies instead the way in which Muslims could be strategically aligned with European interests as long as their religious difference was either silenced or recast as sameness.

Throughout acts three and four of *Part One*, each amplification of the Turks' Muslim identity is followed by a mystification of Tamburlaine's religious difference. Thus when Bajazeth calls upon "holy priests of heavenly Mahomet" to poison Tamburlaine, the conqueror insists upon his safety from such curses as the scourge of the "chiefest god." If Tamburlaine never clearly identifies himself with any particular religion, a defeated Bajazeth recognizes and gives voice to *Part One's* conflation of Tamburlaine and European Christendom. He realizes that Tamburlaine's victory is Christendom's victory, and correspondingly,

Now will the Christian miscreants be glad,
Ringing with joy their superstitious bells,
And making bonfires for my overthrow.

If *Part One* ended with the defeat of Bajazeth, the play might be considered an unqualified example of how rhetorics of legitimation are employed. Tamburlaine would remain, ahistorically, the protector of Christendom, while Bajazeth would be contrastingly figured as the Turkish Antichrist. Instead, the emergence of Tamburlaine's savagery, marked by a contrasting humanization of Bajazeth and Zabina, unsettles the play's closure and elicits an experience of misgiving in its audience.

As the audience grows less and less comfortable with Tamburlaine's mounting brutality, his wife Zenocrate gives voice to these anxieties and activates a degree of religious difference, creating a buffer between the audience and Tamburlaine. She, too, is distressed by the slaughter of "heavenly virgins and unspotted maids," the sight of "streets strowed with dissevered joints of men" and finally the "bloody spectacle" of Bajazeth and Zabina. In her anguish, she turns to the heavens to seek a pardon for Tamburlaine, but this time her addressee is "holy Mahomet." Zenocrate's shift strategically distances Tamburlaine from Christianity as his brutality becomes more conspicuous. In other words, as Timur's Muslim identity becomes visible in Marlowe's Tamburlaine, his shaping by ideology becomes more apparent: when he is Europe's protector, Tamburlaine is distanced from Islam. When Europe is secure, Tamburlaine's brutality and Muslim identity emerge together as if congenitally linked.

If *Part One* only briefly and in its final scenes confronts the audience with its conditional embrace of a Muslim conqueror, *The Second Part of Tamburlaine the Great* sets up that embrace as a premise before proceeding to anatomize it. The sequel begins with a conflict that seems to replicate the early dynamic of *Part One*. Tamburlaine is again off-stage, and Europeans are again threatened with Turkish conquest and the prospect of "Turkey blades...glid[ing] through all their throats." As in the first play, Tamburlaine appears to protect Europe and her mercantile interests from Ottoman violence. He plans to assault Turkish Natolia, "and for that cause" one Turkish leader decides "the Christians shall have peace." Yet this is where the similarities between the two plays end.

In the first play, Tamburlaine's responses to Turkish threats

ELIZABETH'S TURKISH TRADE AND MARLOWE'S TAMBURLAINE TRAP JONATHAN BURTON

tend to distance him from Islam. In the second it is more difficult to demarcate the two until, finally, Tamburlaine and those about him out-“Turk” the Ottomans in their cruelty. Tamburlaine’s armies are no longer concerned with protecting Christian European interests. Instead, they place Europe and its trade in jeopardy. What’s more, if Tamburlaine’s religious difference is generally muted in the first play, it is foregrounded in the second. Indeed, he now vows “by sacred Mahomet” to defeat his enemies. Complicating matters for an audience seeking a point of allegiance, the play’s Christians act despicably and irreligiously and are routed from the play. Absent the triangulating force of European interests, the audience is asked to choose between a monstrous Tamburlaine they had previously embraced and the Turks they had previously scorned.

The soaring rhetorician of Part I gives way to a spectacular sadist, and in a series of episodes offering discordant echoes of the first play, Tamburlaine’s mercilessness draws sympathy to his Muslim victims. So, for example, Tamburlaine’s alliance with Theridimas and skillful conciliation of the Soldan in the first play are rewritten in Part Two as Callapine’s unflagging opposition and Almeda’s betrayal. His moves toward friendship and family in the first play are answered, in the second, with Tamburlaine’s slaughtering of his own son. Likewise Tamburlaine’s captivating seduction of Zenocrate in *Part One* warps into Theridimas’s near-rape of Olympia in *Part Two*. When his enemies describe Tamburlaine as a “damned monster...a fiend of hell,” audiences must concede that they share a sense of disgust with the Turk.

But Marlowe is not through with his audience even when he has made them identify with the Turks. He has only now fully set his trap. Tamburlaine orders his men to burn the Qur’an in defiance of the Prophet. For members of an Elizabethan audience, this might seem a praiseworthy act. Yet Tamburlaine is made to perform this, his most anti-Islamic act, when he is at the height of his repellent viciousness: he has just issued the order to “drown them all, man, woman, and child.” The effect is to equate virulent anti-Islamicism with the sort of cruelty and violence early modern Europeans associated with Islam. For the audience of the second play it is impossible to assimilate

Tamburlaine, impossible to fully distance Tamburlaine by attributing his actions to Islam, and impossible to see Christianity as an exemplary negation of Islam.

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DIALOGUES TAMBURLAINE IN HIS ELEMENT

TANYA POLLARD

Marlowe's Tamburlaine is famously irresistible. His spectacular conquests include not only kingdoms and empires, but also the English stage, which resonated with echoes of his thundering speech long after he first captivated its audiences. The play depicts him as a force of nature, like a meteor or volcano. "Nature," Tamburlaine explains, "that framed us of four elements / Warring within our breasts for regiment, / Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds" (I, 2.7.18-20). As he suggests, early modern medical theory held that the body was composed of elements, mirroring the external world, of which it was a microcosm. Yet these warring elements, like the play's warring armies, are not equal. Tamburlaine derides that which "is gross and like the massy earth / That moves not upwards" (I, 2.7.31-32); the oceans, to which Bajazeth likens his vast troops, prove soft and susceptible (I, 3.1.10), and references to plants only serve

to reflect Mycetes' weak and quivering men (I, 2.4.4). Unlike the fertile botanical bowers that frame so many of Shakespeare's plays, or the gritty urban environments of Jonson's comedies, Tamburlaine's landscape—like his own body—teems with metal. "I hold the Fates bound fast in iron chains" (I, 1.2.174), he announces, and subsequent scenes show him and his men "in armour clad, / ... Shaking their swords, their spears and iron bills" (I, 4.1.21-25). When Ortygius wonders "of what mould or mettle he be made" (I, 2.6.17), he refers to Tamburlaine's general constitution, but audiences also hear the metal that glints in and around him through the play.

Although Tamburlaine's metallic quality is distinctive,

The Hero of a Hundred Fights by Joseph Mallord William Turner, c.1800–10, reworked and exhibited 1847; Tate Britain, London



TAMBURLAINE IN HIS ELEMENT TANYA POLLARD

his Scythian race more generally evoked hard, mineral substances in the early modern imagination. *Edward III* refers to “a flint-heart Scythian” (2.1.72), and the anonymous Elizabethan play *A Yorkshire Tragedy* describes the “Scythians in their marble-hearted fates” as “Unnatural, flinty, more than barbarous” (8.16-17); in Fletcher’s and Massinger’s *The Double Marriage*, an admired mistress is “chaster than crystal on the Scythian cliffs” (3.3.113). Tamburlaine’s steely invincibility represents a hyperbolic version of the Scythians’ notorious flintiness. “Draw forth thy sword, thou mighty man-at-arms,” he tells Theridamas, “Intending but to raze my charmed skin, / And Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven / To ward the blow and shield me safe from harm” (I, 1.2.178-80). Forged of an impermeable substance, Tamburlaine’s skin cannot be pierced—except, ultimately, by himself—and this elemental extremity distinguishes him from ordinary men. When Shakespeare’s Beatrice tells her uncle she will not marry “till God make men of some other metal than earth,” she implicitly imagines an element of Tamburlaine’s caliber. “Would it not grieve a woman to be overmastered with a piece of valiant dust?,” she continues, “to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl?” (*Much Ado*, 2.1.50-53). For Tamburlaine, the idea of subordination to such earthly elements is not so much grievous as unthinkable.

Of all the metals that pervade the play, Tamburlaine is most attracted to gold, the king of elements. Upon hearing of the gilded Persian horsemen—“Their plumed helms are wrought with beaten gold, / Their swords enameled, and about their necks / Hangs massy chains of gold down to the waist” (I, 1.2.124-126)—he is sufficiently impressed to offer them a parley, which he opens with his own matching display of magnificence. “Lay out our golden wedges to the view,” he tells his soldiers, “That their reflection may amaze the Persians” (I, 1.2.139-40). Tamburlaine sees gold as his due. “See how [Jove] rains down heaps of gold in showers,” he tells Theridamas, “As if he meant to give my soldiers pay” (I.1.2.182-83). Imagining the glimmering wealth of Damascus, he tells his men that the god of war will “fill your helmets full of gold / And make Damascus’ spoils as rich to you / As was to Jason Colchos’ golden fleece” (I, 4.4.7-9). His soldiers will not only wear gold, but drink it, “in quaffing bowls, / Ay, liquid gold” (II, 1.6.95-96),

coating their internal organs in the metal to embody fully its hard, gleaming perfection. And when Tamburlaine experiences a terrible loss, he turns to gold for consolation and commemoration. “Where’er her soul be,” he tells Zenocrate’s corpse, “thou shalt stay with me / Embalmed with cassia, ambergris, and myrrh, / Not lapped in lead but in a sheet of gold” (II, 2.4.129-131).

Gold attracts Tamburlaine because it represents absolute power. It evokes not only the sun, the “golden ball of heaven’s eternal fire” (II, 2.4.2), but also the “perfect bliss and sole felicity, /The sweet fruition of an earthly crown” (I, 2.7.29). “A god is not so glorious as a king,” he tells Theridamas and his men;

I think the pleasure they enjoy in heaven
Cannot compare with kingly joys in earth.
To wear a crown enchased with pearl and gold,
Whose virtues carry with it life and death,
To ask, and have, command and be obeyed,
When looks breed love, with looks to gain the
prize—
Such power attractive shines in princes’ eyes.
(I, 2.5.57-64)

It is by reflecting the metal of their crowns that kings exert a “power attractive,” a magnetic pull that later echoes in Hamlet’s sly reference to Ophelia’s erotic appeal: “No, good mother, here’s metal more attractive” (*Hamlet*, 3.2.116). Tamburlaine’s attraction to crowns suggests an uncanny sympathy between their perfect metallic constitution and his own. Just as he, “the chiefest lamp of all the earth” (I, 4.2.36), mirrors and partakes of the sun’s power, so he shares and reflects the glow of the golden crowns that symbolize earthly sovereignty. His instincts lead him unerringly to them; when Mycetes tries to protect his crown by hiding it in a hole on the battlefield, Tamburlaine instantly appears at his side, as if physically drawn. Radiating through his person and words, this magnetic metallic force exerts its power over not only his followers, who find themselves unaccountably drawn to him, but also his enemies, who yield inexorably to his force.

Metal conducts currents, and Tamburlaine—also identified with thunder and lightning—is known for galvanizing

TAMBURLAINE IN HIS ELEMENT TANYA POLLARD

audiences both onstage and off. The striking popularity of *Tamburlaine the Great* quickly spawned its sequel, and both plays inspired revivals, imitations, allusions, and parodies. Tamburlaine's influence on Shakespeare is legendary. Maybe most famously, Tamburlaine's impatient outburst, "Holla, ye pampered jades of Asia! / What can ye draw but twenty miles a day...?" (II, 4.2.1-2), echoes in Pistol's reference to "pack-horses / And hollow pampered jades of Asia, / Which cannot go but thirty mile a day" (2 *Henry 4*, 2.4.162-64). Similarly, Tamburlaine's account of the "stars that reigned at my nativity" (I, 2.4.33) resonates in Glendower's insistence that "at my nativity / The front of heaven was full of fiery shapes" (1 *Henry 4*, 3.1.13-14). Other writers were quick to mock Tamburlaine's extravagant speech: in John Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, one character ridicules another with, "Rampum, scrapum, mount tufty Tamburlaine! What rattling thunder clap breaks from his lips?" (Induction, 91-92), and Ben Jonson complained about "the Tamerlanes and Tamer-chams of the late age" (*Timber*, 95). Yet in their ongoing invocations of Tamburlaine, these writers testify to his residual magnetic pull. In Plato's *Ion*, Socrates uses the image of a magnet, or lodestone, to describe the nature of poetic power. "For this stone not only attracts iron rings," Socrates explains, "but also imparts to them a power whereby they in turn are able to do the very same thing as the stone, and attract other rings" (Plato, *Ion*, 533d). Similarly, he goes on to explain, the Muse infuses her magnetic power into poets, who in turn inspire their performers, who draw on this same power to move their audiences. Tamburlaine might be this sort of a lodestone, his metallic elements exerting a gravitational pull on his listeners both on and off the stage. Or perhaps the lodestone is Marlowe, who coined Tamburlaine's distinctive idiom, and whose interest in metals is attested by his arrest for counterfeiting coins. When the chorus of Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth* yearns for a muse of fire, perhaps it had to imagine its own element to compete with Marlowe's muse of metal. Tamburlaine, in his element, responds to some magnetic force, and transmits its power to the actors and audiences that encounter him. •

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THE PLAY PERSPECTIVES

The following quotes are selected perspectives on the play from notable scholars and artists.

I put for a general inclination of all mankind, a perpetual and restless desire of power after power, that ceaseth only in death.

—THOMAS HOBBES, *LEVIATHAN*, 1651

...kings have now fallen into such disrepute that to aspire to sovereignty over others has come to be regarded as a disgraceful if not actually a criminal ambition. But Marlowe's contemporaries would have no trouble in understanding Tamburlaine's drift...The gods who established the world and their rule in it, did so by war. The whole state of Nature is one of perpetual strife...Man is the highest of the creatures and the perfection of his nature is to rule the world. Given the law of strife, the highest state of that perfection is to rule man himself. But those who actually rule usually do so, not by virtue of their absolute right to do so, for that right has not been tested by contest. This is where Tamburlaine differs from the hereditary kings. He has the natural genius for power and he actually tests it out against all possible contenders.

—A.D. HOPE, "THE ARGUMENT OF ARMS," 1965

"[*Tamburlaine*] is the drama of confidence stretching to such dazzling heights that we forget the wise saws and maxims of mediocrity, and are bewildered into believing with Marlowe that what has never been achieved is by no means therefore unachievable. 'I throw my mind across the chasm,' said the Indian hunter, 'and my horse follows.' That is Marlowe's spirit. The barriers between the possible and the impossible are down.

—UNA ELLIS-FERMOR, *CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE*, 1927

Early in her reign the Queen had declared, it was said, that she did not wish to 'make windows into men's souls,' but the rising tensions of the 1580s had led to mounting vigilance. If her government lacked the technological means of the German Democratic Republic (not to mention our own unleashed national security state), it maintained a small army of informers, listeners, and watchers whose purview extended beyond actual conspiracies to muttered expressions of discontent, ale house banter, and overheated fantasies. Marlowe's plays can be understood against the background of the state's increasingly sophisticated techniques for uncovering what it regarded as hidden threats. His art drew up to the surface dangerous impulses and subversive ideas that were lurking half-formed in the darkness. Thus rumors quickly circulated of restless artisans whose dreams of rebellion were excited by the shepherd Tamburlaine's rise to power.

—STEPHEN GREENBLATT, "WHO KILLED CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE," 2006



detail, "Timur defeating the Khan of the Kipchaks," from the *Safavid illuminated and illustrated copy of the History of Timur*, known as *Timurnamah* or *Zafarnamah*, composed by 'Abd Allah Hatifi (c. 15th century), copied by Pir 'Ali al-Jami, c. 16th century; Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

THE PLAY PERSPECTIVES

...in putting a blazing rhetoric into Tamburlaine's mouth Marlowe expressly recognizes that one of the roads to power is the ability to win people over. Great speech is not only both the guarantor and even the equivalent of great action; it is also in itself a means to power which takes precedence of naked physical aggression. On several occasions Tamburlaine is shown as using it first, as trying to seduce his enemies into his service or into unconditional surrender. Action, we are sometimes made to feel, is only to be resorted to when speech meets with stubbornness or deafness.

—DAVID DAICHES, "LANGUAGE AND ACTION IN MARLOWE'S *TAMBURLAINE*," 1968

...the audience becomes accustomed to charting Tamburlaine's magnificent progress by the ease with which he makes good his most optimistic boasts. He promises to make Bajazeth his footstool and compel the kings of Trebizon and Soria to pull his chariot. It is his glory that he actually carries out his vaunt... But there is another aspect to the realization of hyperbole. For Tamburlaine's word—in both senses of 'word'—becomes a kind of cage too, and the price he pays for making good his hyperbole is the kind of ridiculousness that comes of trying to turn metaphor into fact...His behavior is, after all, curiously literal.

—J.R. MULRYNE AND STEPHEN FENDER, "MARLOWE AND THE 'COMIC DISTANCE,'" 1968

We are accustomed to think of Marlowe's plays as embodying the aspiring mind, as giving to human beings an eloquence denied to us in common life. That is true enough, but, as ever in Marlowe, there is yet another element contrapuntal to this...No dramatist exceeded Marlowe in his use of the human body as a mere property, a thing to be played with as one may play with a ball in a game. On occasion the actor must be prepared to let himself be used simply as an inanimate property.

—CLIFFORD LEECH, *CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE: POET FOR THE STAGE*, 1986

[Queen Elizabeth's] excommunication by Pius V in 1570...positioned her, with the Turks, against the 'papists.' It also made it easier to ignore papal injunctions against the exportation of lead, tin, steel, and other materials for munitions to the 'infidel.' Meanwhile, the continued dismantling of Catholic churches and abbeys meant that these materials were in particular abundance in England. English cargoes included broken bells and images...iron and steel, lead, and copper...In time the term bell metals came to denote the prohibited goods England would ship to Turkish territories...Elizabeth's government recognized that it was not the Muslim Turks who stood threateningly at England's door, but rather the Catholic Spaniards. Continental accusations charging the English with aiding the Turks in the jihad continued through the end of Elizabeth's reign.

—JONATHAN BURTON, "ANGLO-OTTOMAN RELATIONS AND THE IMAGE OF THE TURK IN *TAMBURLAINE*," 2000



Giant by Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, c. 1818; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

THE PLAY SELECTED PERFORMANCE HISTORY

- 1587 Scholars generally agree that *Tamburlaine the Great* (Parts One and Two) and are performed by the Lord Admiral's Men by this time. Edward Alleyn is known for playing the title role.¹
- 1594-5 Philip Henslowe provides a record of performances of both parts of *Tamburlaine* in his diary. The first part is performed fifteen times from August 30, 1594 to November 12, 1595, and the second part is performed seven times from December 19, 1594 to November 13, 1595 demonstrating its popularity with audiences.²
- 1600-1700 *Tamburlaine* probably continued to be performed until the theatres were closed in 1642, but there is no concrete record of these performances.³
- 1919 A production of *Tamburlaine* at Yale University with an all-male amateur cast is the earliest performance of the play on record after 1595. It conflates Parts 1 and 2 in a drastically abridged text prepared by Stephen Vincent Benét and director Edger Montillion Wooley.⁴
- 1933 Producer Nevill Coghill presents another amateur production, this time only of Part 2, at Worcester College at Oxford. It is the first production of *Tamburlaine* in England since early modern times.⁵
- 1948 British director Basil Ashmore adapts Parts One and Two into a single play, but though this version of the text is published, it is not produced.⁶
- 1951 *Tamburlaine* is directed by Tyrone Guthrie at the Old Vic in London. It is the first recorded professional production of the play since 1595. Donald Wolfitt leads the cast. This conflation of the two parts by Guthrie and Wolfitt, which is published in the same year, retains about 59% of Part One and 52% of Part Two.⁷ The production goes on to play one week at Stratford-upon-Avon. Reviews are mostly positive, and emphasize the sheer size, splendor, and spectacle of the production, as well as its horrific brutality. T.S. Eliot comments that it “makes *King Lear* look as if it had been written by Sir James Barrie.”⁸
- 1956 A revival of the Old Vic production from 1951 stars Anthony Quayle. It plays in both Toronto, where it is a success, and in New York, where it is not. Its scheduled eight-week run at the Winter Garden is cancelled after two and a half weeks.⁹



detail, Edward Alleyn, 1626; Dulwich College, London



David Wolfitt, David Waller. Other cast members included Leo McKern, Kenneth Griffith and Jill Balcon in the Old Vic Shakespeare Company of *Tamburlaine the Great*, directed by Tyrone Guthrie, 1952; Victoria and Albert Museum, London

1 Potter, Lois. “Marlowe in theatre and film” in *The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney

2 Dawson, Anthony B. Introduction. *Tamburlaine, Parts One and Two*, by Marlowe. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 1997. vii-xliv. xxix.

3 Beck, Ervin. “Tamburlaine for the Modern Stage.” *Educational Theatre Journal* 23.1 (1971): 62-74, 62.

4 Geckle, George L. *Text & Performance: Tamburlaine and Edward II*. Houndmills: Macmillan Education Ltd, 1988, 47.

5 Geckle, 51.

6 Geckle, 55.

7 Beck, 62.

8 Geckle, 56.

9 Geckle, 61-63.

THE PLAY SELECTED PERFORMANCE HISTORY

- 1964 It is the quartercentenary of Marlowe's birth, and there are a variety of smaller productions of *Tamburlaine*, including a BBC radio production starring Stephen Murray. Two productions, one at Harvard University and the other by the Everyman Theatre in Cheltenham, use Ashmore's 1948 version of the text.¹
- 1972 The Glasgow Citizens Theatre presents *Tamburlaine* at the Ediburgh Festival under the direction of Keith Hack. The adaptation is three acts long with a different actor playing Tamburlaine in each act.
- 1976 Peter Hall directs a major landmark production of *Tamburlaine* for the National Theatre in London with Albert Finney as Tamburlaine, Susan Fleetwood as Zenocrate, and Brian Cox as Theridamas. It opens the National's Olivier Theatre on October 4th. The text is more complete than previous versions, and the run time is four hours with a thirty-minute intermission.
- 1992 The Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford produces *Tamburlaine* in their smaller Swan Theatre in 1992. The production is directed by Terry Hands and stars Antony Sher. It transfers to the Barbican in London the following year. The staging capitalizes on Sher's athleticism, and emphasizes the bloody violence of the play.²
- 2005 David Farr directs a production of *Tamburlaine* at the Bristol Old Vic and the Barbican starring Greg Hicks. The production draws some accusations of censorship because of Farr's decision to alter the scene in which Tamburlaine burns the Qur'an, replacing the Islamic text with holy books in general. Farr defends his artistic choice:
- "What I did in my version was to focus ruthlessly on the philosophical freedom of my lead character in a pared-down version that took the two plays (seven hours) into one three-hour evening... Tamburlaine did burn the Qur'an...but I wanted to make it very clear that his act was a giant two fingers to the entire theological system, not an (sic) piece of Christian triumphalism over the barbarous Turk... His act was a hubristic and nihilistic defiant scream at what he saw as an empty universe."³
- 2007 The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington DC presents *Tamburlaine* in repertory with Marlowe's *Edward II* to open their new Sidney Harman Hall. *Tamburlaine* is directed by the theatre's artistic director, Michael Kahn, with Avery Brooks in the title role.



Antony Sher and Claire Benedict in *Tamburlaine the Great*, directed by Terry Hands and designed by Johan Engels, 1993; photo by Reg Wilson



The cast of the Shakespeare Theatre Company's production of *Tamburlaine*, adapted and directed by Michael Kahn, 2007; photo by Carol Rosegg

1 Geckle, 64-65.

2 Dawson, xxxvi-xxxviii.

3 Farr, David. "Tamburlaine wasn't censored." *The Guardian* 24 November 2005. Online.

THE PLAYWRIGHT BIOGRAPHY

One of the most influential, enigmatic, and popular playwrights of the Elizabethan era, Marlowe is also a seminal figure in theater history. He was the first university graduate to acquire a secure foothold in the large and lucrative public playhouses springing up in London, the first poet to demonstrate the muscular force of blank verse in the mouths of actors (“Marlowe’s mighty line”), the first to recognize the sensational resonance of exotic “outsider” characters, and the first to openly dramatize homoeroticism. All this, along with his singular passion, imagination and rippling eloquence, helped define a new, prototypically modern dramatic form that Shakespeare and others would develop and refine after Marlowe’s death.

The son of a shoemaker, Marlowe was born two months before Shakespeare in Canterbury, old spiritual capital of England—a place where public anxiety over religion had simmered ever since three compulsory changes in state religion were violently enforced between 1547 and 1558. A diligent student, he won scholarships to a prestigious local grammar school and to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he mixed with the wealthy and privileged and earned a BA in 1584. While still a student, he began working as a spy for Queen Elizabeth’s secret service, employed on shadowy missions to foil Catholic conspiracies. In 1587, when Cambridge threatened to deny him his MA due to mysterious unexplained absences from campus, the Queen’s Privy Council wrote to excuse him: he “had done her Majesty good service . . . in matters touching the benefit of his country.”

Seven plays by Marlowe have survived: *Tamburlaine Parts 1 and 2*; *Doctor Faustus*; *Edward II*; *The Jew of Malta*; *Dido, Queen of Carthage*; and *The Massacre at Paris*. *Tamburlaine* is the work that launched his career—a smash hit revived again and again in and beyond his lifetime and his only work published while he lived. It was probably written for the tall, swaggering young star Edward Alleyn, who also first acted the single-minded title roles in *Doctor Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta*. The typical Marlowe hero is a creature of obsessive will, someone who aspires beyond his station, beyond human limitations at times, and whose overreaching passion ultimately destroys him. The bloodshed, callousness and spectacular suffering he instigates stand in counterpoint with the splendor and dignity of his language.

Marlowe’s life was short, precarious and extraordinarily eventful. He was arrested multiple times, for murder, street-fighting, and counterfeiting, and had an impious and unsavory reputation—no doubt partly because of the roleplaying and double-dealing he had to engage in to please various masters. He is thought to have spied on his own patrons and colleagues. He certainly questioned established religion and was about to be prosecuted for blasphemy when he was killed in a decidedly suspicious tavern brawl. Supposedly arguing over the bill, Marlowe was stabbed above the eye by a man who worked for his patron, as others who worked for the secret service looked on. He was 29.



Portrait of 21-year old man, thought to be Christopher Marlowe, by unknown artist 1585; Corpus Christi College, Cambridge

DIALOGUES EXCERPT FROM “WHO KILLED CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE”

STEPHEN GREENBLATT

At the time of his death Marlowe was known not only as a notorious blasphemer but also as England’s greatest playwright. His spectacularly violent two-part epic *Tamburlaine*, about the rise of a Scythian shepherd to become king of half the world, had revolutionized the Elizabethan theater...

What happens again and again in Marlowe’s plays is that the incantatory power of his verse releases a destructive energy that cannot be contained within any conventional boundaries.

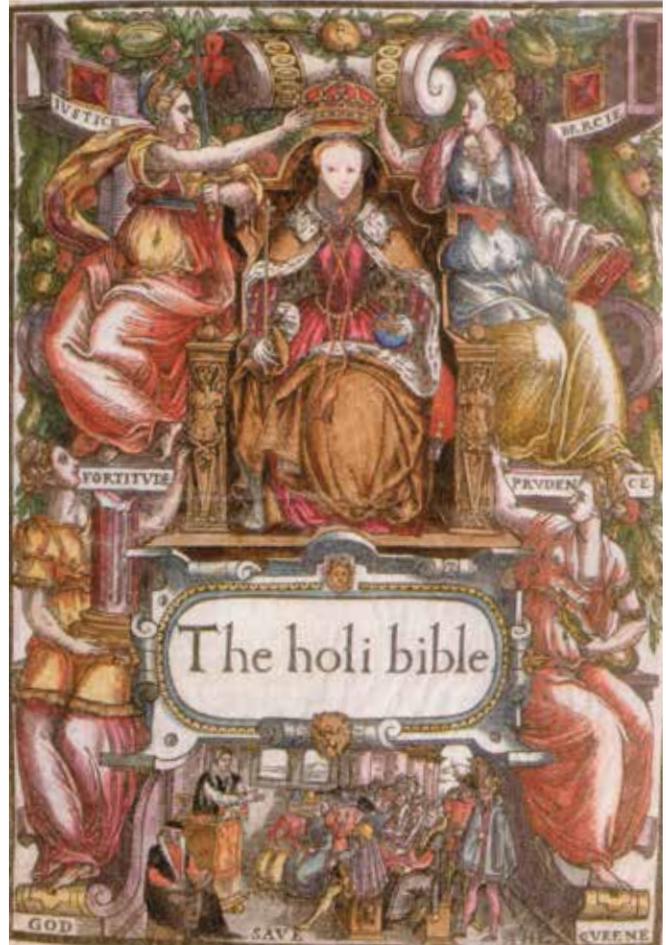
“Forsake thy king and do but join with me,” Tamburlaine cries. Something electrifying happened when these words were first intoned on the London stage. So too when Barabas first sang his cynical praise of money, or Gaveston his paean to homosexual love, or Faustus his desire for Helen:

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burned the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul. See, where it flies!
Come, Helen, come give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven be in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helena.

Reckless desire, mocking all hierarchies and indifferent to the consequences, had been given a passionate, devastatingly eloquent voice.

This desire was not a private affair. Marlowe’s plays, triumphant commercial successes on the public stage, were the first great mass entertainments of modern England. In theatrical performances at court in the winter of 1592–1593, the Queen may have finally seen for herself what the London crowds were so excited about. The daughter of the ruthless Henry VIII and a determined survivor, Elizabeth I was no fool: she wanted this kind of thing stopped: “Prosecute it to the full.” •

STEPHEN GREENBLATT is an author and scholar.



Title page, *Bishops Bible*, 1569; British Library, London

Excerpt from “Who Killed Christopher Marlowe” in *The New York Review of Books*, April 6, 2006; Reprinted by kind permission of the author.

THE PLAYWRIGHT SHAKEN BY SYLLABLES: WHY (MARLOWE'S) VERSE MATTERS

Christopher Marlowe wrote at a moment of transition and renaissance (rebirth) when an oral storytelling culture was inundated with a flood of Latin learning, much of it re-imported from the Islamic civilizations featured in *Tamburlaine*. As a profoundly well-educated scholar from a meager background, Marlowe was able to reach deep into both academic and popular traditions. To a modern reader, many of his erudite references are obscure; a playwright with less education (like Shakespeare) is inevitably easier to read. But it is not necessary to understand every line, reference, and word to appreciate and follow the story; that's not how we hear and understand language in the day-to-day grind. The mind delights in filling in the blanks. Even if one doesn't follow every mythical synonym or nuance, the sounds themselves still communicate on an entirely different level that is just as rich and profound.

Marlowe was a master of writing language that resonated on multiple levels, starting with the bass drumbeat of rhythm, the percussion of consonants, and the pitch and variance of vowels. This is what the playwright Ben Jonson exalted as “Marlowe’s mighty line.” He delighted in using repeated consonants (alliteration), which build exponentially in the hearer’s ears and mind. After Barabas, the satirical hero of *The Jew of Malta*, has been stripped of all his wealth by the Christians (so they can fund a war against the Muslims), he reasserts his power through a crescendo of clashing consonants:

See the simplicity of these base slaves
Who, for the villains have no wit themselves,
Think me to be a senseless lump of clay
That will with every water wash to dirt.
No, Barabas was born to better chance
And framed of finer mold than common men (1.2.215-220)¹

Marlowe repeats the consonants so that they are inescapable, and you not only hear but experience Barabas’ transition from the disdainful hissing “S” in the first through third lines, to the vulnerable “W” in the fourth which is immediately protected by the cutting “T” sound in “water” and “dirt”. The fifth line shifts to “B” sounds that pummel the body and in the final line he moves to a series of “F” noises, a letter that forces the face into a lip-biting snarl. He follows this aggressive consonant with the percussive “C” in “common men,” showing his aggressive disdain (this “F” and “C” combination is extremely popular for the same purpose today in the ubiquitous use of the word “Fuck”). By creating a sequence of consonants, Marlowe has crafted an explicit journey of resentment, recovery, and revenge that is not only heard and felt by the audience, but experienced by the actor in the simple act of speaking the words. The vibration of language itself can change people.

Marlowe also understood that while the consonants shape the meaning of thoughts, the emotions flow through the progression of vowels. All humans have experienced this from infancy: in times of extreme pleasure or pain, people resort to pure vowel sounds, just as in verse drama they utter “ah” or “oh” when words are not enough. For *Tamburlaine*, his public and private sides



woodcut, *A Booke of Christian prayers...*, by Richard Day, 1581

¹ All line citations from *Doctor Faustus and Other Plays*, edited by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen (Oxford, 1995).

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are contrasted through his choice of vowels. In one moment he is ordering the slaughter of thousands: “But go, my lords, put the rest to swords” (I.5.2.71). This is a parade of low vowel sounds, “uh” and “oh”, full of depth and power. He is firmly in control. But the very next line, he is alone: “Ah, fair Zenocrate, divine Zenocrate, / Fair is too foul and epithet for thee” (I.5.1.135-36). Before he says the name of the woman he loves, he shifts to a stand-alone “ah” vowel, which resonates in the face, not the core, and crinkles the eyes. Her name itself is a wave of high, vulnerable vowels (z-“EH”-n-“AH”-cr-“AH”-t-“EH”), which cracks open the cage around the heart. After he calls her “fair” (already a high vowel) he changes it to “divine,” which soars even higher, for “fair” is too “foul” (which contains a falling diphthong, two-vowels linked together). Through the shift in vowels, Marlowe shows us that he is shifting from a public to personal place, and gives the otherwise imperious Tamburlaine a chance to show his open, vulnerable emotions.

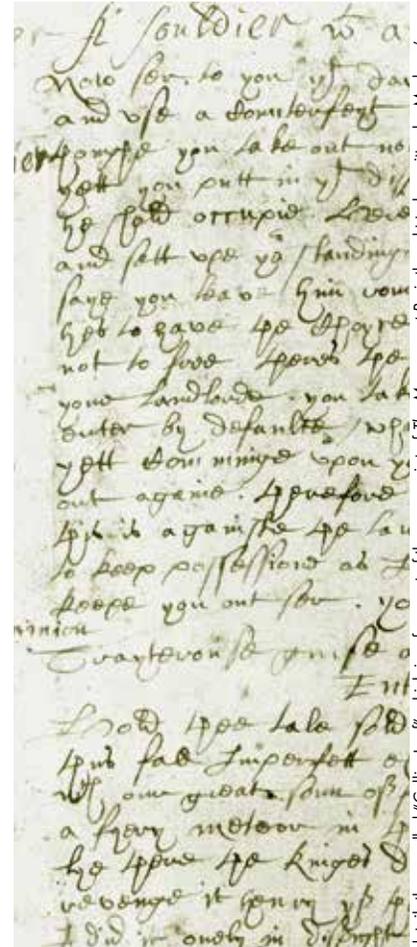
Marlowe’s mastery of language goes beyond word choice and extends into the form of poetry itself. English poets had been experimenting with the iambic pentameter line for nearly a century, but Marlowe took it to new levels of sophistication and power. The basic form is a ten syllable line consisting of five sets (or “feet”) of “iamb” (two syllables, first unstressed and then stressed). Jonson may have called Marlowe’s line “mighty” but that does not mean its power was based in unbroken repetition. While in later decades playwrights such as Shakespeare, Jonson and Webster would experiment with blurring the line between verse and prose (in which there are no poetic rules of rhythm), Marlowe was a pioneer in creating variance within the structure of verse.

In all his plays he explored how multi-syllable and mono-syllable words could be fit into the verse line to create different effects. In *Doctor Faustus*, a quick exchange of dialogue is cut off when the devil Mephistopheles blurts out a line filled with monosyllables. This forces the actor to slow down and speak with more force, commanding attention. But note how once he has the floor, he slowly adds in more and more polysyllabic words:

Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.
Think’st thou that I, who saw the face of God
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells
In being deprived of everlasting bliss? (1.3.77-81)

It is not until the third line that the sensual polysyllabic word “tasted” breaks the staccato rhythm of the first two lines. The initial “T” also grabs the ear, but perhaps more significantly the word “tasted” is not, on its own, iambic. “TAS-tered” is stressed on the first syllable, not the second, so it could be considered “trochaic” (the opposite of iambic: two syllables, first stressed then unstressed). Compare this to “e-TER-nal,” which could be considered iambic because its stress is on the second syllable. Marlowe’s use of “tasted” draws attention to itself not just by being polysyllabic, not just by beginning with a clear consonant, but also by being a trochaic word incorporated into an iambic line. The word itself works against the rhythm of the verse.

In *The World of Christopher Marlowe*, scholar David Riggs explores this device



detail, the so-called “Collier Leaf”, which is a fragment of the manuscript of *The Massacre at Paris* thought to be written by Marlowe’s own hand.

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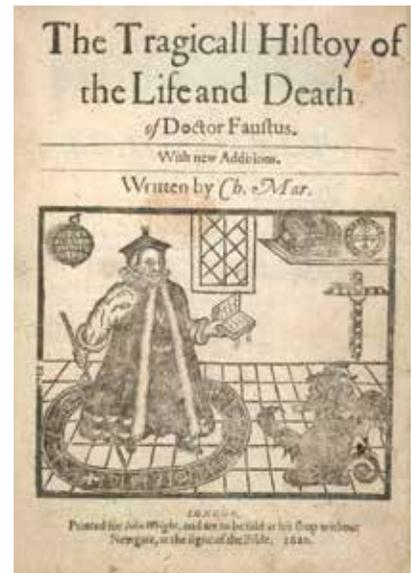
in detail. He examines the rules of Latin poetry, revered by the Elizabethans, in which the meter is determined by the patterns of long and short vowels. Syllabic stresses could add another layer of complexity and could either work with or against the vowel patterns. However, in English, the distinction between long and short vowels is difficult to hear, and poetry is based solely on syllabic stresses. It seemed that English poetry couldn't possibly hope to achieve the same complexity. Marlowe was able to challenge this by filling his verse with polysyllables, some trochaic, some iambic, which could either complement the stress pattern or work against it, creating a similar friction found in Latin poetry¹. In the example above, "tormented" is iambic and reinforces the flow of the verse. But "tasted" interrupts that flow; it may fit into the line in terms of overall stress, but the trochaic nature of the word is in conflict, both with the laws of verse and, in the case of Mephistopheles, the laws of God.

But this line from Faustus goes beyond subverting the verse structure - it breaks it completely by being one syllable too long. The last (trochaic) word, "heaven," hangs over the edge of the line, which gives a lingering feeling of something unresolved, or not easily contained. Marlowe had no hesitations with changing the iambic pentameter form itself. In fact, the first line of many of Marlowe's plays (after the prologues) start with trochies instead of iambs, another break from the normal verse structure. For example, the first line of *Faustus* is: "Settle thy studies Faustus, and begin" (1.1.1). Starting with a stressed syllable grabs the audience's attention right away. After Marlowe, the majority of Renaissance plays start in the exact same way.

Perhaps the most audacious violation of the "rules" of verse occurs in *Tamburlaine, Part I*, when the Persian queen Zabina goes mad and breaks out into stream-of-consciousness prose. In a play dominated by pounding verse, this transition reveals the complete breakdown of order both in the world and in her own mind. But even in the prose, Marlowe doesn't abandon the idea of rhythm, ending her speech with an ominous repetition: "I come, I come, I come" (5.1.317). He still keeps her wild words within the overall style of the play.

Christopher Marlowe was a monumental figure in English theater and culture because he explored, more deeply than anyone before him, the possibilities for the sounds and shapes of the language. The meanings of words may be abstract ideas, but the effect of high and low vowels, of hard and soft consonants, of long sinewy polysyllables and short chopped cries creates effects as distinct as caresses and kicks. That is not to say that meaning is unimportant—it is just another level of understanding. Marlowe's genius was in exploring the limits of expression, in all its forms.

BEN PRUSINER is a director, writer, puppeteer and mask maker. His diverse projects are linked by a drive to stir up larger social and political questions, and he is deeply inspired by classical works from around the world. He currently resides in Dubai.



detail, title page, *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe, 1620

¹ Riggs, 115-120.

THE PLAYWRIGHT TIMELINE

Editors Note: The following timeline of the life of Christopher Marlowe is based in part on "Chronology" in The Cambridge Companion to Christopher Marlowe, edited by Cheney (Cambridge UP, 2004), "Chronology" in Christopher Marlowe: A Renaissance Life by Constance Brown Kuriyama (Cornell UP, 2002), and The World of Christopher Marlowe by David Riggs (Henry Holt and Company, 2004).

- 1558 At the age of 25, Elizabeth Tudor is proclaimed Elizabeth I Queen of England, succeeding Mary I.
- 1564 Christopher Marlowe is born in Canterbury, the son of a cobbler. William Shakespeare is born later in the same year.
- 1579-80 Angelo-Ottoman trade relations begin between Queen Elizabeth and Murad III.¹ The political ties between protestant England and the Muslim Ottoman empire were well established by the time Marlowe wrote *Tamburlaine* in the latter half of the 1580s.
- Marlowe is admitted to the King's School in Canterbury on a scholarship, allowing him to receive a higher level of education than would otherwise be expected for someone of his lower-class background.
- 1580 Marlowe begins his studies at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, once again on a scholarship.
- 1586 George Whetstone's *The English Mirrour* is published. Whetstone's account of *Tamburlaine* is thought to be one of Marlowe's most crucial sources for his play.
- 1581 Queen Elizabeth authorizes the creation of an English secret service, led by Sir Francis Walsingham.
- 1584 Marlowe earns his BA degree from Cambridge.
- 1584-5 This is the probable date range for Marlowe's translation of *Ovid's Elegies* and his first play, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. *Dido* dramatizes portions of Virgil's *Aeneid* and is performed by the Children of the Chapel Royal in London.
- 1585 Marlowe begins studies for his MA at Cambridge.
- 1586-7 Possible year that Marlowe wrote the first part of *Tamburlaine*, followed quickly by Part Two.
- 1587 Due to Marlowe's absences from Cambridge during the course of his study, the University nearly refuses him his degree. Eventually, the degree is granted at the request of the Privy Council, which claimed that he had been employed "in matters touching the benefit of his Countrie." Many scholars cite this unusual instance of the Privy Council's intervention on Marlowe's behalf as evidence for the claim that Marlowe worked as a spy for the Queen's secret service.
- 1587 It is widely accepted that both parts of *Tamburlaine* are performed at this time in the repertory of the Lord Admiral's Men, under the patronage of the Lord High Admiral Charles Howard, 1st Earl of

¹ Burton



Detail, Queen Elizabeth Receiving Dutch Ambassadors, c. 1572, artist unknown; Neue Galerie, Kassel, Germany.



Sir Francis Walsingham, attributed to John De Critz the Elder, c. 1585; © National Portrait Gallery, London

Nottingham. Edward Alleyn, the company's principle actor, plays Tamburlaine.

- 1588 Robert Green alludes to *Tamburlaine* in his preface to *Perimedes the Blacksmith*, writing:

I keep my old course, to palter up something in prose, using mine old poesy still, *Omne tulit punctum*, although lately two gentlemen poets made two madmen of Rome beat it out of their paper bucklers, & had it is derision for that I could not make my verses jet upon the stage in tragical buskins, every word filling the mouth like the fabunden of Bow-bell, daring God out of heaven with that atheist Tamburlaine, or blaspheming with the mad priest of the sun.

- 1588-92 Over the course of these years, Marlowe writes *Doctor Faustus*, *The Jew of Malta*, *The Massacre at Paris*, and *Edward II*.

- 1589 Marlowe and fellow poet Thomas Watson are arrested in London on September 18 for their involvement in a fight that left an innkeeper's son dead. They are imprisoned at Newgate until it is found by the court that Watson acted in self-defense.

Marlowe begins writing for Lord Strange's Men in addition to the Lord Admiral's Men.

- 1590 *Tamburlaine, Parts One and Two* are published in octavo form without Marlowe's name attached.

- 1591 Marlowe and the playwright Thomas Kyd, both under the patronage of Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, share a workroom.

- 1592 Marlowe writes *Hero and Leander* and translates *Lucan's First Book*. It is uncertain whether Marlowe intentionally cuts off the story of *Hero and Leander* before its traditional end or if the poem is incomplete due to Marlowe's death.

January 26 Marlowe is arrested in Flushing—in the Dutch Low Countries—on the accusation of Richard Baines, a spy, for involvement in a counterfeiting scheme, and is sent back to London.

Sometime following his return to London, Marlowe loses the patronage of the Lord Strange.

February 26 The first recorded performance of *The Jew of Malta* by the Lord Strange's Men, though it had probably been in the company's repertory for some time.

September 15 Marlowe gets into a fight with a tailor in Canterbury. The suit is settled out of court.

September 26 Thomas Watson is buried, a possible victim of the plague. Marlowe later contributes to a posthumous publication of Watson's work.

- 1593 **January** The Lord Strange's Men perform Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris*.



"Charles Howard, 1st Earl of Nottingham," (the Lord High Admiral, patron of the Admiral's Men) by William Rogers. c. 1598; British Museum, London.



detail, woodcut in *Greene in Concept*, by John Dickenson, 1598

THE PLAYWRIGHT TIMELINE

May 12 Thomas Kyd is arrested on suspicion of libel. Authorities find incriminating “heretical”¹ documents in the quarters he shares with Marlowe. Kyd claims they are Marlowe’s. Kyd is tortured during his imprisonment.

May 18 The Privy Council issues a warrant for Marlowe’s arrest.

May 20 Marlowe appears before the Privy Council and is released on his own recognizance.

May 26-27 Possible delivery of the so-called “Baines Note,” written by a crown informant, Richard Baines, to the Privy Council. It blatantly accuses Marlowe of blasphemy and atheism.

May 30 Christopher Marlowe is killed by Ingram Frizer in Deptford.

June 1 Marlowe is buried in Deptford. The coroner’s jury determines that Frizer killed Marlowe in self-defense. Frizer is pardoned on June 28.

1594 *Dido, Queen of Carthage* and *Edward II* are both published with Marlowe’s name on the title page.

1598 *Hero and Leander* is published under Marlowe’s name.

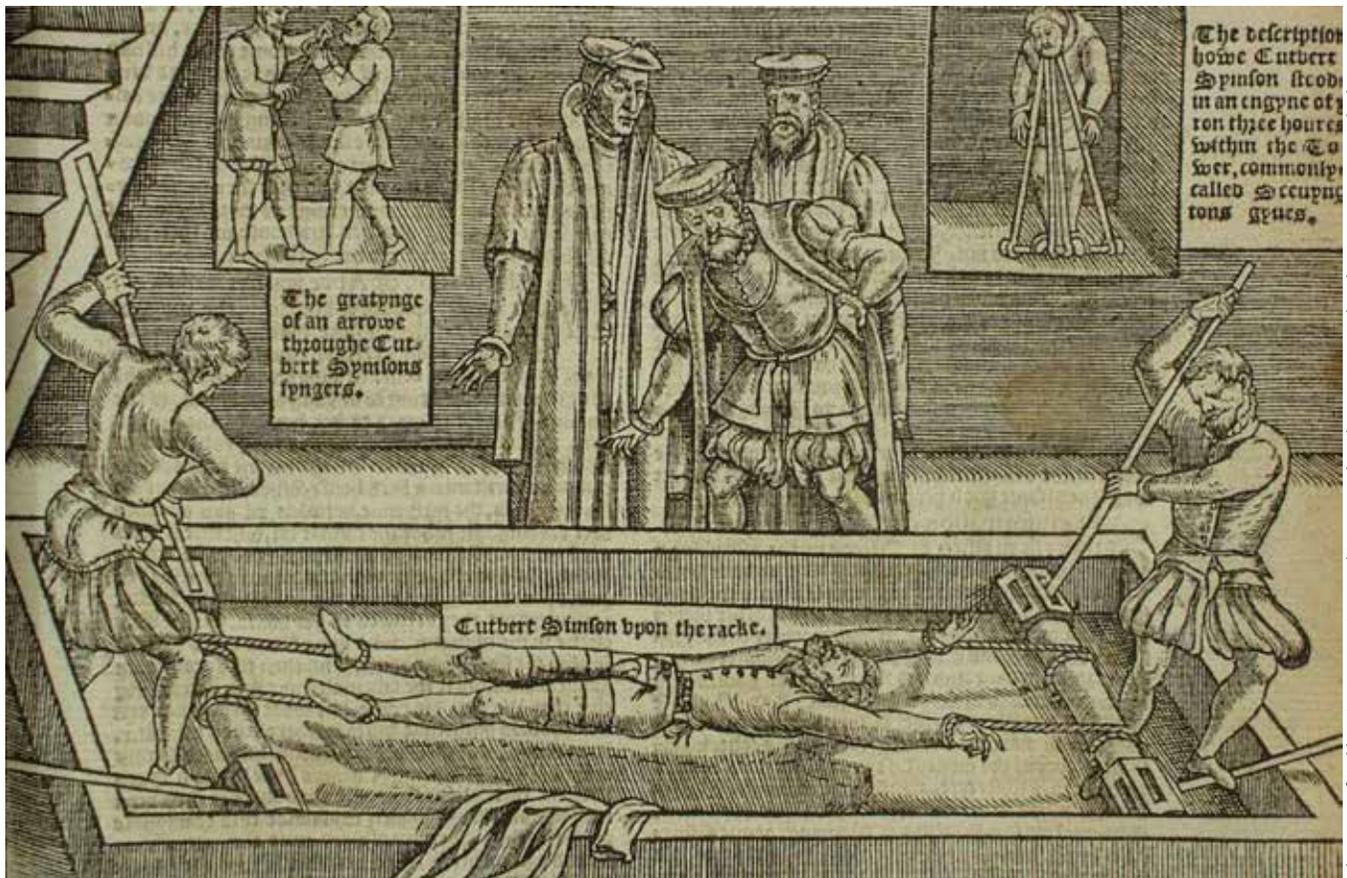
1600 *Lucan’s First Book* is published under Marlowe’s name.

1604 The so-called “A” text of *Doctor Faustus* is published in quarto form.

1616 The so-called “B” text of *Doctor Faustus* is published in quarto form.

1633 *The Jew of Malta* is published under Marlowe’s name.

¹ Cheney, xviii.



“The torture of Cutbert Simpson” in *Actes and Monuments* by John Foxe, 1563; The Ohio State University, Columbus

THE PRODUCTION TOM PIPER: DESIGNING TAMBURLAINE

While in rehearsal for *Tamburlaine*, Costume and Scenic Designer **Tom Piper** sat down with Humanities Intern *Kelsey Shapira* for a Q & A.

Q: Tom, you are British and have made most of your career in the UK. Do you find that anything is significantly different for you when designing a show here in New York in terms of the artistic process? Are there differences (or similarities) between the worlds of British and American theatre that affect or interest you as a designer?

A: The role of a designer in the UK varies wildly depending on the nature of the theatre and the support that organisation has in place. Working with TFANA is akin to an off West End theatre in the UK, and shares the challenge that such a theatre has a small staff and has to rely on outside workshops to realise the designs. This inevitably feels more challenging than working with a theatre with in-house departments. I recently staged *Zorro* the musical at the Alliance in Atlanta and found it very similar to working in a large UK rep house, so it is dangerous to generalise about a whole country's way of working! However I do think design in the US seems to be a bit more disciplined and pre-planned than the way I work in the UK. There is an expectation that designs will be fully worked out before rehearsal begins, which is almost the opposite of what Michael likes to do!

Here in Brooklyn we have had to try and tie down ideas much earlier than we would have working at the RSC, which has the backing of large craft departments and can afford the time to wait. All ideas have a cost, and it is the job of the production team to try and solve the problems these throw up. Makers have to be sourced outside the company, and there isn't a magic store cupboard of stock one can turn to if a new idea for a costume or prop comes up! So there have been times when it has felt that the whole process is driven by keeping costs down while still trying to allow Michael the freedom to play in rehearsal and discover what the play really needs. There is a balancing act to do of when to commit to an idea if a prop needs to be made versus being sure it will be used in the show! I have enjoyed having very dedicated associates working for me on both the clothes and the set. Everybody at TFANA has worked incredibly hard to try and realise our vision on a tiny budget!

As with working with any new team, it has taken a while for everybody to understand our way of working, but at this point, just before we start the tech, I hope we have enough options in hand to be able to play.

Q: You design both sets and costumes, and are doing both for *Tamburlaine*. In your experience, how do those two disciplines of design relate to each other? In what ways do you think a production can benefit from having the same designer do both sets and costumes, and are there any drawbacks to working this way?



Adam Jacobs in *Zorro*, 2013, directed by Christopher Renshaw, designed by Tom Piper, photo by Greg Mooney

THE PRODUCTION TOM PIPER: DESIGNING TAMBURLAINE

A: It is normal practice in the UK to design both, and I really believe it helps to create the world of the play to have a single vision. Much of the imagery I create with Michael is quite sculptural, especially working in thrust spaces where no audience member has the same view, and so we have to think of the story telling from multiple viewpoints. Therefore, I find we use the actors and their clothes in the space to create imagery where it is quite difficult to say what is the design of an idea, what is set what is costume, what the effect of light etc. An actor standing with feathers falling over him to evoke the snow of a battle scene for example (as we did in the *Histories* cycle at the RSC) relies on the space the actor is in, the nature of the falling material and the colour of his or her clothes. It all comes together to make the ‘design’ of that moment. I am able to keep control of the overall colour palette and the journey of themes through the play. We often reuse and recycle objects and clothes as part of the narrative. So in *Tamburlaine*, the cage also becomes the chariot as Tamburlaine’s lust for power takes on a magpie quality, he keeps adding more and more things and victims to his travelling circus.

The main challenge is one of time, with the number of departments who need designs threatening to be overwhelming. I suppose I have found over the years that this stops you obsessing over the minutia of detail and helps to keep an overview of how the design as a whole is working. You also have to put a greater trust in all the experts in every field and have faith in their skills and detailed expertise. Hopefully that is enriching of the work that sum of all the parts is greater than each individual contribution.

I have in the past designed just costumes but found it slightly unsatisfying as it is easy to become a sort of stylist who is removed from the heart of the story telling. There is also still an innate hierarchy in theatre that clothes are often seen as secondary to the set and very often the costume designer’s voice is not as valued as the set designers.

Q: You have worked with director Michael Boyd repeatedly over the course of your career, including a number of productions at the Royal Shakespeare Company where you are Associate Designer. Can you discuss your collaborative process with him and how it has developed over the years?

A: I think I have done over thirty productions with Michael, which is a bit alarming! We do know each other’s tastes very well, and there is a shorthand to our working. Especially for work from the Renaissance canon, which was written for bare stages with little scenery and a very strong relationship between the players and the audience, we have passionately espoused the advantages of working in a thrust theatre; we even built two in Stratford upon Avon! We tend to create a single environment within which the actors can tell their story, so the ‘set’ does



RSC *Histories*, Courtyard and Roundhouse, directed by Michael Boyd, designed by Tom Piper, Lighting by Heather Carson; photo by Ellie Kuntz

THE PRODUCTION TOM PIPER: DESIGNING TAMBURLAINE

not illustrate location in a direct way, instead we allow the poetry to tell us where we are, and work with costume to give a sense of place. I believe in the strong power of objects within an empty space to trigger the imagination of the audience, to tell them where they are and allow the mind's eye to fill in the rest, something I learned working for Peter Brook in the Bouffes du Nord in Paris on his production of *The Tempest*. As Theseus says in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, "...tongue-tied simplicity / In least speak most, to my capacity," i.e. less is more!

One familiar theme in working with Michael is the way he has plotted the through-line of the actors' parts very carefully, so that we see a cyclical pattern in the foes of *Tamburlaine* who rise and fall to be reborn as new characters, often in view, using a new top coat to suggest their new character. We want the audience to keep with them the memory of that actor's past characters, and there is no attempt to add a wig or disguise, rather we celebrate the storytelling with the simplest of costume changes.

Q: You mentioned that your sets do not represent location directly. That interests me because some scholarship suggests that *Tamburlaine's* long series of conquests ultimately attains a sort of spatial meaninglessness. How do you reconcile this in your designs with how geographically expansive the play is?

A: I have been less interested in exactly where we are in the Middle East at any one point; we don't have the cast size or CGI to create vast battles and huge armies of followers, so it becomes a more psychological journey into the mind of Tamburlaine and his relationship to Zenocrate and to his rivals. I think it is important the audience knows he has moved on to new conquests, but I prefer to do that by changing the colour scheme of fabric choices of the next team of enemies, rather than specifically drawing on Arabian costume for one set, Turkish for another etc.

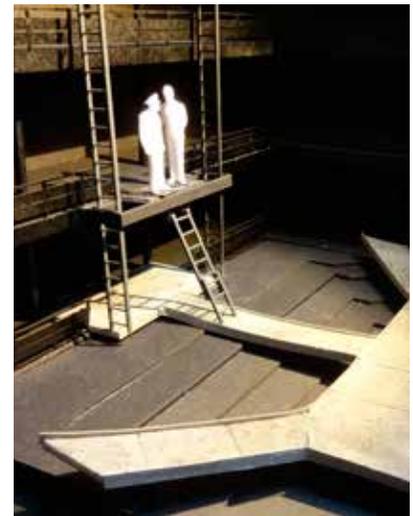
Q: During the "meet and greet" at the theatre, Michael Boyd said that the set for *Tamburlaine* would represent an abattoir. Can you discuss how this concept came into being and how you see it contributing the production?

A: I plunder a huge range of references in researching a production, some specific, others of artists who inspire me, such as Richard Wilson, or Louise Bourgeois. When I was over with Michael for workshops on the show in the summer, we went to the installation at the Domino factory in Brooklyn. Theatre designer's heaven! The textures in that building were amazing, and I loved the way the molasses has soaked like dried blood into the concrete.

There is obviously a lot of death and blood in the shows, and we have to find a way to deal with this violence and asked ourselves whether it



Set model for Theatre for a New Audience's production of *Tamburlaine*, Parts I and II; photo by Tom Piper



Set model for Theatre for a New Audience's production of *Tamburlaine*, Parts I and II; photo by Tom Piper



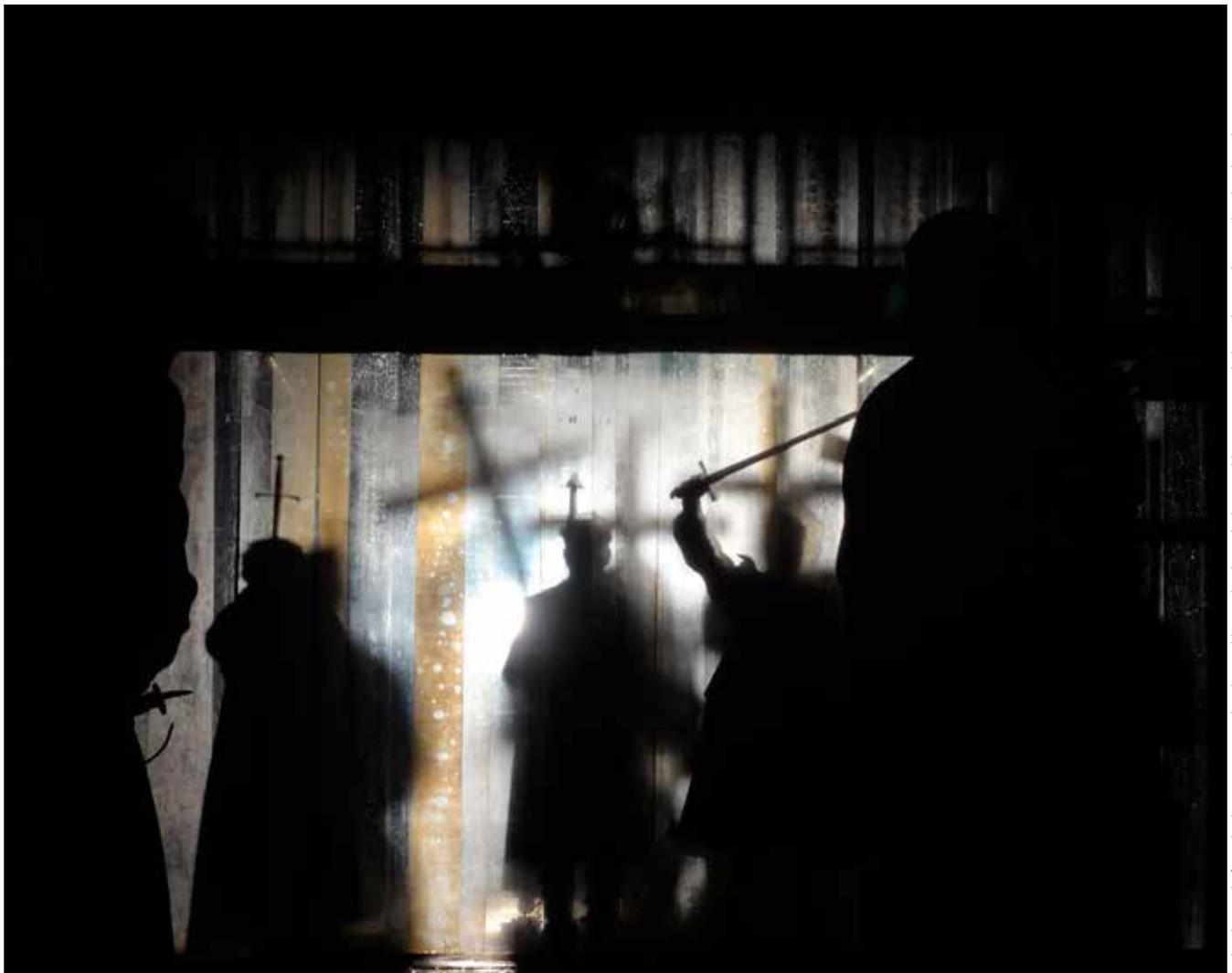
Set model for Theatre for a New Audience's production of *Tamburlaine*, Parts I and II; photo by Tom Piper

THE PRODUCTION TOM PIPER: DESIGNING TAMBURLAINE

should have a Tarantino naturalism, or if there is a way to create a more abstract and poetic way of dealing with the deaths. The abattoir has an obvious appeal; as Tamburlaine descends further into the madness of conquest, there will be moments when we openly use the visual language of a slaughterhouse, blood, plastic, industrial furniture etc. There are other times such, as with the decadent Persian court, when I hope we can turn the plastic into a glistening lustrous surface as if the walls were made of gold.

Q: This is TFANA's second season in Polonsky Shakespeare Center. Can you speak to your experience of designing for the Scripps Mainstage?

A: The Polonsky is a great space, and it is very exciting to be able to design for it quite early in its life. My response had been to extend the architecture of the balconies so it surrounds the whole space. We deliberately have made balconies and acting positions in all sides of the theatre, so it will almost feel like an in-the-round staging. I want the audience to be unaware of where the acting space ends and theirs begins. It is one space in which we all share the same air and are deeply immersed in the storytelling, where it is sometimes as powerful to watch the listener as the protagonist in a scene as the action circles around us.



Tech rehearsal of *Tamburlaine, Parts I and II*, directed by Michael Boyd, designed by Tom Piper, lighting by Matthew Richards; photo by Tom Piper

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

OBERON K.A. ADJEPONG (*Menaphon/King of Argier/Captain/Maximus*). Off-Broadway: *Like I Say*, *Cellophane* (The Flea); *Mother Courage*, *The Blacks* (Classic Stage, Classical Theatre of Harlem); *Hieroglyphic Graffiti* (HHTF); *The Hamlet Project* (La MaMa E.T.C.); *Oya and Sango* (NBT, AUDELCO nomination). Regional credits: *A Civil War Christmas* (CENTERSTAGE); *Electric Baby* (Two River); *Good Goods* (Yale Rep); *Ruined* (La Jolla, Huntington Theatre—IRNE Award, Berkeley Rep, PTC); *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus* (Shakespeare Theatre); and *Rhyme Deferred* (P.S.122). Film/TV: “The Knick,” “The Blacklist,” *Freedom*, “NYC 22” and “Law & Order: SVU.” Training: BADA, Howard University.

CARLO ALBAN (*Usumcasane*). Regional: *A Parallelogram* (CTG), *Lydia* (Denver, Yale, CTG), *All About Us* (Westport), *Dreamlandia* (Dallas), *Night of the Iguana* (Guthrie). New York: *Intrínquilis* (writer/performer); *A Small, Melodramatic Story*; *References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot*; *A Summer Day*; *Flipzoids*. TV: “Law & Order,” “Oz,” “Thicker Than Blood,” “Prison Break,” “Sesame Street,” “Girls.” Film: *Hurricane Streets*, *Strangers With Candy*, *Life Support*, *21 Grams*, *Whip It*, *Margaret*. Member of LAByrinth Theater Company.

MATTHEW AMENDT (*Agydas/Alcidamus King of Arabia/Orcanes King of Natolia*). Off-Broadway: *Much Ado About Nothing* (TFANA); *Henry V* as Henry V (The Acting Company, New Victory); *The Subject Was Roses*, *The Misanthrope* (The Pearl). Regional: numerous theatres including *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2* (The Shakespeare Theatre); 13 productions at the Guthrie, notably *The Great Gatsby* and as *Henry V*. A Presidential Scholar in the Arts with a B.F.A. in Acting from the Guthrie/U of M. Ivey Award winner and Joe Dowling Fellow for writing/performing.

NILANJANA BOSE (*Ebea/Virgin/Olympia*). Off-Broadway: *The Memorandum* (The Actors Company Theatre, Beckett, Theatre Row), *Cock* (The Duke on 42nd Street). Regional: *Noises Off* (Dorset Theatre Festival). Television: “Crossbones,” NBC. Education: The Juilliard School. Nilanjana is also a trained Classical Indian dancer.

PATRICE JOHNSON CHEVANNES (*Zabinal/King of Syria*). Broadway: *Racing Demon* and *The Crucible* starring Liam Neeson. *Othello* (Desdemona, opposite Patrick Stewart). Off-Broadway: *Banished Children of Eve*, *Coriolanus*. AUDELCO nomination, Best Actress: *Angelique*. Barrymore nomination, Best Actress: *Coming Home*. AUDELCO Award: *Four Colored Girls* (dir. Ntozake). Patrice directed three feature films through her company God-And-All-O-Wee Productions: *Kings County*, *NY’s Dirty Laundry* and *Hill and Gully*, currently on the festival circuit. She thanks God for this return to TFANA!

VASILE FLUTUR (*Suceavus/Spy/King of Barbary/Celebinus*). Romanian-born and recent graduate, Brooklyn College (M.F.A., Acting). He is deeply indebted to John McEneny and Piper Theatre Productions for many fruitful collaborations including *Nocturnes*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *Frankenstein* and *Splitfoot*. He would like to warmly thank Michael Boyd, Jeffrey Horowitz and Debby Brown for this beautiful opportunity and the chance to make his off-Broadway debut.

CAROLINE HEWITT (*Anippe/Virgin*). Alley Theatre: *Warrior Class* (dir. Wilson Milam); American Conservatory Theater: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (dir. John Doyle), *A Christmas Carol*; Baltimore CENTERSTAGE: *Twelfth Night* (Viola), *The Rivals*; Chautauqua Theater Company: *Arcadia*, *The Winter’s Tale*; Portland Stage: *Marie Antoinette: The Color of Flesh*; Virginia Stage: *The Great Gatsby*; Gulfshore Playhouse: *Blithe Spirit*; SurfFlight Theater: *Barefoot in the Park*. B.A. in French from Vassar and M.F.A. from A.C.T. Founding member of The___Space.

ANDREW HOVELSON (*TheRIDAMAS*). Broadway: *Lucky Guy* (with Tom Hanks), *An Enemy of the People*. Off-Broadway: *Golden Age* (MTC), *As You Like It* (The Public). World premiere: *a cautionary tail* by Christopher oscar peña. Regional (select): Chautauqua Theater Company, American Players Theatre, Antaeus Company L.A. Film: *Threshold*, *The Rapture of 1863*, upcoming *Stranger in the Dunes*. TV: “Unforgettable,” “The Good Wife,” “ER.” Training: M.F.A. NYU Graduate Acting, B.F.A. U of MN/Guthrie Theater Actor Training Program. Thank you God, April, Maverick and family!

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

ZACHARY INFANTE (*Magnetes/Amyras*) is returning to TFANA after playing Francis Flute in Julie Taymor's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He is a proud member of AEA & SAG-AFTRA whose credits include *School of Rock*, *Jeffrey*, "Alpha House," *Somewhere* at Hartford Stage and *Peter Pan* at Paper Mill Playhouse. Many thanks are owed to his family as well as the team at Abrams Artists Agency for their ongoing faith and encouragement.

CHUKWUDI IWUJI (*Bajazeth/King of Trebizon*). Associate Artist: Royal Shakespeare Company. *King Lear* (Edgar, The Public/Delacorte Theater); *Antony and Cleopatra* (Enobarbus, The Public Theater/RSC); *Richard III* (Buckingham, London Old Vic/BAM); *The Misanthrope* (Comedy Theatre, London); *Welcome to Thebes*, *The Observer* (National Theatre, London); *Henry VI Parts I, II and III* (Henry VI, Olivier Award Best ensemble/revival). Film: *NOW: In the Wings on a World Stage*, the multi award-winning *Exam*, *Fall to Rise*. TV: "Murder in Manhattan" (ABC), "Doctor Who," "Wizards vs. Aliens," "The Three Kings" (SKY), "The Garden" (Tiger Aspect) and "Proof" (RTE).

MERRITT JANSON (*Zenocrate/Callapine*). TFANA: *Notes From Underground* (dir. Robert Woodruff). Off-Broadway: *The Last Will* (dir. Austin Pendleton, Abingdon Theatre); *House for Sale* (dir. Daniel Fish, Transport Group). Regional: Yale Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Shakespeare & Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Denver Center Theatre, Wilma Theater, Theatre de la Jeune Lune and Vineyard Playhouse. Film/TV: *Otto+Anna* and *Mail Order Wife*. Training: M.F.A., American Repertory Theatre Institute at Harvard University.

PAUL LAZAR (*Mycetes/Soldan of Egypt/Almeda*). Theatre: *North Atlantic*, *Brace Up!*, *The Emperor Jones* and *The Hairy Ape* (The Wooster Groups dir. Elizabeth LeCompte); *The Three Sisters* (dir. Austin Pendleton); *Mudd* (dir. Marie Irene Fornes); *Lear* (Writer and dir. Young Jean Lee); *Richard III* (dir. Brian Kulick). Film: *The Silence of the Lambs*, *Mickey Blue Eyes*, *Lorenzo's Oil*, *Philadelphia*, *Married to the Mob*, *The Host* and *Snowpiercer*. Director: *We're Gonna Die* (Joe's Pub); *Elephant Room*, *Major Bang* (St. Ann's Warehouse); *Bodycast* (BAM Fisher).

TOM O'KEEFE (*Ortigius/King of Morocco/Frederick/King of Jerusalem*). Off-Broadway: *Hamlet & Saint Joan* (Bedlam/Lynn Redgrave Theater). Other New York: *The Best of Everything* (HERE Arts), *A Hard Wall at High Speed* (APAC), *The Libertine*, (Kirk Theatre). Regional: *Richard II*, *The Taster*, *Measure for Measure* (Shakespeare & Co.); *From Orchids to Octopi* (Central Square Theater); *Humble Boy* (Publick Theatre Boston); *Questa* (Court Theatre). TV: "CSI," "Criminal Minds," "ER," "The Shield." Film: *A New Tomorrow*, "Avenging Angel," "Crash and Burn." www.Tom-OKeefe.com

SAXON PALMER (*Cosroel/King of Fez/Sigismund/Governor of Babylon*). TFANA: *King Lear*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Broken Heart*, *Macbeth*, *Ohio State Murders*, *The Merchant of Venice* (NYC & RSC), *The Jew of Malta*. Broadway: *Three Sisters*, *Design for Living*. New York: *Measure for Pleasure* (The Public), *You Never Can Tell* (Roundabout), *A Flea in Her Ear* (Bill Irwin, dir.). Regional: *Deathtrap* (BCP), *Tonight at 8:30* (Williamstown), *David Copperfield* (Joanne Woodward, dir.), *The Pillowman*, title roles in *Hamlet* and *Coriolanus*. Film/TV: *Limitless*, "Law & Order." Training: FSU and Florida School of the Arts.

IAN SAINT-GERMAIN (*Young Callapine/Olympia's Son*). Ian is excited to make his stage debut in TFANA's production of *Tamburlaine*. Ian is grateful to the entire staff of P.S.10 for providing a nurturing environment that allowed him the freedom to find himself. Most of all, Ian thanks his Mom and Dad for their unending love for him and genuine interest in everything he does.

STEVEN SKYBELL (*Meander*). TFANA: Richard in *Richard II*, *Richard III* (dir. Ron Daniels for both); *As You Like It* (dir. Mark Rylance); *Titus Andronicus* (dir. Julie Taymor). Broadway: *Pal Joey*; *Wicked*; *The Full Monty*; *Love! Valour! Compassion!*; *Cafe Crown*; and *Ah, Wilderness!* Off-Broadway: *Antigone in New York* (Obie Award), among many more! Inaugural company member: Shakespeare's Globe. Film/TV: "Elementary," "666 Park Avenue," *Simply Irresistible*, *Cradle Will Rock*, *Tom and Francie*, *Everybody Wins*, "Sex and the City," "Law & Order," "Queens Supreme."

THE PRODUCTION CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM

KEITH RANDOLPH SMITH (*Techelles*). International: *Jitney* (National Theatre, London). Broadway: *Fences; Come Back, Little Sheba; King Hedley II; Salome; The Piano Lesson*. Off-Broadway: *Intimacy* (The New Group); *The First Breeze of Summer* (Signature); *Fabulation* (Playwrights Horizons); *Holiday Heart* (MTC). Regional: *Water by the Spoonful* (Old Globe), *In Walks Ed* (Long Wharf), *Antony and Cleopatra* (Hartford Stage), *Gem of the Ocean* (McCarter), *God of Carnage* (Alliance). Training: American Academy of Dramatic Arts (NY). Recipient of TCG's Fox Fellowship.

JOHN DOUGLAS THOMPSON (*Tamburlaine*). TFANA: *Othello, Macbeth*. Broadway: *A Time to Kill, Cyrano, Julius Caesar*. Off-Broadway: *Satchmo at the Waldorf, The Emperor Jones* (Irish Rep), *Hedda Gabler* (NYTW). Regional: *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Mark Taper Forum); *Richard III, Othello* (Shakespeare & Company); *Henry IV* (Chicago Shakespeare/RSC); *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train* (Wilma Theater). Film/TV: *Glass Chin, The Bourne Legacy, Michael Clayton*, "Madame Secretary," "Law & Order: SVU." Awards: Callaway, Obie, Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, Drama League, Ovation, Barrymore, Outer Critics Circle, Robert Brustein and Fox Fellowship recipient.

JAMES UDOM (*Ceneus/King of Barbary/Calyphas*). New York City debut! Regional: *Julius Caesar* (Mark Antony), *Of Mice and Men* (George), *King Lear* (Edgar), *Macbeth* (Malcome); world premiere: *Scamoramaland* (Freddie). Training: Steppenwolf, Dell'arte and Shakespeare and Co. Winner: National Irene Ryan Award (Best Actor), Regional Irene Ryan Award (Best Supporting Actor). Special thanks to Katie Goodland and JDT. Love to my family and my lady.

MICHAEL BOYD (*Director*). Artistic Director, Royal Shakespeare Company 2002–12. RSC: *The Histories, Macbeth, As You Like It, The Grain Store, Hamlet, The Tempest, Romeo and Juliet, Troilus and Cressida, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Measure for Measure, The Spanish Tragedy, The Broken Heart. The Trick Is to Keep Breathing, Crow, Macbeth, Good, The Guid Sisters, The Real Wurld?* (Tron Theatre, Founding Artistic Director). *Mystery Bouffe, Commedia and A Passion in Six Days* (Crucible Theatre). *Risky City, The Coventry Mystery Plays* (Belgrade Theatre Coventry). *Miss Julie* (Theatre

Royal, Haymarket). *Hedda Gabler* (Leicester Haymarket). Received four Oliviers (Best Director in 2002). Knighted for services to drama (2012).

SAM PINKLETON (*Choreographer*). Broadway: *Machinal* (Roundabout). Off-Broadway: *Mr. Burns... Fly by Night, Stage Kiss* (Playwrights Horizons); *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (Kazino); *Marie Antoinette* (Soho Rep); *Buyer and Cellar* (Barrow Street/ tour); *The Lightning Thief* (Theatreworks USA). Regional: *The Understudy* (McCarter), *Spring Awakening* (Olney Theatre Center). Co-director: The Dance Cartel's *ONTHEFLOOR* (Ace Hotel). Teaching: NYU. Associate Artist: The Civilians and Witness Relocation. Current/upcoming: Kansas City Choir Boy (Prototype), *Pretty Filthy* (The Civilians), *Amélie* (Berkeley Rep). www.sampinkleton.com

TOM PIPER (*Set & Costume Designer*). As Associate Designer of the Royal Shakespeare Company Tom has designed over 30 of their shows including *Antony and Cleopatra*, a new edit by Tarell Alvin McCraney (RSC/ Miami/New York); *The Histories Cycle* (Courtyard Theatre/Roundhouse); and *As You Like It* (RSC/New York). Other recent credits include *Bakersfield Mist* (West End) and *Red Velvet* (Tricycle Theatre & New York). Tom designed the critically acclaimed *Poppies* installation at the Tower of London.

MATTHEW RICHARDS (*Lighting Designer*). TFANA: *The Killer*. Broadway: *Ann*. Off-Broadway: Atlantic Theater Company, Lincoln Center, MCC, Playwrights Horizons, Primary Stages, Rattlestick, Second Stage. Regional: Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Baltimore's CENTERSTAGE, Cincinnati Playhouse, Cleveland Play House, Dallas Theater Center, Ford's Theatre, Goodman, Hartford Stage, Huntington, La Jolla, Long Wharf, New York Stage & Film, The Old Globe, Shakespeare Theatre, Westport Country Playhouse, Williamstown, Yale Repertory Theatre. Graduate: University of Massachusetts, Yale School of Drama. matthewrichardsdesign.com.

JANE SHAW (*Co-Sound Designer*). TFANA: *The Killer, The Merchant of Venice, Antony and Cleopatra* (Darko Tresnjak); *Measure for Measure* (Arin Arbus); *The Jew of Malta* (David Herskovits). Recently: *The Fatal*

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Weakness (Mint), *Grounded* (Page 73), *The Little Foxes* (Cleveland Play House), *Hamlet* (Hartford Stage). Next: *O.P.C.* (American Repertory Theater). Awards: Bessie, Henry, Premios ACE 2012, Meet the Composer, TCG's Career Development Program. Nominations: Lortel, Connecticut Critics Circle, Henry Hewes, Elliot Norton. Graduate: Harvard University, Yale School of Drama.

ARTHUR SOLARI (*Composer & Co-Sound Designer*). Recent work: Beijing Music and Dance Academy, Composer and lecturer in residence, 2014; *Chéri*, Signature's Diamond Stage, 2013; *The Piano Upstairs*, Spoleto Festival, Italy, 2013; *Dorian C*, Cannes Film Festival, 2013; *Angel Reapers*, Joyce Theater & Majestic Theatre, 2011; *Garden of Earthly Delights*, Minetta Lane Theatre, 2008–2009. Mr. Solari was a member of the venerable New Jersey Percussion Ensemble, a group founded by his mentor Ray DesRoches.

JEREMY CHERNICK (*Special Effects Designer*) creates special effects. He specializes in making it snow, rain, burn, bleed and explode for the entertainment industry. Recent theatre credits include *You Can't Take It With You* (Longacre Theatre, Broadway), *Aladdin* (New Amsterdam Theatre, Broadway), *Rocky* (Winter Garden Theatre, Broadway), *Let the Right One In* (The Apollo Theater, West End UK). His work was recently featured at the Museum of Art & Design.

KATHY FABIAN (*Props Supervisor*). Fabian has created props for over 50 Broadway productions. Recent credits include *The Realistic Joneses*, *If/Then*, *Rocky*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, *I'll Eat You Last...*, *Kinky Boots*, *Lucky Guy*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Chaplin*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Stick Fly*, *The Normal Heart*, *The House of Blue Leaves* and *Anything Goes*. Off-Broadway: *Piece of My Heart* and *Appropriate* (Signature Theatre) and *Somewhere Fun* (Vineyard Theatre).

ALISON BOMBER (*Vocal & Text Coach*). After taking the M.A. Voice Studies at CSSD, London, Alison spent seven years with the Royal Shakespeare Company, five of them as Senior Text and Voice Coach. Shows included Michael Boyd's award-winning *Histories Cycle* and many more. She is now a freelance coach, working with the RSC and other theatre companies as well as a diverse range of individuals and businesses. Alison is an Associate Artist of the RSC.

J. ALLEN SUDDETH (*Fight Director*). S.A.F.D. Fight Master J. Allen is a Broadway veteran of 12 shows, over 150 Off-Broadway shows and hundreds of regional theatre productions. He has staged over 750 television shows, and teaches at SUNY Purchase and Strasberg. Allen authored a book, *Fight Directing for the Theatre*. For TFANA he has worked on *The Killer*, *The Broken Heart*, *Henry V*, *Cymbeline*, *As You Like It* and several more.

COLE P. BONENBERGER (*Production Stage Manager*). Broadway: *Dividing the Estate*. Off-Broadway: *King Lear*, *The Comedy of Errors* (NY Public's Shakespeare in the Park); *The Killer* (TFANA); *Stage Kiss*, *The Great God Pan* (Playwrights Horizons); *February House*, *Yellow Face* and *Wrecks* (NY Public); *Picked* (Vineyard Theatre); *The Old Friends*, *The Dance and the Railroad*, *The Orphans' Home Cycle*, *Landscape of the Body* and *The Trip to Bountiful* (Signature Theatre). Regional: Hartford Stage, Long Wharf Theatre, Trinity Rep, Westport Country Playhouse.

JONATHAN KALB (*Dramaturg*) is Literary Advisor and Resident Artist at Theatre for a New Audience and Professor of Theatre at Hunter College, CUNY. He has twice won the George Jean Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism, for his books *Beckett in Performance* (1991) and *Great Lengths: Seven Works of Marathon Theater* (2012). *Great Lengths* also won the Theatre Library Association's George Freedley Award.

RESOURCES GLOSSARY



"Turcici Imperii Descriptio" (map of the Ottoman Empire at its height) in *Theatrum orbis terrarum* by Abraham Ortelius, 1570; Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Washington, D.C.

Editor's Note: The following "Glossary of Terms" was researched and written by Humanities Intern Kelsey Shapira. All terms taken from the production script of Tamburlaine, Parts I and II, edited by Michael Boyd.

Glossary Note: Marlowe used place names from cartographer Abraham Ortelius' atlas, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (above), and also from commonly accepted Elizabethan knowledge of the region of the Asian continent that we now refer to as the Middle East. Marlowe often takes creative license in his use of locales.

The *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* can be viewed in full on the Library of Congress website.

PLACES AND PEOPLES

(In alphabetical order)

Aethiopian sea

The southern Atlantic, labelled by Ortelius as "Oceanus Aethiopicus."

Albania/Albainians

Ortelius labels this region where the country is today, in southwest Europe, north of Greece.

Aleppo

Today Aleppo is the largest city in Syria, located in the northwest of the country. Ortelius identifies its location with relative accuracy.

Almains

Germans¹

Amasia

Ortelius labels this as a region in northern Asia Minor.

Archipelago

The Aegean islands.² This is how Ortelius labels them.

Argier

Marlowe uses this name to refer to a region in northern Africa on the Barbary coast.

Ariadan

This town appears on Ortelius' map exactly where Callapine describes it, near the Red Sea coast of Arabia, near Mecca.³

Asia the Less

Asia Minor⁴

Asphaltis /Limnaspfaltis

Though Tamburlaine references “Asphaltis’ plains” as the location of his victory over Orcanes, “Asphaltis lake” and “Limnaspfaltis lake” are the names later given for the lake of Babylon. This is probably a reference to the region of the Euphrates near Babylon, which appears a little like a lake on Ortelius’ map, and which was bituminous (containing naturally occurring bitumen, or asphalt).⁵

Assyrians

Assyria was the center of an ancient Mesopotamian empire, located in the north of modern-day Iraq. Like Babylon, Assyria fell in the first century CE, but though the historical Timur would not have encountered real Assyrians, the name “Syria” does in fact derive from “Assyria.”⁶

Babylon

An ancient city in modern-day central Iraq, south of Baghdad. Though it had been the center of the ancient Babylonian and Neo-Babylonian empires, Babylon had long been an ancient ruin by Timur’s time.⁷

Barbary

The northern coastal region of Africa⁸

Bithynia/Bithynians

A region within Asia Minor⁹

Borno-lake

Ortelius places this large lake (and a town of the same name) in the approximate region of today’s Borno State in Nigeria. At the time, this region was the seat of the Bornu Empire.¹⁰

Byron

Ortelius puts the town of “Biron” just north of “Bagdet” (Baghdad) and the location of ancient Babylon.

Carmania

Ortelius labels the region in the southeast of Asia Minor just north of Syria “Caramania.”

Chio

In Ortelius’ atlas, a town on the northern coast of Asia Minor

Damascus

Today, Damascus is the capital of Syria, located in the south-western portion of the country. In Marlowe’s play, however, Damascus is under Egyptian control, as his version of Egypt seems to include portions of modern-day Syria.¹¹

Danubius

The Danube, a major river of Eastern Europe, which flows into the Black Sea.

Darotes’ stream

A branch of the Nile Delta running from Cairo to Alexandria, along which Ortelius places a town called Darote.¹²

Famastro

In Ortelius’ atlas, a town on the northern coast of Asia Minor.

Fez

A major city and Muslim cultural center in modern-day Morocco, probably founded circa 790 CE.¹³ Ortelius, however labels “Fessa” as a region in northern Africa.

Frozen Sea

The Arctic Ocean¹⁴

Gaza

A city of ancient origin, today the largest in the Gaza Strip. Ortelius places it with accuracy.

Guyron

Ortelius labels “Guiron” as a town on the upper Euphrates.¹⁵

Halla

A town that appears on Ortelius’ world map south-east of Aleppo¹⁶

Illyria/Illyrians

Illyria was an ancient name for the region on the west coast of the Balkan Peninsula.¹⁷

Judaea

The name Ortelius gives to the region of present-day Israel and Palestine (alternately “Judea”).

Larissa

Ortelius identifies Larissa as a coastal town on the Mediterranean just south of Gaza. The location is the site of the present-day Egyptian city of Arish.¹⁸

Mare-Major-sea

The Black Sea¹⁹

Mare Rosso

The Red Sea²⁰

Media/Median

Ortelius identifies Media as a region in northwestern Persia on the southern edge of the Caspian Sea. In ancient times, the region was home to a Median culture related to the Persians, but they lost their identity to the spread of Islam.²¹

Memphis

An ancient Egyptian city on the Nile south of Cairo. After the Arab conquest of Egypt in 642 CE, Memphis was abandoned in favor of newer cities.²²

Moors

A broad ethnic and religious term in early modern England, in this case used to refer to northern African Muslims.²³

Mountain Carnon

This supposed mountain near the besieged Constantinople has no obvious real-world counterpart.²⁴

Natolia/Natolians

This is the name that Ortelius gives to Anatolia, or Asia Minor, the geographic location of much of modern-day Turkey. Though Marlowe generally uses the term to refer to this large region, there is one instance in which a messenger refers to Natolia as if it is a town with walls.

Nubia

A historical region in northeastern Africa, covering the area of southern Egypt and northern Sudan.²⁵ Ortelius labels it.

Orminius' mount

Marlowe may have found "Mt. Horminius" in Bithynia in Ortelius' *Parergon*, a collection of maps depicting the locales of ancient history.²⁶

Parthia

An ancient country located in modern-day northern Iran and southern Turkmenistan, which was the seat of an empire from the second century BCE to the third century CE under the Arsacid dynasty.²⁷

Persepolis

The ancient capital of Persia from 559 to 330 BCE, founded by Darius the Great and burned down by Alexander the Great. The ruins of Persepolis are located in what is now southwestern Iran.²⁸ Though Persepolis was neither contemporaneous with Timur nor Marlowe, the name would have been recognizable to Elizabethan audiences.

Persia/Persians

Modern-day Iran/Iranians

River Araris

Likely the Aras River, known to the Greeks as the Araxes, which flows eastward along the northern borders of Turkey and Iran and into the Caspian Sea.²⁹

Samarcanda-Streets

Samarkand, in modern-day Uzbekistan, was the birthplace of the historical Timur. Today it is still the home of his spectacular mausoleum, the Gūr-e Amīr.

Scythia/Scythian

Marlowe uses the terms "Tartar" and "Scythian" to refer to Tamburlaine interchangeably.³⁰ Though Ortelius labels Scythia as a small region along the north coast of the Black Sea, just west of Crimea, the name had been used by some cartographers to refer to a much larger region covering central and northeastern Asia.³¹ Historically, however, Scythians (or Scyths) were a group of ancient nomadic tribes in southeastern Europe that had ceased to exist as a nation by the end of the 3rd century BCE.³²

Slavonians

Slavonia is a historical region in modern-day Croatia.³³

Sclavonia

Probably "Scalona" (some editions of the play use "Scalonia"), a town that Ortelius places in "Judaea," just north of Gaza. This is Ascalon, the classical name for the ancient city of Ashqelon (which still exists).³⁴

Soldino

Ortelius puts the town of Soldino on the coastline just west of Aleppo in "Soria."

Soria

The name Ortelius uses to represent the region of present-day Syria.³⁵

Tartar

"Tatars" are a Turkic-speaking ethnic group in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where they arrived from Mongolia and Manchuria, having been part of the armies of Genghis Khan.³⁶ "Tartar" was a somewhat broad term in the Elizabethan imagination. In Ortelius' atlas, a large region to the north of the Black and Caspian Seas is labeled as "Tartaria."

Terrene sea/Terreine main

The Mediterranean³⁷

Thracia/Thracians

Thrace is the historic region on the eastern coast of the Balkan Peninsula closest to Asia Minor, and the home of the ancient Thracians. Today the region is divided between Greece, Turkey, and Bulgaria.³⁸

Trebizon

Probably "Trebisonda," a town that Ortelius locates on the coast of the Black Sea, on the northeast of the Anatolian peninsula.³⁹

Tripoly

In Part 1, when Marlowe writes of "ten thousand janizaries, / Mounted on lusty Mauritanian steeds, / Brought to the war by men of Tripoly," he seems to be referring to the present-day Libyan capital Tripoli, a city in north Africa. Ortelius labels this Tripoli, but also another town

of the same name on the Mediterranean coast, near the present-day Syria/Turkey border. It is this second town to which Marlowe is almost certainly referring in Part Two when the King of Soria states that he brings seventy thousand men "ta'en from Aleppo, Soldino, Tripoly."

Turks

The Ottomans, a major world power in Marlowe's day. In Part One, Marlowe uses the Ottoman Turks as Tamburlaine's antagonists in his campaign for control of Turkish territory in northern Africa, whereas in Part Two, Tamburlaine battles the Turkish kings of Asia Minor.

Volga

The Volga River, which runs, through modern-day central Russia into the Caspian Sea. Tamburlaine refers to it as the "fifty-headed Volga" because it has many tributaries.⁴⁰

Western Isles

Britain⁴¹

Zanzibar

A large region that Ortelius labels in southwestern Africa near the Tropic of Capricorn, and not the island of the same name just off the continent's east coast.⁴²

Notes to "Places and Peoples"

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- 3 Seaton, Ethel. "Marlowe's Map." *Marlowe: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Clifford Leech. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc, 1964. 36-56. (50).
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- 5 Seaton, 48.
- 6 Albright, William F. "Assyria." *Encyclopedia Americana*. Grolier Online, 2014. Web. 28 Aug. 2014.
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- 8 Dawson, 40, note 1.
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- 12 Seaton, 50.
- 13 Thomas, Benjamin E. "Fez" *Encyclopedia Americana*. Grolier Online, 2014. Web. 10 July 2014.
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- 15 Seaton, 45.
- 16 Seaton, 51.
- 17 Papacosma, S. Victor. "Illyria." *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*. Grolier Online, 2014. Web. 16 Oct. 2014.
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- 19 Dawson, 123, note 52.
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- 30 Dawson, 10, note 36.
- 31 U.M. Ellis-Fermor ed., *Tamburlaine the Great in Two Parts* (NY: Gordian Press, 1966—orig. published 1930), p. 72.
- 32 "Scythians." *Encyclopedia Americana*. Grolier Online, 2014. Web. 4 Sept. 2014.
- 33 Slavonia." *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*. Grolier Online, 2014. Web. 16 Oct. 2014.
- 34 Seaton, 51; see also "Ashqelon". *Encyclopædia Britannica*. *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2014. Web. 20 Oct. 2014.
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- 37 Dawson, 41, note 10.
- 38 Wiseman, James R. "Thrace." *Encyclopedia Americana*. Grolier Online, 2014. Web. 16 Oct. 2014.
- 39 Seaton, 51.
- 40 Dawson, 19, note 103.
- 41 Dawson, 10, note 38.
- 42 Seaton, 40-41.

TERMS AND PHRASES: PART I

(In order as they appear in the text)

King Mycetes

The name of Marlowe's Persian king comes from the Greek word for "mushroom."¹

Tamburlaine

The historical Timur (sometimes Tamerlane) lived from 1336 to 1405 CE. He was the founder of the Timurid dynasty in Central Asia. Elizabethans would have had access to several accounts of the history of "Tamburlaine," and it is likely that Marlowe's principal source for his plays comes from the version told in George Whetstone's *The English Mirroure*, published in 1586.²

Soldan of Aegyptia

The Sultan of Egypt. "Soldan" is a historical spelling used to refer specifically to the Egyptian monarch.³

"Thorough Africa"

Zenocrate speaks of passage "thorough Africa," although her travels from Media to Egypt would actually take her through the Middle East. Marlowe is probably using a medieval notion that conflates "Africa" with the Turkish Empire.⁴
Zenocrate: Have pass'd the army of the mighty Turk, / Bearing his privy-signet and his hand / To safe-conduct us thorough Africa.

Curtle-axe

A slashing sword, or cutlass⁵
Tamburlaine: This complete armour and this curtle-axe / Are adjuncts more beseeming Tamburlaine.

Rhodope

A mountain range in Thrace (today in southern Bulgaria), known for its silver mines⁶

Tamburlaine: Zenocrate, lovelier than the love of Jove, / Brighter than is the silver Rhodope

"Cruel brothers of the earth"

A reference to the Greek myth of Cadmus, founder of Thebes, who sowed the teeth of a dragon, from which sprang soldiers who began to fight each other. The five left standing became the ancestors of the Thebans.⁷

Meander: Like to the cruel brothers of the earth, / Sprung of the teeth of dragons venomous, / Their careless swords shall lance their fellows' throats, / And make us triumph in their overthrow.

Cyclopien wars

Marlowe seems to conflate the Cyclopes with the Titans, the generation of deities whom Jove overthrew.⁸

Tamburlaine: Shall threat the gods more than Cyclopien wars;

Boreas

The north wind in Greek mythology⁹
Mycetes: Fearing the force of Boreas' boisterous blasts!

Neptune, Dis

The brothers of Jove (or Jupiter), Neptune was the king of the sea, and Dis the god of the underworld.¹⁰

Usumcasane: For as, when Jove did thrust old Saturn down, / Neptune and Dis gain'd each of them a crown, / So do we hope to reign in Asia, / If Tamburlaine be plac'd in Persia.

Bajazeth

Historically Bayezid I (1347-1403), sultan of the Ottoman Empire was defeated in battle and captured by Timur at Ankara in 1402. He died the following year.¹¹

Bassoos

The term refers to pashas,¹² who were high-ranking Ottoman officials.
Bajazeth: Great kings of Barbary, and my portly bassoos

Mahomet

Early modern translation of the name of the Muslim prophet Mohammed.

Bajazeth: All this is true as holy Mahomet;

Orcus' gulf

The entrance to the underworld of classical mythology. Orcus was one of several names for the Roman god of the dead.¹³

Bajazeth: And with their cannons, mouth'd like Orcus' gulf, / Batter the walls, and we will enter in

Queen of Heaven

Juno, the Roman queen of the gods and equivalent of the Greek Hera¹⁴

Zenocrate: And might content the Queen of Heaven as well / As it has chang'd my first-conceived disdain;

Janizaries/janizars

Foot soldiers of the Ottoman Empire. The English word “Janizary” or “Janissary” comes from the Turkish *yeni çeri*, or “new army.” This standing army was formed by recruiting captive Christians who converted to Islam.¹⁵ The Janissary army would have been contemporaneous with Marlowe.

Mauritanian steeds

The region of Mauritania, now a large country in northwest Africa, was famous for its horses.¹⁶

Basso: My lord, the great commander of the world, / Besides fifteen contributory kings, / Hath now in arms ten thousand janizaries, Mounted on lusty Mauritanian steeds

Alcoran

The Early Modern English translation for the title of the Quʾran. The Quʾran itself was not translated into English until 1649.¹⁷

Bajazeth: And by the holy Alcoran I swear

Seraglio

In Ottoman culture, the area in the home reserved for wives and concubines, or the harem.¹⁸

Bajazeth: He shall be made a chase and lustless eunuch, / And in seraglio tend my concubines

Zabina

Possibly based on Olivera Despina Hatun, one of the wives of Bayezid I, who was captured by Timur along with her husband.¹⁹

Runagates

Vagabonds²⁰

Zabina: Injurious villains, thieves, runagates, / How dare you thus abuse my majesty?

Basilisks

Large cannons²¹

Soldan: ...hear the basilisks, / That, roaring, shake Damascus' turrets down!

Gorgon

In this particular instance, probably a demogorgon, or demon²²

Soldan: Villain, I tell thee, were that Tamburlaine / As monstrous as Gorgon prince of hell,

Erebus

The god of darkness in Greek myth, and the son of Chaos. The name was used to refer to the dark portion of the underworld.²³

Soldan: This arm should send him down to Erebus, / To shroud his shame in darkness of the night.

Progne

(Often spelled “Procne”) The wife of Tereus, King of Thrace, who raped his sister-in-law Philomela. She murdered their son Itys and fed him to her husband in revenge.²⁴ Shakespeare riffs on this story in *Titus Andronicus*.

Zabina: And may this banquet prove as ominous / As Progne's to th' adulterous Thracian king! That fed upon the substance of his child!

Graces

In Greek mythology, three goddesses representing beauty, grace, and charm. They were the daughters of Zeus.²⁵

First Virgin: And on whose throne the holy Graces sit;

Flora

The Roman goddess of flowers and the spring²⁶

Tamburlaine: And, like to Flora in her morning's pride,

Ugly ferryman/Charon

In Greek myth, the ferryman Charon brought dead souls across the river Styx and into the underworld²⁷

Elysium

The Elysian Fields where, according to Greek myth, the good and heroic were sent for a happy afterlife.²⁸

Zabina: Where shaking ghosts with ever-howling groans / Hover about the ugly ferryman, / To get a passage to Elysium!

Styx

The river that formed the boundary of the underworld in Greek myth²⁹

Tamburlaine: Millions of souls sit on the banks of Styx,

TERMS AND PHRASES: PART II

(In order as they appear in the text)

Sigisumund, King of Hungary

Marlowe takes the name “Sigismund” from the Holy Roman Emperor and king of Hungary and Bohemia who was contemporaneous with Timur, but he borrows the plotline for this character from the later 1444 Battle of Varna.³⁰ King Władysław III of Poland (who was also king of Hungary) violated a truce with Ottoman Sultan Murad II in an attempt to regain control of the Balkan Peninsula. In the eventual battle near Varna, Bulgaria, the Ottomans defeated the Christians.³¹

Rutters

Horsemen, usually German, from the 16th and 17th centuries³²

Uribassa: More than his camp of stout Hungarians,— / Slavonians, Almains, Rutters, Swiss, and Danes,

“Giants as big as huyg Polypheme”

“Polypheme” refers to the Cyclops Polyphemus, who appears as a character in Homer’s *Odyssey*.³³ According to legend of Marlowe’s day, Greenland was inhabited by giants.³⁴

Orcanes: Vast Greenland, compass’d with the Frozen Sea, / Inhabited with tall and sturdy men, / Giants as big as huyg Polypheme,

“...fiery Cancer’s tropic/to Amazonia under Capricorn”

Marlowe conjures a region encompassing much of the African continent from the Canary Islands off the west coast of northern Africa (the centre of the Tropic of Cancer) to the region of Amazonia, labelled by Ortelius in southern Africa, near the Tropic of Capricorn.³⁵

Orcanes: Even from the midst of firey Cancer’s tropic / To Amazonia under Capricorn; / And thence, as far as Archipelago, / All Afric is in arms with Tamburlaine:

Axle-tree of heaven

The axis of the earth, considered to be the center of the universe, around which the heavenly spheres were thought to rotate.³⁶

Orcanes: As when the massy substance of the earth / Quivers about the axle-tree of heaven?

Winged messenger

The Roman god Mercury³⁷

Tamburlaine: Such lavish will I make of Turkish blood, / That Jove shall send his winged messenger / To bid me sheathe my sword and leave the field

“As fell to Saul, to Balaam, and the rest”

Both Saul and Balaam are Biblical figures. Fredrick indicates that they are both examples of men who failed to kill (in Saul’s case) or curse (in Balaam’s) when God ordered them to. Balaam, however, supposedly refused to curse at God’s command, and so Fredrick’s use of this example is inaccurate.³⁸

Fredrick: As fell to Saul, to Balaam, and the rest, / That would not kill and curse at God’s command,

“Cassia, ambergris, and myrrh”

All used for their aromatic qualities. Cassia is used poetically to indicate a fragrant shrub.³⁹ Ambergris is a substance secreted by the digestive systems of sperm whales. It is found floating in tropical seas, and has been used as an ingredient in perfumes.⁴⁰ Myrrh is a gum resin derived from several species African and Arabian trees. It was used in both perfumes and incense.⁴¹

Tamburlaine: thou [to the body] shalt stay with me, / Embalm’d with cassia, ambergris, and myrrh,

“As rich a tomb as Mausolus”

Mausolus was the Persian ruler of a province called Caria in modern-day Turkey. His tomb, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, was one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.⁴²

Tamburlaine: Then in as rich a tomb as Mausolus’ / We both will rest, and have one epitaph

Pygmalion’s ivory girl

Galatea, In Greek myth, was the statue that the sculptor Pygmalion fell in love with, and which Aphrodite brought to life.⁴³

Io

A daughter of a river god in Greek myth who was loved by Zeus, and whom he transformed into a heifer in order to to hide her from his jealous queen, Hera.⁴⁴

Callapine: As fair as was Pygmalion’s ivory girl / Or lovely Io metamorphosed

Lethe, Phlegethon

Along with the Styx, these were the rivers of the Greek underworld⁴⁵

Tamburlaine: and make them seem as black / As is the island where the Furies mask, / Compass’d with Lethe, Styx, and Phlegethon

Argins, Bulwarks

Ramparts made of earth, intended to protect a fort⁴⁶

Theridamas: And, over thy argins and cover’d ways, / Shall play upon the bulwarks of thy hold / Volleys of ordnance,

Ida’s forest

Marlowe imagines that Callapine hunts in the forest of Mount Ida near ancient Troy (not the mountain of the same name in Crete).⁴⁷ Located in modern-day Turkey, this mountain is now called *Kazdağ*.⁴⁸

Messenger: (In number more than are the quivering leaves / Of Ida’s forest, where your highness’ hounds / With open cry pursue the wounded stag.)

Clog

A heavy piece of wood or a similar item attached to the leg or neck of a person or animal as a restraint.⁴⁹

Tamburlaine: Sirrah Callapine, I’ll hang a clog about your neck for running away again

Scutcheon

Escutcheon, a shield on which heraldry was displayed.⁵⁰

Orcanes: So he shall, and wear thy head in his scutcheon.

Taratantaras

An onomatopoetic word for the sound made by a trumpet or bugle⁵¹

Calyphas: They say I am a coward, Perdicas, and I fear as little their taratantaras, their swords, or their cannons as I do a naked lady in a net of gold.

Obloquy

A cause of disgrace.⁵²

Tamburlaine: The obloquy and scorn of my renown!

Balsamum

“An aromatic resinous vegetable juice”⁵³

Olympia: An ointment which a cunning alchemist / Distilled from the purest balsamum / And simplest extracts of all minerals

“Belus, Ninus, and great Alexander”

All major figures in the history of Babylon. Belus was Babylon’s legendary founder. Ninus was the husband of Semiramis, who was said to have rebuilt Babylon, and “great Alexander” is Alexander the Great, who conquered Babylon in 331 B.C.⁵⁴

Tamburlaine: Where Belus, Ninus, and great Alexander / have rode in triumph, triumphs Tamburlaine,

Burghers

A citizen of a town or borough, in this case Babylon.⁵⁵

Tamburlaine: Go now, and bind the burghers hand and foot, / And cast them headlong in the city's lake.

Cimmerian spirits

“Cimmerian” here means dark, or gloomy. This use of the word derives from the ancient Cimmerian people, or Cimmerii, who were fabled to live in perpetual darkness.⁵⁶

Theridamas: And Death, with armies of Cimmerian spirits / Gives battle against the heart of Tamburlaine.

Hypostasis

Sediment, specifically from urine.⁵⁷

“Humidum and calor”

“Humidum” is the moisture of the body, and “calor” is its natural heat.⁵⁸

First Physician: I view'd your urine, and the hypostasis, / Thick and obscure, doth make your danger great: / Your veins are full of accidental heat, / whereby the moisture of your blood is dried: / The humidum and calor, which some hold / Is not a parcel of the elements, / But of a substance more divine and pure, / Is almost clean extinguished and spent; / Which, being the cause of life, imports your death:

Notes to “Terms and Phrases”

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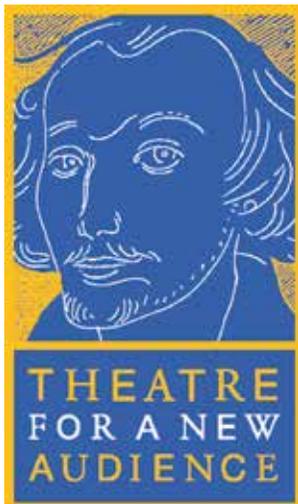
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