ElizabethanDrama.org
presents
the Annotated Popular Edition of

TAMBURLAINE the GREAT
Part the Second
by Christopher Marlowe
c. 1586-7

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TAMBURLAINE THE GREAT
Part the Second
By Christopher Marlowe
1587

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INTRODUCTION to the PLAY

Christopher Marlowe, perhaps with some foresight, did not kill Tamburlaine off in Part One, leaving the conqueror available to thrill his audiences with a Part Two. Tamburlaine picks up where he left off, blustering and violent, and always backing up his words with smashing defeats against enemies all over Asia. Alert readers will notice how many of the elements and much of the language from Part One are repeated in Part Two, including reused phrases, unusual words, imagery and even mythological allusions, suggesting that Marlowe had hurried to finish Part Two while Tamburlaine was still a hot ticket.

OUR PLAY’S SOURCE

The text of the play is taken from the Mermaid edition of the plays of Christopher Marlowe, edited by Havelock Ellis, and cited in the footnotes below at #7.

NOTES ON THE ANNOTATIONS

References in the annotations to Cunningham, Dyce, Schelling and Ribner refer to the notes supplied by these editors for Tamburlaine the Great, Part Two, in their individual collections of Marlowe’s work, each volume cited fully below.

The most commonly cited sources are listed in the footnotes immediately below. The complete list of footnotes appears at the end of this play.

The footnotes in the annotations correspond as follows:

1. Oxford English Dictionary (OED) online.
Brief Notes on Tamburlaine, Part Two.

A. Our Maps for Part Two Are Online.

We discussed in Part One Marlowe's use of the maps of Abraham Ortelius as a source for the geography of the Tamburlaine plays. Part Two in particular is filled with exotic place names from all over the Eastern Hemisphere; Marlowe seems to have relied primarily on five of Ortelius' maps: Europe, the Turkish Empire, Africa, Natolia, and the World.

If you wish to follow the paths taken by the various armies of Part Two, or simply note the locations of the many place names mentioned in the play, we encourage you to view or print out the maps created specifically for Part Two which are available on the Tamburlaine, Part Two page at ElizabethanDrama.org.

Our maps of Africa and Europe contain all the place names which are identified as appearing on Ortelius' maps of Africa and Europe, respectively. All place names which are identified as appearing on Ortelius' maps of the Turkish Empire, Natolia, or Palestina, or in Anatolia or the Levant in general, can be found on our map of Western Asia.

B. Our Story So Far: a Review of Part One.

With a small crew of bandits, Tamburlaine, a Scythian shepherd, began his rise to power by robbing merchant travellers in the Persian Empire. After suborning a troop of Persian cavalry to join his band, Tamburlaine defeated the rival kings of Persia in battle. Having now captured the Persian crown for himself, Tamburlaine took his command west to Anatolia, where he defeated the Ottoman army, capturing the Sultan Bajazeth and his wife in the process. Tamburlaine gave the crowns of several North African territories (which were actually part of the Ottoman Empire, and which he now had title to) to his favorite subordinates.

Tamburlaine had also previously captured Zenocrate, the daughter of the Soldan (Sultan) of Egypt, and the two had fallen in love. After sacking Damascus, Tamburlaine fought a battle with the Egyptian Soldan's army, defeating it in turn. As a favor to his beloved, Tamburlaine spared the life of her father, who in return (and no doubt in relief) blessed the marriage of Tamburlaine and Zenocrate, who was in her turn crowned Empress of Tamburlaine's empire.

C. How Much Time has Passed Between Parts One and Two?

In the last scene of Part Two, Tamburlaine looks at a map and recounts his travels: after defeating the Ottomans and capturing the Sultan in Part One, he had moved his army down to Egypt and Arabia, then to the Sinai Peninsula, where he and his army sit at the beginning of Part Two.

A comment by Tamburlaine's subordinate, Usumcasane, made in the first Act of Part Two, that after leaving Tamburlaine, his army travelled for at least fifteen months (conquering North Africa during this time) before returning to the fold of the main army, suggests that about two years have passed between Part One and Part Two.

However, after Part One, Tamburlaine married Zenocrate, and the royal couple now have three grown sons. This would require about 16 years to have passed between the two Parts.

Should we be concerned by this lack of internal consistency in the passage of time? No, we shouldn't: matters of continuity were never to be of particular interest to any of the playwrights of the Elizabethan era!
D. Other Developments
Since the End of Part One.

Despite their crushing defeat to Tamburlaine in Part One, the Ottomans have since recovered and reestablished control over Anatolia, perhaps some parts of the Middle East (including a portion of Syria), and resumed their wars in Europe, where they have captured lands up to the Danube River in Hungary and the Balkans.

But now, Tamburlaine is on the Sinai Peninsula, gathering his armies and preparing to march north. He has at some point captured, and now holds prisoner, Callapine, the son and heir of the previous Ottoman Sultan, Bajazeth. The rulers of the various Ottoman territories must once again figure out how to defeat the Scythian, who only seems to get stronger with each successive victory.

E. Marlowe's Ahistoric Approach to History in Part Two.

There is no question that the titanic personality and supreme, even Napoleonic confidence, of Tamburlaine could easily fill the pages of two plays without embarrassment; and so it was with great fortune that Christopher Marlowe chose, perhaps with subtle forethought, to leave Tamburlaine alive at the end of Part One, in order to bring him back for a sequel.

Luckily for civilization, the real Tamburlaine (Timur), having devastated much of Syria and crushing the Ottoman army, returned in 1403 to his homeland east of the Caspian Sea, where, while planning a new invasion, this time of China, he promptly died on February 17, 1405, at Otrar in modern Kazakhstan.

Which is to say that Timur died very shortly after the end of Part One, and thus all the events portrayed in Part Two are fictional in so far as they are meant to represent the continuing story of Tamburlaine - not that anyone watching the play would have cared.

After Timur's death, the empire he had taken four decades to build quickly disintegrated, as his sons fought for supreme control. A truncated version of the empire thrived for four decades under the rule of Timur's enlightened astronomer-grandson, Ulug-Beg.
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THE PROLOGUE.

1 The general welcomes Tamburlaine received,
2 When he arrivèd last upon the stage,
Hath made our poet pen his Second Part,
4 Where death cuts off the progress of his pomp,
And murderous fates throw all his triumphs down.
6 But what became of fair Zenocrate,
And with how many cities' sacrifice
8 He celebrated her sad funeral,
Himself in presence shall unfold at large.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

[Southern Bank of the Danube River, Hungary.]

Enter Orcanes, King of Natolia,
Gazellus, Viceroy of Byron,
Uribassa, and their Train, with drums and trumpets.

1 Orc. Egregious viceroys of these eastern parts,

Placed by the issue of great Bajazeth,
And sacred lord, the mighty Callapine,
Who lives in Egypt, prisoner to that slave
Which kept his father in an iron cage; —

Scene Settings: as with Part One, settings are not included in any of the editions of the play; all scene settings in this edition are the editor's own suggestions - as always, done with the goal of making the play easier for the reader to follow.

The Ottoman army has for years been taking control of increasingly larger swaths of south-eastern Europe.

Entering Characters: the named characters are all heads of state who rule lands or cities controlled by the Ottomans. However, with the last Turkish Sultan (Bajazeth) now dead, and his son a prisoner of Tamburlaine, Orcanes (the King of Natolia, ie. Anatolia, or Asia Minor), is the ranking leader of the empire, or at least the first amongst equals. Gazellus is the deputy king of Byron, a city located on the rivers just north of the Persian Gulf (and labeled Biron on Ortelius' map of the Turkish Empire); and Uribassa is the deputy king of an unnamed place.

1-3: "my distinguished (egregious) heads of state and deputy kings (viceroys), who were appointed to your positions by Callapine, the son (issue) of the previous Sultan Bajazeth"

3-5: Callapine is currently held prisoner by Tamburlaine. His father (the Sultan Bajazeth) and mother were captured by Tamburlaine in the climactic battle of Part One, and Bajazeth was kept by Tamburlaine in a cage.
Now have we marched from fair Natolia  
Two hundred leagues, and on Danubius' banks

Our warlike host, in complete armour, rest,

Where Sigismund, the king of Hungary,  
Should meet our person to conclude a truce.  
What! Shall we parley with the Christian,

Or cross the stream, and meet him in the field?

Gaz. King of Natolia, let us treat of peace;  
We are all glutted with the Christians' blood,  
And have a greater foe to fight against, —  
Proud Tamburlaine, that, now in Asiä,

Near Guyron's head doth set his conquering feet,  
And means to fire Turkey as he goes.  
'Gainst him, my lord, must you address your power.

Urib. Besides, King Sigismund hath brought from Christendom  
More than his camp of stout Hungarians —  
Sclavonians, Almain rutters, Muffes, and Danes,
That with the halberd, lance, and murdering axe, 
Will hazard that we might with surety hold.

Orc. Though from the shortest northern parallel, 
Vast Grantland, compassed with the Frozen Sea,

(Inhabited with tall and sturdy men, 
Giants as big as hugy Polypheme.)

Millions of soldiers cut the arctic line, 
Bringing the strength of Europe to these arms, 
Our Turkey blades shall glide through all their throats, 
And make this champion mead a bloody fen.

Danubius' stream, that runs to Trebizond, 
Shall carry, wrapped within his scarlet waves, 
As martial presents to our friends at home, 
The slaughtered bodies of these Christiâns.

The Terrene Main, wherein Danubius' falls, 
Shall by this battle be the Bloody Sea. 
The wandering sailors of proud Italy 
Shall meet those Christians, fleeting with the tide, 
Beating in heaps against their argosies.

And make fair Europe, mounted on her bull.

Trapped with the wealth and riches of the world, 
Alight, and wear a woeful mourning weed.
Yet, stout Orcanes, Prorex of the world,
Since Tamburlaine hath mustered all his men,
Marching from Cairo northward with his camp,
To Alexandria and the frontier towns.

Meaning to make a conquest of our land,
'Tis requisite to parley for a peace
With Sigismund, the King of Hungary,
And save our forces for the hot assaults
Proud Tamburlaine intends Natolia.

Orc. Viceroy of Byron, wisely hast thou said.
My realm, the centre of our empery,
Once lost, all Turkey would be overthrown,
And for that cause the Christians shall have peace.
Sclavonians, Almain runters, Muffes, and Danes,
Fear not Orcanes, but great Tamburlaine;
Nor he, but Fortune, that hath made him great.

We have revolted Grecians, Albanese,
Sicilians, Jews, Arabians, Turks, and Moors,
Natolians, Syrians, black Egyptiens,
Illyrians, Thracians, and Bithynians.

Enough to swallow forceless Sigismund,
Yet scarce enough t' encounter Tamburlaine.

He brings a world of people to the field,
From Scythia to the oriental plage

Of India, where raging Lantchidol
Beats on the regions with his boisterous blows,
That never seaman yet discovered.
All Asia is in arms with Tamburlaine,
Even from the midst of fiery Cancer's tropic.

To Amazonia under Capricorn.

And thence as far as Archipelago,
All Afric is in arms with Tamburlaine;
Therefore, viceroy, the Christians must have peace.

Enter Sigismund, Frederick, Baldwin,
and their Train, with drums and trumpets.

Sigis. Orcanes, (as our legates promised thee,) We, with our peers, have crossed Danubius' stream To treat of friendly peace or deadly war. Take which thou wilt, for as the Romans used, I here present thee with a naked sword; Wilt thou have war, then shake this blade at me; If peace, restore it to my hands again, And I will sheathe it to confirm the same.

Orc. Stay, Sigismund. Forget'st thou I am he That with the cannon shook Vienna walls,
And made it dance upon the continent,
As when the massy substance of the earth
Quiver about the axle-tree of Heaven?

Forget'st thou that I sent a shower of darts,
Mingled with powdered shot and feathered steel,
So thick upon the blink-eyed burghers' heads,
That thou thyself, then county palatine.

The King of Boheme, and the Austria Duke,
Sent heralds out, which basely on their knees,
In all your names, desired a truce of me?
Forget'st thou that to have me raise my siege,
Wagons of gold were set before my tents,
Stamped with the princely fowl, that in her wings
Carries the fearful thunderbolts of Jove?
How canst thou think of this, and offer war?

Sigis. Vienna was besieged, and I was there,
Then county palatine, but now a king,
And what we did was in extremity.
But now, Orcanes, view my royal host
That hides these plains, and seems as vast and wide,
As doth the desert of Arabia
To those that stand on Bagdet's lofty tower;
Or as the ocean to the traveller
That rests upon the snowy Apennines:
And tell me whether I should stoop so low,
Or treat of peace with the Natolian king.

Gaz. Kings of Natolia and of Hungary,
We came from Turkey to confirm a league,
And not to dare each other to the field.
A friendly parley might become ye both.

Fred. And we from Europe, to the same intent,
Which if your general refuse or scorn,
Our tents are pitched, our men stand in array,
Ottomans did not reach, and then besiege, Vienna until 1529, and then again in 1685; our play takes place in the early 15th century.

= land (as opposed to water).
99-100: ie. "like an earthquake".
massy substance = massive foundation.
= the axis around which the earth rotates and the spheres of the universe revolve. The phrase reflects the ancient Ptolemaic view of the universe, in which the sun, moon, planets and stars, each incased in its own titanic sphere, revolve around the earth, which of course lies at the universe's center.
= spears or arrows.
= reference to arrows with steel heads, which might penetrate armour.

103: blink-eyed = a condition causing excessive blinking, suggesting the blinker is stunned.
burghers = citizens or inhabitants of a town.
= "who at the time was only a county palatine"; a palatine was a noble who exercised somewhat independent control of a territory, including "the right of exclusive civil and criminal jurisdiction" (OED, palatine, adj. and n.).
= Bohemia. = Austrian.
= servilely.

110-1: coins portraying eagles (princely fowl) holding thunderbolts were common in the ancient world.

104-112: Orcanes reminds Sigismund that the terrified westerners had, at the time Orcanes and the Ottomans were besieging Vienna, tried to beg or bribe a truce out of him.

= ie. was done only because it was absolutely necessary.
= army.
= does.
= Baghdad's. = Ribner says this refers to Baghdad's highest minaret (p. 117).
= the mountain ranges that make up the spine of Italy.
= alliance.
= befit. = plural form of "you".
Ready to charge you ere you stir your feet.

Orc. So prest are we: but yet, if Sigismund
Speak as a friend, and stand not upon terms.

Here is his sword, – let peace be ratified
On these conditions, specified before,
Drawn with advice of our ambassadors.

Sigis. Then here I sheathe it, and give thee my hand,
Never to draw it out, or manage arms
Against thyself or thy confederates,
But whilst I live will be a truce with thee.

Orc. But, Sigismund, confirm it with an oath,
And swear in sight of Heaven and by thy Christ.

Sigis. By him that made the world and saved my soul,
The son of God and issue of a Maid,
Sweet Jesus Christ, I solemnly protest
And vow to keep this peace inviolable.

Orc. By sacred Mahomet, the friend of God,
Whose holy Alcoran remains with us,
Whose glorious body, when he left the world,
Closed in a coffin mounted up the air,
And hung on stately Mecca's temple roof,
I swear to keep this truce inviolable;
Of whose conditions and our solemn oaths,
Signed with our hands, each shall retain a scroll
As memorable witness of our league.

Now, Sigismund, if any Christian king
Encroach upon the confines of thy realm,
Send word, Orcanes of Natolia
Confirmed this league beyond Danubius' stream,
And they will, trembling, sound a quick retreat;
So am I feared among all nations.

Sigis. If any heathen potentate or king
Invade Natolia, Sigismund will send
A hundred thousand horse trained to the war,
And backed by stout lanciers of Germany,
The strength and sinews of the Imperial seat.

Orc. I thank thee, Sigismund; but, when I war,

= Heaven, like many common words containing a medial v (such as even and given) should be pronounced as a one-syllable word, with the v elided over - that is, essentially omitted.

= He, like many common words containing a medial v (such as even and given) should be pronounced as a one-syllable word, with the v elided over - that is, essentially omitted.

157-9: a tradition seems to have arisen in Europe that the Prophet's coffin was suspended in the air by a magnet.16

= Koran.

156-9: the treaty acts not only as a truce, but also as a promise by each side to come to the defense of the other, should one of them be attacked by a third party.

= "let him know".

= ie. a copy of the treaty.

164-9: the treaty acts not only as a truce, but also as a promise by each side to come to the defense of the other, should one of them be attacked by a third party.

= "let him know".

= ie. pagan, or one who is not Christian or Muslim.

= brave. = lanciers, cavalryman carrying a lance.¹

= means of support, strength behind the throne.¹

Sigismund refers in lines 174-5 to the soldiers of the Holy Roman Empire, which at the time encompassed much of Europe, stretching from modern Germany south to northern Italy; the kingdom of Hungary, however, was still independent at this time, encompassing much of Slovakia, Romania and the Balkans.
All Asia Minor, Africa, and Greece,  
Follow my standard and my thundering drums.  
Come, let us go and banquet in our tents.  
I will dispatch chief of my army hence  
To fair Natolia and to Trebizond,  
To stay my coming 'gainst proud Tamburlaine.  
Friend Sigismund and peers of Hungary,  
Come, banquet and carouse with us a while,  
And then depart we to our territories.  

[Exeunt.]

ACT I, SCENE II.  
[Egypt, just south of Alexandria.]  

Enter Callapine with Almeda, his Keeper.  

Call. Sweet Almeda, pity the ruthless plight  
Of Callapine, the son of Bajazeth,  
Born to be monarch of the western world,  
Yet here detained by cruel Tamburlaine.  
Alm. My lord, I pity it, and with my heart  
Wish your release; but he whose wrath is death,  
My sovereign lord, renowned Tamburlaine,  
Forbids you further liberty than this.  
Call. Ah, were I now but half so eloquent  
To paint in words what I'll perform in deeds,  
I know thou wouldst depart from hence with me.  
Alm. Not for all Afric; therefore move me not.  
Call. Yet hear me speak, my gentle Almeda.  
Alm. No speech to that end, by your favour, sir.  
Call. By Cairo runs –  
Alm. No talk of running, I tell you, sir.  
Call. A little further, gentle Almeda.  
Alm. Well, sir, what of this?  
Call. By Cairo runs to Alexandria bay  
Darote's stream, wherein at anchor lies
A Turkish galley of my royal fleet,  
Waiting my coming to the river side,  
Hoping by some means I shall be released,  
Which, when I come aboard, will hoist up sail,  
And soon put forth into the Terrene Sea,  
Where, 'twixt the isles of Cyprus and of Crete,  
We quickly may in Turkish seas arrive.  
Then shalt thou see a hundred kings and more,  
Upon their knees, all bid me welcome home,  
Amongst so many crowns of burnished gold,  
Choose which thou wilt, all are at thy command;  
A thousand galleys, manned with Christian slaves,  
I freely give thee, which shall cut the Straits,  
And bring armados from the coasts of Spain

Fraughted with gold of rich America;  
The Grecian virgins shall attend on thee,  
Skilful in music and in amorous lays,  
As fair as was Pygmalion's ivory girl

Or lovely Iō metamorphosèd.

With naked negroes shall thy coach be drawn,  
And, as thou rid'st in triumph through the streets,  
The pavement underneath thy chariot wheels  
With Turkey carpets shall be coverèd,

And cloth of arras hung about the walls,  
Fit objects for thy princely eye to pierce.  
A hundred basooses, clothed in crimson silk,  
Shall ride before thee on Barbarian steeds;  
And when thou goest, a golden canopy  
Enchased with precious stones, which shine as bright  
As that fair veil that covers all the world,  
When Phoebus, leaping from his hemisphere,  
Descendeth downward to th' Antipodes,  
And more than this – for all I cannot tell.

Alm. How far hence lies the galley, say you?  
Call. Sweet Almeda, scarce half a league from hence.  
Alm. But need we not be spied going aboard?
Call. Betwixt the hollow hanging of a hill,
And crookèd bending of a craggy rock,
The sails wrapt up, the mast and tacklings down,
She lies so close that none can find her out.

Alm. I like that well. But tell me, my lord, if I should let you go, would you be as good as your word? Shall I be made a king for my labour?

Call. As I am Callapine the Emperor,
And by the hand of Mahomet I swear
Thou shalt be crowned a king, and be my mate.

Alm. Then here I swear, as I am Almeda,
Your keeper under Tamburlaine the Great,
(For that’s the style and title I have yet,)
Although he sent a thousand armèd men
To intercept this haughty enterprise,
Yet would I venture to conduct your grace,
And die before I brought you back again.

Call. Thanks, gentle Almeda; Then let us haste,
Lest time be past, and lingering let us both.

Alm. When you will, my lord, I am ready.

Call. Even straight; and farewell, cursed Tamburlaine.
Now go I to revenge my father’s death.

[Exeunt.]
And dangerous chances of the wrathful war?

_Tamb._ When Heaven shall cease to move on both the poles,
And when the ground, whereon my soldiers march,
Shall rise aloft and touch the _hornèd moon_,
And not before, my sweet Zenocrate.

Sit up, and rest thee like a lovely queen;
So, now she sits in pomp and majesty,
When these, my sons, more precious in mine eyes
Than all the wealthy kingdoms I subdued,
Placed by her side, look on their mother's face
But yet methinks their looks are amorous,
Not martial as the sons of Tamburlaine:

Water and air, being _symbolized_ in one,
Argue their _want_ of courage and of wit;

Their hair, as white as milk, and soft as down,
(which should be like the quills of porcupines,
As black as _jet_, and hard as iron or steel)

_Bewrays_ they are too dainty for the wars;
Their fingers made to _quaver_ on a lute,
Their arms to hang about a lady's neck,
Their legs to dance and _caper_ in the air,
Would make me think them bastards, not my sons,
But that I know they issued from thy womb,
That never looked on _man_ but Tamburlaine.

_Zeno._ My gracious lord, they have their mother's looks,
But when they _list_, their conquering father's heart.

This lovely boy, the youngest of the three,
Not long ago _bestrid_ a Scythian steed,

Trotting the ring, and _tilting at a glove_,

= a reference, of course, to the moon in its crescent shape.

= subjected.

24: _ie_. their thoughts are not warlike as they should be.

25-26: Tamburlaine engages in some medieval physiology and temperament analysis: the ancients believed the human body contained four fundamental fluids, which Hippocrates equated with the four elements, and the Roman physician Galen equated with certain temperaments: (1) black bile (earth, melancholic), (2) _phlegm_ (water, phlegmatic), (3) _blood_ (air, sanguine), and (4) yellow bile (fire, choleric); if the fluids were out of balance, disorders arose.

Tamburlaine is saying that since his sons suffer from an excess of phlegm and blood (water and air), their temperaments are correspondingly phlegmatic (sluggish) and sanguine (hopeful and amorous); he would have preferred them to have more black bile and yellow bile, which would make them more warlike, by causing them to be more melancholic (excitable or easily angered) and choleric (irascible).

symbolized = united, mixed.

want = lack.

= a form of coal, frequently used in Elizabethan drama in similes for blackness.

= betrays the fact that.

= play a _lute_ (an early guitar) in a trilly fashion (_quaver_).

= leap.

= _ie_. any other man.

= wish.

40: here Zenocrate indicates Celebinus, her youngest son.

= _rode_. = horse of Scythia, the widely-spread but vaguely defined region north of the Black and Caspian Seas from which Marlowe's fictional Tamburlaine came.

42-44: Zenocrate describes Celebinus skillfully putting his horse through his paces.

_tilting at a glove_ = an equestrian game of skill in which a rider would attempt to pick up an object, such as the glove or scarf of a favoured lady, with the tip of his lance.

(Many thanks to Mr. Arne Koets, of www.facebook.com/Arne Koets Medieval Combat Seminars for
Providing this information, and Ms. Zhi Zhu of thejoustinglife.com for procuring his help.)

"And when his horse he touched or struck lightly"; taint in this sense is a term from jousting.¹

= leap.

Which when he taintéd with his slender rod,

He reined him straight, and made him so curvet,
As I cried out for fear he should have fall'n.

Tamb. Well done, my boy, thou shalt have shield and lance,

Armour of proof, horse, helm, and curtle-axe,
And I will teach thee how to charge thy foe,
And harmless run among the deadly pikes.
If thou wilt love the wars and follow me,
Thou shalt be made a king and reign with me,
Keeping in iron cages emperors.

If thou exceed thy elder brothers' worth,
And shine in complete virtue more than they,
Thou shalt be king before them, and thy seed shall issue crowned from their mother's womb.

Celeb. Yes, father: you shall see me, if I live,

Have under me as many kings as you,
And march with such a multitude of men,
As all the world shall tremble at their view.

Tamb. These words assure me, boy, thou art my son.

When I am old and cannot manage arms,
Be thou the scourge and terror of the world.

Amyr. Why may not I, my lord, as well as he,

Be termed the scourge and terror to the world?

Tamb. Be all a scourge and terror to the world,
Or else you are not sons of Tamburlaine.

Caly. But while my brothers follow arms, my lord,

Let me accompany your gracious mother;
They are enough to conquer all the world,
And you have won enough for me to keep.

Tamb. Bastardly boy, sprung from some coward's loins,

And not the issue of great Tamburlaine!
Of all the provinces I have subdued,
Thou shalt not have a foot, unless thou bear
A mind courageous and invincible;
For he shall wear the crown of Persiá
Whose head hath deepest scars, whose breast most wounds,
Which being wroth sends lightning from his eyes,
And in the furrows of his frowning brows
Harbours revenge, war, death, and cruelty;
For in a field, whose superficiés
Is covered with a liquid purple veil
And sprinkled with the brains of slaughtered men,
My royal chair of state shall be advanced;

53: another reference to Tamburlaine's keeping the captured Ottoman Sultan Bajazeth in a cage in Part One.

66: Tamburlaine frequently refers to himself by these epithets.

74ff: Calyphas, the eldest son, will demonstrate, to the horror of his father, a strong disinclination to play soldier.

= who. = stirred to a state of fury.¹

= ie. battlefield. = originally a geometric term, meaning surface or extent; the word could be singular or plural.¹

= ie. blood, of course.

= ie. throne.
And he that means to place himself therein, Must armèd wade up to the chin in blood.

Zeno. My lord, such speeches to our princely sons Dismay their minds before they come to prove The wounding troubles angry war affords.

Celeb. No, madam, these are speeches fit for us, For if his chair were in a sea of blood, I would prepare a ship and sail to it, Ere I would lose the title of a king.

Amyr. And I would strive to swim through pools of blood, Or make a bridge of murdered carcasses, Whose arches should be framed with bones of Turks, Ere I would lose the title of a king.

Tamb. Well, lovely boys, you shall be emperors both, Stretching your conquering arms from East to West; And, sirrah, if you mean to wear a crown,

When we shall meet the Turkish deputy And all his viceroy's, snatch it from his head, And cleave his pericranium with thy sword.

Caly. If any man will hold him, I will strike And cleave him to the channel with my sword.

Tamb. Hold him, and cleave him too, or I'll cleave thee, For we will march against them presently.

Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane Promised to meet me on Larissa plains

With hosts apiece against this Turkish crew; For I have sworn by sacred Mahomet

To make it parcel of my empery; The trumpets sound, Zenocrate; they come.

Enter Theridamas and his Train, with drums and trumpets.

Tamb. Welcome Theridamas, King of Argier.

Ther. My lord, the great and mighty Tamburlaine, – Arch-monarch of the world, I offer here My crown, myself, and all the power I have, In all affection at thy kingly feet.
138 Tamb.  Thanks, good Theridamas.

140 Ther.  Under my colours march ten thousand Greeks;
          And of Argier and Afric's frontier towns,
          Twice twenty thousand valiant men-at-arms,
          All which have sworn to sack Natolia.
          Five hundred brigandines are under sail,
          Meet for your service on the sea, my lord,
          That, launching from Argier to Tripoli,
          Will quickly ride before Natolia,
          And batter down the castles on the shore.

150 Tamb.  Well said, Argier; receive thy crown again.
          _Enter Techelles and Usumcasane together._

154 Tamb.  Kings of Morocco and of Fez, welcome.

158 Usum.  Magnificent and peerless Tamburlaine!
          I and my neighbour king of Fez have brought
          To aid thee in this Turkish expedition,
          A hundred thousand expert soldièrs:
          From Azamor to Tunis near the sea
          Is Barbary unpeopled for thy sake,
          And all the men in armour under me,
          Which with my crown I gladly offer thee.

168 Tamb.  Thanks, king of Morocco, take your crown again.

170 Tech.  And, mighty Tamburlaine, our earthly god,
          Whose looks make this inferior world to quake,
          I here present thee with the crown of Fez,
          And with an host of Moors trained to the war,
          Whose coal-black faces make their foes retire,
          And quake for fear, as if infernal Jove,
          Meaning to aid thee in these Turkish arms,
          Should pierce the black _circumference_ of hell.

141-9: during this speech, Theridamas ceremoniously gives his crown to Tamburlaine, who will return it to him, confirming his position as deputy king.
= small, light ships.  
= not the well-known Libyan city, but a city on the Mediterranean coast of the northern Levant.

_Entering Characters:_ the two named persons are Tamburlaine's other two closest subordinates, and fellow Scythians; _Techelles_ is the King of Fez, and _Usumcasane_ (usually called _Casane_ for short) the King of Morocco. Both Fez and Moroco (Ortelius' spelling) are cities (see Ortelius' map of Africa) located in north-west Africa in the region of Morocco.

= _Barbary_ is the name of North Africa west of Egypt.

170: Robert Davis, in _Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters_ (2003), describes how the number of European slaves captured by North African pirates in the 17th and 18th centuries was so staggering, and the breeding of the African men with their female slaves so widespread, that the skin tone of North African society actually shaded towards white over the two-and-a-half centuries during which the Barbary pirates were most active (Davis, pp. 25-26).

= _circumference_ here has four syllables.
With ugly Furies bearing fiery flags,

And millions of his strong tormenting spirits.

From strong Tesella unto Biledull,

All Barbary is unpeopled for thy sake.

Tamb. Thanks, king of Fez; take here thy crown again.

Your presence, loving friends and fellow kings,

Makes me to surfeit in conceiving joy.

If all the crystal gates of Jove's high court

Were opened wide, and I might enter in

To see the state and majesty of Heaven,

It could not more delight me than your sight.

Now will we banquet on these plains a while,

And after march to Turkey with our camp,

In number more than are the drops that fall

When Boreas rents a thousand swelling clouds;

And proud Orcanes of Natolia

With all his viceroys shall be so afraid,

That though the stones, as at Deucalion's flood,

Were turned to men, he should be overcome.

Such lavish will I make of Turkish blood,

That Jove shall send his wingèd messenger

To bid me sheath my sword and leave the field;

The sun, unable to sustain the sight,

Shall hide his head in Thetis' watery lap,

And leave his steeds to fair Boötes' charge;

For half the world shall perish in this fight.

But now, my friends, let me examine ye;

How have ye spent your absent time from me?

Usum. My lord, our men of Barbary have marched
armies' travels and the lands they have conquered, or at least pillaged, a genuine geographical tour-de-force. One can imagine Marlowe sitting with Abraham Ortelius' maps of Africa and Europe in front of him, his eyes pouring over the foreign locations, and selecting the most exotic and poetically fitting names to insert into the mouths of his characters, hoping they would excite the fancies of his audience as much as they did his own.

All place names in this speech can be found on the Ortelius' map of Africa.

206-216: from Egypt, Usumcasane marched his troops west, and conquered all of Barbary, or north-west Africa.

Four hundred miles with armour on their backs,
And lain in leaguer fifteen months and more:

208: in leaguer = in camp, ie. mobilized. fifteenth months or more = if we assume there was a short period of rest following the nuptials of Tamburlaine and Zenocrate immediately after Part One, then it would be further reasonable to assume that Tamburlaine's subordinates would have afterwards then gone on to conquer their assigned provinces; Usumcasane describes this project as having taken more than fifteen months, and then begs Tamburlaine in line 216 below to give his army a chance to rest. This strongly implies that the setting of Part Two is about two years after Part One; of course this directly conflicts with Tamburlaine and his wife having had a chance to raise three sons - an irresolvable problem of chronology, but one that no theater-goer would notice.

For, since we left you at the Soldan's court,

210 We have subdued the southern Guallatia

And all the land unto the coast of Spain;

211: after having defeated the Ottomans in Anatolia in the climactic battle of Part One, Tamburlaine took technical possession of all the Sultan's lands, which included much of North Africa west of Egypt; Tamburlaine subsequently gave the crowns of several of these African states to his key subordinates; their sovereignty was only nominal, of course, until Tamburlaine's armies physically took possession of them.

We kept the narrow Strait of Jubaltèr,
And made Canaria call us kings and lords;

212 = controlled, or took control of. = Gibraltar.

214 Yet never did they recreate themselves,
Or cease one day from war and hot alarms,
And therefore let them rest awhile, my lord.

216 Tech. And I have marched along the river Nile

218 Tamb. They shall, Casane, and 'tis time, i' faith.

220-239: Techelles, the King of Fez, took his army south through the heart of Africa, almost to its southern end, then followed a path north along Africa's south-west coast, turned west at the elbow of the continent for a
short bit, before cutting straight through Africa's north-center back to Egypt.

All the place names in this speech appear on Ortelius' map of Africa.

= Macada, a city along the Nile, sitting in modern Sudan.

= the legendary Prester John was believed by many in medieval Europe to be a genuine Christian king, priest and conqueror who ruled over large areas of the Far East.

At some point in the literature his domain was transferred to Ethiopia.

= the high dome-shaped head-dress (usually understood to be worn by the pope) encircled by three crowns, one above the other.¹

= Ortelius' map of Africa traces the source of the Nile all the way back to two large, unnamed lakes, presumably meant to represent modern lakes Victoria and Nyasa; in reality, the first is a true source of the Nile, the second is not. Ortelius' map places the larger of the two lakes in deep south-central Africa (in modern Zambia), much further south and west than where the Nile actually flows from; Techelles' army followed the Nile south all the way to this lake. Next to this imaginary lake is a region identified as Cafates, and within Cafates is the city of Cazates.

226-7: Ortelius' Amazonum Region sits east of Cazates, in modern eastern Zambia. While the Amazons - the members of the famed race of female warriors - were traditionally most often situated in Asia Minor or some similar classical location, in later periods they might be placed elsewhere, including in Africa.

= granted or made an alliance.

= a region in the extreme south-west of Africa, corresponding with modern Namibia. From Zanzibar Techelles marched up the Atlantic coast of Africa.

= an ancient name for the South Atlantic, labeled on Ortelius' map as Oceanus Aethio.

= Marlowe's poetic corruption of the region of Manicongo, north of Zanzibar, located in modern Angola.

= likely Ortelius' Biafar, at the inner elbow-joint of Africa, modern Cameroon.

= ie. the region of Giber, located roughly where modern Burkina Faso sits.

= Ortelius' Nubia is a large region comprising modern Chad. Techelles is now cutting across north-central Africa.

= a city shown a little east of Ortelius' Borno lacus, or modern Lake Chad.

239: having finished his journey to Africa, Techelles actually took his army north of Tamburlaine's current location, where he rested (stayed), until called by Tamburlaine to join him. One would think Techelles might have concluded his travels by taking up residency in his kingdom of Fez in Barbary.
Ther. I left the confines and the bounds of Afric,

And made a voyage into Europe,
Where by the river Tyrosa I subdued

Stoka, Padalia, and Codemia:

Then crossed the sea and came to Oblia

And Nigra Sylva, where the devils dance,
Which in despite of them, I set on fire.
From thence I crossed the gulf called by the name
Mare Majore of the inhabitants.

Yet shall my soldiers make no period,
Until Natolia kneel before your feet.

Tamb. Then will we triumph, banquet, and carouse;
Cooks shall have pensions to provide us cates,
And glut us with the dainties of the world;
Lachryma Christi and Calabrian wines

Shall common soldiers drink in quaffing bowls,
Ay, liquid gold (when we have conquered him)
Mingled with coral and with orient pearl.

Come, let us banquet and carouse the whiles.

[Exeunt.]
ACT II.

SCENE I.

[Hungary, north of the Danube River.]

Enter Sigismund, Frederick, Baldwin, with their trains.

1 Sigis. Now say, my lords of Buda and Bohemia, What motion is it that inflames your thoughts, And stirs your valours to such sudden arms?

2 Fred. Your majesty remembers, I am sure, What cruel slaughter of our Christian bloods These heathenish Turks and pagans lately made Betwixt the city Zula and Danubius;

How through the midst of Varna and Bulgaria,

And almost to the very walls of Rome,

They have, not long since, massacred our camp. It resteth now, then, that your majesty Take all advantages of time and power, And work revenge upon these infidels. Your highness knows, for Tamburlaine's repair.

That strikes a terror to all Turkish hearts, Natolia hath dismissed the greatest part

Of all his army, pitched against our power, Betwixt Cutheia and Orminius' mount.

And sent them marching up to Belgasar.

Acantha, Antioch, and Caesarea.
extreme north-east corner of the Mediterranean Sea, modern Antakya in Turkey. It does not appear on Ortelius' maps.

Caesarea = ancient coastal town of modern Israel, situated between Tel Aviv and Haifa.

= Ortelius' name for Syria.

To aid the kings of Soria and Jerusalem.
Now then, my lord, advantage take thereof,

And issue suddenly upon the rest;
That in the fortune of their overthrow,
We may discourage all the pagan troop
That dare attempt to war with Christiäns.

Sigis. But calls not then your grace to memory
The league we lately made with king Orcanes,
Confirmed by oath and articles of peace,
And calling Christ for record of our truths?
This should be treachery and violence
Against the grace of our profession.

Bald. No whit, my lord, for with such infidels,
In whom no faith nor true religion rests,
We are not bound to those accomplishments

The holy laws of Christendom enjoin;
But as the faith, which they profanely plight,
Is not by necessary policy
To be esteemed assurance for ourselves,
So what we vow to them should not infringe
Our liberty of arms and victory.

Sigis. Though I confess the oaths they undertake
Breed little strength to our security,
Yet those infirmities that thus defame

Their faiths, their honours, and religion,
Should not give us presumption to the like.
Our faiths are sound, and must be consummate,
Religious, righteous, and inviolate.

Fred. Assure your grace, 'tis superstition
To stand so strictly on dispersive faith:

And should we lose the opportunity
That God hath given to venge our Christians' death
And scourge their foul blasphemous paganism,
As fell to Saul, to Balaam, and the rest,
That would not kill and curse at God's command,

So surely will the vengeance of the Highest,
And jealous anger of His fearful arm,
Be poured with rigour on our sinful heads,
If we neglect this offered victory.

Sigis. Then arm, my lords, and issue suddenly,
Giving commandment to our general host,
With expedition to assail the Pagan,
And take the victory our God hath given.

[Exeunt.] The Violation of the Truce: the events portrayed here are loosely based on real history: in 1443, King Wladislaus of Hungary and Poland, along with the famous Hungarian general John Hunyadi, began a campaign that resulted in a number of great victories over the Ottomans; the Ottomans sued for peace, even offering to return to Hungary all the possessions the Ottomans had conquered from her. The result was the Peace of Szeged (July 1, 1444).

Unfortunately, a papal legate talked Wladislaus into abandoning the treaty in the name of religion, and only two days after vowing to keep peace with the Ottomans, the king crossed the Danube and resumed the war. On November 10, 1444, the two sides finally met in Bulgaria, and the Ottomans crushed the crusading army in what is now known as the Battle of Varna.8

Setting: the mountain Orminius is in the extreme north-west of Anatolia.

= foul may be disyllabic here.
59-60: kill and curse in line 60 refer to Saul and Balaam, respectively.

Saul, the first king of the Israelites, lost God's favour when he failed to slaughter every last living creature, meaning all people and domesticated animals, as God had ordered, in a battle against the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15).

Balaam's presence in these lines is more puzzling: the king of Moab had asked Balaam to curse the Israelites, but Balaam actually followed God's directives repeatedly to bless them instead (Numbers 22-24).

= fear-inducing, frightening.

61-64: Frederick doubles down on Baldwin's argument: not only would God not punish them for breaking the treaty and attacking the Turks, he would punish them if they did not break the treaty, and take advantage of the opportunity God has specifically given them to smite their enemies!

= promptness.

The Violation of the Truce: the events portrayed here are loosely based on real history: in 1443, King Wladislaus of Hungary and Poland, along with the famous Hungarian general John Hunyadi, began a campaign that resulted in a number of great victories over the Ottomans; the Ottomans sued for peace, even offering to return to Hungary all the possessions the Ottomans had conquered from her. The result was the Peace of Szeged (July 1, 1444).

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Setting: the mountain Orminius is in the extreme north-west of Anatolia.
And now come we to make his sinews shake,
With greater power than erst his pride hath felt.

Gaz.  

An hundred kings, by scores, will bid him arms,
And hundred thousands subjects to each score,
Which, if a shower of wounding thunderbolts
Should break out of the bowels of the clouds,
And fall as thick as hail upon our heads,
In partial aid of that proud Scythiän.
Yet should our courageous and steelèd crests,
And numbers more than infinite of men,
Be able to withstand and conquer him.

Urib.  Methinks I see how glad the Christian king
Is made for joy of your admitted truce,
That could not but before be terrified
With unacquainted power of our host.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess.  Arm, dread sovereign, and my noble lords!
The treacherous army of the Christiäns,
Taking advantage of your slender power,
Comes marching on us, and determines straight
To bid us battle for our dearest lives.

Orc.  Traitors, villains, damnèd Christiäns!
Have I not here the articles of peace,
And solemn covenants we have both confirmed,
He by his Christ, and I by Mahomet?

Gaz.  Hell and confusion light upon their heads,
That with such treason seek our overthrow,
And care so little for their prophet, Christ!

Orc.  Can there be such deceit in Christiäns,
Or treason in the fleshly heart of man,
Whose shape is figure of the highest God?

Then, if there be a Christ, as Christians say,
But in their deeds deny him for their Christ,
If he be son to everliving Jove,
And hath the power of his outstretched arm;
If he be jealous of his name and honour,
As is our holy prophet, Mahomet; −
Take here these papers as our sacrifice
And witness of thy servant’s perjury.

[He tears to pieces the articles of peace.]

Open, thou shining veil of Cynthia,
And make a passage from th’ empyreal Heaven,
That he that sits high and never sleeps,
Nor in one place is circumscripible.
But everywhere fills every continent
With strange infusion of his sacred vigour,
May, in his endless power and purity,
Behold and venge this traitor's perjury! –
Thou Christ, that art esteemed omnipotent,
If thou wilt prove thyself a perfect God,
Worthy the worship of all faithful hearts,
Be now revenged upon this traitor's soul,
And make the power I have left behind
(too little to defend our guiltless lives,)
Sufficient to discomfort and confound
The trustless force of those false Christiāns. –
To arms, my lords! "On Christ" still let us cry!
If there be Christ, we shall have victory.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II, SCENE III.
[A battlefield south of the Danube.]

Alarms of battle within. – Enter Sigismund, wounded.

Sigis. Discomfited is all the Christian host,
And God hath thundered vengeance from on high,
For my accursed and hateful perjury, –
O just and dreadful punisher of sin,
Let the dishonour of the pains I feel,
In this my mortal well-deservèd wound,
End all my penance in my sudden death!
And let this death, wherein to sin I die,
Conceive a second life in endless mercy!

[He dies.]

Enter Orcanes, Gazellus, Uribassa, and others.

Orc. Now lie the Christians bathing in their bloods,
And Christ or Mahomet hath been my friend.

Gaz. See here the perjured traitor Hungary,
Bloody and breathless for his villainy.

Orc. Now shall his barbarous body be a prey
To beasts and fowls, and all the winds shall breathe,
Through shady leaves of every senseless tree,
Murmurs and hisses for his heinous sin.

Now scalds his soul in the Tartarian streams,
And feeds upon the baneful tree of hell,
That Zoācum, that fruit of bitterness,
That in the midst of fire is ingraffed.
Yet flourishes as Flora in her pride,
With apples like the heads of damned fiends.
The devils there, in chains of quenchless flame,
Shall lead his soul through Orcus' burning gulf.
From pain to pain, whose change shall never end.

What say'st thou yet, Gazellus, to his foil,
Which we referred to justice of his Christ,
And to his power, which here appears as full
As rays of Cynthia to the clearest sight?

Gaz. 'Tis but the fortune of the wars, my lord,
Whose power is often proved a miracle.

Orc. Yet in my thoughts shall Christ be honourèd,
Not doing Mahomet an injury,
Whose power had share in this our victory;
And since this miscreant hath disgraced his faith,
And died a traitor both to Heaven and earth,
We will both watch and ward shall keep his trunk
Amidst these plains for fowls to prey upon.
Go, Uribassa, give it straight in charge.

Urib. I will, my lord.

[Exit Uribassa.]

Orc. And now, Gazellus, let us haste and meet
Our army, and our brothers of Jerusalem,
Of Soria, Trebizond, and Amasia,
And happily, with full Natolian bowls
Of Greekish wine, now let us celebrate
Our happy conquest and his angry fate.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II, SCENE IV.
[Larissa.]

Zenocrate is discovered in her bed of state,
with Tamburlaine sitting by her.
About the bed are three Physicians tempering potions.
Around are Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane,
and her three Sons.

Tamb. Black is the beauty of the brightest day;
The golden ball of Heaven's eternal fire,
That danced with glory on the silver waves,
Now wants the fuel that inflamed his beams;
And all with faintness and for foul disgrace,
poems, such as Beowulf, were written so that every line was alliterative.

= ie. the sun.

= fire is disyllabic. = bower usually means "chamber", and could do so here; Dyce thinks bowers might mean "brows".

17: note that Tamburlaine will exactly repeat this line four more times.
18: Apollo = the sun god, meaning the sun itself. ceaseless lamps = ie. the stars, which never stop shining.

= gives sight to, though usually used in a spiritual sense, suggesting enlightenment.
= purified, also often used in a spiritual sense.
= purified silver ore;† tried is disyllabic.

26: cherubins (cherubims) and seraphins are the second and first highest choirs (ie. orders) respectively of angels, out of a total of nine choirs.†

= elaborately beautiful.†

= highest. Marlowe loves this word.

= medicine.

43: Tamburlaine, engaging in a little wordplay, addresses Zenocrate here, not the physicians.

= ie. "its allotted portion of".

= diminish.
Whose heavenly presence, beautified with health,
Gives light to Phoebus and the fixed stars;

Whose absence makes the sun and moon as dark
As when, opposed in one diameter,

Their spheres are mounted on the serpent's head,
Or else descended to his winding train.

Live still, my love, and so conserve my life,
Or, dying, be the author of my death!

Zeno. Live still, my lord! O, let my sovereign live!
And sooner let the fiery element
Dissolve and make your kingdom in the sky,
Than this base earth should shroud your majesty:

For should I but suspect your death by mine,
The comfort of my future happiness,
And hope to meet your highness in the heavens,
Turned to despair, would break my wretched breast,
But let me die, my love; yet let me die;
With love and patience let your true love die!
Your grief and fury hurts my second life.—
Yet let me kiss my lord before I die,
And let me die with kissing of my lord.
But since my life is lengthened yet a while,
Let me take leave of these my loving sons,
And of my lords, whose true nobility
Have merited my latest memory.
Sweet sons, farewell! In death resemble me,
And in your lives your father's excellence.
Some music, and my fit will cease, my lord.

[They call music.]

Tamb. Proud fury and intolerable fit,
That dares torment the body of my love,
And scourge the scourge of the immortal God!
Now are those spheres, where Cupid used to sit,
Wounding the world with wonder and with love,
Sadly supplied with pale and ghastly death,
Whose darts do pierce the centre of my soul.

54: Tamburlaine frequently returns to the idea that he and Zenocrate each possess such a high degree of light that otherwise independently luminous heavenly bodies actually take or borrow light from them. _Phoebus_, again, is the sun.

56-58: Tamburlaine describes an eclipse; _in one diameter_ means the sun and moon are directly opposite each other, or lying in one line with the earth. 

57-58: the serpent is a constellation, likely the northern constellation Serpens, first registered by the 2nd century A.D. astronomer Ptolemy. An adjacent constellation, Ophiuchus (the serpent bearer), is traditionally depicted as holding Serpens, and thus dividing it into two parts, the head and the tail (train). Ribner (who identifies the serpent as Scorpio) wonders why Marlowe felt an eclipse required an alignment with the constellation (p. 132).  

60: = i.e. the sun.

65: _earth_ = in lines 63-65, Zenocrate implicitly contrasts two of the four elements (water, air, earth and fire) that were said to make up living things; Aristotle wrote that _fire_ is hot and dry, _earth_ is cold and dry. 

shroud = cover, make imperceptible.

66: = "that my death will be the cause of your death".

68: = ruin.

69: = presumably Zenocrate is referring to her afterlife.

70: = "copy or be like", referring to dying with dignity.  

71: = i.e. "resemble your".

84: = the god of love.

85: = i.e. with his arrows. = amazement; note the dramatic alliteration in this line.
Her sacred beauty hath enchanted Heaven;
And had she lived before the siege of Troy,

Helen (whose beauty summoned Greece to arms,
And drew a thousand ships to Tenedos.)

Had not been named in Homer's Iliad;
Her name had been in every line he wrote.
Or, had those wanton poets, for whose birth
Old Rome was proud, but gazed a while on her,
Nor Lesbia nor Corinna had been named;

Zenocrine had been the argument
Of every epigram or elegy.

[The music sounds.—Zenocrine dies.]

What is she dead? Techelles, draw thy sword
And wound the earth, that it may cleave in twain.
And we descend into th' infernal vaults,
To hale the Fatal Sisters by the hair,

And throw them in the triple moat of hell.

For taking hence my fair Zenocrine.
Casane and Theridamas, to arms!
Raise cavalieros higher than the clouds,
And with the cannon break the frame of Heaven;

Batter the shining palace of the sun,
And shiver all the starry firmament.
For amorous Jove hath snatched my love from hence,

Meaning to make her stately queen of Heaven.

What god soever holds thee in his arms,

Giving thee nectar and ambrosiæ,

Behold me here, divine Zenocrate,

Raving, impatient, desperate, and mad,

Breaking my steelèd lance, with which I burst

The rusty beams of Janus' temple doors,

Letting out Death and tyrannizing War,

To march with me under this bloody flag!

And if thou pitiest Tamburlaine the Great,

Come down from Heaven, and live with me again!

Ther. Ah, good my lord, be patient; she is dead,

And all this raging cannot make her live.

If words might serve, our voice hath rent the air;

If tears, our eyes have watered all the earth;

If grief, our murdered hearts have strained forth blood;

Nothing prevails, for she is dead, my lord.

Tamb. “For she is dead!” Thy words do pierce my soul!

Ah, sweet Theridamas! say so no more;

Though she be dead, yet let me think she lives,

And feed my mind that dies for want of her.

[To the body]

Where'er her soul be, thou shalt stay with me,

Embalmed with cassia,ambergris, and myrrh.

Not lapped in lead, but in a sheet of gold,

And till I die thou shalt not be interred.

Then in as rich a tomb as Mausolus'!

We both will rest and have one epitaph

Writ in as many several languages

As I have conquered kingdoms with my sword.

This cursèd town will I consume with fire,

Because this place bereaved me of my love:

The houses, burnt, will look as if they mourned;

And here will I set up her statuæ,

And march about it with my mourning camp,

Drooping and pining for Zenocrate.

[The scene closes.]

END OF ACT II.
ACT III.

SCENE I.

[Somewhere in Anatolia.]

Enter the kings of Trebizond and Soria,
one bearing a sword and the other a sceptre;
next Orcanes King of Natolia and the King of Jerusalem
with the imperial crown; after them enters Callapine,
and after him, other lords and Almeda.

Orcanes and the King of Jerusalem crown Callapine,
and the others give him the sceptre.

Orc. Callapinus Cyricelibus, otherwise Cybelius,
son and successive heir to the late mighty emperor
Bajazeth, by the aid of God and his friend Mahomet,
Emperor of Natolia, Jerusalem, Trebizond, Soria,
Amasia, Thracia, Illyria, Carmania, and all the
hundred and thirty kingdoms late contributory to his
mighty father. Long live Callapinus, emperor of
Turkey!

Call. Thrice worthy kings of Natolia, and the rest,
I will requite your royal gratitudes
With all the benefits my empire yields;
And were the sinews of th' imperial seat
So knit and strengthened as when Bajazeth,
My royal lord and father, filled the throne,
Whose cursed fate hath so dismembered it,
Then should you see this thief of Scythia,
This proud usurping king of Persiâ,
Do us such honour and supremacy,
Bearing the vengeance of our father's wrongs,
As all the world should blot his dignities
Out of the book of baseborn infamies.

And now I doubt not but your royal cares
Hath so provided for this cursed foe,
That, since the heir of mighty Bajazeth,
(An emperor so honoured for his virtues,)
Revives the spirits of true Turkish hearts,
In grievous memory of his father's shame,
We shall not need to nourish any doubt,
But that proud Fortune, who hath followed long
The martial sword of mighty Tamburlaine,
Will now retain her old inconstancy,

= the heir to the Ottoman Sultanate has, with Almeda's assistance, successfully escaped from his imprisonment in Egypt.

5: Thracia = the land at the extreme south-east point of Europe, comprising very roughly the European portion of modern Turkey.

Illyria = more commonly Illyricum, the west coast of the Balkans, off the Adriatic Sea.

Carmania = Caramania on Ortelius' map of the Turkish Empire, corresponding to the south-central region of modern Turkey.

= repay.

= sinews (meaning muscles of the body) were frequently used as a metaphor for "strength" or "support" of the state.

= "caused it to come apart".

13-22: briefly, if the Ottoman Empire was as strong now as it was when Bajazeth was alive, then it would crush Tamburlaine to such a degree as to even wipe his name out of the register of infamous persons or deeds.

= ie. "have no doubt".

= Callapine refers to himself in the third person.

= Fortune is frequently personified.

32-33: Fortune usually spins a wheel, which lifts up the
And raise our honours to as high a pitch.

In this our strong and fortunate encounter;
For so hath Heaven provided my escape
From all the cruelty my soul sustained,
By this my friendly keeper's happy means,
That Jove, surcharged with pity of our wrongs,
Will pour it down in showers on our heads,
Scourging the pride of cursed Tamburlaine.

Orc. I have a hundred thousand men in arms;
Some, that in conquest of the perjured Christian,
Being a handful to a mighty host,
Think them in number yet sufficient
To drink the river Nile or Euphrates,

And for their power enow to win the world.

K. of Jer. And I as many from Jerusalem,
Judaea, Gaza, and Scalonia's bounds,

That on Mount Sinai, with their ensigns spread,
Look like the parti-coloured clouds of Heaven
That show fair weather to the neighbour morn.

K. of Treb. And I as many bring from Trebizond,
Chio, Famastro, and Amasia.

All bordering on the Mare Major sea,
Riso, Sancina, and the bordering towns

That touch the end of famous Euphrates.
Whose courages are kindled with the flames
The cursed Scythian sets on all their towns,
And vow to burn the villain's cruel heart.

K. of Soria. From Soria with seventy thousand strong,
Ta'en from Aleppo, Soldino, Tripoli.

And so unto my city of Damascus,
I march to meet and aid my neighbour kings;
All which will join against this Tamburlaine,
And bring him captive to your highness' feet.
Orc. Our battle then, in martial manner pitched.
According to our ancient use, shall bear
The figure of the semicircled moon,
Whose horns shall sprinkle through the tainted air
The poisoned brains of this proud Scythian.

Call. Well then, my noble lords, for this my friend
That freed me from the bondage of my foe,
I think it requisite and honourable,
To keep my promise and to make him king,
That is a gentleman, I know, at least.

Alm. That's no matter, sir, for being a king; for
Tamburlaine came up of nothing.

K. of Jer. Your majesty may choose some pointed time,
Performing all your promise to the full;
'Tis nought for your majesty to give a kingdom.

Call. Then will I shortly keep my promise, Almeda.

Alm. Why, I thank your majesty.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE II.
[Larissa.]
Enter Tamburlaine with his three sons and Usumcasne;
four Attendants bearing the hearse of Zenocrate;
the drums sounding a doleful march;
the town burning.

Tamb. So burn the turrets of this cursèd town,
Flame to the highest region of the air,
And kindle heaps of exhalations,
That being fiery meteors may presage
Death and destruction to th' inhabitants!
Over my zenith hang a blazing star,
That may endure till Heavèn be dissolved,
Fed with the fresh supply of earthly dregs,
Threatening a dearth and famine to this land!
Flying dragons, lightning, fearful thunderclaps,
Singe these fair plains, and make them seem as black
As is the island where the Furies mask,
= main army.¹ = camped.¹

73: the crescent (usually accompanied by a star), representing the moon, had long been used in western Asia, and even ancient Rome and Egypt. It was formally adopted by the Ottoman government in 1793, and continues to appear on the flag of Turkey today.²⁹

77-81: Callapine’s honourable decision to keep his promise to reward Almeda for helping him escape is surprising, and pleasing.

81: Callapine is acknowledging that it is unusual to make a man such as Almeda, who has no royal blood, a sovereign; he explains that at a minimum, Almeda is a gentleman - a rank one step below that of a noble. Almeda, in his response, concedes the point.

= appointed.
= "it's nothing".

= the atmosphere was believed to be comprised of three regions, the highest being above the tallest mountains, but the exact boundaries between the regions were never clear.

3-5: meteors (exhalations) were thought to form out of ignited vapours from the earth; such heavenly phenomena were believed to be omens of misfortune.

= the point in the sky directly over one's head.¹
= filth.³¹
= lack of food.²

12: the Furies were mythological monsters who tormented those guilty of certain egregious crimes. mask = wander.
Compassed with Lethe, Styx, and Phlegethon,

Because my dear’st Zenocrate is dead.

Caly. This pillar, placed in memory of her,
Where in Arabian, Hebrew, Greek, is writ, −
This town, being burnt by Tamburlaine the Great,
Forbids the world to build it up again.

Amyr. And here this mournful streamer shall be placed,
Wrought with the Persian and th’ Egyptian arms,
To signify she was a princess born
And wife unto the monarch of the East.

Celeb. And here this table as a register
Of all her virtues and perfection.

Tamb. And here the picture of Zenocrates,
To show her beauty which the world admired;
Sweet picture of divine Zenocrates,
That, hanging here, will draw the gods from Heaven,
And cause the stars fixed in the southern arc,
(Whose lovely faces never any viewed
That have not passed the centre’s latitude.)
As pilgrims, travel to our hemisphere,
Only to gaze upon Zenocrates.
Thou shalt not beautify Larissa plains,
But keep within the circle of mine arms;
At every town and castle I besiege,
Thou shalt be set upon my royal tent;
And when I meet an army in the field,
Those looks will shed such influence in my camp,
As if Bellona, goddess of the war,
Threw naked swords and sulphur-balls of fire
Upon the heads of all our enemies. −
And now, my lords, advance your spears again:
Sorrow no more, my sweet Casane, now;
Boys, leave to mourn! this town shall ever mourn,
Being burnt to cinders for your mother’s death.
Caly. If I had wept a sea of tears for her,
It would not ease the sorrows I sustain.

Amyr. As is that town, so is my heart consumed
With grief and sorrow for my mother’s death.

Celeb. My mother’s death hath mortified my mind,
And sorrow stops the passage of my speech.

Tamb. But now, my boys, leave off and list to me,
That mean to teach you rudiments of war.
I’ll have you learn to sleep upon the ground,

12-13: Tamburlaine imagines the Furies living on a dismal island in Hades, the island surrounded by (compassed with) three of its principle rivers.

= banner.
= finished, ie. embroidered or stitched. = ie. coat-of-arms.

= tablet, record of things to be remembered. 15

33: Tamburlaine is referring to the stars visible only in the Southern Hemisphere; the arc in astronomy is the path a heavenly body appears to take in the sky above. 1

= ie. to south of the equator.
36-37: Tamburlaine imagines the southern stars as crossing north of the equator to view the picture of Zenocrates.

44: Bellona was a Roman goddess.
= unsheathed. = sulfur is highly flammable.

= cease.

59: note the interesting alliteration in this line.

= ancient variation of listen. In this long digression of a speech, Tamburlaine introduces the lessons he will give his sons on the art of war.
March in your armour thorough watery fens,
Sustain the scorching heat and freezing cold,
And after this, to scale a castle wall,
Besiege a fort, to undermine a town,

And make whole cities caper in the air.
Then next, the way to fortify your men,
In champion grounds, what figure serves you best,
For which the quinque-angle form is meet,
Because the corners there may fall more flat
Whereas the fort may fittest be assailed,
And sharpest where th' assault is desperate.
The ditches must be deep; the counterscarps
Narrow and steep, the walls made high and broad;
The bulwarks and the rampires large and strong,
With cavalieros and thick counterforts,
And room within to lodge six thousand men.
It must have privy ditches, countermines,
And secret issuings to defend the ditch;
It must have high argins and covered ways,
To keep the bulwark fronts from battery,
And parapets to hide the musketeers;
Casemates to place the great artillery;

= through. = swamps or marshland.
= accessories.

68-69: to undermine ...in the air = to undermine is to dig a
tunnel or mine underneath an enemy town, wall, fort, etc.,
with the intent of placing explosives beneath it to blow it up.
= leap.
= build forts or defensive works for.
= level. = shape.
= pentagon- or star-shaped.1 = appropriate.
= where.5

= the outer walls of the moat or ditch surrounding the fort.
= Cunningham appropriately wonders why the walls should
be counter-intuitively narrow.3
= ramparts.

= exits.
= rampart, protective mound of earth.1

76-86: one can imagine Marlowe studying a cross-sectional
view of a fortification as he wrote these lines. We start with
a ring of earth, or a circular mound of dirt, inside of which
the troops are held. This ring is our rampart. The level top
of the rampart, on which the soldiers may stand and artillery
be placed, is called the terraplein. A wall is built on the
terraplein, facing the enemy, behind which the soldiers and
artillery are protected - this is the parapet.

Along the outer down-slope of the rampart a ditch or
moat is dug; the inner wall of the ditch is the scarp, the outer
wall facing the scarp is the counterscarp. Above the
counterscarp is another walkway, called the covered way. It
is not covered with a roof, but rather protected by a high
wall of earth in front of it, normally called a glacis, but
referred to here by the Italian name argin, which itself
slopes down towards the enemy.

Additional features a fort may contain are (1) casemates,
which are rooms, or vaults, beneath the rampart, in which
cannon may be placed, which would obviously give them
greater protection; a hole in the front of the rampart (called an
embrasure) allows the cannon to be fired at the enemy.
(2) countermines, tunnels dug outward from underneath the
fort to intercept mines dug by the enemy; (3) hidden exits
from which soldiers may issue forth to surprise the enemy
(the secret issues of line 82); (4) cavalieros, small patches
of land raised to greater elevations than any other in the fort,
for artillery; (5) extra masonry or buttresses, called
counterforts, used to support and strengthen the walls of the
fort; (6) and finally privy ditches, dug for purposes of
sanitation.1,13
And store of ordnance, that from every flank
May scour the outward curtains of the fort,
Dismount the cannon of the adverse part,
Murder the foe, and save the walls from breach.
When this is learned for service on the land,
By plain and easy demonstration
I'll teach you how to make the water mount,
That you may dry-foot march through lakes and pools,
Deep rivers, havens, creeks, and little seas,
And make a fortress in the raging waves,
Fenced with the concave of a monstrous rock,
Invincible by nature of the place.
When this is done, then are ye soldiers,
And worthy sons of Tamburlaine the Great.

Caly. My lord, but this is dangerous to be done; We may be slain or wounded ere we learn.

Tamb. Villain! art thou the son of Tamburlaine, And fear'st to die, or with a curtle-axe To hew thy flesh, and make a gaping wound? Hast thou beheld a peal of ordnance strike A ring of pikes, mingled with shot and horse.

Whose shattered limbs, being tossed as high as Heaven, Hang in the air as thick as sunny motes, And canst thou, coward, stand in fear of death? Hast thou not seen my horsemen charge the foe, Shot through the arms, cut overthwart the hands, Dying their lances with their streaming blood, And yet at night carouse within my tent, Filling their empty veins with airy wine,

That, being concocted, turns to crimson blood, And wilt thou shun the field for fear of wounds? View me, thy father, that hath conquered kings, And, with his host marched round about the earth, Quite void of scars and clear from any wound, That by the wars lost not a dram of blood, And see him lance his flesh to teach you all.

[He cuts his arm.]

A wound is nothing, be it ne'er so deep; Blood is the god of war's rich livery.
Now look I like a soldier, and this wound
As great a grace and majesty to me,
As if a chair of gold enaméled,
Encased with diamonds, sapphires, rubies,
And fairest pearl of wealthy India,
Were mounted here under a canopy,
And I sat down, clothed with the massy robe
That late adorned the Afric potentate,
Whom I brought bound unto Damascus' walls.
Come, boys, and with your fingers search my wound,
And in my blood wash all your hands at once,
While I sit smiling to behold the sight.
Now, my boys, what think you of a wound?

Cal. I know not what I should think of it. Methinks it is a pitiful sight.

Cel. 'Tis nothing: give me a wound, father.

Amy. And me another, my lord.

Tom. Come, sirrah, give me your arm.

Cel. Here, father, cut it bravely, as you did your own.

Tom. It shall suffice thou dar'st abide a wound.
My boy, thou shalt not lose a drop of blood
Before we meet the army of the Turk:
But then run desperate through the thickest throngs,
Dreadless of blows, of bloody wounds, and death;
And let the burning of Larissa walls,
My speech of war, and this my wound you see,
Teach you, my boys, to bear courageous minds,
Fit for the followers of great Tamburlaine! −
Usumcasane, now come let us march
Towards Techelles and Theridamas,
That we have sent before to fire the towns,
The towers and cities of these hateful Turks,
And hunt that coward faintheart runaway,
With that accursed traitor, Almeda,
Till fire and sword have found them at a bay.

Usu. I long to pierce his bowels with my sword,
That hath betrayed my gracious sovereign, −
That cursed and damned traitor, Almeda.

Tom. Then let us see if coward Callapine
Dare levy arms against our puissance,
That we may tread upon his captive neck,
And treble all his father's slaveries.

[Exeunt.]
ACT III, SCENE III.
[Balsera, or Passera, in Syria.]

Enter Techelles, Theridamas, and their Train.

Ther. Thus have we marched northward from Tamburlaine, Unto the frontier point of Soria, And this is Balsera, their chiefest hold.

Wherein is all the treasure of the land.

Tech. Then let us bring our light artillery, Minions, falc'nets, and sakers to the trench, Filling the ditches with the walls' wide breach, And enter in to seize upon the hold. How say you, soldiërs? shall we or not?

Soldiers. Yes, my lord, yes; come, let's about it.

Ther. But stay a while; —summon a parley, drum.—

It may be they will yield it quietly, Knowing two kings, the friends to Tamburlaine, Stand at the walls with such a mighty power.

[A parley sounded.]

The Captain appears on the walls, With Olympia his Wife, and his Son.

Capt. What require you, my masters?

Ther. Captain, that thou yield up thy hold to us.

Capt. To you! Why, do you think me weary of it?

Tech. Nay, Captain, thou art weary of thy life, If thou withstand the friends of Tamburlaine!

Ther. These pioners of Argier in Africa, Even in the cannon's face, shall raise a hill Of earth and faggots higher than thy fort, And over thy argins and covered ways Shall play upon the bulwarks of thy hold

3: Balsera = on Ortelius' map of the Turkish Empire, Balsera corresponds to the modern Basra, in extreme southeast Iraq, which cannot be correct, as the army is in Soria (Syria); Ribner reasonably suggests Marlowe meant Passera, a city on the northern Mediterranean coast of the Levant, just south of Anatolia, appearing on Ortelius' map of Natolia. Tamburlaine has ridden north with the main body of the army, leaving Techelles and Theridamas behind to reduce Balsera / Passera. hold = fortress or castle.

= all names for types of small cannons. 8: "filling the moat with pieces of the outer wall in which we will blast an opening".

= hold on, pause. = a drummer plays a rhythm that was internationally recognized as a call to meet or negotiate under a flag of truce.

21-22: the Captain is the commander of the castle or fort; he and his family appear on the balcony at the back of the stage: the balcony frequently served as a wall of a city or fortress. = old form of address for "gentlemen".

= pioneers or sappers, the labourers of an army.

= bundles of sticks, wood.

= a covered way is a walkway appearing above the outer wall of a ditch surrounding or fronting a fort; the high wall of earth in front of the covered way is referred to here by its Italian name of argin. = "ramparts of your fortress".
Volleys of ordnance, till the breach be made
That with his ruin fills up all the trench;
And when we enter in, not Heaven itself
Shall ransom thee, thy wife, and family.

Tech. Captain, these Moors shall cut the leaden pipes
That bring fresh water to thy men and thee,
And lie in trench before thy castle walls,
That no supply of victual shall come in,
Nor any issue forth but they shall die;
And, therefore, Captain, yield it quietly.

Capt. Were you, that are the friends of Tamburlaine,
Brothers to holy Mahomet himself,
I would not yield it; therefore do your worst:
Raise mounts, batter, intrench, and undermine,
Cut off the water, all convoys that come,
Yet I am resolute, and so, farewell.

[Captain, Olympia and their Son retire from the walls.]

Ther. Pioners, away! And where I stuck the stake,
Intrench with those dimensions I prescribed;
Cast up the earth towards the castle wall,
Which, till it may defend you, labour low,
And few or none shall perish by their shot.

Pioners. We will, my lord.

[Exeunt Pioners.]

Tech. A hundred horse shall scout about the plains
To spy what force comes to relieve the hold.
Both we, Theridamas, will entrench our men,
And with the Jacob's staff measure the height
And distance of the castle from the trench,
That we may know if our artillery
Will carry full point-blank unto their walls.

Ther. Then see the bringing of our ordnance
Along the trench into the battery,
Where we will have gabions of six foot broad
To save our cannoniers from musket shot:
Betwixt which shall our ordnance thunder forth,
And with the breach's fall, smoke, fire, and dust,
The crack, the echo, and the soldier's cry,
Make deaf the air and dim the crystal sky.

Tech. Trumpets and drums, alarum presently!
And, soldiers, play the men; the hold is yours!

= artillery fire.
= its.

= ie. food or provisions.
= ie. "nor will any of your soldiers be able to leave the fortress".
= read as "Even if you were".

53: a list of imperatives; batter = strike (the gates) with a battering ram.
= Dyce suggests "all conveyances that can be cut off".
62-63: ie. "until the raised earthworks you build are high enough to protect you from the enemy's fire, keep low as you work".
= an astronomical instrument originally used to determine the altitude of the sun, but later to measure distances and heights in general.
= directly or straight, suggesting a line-drive, as opposed to a lob.
= ordnance is likely trisyllabic here: OR-di-nance.
= platform on which the artillery is placed.
= large baskets which can be filled with earth and used in fortifications, such as on batteries to protect the gunners, as described here.
= "play a call to arms".
= ie. "act like men".
[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE IV.
[Balsera (Passera).]

[Alarm within. —]

Enter the Captain, with his wife Olympia, and his Son.

Olym. Come, good my lord, and let us haste from hence
Along the cave that leads beyond the foe;
No hope is left to save this conquered hold.

Capt. A deadly bullet gliding through my side
Lies heavy on my heart; I cannot live.
I feel my liver pierced, and all my veins,
That there begin and nourish every part,
Mangled and torn, and all my entrails bathed
In blood that straineth from their orifex.
Farewell, sweet wife! Sweet son, farewell! I die.

[He dies.]

Olym. Death, whither art thou gone, that both we live?
Come back again, sweet Death, and strike us both.
One minute end our days! and one sepulchre
Contain our bodies! Death, why com'st thou not?
Well, this must be the messenger for thee.

[Drawing a dagger.]

Now, ugly Death, stretch out thy sable wings,
And carry both our souls where his remains. —
Tell me, sweet boy, art thou content to die?
These barbarous Scythians, full of cruelty,
And Moors, in whom was never pity found,
Will hew us piecemeal, put us to the wheel.

Or else invent some torture worse than that;
Therefore die by thy loving mother's hand,
Who gently now will lance thy ivory throat,
And quickly rid thee both of pain and life.

Son. Mother, dispatch me, or I'll kill myself;
For think ye I can live and see him dead?
Give me your knife, good mother, or strike home:
The Scythians shall not tyrannize on me.
Sweet mother, strike, that I may meet my father.

[She stabs him, and he dies.]

Olym. Ah, sacred Mahomet, if this be sin,
Entreat a pardon of the God of Heaven,
And purge my soul before it come to thee.
She burns the bodies of her Husband and Son and then attempts to kill herself.

Enter Theridamas, Techelles, and all their Train.

Ther. How now, madam! What are you doing?

Olym. Killing myself, as I have done my son, Whose body, with his father's, I have burnt, Lest cruel Scythians should dismember him.

Tech. 'Twas bravely done, and like a soldier's wife. Thou shalt with us to Tamburlaine the Great, Who, when he hears how resolute thou art, Will match thee with a viceroy or a king.

Olym. My lord deceased was dearer unto me Than any viceroy, king, or emperor; And for his sake here will I end my days.

Ther. But, lady, go with us to Tamburlaine, And thou shalt see a man, greater than Mahomet, In whose high looks is much more majesty Than from the concave superficiēs

Of Jove's vast palace, the empyreal orb.

Unto the shining bower where Cynthia sits, Like lovely Thetis, in a crystal robe; That treadeth Fortune underneath his feet, And makes the mighty God of arms his slave; On whom Death and the Fatal Sisters wait

With naked swords and scarlet liversies; Before whom, mounted on a lion's back, Rhammusia bears a helm full of blood, And strews the way with brains of slaughtered men; By whose proud side the ugly Furies run, Hearkening when he shall bid them plague the world; Over whose zenith, clothed in windy air, And eagle's wings joined to her feathered breast, Fame hovereth, sounding of her golden trump.
That to the adverse poles of that straight line,
Which measureth the glorious frame of Heaven,
The name of mighty Tamburlaine is spread;
And him, fair lady, shall thy eyes behold.
Come!

Olym. Take pity of a lady's ruthless tears,
That humbly craves upon her knees to stay
And cast her body in the burning flame
That feeds upon her son's and husband's flesh.

Tech. Madam, sooner shall fire consume us both
Than scorch a face so beautiful as this,
In frame of which Nature hath showed more skill
Than when she gave eternal chaos form,
Drawing from it the shining lamps of Heaven.

Ther. Madam, I am so far in love with you,
That you must go with us - no remedy.

Olym. Then carry me, I care not, where you will,
And let the end of this my fatal journey
Be likewise end to my accursèd life.

Tech. No, madam, but the beginning of your joy:
Come willingly, therefore.

Ther. Soldiers, now let us meet the general,
Who by this time is at Natolia,
Ready to charge the army of the Turk.
The gold and silver, and the pearl we got,
Rifling this fort, divide in equal shares:
This lady shall have twice so much again
Out of the coffers of our treasury.

[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE V.
[Near Aleppo.]

Enter Callapine, Orcanes, Almeda,
And the Kings of Jerusalem, Trebizond, and Soria,
with their Trains.
— to them Enters a Messenger.

Mess. Renownèd emperor, mighty Callapine,
God's great lieutenant over all the world!
Here at Aleppo, with a host of men,
Lies Tamburlaine, this king of Persià,
(in numbers more than are the quivering leaves
Of Ida's forest, where your highness' hounds,

= ie. the ends of the axis of rotation around which the spheres of the universe rotate.

= on. = pitiful.

99-100: chaos was the term used by the ancients to describe the confused mass of the universe before order was imposed.

= "there is no way out of this."

= Dyce suggests that the word the, which ruins the meter, was added by the transcriber or printer by mistake.

113: as mentioned in Scene iii of this Act, while Techelles and Theridamas captured Balsara, Tamburlaine has taken the main army north to Aleppo.

= plundering.

= Ida is a mountain in western Anatolia, near Troy; the hero Aeneas was conceived and raised on the mountain, and it was on Ida where the Judgment of Paris took place.
With open cry, pursue the wounded stag.
Who means to girt Natolia's walls with siege, Fire the town, and overrun the land.

Call. My royal army is as great as his,
That, from the bounds of Phrygia to the sea
Which washeth Cyprus with his brinish waves,
Covers the hills, the valleys, and the plains.
Viceroy and peers of Turkey, play the men!

Whet all your swords to mangle Tamburlaine,
His sons, his captains and his followers!
By Mahomet! not one of them shall live;
The field wherein this battle shall be fought
Forever term the Persian's sepulchre,
In memory of this our victory!

Orc. Now, he that calls himself the scourge of Jove,
The emperor of the world, and earthly god,
Shall end the warlike progress he intends,
And travel headlong to the lake of hell,
Where legion of devils, (knowing he must die
Here in Natolia by your highness' hands,) All brandishing their brands of quenchless fire,
Stretching their monstrous paws, grin with their teeth,
And guard the gates to entertain his soul.

Call. Tell me, viceroy, the number of your men,
And what our army royal is esteemed.

K. of Jer. From Palestina and Jerusalem,
Of Hebrews three score thousand fighting men
Are come, since last we showed your majesty.

Orc. So from Arabia Desert, and the bounds
Of that sweet land, whose brave metropolis
Re-edified the fair Semiramis,

Came forty thousand warlike foot and horse,
Since last we numbered to your majesty.

K. of Treb. From Trebizond in Asii the Less,
Naturalized Turks and stout Bithynians

Came to my bands, full fifty thousand more,
(That, fighting, know not what retreat doth mean,
Nor e'er return but with the victory.)
Since last we numbered to your majesty.
K. of Soria. Of Sorians from Halla is repaired,

And neighbour cities of your highness' land,
Ten thousand horse and thirty thousand foot,
Since last we numbered to your majesty;
So that the army royal is esteemed
Six hundred thousand valiant fighting men.

Call. Then welcome, Tamburlaine, unto thy death.
Come, puissant viceroy, let us to the field,
(the Persians' sepulchre,) and sacrifice
Mountains of breathless men to Mahomet,
Who now, with Jove, opens the firmament
To see the slaughter of our enemies.

Enter Tamburlaine with his three Sons,
and Usuncasane, and others.

Tamb. How now, Casane? See a knot of kings,
Sitting as if they were a-telling riddles.

Usum. My lord, your presence makes them pale and wan:
Poor souls! they look as if their deaths were near.

Tamb. And so he is, Casane; I am here;
But yet I'll save their lives, and make them slaves. –
Ye petty kings of Turkey, I am come,
As Hector did into the Grecian camp,
To overdare the pride of Græcia,
And set his warlike person to the view
Of fierce Achilles, rival of his fame:
I do you honour in the simile;
For if I should, as Hector did Achilles,
(the worthiest knight that ever brandished sword,)n
Challenge in combat any of you all,
I see how fearfully ye would refuse,
And fly my glove as from a scorpion.

Orc. Now thou art fearful of thy army's strength.

Thou wouldst with overmatch of person fight;
But, shepherd's issue, baseborn Tamburlaine,
Think of thy end! this sword shall lance thy throat.

53: Sorians = Syrians.
Halla = perhaps modern Hama, the Bible's Hamath, in western Syria, or Halab, the ancient name for Aleppo.
is repaired = have come.

= mighty.

= the heavens.

= assemblage, group.

= ie. Death. = Tamburlaine grimly refers to himself as personified death.

79-82: Hector and Achilles were the greatest warriors of the Trojans and the Greeks respectively; in Book 22 of the Iliad, after the one-man wrecking crew Achilles had caused the Trojan army to flee, Hector alone remained outside the gates of Troy to face Achilles. Changing his mind, Hector ran away from Achilles, who chased Hector several times around the city before catching him and killing him.

= outrade.¹ = ie. the Greek army.

83: Tamburlaine indeed flatters Orcanes, in comparing Orcanes to Achilles, who proved himself to be a greater warrior than Hector.

= plural form of you.

= "run away from my gauntlet which I have figuratively thrown down in challenge" (adapted from Ribner, p. 147).⁹

90-91: Orcanes suggests that since Tamburlaine is afraid for his army's survival against the Ottomans, he instead is challenging Orcanes, who is superior to Tamburlaine, to single-combat, as Hector did Achilles.

= "one who is more than a match for you".¹

= son of a shepherd.
Tamb. Villain! the shepherd's issue, (at whose birth
Heaven did afford a gracious aspect).

And joined those stars that shall be opposite
Even till the dissolution to the world,
And never meant to make a conqueror
So famous as is mighty Tamburlaine.)

Shall so torment thee and that Callapine,
That, like a roguish runaway, suborned

That villain there, that slave, that Turkish dog,
To false his service to his sovereign,
As ye shall curse the birth of Tamburlaine.

Call. Rail not, proud Scythian! I shall now revenge
My father's vile abuses, and mine own.

K. of Jer. By Mahomet! he shall be tied in chains,
Rowing with Christians in a brigandine

About the Grecian isles to rob and spoil,
And turn him to his ancient trade again:
Methinks the slave should make a lusty thief.

Call. Nay, when the battle ends, all we will meet
And sit in council to invent some pain
That most may vex his body and his soul.

Tamb. Sirrah, Callapine! I'll hang a clog about your

neck for running away again. You shall not trouble me
thus to come and fetch you.
But as for you, viceroys, you shall have bits,
And, harnessed like my horses, draw my coach;
And when ye stay, be lashed with whips of wire.
I'll have you learn to feed on provender
And in a stable lie upon the planks.

Orc. But, Tamburlaine, first thou shalt kneel to us,
And humbly crave a pardon for thy life.

K. of Treb. The common soldiers of our mighty host
Shall bring thee bound unto the general's tent.

K. of Soria. And all have jointly sworn thy cruel death,
Or bind thee in eternal torments' wrath.

Tamb. Well, sirs, diet yourselves; you know I shall
have occasion shortly to journey you.

Celeb. See, father,
How Almeda the jailor looks upon us.
**Tamb.** Villain! Traitor! damnèd fugitive!  
I'll make thee wish the earth had swallowed thee!  
See’st thou not death within my wrathful looks?  
Go, villain, cast thee headlong from a rock,  
Or rip thy bowels and rend out thy heart  
T' appease my wrath! or else I'll torture thee,  
Searing thy hateful flesh with burning irons  
And drops of scalding lead, while all thy joints  
Be **rack’d** and beat **asunder** with the **wheel**;

For, if thou liv'st, not any element  
Shall **shroud** thee from the wrath of Tamburlaine.

**Call.** Well, in despite of thee, he shall be king.  
Come, Almeda; receive this crown of me.  
I here invest thee king of **Ariadan**.

Bordering on Marè Rosso, near to Mecca.

**Orc.** What! Take it, man.

**Alm.** [To Tamburlaine] Good my lord, let me take it.

**Call.** Dost thou ask him **leave**? Here; take it.

**Tamb.** Go to, sirrah, take your crown, and make up  
the half dozen. So, sirrah, now you are a king, you  
must **give arms**.

**Orc.** So he shall, and wear thy head in his **scutcheon**.

**Tamb.** No; let him hang a bunch of keys on his  
**standard**, to put him in remembrance he was a jailor,  
that, when I take him, I may knock out his brains with  
them, and lock you in the stable, when you shall come  
sweating from my chariot.

**K. of Treb.** Away; let us to the field, that the villain  
may be slain.

**Tamb.** Sirrah, prepare whips, and bring my chariot to  
your tent; for, as soon as the battle is done, I'll ride  
in triumph through the camp.

**Enter Theridamas, Techelles, and their Train.**

How now, ye petty kings? Lo, here are **bugs**

Will make the hair stand upright on your heads,

152: **rack’d** = torn apart on the rack, the quintessential  
medieval instrument of torture.  
**asunder** = into pieces.  
**wheel** = see Act III, iv, line 28 above.

= cover, ie. shield.

= a city on the coast of the Red Sea (Marè Rosso); Ortelius  
places **Ariadan** directly south of Mecca.

163: Cunningham comments that Almeda is no doubt  
trembling as he speaks this line.

= permission.

167-177: the dialogue turns to prose briefly, and will again  
at 196-202.

= Tamburlaine shows an increasing ability to be droll: to  
give arms is to take a coat of arms.

= ie. escutcheon, the shield on which a coat of arms is  
displayed.  
Orcanes responds with appropriate dry humour.

= military flag or banner.

186: Techelles and Theridamas rejoin the main army after  
taking Balsera.

= bug-bears, objects intended to strike one with terror.  
Tamburlaine is addressing the Ottomans, referring to his  
subordinates.
And cast your crowns in slavery at their feet. –
Welcome, Theridamas and Techelles, both!
See ye this rout, and know ye this same king?

Ther. Ay, my lord; he was Callapine's keeper.

Tamb. Well now you see he is a king; look to him,
Theridamas, when we are fighting, lest he hide his

K. of Soria. No, Tamburlaine; he shall not be put to that
exigent, I warrant thee.

Tamb. You know not, sir. –
But now, my followers and my loving friends,
Fight as you ever did, like conquerors,
The glory of this happy day is yours.

My stern aspéct shall make fair Victory,
Hovering betwixt our armíes, light on me,
Loaden with laurel wreaths to crown us all.

Tech. I smile to think how when this field is fought
And rich Natolia ours, our men shall sweat
With carrying pearl and treasure on their backs.

Tamb. You shall be princes all, immediately;
Come, fight, ye Turks, or yield us victory.

Orc. No; we will meet thee, slavish Tamburlaine.

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT III.
ACT IV.

SCENE I.
[A battlefield near Aleppo.]

Alarms within. —

Amyras and Celebinus issue from the tent
where Calyphas sits asleep.

1 Amyr. Now in their glories shine the golden crowns
Of these proud Turks, much like so many suns
That half dismay the majesty of Heaven.

2 Now, brother, follow we our father's sword,
That flies with fury swifter than our thoughts,
And cuts down armies with
his
conquering wings.

3: ie. by trying to outshine it.

4Celeb. Call forth our lazy brother from the tent,
For if my father miss him in the field,
Wrath, kindled in the furnace of his breast,
Will send a deadly lightning to his heart.

5 Amyr. Brother, ho! What, given so much to sleep!
You cannot leave it, when our enemies' drums
And rattling cannons thunder in our ears
Our proper ruin and our father's
foil?

6 = total. = defeat or dishonour.¹

7 Caly. Away, ye fools! My father needs not me,
Nor you, in faith, but that you will be thought
More childish-valorous than manly-wise.
If half our camp should sit and sleep with me,
My father were enough to scare the foe.
You do dishonour to his majesty,
To think our helps will do him any good.

8 Amyr. What, dar'st thou then be absent from the field,
Knowing my father hates thy cowardice,
And oft hath warned thee to be
still in field,
When he himself amidst the thickest troops
Beats down our foes, to
flesh our taintless swords?

10 = "always (still) on the field of battle."

11 = the phrase to flesh one's sword was used to describe
the first time one's sword was used in battle, and hence one's
first battle; taintless means unused or uncorrupted: the image
suggests the military equivalent of losing one's virginity.

12 Caly. I know, sir, what it is to kill a man;
It works remorse of
conscience
in me;
I take no pleasure to be murderous,
Nor care for blood when wine will quench my thirst.

13 = conscience is trisyllabic.

14 Celeb. O cowardly boy! Fie! for shame, come forth!
Thou dost dishonour manhood and thy
house.

15 Caly. Go, go, tall stripling, fight you for us both,
And take my other
toward
brother here,
For person like to prove a second
Mars.
'Twill please my mind as well to hear you both
Have won a heap of honour in the field
And left your slender carcasses behind,
As if I lay with you for company.
Amyr. You will not go, then?

Caly. You say true.

Amyr. Were all the lofty mounts of Zona Mundi,

That fill the midst of farthest Tartary.

Turned into pearl and proffered for my stay,
I would not bide the fury of my father,
When, made a victor in these haughty arms,
He comes and finds his sons have had no shares
In all the honours he proposed for us.

Caly. Take you the honour, I will take my ease;
My wisdom shall excuse my cowardice.
I go into the field before I need!

[Alarums. – Amyras and Celebinus run out.]

The bullets fly at random where they list;
And should I go and kill a thousand men,
I were as soon rewarded with a shot,
And sooner far than he that never fights;
And should I go and do nor harm nor good,
I might have harm, which all the good I have,
Joined with my father's crown, would never cure.
I'll to cards. Perdicas!

Enter Perdicas.

Perd. Here, my lord.

Caly. Come, thou and I will go to cards to drive away
the time.

Perd. Content, my lord; but what shall we play for?

Caly. Who shall kiss the fairest of the Turks'
concubines first, when my father hath conquered them.

Perd. Agreed, i' faith.

[They play.]

Caly. They say I am a coward, Perdicas, and I fear as
little their tarantaras, their swords or their cannons,
as I do a naked lady in a net of gold, and, for fear I
should be afraid, would put it off and come to bed
with me.

Perd. Such a fear, my lord, would never make ye retire.

Caly. I would my father would let me be put in the
front of such a battle once to try my valour.

[Alarms within.]
ACT IV, SCENE II.
[The same battlefield.]

Enter Tamburlaine, Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane, Amyras, and Celebinus, leading in Orcanes and the Kings of Jerusalem, Trebizond and Soria.

Tamb. See now, ye slaves, my children stoop your pride
And lead your bodies sheeplike to the sword. —
Bring them, my boys, and tell me if the wars
Be not a life that may il·lústrate gods,
And tickle not your spirits with desire
Still to be trained in arms and chivalry?

Amyr. Shall we let go these kings again, my lord,
To gather greater numbers 'gainst our power,
That they may say it is not chance doth this,
But matchless strength and magnanimity?

Tamb. No, no, Amyras; tempt not fortune so;
Cherish thy valour still with fresh supplies,
And glut it not with stale and daunted foes.
But where's this coward villain, not my son,
But traitor to my name and majesty?

[He goes in and brings Calyphas out.]

Image of sloth and picture of a slave,
The obloquy and scorn of my renown!
How may my heart, thus firèd with mine eyes,
Wounded with shame and killed with discontent,
Shroud any thought may hold my striving hands

From martial justice on thy wretched soul?

Ther. Yet pardon him, I pray your majesty.

Tech. & Usum. Let all of us entreat your highness' pardon.

Tamb. Stand up, ye base, unworthy soldiërs!
Know ye not yet the argument of arms?

Amyr. Good my lord, let him be forgiven for once,
And we will force him to the field hereafter.
Tamb. Stand up, my boys, and I will teach ye arms,  
And what the jealousy of wars must do.  
O Samarcanda, (where I breathèd first,  
And joyed the fire of this martial flesh,) −  
Blush, blush, fair city, at thine honour's foil,  
And shame of nature, which Jaertis' stream,  
Embracing thee with deepest of his love,  
Can never wash from thy distainèd brows!  
Here, Jove, receive his fainting soul again;  
A form not meet to give that subject essence  
Whose matter is the flesh of Tamburlaine;  
Wherein an incorporeal spirit moves,  
Made of the mould whereof thyself consists,  
Which makes me valiant, proud, ambitiöus,  
Ready to levy power against thy throne,  
That I might move the turning spheres of Heaven!  
For earth and all this airy regiön  
Cannot contain the state of Tamburlaine.  

[He stabs Calyphas.]  

By Mahomet! thy mighty friend, I swear,  
In sending to my issue such a soul,  
Created of the massy dregs of earth,  
The scum and tartar of the elements,  
Wherein was neither courage, strength, or wit,  
But folly, sloth, and damned idleness,  
Thou hast procured a greater enemy  
Than he that darted mountains at thy head,  
Shaking the burden mighty Atlas bears;  
Whereat thou trembling hid'st thee in the air,
Clothed with a pitchy cloud for being seen.
And now, ye cankered curs of Asiä,
That will not see the strength of Tamburlaine,
Although it shine as brightly as the sun;
Now you shall feel the strength of Tamburlaine,
And, by the state of his supremacy,
Approve the difference 'twixt himself and you.

Orc. Thou show'st the difference 'twixt ourselves and thee,
In this thy barbarous damnèd tyranny.

K. of Jer. Thy victories are grown so violent,
That shortly Heaven, filled with the meteors
Of blood and fire thy tyrannies have made,
Will pour down blood and fire on thy head,
Whose scalding drops will pierce thy seething brains,
And, with our bloods, revenge our bloods on thee.

Tamb. Villains! these terrors, and these tyrannies
(If tyrannies war's justice ye repute,)
I execute, enjoined me from above.

To scourge the pride of such as Heaven abhors;
Nor am I made arch-monarch of the world,
Crowned and invested by the hand of Jove
For deeds of bounty or nobility;
But since I exercise a greater name,
The scourge of God, and terror of the world,
I must apply myself to fit those terms,
In war, in blood, in death, in cruelty,
And plague such peasants as resist in me
The power of Heaven's eternal majesty.

Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane,
Ransack the tents and the paviliöns
Of these proud Turks, and take their concubines,
Making them bury this effeminate brat;
For not a common soldier shall defile
His manly fingers with so faint a boy.
Then bring those Turkish harlots to my tent,
And I'll dispose them as it likes me best;
Meanwhile, take him in.

Soldiers. We will, my lord.

[Exeunt with the body of Calyphas.]

K. of Jer. O damnèd monster! Nay, a fiend of hell,
Whose cruelties are not so harsh as thine,  
Nor yet imposed with such a bitter hate!

**Orc.** Revenge it, **Rhadamanth and Ääcus.**

And let your hates, extended in his pains,  
Excel the hate wherewith he pains our souls!

**K. of Treb.** May never day give virtue to his eyes,  
Whose sight, composed of fury and of fire,  
Doth send such stern affections to his heart!

**K. of Soria.** May never spirit, vein, or artier, feed  
The cursed substance of that cruel heart!  
But, wanting moisture and remorseful blood,  
Dry up with anger, and consume with heat!

**Tamb.** Well, bark, ye dogs. I'll bridle all your tongues,  
And bind them close with bits of burnished steel,  
Down to the channels of your hateful throats;  
And, with the pains my rigour shall inflict,  
I'll make ye roar, that earth may echo forth  
The far-resounding torments ye sustain:  
As when an herd of lusty **Cymbrian** bulls

Run mourning round about the females' miss,  
And, stung with fury of their following,  
Fill all the air with troublous bellowing;  
I will, with engines never exercised,

Conquer, sack, and utterly consume  
Your cities and your golden palaces;  
And, with the flames that beat against the clouds,  
Incense the heavens, and make the stars to melt,  
As if they were the tears of Mahomet,  
For hot consumption of his country's pride;  
And, till by vision or by speech I hear  
Immortal Jove say “Cease, my Tamburlaine,”  
I will persist, a terror to the world,  
Making the meteors (that, like arm'd men  
Are seen to march upon the towers of Heaven)  
Run tilting round about the firmament,

= the two named persons, along with a third, Minos, were rewarded for their records of justice and wisdom while they lived on earth by being appointed judges in the underworld. **Rhadamanthys** was a tutor for Hercules, and a judge on earth, but where he practiced is unclear - perhaps he served with his brother, Minos, the king of Crete (Murray, pp. 240-3).**

**Æacus** ruled the island of Aegina in the Saronic Gulf south of Athens.

= severe passions.¹

127: *spirit* = the supernatural animating power that gives life to the soul.³¹

*artier* = artery.

= lacking. = compassionate.⁵

= burn to ashes; the line is an indirect allusion to the element of fire, which was, in Aristotelian terms, described as dry and hot.

= tightly.

= A Dictionary of Ancient Geography (1773) notes that the **Cimbrians** were believed by the ancients to be an itinerant German people who eventually settled in Scythia.³⁷ Their connection to bulls is unclear.⁹

= ie. the loss of the females.³

140-1: an odd but engaging rhyming couplet.

= "with war machines never yet used", ie. perhaps never yet invented; *engines* was the word used to describe large and sometimes complex weapons of war such as catapults, battering rams, etc.

= burn.

= burn.¹

= destruction.

152-5: like armed...pavilion = Tamburlaine personifies meteors as knights engaged in tournament games.

= jousting. = sky or heavens.
And break their burning lances in the air,
For honour of my wondrous victories.
Come, bring them in to our pavilion.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV, SCENE III.
[The camp of Tamburlaine.]

Olympia discovered alone.

Olym. Distressed Olympia, whose weeping eyes
Since thy arrival here beheld no sun,
But closed within the compass of a tent
Have stained thy cheeks, and made thee look like Death,
Rather than yield to his detested suit,
Whose drift is only to dishonour thee;
And since this earth, dewed with thy brinish tears,
Affords no herbs whose taste may poison thee,
Nor yet this air, beat often with thy sighs,
Contagious smells and vapors to infect thee,
Nor thy close cave a sword to murder thee;
Let this invention be the instrument.

Enter Theridamas.

Ther. Well met, Olympia; I sought thee in my tent,
But when I saw the place obscure and dark,
Which with thy beauty thou was’t wont to light,
Enraged, I ran about the fields for thee,
Supposing amorous Jove had sent his son,
The wingèd Hermes, to convey thee hence;

But now I find thee, and that fear is past.
Tell me, Olympia, wilt thou grant my suit?

Olym. My lord and husband’s death, with my sweet son’s,
(with whom I buried all affectiöns
Save grief and sorrow, which torment my heart,)
Forbids my mind to entertain a thought
That tends to love, but meditate on death,
A fitter subject for a pensive soul.

Ther. Olympia, pity him in whom thy looks
Have greater operation and more force
Than Cynthia’s in the watery wilderness,
For with thy view my joys are at the full,
And ebb again as thou depart'st from me.

Olym. Ah, pity me, my lord! and draw your sword,
Making a passage for my troubled soul,
Which beats against this prison to get out,
And meet my husband and my loving son.

Ther. Nothing but still thy husband and thy son!
Leave this, my love, and listen more to me:
Thou shalt be stately queen of fair Argier;
And, clothed in costly cloth of massy gold,
Upon the marble turrets of my court
Sit like to Venus in her chair of state,
Commanding all thy princely eye desires;
And I will cast off arms to sit with thee,
Spending my life in sweet discourse of love.

Olym. No such discourse is pleasant in mine ears,
But that where every period ends with death,
And every line begins with death again.
I cannot love, to be an emperèss.

Ther. Nay lady, then, if nothing will prevail,
I'll use some other means to make you yield:
Such is the sudden fury of my love,
I must and will be pleased, and you shall yield.
Come to the tent again.

Olym. Stay now, my lord, and, will you save my honour,
I'll give your grace a present of such price
As all the world cannot afford the like.

Ther. Why, madam, think ye to mock me thus palpably?
Olym. To prove it, I will 'noint your naked throat,
Which when you stab, look on your weapon's point,
And you shall see't rebated with the blow.

Ther. Why gave you not your husband some of it,
If you loved him, and it so preciöus?

Olym. My purpose was, my lord, to spend it so,
But was prevented by his sudden end;
And for a present, easy proof hereof,
That I dissemble not, try it on me.
Ther. I will, Olympia, and will keep it for
The richest present of this eastern world.

[She anoints her throat.]

Olym. Now stab, my lord, and mark your weapon's point,
That will be blunted if the blow be great.

Ther. Here, then, Olympia.

[Stabs her.]

What, have I slain her? Villain, stab thyself!
Cut off this arm that murderèd my love,
In whom the learnèd rabbis of this age
Might find as many wondrous miracles
As in the theoria of the world.

Now hell is fairer than Elysium;
A greater lamp than that bright eye of Heaven,
From whence the stars do borrow all their light,
Wanders about the black circumferènce;
And now the damnèd souls are free from pain,

For every Fury gazeth on her looks.
Infernal Dis is courting of my love,
Inventing masques and stately shows for her,

Opening the doors of his rich treasury
To entertain this queen of chastity;
Whose body shall be tombed with all the pomp
The treasure of my kingdom may afford.

[Exit, with the body.]

ACT IV, SCENE IV.
[Byron in Persia.]

Enter Tamburlaine, drawn in his chariot by the
Kings of Trebizond and Soria with bits in their mouths:
in his right hand he has a whip with which
he scourgeth them, while his left hand holds the reins;
then come Techelles, Theridamas, Usumcasane,
Amyras, and Celebinus with Orcanes and the King of
Jerusalem, led by five or six common soldiers.

Tamb. Holla, ye pampered jades of Asiä!

97: Dyce points out how this incident was borrowed from
the well-known Italian poem Orlando furioso, by Ludovico
Ariosto.

= observe.

98: Dyce points out how this incident was borrowed from
the well-known Italian poem Orlando furioso, by Ludovico
Ariosto.

= as Ribner points out, rabbis can refer to men of learning
who are not necessarily Jewish.1,9

= OED defines theoria as a "contemplation of the nature of
things." (def. 1).

111: Elysium, the part of Hades reserved for blessed souls,
is now less desirable than the rest of Hades.
= ie. Olympia's soul. = the sun.

113: Marlowe repeatedly uses the motif of certain heavenly
bodies borrowing light (as in reflection) from others.
= probably the outer limits of Hades.

115-6: the souls of the damned are momentarily free of their
 tormentors (the Furies), who stand amazed in viewing
the wonderful Olympia.

= ie. Pluto, the god of the underworld.

= masques were courtly entertainments, featuring music
and dancing, and often allegorical characters; without
 television, the Elizabethans frequently created such
entertainments for themselves, using members of their
own households and guests as players.

= worn out horses; this passage was frequently parodied by
later poets: ex. In Act II, iv, of Part II of Shakespeare's
Henry IV, Pistol cries, "Shall pack-horses / And hollow pampered jades of Asia, which cannot go but thirty mile a day, / Compare with Caesars, etc." Note that Pistol's use of hollow is a malapropism for Tamburlaine's Holla.

2 What! can ye draw but twenty miles a day,  
And have so proud a chariot at your heels,  
And such a coachman as great Tamburlaine,  
But from Asphaltis, where I conquered you,

6 To Byron here, where thus I honour you!

The horse that guide the golden eye of Heaven
And blow the morning from their nosterils,  
Making their fiery gait above the clouds,  
Are not so honoured in their governor

As you, ye slaves, in mighty Tamburlaine.

The headstrong jades of Thrace Alcides tamed,

That King Aegeus fed with human flesh,  
And made so wanton that they knew their strengths,  
Wore not subdued with valour more divine  
To make you fierce, and fit my appetite,

14 You shall be fed with flesh as raw as blood,  
And drink in pails the strongest muscadel;  
16 If you can live with it, then live, and draw  
My chariot swifter than the racking clouds;

18 If not, then die like beasts, and fit for nought  
But perches for the black and fatal ravens.

24 Thus am I right the scourge of highest Jove;  
And see the figure of my dignity
By which I hold my name and majesty!

28 Amyr. Let me have coach, my lord, that I may ride,  
And thus be drawn by these two idle kings.

30 Tamb. Thy youth forbids such ease, my kingly boy.  
They shall tomorrow draw my chariot,  
While these their fellow-kings may be refreshed.

34 Orc. O thou that sway'st the region under earth,

= the Dead Sea, labeled as such on Ortelius’ map of Palestine; Tamburlaine means the plains of Asphaltis (see line 81 below).

= the city of Byron, or Biron, is just north of the Persian Gulf on Ortelius’ map of the Turkish Empire. The kings of Trebizond and Soria have pulled Tamburlaine’s chariot for about 450 miles!

= a reference to the horses that, guided by the sun god, pull the sun across the sky every day.

= trisyllabic variation of nostrils.

10-11: that is, in pulling the sun god, the celestial horses are not honoured to the degree the two horse-kings are that get to pull Tamburlaine.

12-13: a reference to the 8th labour of Hercules, in which he was sent to bring back the horses of Diodemes, the King of Thrace; the horses were regularly fed human flesh, which caused them to become furious and unmanageable.

Defeating Diodemes in a fight, Hercules fed the king to his own horses.

Tamburlaine, or perhaps we should say Marlowe, is mistaken in identifying Aegeus, a King of Athens, with the legend.

= unmanageable.

= controlled, broken, tamed.

= a strong, sweet wine.

= ie. clouds driven by the wind.

= nothing.

= ravens were omens of great misfortune or even death, hence the adjective fatal.

= "the form of my excellence".

= ie. Orcanes and the King of Jerusalem, who are Tamburlaine’s "spare horses".

35f: Orcanes prays to Pluto, the god who rules (sways) the underworld.
And art a king as absolute as Jove,

Come as thou didst in fruitful Sicily,
Surveying all the glories of the land,
And as thou took'st the fair Proserpina,
Joying the fruit of Ceres' garden-plot,
For love, for honour, and to make her queen,
So for just hate, for shame, and to subdue
This proud contemner of thy dreadful power,
Come once in fury and survey his pride,
Haling him headlong to the lowest hell.

Ther. Your majesty must get some bits for these,
To bridle their contemptuous, cursing tongues,
That, like unruly, never broken jades,
Break through the hedges of their hateful mouths,
And pass their fixèd bounds exceedingly.

Tech. Nay, we will break the hedges of their mouths,
And pull their kicking colts out of their pastures.

Usum. Your majesty already hath devised
A mean, as fit as may be, to restrain
These coltish coach-horse tongues from blasphemy.

Celeb. How like you that, sir king? Why speak you not?

K. of Jer. Ah, cruel brat, sprung from a tyrant's loins!
How like his cursed father he begins
To practice taunts and bitter tyrannies!

Tamb. Ay, Turk, I tell thee, this same boy is he
That must (advanced in higher pomp than this)
Rifle the kingdoms I shall leave unsacked,
If Jove, esteeming me too good for earth,
Raise me to match the fair Aldebaran.

Above the threefold astracism of Heaven,
Before I conquer all the triple world.  
Now, fetch me out the Turkish concubines;  
I will prefer them for the funeral  
They have bestowed on my abortive son.

[The Concubines are brought in.]

Where are my common soldiers now, that fought  
So lion-like upon Asphaltis' plains?

Soldiers. Here, my lord.  
Tamb. Hold ye, tall soldiers, take ye queens apiece —  
I mean such queens as were kings' concubines.

Take them; divide them, and their jewèls too,  
And let them equally serve all your turns.

Soldiers. We thank your majesty.

Tamb. Brawl not, I warn you, for your lechery:  
For every man that so offends shall die.

Orc. Injurious tyrant, wilt thou so defame  
The hateful fortunes of thy victory,  
To exercise upon such guiltless dames  
The violence of thy common soldiers' lust?

Tamb. Live continent, then, ye slaves, and meet not me

With troops of harlots at your slothful heels.

Concubines. O pity us, my lord, and save our honours.

Tamb. Are ye not gone, ye villains, with your spoils?

[They run away with the Concubines.]

K. of Jer. O, merciless, infernal cruelty!

Tamb. Save your honours! Twere but time indeed.  
Lost long before you knew what honour meant.

Ther. It seems they meant to conquer us, my lord,  
And make us jesting pageants for their trulls.

Tamb. And now themselves shall make our pageant,  
And common soldiers jest with all their trulls.

Let them take pleasure soundly in their spoils,  
Till we prepare our march to Babylon.  

= the ancients divided the world into three continents,  
Europe, Asia and Libya (Africa), surrounded by ocean.

= promote or assign, perhaps ironic.

= monster of nature.¹

= the plains of the Dead Sea, but used loosely here to refer to  
the battlefield in the Levant where Tamburlaine defeated the Ottomans.

= brave. = each.

= Tamburlaine puns on queens and queans, the latter  
meaning whores. Line 86 is humourously meant to be  
a "clarification".

= needs.²

= quarrel.²

= bring disrepute on.

= note that Orcanes continues to use the insulting "thou"  
in addressing Tamburlaine.

= chastely or with self-control; Tamburlaine is addressing  
and admonishing his soldiers, who have not yet left with  
the concubines.

= slow, sluggish.

= ie. by not allowing them to be raped.

= "it is about time you did something to protect your  
honours".

= ie. "the Ottomans intended".

= actors in performances.² = whores.

= Tamburlaine, now rolling out the jokes, puns on jest,  
which can mean to taunt or to act in a play or masque,¹  
as well perhaps with a vague suggestive sense.

= Babylon is near to their present location of Byron.
Whither we next make expeditiön.

_Tech._ Let us not be idle, then, my lord,
But presently _be prest_ to conquer it.

_Tamb._ We will, Techelles. — Forward, then, ye jades. —
Now _crouch_, ye kings of greatest Asiä,
And tremble when ye hear this scourge will come
That whips down cities and controlleth crowns,
Adding their wealth and treasure to my store.
The _Euxine sea_, north to Natolia;
The _Terrene_, west; the Caspian, north northeast;
And on the south, _Situs Arabicus_;
Shall all be loaden with the martial spoils
We will convey with us to Persiä.
Then shall my native city, Samarcanda,
And crystal waves of fresh Jaertis' stream,
For there my palace-royal shall be placed,
Whose shining turrets shall dismay the Heavens,
And cast the fame of Ilion's tower to hell.

Thorough the streets, with troops of conquered kings,
I'll ride in golden armour like the sun;
And in my _helm_ a triple plume shall spring,
Spangled with diamonds, dancing in the air,
To note me emperor of the threefold world,
Like to an almond tree _y-mounted_ high

Upon the lofty and celestial _mount_
Of evergreen _Selinus_ quaintly decked
With blooms more white than _Erycina's brows_,
Whose tender blossoms tremble every one,
At every little breath through Heaven blown.

142: _and become more famous than the tower of Troy_;
in Book VI of the _Iliad_, Homer mentions "the great bastion (or tower) of Ilion" (Lattimore, p. 181).32

148-153: Dyce observes that these lines are adapted from Canto VII of Book I of Edmund Spenser's epic poem, _The Faerie Queene_: Stanza 32 reads in full:

_Upon the top of all his loftie crest,
A bounch of heares discolord diversly,
With sprinclned pearle and gold full richly drest,
Did shake, and seemd to daunce for jollity.
Like to an almond tree ymounted hye
On top of greene Selinis all alone,
With blossoms brave bedecked daintily;
Whose tender locks do tremble every one_
Then in my coach, like Saturn's royal son
Mounted, his shining chariot gilt with fire,
And drawn with princely eagles through the path
Paved with bright crystal and enchased with stars,
When all the gods stand gazing at his pomp,
So will I ride through Samarcanda streets,
Until my soul, dissevered from this flesh,
Shall mount the milk-white way, and meet him there.

To Babylon, my lords; to Babylon!

[Exeunt.]

END OF ACT IV.
ACT V.

SCENE I.
[Babylon.]

Enter the governor of Babylon, Maximus, and others upon the walls.

Gov. What saith Maximus?
Max. My lord, the breach the enemy hath made
Gives such assurance of our overthrow,
That little hope is left to save our lives
Or hold our city from the conqueror's hands.
Then hang out flags, my lord, of humble truce,
And satisfy the people's general prayers,
That Tamburlaine's intolerable wrath
May be suppressed by our submission.

Gov. Villain, respects thou more thy slavish life
Than honour of thy country or thy name?
Is not my life and state as dear to me,
The city, and my native country's weal,
As anything of price with thy conceit?
Have we not hope, for all our battered walls,
To live secure and keep his forces out,
When this our famous lake of Limnasphaltis
Makes walls afresh with everything that falls
Into the liquid substance of his stream,
More strong than are the gates of death or hell?
What faintness should dismay our courages,
When we are thus defensed against our foe,
And have no terror but his threatening looks?

Enter a Citizen, who kneels to the Governor.

Cit. My lord, if ever you did deed of ruth,
And now will work a refuge to our lives,

Enter Characters: Maximus is likely an advisor to the governor of Babylon.

= Babylon, which was of course no longer extant in the Middle Ages, does not appear anywhere on the maps of Ortelius; the city lay on the Euphrates River in modern Iraq, about 50 miles south of Baghdad.

= being vanquished.²

= tremendous, excessive.²

12f: the response of Babylon’s governor recalls the excuses given by Damascus’ governor (oddly enough, also in the opening scene of Act V, in Part One), who similarly refused to submit to Tamburlaine early enough to save the city, on the theory that such surrender amounted to dishonour and the acceptance of slavery.

= welfare; the word survives as commonweal.

16: "as anything of value (price) that you can think of?"

19-22: Marlowe’s primary source for the life of Tamburlaine was Chapter 14 of Thomas Fortescue's Collection of Histories. It appears that Marlowe may have peeked at the first paragraph of Chapter 15, wherein he saw a description of a series of asphalt (or bitumin) lakes "that adjoineth so nigh unto Babylon". Asphalt, a form of petroleum used in paving for millennia, is produced naturally in lakes around the world.⁸

In these same lines may be where Marlowe got the idea that Semiramis built the walls of Babylon; see Act III, v, 42.

In Book One of his Histories, Herodotus describes the asphalt thrown up by the River Is as being transported to and used in Babylon to construct the city's walls.³⁴

= ie. an act of mercy.

30: ie. "and now might find a way to save our lives".
Offer submission, hang up flags of truce,
That Tamburlaine may pity our distress,
And use us like a loving conqueror.
Though this be held his last day's dreadful siege,

Wherein he spareth neither man nor child,
Yet are there Christiäns of Georgia here,
Whose state he ever pitied and relieved,
Would get his pardon, if your grace would send.

Gov. How is my soul environèd with cares!
And this éternized city, Babylon,
Filled with a pack of faint-heart fugitives
That thus entreat their shame and servitude!

Enter another Citizen.

2 Cit. My lord, if ever you will win our hearts,
Yield up the town and save our wives and children;
For I will cast myself from off these walls
Or die some death of quickest violence,
Before I bide the wrath of Tamburlaine.

Gov. Villains, cowards, traitors to our state!
Fall to the earth and pierce the pit of hell,
That legions of tormenting spirits may vex
Your slavish bosoms with continual pains!
I care not, nor the town will ever yield,
As long as any life is in my breast.

Enter Theridamas and Techelles, with Soldiers.

Ther. Thou desperate governor of Babylon,
To save thy life, and us a little labour,
Yield speedily the city to our hands,
Or else be sure thou shalt be forced with pains,
More exquisite than ever traitor felt.

Gov. Tyrant! I turn the traitor in thy throat,

And will defend it in despite of thee. –
Call up the soldiers to defend these walls!

= treat.
34-35: a reference to Tamburlaine's three-day siege program, instituted in Part One: on the first day of a siege, Tamburlaine displays tents and banners of white, signaling his willingness to accept the surrender of a city peacefully; on the second day, the colors change to red: if the city surrenders on this day, he will only "execute the officers, magistrates, masters of households, and governors, pardoning and forgiving all others whatsoever." But if the city has not submitted by the third day, out come the tents and banners of black, which signal Tamburlaine's intention to kill every last soul in the city.

36: because the real Tamburlaine (Timur) was viewed by the Europeans as a savior of sorts for having defeated the Ottomans in a crushing victory, at a time when the Turks' capture of ever-increasing swaths of southeast Europe seemed unstoppable, it made sense to portray him as sympathetic to Christianity; however, Timur was a Muslim, and he certainly never had any kindly feelings for the Georgians, whose land between the Black and Caspian Seas he invaded and made a wasteland of six times in his career.21

= immortalized in fame.2
= ie. "beg for their own".
= endure.
= torment.

62-66: by offering the Babylonians their lives if they surrender voluntarily, Theridamas signals an exception to Tamburlaine's usual practice of slaughtering every living being if they wait until the third day of the siege to submit.

68: cf. Shakespeare's King Henry VI, Part I, from Act II, iv: "I'll turn my part thereof into thy throat"; and from Richard II, Act I, i: "With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy throat."
Tech. Yield, foolish governor; we offer more
Than ever yet we did to such proud slaves
As durst resist us till our third day's siege.
Thou seest us prest to give the last assault,
And that shall bide no more regard of parley.

Gov. Assault and spare not; we will never yield.

[Alarms; and they scale the walls.]

Enter Tamburlaine drawn in his chariot
by the Kings of Trebizond and Soria;
Amyras, Celebinus, and Usumcasane;
with the two spare Kings of Natolia (Orcanes)
and Jerusalem led by soldiers.

Tamb. The stately buildings of fair Babylon,
Whose lofty pillars, higher than the clouds,
Were wont to guide the seaman in the deep,
Being carried thither by the cannon's force,
Now fill the mouth of Limnasphaltis' lake,
And make a bridge unto the battered walls.
Where Belus, Ninus, and great Alexander

Have rode in triumph, triumphs Tamburlaine,
Whose chariot wheels have burst th' Assyrians' bones,

Drawn with these kings on heaps of carcasses.
Now in the place where fair Semiramis,

Courted by kings and peers of Asiä,
Hath trod the measures, do my soldiers march;

And in the streets, where brave Assyrian dames
Have rid in pomp like rich Saturniä,
With furious words and frowning visages
My horsemen brandish their unruly blades.

Enter Theridamas and Techelles,
bringing in the Governor of Babylon.
Who have ye there, my lords?

Ther. The sturdy governor of Babylon,
That made us all the labour for the town,
And used such slender reckoning of your majesty.

Tamb. Go, bind the villain; he shall hang in chains
Upon the ruins of this conquered town. − Sirrah, the view of our vermillion tents,
(which threatened more than if the region

Next underneath the element of fire
Were full of comets and of blazing stars,
Whose flaming trains should reach down to the earth,)
Could not affright you; no, nor I myself,
The wrathful messenger of mighty Jove,
That with his sword hath quailed all earthly kings,
Could not persuade you to submission,
But still the ports were shut; villain! I say,
Should I but touch the rusty gates of hell,
The triple-headed Cerberus would howl
And make black Jove to crouch and kneel to me;
But I have sent volleys of shot to you,
Yet could not enter till the breach was made.

Gov. Nor if my body could have stopped the breach,
Should’st thou have entered, cruel Tamburlaine.
’Tis not thy bloody tents can make me yield,
Nor yet thyself, the anger of the Highest;
For though thy cannon shook the city walls,
My heart did never quake or courage faint.

Tamb. Well, now I’ll make it quake; − go, draw him up,
Hang him in chains upon the city walls,
And let my soldiers shoot the slave to death.

Gov. Vile monster! born of some infernal hag,
And sent from hell to tyrannize on earth,
Do all thy worst; nor death, nor Tamburlaine,
Torture, nor pain, can daunt my dreadful mind.

Tamb. Up with him, then; his body shall be scared.

Gov. But, Tamburlaine, in Limnasphaltis’ lake
There lies more gold than Babylon is worth,
Which, when the city was besieged, I hid.
Save but my life, and I will give it thee.

Tamb. Then for all your valour, you would save your life?
Whereabout lies it?

Gov. Under a hollow bank, right opposite
Against the western gate of Babylon.

Tamb. Go thither, some of you, and take his gold. —

[Exeunt some Attendants.]

The rest — forward with execution!
Away with him hence, let him speak no more. —
I think I make your courage something quail. —

[Exeunt other Attendants with the Governor.]

When this is done, we'll march from Babylon,
And make our greatest haste to Persiä.
These jades are broken-winded and half tired;
Unharness them, and let me have fresh horse.

[Attendants unharness the Kings of Trebizond and Soria.]

So, now their best is done to honour me,
Take them and hang them both up presently.

K. of Treb. Vile tyrant! Barbarous bloody Tamburlaine!

Tamb. Take them away, Theridamas; see them dispatched.

Ther. I will, my lord.

[Exit with the Kings of Trebizond and Soria.]

Tamb. Come, Asian viceroy's, to your tasks a while,
And take such fortune as your fellows felt.

Orc. First let thy Scythian horse tear both our limbs,
Rather than we should draw thy chariot,
And, like base slaves, abject our princely minds
To vile and ignominious servitude.

K. of Jer. Rather lend me thy weapon, Tamburlaine,
That I may sheathe it in this breast of mine.
A thousand deaths could not torment our hearts
More than the thought of this doth vex our souls.

Amyr. They will talk still, my lord, if you don't bridle them.

Tamb. Bridle them, and let me to my coach.

[They bridle the Kings of Natolia (Orcanes)
and Jerusalem and harness them to the chariot.
The Governor of Babylon is seen
hanging in chains on the walls.]
Enter Theridamas.

Amyr. See now, my lord, how brave the captain hangs.

Tamb. 'Tis brave indeed, my boy; well done.
Shoot first, my lord, and then the rest shall follow.

Ther. Then have at him to begin withal.

[Teridamas shoots at the Governor.]

Gov. Yet save my life, and let this wound appease
The mortal fury of great Tamburlaine.

Tamb. No, though Asphaltis' lake were liquid gold,
And offered me as ransom for thy life,
Yet shouldst thou die. — Shoot at him all at once.

[They shoot.]

So, now he hangs like Bagdet's governor,

Having as many bullets in his flesh
As there be breaches in her battered wall. —
Go now, and bind the burghers hand and foot,
And cast them headlong in the city's lake.
Tartars and Persians shall inhabit there,
And, to command the city, I will build
A lofty citadel that all Africa,
Which hath been subject to the Persian king,
Shall pay me tribute for in Babylon.

Tech. What shall be done with their wives and children,
my lord?

Tamb. Techelles, drown them all, man, woman, and child;
Leave not a Babylonian in the town.

Tech. I will about it straight. Come, soldiers.

[Exit with Soldiers.]

Tamb. Now, Casane, where's the Turkish Alcoran,
And all the heaps of superstitious books
Found in the temples of that Mahomet,
Whom I have thought a god? They shall be burnt.

Usum. Here they are, my lord.

Tamb. Well said; let there be a fire presently.

[They light a fire.]

In vain, I see, men worship Mahomet:
My sword hath sent millions of Turks to hell,
Slew all his priests, his kinsmen, and his friends,
And yet I live untouched by Mahomet.
There is a God, full of revenging wrath,
From whom the thunder and the lightning breaks,
Whose scourge I am, and him will I obey.
So, Casane, fling them in the fire.

[They burn the books.]

Now, Mahomet, if thou have any power,
Come down thyself and work a miracle:
Thou art not worthy to be worshipped,
That suffers flames of fire to burn the writ
Wherein the sum of thy religion rests.
Why send'st thou not a furious whirlwind down
To blow thy Alcoran up to thy throne,
Where men report thou sit'st by God himself?
Or vengeance on the head of Tamburlaine
That shakes his sword against thy majesty,
And spurns the abstracts of thy foolish laws? −
Well, soldiers, Mahomet remains in hell;
Seek out another Godhead to adore,
The God that sits in Heaven, if any god,
For he is God alone, and none but he.

269-271: Tamburlaine believes in God, but as far as prophets and other such superstitions go - not so much.

= tolerates. = book.

= who.
= kicks. = embodiment or summary.¹

274-291: burning of the Koran: during any modern production of Part Two, the question of whether this scene should be deleted or altered in any way in order to prevent offending Muslim sensibilities is inevitable; in 2005, for example, regarding his own staging of the play, director David Farr wrote an article for The Guardian in London defending his decision to have Tamburlaine burn books of all religions, and not just the Koran, to emphasize both Tamburlaine's, as well as Marlowe's apparent, disdain of "the entire theological system."¹⁷

Enter Techelles.

Tech. I have fulfilled your highness' will, my lord.
Thousands of men, drowned in Asphaltis' lake,
Have made the waters swell above the banks,
And fishes, fed by human carcasses,
Amazed, swim up and down upon the waves,
As when they swallow assafetida,
Which makes them fleet aloft and gasp for air.

Tamb. Well then, my friendly lords, what now remains,
But that we leave sufficient garrison
And presently depart to Persiā,
To triumph after all our victories?

Ther. Ay, good my lord; let us in haste to Persia;
And let this captain be removed the walls
To some high hill about the city here.

Tamb. Let it be so; about it, soldiërs;
But stay; I feel myself distempered suddenly.

Tech. What is it dares distemper Tamburlaine?

Tamb. Something, Techelles; but I know not what. −

= here referring to Babylon's Limnasphaltis Lake.

= a plant resin that smells like garlic.¹
= float.

= ie. from the.

= "hold on." = ill.
But forth, ye vassals! whatso'ever it be,
Sickness or death can never conquer me.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V, SCENE II.
[The Ottoman camp near Babylon.]

Enter Callapine, the King of Amasia,
A Captain and Soldiers, with drums and trumpets.

Call. King of Amasia, now our mighty host
Marcheth in Asia Major, where the streams
Of Euphrates and Tigris swiftly run,
And here may we behold great Babylon,
Circled about with Limnasphaltis' lake,
Where Tamburlaine with all his army lies,
Which being faint and weary with the siege,
We may lie ready to encounter him
Before his host be full from Babylon,
And so revenge our latest grievous loss,
If God or Mahomet send any aid.

K. of Amas. Doubt not, my lord, but we shall conquer him.
The monster that hath drunk a sea of blood,
And yet gapes still for more to quench his thirst,
Our Turkish swords shall headlong send to hell,
And that vile carcass, drawn by warlike kings,
The fowls shall eat; for never sepulchre
Shall grace this base-born tyrant Tamburlaine.

Call. When I record my parents' slavish life,
Their cruel death, mine own captivity,
My viceroy's bondage under Tamburlaine,
Methinks I could sustain a thousand deaths
To be revenged of all his villainy. —
Ah, sacred Mahomet! thou that hast seen
Millions of Turks perish by Tamburlaine,
Kingdoms made waste, brave cities sacked and burnt,
And but one host is left to honour thee,
Aid thy obedient servant, Callapine,
And make him, after all these overthrows,
To triumph over cursèd Tamburlaine.

K. of Amas. Fear not, my lord; I see great Mahomet,
Clothèd in purple clouds, and on his head
A chaplet brighter than Apollo's crown,
Marching about the air with armèd men,
To join with you against this Tamburlaine.

Capt. Renownèd general, mighty Callapine,
Though God himself and holy Mahomet
Should come in person to resist your power,
Yet might your mighty host encounter all,
And pull proud Tamburlaine upon his knees
To sue for mercy at your highness' feet.
Call. Captain, the force of Tamburlaine is great, 
His fortune greater, and the victories Wherewith he hath so sore dismayed the world 
Are greatest to discourage all our drifts;
Yet when the pride of Cynthia is at full,
She wanes again, and so shall his, I hope;
For we have here the chief selected men Of twenty several kingdoms at the least;
Nor ploughman, priest, nor merchant, stays at home;
All Turkey is in arms with Callapine; And never will we sunder camps and arms Before himself or his be conquerèd.
This is the time that must éternize me For conquering the tyrant of the world.
Come, soldiers, let us lie in wait for him, And if we find him absent from his camp, Or that it be rejoined again at full, Assail it and be sure of victory.

[Exeunt.]  

ACT V, SCENE III.  
[Tamburlaine’s camp near Babylon.]  
Enter Theridamas, Techelles, and Usumcasane.  

Ther. Weep, heavens, and vanish into liquid tears!  
Fall, stars that govern his nativity,  
And summon all the shining lamps of Heaven  
To cast their bootless fires to the earth,  
And shed their feeble influence in the air;  
Muffle your beauties with eternal clouds,  
For Hell and Darkness pitch their pitchy tents,  
And Death, with armies of Cimmerian spirits,  
Gives battle ’gainst the heart of Tamburlaine!  
Now in defiance of that wonted love  
Your sacred virtues poured upon his throne,  
And made his state an honour to the heavens,  
These cowards invisibly assail his soul,  
And threaten conquest on our sovereign;  
But if he die your glories are disgraced;  
Earth droops and says that hell in Heaven is placed.  

Tech. O then, ye powers that sway eternal seats  
And guide this massy substance of the earth,  
If you retain desert of holiness,  
As your supreme estates instruct our thoughts,  
Be not inconstant, careless of your fame, –  
Bear not the burden of your enemies’ joys  
= by which. = terrified.  
= intentions.  
51: typical poetic description of a full moon.  
= individual, distinct.  
= ie. fighting alongside.  
= ie. discharge the army; sunder = break down.  
= make famous forever.  
= ie. Tamburlaine’s birth.  
= ie. stars.  
= useless.  
= conceal.  
= a bit of wordplay: "set up their black tents".  
= the fabled Cimmerians lived in caves, emerging only at night to rob, never seeing daylight; the adjective Cimmerian became proverbial for darkness; here the idea is that the spirits are coming out from the underworld darkness, much as the Cimmerians occasionally emerged from their caves.  
= customary.  
15-16: a rhyming couplet, occasionally used in Elizabethan drama, as here, to signal the end of a speech.  
= falters.  
= ie. rule eternally; the seats, or thrones, symbolize sovereignty.  
= massive.  
= continue deserving.  
= ie. "you of the highest authority".  
= changing, variable. = unconcerned.
Triumphing in his fall whom you advanced,
But as his birth, life, health, and majesty
Were strangely blest and governèd by Heaven,
So honour, Heaven, (till Heaven dissolvèd be)
His birth, his life, his health, and majesty!

Usum. Blush, Heaven, to lose the honour of thy name!
To see thy footstool set upon thy head!

And let no baseness in thy haughty breast
Sustain a shame of such inexcellence,
To see the devils mount in angels' thrones,
And angels dive into the pools of hell!
And though they think their painful date is out,
And that their power is puissant as Jove's,
Which makes them manage arms against thy state,
Yet make them feel the strength of Tamburlaine,
(Thy instrument and note of majesty,)
Is greater far than they can thus subdue:
For if he die, thy glory is disgraced;
Earth droops and says that hell in Heaven is placed.

Enter Tamburlaine drawn by captive kings
as before, with Amyras, Celebinus, and Physicians.

Tamb. What daring god torments my body thus,
And seeks to conquer mighty Tamburlaine?
Shall sickness prove me now to be a man,
That have been termed the terror of the world?
Techelles and the rest, come, take your swords,
And threaten him whose hand afflicts my soul.
Come, let us march against the powers of Heaven,
And set black streamers in the firmament,
To signify the slaughter of the gods.

Ah, friends, what shall I do? I cannot stand.
Come carry me to war against the gods
That thus envy the health of Tamburlaine.

Ther. Ah, good my lord, leave these impatient words,
Which add much danger to your malady.

Tamb. Why, shall I sit and languish in this pain?
No, strike the drums, and in revenge of this,
Come, let us charge our spears and pierce his breast,
Whose shoulders bear the axis of the world,
That, if I perish, Heaven and earth may fade.

Theridamas, haste to the court of Jove,
Will him to send Apollo hither straight

= ie. Tamburlaine.

31: Usumcasane berates the god (or gods) above for allowing Tamburlaine to get sick; the image is of a foolish god wearing a footstool for a crown: the footstool is no doubt additionally a reminder of how Tamburlaine used the Ottoman Sultan as his personal footstool in Part One.

34-35: ie. if Tamburlaine dies, it means the whole world, indeed the universe, has turned upside-down.

= ie. allotted period of life is ended.

= as mighty as.

= conduct war.

= mark (Ribner, p. 169).

42-43: except for But and your, Usumcasane repeats the last two lines spoken by Theridamas at 15-16.

= ie. Orcanes and the King of Jerusalem.

= ie. only mortal.

= called.

= banners. = sky; in 55-56, Tamburlaine suggests they set up the black equipment to signify his intent to destroy Heaven and all the gods, just as he used the black tents and pennants on the third day of an earthly siege to signify the same intent with respect to a city.

67: another reference to Atlas, who supports the heavens on his shoulders.

68: if Tamburlaine dies, the universe should disappear with him.

70: Will him = an imperative: "command him". Apollo = in this line and the next, Apollo is invoked in his
To cure me, or I'll fetch him down myself.

_Tech._ Sit still, my gracious lord; this grief will cease,
And cannot last, it is so violent.

_Tamb._ Not last, Techelles?—No! for I shall die.
See where my slave, the ugly monster, Death,
Shaking and quivering, pale and wan for fear,
Stands aiming at me with his murdering dart.
Who flies away at every glance I give,

And when I look away, comes stealing on. —
Villain, away, and _hie_ thee to the field! I and mine army come to load thy back
With souls of thousand mangled carcasses. —
Look, where he goes; but see, he comes again,
Because I stay: Techelles, let us march
And weary Death with bearing souls to hell.

_1st Phys._ Pleseth your majesty to drink this potion,
Which will abate the fury of your fit,
And cause some milder spirits govern you.

_Tamb._ Tell me what think you of my sickness now?

_1st Phys._ I viewed 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.
Besides, my lord, _this day_ is _critical_,

Dangerous to those whose crisis is as yours.
Your _artiers_, which alongst the veins convey
The lively spirits which the heart engenders,
Are parched and void of spirits, that the soul,
Wanting those _organons_ by which it moves,

Cannot endure, by _argument of art_.

guise as the god of healing.

_hither_ = to here.

= too extreme.

= sickly.¹

80-81: an interesting image of Death who, sensing that Tamburlaine is faltering, moves closer when he can to finish him off, but, still in awe and fear of the conqueror, starts away whenever Tamburlaine looks in his direction.

= hurry. = battlefield; Tamburlaine addresses Death.

= hesitate, ie. "delay my departure."

= sediment;¹ 95-96: medieval medicine placed great stock in diagnosing a patient by studying his or her urine. The medieval English physician John of Gaddesden wrote in his medical treatise _Rosa Anglica_, regarding the urine, "If the sediment be as thick as a spider's web, it is a sign of the second form of hectic fever."³

97-98: ie. Tamburlaine's blood is hot and dry, signs of fever.⁴

_accidental_ = extraneous.³¹

= moisture and heat; in 99-102, the physician is describing a vaguely understood notion of a life force, called "essence", which some in medieval times considered a fifth element.

= part.

= signifies.

= adapting from Ribner, "the stars are not propitiously aligned today" (p. 170).⁹

= arteries. 106-7: the blood was believed to carry the essential force of life to the heart.

= lacking those organs; _organon_ was used to describe the organ which acted on or for the soul (and also the mind).¹

= knowledge, ie. "as far as modern medicine can tell."
Yet, if your majesty may escape this day,
No doubt but you shall soon recover all.

**Tamb.** Then will I comfort all my vital parts,
And live, in spite of death, above a day.

[Alarm within.]

**Enter a Messenger.**

**Mess.** My lord, young Callapine, that lately fled from
your majesty, hath now gathered a fresh army, and
hearing your absence in the field, offers to set upon
us presently.

**Tamb.** See, my physicians, now, how Jove hath sent
A present medicine to recure my pain.

My looks shall make them fly, and might I follow,
There should not one of all the villains's power
Live to give offer of another fight.

**Usum.** I joy, my lord, your highness is so strong,
That can endure so well your royal presence,
Which only will dismay the enemy.

**Tamb.** I know it will, Casane. — **Draw**, you slaves;
In spite of death, I will go show my face.

[**Alarums. Exit Tamburlaine and the rest,**
with the exception of the Physicians,
They all presently reenter.]

Thus are the villain cowards fled for fear,
Like summer's vapours vanished by the sun;
And could I but a while pursue the field,
That Callapine should be my slave again.
But I perceive my martial strength is spent.
In vain I strive and rail against those powers
That mean t' invest me in a higher throne,
As much too high for this disdainful earth.
Give me a map; then let me see how much
Is left for me to conquer all the world,
That these, my boys, may finish all my wants.

[**One brings a map.**]

Here I began to march towards Persiä,
Along Armenia and the Caspian Sea,
And thence unto **Bithynia**, where I took
The Turk and his great Empress prisoners.
Then marched I into Egypt and Arabia;  
And here, not far from Alexandria,  
Whereas the Terrene and the Red Sea meet,  
Being distant less than full a hundred leagues.

I meant to cut a channel to them both,  
That men might quickly sail to India.  
From thence to Nubia near Borno lake,  
And so along the Ethiopian sea,  
Cutting the tropic line of Capricorn,  
I conquered all as far as Zanzibar.

Then, by the northern part of Africa,  
I came at last to Graecia, and from thence  
To Asia, where I stay against my will;  
Which is from Scythia, where I first began,  
Backward and forwards near five thousand leagues.

Look here, my boys; see, what a world of ground  
Lies westward from the midst of Cancer's line,  
Unto the rising of this earthly globe;  
Whereas the sun, declining from our sight,  
Begins the day with our Antipodes!  
And shall I die, and this unconquerèd?  
Lo, here, my sons, are all the golden mines,  
Inestimable drugs and precious stones,  
More worth than Asia and the world beside;  
And from th' Antarctic Pole eastward behold  
As much more land, which never was descried,  
Wherein are rocks of pearl that shine as bright  
As all the lamps that beautify the sky!  
And shall I die, and this unconquerèd?  
Here, lovely boys; what death forbids my life,  
That let your lives command in spite of death.

Amyr. Alas, my lord, how should our bleeding hearts,  
Wounded and broken with your highness' grief,  
Retain a thought of joy or spark of life?  
Your soul gives essence to our wretched subjects,  
Whose matter is incorporate in your flesh.
Celeb. Your pains do pierce our souls; no hope survives,
For by your life we entertain our lives.

Tamb. But, sons, this subject, not of force enough
To hold the fiery spirit it contains,
Must part, imparting his impressions
By equal portions into both your breasts.

My flesh, divided in your precious shapes,
Shall still retain my spirit, though I die,
And live in all your seeds immortally.
Then now remove me, that I may resign

My place and proper title to my son.—
First, take my scourge and my imperial crown,
And mount my royal chariot of estate,
That I may see thee crowned before I die.—
Help me, my lords, to make my last remove.
[They lift him from the chariot.]

Ther. A woful change, my lord, that daunts our thoughts
More than the ruin of our proper souls!

Tamb. Sit up, my son; let me see how well
Thou wilt become thy father's majesty.

Amyr. With what a flinty bosom should I joy

The breath of life and burthen of my soul;
If not resolved into resolved pains,

My body's mortified lineaments
Should exercise the motions of my heart,
Pierced with the joy of any dignity!

O father, if the unrelenting ears
Of death and hell be shut against my prayers,
And that the spiteful influence of Heaven
Deny my soul fruition of her joy;
How should I step or stir my hateful feet
Against the inward powers of my heart,
Leading a life that only strives to die,
And plead in vain unpleasing sovereignty?

Tamb. Let not thy love exceed thine honour, son,
Nor bar thy mind that magnanimity
That nobly must admit necessity.
Sit up, my boy, and with these silken reins
Bridle the steellèd stomachs of those jades.

Ther. My lord, you must obey his majesty,
Since fate commands and proud necessity.

Amyr. Heavens witness me with what a broken heart
And damned spirit I ascend this seat,
And send my soul, before my father die,
His anguish and his burning agony!

[They crown Amyras.]

Tamb. Now fetch the hearse of fair Zenocrate;
Let it be placed by this my fatal chair,
And serve as parcel of my funeral.

Usum. Then feels your majesty no sovereign ease,
Nor may our hearts, all drowned in tears of blood,
Joy any hope of your recovery?

Tamb. Casane, no. The monarch of the earth,
And eyeless monster that torments my soul,
Cannot behold the tears ye shed for me,
And therefore still augments his cruelty.

Tech. Then let some god oppose his holy power
Against the wrath and tyranny of Death,
That his tear-thirsty and unquenchèd hate
May be upon himself reverberate!

[They bring in the hearse of Zenocrate.]

Tamb. Now, eyes, enjoy your latest benefit,
And when my soul hath virtue of your sight,
Pierce through the coffin and the sheet of gold,
And glut your longings with a heaven of joy.
So reign, my son; scourge and control those slaves,
Guiding thy chariot with thy father's hand.
As precious is the charge thou undertakes
As that which Clymene's brainsick son did guide,
When wandering Phoebe's ivory cheeks were scorched,

263-266: since Death and whatever illmess is killing Tam-
curlaine are unable to see the tears Usumcasane sheds
for his leader, they ignorantly continue to torment the
conqueror.

268-9: "perhaps some god will employ his holy power in
opposition to Death".

270-1: "so that Death's murderous hatred is turned on
himself."

270-1: Techelles' last lines in the play comprise a rhyming
couplet, as was not uncommon in Elizabethan drama.

282-3: the reference is to the well-known and oft-referred
to story of Phaeton, the son of Clymene and the sun god Helios:
as an adolescent, Phaeton begged his father to let him drive
the chariot that pulled the sun across the sky for one day.
After much pleading, Helios reluctantly acquiesced, but
warned his son to be careful. Phaeton could not control the
horses, and would have crashed onto the earth, burning it,
had not Zeus killed him first with a thunderbolt.

Note that in Part One, Marlowe used the exact same phrase to describe Phaeton, Clymene's brainsick son.
Phoebe is another name for the moon, hence her ivory
And all the earth, like Ætna, breathing fire. Be warned by him, then; learn with awful eye To sway a throne as dangerous as his; For if thy body thrive not full of thoughts As pure and fiery as Phyteus' beams, The nature of these proud rebelling jades Will take occasion by the slenderest hair

And draw thee piecemeal, like Hippolitus,

Through rocks more steep and sharp than Caspian cliffs. The nature of thy chariot will not bear A guide of baser temper than myself, More than Heaven's coach the pride of Phaeton. Farewell, my boys; my dearest friends, farewell! My body feels, my soul doth weep to see Your sweet desires deprived my company, For Tamburlaine, the scourge of God, must die. [He dies.]

Amyr. Meet Heaven and Earth, and here let all things end, For Earth hath spent the pride of all her fruit, And Heaven consumed his choicest living fire. Let Earth and Heaven his timeless death deplore, For both their worths will equal him no more.

FINIS
Marlowe's Invented Words

Like all of the writers of the era, Christopher Marlowe made up words when he felt like it, usually by adding prefixes and suffixes to known words, combining words, or using a word in a way not yet used before. The following is a list of words from *Tamburlaine the Great, Part Two*, that are indicated by the OED as being either the first or only use of a given word, or, as noted, the first use with a given meaning:

- **absent** (as an adjective, describing time)
- **alarum, ie. alarm** (as an intransitive verb)
- **Anatolian**
- **bid arms**
- **astracism**
- **battery** (meaning the platform on which artillery is placed)
- **coach-horse**
- **counterfort**
- **dispensive**
- **dispose** (meaning to deal with)
- **distained** (as an adjective)
- **faint-heart** (as an adjective)
- **flank** (applied to a fort)
- **flesh** (as a verb, meaning to plunge a sword into one's flesh)
- **impassionate**
- **inexcellence**
- **journey** (meaning to travel on or ride a horse)
  - **Lacryma Christi**
  - **lancer**
  - **in leaguer**
- **metaphysical** (meaning supernatural)
- **musketeer**
- **naturalized**
- **never-broken**
- **orifex**
- **overdare** (meaning to daunt)
- **pericranium** (humorous term for the mind or skull)
- **period** (meaning a pause)
- **quill** (applied to the spines of a porcupine or hedgehog)
- **quinquangle**
- **rack, racking** (driven by the wind, applied to clouds)
- **remorseful**
- **rival** (meaning one who is arguably equal or better in something)
- **seething** (applied figuratively, ie. to something other than a boiling liquid or very hot solid)
- **selected** (as an adjective)
- **strain** (meaning to trickle)
- **subject** (meaning matter or substance)
- **sulphur-balls**
- **symbolize, symbolized** (meaning to mix or unite)
- **taintless**
- **tartar** (applied figuratively)
- **theoria**
- **timeless** (meaning untimely)
- **unrelenting**
- **unsacked**
- **vanish into** (ie. air, etc.)
- **ymounted**
FOOTNOTES

References in the annotations to Cunningham, Dyce, Schelling and Ribner refer to the notes supplied by these editors for *Tamburlaine the Great, Part Two*, in their individual collections of Marlowe's work, each volume cited fully below.

The footnotes in the annotations correspond as follows:


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