ElizabethanDrama.org presents
the Annotated Popular Edition of

TAMBURLAINE the GREAT
PART TWO

by Christopher Marlowe
Written c. 1587
Earliest Extant Edition: 1590

Featuring complete and easy-to-read annotations.

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TAMBURLAINE THE GREAT
Part the Second
By Christopher Marlowe
Written c. 1587
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DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Tamburlaine, King of Persia.
    Zenocrate, wife to Tamburlaine.

Tamburlaine’s sons:
    Calyphas.
        Perdicas, Servant to Calyphas.
    Amyras.
    Celebinus.

Tamburlaine’s Kings:
    Techelles, King of Fess (Fez).
    Theridamas, King of Argier.
    Usumcasane, King of Morocco.

Other Kings:
    Orcanes, King of Natolia.
    King of Trebizond.
    King of Soria.
    King of Jerusalem.
    King of Amasia.
    Gazellus, Viceroy of Byron.
    Uribassa.
    Sigismund, King of Hungary.

Lords of Buda and Bohemia:
    Frederick.
    Baldwin.

Callapine, Son to Deceased Ottoman Sultan Bajazeth.
    Almeda, his Keeper.

Captain of Balsera.
    Olympia, Wife of the Captain of Balsera.
        His Son.
    Maximus.
    Physicians.
    Another Captain.

Lords, Citizens, Soldiers, Turkish Concubines, &c.

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, with some original wording and spelling reinstated from the octavo of 1590.

NOTES ON THE ANNOTATIONS

Mention in the annotations of various editors cited below refers to the notes supplied by these scholars for their editions of this play. We note that the works of Bartlett (#21) and Davis (#23) are history texts.

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.
5. Schelling, Felix E. Christopher Marlowe. New York:


A. 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 favour 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.

B. 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 our website, ElizabethanDrama.org, on the Tamburlaine, Part Two page.

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

In Tamburlaine, Part One, the conqueror travelled from Scythia to Asia Minor to Damascus. Part Two begins with Tamburlaine and his army at the city of Larissa on the Sinai Peninsula.

Early in Part Two, one of Tamburlaine's subordinates, the King of Morocco, Usumcasane, informs his boss that upon leaving Tamburlaine after the end of Part One, he and his army were on the road for at least fifteen months, conquering North Africa, before rejoining Tamburlaine at Larissa. His comment 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 (and 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 seems only to get stronger with each successive victory.

E. Marlowe's Ahistorical 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 17 February 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.

F. Scene Breaks, Settings, and Stage Directions.

*Tamburlaine the Great, Part I* was originally published in 1590 in combination with *Part Two* in a single octavo; it was reprinted in 1592 and 1597, with further editions released in the first decade of the 17th century. As usual, we lean towards adhering to the wording of the earliest volume as much as possible.

Words or syllables which have been added to the original text to clarify the sense or repair the meter are surrounded by hard brackets [ ]; these additions are often adopted from the play's later editions. A director who wishes to remain truer to the original text may of course choose to omit any of the supplementary wording.

The 1590 octavo divides our edition of *Tamburlaine, Part Two* into Acts and Scenes. However, as is the usual case, it does not provide scene settings. Scene locations are hence the editor's own suggestions.

Finally, as is our normal practice, a good number of the octavo's stage directions have been modified, and others added, usually without
comment, to give clarity to the action. Most of these changes are adopted from Dyce.
THE PROLOGUE.

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

3-4: note the extended alliteration of *p*-words.
= ie. Tamburlaine's.
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.

Scene Settings: the play begins with a visit to the Ottoman army. The Ottomans have 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 and heir a prisoner of Tamburlaine, Orcanes (the King of Natolia, i.e. 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); Uribassa is the deputy king of an unnamed place.

train = attendants and followers.

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

4-5: 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 famously kept by Tamburlaine in a cage. The royal Ottoman couple eventually killed themselves by smashing their heads against the cage. We note that Callapine's capture occurred in the time period between the two parts of Tamburlaine.

Callapine is being held in Egypt, just a short distance from Alexandria.

= a league is an ancient measurement of length, believed to be about 5 miles (8 kilometers); Orcanes' estimate of his army's march of 600 miles (or 1000 kilometers) would place the Ottomans right at the point where the Danube River (Danubius) crosses the modern border from Croatia into Hungary - which makes sense, as they are about to meet Sigismund, the King of Hungary.

= valiant army. = wearing full armour.

= ie. "me"; Orcanes employs the royal "we".

= a call to attention. = talk, negotiate; parole is technically a different word from parley, though they are both disyllables, and both pronounced the same.¹

9-12: Orcanes wants to bring the Ottoman army out of Europe to fight Tamburlaine, who is once again threatening the Ottoman Empire; a truce with the Europeans would free up his forces to attend to this project.

On the other hand, the Ottomans have been so successful in subjugating south-eastern Europe, that Orcanes is not
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 Giyron'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, Almains, rutters, Muffes, and Danes, That with the halberd, lance, and murthering axe, Will hazard that we might with surety hold.

Orcan. Though from the shortest northern parallel, completely certain as to whether they should stay and meet the Christian army on the battlefield (field) instead, since both sides are present and ready for a fight.

= negotiate a peace treaty.

= Giyron (Marlowe's Guyron) is a city on the Euphrates River east of Aleppo on Ortelius' Turkish Empire map; head suggests Guyron may be a river, or at the head of a river (which it is not), but head could also mean simply "boundary." An intriguing alternate thought is that Marlowe meant to write Giulap instead of Guyron, Giulap being a river whose head is near Giyron on Ortelius' map.

Either way, Gazellus is wrong about Tamburlaine's position: the conqueror is actually gathering an army at Larissa, which is located on the Mediterranean shore of the Levant, near Gaza.

= burn; fire is disyllabic here: fi-yer.

= "direct your army."16

22f: Sigismund, the King of Hungary, has brought his own large, mixed army of European warriors to meet the Ottomans.

= haughty.2

24: Sclavonians = Slavonians; on Ortelius' map of Europe, Slavonia encompasses the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea from about Rijeca in Croatia to the border between Montenegro and Albania. Almains = Germans.

rutters = cavalry.1

Muffes = Germans or Swiss, perhaps a derogatory term.1,16

Note that line 24 is repeated exactly at line 63.

25: halberd = a medieval pole weapon, with a blade and a pointed end.43

murthering = ie. murdering; the octavo prints the common alternate form of murder with a th throughout Part Two.

26: "will imperil our hold on those lands which we could securely keep possession of (if we make peace with the Europeans)."

Uribassa's point is that a large battle is always risky, and it would thus be wiser to assure their sovereignty over the land they already have de facto control over by making a treaty with the Europeans, than to jeopardize those possessions by engaging the enemy in unpredictable battle.

28-35: briefly, "no matter how many men the Europeans bring to battle, even if they are joined by millions of men from the farthest north, we will destroy them."

Though = ie. even if.

shortest northern parallel = ie. the smallest circle of latitude, meaning "the farthest north".
Vast Gruntland, compassed with the Frozen Sea.

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

Millions of soldiers cut the artic 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 Christiäns.

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.

29: Gruntland = Greenland, the usual 16th century spelling. compassed with = surrounded by. Frozen Sea = term used by old English writers to describe any of the ocean waters north of Europe or Asia; Ribner³ suggests simply "Arctic ocean" (p. 114).

30-31: Marlowe has in mind the superstition that there were giants in Lapland, when in fact the natives of that land were known for their diminutive size, averaging about 5 feet in height (in Doctor Faustus, Marlowe refers to "Lapland giants"). Schelling⁶ comments oddly, "On the contrary, the inhabitants (of Gruntland) are almost dwarfs."

hugy = huge.

Polypheme = famous Cyclops (one-eyed giant), who imprisoned Odysseus and his men in a cave during the hero's voyage home from Troy. In the well-known story, Odysseus escaped by getting the monster drunk, then burning his eye out with a red-hot log.

32-33: cut the...arms = "cross the Arctic Circle to come south to join Sigismund's army to fight against us". artic = common 16th century spelling for arctic.

artic = common 16th century spelling for arctic.

36: Trebizond was both a small kingdom and a city on the south-eastern coast of the Black Sea; needless to say, the Danube River (Danubius' stream) flows into the Black Sea at its western end, "diametrically opposite to T[rebizond]."³⁰ = its waves which are red with blood.

artic = common 16th century spelling for arctic.

40: Orcanes suggests a branch of the Danube flows into the Mediterranean Sea (Terrene Main); Schelling notes here this "mistake of Marlowe's, whose ideas of geography seem vague."

Bevington,¹¹ however, suggests that Orcanes simply means that the bloody, corpse-choked waters of the Danube will make their way to the Mediterranean Sea via the Black Sea, the Bosporus, the Sea of Marmara, the Dardanelles and finally the Aegean Sea.

42: the image is of large numbers of Christian corpses smashing against the sides of large merchant-vessels (argosies).¹

44: briefly, "and send all of Europe into mourning."

mounted on her bull = a mythological allusion: Jupiter, the king of the gods, famously took the form of an attractive bull in order to approach the beautiful maiden Europa; having somehow convinced her to sit on him, Jupiter plunged into the ocean and swam to Crete, where he raped her; they had three children, including the Minotaur. The
48
**Gaz.** Yet, stout Orcanes, Prorex of the world,
continent is named after her.
*Trapped* = adorned.
*Alight* = descend (from her bull).
*weed* = outfit.

49: *stout* = valiant.
*Prorex* = deputy king, but with *of the world*, recognizing Orcanes as leader of the Ottomans in the absence of Callapine.

50: Since Tamburlaine hath mustered all his men, Marching from Cairo northward with his camp.

51: the octavo prints *Cairon*, but this name does not appear elsewhere in contemporary literature.
*camp* = army.

= the Ottomans' *frontier towns* are those near the border between the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, located somewhere on the Mediterranean's eastern coast.

Note how Gazellus is contradicting his own assertion of line 18 above as to the location of Tamburlaine's army.

52 To Alexandria and the frontier towns,

Meaning to make a conquest of our land,

'Tis requisite to parlë for a peace
With Sigismund, the King of Hungary,

And save our forces for the hot assaults
Proud Tamburlaine intends Natolia.

54 = empire.
= ie. the entire Ottoman empire.
= ie. reason.

= frighten not.³ = ie. "but they do".

58 *Orcan.* 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 ruters, Muffes, and Danes,

Fear not Orcanes, but great Tamburlaine;

Nor he, but Fortune, that hath made him great.

56 = empire.

59 We have revolted Grecians, Albanese,

Sicilians, Jews, Arabians, Turks, and Moors,

Natolians, Sorians, black Egyptiäns,

Illyrians, Thracians, and Bithynians.

60 = empire.

61 = ie. the entire Ottoman empire.

62 = ie. reason.

64 = frighten not.³ = ie. "but they do".

65: ie. nor does Tamburlaine frighten Orcanes, but Orcanes is concerned about Fortune, who has always been on Tamburlaine's side. Fortune is frequently personified in Elizabethan drama.

66-71: Orcanes admits that though the Ottoman army has enough men to easily destroy the Western coalition, it is still dwarfed by Tamburlaine's army; at last count, in *Part One*, Tamburlaine was reported to have 800,000 men at arms.

*revolted Grecians* = rebellious Greeks, meaning those who have joined the Turks.
*Albanes* = ie. Albanians.
*Sorians* = Marlowe's term for Syrians.
*Illyrians* = those who live in Illyria, or Illyricum, the region comprising the eastern part of the Adriatic Sea. This region has also been called Dalmatia, and it overlaps with Ortelius' Sclavonia.

*Thracians* = the people of Thrace, the large region encompassing the extreme south-eastern portion of Europe across from Anatolia.

*Bithynians* = the dwellers of Bithynia, a small region and one-time kingdom at the extreme north-west of Asia Minor, bordering the Black Sea.
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.
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.

Orcanes, (as our legates promised thee,) presumably respectively.

train = entourages.

= ambassadors or messengers.¹
= ie. "I"; Sigismund uses the "royal we".

= ie. "used to do".
= ie. "if you choose war".

87-94: note that Sigismund has addressed Orcanes by his name, not his title; and, in addressing him with the pronoun thou instead of you, he further signals his belief in his own superior status to his fellow king, and may even intend for it to be somewhat insulting.

Orcanes, not surprisingly, will respond in kind, and the kings briefly bicker.

= "hold on a moment".

97f: the chronologically-challenged (or perhaps clairvoyant) Orcanes should be the one "holding on" here: the 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).¹

99-100: briefly, "like an earthquake".

massy substance = massive foundation.¹
axle-tree of Heaven = the axis around which the earth and the spheres of the universe rotate. 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.¹
burgers = citizens or inhabitants of a town.¹

= "who at the time was only County Palatine"; a Count Palatine was a noble who exercised supreme and independent control of a territory.¹

= ie. "and also the". = Bohemia. = Austrian.
= servilely.

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

thunderbolts of Jove = Jove, or Jupiter, was the god responsible for thunder and lightning.
How canst thou think of this, and offer war?

= ie. "still challenge us to battle?"

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 Bagdét'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 parlé 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,
Ready to charge you ere you stir your feet.

Orcan. 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.

Orcan. 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.

Orcan. By sacred Mahomet, the friend of God,
Whose holy Alcorán 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 lancers of Germany,
The strength and sinews of the Imperial seat.

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

1: Almeda = Almeda is pronounced with the stress on the first syllable: AL-me-da.
   ruthless = pitiful.

= ie. western Asia.
= ie. in Egypt.
Alm. My lord, I pity it, and with my heart
Wish your release; but he whose wrath is death,
My sovereign lord, renownéd 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 would'st 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
Daroté'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 negroses 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 bassoës, 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' Antipodès,
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, cursèd Tamburlaine.  
Now go I to revenge my father's death.  

[Exeunt.]  

ACT I, SCENE III.  

Larissa on the Sinai Peninsula.  

Enter Tamburlaine, Zenocrate, and their three sons,  
Calyphas, Amyras, and Celebinus,  
with drums and trumpets.  

Tamb. Now, bright Zenocrate, the world's fair eye,  
Whose beams illuminate the lamps of Heaven,  
Whose cheerful looks do clear the cloudy air,  
And clothe it in a crystal livery;  
Now rest thee here on fair Larissa plains,  
Where Egypt and the Turkish empire part,  
Between thy sons, that shall be emperors,  
And every one commander of a world.  

Zeno. Sweet Tamburlaine, when wilt thou leave these arms,
And save thy sacred person free from scathe,
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,
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.

1: scathe = harm or injury.

14: on both the poles = ie. on earth's axis, which passes through both of the earth's poles.

24: ie. the boys' 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 associated with certain temperaments:

(1) black bile (fluid), earth (element), melancholic, meaning either irascible or gloomy (temperament);
(2) phlegm, water, phlegmatic;
(3) blood, air, sanguine; and
(4) yellow bile, fire, choleric.

If the fluids were out of balance, disorders arose. In noting that his sons are controlled by water and air, Tamburlaine means to say they suffer from an excess of phlegm and blood, which is causing their personalities to be correspondingly phlegmatic (sluggish and sanguine (hopeful and amorous); he would have preferred them to be comprised of more black bile and yellow bile, which would make them more melancholic (excitable or easily angered) and choleric (irascible), and hence more warrior-like. symbolized = united, mixed.

want = lack.

= a form of coal, frequently used in Elizabethan drama in similes for blackness.
= betrays the fact that.
= ie. play a lute (an early guitar) in a trilly fashion (quaver).
= leap.
= except.
= ie. any other man.
= wish.

40: here Zenocrate indicates Celebinus, her youngest son.

41: bestrid = rode.

Scythian steed = horse of Scythia, the widely-spread and
Trotting the ring, and *tilting at a glove*,
Which when he *tainted* 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 crownèd 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 of 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 my gracious mother;
They are enough to conquer all the world,
And you have won enough for me to keep.

**Tamb.** Bastardly boy, *sprong* 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 Persià
Whose head hath deepest scars, whose breast most wounds,
Which being *wroth* sends lightning from his eyes,
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 its 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.\(^4\)

*Which when he tainted* = "and when he touched or struck his horse lightly"; *taint* in this sense is a term from jousting.\(^3\)

*curvet* = leap.

48: *of proof* = of tested or proven strength.\(^1,16\)

*helm* = helmet.

*curtle-axe* = curved sword, scimitar.

= without getting hurt.

53: Tamburlaine alludes to his keeping the captured Ottoman Sultan Bajazeth in a cage in *Part One*.

= perfect courage or valour.\(^1,16\)

= ie. children.

57: ie. "shall be born kings."

= ie. can no longer conduct war.

66: Tamburlaine frequently refers to himself by these epithets.

= "all of you be".

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

= ie. sprung, a common alternate form.

= off-spring.
And in the furrows of his frowning brows
Harbours revenge, war, death, and cruelty;
For in a field, whose superfluities

Is covered with a liquid purple veil
And sprinkled with the brains of slaughtered men,
My royal chair of state shall be advanced;
And he that means to place himself therein,
Must armed 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 viceroys, snatch it from his head,
And cleave his pericranion 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.

Theridamas is one of Tamburlaine's main commanders, and now also the King of Argier, a position appointed him by Tamburlaine. Originally serving the Persian king, and assigned in Part One to capture Tamburlaine when the latter was still but a petty bandit, Theridamas was persuaded by Tamburlaine to bring his cavalry over to Tamburlaine's side and fight alongside him against his own king.

Theridamas ceremoniously gives his crown to Tamburlaine, who will return it to him after hearing of his accomplishments, confirming his position as deputy king.

Enter Techelles and Usumcasane together.

Techelles and Usumcasane are Tamburlaine's other two closest subordinates, and fellow Scythians; Techelles is the King of Fess (Fez), and Usumcasane (usually called Casane for short) the King of Morocco. Both Fess and Morocco (Ortelius' spelling) are cities located in north-west Africa in the region of Morocco.

Tamburlaine's other two closest subordinates, and fellow Scythians; Techelles is the King of Fess (Fez), and Usumcasane (usually called Casane for short) the King of Morocco. Both Fess and Morocco (Ortelius' spelling) are cities located in north-west Africa in the region of Morocco.

Barbary is the name assigned to all of North Africa west of Egypt.
Thanks, king of Morocus, take your crown again.

And, mighty Tamburlaine, our earthly god,
Whose looks make this inferior world to quake,
I here present thee with the crown of Fess,
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 them in this Turkish arms,
Should pierce the black circumference of hell
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.

Thanks, king of Fess; 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
Four hundred miles with armour on their backs,
And lain in leaguer fifteen months and more:

flood to destroy the race of degenerate men which had come to occupy the earth. Deucalion built a boat, saving the lives of him and his wife; after the flood subsided, the couple prayed to Zeus for the restoration of mankind; on the advice of the gods, the couple threw stones behind their backs, and from these stones arose the modern race of mankind.¹

¹ 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 Four hundred miles with armour on their backs, And lain in leaguer fifteen months and more: = profusion; this interesting use of lavish as a noun did not survive the 16th century.¹

¹ 197-8: i.e. that even the king of the gods will say to Tamburlaine, "enough!"

his wingèd messenger = Mercury, the messenger god, was frequently portrayed bearing wings on his travelling hat and sandals, and sometimes on his own shoulders.

The sun, feeling shame or horror at the sight of all the bloodshed (line 199), will either fail to rise, or hurry to set (line 200). Thetis was a water nymph, who lived in the depths of the sea (she was also the mother of Achilles). A number of contemporary works describe a sunset in the metaphorical (and mythological) terms of the sun (or its god, Apollo) as laying down with Thetis.

The sun is often imagined to be pulled across the sky by a pair of horses (steeds), led by the sun god Apollo; Tamburlaine imagines the sun, hesitant to show its face, leaving its horses unhitched, and in the care of Boötes, a large constellation known appropriately as "the herdsman".

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

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

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

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

220 Tech. And I have marched along the river Nile
To Machda, where the mighty Christian priest,
Called John the Great, sits in a milk-white robe,
Whose triple-mitre I did take by force,
And made him swear obedience to my crown.
From thence unto Cazates did I march,

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 theatre-goer would notice.

= the Soldan (Sultan) is the Egyptian head of state; the present Soldan is the father of Tamburlaine's wife Zenocrate; his life was spared by Tamburlaine at the concluding battle of Part One, and lived in the conqueror's favour thanks to his relationship to him as his father-in-law.

= Gualata is a small region in north-west Africa, roughly near the point where modern Mauritania, Mali and Algeria meet.

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.

= controlled, or sailed through.111
= the Canary Islands, off the extreme southern coast of Morocco.

214: "yet the army rested not once".
= calls to arms.

220-239: Techelles, the King of Fess, took his army south through the heart of Africa, almost to its southern tip, then followed a path north along Africa's extreme 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 Techelles' speech appear on Ortelius' map of Africa.

= Macada, a city along the Nile, situated 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
Where Amazonians met me in the field.

With whom (being women), I vouchsafed a league.

And with my power did march to Zanzibar.

The western part of Afric, where I viewed

The Ethiopian sea, rivers and lakes,

But neither man nor child in all the land;

Therefore I took my course to Manico.

Where, unresisted, I removed my camp;

And, by the coast of Byather, at last

I came to Cubar, where the negroes dwell,

And conquering that, made haste to Nubia.

There, having sacked Borno, the kingly seat,

I took the king and led him bound in chains

Unto Damasco, where I stayed before.

Tamb. Well done, Techelles. What saith Theridamas?

Ther. I left the confines and the bounds of Afric,

And made a voyage into Europe,

Where by the river Tyros I subdued

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: 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 situated in Asia Minor or some similar classical location, in later periods they might be placed elsewhere, including in Africa.

in the field = prepared to fight.

= granted or made an alliance.

228: power = army.

Zanzibar = a region in the extreme south-west of Africa, corresponding to 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.

= ie. “moved my army.”

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

= ie. the region of Guber, 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 Fess in Barbary.

Damasco = ie. Damascus.

242-251: Theridamas, the king of Argier, brought his army to Europe, conquering regions just north-west of the Black Sea; all the place names in this speech appear on Ortelius' map of Europe.

= Ortelius' Tyros River is the ancient name for today's Dniester, which flows through Ukraine and Moldova and into the north-west Black Sea.
246 Stoka, Padalia, and Codemia:

Then crossed the sea and came to Oblia

248 And Nigra Sylva, where the devils dance,
Which in despite of them, I set on fire.

250 From thence I crossed the gulf called by the name Marë Majorë of th' inhabitants.

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

254 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;

258 Lachryma Christi and Calabrian wines
Shall common soldiers drink in quaffing bowls.

260 Ay, liquid gold when we have conquered him.
Mingled with coral and with oriental pearl,
Come, let us banquet and carouse the whiles.

264 [Exeunt.]

END OF ACT I.

246: Podolia is the region, Stoka and Codemia (modern Kodyma) two cities, all located around or along the Tyros (Dniester) River.

= actually appearing on Ortelius’ map as Olbia, and once an ancient Greek colony; Ortelius’ Olbia is a town on the modern Southern Bug River in Ukraine (which also flows into the Black Sea), roughly in the same location as the modern city of Myko. The archaeological remains of Greek Olbia are extant.

= Ortelius’ Black Forest has been placed in Russia just north of Odessa!

249: to spite the resident devils, Theridamas burned the Black Forest.

251: Mare Majore = the Black Sea; from the mouth of the Southern Bug River, Theridamas sailed across the Black Sea, presumably to Anatolia, and marched south to join Tamburlaine

= ie. not stop moving; period = pause or cessation.

= expenditure, = delicacies.

= expenditures. = delicious foods.

258-9: Tamburlaine mentions two fine wines which his soldiers will be able to drink.

Lachryma Christi = an old wine from Campania in Italy.
Calabrian = another well-known wine, from Calabria, the toe of Italy’s boot.

quaffing bowls = drinking bowls.

= ie. the king of Natolia.

= eastern pearls; but Dyce emends to orient pearls, the collocation used by Marlowe in The Jew of Malta and Doctor Faustus.
ACT II.

SCENE I.

Hungary, north of the Danube River.

Enter Sigismund, Frederick, Baldwin, with their train.

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?

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

Entering Characters: we have met Sigismund, the King of Hungary, and his two nobles, Frederick and Baldwin.

= impulse.

6-11: Frederick describes in nonsensical geographic terms the extent of the successful and bloody raid made by the Turks against the Christian armies, before Sigismund negotiated the peace treaty with Orcanes.

bloods = lives.\textsuperscript{11}

= recently.

= the city of Zula appears on Ortelius’ map of Europe to be in the south-west of modern Romania, very roughly at the location of modern Târgu Jiu, north of the Danube River (Danubius).

= Varna is a still-extant city on the north-central Black Sea coast of Bulgaria. The mention of Varna here suggests a possible reference to the Battle of Varna, which took place in 1444, sometime after the events of the Tamburlaine plays; but see the note at line 70 at the end of this scene.

= on Ortelius’ map of Europe, there appears to be a city labelled ROMA situated on the coast of Bulgaria, about 120 kilometers (75 miles) south of Varna; perhaps Marlowe adapted this name for his Rome.

However, as Wolff\textsuperscript{15} notes, ROMA is only the first half of the name of the region on the map, ROMANIA; unfortunately, the second half of the name, NIA, is printed so far away from ROMA, that it is quite easy to overlook the connection of the two parts of the word.

Alternately, Dawson\textsuperscript{17} suggests that by Rome, Marlowe may mean Constantinople; the literature of the era sometimes referred to the Byzantine capital as New Rome.

= remains only.

= i.e. “in anticipation of Tamburlaine’s arrival”.\textsuperscript{16}

17-22: Natolia here means Orcanes, the king of Natolia, and leader of the Ottomans, who has taken most of his army, which till now was facing Sigismund, out of Europe to meet Tamburlaine.
Of all his army, pitched against our power.

Betwixt Cutheia and Orminius' mount.

And sent them marching up to Belgasar.

Acantha, Antioch, and Caesarea.

To aid the kings of Soria and Jerusalem.

Now then, my lord, advantage take hereof,
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 professiön.

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

18-22: Frederick describes the movements of the Ottoman armies as they mobilize to face Tamburlaine. He describes a path through Asia Minor from west to east to Antioch, then south into Palestine.

power = army.

19: Cutheia is likely Ortelius' Chiuitae, a regional name for west-central Anatolia, which would correspond nicely with modern Kütahya in west-central Turkey. Orminius' mount = a mountain in north-west Anatolia, mentioned by the 2nd century A.D. Greek astronomer Claudius Ptolemy in his Geographia as one of "the most noted mountains in this region".39

Betwixt Cutheia and Orminius' mount, = a city shown by Ortelius' map of Asia to be located just north-east of Cutheia, in western Asia Minor, along a river that seems to correspond with the modern Sakarya River.

20: Acantha = likely Acanta, which appears on the Ortelius map of Asia in central Anatolia, south of modern Ankara. Antioch = ancient city located on the coast of the 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.

21-24: Frederick advises Sigismund to break the treaty with Orcanes, and attack the small remnant of Orcanes' army, which the general left behind in the Balkans to mind the store while he attacks Tamburlaine.

22 = defeat.2

23-24: Frederick advises Sigismund to break the treaty with Orcanes, and attack the small remnant of Orcanes' army, which the general left behind in the Balkans to mind the store while he attacks Tamburlaine.

24 = alliance.

30 = witness.1

34 = would.

36 = not at all.

38 = The English Expositor of 1719 defines "to accomplish" as "to perform"; the sense here then is "performance or fulfillment of oaths".22

40-42: "Since the vows the Turks (as Muslims) make in the name of their religion cannot, according to the tenets of
To be esteemed assurance for ourselves,

prudent statecraft (line 41, see Bevington, p. 421), be trusted

Islam being inherently profane).".

plight = pledge.¹

42: ie. the sense is, "to be accounted by us as trustworthy".

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 their religion,

Should not give us presumption to the like.

Ours 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.  

ACT II, SCENE II.

Near Orminius' Mount in Bithynia.

Enter Orcanes, Gazellus, and Uribassa, with their train.

Orcan. Gazellus, Uribassa, and the rest,
Now will we march from proud Orminius' mount
To fair Natolia, where our neighbour kings
Expect our power and our royal presence,
T' encounter with the cruel Tamburlaine,
That nigh Larissa sways a mighty host,
And with the thunder of his martial tools
Makes earthquakes in the hearts of men and Heaven.

Gaz. And now come we to make his sinews shake,
With greater power than erst his pride hath felt.
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 Scythian,
Yet should our courages 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.

Scene II: the setting is the mountain Orminius in the extreme north-west of Anatolia.

Entering Characters: Orcanes, the King of Natolia, is the acting head of the Ottoman armies; Gazellus and Uribassa are two of Orcanes' deputy kings.

1: ie. to that part of Asia Minor where the main body of the Ottoman army has gathered.
4: "await the arrival of my army and me".
7: near. = controls. = army.
8: = weapons.
10: = muscles.
12: = ie. ever before.
14: = by groups of twenty. = offer him battle.
16: = ie. soldiers.
17: = even if".
18: = interior.
22: = granted.
25: perhaps meaning that Sigismund had never before experienced, and was therefore previously unacquainted, with an army (host) as large as the Ottomans'.
Enter a Messenger.

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

Orcan. Traitors, villains, damned Christiâns!
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 cares so little for their prophet, Christ!

Orcan. Can there be such deceit in Christiâns,
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 on 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! −

= limited, reduced.

= a disyllable: COV'-nants.

= ruin. = descend, land.

= in the Koran, Jesus is a prophet, but is without divinity.

= soft (as in soft-hearted). ¹

46: "who was created by God in His own image", perhaps a reference to Genesis 1:27.

47-48: "then, if a man asserts he is a Christian, but does not act in a manner befitting a Christian".

= ie. Christ. = ie. the Christian God. The Elizabethans often used the name Jove to refer to their own God.

50: allusion to the idea that it is difficult for a subject to escape the reach of his ruler or the law; the modern version refers to "the long arm of the law".

= protective, vigilant. ¹

53-54: Orcanes now addresses Christ directly.
= ie. Sigismund's breaking of his sacred vow.

58-65: Orcanes asks the moon to open up a sight-line for God so that he can see from Heaven the dastardly vow-breaker Sigismund, and dispense the appropriate punishment.

Cynthia = the traditional personification of the moon.

= the outermost sphere, or the region that exists at the farthest reaches of the universe; it is in the Empyreal Heaven that one finds the throne of God, Christ and all of the angels.

= ie. God.

61: "nor is subject to being limited in space".

circumscripible = an early version of circumscrib-able. ¹

= avenge.
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 Christiâns. —  
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.

Orcan. 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.

Orcan. 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.

Scene III: Orcanes' prayers have been answered; the Turks, despite their greatly reduced numbers, have crushed the attacking Christians. Note how Orcanes is happy to give credit for the upset to either Mahomet or Jesus.

= accounted.

= troops.
= few. = ie. their. = innocent.
= defeat and destroy.¹

= defeated in battle.¹
= ie. breaking his oath.
4f. Sigismund prays to God.
5-7: Sigismund knows that he must be punished for breaking his word, a sin, but he hopes the guilt he feels will serve as his penance.
8-9: "and let my death, [wherein I sin to die], beget (conceive)¹¹ for me an afterlife filled with God's mercy!"

wherein to sin I die = an obscure clause: Bevington and Wolff suggest something like "which I hope will end the toils of my sin", and Dawson proposes "which absolves me of my sin" (p. 115).¹⁷

15-16: Orcanes' liberal approach to religion makes him seem more contemporary or approachable than your typical Elizabethan character.

= again, the sovereign is named by the land he rules.
= dead (literally "without breath").

22-24: all the winds...sin = Orcanes expects the winds to spread the word of Sigismund's perfidy throughout nature. senseless = not possessing any of the physical senses. hisses = hissing has long been the traditional reaction of an unhappy or disapproving crowd or theatre audience.
Now scalds his soul in the Tartarian streams.

25: "Sigismund's soul now burns (scalds) in Hades' river of fire".

Tartarian streams = Tartarus is a special part of hell reserved for the most wicked; in Book VI of the Aeneid, Tartarus is described as being surrounded by the river Phlegethon, which is comprised of fire, rather than air.

26-27: the zuqqum (Zoacum) tree is the tree of hell described in chapter 37:62-68 of the Koran; it is "a symbol of the contrast with the beautiful Garden of heaven with its delicious fruits." Those who are sinful are described as perpetually returning to eat its fruit, which serves as a metaphor for the "unending chain of evil" (from the commentary by Ali, p. 312-3).  

baneful = poisonous, destructive.

28: "For it is a tree that springs out of the bottom of Hell-Fire" (Ali, 37:64).  

fire = a disyllable.  

ingrafted = grafted1 ie. firmly rooted.16

29: a mythological metaphor: "yet the tree flourishes like when all of nature is filled with blooming flowers."  

Flora is the Roman goddess of flowers.

30: "The shoots of its fruit-stalks are like the heads of devils" (Ali, 37:65).  

= the opening to Hades. Orcus was another name for Pluto, the king of the underworld.  

= ie. "whose torments shall go on forever".  

Ribner points out Orcanes' mixing of Islamic (Zoacum, the tree of hell), pagan (Flora and Orcus) and Christian (fiends and devils) imagery in lines 26-33.

32 = fully, ie. obviously.

= ie. "as is the light of the moon (Cynthia)".

33 = defeat.

= appealed.

41  

42 Orcan. 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

34 = "asserted to be".17

43: ie. "without thinking any less of Mahomet".  

43-44: note the rhyming couplet.

47: "I order (will) that a guard be kept over Sigismund's body".5  

The alliterative expression keep watch and ward, meaning "to act the watchman" or "sentinel", was a common one.

= ie. birds of prey.

= "give the order immediately."
Urib. I will, my lord.

[Exit Uribassa.]

Orcan. 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.

The arras is drawn and Zenocrate
is discovered lying in her bed of state,
with Tamburlaine sitting by her.
About the bed are three Physicians tempering potions.
Around are Theridamas, Techelles, Usumcasane,
and Zenocrates' 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,
He binds his temples with a frowning cloud,
Ready to darken earth with endless night.
Zenocrate, that gave him light and life,
Whose eyes shot fire from their ivory bowers.

And tempered every soul with lively heat,
Now by the malice of the angry skies,
Whose jealousy admits no second mate,
Draws in the comfort of her latest breath,
All dazzled with the hellish mists of death.

Now walk the angels on the walls of Heaven,
As sentinels to warn th' immortal souls
To entertain divine Zenocrate.

Apollo, Cynthia, and the ceaseless lamps
That gently looked upon this loathsome earth,
Shine downwards now no more, but deck the heavens
To entertain divine Zenocrate.

The crystal springs, whose taste illuminates
Refinèd eyes with an eternal sight,
Like trièd silver, run through Paradise,
To entertain divine Zenocrate.

The cherubins and holy seraphins,
That sing and play before the King of Kings,
Use all their voices and their instruments
To entertain divine Zenocrate.

And in this sweet and curious harmony,
The God that tunes this music to our souls
Holds out his hand in highest majesty
To entertain divine Zenocrate.

Then let some holy trance convey my thoughts
Up to the palace of th' empyreal Heaven,
That this my life may be as short to me
As are the days of sweet Zenocrate. –

Phys. My lord, your majesty shall soon perceive:
And if she pass this fit, the worst is past.

Tamb. Tell me, how fares my fair Zenocrate?

Zeno. I fare, my lord, as other empresses,
That, when this frail and transitory flesh
Hath sucked the measure of that vital air
That feeds the body with his dated health,
Wane with enforced and necessary change.

Tamb. May never such a change transform my love,
In whose sweet being I repose my life,
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 diamet
er.
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,
And fury would confound my present rest.

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,

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

56-58: briefly, "as during an eclipse."
   in one diameter = describing the sun and moon lining up with the earth in colinear fashion, either on opposite sides of the earth (producing a lunar eclipse), or with the moon in between the sun and earth (resulting in a solar eclipse).15

   The Serpent is the constellation Serpens, whose head lies to the west of its tail.13 Dawson explain that an eclipse occurs when the moon's path intercepts the sun's orbital path (called the ecliptic) at two points, one each in Serpens's head and tail. (119).17

   = the octavo prints anchor, but author of one's death was a common expression, hence the word is emended.

= ie. the sphere of fire.
   The ancients believed that all matter was made up of four elements: air, earth, fire and water. Around the globe, which was comprised of earth and water, was a sphere, or layer, of air, and immediately surrounding that was a sphere of fire.

= "create for you a new kingdom".
65: that the lowly earth should conceal Tamburlaine's greatness (by burying him).
66: ie. "that my death will be the cause of your death".

= ruin. = immediate or approaching peace of mind.
   Note the rhyming couplet of lines 69-70.

= "will cause me pain in my afterlife."

79: "have deserved to be the last thing I think about".
= "follow my example", referring to dying with dignity.
= ie. "resemble your".

88: briefly, "and flogs me!"
89-90: Cupid, the god of love, was always metaphorically
Wounding the world with wonder and with love,
Sadly supplied with pale and ghastly death,
Whose darts do pierce the centre of my soul.
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.

Wounding = Cupid spread his influence by shooting golden arrows at people.

Note the dramatic alliteration of line 90.

Sadly supplied with pale and ghastly death,
Whose darts do pierce the centre of my soul.
Her sacred beauty hath enchanted Heaven;
And had she lived before the siege of Troy,

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Her sacred beauty hath enchanted Heaven;
And had she lived before the siege of Troy,

Wounding = Cupid spread his influence by shooting golden arrows at people.
[The music sounds.—Zenocrate 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 Zenocrate.—
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 ambrosia,
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 murthered 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 cursed 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 stature,
And march about it with my mourning camp,
Drooping and pining for Zenocrate.

[The arras is drawn.]

END OF ACT II.
ACT III.

SCENE I.

Somewhere in Anatolia.

Enter the kings of Trebizond and Soria, one bringing 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.

Callapine, the son of the deceased Ottoman Sultan Bajazeth, has, with the help of his guard Almeda, successfully escaped imprisonment from Tamburlaine in Egypt, and returned to Asia Minor. In a stirring ceremony, he is welcomed back by the empire's deputy kings.

Orcan. Callapinus Cyricelibes, 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 cursèd fate hath so dismembered it, Then should you see this thief of Scythia, This proud usurping king of Persiä, Do us such honour and supremacy, Bearing the vengeance of our father's wrongs,

1-8: the ceremonial invocation is in prose.

Cyricelibes = identified in a 1575 publication, Thomas Newton's A Notable Historie of the Saracens, as an alternate name for Callapine.

It is worth noting that Newton wrote of Callapine, "the turkes...atchieued nothing worthy of any remebraunce vnder this Cyriscelebes."

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.

13-15: briefly, "if the empire had been as strong now as it was when Bajazeth was alive".

sinews = the muscles of the body; sinews was frequently used as a metaphor for "strength" or "support" of the state.

= "caused the empire to come apart".

19-20: "Tamburlaine would be compelled to acknowledge my supremacy, and suffer the vengeance he deserves for the injuries he did to my father“ (Bevington, p. 422).
As all the world should blot our 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,
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.

Orcan. I have a hundred thousand men in arms;
Some, that in conquest of the perjured Christián,
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.

21-22: "so that my name will be removed from the register of infamous persons or deeds." Bajazeth's fall and subsequent treatment by Tamburlaine led to his son's disgrace.\(^\text{16}\)

= 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 circumstances and luck of some people while lowering those of others; in Part One, Zenocrate's maid Anippe offered an image of Fortune's wheel frozen in place, with Tamburlaine's fortune at the top, suggesting his continuous success in all his endeavors. Callapine is hoping it is time for Fortune's wheel to return to its arbitrary business as usual (hence Fortune's inconstancy, or flickleness), as the moment has arrived for Callapine's luck to rise to a new height (pitch).

= ie. (upcoming) battle.

= ie. Almeda's. = fortunate
= overburdened.\(^1\) = "the wrongs done to me".
= ie. pity.

43-47: the soldiers of the force that defeated the Christians, despite the fact that there were so few of them compared to how many soldiers the Christians possessed (line 44), are now so confident that they believe there are enough of them (line 45) to drink whole rivers (line 46) and even conquer the world (line 47).

them (line 45) = ie. themselves.
sufficient = a four-syllable word here: suf-FI-ci-ent. 46: in Part One, Tamburlaine made a reference to a description in Herodotus' Histories of Cyrus' Persian army being so large that it drank rivers dry.
Euphrates = stressed on the first syllable, both here and below at line 59.
enow = plural form of enough.

50: on Ortelius' map of the Turkish Empire, Judaea is a region in the Levant, and Cazza (Marlowe's Gaza) and Scalona (Scalonia, modern Ashkelon) are cities on its southern Mediterranean coast.

= (colourful) banners.
= multi-coloured.\(^1\)
K. of Treb. And I as many bring from Trebizond, Chio, Famastro, and Amasía.

56: the cities of Chio and Famastro appear on Ortelius' maps of the Turkish Empire and Asia respectively, lying on the northern coast of Anatolia, on the Black Sea. Amasia, as has been mentioned, was a city and region in north-central Anatolia.

= Black Sea.

58: the cities of Riso and Santina appear at the extreme south-east corner of the Black Sea.

60-62: Tamburlaine's having literally burnt down the soldiers' homes has figuratively kindled their courage to burn, ie. destroy, Tamburlaine.¹¹

65: Soldino and Tripoli are cities located west of Aleppo on the Mediterranean coast of the northern Levant.

= ie. Damascus.

71-75: the soldiers are arrayed on the battlefield in the shape of a crescent.

battle = main army.¹

pitched = camped.¹

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 or noble 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.

83-84: given that Tamburlaine has risen to such a high position after having begun life as a lowly shepherd, it should be no big deal to make Almeda, who was born into a higher rank than the conqueror, a king.

= ie. appointed.

= "it's nothing", or "it is no big deal".

ACT III, SCENE II.
Larissa.

Enter Tamburlaine with his three sons Calyphas, Amyrus and Celebiuns; 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 Heaven be dissolved,
Fed with the fresh supply of earthly dregs,
Threatening a dearth and famine to this land!
Flying dragons, lightning, fearful thunderclaps,
Sing these fair plains, and make them seem as black
As is the island where the Furies mask,
Compassed with Lethe, Styx, and Phlegethon,
Because my dear 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 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 Zenocrate,
To shew her beauty which the world admired;

= the term hearse in the 16th century normally referred to a wooden frame used in the funerals of royal and noble persons, on which were placed decorations such as "banners, heraldic devices, and lighted candles" and on which "it was customary for friends to pin short poems or epitaphs." (Skeat, p. 189).12

1-14: Tamburlaine imagines a series of natural, astronomical, meteorological and fantastical disasters descending on the land and city of Larissa.

2-3: Tamburlaine wants the flames of the burning city to reach the highest level of the atmosphere, where they may engender meteors (exhalations).

The sphere, or layer, of air surrounding the earth 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. It was in the highest regions that astronomical phenomena like comets and meteors were thought to originate.

3: meteors were thought to form out of ignited vapours from the earth.

4-5: heavenly phenomena such as meteors and comets were believed to be omens of misfortune.

= the point in the sky directly over one's head.1 = comet.

= filth.31
= lack of food.2

12-13: Tamburlaine imagines the Furies, mythological monsters who tormented those guilty of certain egregious crimes, as living on a dismal island in Hades, the island surrounded by (compassed with) three of its principle rivers. Lethe = a dissyllable: LE-the.

mask = wander,1 lurk16 or hide.17

= banner.
= adorned, ie. embroidered. = ie. coat-of-arms.

= tablet, record of things to be remembered.44

= show, a common alternative form.
Sweet picture of divine Zenocrate,  
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 Zenocrate. −

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 sorrow 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,  
March in your armour thorough watery fens,  
Sustain the scorching heat and freezing cold,  
Hunger and thirst, right adjuncts of the war.

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, countermine.

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;

70-90: Tamburlaine engages in an impressive-sounding but decidedly oddly-placed lesson in building fortifications. fortify = build forts or defensive works for.

71-75: the editors agree that Tamburlaine is explaining the considerations for placing a pentagon-shaped (quinque-angle form) fort. Flattened vertexes or angles, being easier to defend, should be placed on level (champion) ground, and more acute, or sharper, angles, which are harder to defend, should be situated on rougher ground over which an attacker is at a greater disadvantage to cross. See Wolff, p. 259, and Bevington, p. 423.

figure = shape.
meet = appropriate.
Whereas = where.

76-86: see the note at line 86 below for a detailed discussion of the terminology used in this passage.

counterscarps = the outer walls of the moat or ditch surrounding the fort. Cunningham¹ appropriately wonders why these walls should be counter-intuitively narrow (line 77).

= ie. the fort's main walls.

= defensive earthworks.¹ = ramparts.

= exits.

70-86: so how does one build a fort? 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) countermine, 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 issuings 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; and finally (6) privy ditches, supplementary ditches running alongside the main ditches. 1,13,16

87-88: "and (the fort must further possess) an abundance of artillery (store of ordnance), which must be able to reach all of the areas immediately outside the walls of the fort (curtains)", in order to create a deadly field of fire for an enemy which chooses to rush the fort.

Tamburlaine seems here to be describing features of the 16th century style of fort known as a bastion fort; this is the familiar polygonal fort-design comprised of four or more sides, but with salients, or angular works, called bastions, projecting outward from the vertexes, creating the visually attractive appearance of stars (see, e.g., aerial photos of Fort McHenry in Baltimore in the USA, or Charles Fort in Ireland).

The curtains of a fort are its primary walls; think of them as the walls of a fort before the bastions are added; the flanks are the parts of the bastions that extend directly outward from the curtain wall (ie. the portion of the walls perpendicular to the curtains); cannon placed thereon could face and fire in a direction parallel to the curtains, and thus be able to sweep (scour) every square foot of ground which lay outside its walls. 1,8,13

89: properly placed cannon should be able to knock the cannon of the enemy (the adverse part) off its carriages.

90: here Tamburlaine refers again to the cannon of the fort's bastions killing opposing troops who are storming it.

93-98: Tamburlaine will teach the boys how an army can overcome water obstacles by, he seems to suggest, holding the water back (as with a dam, which would cause the water to mount, or rise), 11 thus allowing it to cross safely.

= sheltered harbours. 1

= ie. "protected by or within the cavity". 1

= plural form of you.

70-90: Tamburlaine's lengthy discussion of fortification-building has long puzzled scholars.

(1) What was Marlowe's source? scholars have long recognized that Marlowe borrowed many terms and phrases for this passage directly from a work entitled Practice of Fortification, written by Paul Ive, a professional fort-builder.

But there is a problem: the book was published in 1589, a couple of years after Marlowe wrote Part Two of Tamburlaine. Some early scholars therefore concluded that Part Two could not have been written before that year.

20th century Elizabethan drama scholar Frederick Boas, however, solves the problem by suggesting that Marlowe more likely simply added this entire speech to the play after Ive's work was published, in order to include it in the first
published edition of the *Tamburlaine* plays in 1590. This would explain why this speech, which as Boas puts it, is “detached” from the scene around it, appears so jarringly where it does.

(2) Why is this speech here to begin with? Joseph Jarrett, in his 2019 publication, *Mathematics and Late Elizabethan Drama*, suggests that Marlowe is simply trying to impress his audience with cutting-edge military lingo, just as he was seeking to impress them, by writing the Tamburlaine plays, with a cutting-edge pair of stage works. Certainly no contemporary audience would be expected to understand or follow this speech; but the point was to create the aura of military genius possessed by Tamburlaine. (see pp. 43-47).

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**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 march[ed] 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 enamelled, 
*Enchased* with diamonds, sapphires, rubies, 102-3: Calyphas has no stomach for soldiering. 

= before.

= scimitar.

= ie. “haven't you”. = discharge or firing of cannon. 1
109: a mixed body of men with pole weapons (*pikes*), musketeers (*shot*) and cavalry (*horse*). 3

= dust particles.

= across. 1

117-8: wine, when digested (*concocted*), was believed to replenish lost blood. 17

*airy wine* = according to medieval physiology, blood was assigned the characteristic of being moist and hot. According to medieval cosmology, the element *air* was also considered moist and hot. Hence, the wine, which can replace one's lost blood, is described as *airy*. 11

= avoid the battlefield.

129: blood is the metaphorical uniform (*livery*) of soldiers, who are in a sense servants of Mars.

*livery* = term used to describe the colourful outfits of household servants.

= inlaid.
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?

Caly. I know not what I should think of it. Methinks tis a pitiful sight.

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

Amyr. And me another, my lord.

Tamb. Come, sirrah, give me your arm.

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

Tamb. 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 faint heart runaway,
With that accursèd traitor, Almeda,
Till fire and sword have found them at a bay.

Usum. I long to pierce his bowels with my sword,
That hath betrayed my gracious sovereign, –
That cursed and damnèd traitor, Almeda.

Tamb. 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 in Syria.

Enter Techelles, Theridamas, and their train.
Thus have we marched northward from
Tamburlaine,
Unto the frontier point of Soria,
And this is Balsera, their chiepest hold.
Wherein is all the treasure of the land.

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

Yes, my lord, yes; come, let’s about it.
But stay a while; — summon a parle, drum —

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

[A parle sounded.]
The Captain appears on the walls,
With Olympia his Wife, and his Son.

What require you, my masters?
Captain, that thou yield up thy hold to us.
To you! Why, do you think me weary of it?
Nay, Captain, thou art weary of thy life,
If thou withstand the friends of Tamburlaine!
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.
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 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
= artillery fire.

39: that will fill the defensive ditch (trench) with pieces of crumbled wall.\(^{17}\)
his = its.

33-39: Wolff notes that according to one of Marlowe's sources, Thomas Fortescue's *The Foreste*, Tamburlaine did in fact build up earthworks that were higher than the walls he was facing, in order to be able to fire his cannon into the fort or town with devastating effectiveness.

= ie. "and also watch vigilantly as they lie in the trench".
= ie. food or provisions.
= ie. "nor will any of your soldiers be able to leave the fortress".

50: ie. "even if you, the friends of Tamburlaine, were".

53: a list of imperatives:

- Raise mounts = build earthworks.
- batter = strike (the gates) with a battering ram.\(^{1}\)
- intrench = "surround us with trenches".\(^{16}\)

= (and) intercept any arriving supplies.\(^{5,16}\)

= ie. "get to work".
= the stress is on the second syllable here.

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".

= cavalry.

= an astronomical instrument originally used to determine the altitude of the sun, but later to measure distances and heights in general.\(^{1}\) Here the attackers use the staff to help the gunners find their range.\(^{11}\)

= directly or straight, suggesting a line-drive, as opposed to a lob.\(^{1}\)

77: see = ie. see to.\(^{11}\)

ordnance = ie. ordnance, spelled so to indicate it is
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!

[Exeunt.]

ACT III, SCENE IV.

Balsera (Passera).

[Alarms 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?

= trisyllabic.

= platform on which the artillery is placed.¹

79-80: gabions are large baskets which can be filled with earth and employed defensively in fortifications, e.g. on batteries to protect the gunners, as described here.³

77-84: Wolff suggests the din of battle increases during this speech.

= "play a call to arms".
= ie. "act like men", a common exhortation.

Scene III: the battle for Balsera rages; alarms are calls-to-arms.

Entering Characters: the ruling family of Balsera now appears on the main stage; the Captain has been wounded.

= "get out of here quickly".
= ie. through the tunnel.
= fortress.

= openings.²

= to where. = "that you leave the two of us alive?"

17: One...days = ie. "let us all die at the same time."

sepulchre = probably stressed on the second syllable.

= ie. her dagger.

= black.
= ie. "to where his soul now resides."²
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 wert,  
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 superficies

Of Jove's vast palace, the empyreal orb,  
Unto the shining bower where Cynthia sits,

28: piecemeal = into pieces.  
the wheel = a gruesome instrument of execution, by  
which a victim was beaten to death with hammers or clubs  
while he or she was tied to a slowly rotating wheel.

= free from sin.¹

49: the entering soldiers grab hold of Olympia before she  
can kill herself.

= ie. "you will go with us"; note the common Elizabethan  
grammatical construction of this phrase: in the presence  
of a word of intent (shall), the word of movement (go)  
may be omitted.

= "marry you to".

68-71: Tamburlaine's appearance presents greater grandeur  
than exists from the outermost sphere of the universe (the  
empyreal orb) to the innermost (that of Cynthia, the  
moon), ie. than exists in the rest of the universe.  

Theridamas metaphorically describes the upper reaches of  
the empyreal orb, or sphere, as the curved interior surface  
(concave superficies) of the roof of Jove's palace.¹¹  

orb = orbs is another name for the spheres of Ptolemaic  
astronomy: the universe was imagined to be comprised of a
A series of concentric spheres, each holding a planet (including one for the sun and the moon each, and one carrying all the stars), and each sphere rotating around the earth which sat at the center.

The *empyreal orb* - the highest sphere - refers to the medieval conception of the absolute outermost sphere, which was thought to house the throne of God, Christ, and the angels.\(^{18}\)

*bower* = dwelling.

= second mention in the play of the sea nymph.
= ie. "the man (Tamburlaine) who"
= ie. Mars, the god of war.

75: **the Fatal Sisters** = another reference to the goddesses who measure out the life spans of humans.

*wait* = attend.

Wolff notes that Tamburlaine keeps Death and the Fates "all very busy" (p. 260).\(^{15}\)

= blood-red uniforms.

85-86: **the adverse…Heaven** = ie. the ends of the axis of rotation around which the spheres of the universe rotate, meaning "from one end of the universe to the other".

= 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."
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, the silver, and the pearl ye got,
Rifling this fort, divide in equal shares:
This lady shall have twice so much again
Out of the coffers of our treasury.

[Exeunt.]
The emperor of the world, and earthly god,
Shall end the warlike progress he intends,
And travel headlong to the lake of hell,
Where legiöns of devils, (knowing he must die
Here in Natoli 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, viceroys, 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 shewed your majesty.

Orcan. 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 Asiï the Less.
Naturalized Turks and stout Bithynians
Came to my bands, full fifty thousand more,
That, fighting, knows not what retreat doth mean,
Nor e'er return but with the victory,
Since last we numbered to your majesty.

K. of Soria. Of Soriants 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 viceroys, let us to the field,
= flaming torches; note the wordplay in the line.
30: Cunningham prefers jaws for paws; if the devils stretch their paws, they would drop their firebrands; but stretching may simply mean "extending". We note that in the literature of the day, it was common to say both stretch one's paws and stretch one's jaws.
= welcome.
34: "and how many total men we have".
= showed, ie. reported to.
= ie. Babylon.
42: Semiramis (the historical Sammuramat) was a 9th century B.C. queen of the Assyrian empire, of which northern Arabia was a part; many legends surround her name, including her responsibility for numerous construction projects, such as building the walls of Babylon. re-edified = rebuilt.
= ie. reckoned or reported to.¹ This line will be repeated exactly by the next two speakers.
= ie. Asia Minor.
47: naturalized Turks = ie. those persons who have become of the empire through long-term residence in the region.¹ stout = valiant.
53: Soriants = Syrians.
Halla = perhaps modern Hama, the Bible's Hamath, in western Syria, or Halab, the ancient name for Aleppo. is repaired = have come.
= cavalry. = infantry.
= mighty.
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 Us'mcasane, and others.

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

Us'm. 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 Graecia,
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,)  
Challenge in combat any of you all,
I see how fearfully ye would refuse,
And fly my glove as from a scorpion.

Orcan. 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.

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

= without breath, i.e. dead.
= the heavens.

63-65: note Callapine's mixing of Islamic (Mahomet) and pagan (Jove) imagery.

To = i.e. in order to.

67-68: once again, the leaders of opposing sides are given an opportunity to meet and taunt each other prior to battle.

= assemblage, group.

79-82: Hector and Achilles were the greatest warriors of the Trojans and the Greeks respectively; Tamburlaine alludes to an episode not from Homer, but from The Troy Book, an epic poem written by John Lyndgate in the early 15th century. In Book III, Hector visits Achilles in his tent and challenges him, as a way to end the Trojan War once and for all, to single combat.11,15
overdare = outdare.1
the pride of Graecia = i.e. the Greek army.

83: Tamburlaine indeed flatters Orcanes, in comparing Orcane 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" (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 Orcane, who is superior to Tamburlaine, to single-combat, as Hector did Achilles.

fearful of = afraid for.
overmatch of person = "one who is more than a match for you".1

= son of a shepherd.
= i.e. death.

96: an indirect allusion to the auspicious (gracious) placement of the stars at his birth (their aspect), which have decided that Tamburlaine's life will be ruled by good fortune.
And joined those stars that shall be opposite
Even till the dissolution of 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, viceroy[s], 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.

Orcan. 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 cruël 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 racked 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._

_Celeb._ [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.

_Orcan._ 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 = "drive you", as horses.¹,¹⁶

142: it appears Tamburlaine has not noticed Almeda standing amongst those present; this would not be surprising, since Tamburlaine would not have expected to find Almeda dressed like a king or noble.

_152: racked = torn apart on a rack, the quintessential medieval instrument of torture._

_asunder = into pieces._

_wheel = see the note at Act III.iv.28 above._

_158-9: Almeda is made king of Ariadan, a city on the coast of the Red Sea (Mare Rosso); Ortelius places Ariadan directly south of Mecca._

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

_167-177: the dialogue turns to prose briefly, and will again at 196-201._

_167-8: make up the half dozen = Almeda would become the sixth king on the Turkish side, the others being Callapine, Orcanes, and the kings of Jerusalem, Trebizond and Soria._

_177: as a nobleman's distinct banner._
may be slain.

**Tamb.** Sirrah, prepare whips, and bring my chariot to my 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, 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 crown as the foolish king of Persia did.

**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 _aspect_ shall make fair Victory, Hovering betwixt our armies, _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.

**Orcan.** No; we will meet thee, slavish Tamburlaine.

[_Exeunt._]

END OF ACT III.
ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A battlefield near Aleppo.

Alarm within. –

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

*Entering Characters:* A curtain may be pulled back to reveal a large, open tent belonging to Tamburlaine's three sons.

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.

Celeb. 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.

4
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?

5
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.

6
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?

14-16: Amyras is surprised Calyphas can sleep through the threatening din of battle around them.

14-16: = own. = defeat or dishonour.

7
Caly. I know, sir, what it is to kill a man;
It works remorse of conscience in me;
I take no pleasure to be murthorous,
Nor care for blood when wine will quench my thirst.

32
Caly. I know, sir, what it is to kill a man;
It works remorse of conscience in me;
I take no pleasure to be murthorous,
Nor care for blood when wine will quench my thirst.

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 both you
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 taratantaras, 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.]

What a coil they keep! I believe there will be some hurt done anon amongst them.

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 stoops your pride

And leads your glories sheeplike to the sword. –

Bring them, my boys, and tell me if the wars

Be not a life that may illustrate 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 fired 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?

25-26: striving...soul? = the sense is that his hands are struggling against the temptation to murder Calyphas.¹

Ther. Yet pardon him, I pray your majesty.

140-3: it was customary, even expected, for the king's entourage to formally beg for forgiveness on behalf of a transgressing member of his family.

= ask or beg for; the soldiers all kneel here to formalize the supplication process.

= "do not kneel to me for this pardon." ⁵

= "importance of living a soldier's life?" (Ribner, p. 152).⁹

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

= zeal for martial activity.¹

Samarcanda = Marlowe may have meant a region of land labeled on Ortelius' map of Asia immediately east of the Caspian Sea as Samarchand. The city of Samarkand in Uzbekistan was Timur's capital; the real Tamburlaine was actually born in Kesh, the modern Shahrisabz in Uzbekistan, a short distance south of Samarkand.

152-7: Tamburlaine apostrophizes to the land of his birth. 

= defilement, dishonour.⁶

And joyed the fire of this martial flesh, –

= and enjoyed my first experience of military life', or "and was thrilled to be born into a military life."¹¹

And shame of nature, which Jaertis' stream,

= Jaxartes River, the modern Syr Darya River, which actually flows some distance north of Samarkand into the Avar Sea, although the ancients believed it emptied into the Caspian.⁵

Embracing thee with deepest of his love,

= dishonoured.

Can never wash from thy distained brows!

Here, Jove, receive his fainting soul again;

158: Tamburlaine, addressing Jove, foreshadows Calyphas' imminent death.

A form not meet to give that subject essence

Whose matter is the flesh of Tamburlaine;

Wherein an incorporeal spirit moves,

159-160: Calyphas' weak and effeminate spirit (his fainting soul of line 47) is not a fitting (meet) vehicle around which to give life (essence) to a body (subject) which issued from Tamburlaine's seed, and hence is of his flesh.

Made of the mould whereof thyself consists,

161-2: but in Tamburlaine's own body is a soul comprised of the same stuff as that of Jove (to whom Tamburlaine is still speaking).
Ready to levy power against thy throne,
That I might move the turning spheres of Heaven!

For earth and all this airy regiōn
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 damnèd idleness,
Thou hast procured a greater enemy
Than he that darted mountains at thy head,

Shaking the burthen 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 Asiā,
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.
Orcan. Thou show'st the difference 'twixt ourselves and thee,
In this thy barbarous damned 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 resisting me
In the power of Heaven's eternal majesty.

Theridamas, Techelles, and Casane,
Ransack the tents and the paviliōns
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 damned monster! Nay, a fiend of hell,
Whose cruelties are not so harsh as thine,
Nor yet imposed with such a bitter hate!

189ff: the Ottoman kings show their contempt for their captor by addressing him with the insulting thou.

= destructive or oppressive.¹

193-5: the skies have absorbed the spilt blood and fire created by Tamburlaine's army, and will soon rain them back down back onto Tamburlaine's person.¹⁵  
meteors = often used as here to refer to meteorological phenomena generally.  
fire = has one syllable in line 194, but is disyllabic in line 195.

200: ie. "if tyranny is what you call war's justice".

201-3 (outside the parentheses): "I perform these tyrannical acts, the orders for which were handed down to me by the gods above".
   Line 201 continues the sentence begun in line 199; it is unclear to what degree Elizabethan playwrights expected their audiences to follow such complex sentences that were interrupted by parenthetical asides.

= those who.

203-5: "nor have I become the supreme king of the world, invested so by the king of the gods, by engaging in acts of generosity (bounty) and nobility, ie. for being a good guy."

= wield.¹

207: Tamburlaine refers to himself by these names frequently and tiresomely.

208: "I must make my actions fit my epithets".

211-3: note the rhyming triplet here.

= a paviliōn is a ceremonial tent, as opposed to a shelter tent.¹

= ie. Calyphas.

= ie. by touching. = ie. faint-hearted.

= pleasures.
**Orcan.** Revenge it, **Rhadamanth and Aeäcus.**

And let your hates, extended in his pains,
Expel 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 **artery**, **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;

= famous jurists of hell.

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).

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

231-2: "and may your loathing of Tamburlaine, manifested in the tortures you inflict on him, override or crush the hatred by which he punishes us!"

= power.¹

= severe passions.³

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

**artery** = artery.

**feed** = ie. bring life force or blood to.

240: "the cursed physical matter that is your heart!"

241-2: without blood (which as noted previously was identified in medieval physiology as being hot and moist), Tamburlaine's heart would be left hot and dry, which are the characteristics of the element fire; the result, hopes the king of Soria, is that the conqueror's heart will burn itself to ashes (consume with heat).²

wanting = lacking.

remorseful = compassionate.⁵

= tightly. = a **bit** is the mouthpiece of a **bridle**.

249-252: the kings' roars will resemble those of bulls that are in heat, but have no females around with which to mate (the females' miss).

**Cymbrian bulls** = 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 The Cimbrians' connection to bulls has no literary or historical basis.⁹ Instead, we can see that the entire passage has been adapted from Edmund Spencer's 1590 The Faerie Queene (see the note at Act IV.iv.153 for a brief discussion of the timing of Marlowe's adaption of Spencer's verse):

That all the fieldes rebellowed againe,
As great a noyse, as when in cymbrian plaine
An heard of Bulles, whom kindly rage doth sting.
Doe for the milky mothers want complaine,  
And fill the fieldes with troublous bellowing ...  

I will, with engines never exercised,  

254 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;  

260 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 armed men  
Are seen to march upon the towers of Heaven,  
Run tilting round about the firmament,  
And break their burning lances in the air,  
For honour of my wondrous victories. −  
Come, bring them in to our pavilión.  

[Exeunt.]  

ACT IV, SCENE II.  
The camp of Tamburlaine.  

Enter Olympia.  

Olym. Distressed Olympia, whose weeping eyes  
Since thy arrival here beheld no sun,  
But closed within the compass of a tent  

263-6: like armed...the air = Tamburlaine personifies meteors, which are imagined to be like knights engaged in tournament games.  

Hath stained thy cheeks, and made thee look like Death,  
Devisc some means to rid thee of thy life,  
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 vapours to infect thee,  
Nor thy close cave a sword to murder thee;  

Let this invention be the instrument.  

Enter Theridamas.  

1 Enter Olympia.  

Olympia is the wife of the now-deceased Captain of Balsera; Theridamas, now in love with Olympia, has brought her back with him to Tamburlaine's camp.  

1f: Olympia engages in monologue, addressing herself.  

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 vapours to infect thee,  
Nor thy close cave a sword to murder thee:  

Let this invention be the instrument.  

Enter Theridamas.  

3: "but instead remain enclosed within the limits (compass) of a tent".  

6: "rather than give in to Theridamas' detestable courting".  

12: close cave = secluded or private cave, ie. her tent.  

to murder thee = ie. to commit suicide with.  

13: "let this idea which I have come upon be the means (instrument) which will bring me desired death."
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 winged Hermes, to convey thee hence;

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

My lord and husband's death, with my sweet son's,
with whom I buried all affections
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.

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.

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.

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 and sit with thee,
Spending my life in sweet discourse of love.

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 empress.
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, good 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. What is it?

Olym. An ointment which a cunning alchemist,
Distilled from the purest balsamum,
And simplest extracts of all minerals,
In which the essential form of marble stone,
Tempered by science metaphysical,
And spells of magic from the mouths of spirits,
With which if you but 'noint your tender skin,
Nor pistol, sword, nor lance, can pierce your flesh.

Ther. Why, madam, think ye to mock me thus palpably?

Olym. To prove it, I will 'noint my 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 precious?

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.

[He stabs her.]

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

She anoints her throat.

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

= observe.
= even if.¹¹

= as Ribner points out, rabbis can refer to men of learning who are not necessarily Jewish.¹⁹

= OED defines theoria as a "contemplation of the nature of things." (def. 1),¹ hence "contemplation" or "survey".¹¹
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 circumference;

And now the damnèd souls are free from pain,

For every Fury gazeth on her looks.

Infernal Dis is courting 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 III.

Byron, near Babylon.

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, and other Soldiers.

Tamb. Holla, ye pampered jades of Asiä!

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.

Scene IV: Tamburlaine and his army have moved east to Byron, a city near Babylon, a short distance north of the Persian Gulf.

1-3: in Act II.iv of Part II of Shakespeare's Henry IV, Pistol spoofs these lines:

These be good humours, indeed! Shall pack-horses
And hollow pamper'd jades of Asia,
Which cannot go but thirty mile a-day...

Note that Pistol's use of hollow is a malapropism for Tamburlaine's Holla.

We may note that Marlowe for his part borrowed some of his language from Arthur Godling's 1567 translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses, in which he wrote of "the pampered jades of Thrace".

= the Dead Sea, labeled as such on Ortelius' map of Palestine; Tamburlaine means the plains of Asphaltis
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 Aegus fed with human flesh,
And made so wanton that they knew their strengths,
Were not subdued with valour more divine
Than you by this unconquered arm of mine.
To make you fierce, and fit my appetite,
You shall be fed with flesh as raw as blood,
And drink in pails the strongest muscadel;
If you can live with it, then live, and draw
My chariot swifter than the rack'd clouds;
If not, then die like beasts, and fit for nought
But perches for the black and fatal ravens.

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

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

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

Orcan. O thou that sway'st the region under earth,
36 And art a king as absolute as Jove,

36: in his own realm, Pluto's authority is equal to that of his brother Jove in the heavens, even as Jove is acknowledged to be the most powerful of the gods.

38 Surveying all the glories of the land,

38-41: allusion to the famous myth in which Pluto, smitten with Proserpina (often called Persephone), daughter of Ceres (goddess of the harvest), kidnapped her as she was picking flowers in Sicily, and carried her down to earth to make her his queen. Proserpina is stressed on the second syllable. fruit = outgrowth or product, i.e. flowers. Joying = "who was enjoying".

42 So for just hate, for shame, and to subdue

42 = scorners. = i.e. causing dread or awe.

44 = i.e. once and for all.

46 Haling him headlong to the lowest hell.

46 = dragging.

48-51: in a colourful metaphor, the tongues of the Ottoman kings are compared to wild horses (jades) that break through the hedges which define the limits of their range, just as a tongue "breaks through" one's teeth to speak.

54 Tech. Nay, we will break the hedges of their mouths,

54 = i.e. flapping tongues; Techelles continues Theridamas' amusing metaphorical imagery.

58 A mean, as fit as may be, to restrain

58 = means.

64 How like his cursèd father he begins

64 = obvious mockery.

68 Tamb. Ay, Turk, I tell thee, this same boy is he

68 = plunder.

70 If Jove, esteeming me too good for earth,

70 "if Jove kills me because I am too superior a being to be stuck on earth, turning me into a constellation equal in brightness to the brightest constellation in the sky". Aldebaran = alpha Tauri. the brightest star in the constellation of Taurus, also called the Eye of Taurus; the name Aldebaran has been used by the English to identify this star at least as far back as1310.1

72 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 Asphalts' 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 jewels 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.

Orcan. 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 content, 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?

[The Soldiers run away with the Concubines.]

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

Tamb. Save your honours! 'Twere but time indeed.

Confronted by Apollo, the Raven stated that he had been delayed by the Hydra, or water-snake, which the Raven had brought back with him. Apollo, seeing through the lie, placed them all in the sky near each other, where the Hydra could guard the water from the Raven.¹⁹

¹⁹ 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.

= quarrel.²

= bring disrepute on.

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

100-1: "enjoy yourselves now, but leave the women behind when we recommence our march;" Tamburlaine continues to address his soldiers.

But some editors emend content to continent (meaning "chaste"), and suggest the general is admonishing the Ottoman kings, telling them they would have proved better warriors if they had not been dragging the women around with them.

slothful = slow, sluggish.

= ie. by not allowing them to be raped.

= ie. the Soldiers. = plunder, ie. the Concubines.

= "it is about time (that you did something to protect your
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,
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, Sinus 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,
The pride and beauty of her princely seat,
Be famous through the furthest continents;
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.

honours)

= ie. "the Ottomans intended".

115: make...pageants = "make mocking spectacles of us" (Jump, p. 173); jesting also can have a sense of "acting". 

trulls = whores.

= Tamburlaine engages in some wordplay: jest can mean "to taunt" or "to act in a play or masque", as well perhaps carry a vague suggestive sense.

= thoroughly.

= Babylon is near to their present location of Byron.

= to where. = ie. a hasty journey.

= make ready.

= bow down or cringe.

= Black Sea. = of.

= Mediterranean.

= ancient name for the Red Sea.

142: ie. "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). 

= through.

= helmet.

= speckled.

= mounted.

The y- prefix (which derived from the Old English ge-prefix) was used to emphasize the completion of an action; these prefixes had dropped out of everyday English use by the end of the 15th century, only to be employed by future poets and dramatists to add an archaistic touch to their language.

149-151: "upon the mountain, located in Selinus, which was covered with blooms whiter than Venus' forehead (brows)."

Selinus likely refers to an ancient Greek colony of that name located in western Sicily; the mount in question is
Whose tender blossoms tremble every one,
At every little breath that thorough Heaven is blown.

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, above, a Citizen, who kneels to the Governor.

1st Cit. My lord, if ever you did deed of ruth,
And now will work a refuge to our lives,
Offer submission, hang up flags of truce,

Scene I: Babylon, which was 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.

Entering Characters: Maximus is likely an advisor to the Governor of Babylon.

1: i.e. an act of mercy.
30: i.e. "and now might find a way to save our lives".

19-22: the bituminous lake (see the note below at line 25) that surrounds Babylon turns everything that falls into it into defensive walls that are more effective than are the gates of hell.

= being vanquished.

= irresistible or excessive.

12f: the response of Babylon's governor recalls the excuses given by Damascus' governor of Part One, who similarly refused to submit to Tamburlaine early enough to save the city, on the grounds that such surrender amounted to dishonour and acceptance of slavery.

= welfare.

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

Babylon's Lake: 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 bitumen) 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.

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

= faint-heartedness.
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 Christians of Georgia here,
Whose state he ever pitied and relieved,
Will 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, above, a second Citizen.

2nd 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!

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 parlè.

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

[Alarms; and they scale the walls.]

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

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,

66: "more excruciating than any traitor has ever been forced to endure."

68: the Governor returns Theridamas' words, metaphorically stuffing them back down into his throat.

= dared.
= ready.
= ie. "and there will be no more negotiations."
= ie. "do your worst!"

Entering Characters: with Theridamas and Techelles scaling a ladder onto the balcony, and Tamburlaine rolling onto the stage, the complete conquest of Babylon is signaled to the audience.

85-86: as in the previous scene, Orcanes and the King of Jerusalem are Tamburlaine's "spare horses".

89: Herodotus describes the enormous towers lining the wall which surrounded Babylon; there may also be a reference to the Tower of Babel, described in Genesis 11:4 as one "whose top may reach unto heaven" (Geneva Bible, 1561).

90: Bevington notes how unlikely it is that sailors on the nearest navigable sea, the Persian Gulf, would be able to see anything of Babylon, 100 miles away.

wont = accustomed.

91-92: the pieces of the destroyed buildings were blown into the air, and fell into, and now fill, the lake.

94-95: Belus = mythical Assyrian ruler and founder of Babylon, mentioned by the Greek historian Thallus as having fought with the Titans against Jupiter.\(^5\)

Ninus = legendary son of Belus, and founder of Nineveh, the capital of the ancient Assyrian Empire; he conquered much of western Asia, founding the first Assyrian Empire.\(^8\)
great Alexander = according to the Roman historian Quintus Curtus Rufus, Alexander the Great entered Babylon in triumph after the city voluntarily surrendered in October, 331 B.C.\(^36\)

= broken, crushed.\(^3\)

Tamburlaine refers to the Babylonians as Assyrians in lines 96 and 101, perhaps for metrical reasons; he likely did not really care that the Babylonians and Assyrians were distinct historical peoples; the former's Empire comprised the lower Euphrates and Tigris Rivers, bordering the Persian Gulf, while the latter's centered further north along the
Drawn with these kings on heaps of carcasses.

Now in the place where fair Semiramis,

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

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

Re-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.

Tigris.
= ie. by.

98: in the place = ie. in Babylon.
Semiramis = wife of the above mentioned Ninus; when
Ninus died, she took the reins of the Assyrian Empire,
becoming famous, as mentioned before, for her massive
building projects, including construction in Babylon.8,11

= danced dances; measures properly are slow, stately
dances.5
= finely dressed.
= ie. Juno, queen of the gods, and daughter of Saturn.
= countenances.2

= the cavalry’s swords (blades) are described as unruly,
meaning "ungovernable", or "hard-to-control",1 because they
cannot resist slaughtering as many people as they can.

= defiant.2
= ie. have to work for (ie. to capture).
113: "who thought so little of".
slender reckoning = limited estimate (of one's value).

117-122: Sirrah...affright you = the sight of Tamburlaine's
red (vermillion) tents did not frighten the governor, though
they carried more danger than would the sight of a sky filled
with comets and meteors (blazing stars).
The sphere, or layer, of air which surrounds the earth
(and which sits directly beneath the sphere of fire, line 119),
was imagined to be itself divided into three sub-layers, the
highest of which produced astronomical phenomena such as
comets and meteors.
Sirrah (line 117) = address form used to indicate
contempt.
trains (line 121) = tails.
= caused to quail, intimidated.
= gates.
= three-headed dog who guarded the entrance to Hades.
129: make = the octavo prints wake, which might make
sense, but we accept Dyce's emendation to make.
black Jove = Pluto.9
crouch = bow down.
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 up 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, [n]or 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 Persia. 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 Theridamas
with the Kings of Trebizond and Soria.]

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

Orcan. 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.

[Attendants 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.]

Re-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.

[Theridamas 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 should'st 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 burgher's 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 citadel[la], 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.

[Techelles exits 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.

Usam. 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?  −

= ie. and thus displace the current citizens of Babylon.

240-3: I will build...Babylon = Tamburlaine will impose a tax to pay for the construction of a new fortress (citadel) in Babylon.  
Africa = ie. the Levant.  
the Persian king = ie. Tamburlaine himself.

= "I will get to it immediately."

= Koran.  
= Marlowe's go-to adjective, used to signal a character's scorn for a religious object or practice.

= the real Tamburlaine, being a Muslim, would hardly be expected to have committed such an act, even if his faith was more of a practical one than a devout one.

= ie. "well done".

266: ie. because the Prophet has never lifted a finger to help any of the Muslim nations and cities who fought against Tamburlaine.

270-2: Tamburlaine believes in God, but as far as prophets and other such superstitions go - not so much.

= ie. the copies of the Koran.

278: a pause may follow this line, as Tamburlaine waits for Mahomet to make himself known.

= tolerates.  = book.

= ie. or take vengeance.  
= who.

286: ie. "and kicks (spurns) the Koran around".  
abstracts = embodiment or summary.
Well, soldiers, Mahomet remains in hell;
He cannot hear the voice of Tamburlaine;
Seek out another Godhead to adore,
The God that sits in Heaven, if any god,
For he is God alone, and none but he.

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 contemporary 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."46

Re-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 asafoetida,
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 Persiä,
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. –
But forth, ye vassals! whatsoe'er 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,
and train.

Scene II: Callapine has brought the Ottoman armies out of Asia Minor and into Mesopotamia to meet Tamburlaine's forces.
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 Limnasphatis' 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 viceroys' 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 overthrowes,
To triumph over cursed Tamburlaine.

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

Capt. Renowned 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

9: before Tamburlaine's army has fully recuperated or reunited after the siege or battle for Babylon.11,17

= army.
= the much larger area of Asia east of Asia Minor.
= stressed on the first syllable.

= recall.5
= the Ottoman Sultan's deputy kings who have been made Tamburlaine's prisoners (and draft-horses).
= great.
= only one army.
= defeats.
= wreath.

43: note the wordplay.
= ie. down to.

= by which. = terrified.31
= intentions.

51-52: Callapine hopes that just as the moon (Cynthia) wanes after it reaches its full stage, Tamburlaine's power too shall diminish now that it has reached its apex.
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 etérnize 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 'gains 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, –  
= individual, distinct.  
= ie. fighting alongside.  
= break camp, discharge the army.  
= Tamburlaine or his army.  
= make famous forever.

= before.\textsuperscript{16} = reassembled.\textsuperscript{11}

= a bit of wordplay: "set up their black tents". Just as Tamburlaine displays black equipment whenever he expects to kill every living soul in a town or fortress, so the black tents of Hell and Darkness signal their intent to give no quarter.

= 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.\textsuperscript{9}

= customary.  
= ie. referring to the heavens of line 1.  
= ie. Death and his spirits of line 8; cowards is pronounced in a single syllable here: cow’rds.

15-16: a rhyming couplet, occasionally used in Elizabethan drama, as here, to signal the end of a speech.  
= falters.\textsuperscript{2}

18-22: "if you eternal powers (lines 18-19) want to retain your reputation for holiness (line 20), which your high rank leads us to believe you possess (line 21), then you should not act with such fickleness, which suggests you are in fact unconcerned for your reputations (line 22)."

s\textit{way eternal seats} = rule eternally; the \textit{seats}, or thrones,
Bear not the burthen of your enemies' joys 
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 dissolved 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 in his chariot
(as before) by Orcanes and the King of Jerusalem,
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. —

symbolize sovereignty.
massy = massive.
retain desert = continue deserving.
inconstant = changing, variable.
Line 20 has proven difficult to make sense of; Bevington and Jump suggest, "if you wish to keep deserving to be worshipped".

23-24: "do not join in the joyful chorus of your enemies, who will celebrate the death of Tamburlaine, the man you have raised (to the highest office) (advanced)."11,16

31: Usumcasane berates the god (or gods) above for allowing Tamburlaine to get sick; the idea is that by wearing a footstool on his head instead of keeping it under his feet where it belongs, the god is foolish, or not behaving properly or as he should.
The footstool is no doubt additionally a reminder of how Tamburlaine used the Ottoman Sultan as his personal footstool in Part One.

33: "tolerate so repugnant a shame".16

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

36: "and though the devils, having escaped hell, believe their allotted period of punishment is ended."11
= as mighty as.
= conduct war. = ie. "you, Heaven"
= ie. "believe that the".11
= distinguishing mark.9,16

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

And though the devils, having escaped hell, believe their allotted period of punishment is ended.11

46-47: Tamburlaine suggests they set up the black banners (streamers) to signify his intent to destroy Heaven and all the gods, just as he used the black tents and pennants on the
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
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 murthering 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 bark
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;
third day of an earthly siege to signify the same intent with respect to a city.

firmament = sky.

= stressed on the second syllable.

= ie. sit and do nothing. = weaken, waste away.

67-68: now Tamburlaine suggests an assault on Atlas, who supports the heavens on his shoulders.

charge = level.11

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

71: Will him = an imperative: "command him".

Apollo = Apollo is invoked in his guise as the god of healing.

hither = to here.

81-82: 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.

= ship; but some editors emend bark to back.

87: stay = hesitate.

87-88: let us…to hell = if Tamburlaine can keep Death busy collecting the souls of dead soldiers his army can kill in battle, perhaps they can tire him out so much that he will put off taking Tamburlaine's soul.

96-97: 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
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 amongst 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.

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.

[Alarms 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, (hypostasis) be as thick as a spider's web, it is a sign of the second form of hectic fever.\(^{4}\)

98-99: Tamburlaine's blood is possessed of excess amounts of heat, which cause it to be hot and dry, instead of hot and moist, as it should be. accidental = extraneous.\(^{31}\)

100-4: the physician is describing a vaguely understood notion of a life force, called "essence", which some in medieval times considered a fifth element. Tamburlaine's essence has been spent, and so he is dying.

humidum and calor = moisture and heat.

cause = source, giver.

imports = signifies.

105-6: "besides, the stars are not propitiously aligned today" (Ribner, p. 170).\(^{9}\) Medieval medicine depended on astrological readings to determine which days were propitious (or not) for one's health, and even for giving treatment. The expression critical day was used to suggest a turning point in the progression of a disease has been reached, but its dependence on astrology seems to have been implied.\(^{1}\)

107-111: the blood was believed to carry the essential force of life to the heart; Tamburlaine's blood, having dried up, is no longer receiving his life force.

artiers = arteries.

alongst = parallel to.\(^{1,11}\)

organon = lacking those organs; the term organon was used to describe the organ which acted as an instrument of the soul (and also the mind).\(^{1,17}\)

= medical knowledge, ie. "as far as modern medicine can tell."

112-3: perhaps a pro forma bit of optimism, following such a devastating diagnosis.

all = completely.

= beyond one day.

= recently.

= attack.

= immediately.

= an immediate. = cure.

= flee. = "if I am able to"
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, except the Physicians.***

They all presently re-enter.]

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
That these, my boys, may finish all my wants.

[One brings a map.]

Here I began to march towards Persiā,
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.

142: *ie.* all the warriors, including Tamburlaine, after a brief absence, re-enter the stage. The entire battle with the Ottomans takes place in the few seconds Tamburlaine and his soldiers are off the stage.

156: following lengthy passage recaps a bit of the history of the marches of Tamburlaine's armies; it provides Marlowe an opportunity to recall for the audience's titillation some of the exotic names of foreign locations to which pretty much nobody listening could ever expect to travel to.

156; *full* = the octavo prints *still*, emended as shown by Dyce.

*a hundred leagues* = about three hundred miles.

166-7: some early editors speculated that Marlowe had predicted in these lines the building of the Suez Canal; however, it was known that a canal had been built by the early Egyptians, but had been filled up by the Caliph al-Mansur in 775 A.D.; later it was recognized that Marlowe was more likely influenced by a Venetian plan to construct a canal in the early 16th century, in order to resurrect their influence after the discovery of a sea-route to India around the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco de Gama in 1497. The
From thence to **Nubia** near Borno lake. And so along the Aethiopian 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 than Asia and the world beside; And from th' Antartic Pole eastward behold As much more land, which never was described.

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.

...
Your pains do pierce our souls; no hope survives,
For by your life we entertain our lives.

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 assist Tamburlaine to descend from the chariot.]

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

Sit up, my son; let me see how well
Thou wilt become thy father's majesty.
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 those silken reins
Bridle the steelèd stomachs of those jades.

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

Amyr. [Mounting the chariot]
Heavens witness me with what a broken heart
And damnèd 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 undertak'st
As that which Clymene's brainsick son did guide,

240-2: "your devotion to me should not be so great as
to override the requirement that you act with honour and
display fortitude (magnanimity)."

243-4: Dyce emends those in both lines to these.
= stubbornly proud spirits.

= doomed, sorrowful.

252-3: Amyras seems to be asking Heaven to transfer
Tamburlaine's suffering to himself, so that his father may
enjoy some relief.

= coffin.

265-8: since Death (The monarch of the earth) and what-
ever illness is killing Tamburlaine are unable to see the
tears his followers shed for him, they ignorantly continue to
torment the conqueror.

augments = adds to.

270-1: "perhaps some god will employ his holy power in
opposition to Death".

272-3: "so that Death's murderous hatred is turned on
himself."

tear-thirsty = eager for tears, analogous to "blood-
thirsty".

Techelles' last lines in the play comprise a rhyming
couplet, a common practice in Elizabethan drama.

= coffin.

= last.

278-9: Tamburlaine expects that in death, his soul will adopt
the sense of sight (which in life was limited to his eyes), and
be able to finally see Zenocrate.

= flog.

= responsibility.

284-5: the reference is to the well-known and oft-referred-to
When wandering Phoebe's ivory cheeks were scorched, story of Phaeton, the son of Clymene and the sun god Helios: as an adolescent, Phaeton begged his father to let him drive for one day the chariot that pulled the sun across the sky. 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 cheeks, which were scorched when Phaeton drove the sun too close to her.

And all the earth, like Aetna, 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.

*Tamburlaine 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.

*Exeunt.*

FINIS
Marlowe's Invented Words.

Like all 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 and phrases that research suggests first appeared in Tamburlaine, Part Two.

Some of the entries in Part “a” below are marked as "unconfirmed". These are words that the OED has identified as appearing in print having been used a certain way for the first time in Tamburlaine, Part Two.

Some of the entries below are paired with a year. In these cases, the entry technically appeared in print before the Tamburlaine plays did in 1590 (the year shown is the year the entry actually first appeared). However, it is very possible that the entry was in fact invented by Marlowe, since he wrote the play in about 1586 or 1587.

a. Words and Compound Words.

alarum, ie. alarm (as an intransitive verb, unconfirmed)
Anatolian / Natolian (1588)
arch-monarch
astracism (1588)
a-telling
battery (meaning the platform on which artillery is placed)
childish-valorous
dispensive (as an adjective)
dispose (meaning to deal with, unconfirmed)
faint-heart (as an adjective)
far-resounding
flank (applied to a fort)
flesh (as a verb, meaning to plunge a sword into one's flesh) (1587)
half-tired (an adjective)
impassionate
inexcellence
journey (meaning to travel on or ride a horse, unconfirmed)
Lacryma Christi
lancer (meaning a soldier armed with a lance)
musketeer
naturalized (as an adjective, referring to one granted the rights of a citizen) (1587)
ever-broken (as an adjective)
orifex
pericranion (humourus term for the mind or skull)
period (meaning a pause, unconfirmed)
quinsque-angle
racking (as an adjective, meaning driven by the wind, applied to clouds)
remorseful (1589)
rival (meaning one who is arguably equal or better in something, unconfirmed)
strain (meaning to trickle, unconfirmed)
subject (meaning matter or substance, unconfirmed)
sulphur-balls
symbolize, symbolized (meaning to mix or unite, unconfirmed)
taintless
tartar (applied figuratively, unconfirmed)
**theoria** (earliest appearance in non-dictionary entry)

**thrice-worthy**

**timeless** (meaning untimely)

**triple-moat**

**unrelenting**

**villain-coward**

**b. Expressions and Collocations.**

Collocations are words that are commonly, conventionally and familiarly used together (e.g. "blue sky"), but which when used collectively so do not rise to the level of what may be called an expression. All of the following expressions and collocations make their first appearance in *Tamburlaine, Part Two*, and were subsequently used by later writers, and some even continue to be used this day.

Those collocations in *quotation marks* indicate an exactly worded formula that was reused regularly by later writers. Also, the words *one*, *one’s*, and *oneself* are used as proxies for any pronoun, e.g. the entry "pull one's house down" represents all variations including "pull my house down", "pull your house down", etc.

"accursed traitor"

"argument of arms"

"argument of art"

"Barbarian steed(s)"

"barbarous body"

"black circumference"

"black Jove"

"bloody and breathless"

"bootless fire(s)"

"bounty or nobility" (1588)

"bowels of the clouds"

"breathless men"

"brinish waves"

"burn to cinders"

"burning glances"

"burning gulf"

"closed in a coffin"

"coal-black face(s)"

"conquering feet"

"conquering wings"

"contagious smell(s)" (1587)

"courageous and invincible"

"cover all the world"

"crimson blood"

"crown(s) of burnished gold"

"crystal robe(s)"

"cunning alchemist"

"daunted foe(s)"

"dearest lives" (1588)

"deed(s) of ruth"

"diet yourself / yourselves"

"dim the crystal sky / skies"

"enforced and necessary"

"eternal chaos"
"fatal raven(s)"
"fearful thunderbolts" (1588)
"feathered breast(s)"
"feeble influence(s)"
"fiery Cancer"
"fixed bounds"
"fleshly heart of man"
"fly at random"
"friendly keeper"
"friendly parle/parley"
"frowning cloud(s)"
"frowning visage(s)"
"fruitful Sicily"
"general welcome"
"God's great lieutenant"
"golden eye of Heaven"
"haste and meet"
"hateful feet"
"hateful mouth(s)"
"hateful throats"
"headlong from a rock"
"heathenish Turks"
"hell and confusion"
"hellish mists"
"hollow hanging"
"huge/hugy Polypheme"
"illustrate god(s)"
"in one diameter"
"incorporeal spirit"
"infernal vault(s)"
"injurious tyrant"
"intolerable fit(s)"
"invincible by nature"
"ivory bower(s)"
"ivory throat"
"jealous anger" (1589)
"latest memory"
"liquid tears"
"loathsome earth"
"lose a drop of blood"
"lusty thief"
"make no period"
"make one's greatest haste"
"make the water mount"
"marble turret(s)" (1589)
"martial present(s)"
"martial tool(s)"
"matchless strength"
"memorable witness" (1586)
"mist(s) of death"
"mournful streamer(s)"
"murdering axe"
"northern parallel"
"paint in words"
"picture of a slave"
"pitchy tents"
"proud fury"
"purple veil(s)"
"quaffing bowl(s)"
"queen of chastity"
"quivering leaves"
"racking cloud(s)"
"refined eyes"
"royal gratitude(s)"
"rudiments of war" (though rudiments of warfare appeared once earlier)
"rusty gates"
"sable wings"
"scarlet livery"
"second mate"
"semicircled moon"
"shame of nature"
"shattered limb(s)"
"shower of darts"
"shun the field" (1589)
"silken reins"
"spells of magic"
"spiteful influence"
"state of one's supremacy"
"steeled crest(s)"
"strange infusion"
"sunny motes"
"sway a throne"
"temple roof"
"the world's fair eye" (1589)
"thickest troops"
"troops of harlots"
"trotting the ring"
"wandering sailors"
"warlike progress"
"watery fen(s)"
"western world" (1586)
"whip(s) of wire"
"wounding trouble(s)"
"wrathful looks"
"yet let me die"
"yield speedily"
collocation of "brains" and "sprinkled"
collocation of "Cynthia" and "bower"
collocation of "Lesbia" and "Corinna"
collocation of "murmurs" and "hisses"
collocation of "obloquy" and "scorn"
collocation of "quaver" and "lute"
pairing of "honourable" and "requisite"
pairing of "knit" and "strengthened"
pairing of "peerless" and "magnificent"
the expression "absent time"
the expression "in leaguer"
the expression "to bid arms"
  to "half dismay" one
  to "have fresh horse"
  to "hew" something "piecemeal"
  to "mock" one "palpably"
  to "put one to the wheel"
  to "stoop one's pride"
  to (be) "beat asunder"

Words and Expressions Incorrectly Credited to Marlowe by the OED.

The OED cites Tamburlaine, Part Two, as being the publication containing the earliest use of the following words; however, research has shown that the OED is not correct in giving Marlowe credit for using these words first, ie. all of them appeared in works published before 1586, the earliest likely year Tamburlaine was written:

couch-horse
counterfort
quill (applied to the spines of a porcupine or hedgehog)
selected (as an adjective)
unsacked
The footnotes in the annotations correspond as follows:


41. thanks to Mr. Arne Koets, of www.facebook.com/ArneKoetsMedievalCombat Seminars and Ms. Zhi Zhu of thejoustinglife.com for this information.


