WOMEN IN CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S TAMBURLAINE PLAYS

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WOMEN IN CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S TAMBURLAINE PLAYS

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In undertaking a study of Marlowe, one needs to be aware of the general trends of thought accorded the playwright and his works. Generally, Marlowe's plays are known for their bombastic eloquence, their magnificent blank verse, their exaggerated but well-drawn super-heroes, their occasional anti-religious tenor, their sometime inclusion of paederastic motifs, and their barbarous scenes of blood and cruelty. The Tamburlaine plays have some of each of these characteristics and especially do they have the super-hero, the fine blank verse, and much anti-religious sentiment. But the two plays have also some other important elements that scholars often overlook or pass over briefly in their criticisms, apparently not realizing the value of these elements in the plays. The allusions to women and the women characters are among those elements that the critics frequently ignore. Upon reading the dramas, one is made to wonder at Paul Kocher's idea that all characters therein are flat but Tamburlaine,¹ and one is

bothered that John Bakeless passes over the women by saying they lack life and reality.\textsuperscript{2}

The plays themselves suggest that the critics have not said enough about women in the \textit{Tamburlaines}. Perhaps Marlowe's women in these plays are not real by modern standards; perhaps they are not as lifelike as women created by some of Marlowe's contemporaries. But that the women are dead and flat in the dramas themselves is questionable. The purpose of this study is to investigate the problem of whether or not the female characters are lively, active, and essential in the \textit{Tamburlaine} plays. The study has been broadened to include a consideration of the general attitudes toward women expressed in the plays. However, the central emphasis is on Zenocrate's characterization and function.

After the problem for this thesis was conceived and the research begun, it was discovered that one critic has already noticed that the women in the Tamburlaine plays have been neglected. Charles Brooks of Lewis and Clark College, in an article published in \textit{ELH} in March, 1957, attempts to deal with the problem by offering some observations on the function of women in the plays and the attitudes about women expressed therein. His article discloses much about women in the Tamburlaine dramas that other critics seem to have missed.

However, Brooks, too, seems to fall short of an accurate explication of the Tamburlaine women. Some of Brooks's premises seem to contradict the evidence of the plays, and some of his points are not well enough elaborated.

One of Brooks's main premises, for instance, is that, in Tamburlaine I, Zenocrate chooses Tamburlaine and that she "wins him quickly" when she finally makes her decision.3 The play seems to indicate just the opposite, that Tamburlaine immediately chooses Zenocrate, that he woos her successfully, and that Zenocrate simply falls devotedly in love with Tamburlaine, which causes her to acquiesce in his proposal. The thesis considers the problem of whether or not Zenocrate is the aggressive one in promoting the love match.

Brooks also says that Tamburlaine and Zenocrate embark on an extended competition with one another. His premise reads:

In Tamburlaine, then, courtship is competition and the end of courtship is conquest. The women are active, striving to attain individual aims, not passively virtuous women like the usual romantic heroines. Virtue is something to be attained rather than protected, beauty is an asset to be used, women are to be conquered rather than served, and delight in love is a vision of triumph. Destiny is to be moulded rather than endured. These feelings contribute significantly to the action and theme of the play.4


4Ibid.
Once again, the evidence of the play has raised some question about the validity of Brooks's observation. The present study is concerned with whether such a competitive relationship actually exists with Tamburlaine and Zenocrate. There is much in both of the plays to indicate that, contrary to Brooks's idea, Zenocrate does not strive for virtue actively, but is patient, enduring, and subject always to her husband. There seem to be lines and passages in the dramas to indicate for the reader that Zenocrate's virtue is her devotion to her master. The evidence also suggests that Tamburlaine's efforts to achieve are not competitive with Zenocrate but are engaged upon for Zenocrate's benefit. What Zenocrate's relationship is with Tamburlaine and what influence she has on his actions are primary questions handled in the present research.

Brooks also believes that Zenocrate wants to be honored in the world as a virtuous woman, but does not immediately see how she can accomplish this. Ostensibly, she later discovers that through Tamburlaine she can gain her ends. Brooks contends that, despite her desire, she feels unworthy and doubts success.\(^5\) One is led to wonder whether Zenocrate ever doubts her success with Tamburlaine, especially when the only wish she ever utters concerning her relationship with her lover is that she may be privileged to live and die with

\(^5\)Ibid., p. 5.
the man. What the real relationship is between Zenocrate's sense of honor and her feeling of security with Tamburlaine is another question taken up in this study.

Brooks's greatest deficiency may be that he does not point out the power and influence Tamburlaine's love for Zenocrate has over the Conqueror. Brooks only suggests that love is a motive for action, but a study of Marlowe's indebtedness and a study of the text of the plays indicate that Tamburlaine's love may be the motivating force behind his success. There is even evidence that the loss of the object of his love, Zenocrate, contributes directly to the hero's decline and fall. The thesis considers the value of the love relationship in the action of both plays.

Another deficiency in Brooks's study is his handling of the attitudes toward women found in the Tamburlaine plays. He suggests that these attitudes are products of traditional views common to Renaissance England, and he cites a few instances of their occurrence, but he does not elaborate on the frequency or importance in the plays of motifs that depict Renaissance concepts of women. A preliminary study of the text of the Tamburlaines has produced evidence that Marlowe utilized these common theories considerably in the two works. Therefore, in order to facilitate a clearer understanding of Marlowe's use of the theories and their importance to the plays, the first chapter of this thesis is devoted to a study
of the Renaissance concepts of woman. It has been discovered that these concepts are basically anti-feminist; the anti-feminist viewpoint dominates Renaissance interpretations of the nature and role of women in society. One aspect of the present research is the study of the effect of anti-feminism on Marlowe's handling of women and ideas about women in the Tamburlaine plays.

Chapter III of the thesis is a discussion of dating and sources for the plays. Marlowe borrowed heavily from a variety of sources in order to write as accurately as necessary about a historical personage well known to the Elizabethans. But the playwright was not entirely unoriginal. In order to fully develop the themes he had in mind, he reworked much of the material to suit his own tastes, and he borrowed other ideas from sources unrelated to the Timur Khan (the historical Tamburlaine) history. How concerned Marlowe was with his female characterizations can be better understood when one knows of the playwright's intricate manipulation of his scanty and diversified sources. The section on sources is included so that the reader can know what materials Marlowe had to work with, and the discussion of dating is given so that one can see that the plays were probably written at a time when Marlowe had best access to source material.

In preparing for this study, a rather thorough investigation of the plays and of English criticism on Marlowe was
conducted with the aid of the admirable Marlowe bibliography by Samuel A. Tannenbaum as well as the annual *PMLA* and *Studies in Philology* bibliographies on Renaissance literature. From the Tannenbaum main work and supplement, most pertinent materials through 1947 were located. Materials written after 1947 were found in the two annual listings. The text used for the plays is C. F. Tucker Brooke's 1910 edition of Marlowe's complete works printed in 1929; the Brooke edition is the current standard text for Marlowe criticism. All quotations from this text are cited in the body of the thesis at the end of each quotation according to the line numbering system devised by Brooke. All obtainable Marlowe criticism pertinent to this study has been consulted, but the plays have been allowed to speak for themselves as much as possible.
CHAPTER II

THE RENAISSANCE THEORIES ON WOMAN

The study of women characters in Christopher Marlowe's plays inevitably leads the researcher to a consideration of how women were generally appreciated during his era. Marlowe himself tells nothing outside of his drama that can guide one's understanding of his female interpretations, and there is virtually no biographical information that one can lean upon. As far as can be seen, Marlowe had no interest in women, but no one can say for certain if this is so. Therefore, with the present limited knowledge, it is impossible to establish relationships between his female characterizations and his own experiences with women, simply because a researcher can offer no acceptable defense for any postulations he makes. He can say that Marlowe appears to have made certain types of characterizations, but one cannot safely judge who is characterized where from Marlowe's own experience, or which personality is closest to the playwright's heart.

Fortunately, though, the limitations on one's knowledge of the man Marlowe need not negate intelligent analysis of the playwright's female characters as products of Renaissance

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1Bakeless, *Christopher Marlowe*, p. 7.
concepts about women. The reason here is simple. The drama of Marlowe's time, being the human institution that it is and following an age-old precedent, is the literary medium that accurately reflects Elizabethan life much as the modern novel mirrors contemporary society.  

One can expect, then, to find the popular ideas of the Elizabethans concerning the structure and ideals of their world cropping up in the plays of Marlowe and his fellow playwrights. One subject about which there was considerable published opinion and open debate—leading scholars, consequently, to assume that it was a major topic of interest—was woman and her role in the scheme of things. As Carroll Camden explains, "Popular writers all wanted to be heard on just why and how and to what degree women differed from men in constitution and mentality."  

It seems as if everyone who wrote turned out, at one time or another, something about women.

The mass of material that poured from the pens of Elizabethan writers is particularly interesting in two ways. First, not very many words of praise for women can be found that effectively combat the force of what one scholar calls the "traditional anti-feminist literature."  

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4 Ibid., p. 17.
writers attempted to handle the subject with prudence and sobriety, giving due attention to a just and honest defense of woman, the terms sound as harsh as the words in dispraise. The second salient fact about the material is that, with few exceptions, men made the observations about women; women seldom had anything to say for themselves, and when they did, they were usually defending the sex against vituperation.⁵

The theories devised were elaborate and painstaking, sometimes directed toward proving the superiority of women over men but usually aimed at showing just the opposite. Besides comparing the intellectual and temperamental capacities of men and women in some detail, writers dealt at length with physiological differences. Once again, there were two sides presented in the arguments, but the points of view that disparaged women were most common.⁶

The anti-feminist propounders had much precedent to fall back on in building their arguments. In fact, it might be more correct to say that the Elizabethans who wrote against women were simply perpetuating a Renaissance tradition which had its real flowering on the Continent at least two centuries earlier.⁷ Vituperation of women was not a new product of the Renaissance; the activity had been indulged in for

Men have long engaged in the dispraise of women from the Greek high culture to the present, but the war was a hot one during the Renaissance: "Vituperation of women seems always, as far back as we have any record, to have been a manly sport."\(^9\)

Attitudes toward women varied little across the Continent and in England because most writers, attuned to the New Learning, used common authorities—Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Jerome, Paul, and others—for their material.\(^10\) One might expect that because of the rise in nationalism, there would have been a tendency toward defending the honor of a nation by defending its women, but nationalism had not yet generated that much influence.\(^11\)

The amount of vituperative literature produced in the sixteenth century is prodigious; everything about woman is considered.\(^12\) On the other hand, the Middle Ages and early Renaissance, though graced with a generous portion of vituperative writing, provide little authentic information about the female. There are the romances and the poetry of the times to tell us much, but these nebulous accounts do not usually offer much specific detail about real women.

\(^8\)Ruth Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady of the Renaissance (Urbana, 1956), pp. 5-6.

\(^9\)Ibid., p. 17. \(^10\)Ibid., p. 267. \(^11\)Ibid.

\(^12\)Camden, Elizabethan Woman, p. 35.
Self-effacement, so much a part of the medieval way of life, is a primary cause of the scanty information about woman. What records there are seem to be either stories about fictitious idealized heroines, semi-fictitious histories of famous women of the past, or exaggerated accounts of women prominent in religious or political positions. The late Renaissance seems almost a complete reversal of this situation. Practically everything in the life of a woman, no matter how mundane or prosaic, is written about, mostly with a vituperative slant.

The specific emphases of these writings are as varied as the writings themselves. However, one modern scholar has attempted to group the material into four categories. The first group consists of material concerning the male-female struggle and offers information about women's place in the world. The second is about women's wifely duties and gives complete information on the rearing of girls and the vocations of women. The third deals with love and beauty and reveals what part women had in the love game. The fourth considers the court and tells what women who rule must do.

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14 Camden, Elizabethan Woman, pp. 34-35.
15 Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady, p. 2.
Many of the theorists in each of these groups insist that a woman's world is a domestic one; according to these writers, "the lady . . . turns out to be merely a wife."\textsuperscript{16} The Renaissance gentleman in his roles away from home can be reconstructed from the theories, but rarely the lady:

The emphasis is placed so over-whelmingly on the good wife within the walls of her house, whatever her rank, that the few exceptions affording some glimpse of the reality would do no more than merely ruffle the mind of the searcher with a slight doubt as to whether he had the whole picture.\textsuperscript{17}

The theories in each of the four types of literature usually are geared to the idea that the woman is subservient to the man, even those writings dedicated to women who must rule; "the first law of woman, as we shall see, was submission and obedience, exemplified in the beginning and for all time by our Mother Eve."\textsuperscript{18} Practice put women, like men, into two groups, ruler and ruled, but not theory.\textsuperscript{19} Theory says that woman is an inferior being; the idea is inherited from the ancients and the Middle Ages.\textsuperscript{20} Even the improved status of women in the Renaissance, especially in England where opportunity permitted such names as Lady Jane Grey, Katherine Parr, Elizabeth Lucas, and the sisters Margaret, [\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 1. \hspace{1cm} 17\textsuperscript{Ibid.}, pp. 1-2. \hspace{1cm} 18\textsuperscript{Ibid.}, p. 3. \hspace{1cm} 19\textsuperscript{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} 20Ina Bell Auld, "Woman in the Renaissance: A Study of the Attitude of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries," unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of English, the State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, 1938, p. 1.]
Elizabeth, and Cecilia More to be added to our records of cultivated and able personalities, did little to change the anti-feminine sentiment.

Science as well as tradition was back of the disparagement. Women of the Elizabethan era could rightly have blamed Aristotle for all their troubles, because it is ostensibly he who originated some of the preposterous pseudoscientific ideas about woman's constitution. One postulation that he established, and that medieval and Renaissance treatise writers picked up, is that women's brains are smaller and less complex than man's, which, therefore, makes them less of a mental match for men. Aristotle is also responsible for the humours theory that describes woman as moist, cold, and phlegmatic. Exploiting this theory proved a neat exercise in deductive logic:

Since the soft derives from the moist, it follows that women are by nature soft and hence lacking in firmness and stability of mind and character as well as strength. A woman compared with a man was an imperfect, undeveloped creature.

Poor, unfortunate woman. Because she is "of softer metal made than men," according to Aristotle and his Renaissance enthusiasts, she is naturally less a match for man both physically and mentally. The deduction goes further to say that excessive moisture prevents memory's permanent impression so that women have a deceptive, superficial

\[21\text{Ibid.}\] \[22\text{Ibid., p. 2.}\] \[23\text{Ibid.}\]
knowledge of simple subjects, but no more. Consequently, woman's temperament is considered ultimately inferior to man's.24

Aristotle's derogation of woman is gross, but not as gross as the interpretations of it become. One idea of his, that women are unexplainable apart from animals, is garbled to say that women are the same as beasts. Some Renaissance theorists find in Plato fuel for their fires of abuse; he apparently had difficulty deciding whether women are rational beings or dumb animals.25 It is surprising to note the number of seemingly rational and certainly educated men who, theoretically, at least, avow such a concept. John Knox questions whether women have souls and finds it easy to believe that they do not. He is quoted by Geoffrey Fenton when Fenton tells men that women are "distilled of the imperfections of yourselves."26 Other Elizabethans in their theories measure the sub-human state of women by the amount of pain they bring to men. Thomas Nashe says in The Terrors of the Night that "women are borne to torment a man both alive and dead," which seems to suggest that he considers women even worse than beasts and more like devil-spirits incarnate.27 Many

24Ibid., p. 5.
sixteenth century Englishmen apparently wholeheartedly agree with Boccaccio's idea that God sent three scourges to man: sickness and disease, travail and pain, and women.\textsuperscript{26}

These two somewhat divergent theories about women, that they are weaker, less capable than man, but are also his torment and pain, generated a host of incidental grievances against the hapless creatures. One of the recurring complaints is that a woman, above all else, must have her own way.\textsuperscript{29} Robert Burton is cited by one scholar to show what happens when woman cannot accomplish her will: "And when they are disappointed they dissolve into tears . . . weep with one eye, laugh with the other, or as children weep and cry, they can both together . . ."\textsuperscript{30} Such reaction to having her will thwarted is a product of woman's peculiar makeup. The argument is that woman is like a child in wanting her own way, and she is like a child because her mental capacity is deterred by her cold and moist humours.\textsuperscript{31} It is said that a "moderate degree of cold resulted in mildness and temperance; an excessive amount interfered with the operation of all faculties."\textsuperscript{32} Woman, of course, by her nature has excessive amounts, according to the theories.

\textsuperscript{26}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{29}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 26.
\textsuperscript{31}Auld, "Woman in the Renaissance," p. 4.
\textsuperscript{32}\textit{Ibid.}
Women are also accused of talking too much. Besides being generally incessant gossips, according to the theorists, they are also incapable of keeping secrets. Perhaps this explains why poets of the day followed the tradition of making Echo always a woman. The term "gosseps" is not necessarily a derogatory term. It is used to identify women whose conversational activity, whether it be malicious or not, is a regular part of their entertainment, like card playing or dancing. Nevertheless, various writers show their resentment toward the "gosseps" and speak harshly of them. Along with this, the shrewish wife with her sharp and chiding tongue, the malicious slanderer, and the foolish prattler reap envenomed dispraise.

Women are also castigated for their inveterate tendencies to waste both time and money. Often ridiculed for their love of expensive and fancy apparel, women have to bear accusations of many times causing the ruination of their families on account of finery. Charles Bansley says, in a treatise devoted to satire on women's dress, for men to beware lest "youre wyues raymente and galante trickes, doo make youre thryfte full bare." "Fashion was a tyrant" with no one more subject to her tyranny than Queen Elizabeth herself.

34 Ibid.
35 Ibid., p. 162.
36 Ibid., p. 235.
37 Ibid., p. 247.
38 Bradford, Elizabethan Women, pp. 79-80.
Frequent remarks are made against the indiscretion of women, their bent toward "deceiving, dissembling, and lying," and their jealousy. 39 It is said that:

women are . . . of small discretion, and are jealous; some say that women are no more jealous than men, but if so, at any rate jealousy is worse in them because of their natural weakness . . . 40

Even those people who defend women against these latter charges admit that women have such vices. But these writers put the blame on men, saying that because of men's irascible tempers and inconstancy, women are forced to lie and to be jealous. 41

Pride is another vice proscribed in women. It is said that, if their husbands have wealth or influence, wives are pompous and condescending, vaunting themselves in glory that is not wholly theirs. Women are ridiculed for bragging and for making vain displays of themselves. They are criticized for their concern with cosmetics, clothing, and jewelry which, it is said, they use in excess out of love for their own beauty. 42

And then, Renaissance writers attribute the vice of eroticism to women:

Elizabethan writers begin by quoting Proverbs, "who shall find a virtuous woman?" and go on to speak of

39 Camden, Elizabethan Woman, p. 27.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid., p. 32.
42 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
women's "insatiable lust" and "lewde behauiour," calling them "incontinent," "insatiable, & vnsatisfied," and more hot than goats; they continue that "wyman be more desyrous of carnall lust than men," and that apparently they are born on the earth more to "enterteine and nourish voluptuousness and Idleness" than to be trained in matters of importance.43

Few women are exempt from vituperation of this nature. The Queen herself is often criticized for her flirtations:

Feminine weakness, foibles, and vanity were not lacking even in Queen Elizabeth to bear out the general notion of women's inferiority. In spite of being "above her sex", her preference for the dancers, perfumed dandies, and handsome faces among her courtiers as well as such follies as showing her ankle to the French ambassador and asking the Scotch ambassador whether his queen had such a fine head of hair as her own, were not calculated to add to the general regard for feminine character.44

It seems that city women in particular give the anti-feminists reason for condemning the hot-bloodedness of the female because too often there exists for such women much idleness that leads them into intrigues "with the first spurred and feathered courtier who [doffs] his nodding plume in [their] direction."45 Generally, though, women of all classes and ranks suffer from the biting pens of the anti-feminists. Young men are warned against vile women. Husbands are advised to watch their wives closely lest they be cuckolded. All men are told how deceitful women are.

43 Ibid., p. 27.
44 Auld, "Woman in the Renaissance," p. 16.
45 Bradford, Elizabethan Women, p. 68.
Fortunately, for integrity's sake if nothing else, few English are guilty of one form of derogation—depriving women of credit for things distinctively theirs: childbearing and motherly affection.46 The most derisive English comments go no further than to say that woman is merely a tool for propagation without other justification for her existence. It is allowed that she suffers pain in fulfilling her purpose, and that she is best when caring for the fruit of her womb.47 But there are writers from the Continent, Montaigne, for instance, who say that women's pains at childbirth are negligible and often feigned, their severity exaggerated by doctors and the women themselves. One author says that childbirth is no worse than a hen's laying an egg. In refuting the concept of motherly love, another says that "love of fathers for their children is longer enduring and more constant than that of mothers."48

There are complaints of various other kinds lodged against women, but these that we have examined are the major ones. One writer of the period, Leonard Wright, in an essay titled "The Naturall Disposition of Most Women" summarizes most of these complaints and includes some others:

Most women by nature, are sayd to be light of credit, lusty of stomacke, vnpatient, full of words, apt to lye, flatter & weep; whose smiles are rather of custome then of courtesie, and


48Ibid., p. 8.
their teares more of dissimulation, then of grief, all in extremes, without meane, either loving deerly, or hating deadly, desirous rather to rule, then to be ruled, despising naturally that is offered to them, and halfe at death to be denied of that they demaund.49

Carroll Camden, impressed by the variety of grievances Renaissance writers charged against women, presents a quaint evaluation of the situation:

The particular faults of women, as listed by anti-feminist writers, are legion, beginning with the all-inclusive one that though men are full of faults, women have only two: everything they say, and everything they do.50

Perhaps there can be no single reason established for the torrent of vituperative anti-feminine literature, but if one were to be considered, it might be, oddly enough, that phenomenon peculiar to the Renaissance which allowed women a way to show they are not at all inferior—the rise in general education for the gentlewoman. Here may have been the rub. The woman, not wanting to be outdone, became so interested in education that men grew fearful lest women should step out of their place. Hence, to keep them where they belonged, men attempted to humble women with vituperation.51 Apparently, for those who were concerned, there was ample reason to fear. It is common knowledge that the New

49 Camden, Elizabethan Woman, p. 28.
50 Ibid., p. 24.
51 Kelso, Doctrine For the Lady, p. 10.
Learning influenced especially the queens and noblewomen of
the Tudor period to become proficient in intellectual and
cultural subjects. We have many examples of Tudor women who
were skilled in composition, the fine arts, and both classical
and modern languages.\textsuperscript{52}

Because many women did in fact demonstrate through their
intelligence and skills that they were capable of holding
their own beside men, Elizabethan men were forced to recog-
nize in some way such women's accomplishments. Anti-feminist
writers handle this problem neatly. They simply explain that
these women, Queen Bess included, have "manly" characteristics:\textsuperscript{53}

When women displayed courage, resistance, or fortitude not expected of their sex, they were said to
have manly qualities or virtues.\textsuperscript{54}

If a woman gave evidence of powers and virtues comparable to those of a man, she was thought of as
having the nature of a man, a man's soul in a
woman's body.\textsuperscript{55}

There is a common term for these exceptional women--
\textit{virago}. Eve, Joan of Arc, Elizabeth, all are referred to as
\textit{viragos}. When William Camden extols Elizabeth for her magna-
nimity, he says it is because she has virtues above her sex.
The Queen says herself that she has the body of a woman but
a kingly heart. And the period is full of other notable women

\textsuperscript{52}Reich, \textit{Woman Through the Ages}, II, 2.
\textsuperscript{53}Auld, "Woman in the Renaissance," p. 10.
\textsuperscript{54}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 11. \textsuperscript{55}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 10.
who are praised for their manliness. Queen Margaret, wife of Henry VI; Katherine of Aragon; and Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, are lauded for the masculinity of their behavior. Even Boccaccio, who is noted for his praise of a number of women, thought of those that he praised in his day as kinds of men.  

The situation was such that women found it difficult to assume positions of authority or power in their own right. Women of power were not only praised in terms of manly virtues, but were generally obliged to assert themselves according to male standards. In fact, only through special circumstances could women share in the leadership of men; either "the death or absence of her husband, the inheritance of a title through lack of a male heir, or, as in nunneries, the lack of competition from men" were necessary conditions for a woman's rise to authority.  

The lot of women, then, as far as the Renaissance anti-feminist is concerned, is indefensible. Vilification is put upon their every action and condition of being, at one time or another. It is fortunate, therefore, for women that their deprecators recognize one fact, that despite their inferiorities, they are necessary evils. Robert Greene speaks the general attitude when he says:

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56 Ibid., pp. 10-13.
57 Kelso, Doctrine for the Lady, p. 2.
The Philosophers whose sayings haue beene holden as Oracles, haue sette down this for a principall, that howe perfect a woman be eyther in virtue, beautie, or wealth, yet they are to men necessarie euils.56

Fortunately, too, for the Renaissance women, their critics seem to have been more vocal than effective. It seems quite unlikely that there would have been any cause for the anti-feminists to vent their spleen if, in fact, there had not been a considerable amount of independence and individual self-assertion among Renaissance women. Some instances have already been pointed out where women achieved social prominence in competition with men, and there is much evidence to show that English women in particular of whatever class enjoyed more prestige than the anti-feminists allow them.59

The fact is that while women were being assailed vigorously with deprecation, they were also basking in the suns of praise from other media. The pastoral and romantic literary traditions were still strong in the late sixteenth century, and the last dying embers of medieval court etiquette were still glowing. Pastoral-romance literature and the courtly love tradition both have much in common as far as attitudes accorded women are concerned; women are idealized and a

56 Camden, Elizabethan Woman, p. 17.

59 Ibid.
beautiful woman's love is made the worthy object of aspiration. Pastoral poetry and drama, ostensibly begun by the Greek Theocritus (fourth century B.C.), and romance prose, first written by Greeks in the Roman empire, probably helped inspire the code of conduct toward women practiced in courtly circles in the Middle Ages. This code glorified love-making within or without marriage and asked only that women, like the lovely nymphs and magnificent heroines of the romances and pastorals, be beautiful, and loyal to their paramours; men, like the noble knights of the literature, were asked to be worshipful of their loves, brave in proving themselves worthy, and ready for devoted service to their paramours. Sexual intercourse could be indulged in without stigma between loyal and devoted lovers, but, at first, it was not encouraged. The courtly love tradition as it appeared in literature and as it was practiced by knights and their ladies had higher aims than promoting adultery or sexual fulfillment; it intended to honor the virtuous woman and ennoble the worthy male. The one vice that could destroy

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the whole relationship, however, was not adultery but a woman's infidelity to a chosen lover.62

The courtly love tradition in practice had disintegrated by the late sixteenth century into sheer license for loose and immoral activity among the dandies and idle women of the courts. But, in literature, the concept of the virtuous woman still had its vogue. Such works as The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia, The Shepherd's Calendar, The Faerie Queene, and others did much in England to enhance the image of woman. Even numerous treatises and essays were written defending woman according to the precepts of romance and pastoral literature.

However, one thing must be remembered, that even in the literature that extolled the virtues of women, the tendency to subjugate women to the authority of men is apparent. The didactic treatises and essays that defend women deal more specifically with the role of women in society than do the romances and pastorals, and they are not always clearly in favor of the female sex. Some supposed defenders of women state explicitly that the female should be subservient to the male. Vives says that women are well equipped for learning but are still inferior to men and should be subject

to their rule. A host of writers defend woman's ability, and her right, to seek knowledge and self-improvement, but such activity is to be aimed at making her a better asset to her husband. Even the most vehement backers of the sex balk at acknowledging the acceptability of feminine independence. William Austin, believing that women are equal in all respects to men except for the obvious physical differences, says that women are excellent aids to men and take care of their needs well; the connotation is still that the woman serves the man.

Even when writers are sincerely trying to give women praise, it sometimes appears that the writers are not convinced that very many women are really praiseworthy. Rather, many of the writings read like catalogues of examples that show women how to be good if they care to be. Classical, Biblical, and strictly historical sources are searched for examples of good women, and a good many are found. These model women are praised for their physical beauty, "chastity of mind," "honesty of manners," "prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude, humility, modesty," all prerequisites for the making of good mothers and wives. The suggestion seems ever present that women should look to these examples for

64 Camden, Elizabethan Woman, p. 30.
65 Ibid., pp. 32-34.
instruction on how to make themselves better. At times, there is more than a suggestion; women are told that quiet and reserved speech, avoidance of pride, simple dress, and care for their natural beauty are all virtues to be cultivated. Indeed, with all her limitations the truly feminine woman as she was conceived is preferred to one endowed with intelligence, learning, energy, independence, courage, virtue, and strength of will.

It is apparent, then, that even the efforts made to give women credit where credit is due are tainted by the influence of the anti-feminists. Christopher Marlowe demonstrates in the Tamburlaines the effects of anti-feminist theory. As subsequent chapters in this study disclose, there is a strange amalgamated castigation and idealization of woman, there is a combination of anti-feminist morality and pastoral-romantic worship of physical beauty, and there is a double emphasis on the sacredness of the marriage bed and the nobility of pure love for its own sake.

66 Ibid., pp. 70-71.
When studying the writings of any author, it is usually helpful to know the date and sources for any given work, especially if the writer has been writing throughout a period of emotional, intellectual, or physical change. By this criterion, it may seem, then, that dates and sources are relatively unimportant in the study of Marlowe, for here one finds a man who wrote all he was to write in six years at the most. But, those six years for Marlowe, by all indications, are commensurate with twenty for many men. It is known that Marlowe was a college man at Cambridge until 1587. There is some indication that the last two years were divided between schooling and other employments, government service possibly, but nonetheless, he was close to academic life. After 1587, though, Marlowe's association with the stodgy, traditionalized atmosphere of books and theological study was broken, and Marlowe became a very active if not disreputable man-of-the-world. From theology to spying, murdering, atheism, and professional playwriting was a step several Elizabethan writers took, Marlowe among them, but such a step was a big one nevertheless. The maturing effect of Marlowe's progression is certainly demonstrable in his plays.
The idealism, the exuberance, the excesses, and the brashness of the Tamburlaine plays make these plays somewhat less refined than are later works, such as *Faustus* and *Edward II*. Too, the detailed, close-at-hand knowledge of source material used in the Tamburlaines indicates a mind at work fresh from the resources of a well-stocked library, the kind of library available to Marlowe while a student at Cambridge. Marlowe used more sources in the Tamburlaine plays than any other play he wrote, and, though he applied much of his own originality, used them with more traceable precision than ever again.

It seems imperative to give the facts about the date and sources for the Tamburlaine plays. The youthful exuberance and idealism of *Tamburlaine I* indicate its having been written sometime close to the relatively sheltering and secure environment of Marlowe's college years; the facts corroborate this. *Tamburlaine II*, on the other hand, is not quite so idealistic as its forerunner; for example, Tamburlaine suffers setbacks and losses in the second play whereas he is ever victorious in the first. The indication here is that Marlowe wrote the second play after being away from college long enough to have his idealism somewhat cooled by experience in the world. The facts show that *Tamburlaine II* was probably written about a year after Marlowe left Cambridge. The discussion of dating in this chapter explains what has been discovered about the dates of the Tamburlaines.
A knowledge of Marlowe’s sources for the Tamburlaine plays is particularly important to the study of the female characters. Marlowe painstakingly gleaned from obscure and, sometimes, unrelated materials the themes and motifs concerning women and ideas about women. When one knows the details of his borrowings, one can better realize the playwright’s conscious intentions in developing the themes and motifs the way he does. It is no accident that Tamburlaine is made to madly love Zenocrate. Nor is it accident that Olympia and Zabina are brought into the plays. Marlowe had sources for them all; understanding his application and treatment of sources presupposes a knowledge of them.

Most scholars now believe that Marlowe wrote Tamburlaine I by 1587-1588 and completed its sequel, Tamburlaine II, by 1588. According to the argument of John Bakeless, Marlowe had Tamburlaine I in preparation while still enrolled at Corpus Christi College.¹ However, there is no conclusive evidence that the two plays were produced before 1590, other than a reference to that "atheist Tamburlaine" in the preface to Robert Greene’s Perimedes (1588) and some apparent allusions to the plays in a sonnet by Gabriel Harvey.² The Harvey reference is rather obscure, but the Greene allusion


²Christopher Marlowe, Tamburlaine the Great, edited by Una Ellis-Fermor (New York, 1930), pp. 6-7.
is by no means a negligible piece of evidence. In fact, scholars accept it as conclusive enough, saying that no such allusion could have been made if the productions had not been before the public prior to Greene's work. Greene speaks of Tamburlaine "daring God out of heaven" and is apparently referring to Tamburlaine's denouncement of Mahomet in Act V of Tamburlaine II. This would mean, then, that both plays were completed by 1588.

There has been some effort both to update the plays and to set the date back. One notable attempt to establish 1587 as the latest date for both plays was made by E. K. Chambers, who stated that a letter of November 16, 1587, from one Philip Gawdy to his father clearly showed that Tamburlaine II was being performed by that time. The letter described an accident that occurred during an Admiral's Company production of a scene similar to the death scene of the Governor of Babylon in Tamburlaine II, V, i. However, Chambers' evidence has been discarded by some critics of Marlowe since then. Presently almost everyone accepts the dates 1587-1588 and 1588 for the two plays.

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3Ibid., pp. 8-9.


Marlowe apparently took advantage of the good library facilities available to him at Cambridge when he undertook to write a history play on the Mongolian Tīmūr Khan (1336-1405). It is because of his meticulous care in searching the sources available to him and reworking the material to suit his own purposes that scholars today have had difficulty pinpointing exactly which authorities he used. Modern scholarship is indebted to a handful of eighteenth and nineteenth century Marlowe critics for efforts made in this field, but a most significant contribution came in 1883 when Professors C. H. Herford and A. Wagner announced that two historical compilations by Pedro Mexia and Petrus Perondinus furnished most of the material for Tamburlaine I. They stated that Mexia's work, Sylvia de varia lecion (Seville, 1543), was available to Marlowe in an English translation by Thomas Fortescue, The Foreste, or Collection of Histories, and was his primary source. They felt that Perondinus was used for supplementary material.

Until recently, most editors and critics have accepted Mexia and Perondinus as Marlowe's sole authorities. There were some early dissenters, however. In 1906 H. C. Hart expressed his belief that Marlowe followed the account in

6 Bakeless, Tragicall History, I, 59, 204-205.
7 Ibid.
L'Academie by Pierre de la Primaudaye, published in 1577 and translated into English by one T. B. in 1586. Hart's assertion has been disregarded generally, however, since others have pointed out that Primaudaye's work followed closely the earlier work by Perondinus.

There were also some early attempts to show Marlowe's indebtedness to some minor sources for bits of detail. An example is an item submitted by S. Douglas Bruce, in Modern Language Notes, December, 1909. Bruce suggests that the scene which concerns Tamburlaine's use of white, red, and black tents was derived from the old romances where such symbolism often occurred. A few months later, however, this observation was refuted.

Efforts to understand thoroughly Marlowe's indebtedness to his sources continued. Leslie Spence published an article in which he elaborated upon the findings of Wagner and Herford. He assumes that Marlowe did use Mexia and Perondinus, but quite freely and imaginatively.

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9 H. C. Hart, "Tamburlaine and Primaudaye," Notes and Queries, CXIII (June 23, 1906), 484-487; (June 30, 1906), 504-506.

10 Marlowe, Tamburlaine, Ellis-Fermor, ed., p. 34.


13 Ibid., p. 182.
contends, for instance, that Zenocrate was largely invention.\textsuperscript{14} This view has some prominence among a few Marlowe commentators. Thomas Marc Parrott and Robert Hamilton Ball say, adding some commentary on Zenocrate's role, "The character of Zenocrate . . . is Marlowe's creation from a mere hint in history, and it is this invented character that allows Marlowe to show another side of the protagonist than that of the merely ruthless conqueror."\textsuperscript{15}

Ethel Seaton, in 1929, contributed Philip Lonicer to the list of Marlowe's probable authorities.\textsuperscript{16} She noted that the word "zoacum," a tree mentioned in Tamburlaine II, l. 2941 (Brooke), is the "baneful tree of hell" from chapter forty-seven of the Koran, and could be found only in Lonicerus' \textit{Chronicorum Turcicorum Tomus Primus} (1556).\textsuperscript{17} Seaton made reference to other works Marlowe had access to. These need not be mentioned yet, since two other scholars who are to be considered in some detail shortly have handled them thoroughly.

One year after Seaton's article, Una Ellis-Fermor published her praiseworthy edition of the Tamburlaine

\textsuperscript{14}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 185-186.
\textsuperscript{15}Thomas Marc Parrott and Robert Hamilton Ball, \textit{A Short View of Elizabethan Drama} (New York, 1958), p. 82.
\textsuperscript{16}Ethel Seaton, "Fresh Sources for Marlowe," \textit{The Review of English Studies}, V (October, 1929), 385-387.
\textsuperscript{17}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 385-387.
plays. A section in the introduction to this edition has one of the most thorough and accurate analyses of Marlowe's indebtedness to date. Besides acknowledging that Marlowe had recourse to a variety of histories, charts and manuscripts for almost every detail in the Tamburlaine plays, Ellis-Fermor makes the first strong case for a source for Zenocrate other than the mere hint in Perondinus. She observes that there were "some forty authors in whose writings Marlowe could have found some account of the career of Timur." But despite the abundance of source material, she says Marlowe still used Mexia and Perondinus' works as primary sources. She adds to these one author previously cited by Seaton in the article of 1929, Haytoun the Armenian, whose travels were recorded and then published in a French translation about 1501. Besides Mexia, Perondinus, and Haytoun, Ellis-Fermor also postulates Primaudaye, whom, as has already been noted, H. C. Hart suggested; one Baptiste Fregoso, who wrote De Dictus Factescue memorabilia (1518); Petrus Bizarus, Pessicarum rerum historia (1583); and Chalcocondylas, whose Greek work appears in a Latin translation by Conradus Clauerus, Laonici Chalcocondylae Atheniensis, de origine et rebus Turcorum Libri.

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18 Marlowe, Tamburlaine, Ellis-Fermor, ed.
19 Ibid., pp. 24, 36-37.
20 Ibid., p. 38.
21 Ibid., p. 34.
22 Ibid., p. 27.
Decem (1556). Also listed for minor details primarily in Tamburlaine II are Bonfinius, Antonii Bonfinii Rerum Ungaricum decades quattor (1543); Lonicerus; Ludovico Ariosto, Orlando Furioso (1516); Belleforest, Cosmographie Universelle; Paul Ives, Practise of Fortification (1589); and Abraham Ortels (Ortelius), Theatrum Orbis Terrarum (1570).^ 

It would be tedious and unnecessary to the purpose of this study to detail Ellis-Fermor's arguments for her choices. Only three of the above authors are considered in connection with the female characterizations in the play. These three are Chalcocondylas, Ariosto, and Belleforest. The episode that comprises Marlowe's major borrowings from Ariosto and Belleforest's works, Orlando Furioso and Cosmographie, is the Olympia/Theridamas scene in Act IV of Tamburlaine II. With considerable revision, Olympia's perilous predicament and subsequent suicide follow the tale of Isabella's dire escape through death from her tormentor, Rhodomont, found in the twenty-ninth book of Orlando Furioso. The earlier part of the Olympia story in which she kills her own children and starts to kill herself before being captured comes from an episode in the Cosmographie.26

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23Ibid., pp. 24-26, 33-34, 36-40.


25Marlowe, Tamburlaine, Ellis-Fermor, ed., pp. 41-48. Marlowe probably saw Ives' manuscript before it was published.

26Ibid., pp. 44-45.
Chalcocondylas, according to Ellis-Fermor, is the source for Zenocrate. Ellis-Fermor synopsizes the story contained in Chalcocondylas of the respectful and affectionate relationship between Timur and his wife:

Chalcondylas alone, of all the writers cited here, repeats the widespread eastern tradition that Timur felt for his first and chief wife a respect and affection unusual among his race. The wife of Themir, in Chalcondylas’s history, is a woman of power and wisdom to whose judgement the Khan defers and whom he consults even upon matters of state and military policy. She tries to prevent a war between Pajasites and Themir and Themir listens to her advice and adopts a conciliatory attitude until the conduct of the Turkish ruler becomes unsufferable and she of her own accord gives consent to the war. Here, and here alone, seems to be the outline of that relationship from which Marlowe draws so much of the poetry of the first part of his play and the poignancy of the second. The love of Tamburlaine for Zenocrate may have been his own supreme addition to the story. . . .

It should be kept in mind that, according to this synopsis, Marlowe could have abstracted three characteristics of the Tamburlaine-Zenocrate relationship from Chalcocondylas: the respect and devotion the two shared, the wife’s attempt to prevent war (Zenocrate, of course, tries to prevent war between Tamburlaine and her father, not the Turkish ruler), and the wife’s power over her husband (expressed in an entirely different way in the plays). But Ellis-Fermor hints at one important dilemma when she remarks that Chalcocondylas’s story did not contain the passionate love motif that is found in the plays. Later in this study, when

27 Ibid., p. 36.
the plays are analyzed more closely, it will be shown how important the love element is as a thematic and unifying device. Assuming for the moment that the love motif is important, one wonders whether Marlowe invented the motif, as Ellis-Fermor suggests, when it appears that he was meticulous to use specific sources for practically every other ingredient in the Tamburlaines.

One scholar, John Bakeless, obviously does not think so. Writing his famous two-volume work twelve years after Ellis-Fermor's edition of the Tamburlaines appeared, Bakeless suggests a source for Zenocrate known but hitherto ignored by other scholars, *The Mulfuzat Timury*. This work is supposedly the memoirs of the great Khan himself. Bakeless constructs a convincing, remarkable argument about Marlowe's sources in general of which his suggestion of The Mulfuzat is only a part. This argument should be reviewed in order to understand the basis for The Mulfuzat Timury postulation.

The crux of Bakeless's position on Marlowe's indebtedness is in his revaluation of the importance of Mexia and Perondinus. Though his argument is detailed and lengthy, Bakeless summarizes his position in a few sentences:

> It is highly probable that Marlowe may have used either Mexia or Perondinus; but it is by no means certain that he used both; and it is even possible that he used neither. It can be definitely established that Marlowe had recourse to other material,

adhering to the facts of the historical Timur's career very closely, though perhaps without realizing that he was doing anything more than follow tradition, in entire indifference to historical exactness.29

Bakeless presents a sound argument for his case. First, he declares that there are many details in the plays that cannot be found in Mexia and Perondinus but can be located in other sources. Secondly, he says that all of Mexia and Perondinus can be found in one form or another in other histories. Third, he has discovered that,

The love story of Tamburlaine and Zenocrine, though it does not exist in any known European source available to Marlowe, did exist in Oriental documents written before the middle of the sixteenth century, and the historical account presents unmistakable kinship with the drama.30

What is more, Bakeless points out that in Mexia's own bibliography appear the works that Mexia himself used and which contain details that Marlowe borrowed but both Mexia and Perondinus neglected.31

Bakeless's reasoning, then, is based on the idea that if Marlowe drew from sources at all, he drew from them in detail. Including some minor sources mentioned before the main discussion of primary sources,32 adding those works in Mexia's bibliography and The Mulfuzat Timury, and concluding with the Theatrum Orbis Terrarum (from which Marlowe got his

31 Ibid., pp. 220-228. 32 Ibid., pp. 204-214.
Bakeless compiles a formidable selection of references from which Marlowe could have obtained almost every name, place, and statistic—certainly every episode and motif.

It is this concern with detail that causes Bakeless to choose *The Mulfuzat Timur*. Bakeless explains briefly what there is to be found in the memoirs that relate to Zenocrate:

What do we find in *The Mulfuzat Timur*? A close approximation of the Zenocrate story. It is idle to pretend that we have here much more than an approximation of the story as Marlowe tells it, but the resemblances are so close that we are forced to conclude either that this document gave Marlowe the love story of Timur which is hinted at by Schiltberger and von Effenthal [two other accounts Marlowe may have heard about, though they had not been published by 1588], or else that the facts on which it is based reached Marlowe in some other way through some unknown intermediary.

The historical Tamburlaine was not, of course, the model (if somewhat stormy) husband whom Marlowe depicts, but in all essentials the two accounts are the same. The historical Timur, like Marlowe's hero, did capture a lady whom he afterward married. Among his numerous wives (Marlowe, of course, makes his hero more romantically appealing by giving him only one), there was a favorite whom he especially loved; who, like Zenocrate, shared many of her husband's perils and adventures in the field; and who died when he was in the midst of his career of conquest.34

Notice that *The Mulfuzat Timur* relates the "love story."

Bakeless mentions Chalcocondylas only briefly in his study and, then, not as an immediate source for the whole Zenocrate sequence. But it is clear that he understands the

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33 Ibid., pp. 236-238.  
34 Ibid., p. 229.
dilemma posed if the Byzantine were accepted as Zenocrate's source. The Multiplicat Timmy answers the dilemma. Bakeless recognized Marlowe's consistency as a historical dramatist.\textsuperscript{35}

Throughout the progress of this study, it will be pointed out from time to time how Marlowe used his sources in his female characterizations. This will be carried on in conjunction with the study of the development of the women along the lines of the Renaissance theories about women. Both the sources and the theories are important to the understanding of the female characters in the Tamburlaines. However, one should remember that though Marlowe was using his sources, he may not have been so conscious of his indebtedness to the theories. He may not have realized what a strong influence his cultural background had on his writings.

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 204.
CHAPTER IV

WOMEN IN TAMULAINE I

Tamulaine I is a reckless, massive play that demonstrates a young man's enthusiasm and idealism. It portrays the progress of untrammeled success of a magnificent super-hero who holds nothing sacred but his own will to power—and a single beautiful woman. It is with this woman, specifically her character and her influence on Tamulaine, that this chapter is primarily concerned. Zenocrate is the key element in Tamulaine's rise to pomp and power; consequently, one must know Zenocrate and what she means to Tamulaine before he can well understand the play. The chapter will follow closely Marlowe's development of this woman as it occurs in the play digressing only in those areas where Marlowe brings in other female personalities or expresses attitudes about women in general.

The first appearance of Zenocrate comes in Act I, scene ii. In the previous scene the stage has been set for the first of a series of episodic conflicts which serve as the basic structural device for both plays. Zenocrate's confrontation with Tamulaine begins the love theme that dominates the play and contributes to its unification.¹

¹Spence, "The Influence of Marlowe's Sources," p. 197.
There has been considerable discussion of the merits of the first Tamburlaine's structure. Many critics assume that Marlowe failed in dramatic construction simply because of the loosely connected series of events that mark Tamburlaine's progress to his "earthly crown." These people seem to have misunderstood Marlowe's purpose and technique in the Tamburlaines. It is obvious why they fail to see Marlowe's system of unification. The plays seem to them to be nothing more than a chronicle in two parts with the traditional emphasis on the rise and fall of kings.\textsuperscript{2} Granted, they are right to observe that Marlowe chronicled history as carefully as he could within the limits of his dramas. We have already seen how Marlowe followed meticulously the historical sources for his material. But that the playwright chronicled history and that he wrote merely a chronicle play in the traditional sense of the term are two different propositions. Shakespeare, too, chronicled history but who would claim that Richard III and Henry IV have no unifying qualities beyond the stringing together of a series of events?\textsuperscript{3}

Not presuming to equate the quality of Tamburlaine I with either of these Shakespearean dramas, one might still notice some parallels which demonstrate that Marlowe's history

\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., p. 196.

\textsuperscript{3}Marlies K. Danziger and W. Stacy Johnson, An Introduction to Literary Criticism (Boston, 1961), p. 72.
is as different in its own way from the chronicle play as are Shakespeare's. For instance, Richard III is unified primarily through the psychological study of Richard's character. Tamburlaine I is also a study of the central figure's character, and Tamburlaine's relationship with Zenocrate is important to this study. As in Henry IV, there is in Tamburlaine I a parallel deviation from the chronicle tradition, the one-sided rise to power of the hero without a subsequent downfall. True, a fall does come in the second parts of both plays, but once again, with the Tamburlaine plays, this is not significant because Tamburlaine II is an afterthought. Marlowe effected a double change from the old chronicle. First, he marked the rise of his hero by compounding one spectacular victory on top of another; the chronicle play monotonously strung a series of equally significant events along horizontally. Marlowe captivated his audience's interest in this structural spiral through a dynamic characterization of Tamburlaine; characterization was usually subordinate to didacticism in the chronicles.

But Tamburlaine's unbroken rise to power and his superhuman, overreaching ambition could have been as monotonous

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in themselves as the repetitious events of the old chronicle. Tamburlaine is unreal, too superhuman even for the Elizabethans. The audience cannot effect an emotional response to a figure with whom they can make no identification. There must be some humanity about the man before he can live on the stage. Hence, we have the love match between the hero and Zenocrate. Marlowe was no poor craftsman. He knew what he was about, taking so carefully from his sources the obscure stories about Timur's loving wife and broadening them. Zenocrate makes Tamburlaine live when it might otherwise have suffered an early death at the hands of a displeased, rapidly maturing theater audience. The story of Zenocrate makes good theater. Not ignoring the fact that she has more vivid counterparts in plays by other contemporary dramatists, one finds Zenocrate imbued with a vigor of her own.

Zenocrate's demeanor as she is brought before Tamburlaine is that of a damsel in distress. The suggestion has been made that Marlowe drew his image here from the distressed maidens of The Faerie Queene. That Marlowe applied some


7Wakeless, Tragicall History, I, p. 203.
other obvious borrowings from Spenser's style and diction demonstrates his familiarity with Spenser's works. Whatever the source, the scene is a masterful bit of dramaturgy. Tension induced in the first scene as Tamburlaine's enemy, the Persians, prepare for battle is drawn out through scene ii, causing nerve-tingling suspense. The audience, ready for the ensuing combat, is taken aback to see Tamburlaine mounting the stage in battle garb but appearing hardly occupied with thoughts of war. Instead, his attentions are centered on a beautiful woman standing beside him and a band of captive travelers. There are, to be sure, some armed soldiers on stage as well, but they seem no more concerned about combat than Tamburlaine. Instead, they are busily carrying in huge loads of rich treasure, "rich presents from the puissant Cham" bound for the coffers of "the mightie Souldan of Egyptia." It seems that Tamburlaine, unruffled by the impending danger, demurely pauses to capture a defenseless expedition of Egyptian travelers, maybe for spoils, maybe for recreation, maybe because the fine figure of a lovely young princess has caught his eye. Whatever the reason for Tamburlaine's aberrance, the effect is electric.

It is also in this scene that one gets his first introduction to Zenocrate. When she first speaks, she is pleading with Tamburlaine, apparently having heard of her captor's lawless reputation. "Ah Shephered, pity my distressed
plight," she pleads, "[a]nd seeke not to inrich thy follow-
ers, / By lawless rapine from a silly maide. . ." (ll. 203, 205-206). Her first reaction to the man soon to win her favor is one of fear. Tamburlaine attempts to assuage her fears: "The ieweels and the treasure we haue tane / Shall be reseru'd, and you in better state, / Than if you were arriu'd in Siria, / Euen in the circle of your fathers armes. . ." (ll. 196-201). But this initial persuasion falls on deaf ears; Zenocrate knows the ways of marauding armies. Tamburlaine does not continue in his assurance of protection, however. Instead, after announcing with bombas-tic deliberation his position concerning travelers in his territory, he suddenly asks the lady if she is betrothed. Obviously, the warrior is not concerned with Zenocrate's answer because despite her affirmative reply, he announces his intention of making her his paramour—an Elizabethan interpretation of Mongolian love at first sight.

At this point in the scene, one finds a characteristic weakness of Marlowe, the tendency to break a mood through digression. When one most expects a reply to this presumptuous announcement, one gets instead from Techelles and Usumcasane a windy panegyrical discourse of the merits of their leader, and some self-congratulation from the braggart

himself. Zenocrate's next speech is not a direct answer to Tamburlaine's proposition but a prudent, sober warning:

The Gods, defenders of the innocent,
Will neuer prosper your intended driftes,
That thus oppresse poore friendless passengers.
Therefore at least admit vs libertie,
Euen as thou hop'at to be eternized
By liuing Asias mightie Emperour. (ll. 264-269)

Here is the beginning of a dominant characteristic of Zeno-
crate to be traced throughout the play; she is reserved in
her efforts to temper her Tamburlaine's overexuberance.\(^9\)
According to her mild nature, she does not find it expedient
to make demands; she is like the romantic heroines Griselda
and Una, a dramatic but rather unassuming contrast to the
man she appears with.

It is a long while before Zenocrate gets another chance
to speak. Meanwhile, Tamburlaine pursues her favor by press-
ing the question:

Disdaines Zenocrate to liue with me
... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Thinke you I way this treasure more than you
... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
Zenocrate, louelier than the Loue of Jove,
Brighter than is the siluer Rhodope,
Fairer than whitest snow on Scythian hils,
Thy person is more woorth to Tamburlaine,
Than the possession of the Persean crowne.
... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
A hundreth Tartars shall attend on thee,
Mounted on Steeds swifter than Pegasus.
Thy garments shall be made of Medean silk,
Enchast with precious iuelles of mine owne,
More rich and valurous than Zenocrates,
With milke-white Hartes vpon an Iuorit sled,
Thou shalt be drawen amidst the frozen Pooles,
And scale the ysie mountaines lofty tops:
Which with thy beautie will be soone resolu'd.

My martiall prises with fие hundred men,
Wun on the fiftie-headed Vuolgas waues,
Shall all we offer to Zenocrate,
And then my selfe to faire Zenocrate. (11. 278, 280, 283-287, 289-301)

This passage tells much about the depth of Tamburlaine's infatuation with Zenocrate. There is more revelation here than has been recognized heretofore. For one thing, Tamburlaine gives away what is to be his ruling passion throughout the play and it is not primarily to conquer his enemies sheerly for the sake of conquest; it is to honor Zenocrate according to his concept of her worth. In fact, he says that he values her more than any treasure and even more than the Persian crown. Later in the play, after he wins this crown and several others, sometimes seemingly oblivious of any goal except the conquests themselves, it will become evident that all of his efforts are inspired by Zenocrate and are for her sake.

But, for the moment, Tamburlaine is engrossed in the preliminaries of the conquest of Zenocrate herself. He speaks to her in the manner of the romantic hero or the medieval courtly lover, extolling her worth and offering her magnificent rewards for her love. There is exaggeration and some flattery in Tamburlaine's words, to be sure, but there is also much sincerity. Tamburlaine's subsequent actions in the play prove that he intends to give her just as much of what he promises her as he can.
As for Zenocrate, how can she refuse such eloquence? The imposing Edward Alleyn must have captured the hearts of an enraptured audience when he delivered these lines. No doubt the audience was sure, certainly the reader should be who knows how prevalent was the belief in woman's love of flattery, that Zenocrate will acquiesce. It seems anti-climactic for Tamburlaine to force his claim with a final threat of concubinage at the end of the scene. Zenocrate, like Iphigenia in Alphonsus of Aragon, has been duly wooed. Her final words—"I must be pleased perforce, wretched Zenocrate" (1. 454)—are a tribute to her modesty, but later devoted love proves then superfluous. And, of course, one must not forget in weighing the value of these words of seeming dejection that women were noted in the anti-feminist theories for "deceiving, dissembling, and lying." 

10 Levin, The Overreacher, p. 31.

11 Bakeless, Tragicall History, I, 250-251.

12 In a footnote to this scene, Fermor says that a change had not been effected yet in Zenocrate's attitude. She proceeds to defend Marlowe's dramatic sense, but says that he failed in his stage craft by not making his audience duly "preparation for the emotions and events which are to play an important part in the drama." If, however, the audience was predisposed to view Zenocrate as a typically weak, dissembling woman, quite susceptible to flattery as betokens her sex, perhaps they would realize Tamburlaine's de facto victory quite readily.

13 Camden, Elizabethan Woman, p. 27.
Zenocrate does not speak on stage again until the second scene of Act III. This scene contains the notable argument between Agydas, an old merchant lord captured in Zenocrate's train, and Zenocrate herself. Agydas, speaking first, notices that the woman is restless, "so wan and pale" (1.990), and wants to know the matter. He has seen that her "offensive rape by Tamburlaine," as he calls it, "[h]ath seem'd to be digested long agoe" (ll. 991, 993). Such concerns, Zenocrate confesses, have indeed long ago been put away "[a]s his [Tamburlaine's] exceeding fauours have deseru'd" (1. 995). Now there is a greater "passion." Zenocrate says in her reply to Agydas that she must have life with Tamburlaine or no life at all.

Agydas is aghast. He cannot believe that this woman wants to "lieue and die with Tamburlaine" (1. 1009):

Ah faire Zenocrate.
Let not a man so vile and barbarous
That holds you from your father in despight,
And keeps you from the honours of a Queene,
Being suppose his worthlesse Concubine,
Be honored with your loue, but for necessity.
So now the mighty Souldan heares of you,
Your Highnesse needs not doubt but in a short time,
He will with Tamburlaines destruction
Redeeme you from this deadly seruitude. (ll. 1010-1019)

Zenocrate cannot accept her friend's argument. She begs him to quit hurting her with words that are not altogether true: "...speake of Tamburlaine as he deserves: / The entertainment we haue had of him, / Is far from villanie or seruitude, / And might in noble minds be counted
priestly" (ll. 1030-1034). One might notice that Zenocrate never refers to the point most immediate in Agydas's mind, that she may soon be rescued. She seems willing to lose her father and her fiancé if she can be Turbulinae's. Agydas's subsequent reference to Zenocrate's betrothed, his plea that she remain faithful, draws no more comment than does his assurance of rescue: "Yet be not so inconstant in your heart / But let the young Arabian live in hope, / After your rescue to enjoy his choice" (ll. 1041-1043).

Zenocrate has certainly broken away from the pattern of the romance heroine at this point in the play. She seems undisturbed by the prospect of committing infidelity. One must not drift too far from Marlowe's England when considering this idiosyncracy of Zenocrate's characterization. Though a modern reader might not attach such importance to the woman's nonchalant disdain of a fiancé, the sixteenth century theater audience may have reacted differently. In the anti-feminist theories as well as in the pastorals and romances, infidelity is inexcusable; it is a sign of woman's inferiority and failings. The reader should recall how generalized was the acceptance of these theories in Marlowe's day. One should also realize that an Elizabethan play often "reflects the Renaissance conception of woman and the position of women."14 The Elizabethan audience probably accepted

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as natural to woman's nature what Zenocrate had done, or rather had failed to do: heed Agydas's words, reject Tamburlaine, and faithfully live up to promises already made. Zenocrate, however, may have good reason for being unfaithful to the Arabian prince; one may better understand this reason if he recognizes that "the indissoluble marriage of convenience and the frequent disproportionate age of the husband, were . . . conducive to unfaithfulness, deception, and trickery on the part of wives unhappily married, who could only thus know love." The same principle applies to the marriage-like indissolubility of the engagement.

Nevertheless, a woman's infidelity, whatever the cause, is still a weakness, according to the Renaissance theories, and women are heartily castigated for it. Shakespeare, for instance, cannot resist reproaching women for this weakness. One Shakespearean critic points out this fact when he says that "Hamlet shares with Troilus and Cressida, among Shakespeare's plays, the charge that women are fickle." This same critic goes on to remind the reader that "it is an old accusation."

Zenocrate's unfaithfulness to her "yong Arabian" is not, however, indicative of a permanent blemish to her character because she later becomes a paragon of fidelity in

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16 Ibid.
her relationship to Tamburlaine. But this one fall is enough to suggest that Marlowe is not unaware of woman's weakness as portrayed by the anti-feminists. Tamburlaine himself, in fact, makes a remark that suggests Marlowe's acquaintance with the theories. After the passionate speech of praise and promises in Act I aimed at wooing Zenocrate, Tamburlaine answers Techeles's query—"What now? In love?"—by reminding him that "women must be flatered" (1. 303). The Mongol apparently shares the Renaissance belief that flattery is the key to winning a woman.17

This early reference in the play to a weakness in Zenocrate's character is only one aspect of the woman's character development. It is an important one, however, in that it helps make Zenocrate more than just a stock romance heroine; it adds to her vitalization as a dramatic figure. Zenocrate's character development is continued in her next appearance. In this appearance, the Princess accompanies Tamburlaine to a confrontation with Bajazeth, the Turkish emperor, and his wife, Zabina. There is, in this scene, a conflict between Zabina and Zenocrate that becomes a mock counterpart of their husbands' belligerence to one another.18 It is evident in the way that each pair of husbands and wives unite in heaping scorn on the other that both

women are devoted to their mates, and both men are confident of their wives. However, there are some interesting differences in the attitudes the men have toward their ladies and in the personalities of the ladies themselves. These differences point up, to some extent, the function of both women in the continuity of the play.

The men expose their feelings toward their loves as each charges his wife to wait patiently and confidently for her husband's victorious return. Bajazeth speaks first, enjoining "Zabina, mother of three brauar boies, / Than Hercules . . ." to occupy his royal seat and wear his "Emperiall crowne" until Tamburlaine and company are brought back captive. The emphasis is on the brave boys Zabina mothered, not on Zabina herself.19

Contrast this with Tamburlaine's charge. He addresses Zenocrate when he gives her his crown as "the loueliest Maide aliue." His attention is certainly on Zenocrate herself, on her beauty, not on what her service to him has been. Tamburlaine's eloquence outstrips that of Bajazeth. His praise of Zenocrate approximates his catalogue of her virtues in Act I. The contrast, then, is between motherhood and comeliness. One man appreciates function, another aesthetics.

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19Marlowe, Complete Works, ll. 1201-1213: of the thirteen lines in this passage, eight concern the sons Zabina mothered and only five are directed at Zabina herself.
Because of scenes like this one with Bajazeth and Zabina in which Tamburlaine praises Zenocrates's beauty in excess, the Scythian—and Marlowe too, by those who equate the creation with the creator—has been accused of being without love and merely a worshipper of sensual beauty. His bombastic, exaggerated praise of and glib promises to the vision of loveliness are condemned as trite, a bid for "beauties iust applause," a dissociation of desire from love. He is accused of viewing Zenocrates as merely another one of his conquests. He is called a supreme egoist and associated in this respect with Faustus. One critic puts Tamburlaine's attitude toward Zenocrates beside that of Faustus for Helen and sets both on a completely aesthetic plane:

Zenocrates and Helen are for Tamburlaine and Faustus no more than a symbol of beauty, a more perfect symbol than the most perfect work of art could ever be, but in either man the contemplation of woman arouses a purely aesthetic emotion accompanied neither by sexual passion nor the desire for spiritual communion.

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21 Levin, The Overreacher, pp. 31-32, 40, 45.
22 Bakeless, Christopher Marlowe, pp. 7-8.
Beauty does dominate the relationship between Zenocrate and Tamburlaine. And it is true that Tamburlaine, through an obvious egoism, idealizes his mate to fit the conception of his own worth. Tamburlaine does feel that he has made a great conquest; he feels likewise about his martial victories. Tamburlaine's aspiration demands superior accomplishments, fame, and valor. But the egoist nevertheless loves—and, as subsequent demonstrations of affection in Tamburlaine I and Tamburlaine's reaction to Zenocrate's death in Tamburlaine II will show, the Conqueror loves deeply. His problem is that love for him cannot be separated from aspiration and honor. In a distorted version, one sees the courtly love tradition in Tamburlaine's attitude.

The scene in which both women, spurred by the tension and insecurity of the moment, fire venom at one another in defense of their positions, shows subtle differences of personalities and provides some of Marlowe's peculiarly vicious humor. Harry Levin describes it as a parody:

[One sees] Marlowe's stratagem of out-Heroding Herod, which builds Tamburlaine into a king of kings by breaking down the others . . . absurdly reversed when these tragedy-queens tirade like fishwives, each threatening to make the other servant of her servants.

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25 Levin, *The Overreacher*, p. 35.
27 Levin, *The Overreacher*, p. 46.
Zabina sees her position clearly as one of material and personal superiority. She is empress and the lawful wife of "the mighty Turke." She disdains Zenocrate's concubinage and the girl's pride in it: "Straight will I use thee as thy pride deserves." But her own pride in being "the Empresse" dominates her characterization. Theridamas has to remove the crown from her head before she will relinquish it even though she is prisoner to the victorious Scythian. Her protest is violent: "Injurious villains, thieves, runnagates, / How dare you thus abuse my Maiesty?" (ll. 1323-1324).

Zenocrate, on the other hand, is content to be the "betrothed" of Tamburlaine. She defends her position solely on the basis of her love for "the king of Persea." Unlike Zabina, she never flaunts her own queenship; she pleasures in Tamburlaine's power, success, and majesty but claims none of it for herself.

Even when Zenocrate feels she must defend herself from the accusation that she is a concubine, it is not a defense based on her own personal integrity. Her defense rests on her confidence in the integrity of Tamburlaine. It has been said that Zenocrate is a maiden seeking to live a life of virtue, and finds the means through her love for Tamburlaine, but the evidence of the play seems to refute this idea. In

neither of the two instances when Zenocrate defends herself—once to Agydas and again to Zabina—does she speak of her own purity of intention. Her arguments are consistently in terms of faith in Tamburlaine's integrity, a faith based on love and not generally shared by anyone else in the play. Zenocrate says in answer to Zabina's charge: "Disdainful Turkesse and vnreuerend Bosse, / Call'at thou me Concubine that am betroath'd / Unto the great and mighty Tamburlaine?" (ll. 1266-1268). Where has come the betrothal? Only in Tamburlaine's promises. Agydas has read only lecherous design into those promises. But Zenocrate's pure love seeks no evil; therefore, she believes Tamburlaine and contents herself with no other proof but her own conviction of his greatness.

The climactic evidence that Zenocrate is little concerned for her own self-edification and is completely devoted to Tamburlaine is manifest when the Conqueror returns from the battlefield. Zenocrate, rather than turn on Zabina to exult spitefully in the Turkess' downfall, humbly offers back Tamburlaine his crown. "Now let me offer to my gracious Lord / His royall Crowne againe so highly won" (ll. 1316-1317). Not another word does she speak in this scene.

²⁹The attitude of Tamburlaine's other followers is not one of respect for his integrity but is rather appreciation of his war prowess and his apparent favor with Fortune.
Zabina, on the other hand, seeks to protect her crown, not for her husband's sake, but as a symbol of her own majesty ("How dare you thus abuse my Majesty?").

Zabina's imprudent self-esteem is not a discredit to her love for Bajazeth. She proves her dedication to the Turk most conclusively later in the play. She does, however, represent an antithesis to the Renaissance theory that a wife should be subservient to her husband. Like Lady Macbeth, she is a rather arrogant equal in the marriage partnership.

Zenocrate, on the contrary, is here a specimen of the romance ideal. She does not presume upon her status as Tamburlaine's consort. It is Theridamas, at Tamburlaine's behest, who bestows on Zenocrate the title that she will not assume herself: "Here Madam, you are Empresse, she is none."

This final scene of Act III completes the framework of the two elements that unify the play, the love story of Tamburlaine and Zenocrate and the somewhat different story of Bajazeth and Zabina. The development of either element is rather slow. Interest in the Tamburlaine/Zenocrate affair is stimulated in the first act but is put aside in the second and not revived again until the third. Zabina and Bajazeth

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do not appear until the third act. Half the play is over before either element is firmly established.

Marlowe's failure to develop the Zenocrate theme in Act II weakens the play's unity temporarily.\(^3\) However, it is questionable that this break is serious. The overall effect of the unifying device is to destroy monotony, to make the episodic parts of Tamburlaine's ascension secondary to the influence of love on Tamburlaine's motivation. Zenocrate becomes to Tamburlaine an object of great worth to whom the warrior must prove himself. Contrary to Brooks's assertion, however, that Tamburlaine spends the entire play making himself acceptable to Zenocrate,\(^3\) the Conqueror does all he needs to to make himself worthy of the Princess early in the drama; Act II demonstrates Tamburlaine proving himself. The details of the conflict of personalities in the Persian camp and of Tamburlaine's defeating both the weak Mycetes and the strong Cosroe are not merely incidental.

In Act I, Marlowe carefully prepares for the Persian episode. Following his sources, the playwright describes a formidable enemy slightly weakened on one hand by Mycetes, who is more interested in paederasty than in being an effective ruler, but sustained on the other by the sober strength of Cosroe and Theridamas. Tamburlaine, against two to one

\(^3\)Inbid.

odds ("A thousand horsmen? We fiue hundred foote?") reveals his magnanimity by winning Theridamas to his side with words instead of swords. But for Tamburlaine to prove a truly great and worthy conqueror, he must also win with swords. Thus we have Act II.

The significance of the victory in Act II is carried over to Act III. Historically, this conquest may or may not have been Timur's major victory. In Tamburlaine I it certainly is, for here Tamburlaine rises from marauding bandit to worthy challenger for the rule of Africa and a worthy prince for Zenocrate. It is "the sweet fruition of an earthly crowne," the crown of Persia, that forces Tamburlaine against Bajazeth. With this crown Tamburlaine has the power and the motivation to challenge "the Turkish Emperour, / Dread Lord of Affrike, Europe and Asia . . . / The high and highest Monarke of the world. . . ." With the Persian crown Tamburlaine makes Zenocrate Zabina's equal.

By the end of Act III, one is aware of the attitudes and capacities generated by the four men and women. The protagonist, Tamburlaine, loves Zenocrate as an ideal. Nevertheless, for Tamburlaine it is a legitimate love in accordance with his nature. Marlowe has Tamburlaine act like a medieval knight wooing Zenocrate in a courtly fashion perhaps because of his then recent encounter with Castiglione's

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Ibid.
The Courtier. Tamburlaine's military prowess, learning, courtesy, conviction of his own virtu, power of love making are all according to the ideals expressed in the conduct book (he woos by "favors" and "perceives the beauty of the ideal").

Zenocrate, "the incarnation of beauty," is in many ways the product of conventional Renaissance scorn of women. She is fickle to a fiancé and won to another lover through flattery. She may have even pretended modesty in initially protesting her capture. She demonstrates the sharp tongue of a shrew in bickering with Zabina. She is condemned for living immorally with Tamburlaine. According to the precepts, Zenocrate is as virtuous as Marlowe could allow. She is doggedly loyal to Tamburlaine. She is trusting. And John Knox, the Puritan writer mentioned in Chapter I, could appreciate that she keeps her place subservient to Tamburlaine's will. Though with no real goal in mind, as Brooks suggests, Zenocrate does try to live virtuously.

In contrast to the hero and his paramour are their countertypes, Bajazeth and Zabina. Bajazeth does not idealize

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36 Ibid.
37 Levin, The Overreacher, p. 41.
39 Ibid., p. 5.
Zabina. He loves her in an earthy way as mother of three fine boys and as a constant companion. Zabina, in turn, is not altogether subject to her husband. Even though she is devoted to Bajazeth, she is nevertheless somewhat self-assertive and proud.

In Acts IV and V, Marlowe intensifies and vitalizes these characterizations. If this were not so, one could perforce only accept the dictum of some critics that Marlowe's characters in Tamburlaine I other than Tamburlaine are flat.40 But, as Leslie Spence has observed, the last two acts bring for at least Zenocrate an "enlargement of sympathy that gives depth to her character."41 The last two acts bring depth to the personality outlines developed in the first three for all the other important characters as well.

Act IV revives the accusation that Zenocrate has been burdened with, the accusation of the illegitimacy of her relationship with Tamburlaine. The Souldan of Egypt, Zenocrate's father, protests vehemently the supposed concubinage being imposed on his daughter and prepares to go to war, pronouncing grandiloquently that he will fight Tamburlaine "yet in revenge of faire Zenocrate, / Whom he [Tamburlaine]"


detaineth in despight of vs" (11. 1415-16). The Souldan, eager to avenge his wronged daughter, ignores the warnings of his retinue that they are woefully outnumbered. He also rejects a proffered escape from total destruction, underestimating Tamburlaine's resolution. Unwittingly, the Souldan makes his destiny dependent on the power of Zenocrate's influence with Tamburlaine. It is she who must work his salvation from Tamburlaine's fury.

Zenocrate is faced with a precarious dilemma at this crucial point. Heretofore, she has unquestionably acquiesced in the Scythian's will. She has even appeared somewhat cold-hearted not to frown on Tamburlaine's cruel atrocities. Now, she finds it expedient to plead: "Yet would you have some pitie for my sake, / Because it is my countries, and my Fathers" (11. 1567-68). But even though she is seeking to save her own father, her inferior status to Tamburlaine's will is preeminent. Tamburlaine coldly refuses mercy; it would mean breaking his word.

In the meantime, Bajazeth and Zabina are providing good sport for the Scythian and his followers. Zabina, somewhat less self-concerned than before, is incredulous to see her noble husband vilified, even used as a footstool. She angrily challenges Tamburlaine's right to so basely abuse "an Emperor," calling Tamburlaine "unworthy king," usurper of the Persian throne. But her ire is roused here over the
indignities Bajazeth suffers, not hers. Not once does she mention her own desecrated majesty. Perhaps this scene illustrates that Marlowe not only recognized the vice of pride in women, but was also willing to give them credit for one of their few virtues, a sense of justice.

If Zabina is at her best in this scene, Zenocrate is at her worst. When Tamburlaine commands, "Zenocrate, looke better to your slaue" (1. 1512), she replies, "She is my Handmaids slaue, and she shal looke / That these abuses flow not from her tongue / Chide her Anippe" (11. 1513-15). Zenocrate is engaging in fishwifery again, only this time it is tinctured with a bit more malice; Zabina is in no position to defend herself. What is more, Zenocrate augments the indignity by inviting her servant to chide the former empress. In effect, Zenocrate reflects some of her husband's cruelty here. Later, in scene iv, during the banquet, Zenocrate continues in this low key by sardonically asking Tamburlaine why he allows "these slaues" of his to curse him. In Act V, the young princess will recall these acts of deprecation as she views the dead bodies of the Turkish couple and speak sorrowfully of her indecency.

It might be that Marlowe fabricated these vituperative outbreaks of Zenocrate's to further feminize Zenocrate according to the established anti-feminine code. Or it may be that the purpose for them is to aggrandize Tamburlaine's
cruelty. Either way, the reflection is still on Zenocrate. Slander is a product of the natural feminine nature, according to the anti-feminist precept.\textsuperscript{42}

There is also the possibility that Marlowe is subtly criticizing Zabina's courage and self-will by having his heroine provoked at the Turkess' audacity. Renaissance thinking was that "if a woman gave evidence of powers and virtues comparable to those of a man, she was thought of as having the nature of a man, a man's soul in a woman's body."\textsuperscript{43} And "when women displayed courage, resistance, or fortitude not expected of their sex, they were said to have manly qualities or virtues."\textsuperscript{44} But, "with all her limitations the truly feminine woman as she was conceived was preferred to one endowed with . . . energy, independence, courage, virtue, and strength of will."\textsuperscript{45} There is no doubt that Zabina possessed a goodly portion of all these characteristics. It could well be that Marlowe purposely created these qualities in Zabina as a condition for her downfall. Perhaps Marlowe intended that his audience think the better of Zenocrate for rebuffing Zabina in her unfeminine boldness.

\textsuperscript{42}Camden, \textit{Elizabethan Woman}, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{43}Auld, "Woman in the Renaissance," p. 10.
\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 11.
\textsuperscript{45}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 12.
Pride, of course, induced Zabina's anger in the first place, and pride is Tamburlaine's essential grievance against Bajazeth and Zabina. On the face of it, there seems to be a contradiction here, an absurdity. After all, is not Tamburlaine, the hero, quite proud himself? He is, but there is a difference. Tamburlaine is proud of his destiny; Bajazeth and Zabina are proud of who they are. Tamburlaine believes "that he is the Scourge sent by God to chastise mankind."\(^\text{46}\) Tamburlaine's God—and possibly Marlowe's\(^\text{47}\)—is no Christian deity.\(^\text{48}\) His "God is a God of Force," and he is "the servant of a deity who is Power without Justice and who punishes disobedience in man merely because disobedience is rebellion regardless of fictions about right and wrong."\(^\text{49}\)

Bajazeth and Zabina, on the other hand, are offenders Tamburlaine is sent to chastise. Their offense is in vain, haughty adoration of titles. Witness Bajazeth's proud boasting when, earlier in the play, he prepares to battle Tamburlaine:

\begin{quote}
Hie thee my Bassoe fast to Persea,  
Tell him thy Lord the Turkish Emperour,  
Dread Lord of Affrike, Europe and Asia,  
Great King and conqueror of Grecia,  
The Ocean, Terrene, and the cole-blacke sea,  
The high and highest Monarke of the world,  
Wills and commands (for say not I intreat)  
Not once to set his foot in Affrica,
\end{quote}

\(^\text{46}\)Kocher, Christopher Marlowe, p. 79.  
\(^\text{47}\)Ibid., pp. 74-79.  
\(^\text{48}\)Ibid., p. 72.  
\(^\text{49}\)Ibid., pp. 71-81.
Or spread his collours in Grecia, 
Least he incurre the furie of my wrath. 
Tell him, I am content to take a truce, 
Because I heare he beares a valiant mind. 
But if presuming on his silly power, 
He be so mad to manage Armes with me, 
Then stay thou with him, say I bid thee so.

(11. 939-953)

Compare these boasts with some of Bajazeth's complaints after his enslavement:

Ah villaines, dare ye touch my sacred armes. 
(1. 1366)

Great Tamburlaine, great in my ouerthrow, 
Ambitious pride shall make thee fall as low, 
For treading on the back of Bajazeth, 
That should be horsed on fower mightie kings. 
(11. 1519-1522)

Is this a place for mighty Bajazeth? (1. 1526)

Bajazeth is indeed a very proud Emperor, as proud as Zabina has shown herself to be. And like Zabina, Bajazeth is conceited for his mate as well. He bemoans her degradation as she has protested his:

O dreary Engines of my loathed sight, 
That sees my crowne, my honor and my name, 
Thrust vnnder yoke and thraldom of a thiefe. 
Why feed ye still on daies accursed beams, 
And sink not quite into my tortur'd soule? 
You see my wife, my Queene and Emperesse, 
Brought vp and propped by the hand of fame, 
Queene of fifteene contributory Queens, 
Now throwen to roomes of blacke abiection, 
Smear'd with blots of basest drudgery: 
And Villanesse to shame, disdain, and misery: 
Accursed Bajazeth, whose words of ruth, 
That would with pity chear Zabinas heart: 
(11. 2040-2052)

Clearly, the Turkish couple's veneration of titles is substantially a part of their respect and appreciation for
each other. It is not clear why Marlowe finds Bajazeth and Zabina's arrogance so heinous a crime. The playwright certainly lived in a time when self-esteem was common among people in high places. If Marlowe was indeed writing a morality play in Tamburlaine I, as one critic argues, one could say that the offense is against the Christian God and that Tamburlaine is simply the tool by which this Deity works his punishment on two disobedient pagans. But Paul Kocher's argument, that Tamburlaine I is an atheistic play, seems more valid and would eliminate the possibility of its being a morality play.

An intriguing aspect of Marlowe's presentation of his grievance against Bajazeth and Zabina is that, even though objecting to them, he infuses into their story a forceful note of tragedy. Their last lines before they each commit suicide speak such poignant hopelessness and helplessness that one cannot help feeling sympathy for them. Their expression of mutual devotion, even if it is devotion based on pride, is charged with pathos. Observe these lines spoken by Bajazeth as he sends Zabina away for water to satisfy a feigned thirst so that she will not have to witness his last desperate act, suicide:

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50 Bevington, "Mankind" to Marlowe, p. 212: Actually, the entire work is devoted to arguing Tamburlaine as a morality play.

51 Kocher, Christopher Marlowe, p. 72.
O poore Zabina, O my Queen, my Queen,
Fetch me some water for my burning breast,
To coole and comfort me with longer date,
That in the shortned sequel of my life,
I may poure fouorth my soule into thine armes,
With words of loue: Whose moaning entercourse
Hath hetherto bin staid, with wrath and hate
Of our expreslesse band inflictions.
(ll. 2056-2063)

And note Zabina's touching reply:

Sweet Bajazeth, I will prolong thy life,
As long as any blood or sparke of breath
Can quench or coole the torments of my griefe.
(ll. 2064-2066)

Zabina's first mad, anguished words spoken upon returning
to find her husband dead deepen the tragic scene further:

What do mine eies behold, my husband dead
His Skul al in twain, his braines dasht out?
The braines of Bajazeth, my Lord and Soueraigne?
O Bajazeth, my husband and my Lord,
O Bajazet, O Turk, O Emperor, giue him his liquor?
(ll. 2086-2090)

In this melancholy mood, Marlowe completes a love story,
which in Act III appears somewhat prosaic beside that of
Tamburlaine and Zenocrate, with moving tenderness.

Bajazeth and Zabina have offered some diversion from
the question of the fate of Zenocrate's father and fellow
countrymen, but the maiden is not long in getting back to
it. Tamburlaine, noticing that his love is no longer amused
by entertainments of the banquet, asks, "... why art thou
so sad?" (l. 1702). Speaking more confidently than ever
before to her betrothed, Zenocrate replies:
My lord, to see my fathers towne besieg'd,
The countrie wasted where my selfe was borne,
How can it but afflict my verie soule?
If any loue remaine in you my Lord,
Or if my loue vnto your maiesty
May merit fauour at your highnesse handes,
Then raise your siege from faire Damascus walles,
And with my father take a frindly truce.

(11. 1705-1712)

This speech represents a breakthrough to a new maturity for
Zenocrate. Until now, she has blinded herself to her lover's
nature. When others recognized Tamburlaine's cruel heart--
Agydas, Zabina--Zenocrate defended him. But, then, Tambur-
laine's cruelty never personally affected her. Now, however,
the words, "If any loue remaine in you my Lord," have
pertinent significance. Zenocrate has come to doubt if
love for Tamburlaine is of more than negligible importance.

Nevertheless, Zenocrate's love for her captor is
unwavering--"... if my loue vnto your maiesty / May merit
fauor ... " (11. 1709-1710). In the spirit of Griselda,
Zenocrate determines to remain faithful. When Tamburlaine
asks in effect if she would have their progress to power
stopped as the price for her father's love, Zenocrate answers,
"Honor still waight on happy Tamburlaine: / Yet giue me
leave to plead for him my Lord" (11. 1725-1726). This is
not a complete retraction of her plea, but it is enough to
demonstrate her deference to the Scythian's will without
forsaking hope for her father.
What is Tamburlaine's reaction? If the man truly loves this constant woman, he will yield despite his having never revoked a decision before. Tamburlaine does yield eventually but with considerable reluctance. His ultimate concession is to save only the life of the Souldan. Capolin (Zenocrate's Arabian fiancé), the virgin petitioners, and the town all go down before the swords and lances of Tamburlaine's army. But the point is that Tamburlaine, even in consenting just to save the Souldan's life, shows mercy for the first and last time. Even Marlowe, who has been called cruel hearted,\(^52\) finds love's power strong over his incorrigible Machiavellian. Perhaps this bit of romance in Marlowe is a small but significant reply to those who rule out love as a principle in Marlowe's dramatic method.\(^53\)

But, though Tamburlaine's consent to save Zenocrate's father is a unique deference to mercy for the Conqueror, it cannot match the depth of Zenocrate's compassion. Indeed, she manifests the tender heart, the soft nature, ascribed in the short list of virtues allowed Renaissance women.\(^54\) Her compassion moves her to sober maturity and a full understanding of Tamburlaine. Already distraught at seeing the

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\(^52\)Robertson, \textit{Marlowe}, pp. 54-56. Robertson does not accuse Marlowe of having a cruel heart, but his discussion of this accusation is enlightening.


\(^54\)Auld, "Women in the Renaissance," p. 2.
virgins of Damascus hewn down and hung on the walls of the city like slaughtered animals, Zenocrate comes upon the bodies of the suicides, Bajazeth and Zabina, and is roused to a piteous declamation of anguish:

Wretched Zenocrate, that liuest to see, Damascus walles di'd with Egyptian blood, Thy Fathers subjests and thy countrimen: Thy streetes strowed with dissecured iointes of men, And wounded bodies gasping yet for life. But most accurst, to see the Sun-bright troope Of heavenly virgins and unspotted maides, Whose lookes might make the angry God of armes, To breake his sword, and mildly treat of loue, On horsmens Lances to be hoisted vp, And guiltlesly endure a cruell death.

Ah wretched eies, the enemies of my hart, How are ye glutted with these grieuous obiects, And tell my soules mor tales of bleeding ruth?

(11. 2101-2111, 2122-2124)

Disbelieving what her eyes can see, Zenocrate asks her maid-servant to see if there might still be life in Bajazeth and Zabina. A negative reply invokes further lamentation:

Earth cast vp fountaines from thy entralles, And wet thy cheeks for their untimely deatthes.

Ah Tamburlaine, my loue, sweet Tamburlaine, That fights for Scepters and for slippery crownes, Behold the Turk and his great Empresse, Thou that in conduct of thy happy stars, Sleep'st euery night with conquest on thy browes, And yet wouldst shun the wauering turnes of war.

Ah myghty Joue and holy Mahomet, Pardon my Loue, oh pardon his contempt, Of earthly fortune, and respect of pitie And let not conquest ruthlessly pursuwde Be equally against his life incenst, In this great Turk and haplesse Empresesse. And pardon me that was not mou'd with ruthe, To see them liue so long in misery: Ah what chance to thee Zenocrate?

(11. 2129-2130, 2137-2142, 2145-2153)
Zenocrate is no longer merely the devoted lover of Tamburlaine, somewhat naive in her devotion. She is a burdened woman, fearful lest her love reap that fate which he has unmercifully sown for others. She is also a stricken woman, filled with agony for that which is lost—innocent lives and her own innocent spirit. At once she repents her own callousness and laments that of her husband—but not once does she revoke her love for Tamburlaine.

Then she asks a fateful question, a question that the discerning of Marlowe's audiences may have been asking at this point in the play: "Ah what may chance to thee Zenocrate?" Marlowe probably gave some new boy actor his first good lines on the stage by allowing Anippe, Zenocrate's maid and a quite minor character, to give the important answer:

Madam content your self and be resolu'd,
Your Loue hath fortune so at his command,
That she shall stay and turne her wheele no more,
As long as life maintaines his mighty arme,
That fights for honor to adorne your head.

(11. 2154-2158)

Anippe's answer gives us the theme of the play again. Tamburlaine's destiny, to serve as the Scourge of some undefined God, to successfully win for Zenocrate an earthly crown, puts Fortune at his command. Zenocrate's only choice is to remain submissive to Tamburlaine's will, for his will and tenacity are to continue supreme.
Nevertheless, Zenocrate is torn between two loyalties which she cannot easily resolve. She has just received word that her father and her betrothed are preparing to battle Tamburlaine. She expresses explicitly the miserable confusion of her soul in the following speech:

Now shame and duty, loue and feare presents
A thousand sorrowes to my martyred soule:
Whom should I wish the fatall victory,
When my poore pleasures are deuided thus,
And rackt by dutie from my cursed heart:
My father and my first betrothed loue,
Must fight against my life and present loue:
(11. 2165-2171)

What answer can Zenocrate offer for her dilemma? There is no new answer. Regretting her position—"Wherein the change I use condemns my faith, / And makes my deeds infamous through the world"—she reverts to the only source of hope she knows, her trust in the integrity of Tamburlaine:

But as the Gods to end the Troyans toile,
Preuented Turnus to Launia,
And fatally enrich Eneas loue,
So for a finall Issue to my griefes,
To pacifie my countrie and my loue,
Must Tamburlaine by their resistlesse powers,
With vertue of a gentle victorie,
Conclude a league of honor to my hope,
Then as the powers deuine haue preordainde,
With happy safty of my fathers life,
Send like defence of faire Arabia.
(11. 2174-2184)

Perhaps her faith is too strong—Capolin dies. The spectacle of seeing her former betrothed slain before her own eyes crushes her. Speaking of the great wound in her heart caused by seeing Capolin die, the woman cries out, "Behold Zenocrate,
the cursed object / Whose Fortunes neuer mastered her
griefes: / Behold her wounded in conceit for thee, / As
much as thy faire body is for me" (ll. 2195-2198).

Zenocrate, typically feminine according to Renaissance
ideas, demonstrates the tender heart and soft nature of her
sex. The problem of loving Tamburlaine and abiding by his
cruel destiny at the same time is almost too much for her.
But she has not been completely forsaken by Tamburlaine,
either. After all, he has saved her father, and, as the
play draws to a close, he indicates in a final speech that
all of the promises made in the past will be kept. In fact,
in his exuberance over his successful rise to power and in
efforts to please Zenocrate, Tamburlaine becomes a paragon
of generosity. The Souleian is to be awarded kingdoms to
govern; the Turk, his empress, and the Arabian are to be
given honorable, royal burials; and Zenocrate, at long last,
is to become Tamburlaine's legal bride. But, for Tambur-
laine, the proof that he loves Zenocrate comes when he
bestows on her the crown that he has promised her from
early in the play.

So ends a strange play. The roles played by Marlowe's
women should now be fairly clear. Zenocrate, created from
Renaissance theories about women, perhaps unwittingly by
Marlowe, is susceptible to all the vices of her sex. Never-
theless, Marlowe favors her and she is given many of the
qualities of a romance heroine. Most important, Zenocrate serves to aid and inspire Tamburlaine.

Zabina, on the other hand, is of much stronger fiber than Zenocrate, but it is this very strength, which is unladylike, that Marlowe seems to dislike. This woman, of whom there is little mention in the historical sources except that she existed and had an historical name, Despina, very similar to Marlowe's appellation, is doomed to suffer mightily for her pride and "masculine" courage.55

Both women bring love into the play. Zenocrate's love for Tamburlaine is a type consistent with her character; hers is a love that is modest and submissive. Zabina, however, is not at all modest nor is she servile in her love for Bajazeth. She is rather his equal in the marriage partnership, devotedly sharing his pride, affluence, and eventual ruin.

The two love stories do unify the play, contributing another interest besides merely Tamburlaine's series of wars. Zenocrate is involved in the whole play—even Act II, when Tamburlaine is winning the all important Persian crown to bestow on her as a symbol of his worth. The Zabina/Bajazeth episode carries through three acts. Both stories seem to combine to explain some motivations behind Tamburlaine besides his hunger for an earthly crown. He is inspired by Zenocrate, a virtuous woman, an object of worth for whom he

must prove worthy. He is agitated to furious action, on the other hand, by Bajazeth and Zabina. He has no stomach for Zabina's impropriety nor for Bajazeth's pomposity.

Levin sums up the purport of *Tamburlaine I* in these words:

> Despite the many incidental tragedies . . . the First Part is not a tragedy; it is a heroic play of romantic drama, in the manner of Corneille, where the hero stands between the conflicting claims of love and honor. Unlike Aeneas, Tamburlaine chooses both; and unlike Dido—indeed, like Lavinia—Zenocrate has a share in the happy ending.\(^56\)

Marlowe leaves Zenocrate's characterization almost wholly as he has developed it here when he writes *Tamburlaine II*. There is one added virtue, but this serves only to strengthen the portrait he has made of her in *Tamburlaine I*. The love relationship between Tamburlaine and Zenocrate remains the same and is the motivating force in the theme of the second play as it is in the first, but Marlowe takes a different approach to the love story in *Tamburlaine II*. The next chapter will explore this difference and will also continue the study of the influence of anti-feminist ideas throughout the play.

\(^56\)Levin, "The Overreacher," p. 35.
CHAPTER V

TAMBURLAINE II

For all practical purposes, the second part of Tamburlaine should be considered a separate play from the first. It is true that Tamburlaine II is a sequel to Tamburlaine I and that its success was aided by the popularity of its predecessor. It is equally true that Marlowe’s audience was expected to be acquainted with the first play in order to fully enjoy the second. But, as numerous scholars have indicated, Marlowe practically exhausted all of his source material in the writing of part one, and consequently, had just enough left to piece together enough detail to make a decent sequel.¹

One might also say that Marlowe fairly well exhausted his plot and character development in part one, which left little for him to work with in part two. In fact, the only clue one has that Marlowe may have intended to write one play in two parts is that Tamburlaine I is called a tragedy, which it obviously is not.² If either of the plays can be considered tragedy, it is Tamburlaine II, not I. Therefore,

¹Bakeless, Christopher Marlowe, p. 116.
²Levin, The Overreacher, p. 35.
for Marlowe to label both plays tragedies might presuppose that his plan at the outset was to create a single long play divided into two parts. However, there is actually no evidence that "tragedy" is Marlowe's own designation for Tamburlaine I. The term may very well have been applied by Richard Jones, the printer of the 1590 octave edition (which is the earliest edition known about), who had by that date both plays from which to make a classification.

So, in effect, all the evidence available suggests that Part II was not anticipated, at least when Part I was conceived. When, exactly, Marlowe decided that a sequel was needed, is not known; neither is it known definitely why. Most scholars think that the playwright simply bowed to the pressures of public demand after seeing how popular the first play was.

It has previously been mentioned that Marlowe exhausted most of his source material in the writing of Tamburlaine I. When he started work on Tamburlaine II, he was faced with the difficulty of splicing together piecemeal information into a successful drama. As it happened, the problem directly affected Marlowe's use of women in this second play. There were no more interesting individual personalities like Zabina for Marlowe to use, and the Zenocrate references were practically exhausted. The only other women left connected with Tamburlaine's history were a few
obscure groups of maidens and concubines who became victims of the great Scythian's cruelty. Consequently, our playwright was forced to use a source entirely disconnected from the Tĕmĕr Khan history for one female character. He chose Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, and used this with either De Bello Rhodic by Jacobus Fontanus or Belleforest's Cosmographie Universelle.  

From these writings, Marlowe created Olympia.

Although the Olympia story will be considered in detail later in this chapter, the use Marlowe made of her source can be better understood through a brief sketch or the highlights of the episode in which she is the heroine. The episode is broken into two parts and occurs in Act III, scene iv, and Act IV, scene ii. Olympia, who is attempting to escape Tamburlaine's soldiers with her mortally wounded husband, is forced to stop when the Captain falls dying. Weakened by despair after he is dead and fearful lest she and her child be captured, she kills the young boy and is ready to destroy herself when Theridamas appears to stop her. She is carried away against her will by Theridamas, who later attempts to win her as his paramour in much the same manner that Tamburlaine won Zenocrate. But Olympia's sense of honor is much stronger than Theridamas' shallow, glamorous proposals. The Balserian woman tricks Theridamas

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into killing her, and the episode ends with the warrior bemoaning his loss.

Marlowe skillfully weaves together the tale by extracting the child-murder incident from Belleforest or Fortunatus and combining it with the story of Isabella and Rhodomont found in the twenty-ninth chapter of *Orlando*. In Ariosto's version, Isabella saves her virtue by convincing Rhodomont that she has a magic potion which will protect the body from the blows of steel weapons. For proof, she annoints her own throat, commands him to stab her, and is immediately decapitated. Such is Olympia's deception of Theridamas. More will be said later of the significance of the Olympia scene in the play.

The rest of the play is pieced together with borrowings from Edmund Spenser, Paul Ive, Philip Lonicer, the several writers listed in Mexia's and Perondinus's bibliographies, and *The Mulfuzat Timury*. It is from *The Mulfuzat Timury* that one gets a close approximation of the circumstances surrounding the death of Tamburlaine's favorite wife as they are rendered in *Tamburlaine II*. However, Marlowe's version of Tamburlaine's violent reaction to the death

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5 Marlowe probably saw the manuscript of the first several chapters of the *Faerie Queene* when Spenser brought it over to England from Ireland. See Charles Norman, *The Musea*’s *Darling* (New York, 1946), p. 104.

seems to be his own. It is, though, an addition which strengthens an idea Marlowe got from the Timury, that Tamburlaine was much in love with his wife.

The love motif is immediately realized when Tamburlaine and Zenocrate first appear on stage. Tamburlaine, in his usual overexuberance, is extolling the beauty of Zenocrate, idealizing her as the courtly lover is bound to do. Zenocrate, in turn, approaches her love with an expression of wifely concern for his safety: "Sweet Tamburlaine, when wilt thou leave these armes / And save thy sacred person free from scathe / And dangerous chances of the wrathfull war?" (11. 2578-2580). The relationship between the lovers is the same as it is at the end of the first play. Tamburlaine is still in his habit of generous praise for beautiful Zenocrate, and the Empress, meek and mild as becomes a virtuous woman, is still submissive to Tamburlaine's will. She does not dare to bluntly ask Tamburlaine to cease his war-fervor. Instead, she merely requests to know when he will choose to leave the battlefield. Her wish is certainly that he change his ways, but she understands her role and knows better than to make demands of her master.

The very concern that Zenocrate shows for her husband's safety identifies the pure femininity of her nature. It is a natural concern as the anti-feminine writers would see it; the cold and moist humours create timidity and lack of
martial courage in woman. But this is quite acceptable in Zenocrate, for it breeds compassion, a quality which virtuous women have and which men often need. Such timidity and fear of war make for a happy contrast in the Tamburlaine marriage. A valiant, courageous husband has a true helpmate in a compassionate woman. True, some anti-feminists might view this weakness with disdain, dismissing it as just another sign of woman's inferiority. Those, however, who recognize the usefulness of feminine virtue would look on Zenocrate's humbleness, submissiveness, and concern with favor. Tamburlaine is apparently one of these latter enthusiasts.

One sees quickly, however, that the virtue Zenocrate displays is not at all acceptable in men. In the next speech after Zenocrate's plea, Tamburlaine addresses the woman about his sons with criticism for their seeming fear of martial enterprise:

When these my sonnes, more precious in mine eies Than all the wealthy kingdomes I subdued: Plac'd by her side, looke on their mothers face. But yet me thinks their looks are amorous, Not martiall as the sons of Tamburlaine. Water and ayre being simbolisde in one Argue their want of courage and of wit. 

Would make me thinke them Bastards, not my sons, But that I know they issued from thy wombe, That never look'd on man but Tamburlaine.

(11. 2587-2593, 2601-2603)
What is appreciated in women and what is appreciated in men concerning attitudes toward war is spelled out here. Men should be fiery and dry, like the air. There should be no mixture of the cold and moist feminine elements in them. But Tamburlaine thinks that he sees precisely this mixture in his sons: "water and ayre ... simbolisde in one." He believes, consequently, that they lack courage and mental prowess, deplorable vices for future inheritors of Tamburlaine's empire.

However, Zenocrate is quick to assure the warrior that his sons are as brave as he: "My gratious Lord, they haue their mothers looks / but when they list, their conquering fathers hart" (ll. 2604-2605). Zenocrate is here inadvertently revealing the virtue that English writers rarely denied women, motherly concern for her children. She is at once at their defence, hoping to stem their father's ire. Marlowe has gone the limit to bestow on Zenocrate the truly feminine weaknesses and strengths. He is not satisfied to leave her as a virtuous, beautiful, obedient wife, but must also make her an example of worthy motherhood. In Tamburlaine I, he has depicted some of her pure faults, shrewishness with Zabina and fickleness to Arabia. But, then, her feminine strengths offset her feminine weaknesses so that in the complete picture she emerges favorably portrayed. When contrasted with Zabina, it is clear that
Marlowe finds Zenocrate a successful heroine because she assumes the same qualities that the Turkess has without the vice of pride. Since she remembers to keep her place, she fares well.

The addition of motherly love to Zenocrate's list of virtues brings to an end her character development. When the Queen appears next, after one short passage in which she tries again to reconcile father and sons, she is dying. Zenocrate's death scene is both moving and masterfully done. It is here that the complication occurs for Tamburlaine II. Tamburlaine, for the first time in all of his progress and pomp, is faced by a force that he can in no way control. One critic says that "the death of Zenocrate represents the first major defeat of Tamburlaine's will to power." It is Death itself that stymies the Chieftain; he rants and rages, but cannot forestall this awesome Power. Zenocrate, on the other hand, calmly recognizes that she dies as all living things must. In answer to Tamburlaine's question—"tell me, how fares my faire Zenocrate?"—Zenocrate replies:


9Ibid.
I fare my Lord, as other Empresses,
That when this fraile and transitory flesh
Hath suckt the measure of that vitall aire
That feeds the body with his dated health,
Wanes with enforst and necessary change.

(11. 3009-3014)

In Paul Kocher's words, Zenocrine speaks the "doctrine of necessity." She is as submissive to Fate as she has been to Tamburlaine. She says that she fares "as other Empresses," but she could have said kings as well. What she realizes and what Tamburlaine does not is that, where she stands, there are no he's and she's. All humanity has the same end, and Zenocrine, along with these writers who defend women, recognizes this principle.

But Tamburlaine, glutted with his past glories and uninterrupted success, cannot as yet comprehend the one limitation to his power, the fact that he and his love are no more than human. He cannot bear to think that all of his martial victories and the thousands of deaths he has caused will not save Zenocrine. Neither has he yet caught sight of his own inevitable downfall. As Harry Levin points out, "The death of Zenocrine, in the second act, should have been an intimation of his vulnerability." But for the Scythian, it is not. Throughout the rest of

10 Kocher, Christopher Marlowe, p. 93.
11 Camden, Elizabethan Woman, p. 27.
13 Levin, The Overreacher, p. 35.
the play, until he is in sight of his own death, Tamburlaine shakes his sword in the face of Fortune and tries to control the turning of her wheel.

Tamburlaine's torrents of rage immediately before and after Zenocrate dies express more than the anger and frustration that possesses the Conqueror; they magnify the depth of Tamburlaine's love for his wife. After admonishing the heavens and the angels there to direct all of their resources to the entertainment of "divine Zenocrate," Tamburlaine says: "Then let some holy trance convey my thoughts, / Up to the palace of th' imperiall heauen: / That this my life may be as short to me / As are the daies of sweet Zenocrate" (ll. 3002-3004). These lines and Tamburlaine's next speech convey the wish for death, but without Tamburlaine envisioning the real possibility of his own end. They are spoken as protestations of love for his beloved.

Zenocrate sees her husband's sincerity, and, concerned that he might be truly contemplating suicide, pleads with him. She says that "the comfort of [her] future happinesse / And hope to meet [Tamburlaine] in the heauens" would dissolve if her husband insisted on killing himself after her death. She wants to die in peace, with hope, and with a kiss. Truly, she dies a loving wife and mother, and she dies nobly. Her final words tell of her honor as she
advises her sons, "Sweet sons farewell, in death resemble me, / And in your lives your fathers excellancy" (ll. 3043-3044).

But Zenocrate dies with a request on her lips which Tamburlaine, despite his love, cannot find wisdom to obey. She asks:

But let me die my Loue, yet let me die,  
With loue and patience let your true loue die:  
Your grieue and furie hurtes my second life,  
Yet let me kisse my Lord before I die,  
And let me die with kissing of my Lord.  
(ll. 3034-3038)

Tamburlaine has the love, but he has neither patience nor power to quell his fury. This makes for the struggle through the remainder of the play. Upon seeing Zenocrate dead, he bursts out:

What, is she dead? Techelles, draw thy sword,  
And wound the earth, that it may cleaue in twaine,  
And we descend into th' infernall vaults,  
To haile the fatall Sisters by the haire,  
And throw them in the triple mote of Hell,  
For taking hence my faire Zenocrate.  
(ll. 3064-3069)

He audaciously challenges the very gates of the eternal.

He even raises his voice to the soul of the one departed:

Behold me here diuine Zenocrate,  
Raving, impatient, desperate and mad,  
Breaking my steeled lance, with which I burst  
The rusty beames of Janus Temple doores,  
Letting out death and tyrannising war:  
To march with me vnder this bloody flag,  
And if thou pitiest Tamburlaine the great,  
Come downe from heauen and liue with me againe.  
(ll. 3079-3086)
The tirade is too much for even Theridamas, who tries to calm his lord with reasoning:

Ah good my Lord be patient, she is dead
And all this raging cannot make her live,
If words might serve, our voice hath rent the air,
If tears, our eyes have watered all the earth:
If grief, our murdered hearts have strained forth blood.
Nothing prevailes, for she is dead my Lord.

(11. 3087-3092)

Yes, she is dead, but Tamburlaine continues to remonstrate, "yet let me think she lives" (1. 3095). The fire of the Emperor's love is unquenchable. Ellis-Fermor has recognized how well Marlowe captures the magnitude of Tamburlaine's despair. Though speaking specifically of Tamburlaine's excruciatingly painful lament in lines 3093 through 3110, her words apply to the whole of the mighty warrior's anguish: "There is a fine understanding, beyond the reach of the earlier play in these lines. It has departed entirely from the picture of Tamburlaine offered by the western sources."^{14}

Marlowe did understand apparently the irrational power of love. Whether it was firsthand knowledge or knowledge assimilated from his reading, we do not know. Indeed, the western sources give no hint for such a powerful love motif. It is not in Chalcocondylas, certainly. Only from The Mulfuzat Timur is there a suggestion of it available to Marlowe, but even the Mulfuzat account is desperately

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weak compared to what Marlowe does with the idea. Tamburlaine is made to "flout the Gods of Olympus" at the death of Zenocrate because he has lost the one person for whom he has love and respect. He has lost the very source of his ambition. One must recall that the Scythian claims, in Tamburlaine I, to have sought glory for the sake of Zenocrate. Tamburlaine's spiralling rise to power and authority in the first play is predicated upon his wish to give Zenocrate a crown and a position in accordance with his concept of her worth.

The situation is the same in Tamburlaine II. Tamburlaine still looks to Zenocrate for an influence to power. Therefore, he is shattered when she is suddenly taken from him; he cannot accept her death, and he is not ready himself to die, but he must have her influence to go on. Nothing else will move him. Tamburlaine, then, is left with two choices: to go no further in his goal of world conquest or to find an acceptable substitute for the living Zenocrate. The first choice he is unwilling to make and the second seems impossible. So, confused and angered, Tamburlaine searches madly for an answer, and finds what for him appears to be a solution. He decides that what the live Queen did for him, the memory of that Queen must now do. The following passage from Act III describes what his decision entails:
And here the picture of Zenocrate.
To shew her beautie, which the world adm(Y)r'd
Sweet picture of divine Zenocrate,
That hanging here, will draw the Gods from heauen.

Thou shalt be set upon my royall tent.
And when I meet an armie in the field,
Those looks will shed such influence in my campe,
As if Bellona, Goddess of the war
Threw naked swords and sulphur bals of fire,
Upon the heads of all our enemies.
And now my Lords, advance your speares againe,
Sorrow no more my sweet Casane now:
Boyes leaue to mourn, this towne shall ever mourn,
Being burnt to cynders for your mothers death.

With grim finality, Tamburlaine brings an end to his
lament. He shakes off the burden of fear and confusion,
awakens his sons from their stupor of mourning, and, with
his armies drawn up around him, prepares to march on to
further conquest. As a memorial to Zenocrate, he has burned
the town where she died and has built a pillar on which are
words that warn the world never to resurrect that heinous
place where occurred all of his suffering. All he has left
to remind him of his love is her picture, her gold coffin,
and her memory.

The future goes well for the Scythian in his battles.
He remains undefeated throughout. There is only one diffi-
culty with it all; the glamour seems to have disappeared
from Tamburlaine's victories. As one critic remarks, all
subsequent conquests after Tamburlaine leaves Larissa seem
mechanical and absurd. His uncontrolled wild cruelty is sickening: he stabs his own arm to prove his courage, he strikes dead his son, Calyphas, he hitches captive kings as horses to his carriage, he turns out the Turkish concubines to the common soldiers, and he makes a shooting target of the Governor of Babylon. Except in two instances which will be discussed shortly, the killing of Calyphas and the degradation of the concubines, these excesses have no purpose.

Each one of these inane barbarities marks a step in what one scholar calls "the ever-increasing madness of Tamburlaine." His rage at Zenocrate's death has apparently never subsided completely. And he has not yet become aware "of the presence of [that] wistful melancholy," the inevitability of his own death.

Marlowe is, however, aware "of the frailty of man and the transience of his glory." He makes it the theme of the play. It is a measured course that Tamburlaine must follow now at his creator's bidding; there is to be no more spiralling rise to pomp and glory. Zenocrate is gone and nothing, no, not even her memory, can keep the new conquests from tasting of ashes.

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17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
Marlowe subtly tries to keep the audience aware of what is happening to Tamburlaine (he may have missed his not-so-subtle Elizabethan audience here); he is not so gross as to yank Fortune's wheel suddenly from the Conqueror's grip. She is made to slowly regain control. First, Tamburlaine loses his self-possession when Zenocrate dies. This leads him to expend energies on irrelevancies, committing petty cruelties and besieging stubborn but insignificant towns and fortresses. Even the reconquest of Turkey is a weak victory because it is just that, a reconquest, a reenslavement of a foe he should already have had permanently out of the way. There are no mighty Persians, no undefeated Turks, or no rich Egyptians conquered in Tamburlaine II. Toward the end, the Scythian wanes and "Fortune" finally returns to "her olde inconstancie" (1. 3140) by striking him mortally ill. He has not even made adequate provision for the continuation of his empire after he is gone; the historical sources tell that Tamburlaine's sons soon lost all after their father's decease.

Tamburlaine rages almost to his grave, threatening death to Death itself; but, at last, just before he dies, he acknowledges the inevitable, and is suddenly at peace. There has come a new vision, a vision of reuniting with his only beloved, Zenocrate. These lines tell of the Conqueror's new hope: "Now eies, injoy your latest benefite,
And when my soule hath vertue of your sight, / Pierce through the coffin and the sheet of gold, / And glut your longings with a heauen of ioy " (ll. 4617-4620).

K. M. Mahood has observed that Tamburlaine ends victorious by recognizing finally the limit to his power and reconciles himself to death; the noble hero dies worthy of Zenocrate after all.19 Contrary to John Bakeless' opinion, the Scythian does not meet a violent and unhappy end.20 He dies calmly in the hope of being once again with his love. Ellis-Fermor's explication of line 4618 in the passage above explains the triumph Tamburlaine envisions:

The implication in this line is the familiar stoic belief that the body and its senses clog the spirit, which will exercise finer spiritual senses when it is freed from the body. When Tamburlaine's soul is freed and has the power of vision now vested only in the eyes of his body, he will see the spirit of Zenocrate.21

Charles Brooks's evaluation of Tamburlaine's death elucidates even more clearly the happy ending to the play:

Death is for Tamburlaine and Zenocrate, as for Olympia and her husband, a new marriage, just as he [Tamburlaine] goes to be invested 'in a higher Throane, / As much too high for this disdainful earth' (II. V. iii. 4514-5). This marriage-in-death provides for Part II the same sense of triumph as the original marriage does for Part I.22

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21 Marlowe, Tamburlaine, Ellis-Fermor, ed., p. 279.
So, after all, Marlowe turns about to give not the catastrophe that has been expected, but a triumphant dénouement. "If there is any tragedy in the play," remarks Irving Ribner, "it is in the tragedy of man himself, the recognition that all men, no matter how great or noble, must inevitably die." Otherwise, there is no pity and fear to feel for Tamburlaine, who is by his own admission victorious in death. One cannot help being reminded of the triumphant speech of Mortimer as he faces his own death in Edward II: "Why should I greeue at my declining fall? / Farewell faire Queene, wepe not for Mortimer, / That scorns the world, and as a traueller, / Goes to discouer countries yet vnknowne" (Edward II, 11. 2631-2634).

Tamburlaine does not care about "countries yet vnknowne." He is satisfied to return to his "diuin Zenocrate."

In order to show fully the development of Zenocrate's role in Tamburlaine II without digressing, this study has neglected the application of Renaissance concepts about women in other parts of the play. Aside from the use of these theories in Zenocrate's characterization, there are at least four other instances in the play in which the ideas are important.

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Shortly before Zenocrate's death scene, there is one minor passage which relates how a gentleman defers to the frailty of women even when facing a group of them as enemy soldiers on a battlefield. In Act I, scene iv, Theridamas is reporting to Tamburlaine of his recent conquests and tells that, while marching through Africa, he came upon a body of Amazons. What he did at this point indicates to what limits the chivalric code might lead the Renaissance man: "From thence unto Cazates did I march, / Wher Amazonians met me in the field: / With whom (being women) I vouchsaft a league, / And with my power did march to Zansibar" (ll. 2760-2763). Even Amazons, who have the nature of men, are safe from Theridamas because they have the bodies of women. Knowing of Tamburlaine's indiscriminate treatment of his enemies in the past, one wonders how he would have reacted in the same situation.

Another scene in which the ideas about women are important is the scene of Calyphas's murder. In this scene, Tamburlaine drags the boy out from his tent, and, before the eyes of the horrified captains and remaining sons, stabs him. The charges leveled against the wayward lad are "follie, sloth, and damned idleness" (l. 3800). The boy lacked "courage" and "strength of wit," imperative masculine virtues. Tamburlaine expected his sons to be "valiant, proud," and "ambitious" like their father or
other true men. Calyphas had been admonished for his unmanliness by Tamburlaine before and had been warned by his brothers. Now the hapless son reaps a dire punishment. Brooks explains that Calyphas's effeminacy is condemned because this son, by staying home, put himself in the position of housekeeper instead of breadwinner, a place reserved for women, according to the theories.

The Renaissance theories are important to the third section of Tamburlaine II, the Olympia-Theridamas episode of which the plot has been outlined earlier in this chapter. As was pointed out in the preliminary discussion, the story is an addition of Marlowe's drawn from sources outside the historical material on Timur Khan.

There have been interesting postulations made concerning this brief but poignant digression of Marlowe's, most of which leave something to be desired in adequate explanation of its purpose and significance in the play. The problem seems to be that the episode has several parallels in both Tamburlaine I and II while it provides contrasts as well. Scholars have found it troublesome to reconcile the various parallels with one another and make the contrasts fit, too.

It has been noted, for instance, that the Olympia story corresponds in tone and placing to the Agydas episode

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When one considers this parallel, it becomes obvious that the two are similar in another respect; both have the theme of woman's fidelity. But, then, the contrast follows; in the Agydas scene, Zenocrate is accused of infidelity whereas, for Olympia, extreme loyalty is her hallmark of virtue.

Then, one is led by the circumstances of Olympia's suicide to associate the story with that of Zabina. In both cases, the women commit self-destruction out of love for their husbands and in order to escape their tormentors. One dies, however, in shame condemned for her pride; the other dies in triumph honorably.

Brooks emphasizes Theridamas's proposal to Olympia in his analysis of the scene. The critic believes that Theridamas, like Tamburlaine, attempts to woo his captive woman, the counterpart of Zenocrate, with eloquence, protestations of ideal love, and promises of riches. It is observed that Theridamas fails, however, because Olympia is concerned that a second romantic entanglement would dishonor her. Zenocrate is willing to forego such concern.

There has also been the observation that Olympia's story touches on the theme of the play. Mahood says:

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25 Wilson, Marlowe and the Early Shakespeare, p. 36.
27 Ibid., p. 4.
The episode of Olympia and Theridamas is also chosen deliberately for its bearing on the main theme of the play. This improbable story, taken from Ariosto, gives wider significance to the theme that earthly authority, although it enables the wielder to take away life, does not empower him to bestow it or preserve it.\textsuperscript{28}

Mahood has found the crucial relationship between minor episode and theme here. Olympia and Theridamas work out in brief the central idea of \textit{Tamburlaine II}. The futility of Theridamas's efforts to save Olympia equates the hopelessness of Tamburlaine's attempts to stave off death.

This association of theme and episode, and the several parallels and contrasts of episodes, when put together, illuminate the value of the Olympia-Theridamas story in the play. One sees tribulation forced on a virtuous woman pressured to indulge in a vice expected of woman, adultery; the pressuring tactics resemble those used on Zenocrate, and the tribulation parallels that of Zabina. Both Olympia and Zabina choose to die for their husbands rather than continue living in shame. But Olympia's honor is much purer than Zabina's, or, for that matter, Zenocrate's. Her virtue is not tainted with even one infidelity as Zenocrate's is, nor is it blemished with a pride like Zabina's. Olympia is certainly the ideal in virtuous women.

Then, Marlowe artistically fits this tale of feminine honor into a scene that functions in \textit{Tamburlaine II} like

\textsuperscript{28}Mahood, "Marlowe's Heroes," pp. 102-103.
the Agydas episode in Tamburlaine I—both serve to break the monotony of events. The Olympia-Theridamas motif is a common one, the "war motif" as one scholar calls it, and its use is common as a device to break the humdrum of a main story. Of course, the anti-feminist concept that womanly virtue requires fidelity no matter what the consequences is central to the meaning of the device.

One other incident in Tamburlaine II is worked from the motif of feminine honor and utilizes certain other of the Renaissance ideas about women. The Turkish concubines are brought before Tamburlaine, and, though their relationship to the Turkish kings is not much worse than that of Zenocrate before her marriage to the Scythian, they are condemned for their lack of honor. Brooks broaches the question of what is lacking in these women that Tamburlaine's wrath would fall so harshly upon them:

Tamburlaine despises [the Turkish whores] because their conception of honor has been too low, and he punishes them by the most effective means, giving them to the common soldiers. They were proud to be mistresses of kings, but now their pride is purged as they are forced to be common whores.

Now that they are stripped of the refinements and riches of de facto queens, they suddenly become quite concerned with honor. Brooks explains:

29 Bevington, From 'Mankind' to Marlowe, p. 208.
. . . the Turkish concubines appeal to Tamburlaine to 'save our honours' (II. IV. iii. 4062); their sense of honor is not so strict as Zenocrate's or Olympia's but to become the mistresses of common soldiers after having been the mistresses of kings is as much a disgrace to them as a second marriage is to Olympia.31

Here we have Tamburlaine condemning pride or vanity in women once again. The essential difference in the relationship of the concubines to their kings and Zenocrate to Tamburlaine is that the Turkesses prostituted themselves for riches and position while Zenocrate gave herself to Tamburlaine out of love. She was willing to "live and die with Tamburlaine" (Tamb. I, 1. 1009). Her progress to pomp is only incidental to her motive in associating herself with Tamburlaine.

With this study of the Turkish concubines, the explanation of the women in Tamburlaine II is complete. Throughout the play, there have been utilizations of the principles of anti-feminism in illustrating the necessity of woman to be subject and doggedly loyal to her one husband, in portraying feminine cowardice turned to good by a virtuous woman, in depicting unacceptable feminine characteristics in men, and in condemning woman for vanity. There has also been demonstrated the effect of a virtuous woman's love on Tamburlaine and, subordinately, the worth of an

31Ibid., p. 4.
honorable woman who is willing to maintain fidelity to a husband even to the point of death. Pursuing these approaches to the study of both plays has revealed Marlowe's profound concern with women and their roles in a world ruled by men.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

If the analysis of the function of women and attitudes toward women in Tamburlaine I and II has been accurate and thorough, it seems safe to draw several conclusions at this point concerning these subjects. First, it appears evident that Zenocrate, because of Tamburlaine's love for her, is the motivating influence behind Tamburlaine's will to power. It is because Tamburlaine wishes to prove himself worthy of her and wishes to crown her with the glory he thinks she deserves that he is driven forward to even more spectacular success as a nation-conqueror. The loss of Zenocrate seems to predicate the Conqueror's failure to find glory in his successes in Tamburlaine II. At the end of this second play, his sense of victory seems not to come from martial success but from the belief that he will be reunited with Zenocrate after death. It seems clear, however, that Zenocrate has very little power to control Tamburlaine's excessive barbarity and martial cruelty. Only once does he accede to her wishes and spare a foe, her father, from defamation or death.
It also seems true that Zenocrate is drawn as an ideal romantic heroine, virtuous and beautiful, but is given some roundness by being tainted with a few natural feminine vices (according to anti-feminine precepts), infidelity to a lover, shrewishness, and fear of martial endeavor. Her character, the development of which is stretched between both plays, includes modesty, submissiveness, patience, marital devotion and love, physical beauty, motherly tenderness, and mature understanding of the transience of life. These virtuous characteristics overbalance her vices and make her an acceptable and favored woman. Her primary bid to success as heroine in the plays is based upon her lack of pride and unquestionable submission to Tamburlaine.

Zabina, on the other hand, is punished for her pride despite the fact that she is apparently a good mother and loyal wife. Her main fault is that she attempts to share as an equal in her husband's fame and glory. Zabina's husband, incidentally, is also punished for his pride in his title and prerogatives as Emperor of Turkey.

Olympia, who serves many functions in the structure of Tamburlaine II, is a contrasting figure to both Zenocrate and Zabina. She has all of their virtues and none of their vices.
Marlowe brings out, perhaps inadvertently, anti-feminist ideas on incidental occasions throughout both plays. The Damascen virgins, like Zabina, are made to suffer for their vanity, a vice objectionable in men and women alike but especially in women. Some of the objectionable characteristics of inferior women are disparaged in a unique way when a man, Calyphas, is discovered having such traits and is subsequently put to death. The Turkish concubines, whose sense of feminine honor is too weak because of vanity and pride in false position, are punished.

The courtly love tradition contributes some motifs to both of the plays. Tamburlaine's need to prove himself worthy of Zenocrate and his idealization of her are straight from the conduct books, such as Castiglione's *The Courtier.* Theridanas's attitude toward the Amazons that he encounters is an attitude of a man schooled in courtly etiquette.

Above all, it seems clear that the women in the Tamburlaine plays have some degree of roundness; they are somewhat active and lively, and they are graced with certain vices as well as virtues which add to their credibility. Furthermore, they serve the vital function of helping to unify the structure that Marlowe devised for the plays.

The evidence appears to indicate, therefore, that Marlowe's concern with women and attitudes toward women is not a negligible part of his dramatic technique in the
Tamburlaine plays. There is much to suggest, as has been revealed, that Tamburlaine himself cannot be well understood without an understanding of Zenocrate's role as his inspiration and guide to success. Tamburlaine's desire to honor Zenocrate according to her worth explains, for instance, his enthusiasm for winning the Persian crown. Conversely, it is the absence of the object of his love in Tamburlaine II which apparently works in Tamburlaine a sort of despairing madness, discomfiting the Conqueror and somewhat weakening his ability to tell tinsel success from truly glorious victory. It is Zenocrate, too, in the second Tamburlaine, whose own prudence and discernment stand as warning to Tamburlaine, and Marlowe's audience, of the end to come. Because of Zenocrate, one cannot get far into the flighty atmosphere of Tamburlaine's martial success without realizing his Achilles' heel, an unawareness of his own mortality. The intimations of Tamburlaine's mortality are more obvious in Tamburlaine II than in I perhaps because the young Marlowe's own idealistic view of his super-hero, when he wrote the first play, was allowed to supercede a true concept of reality. Marlowe subdues Zenocrate's sober warnings of what can befall the warrior; they are there but are simply unconvincing.

At the same time that Marlowe pursues the relationship of Zenocrate to Tamburlaine, he develops other motifs and
themes that demonstrate his interest in women and attitudes toward them. He seems particularly concerned with the position of women in the marriage bond; his theme here is strictly according to anti-feminist precepts. Zenocrate and Olympia are models of virtue because they play well their roles as constant wives. What is more, each of these women demonstrates a particular aspect of the virtue of truly faithful women. Zenocrate represents unwavering obedience and submission to the husband's will. Olympia illustrates that the road a truly constant woman must follow may lead even unto death.

Marlowe probes deeply into the idea of the truly virtuous woman. He is no less concerned with this idea in the first play than he is in the second. There is considerable emphasis in Tamburlaine I on Zabina's self-esteem and vanity, which equals Bajazeth's pride. Marlowe has Zabina punished, even though she is a loyal wife, because she transgresses the anti-feminine maxim that women are not to put themselves forward as equals with their husbands nor demonstrate "manly" qualities. Marlowe, at the same time, is consistent in his motif that constancy and devotion are wifely virtues by treating sympathetically Zabina's suicide, which she commits for her husband's sake.

Marlowe's interest in the virtuous woman and constant wife is evident in every digression, in both plays, from
the story of Tamburlaine's martial endeavors. The Agydas episode of *Tamburlaine* I involves the old merchant's concern for Zenocrate's reputation as a loyal fiancée. Then, of course, the Zabina episode concerns the punishment meted out to a presumptuous woman, and the Olympia incident describes the high sense of honor in a truly loyal wife. Attitudes toward women are expressed at every minor turn from the main story, for instance, when Theridamas defers punishment to a band of enemy Amazons only because they are women and when Tamburlaine punishes the Damascen virgins in one play as well as the Turkish concubines in the other only because they are self-asserting and vain.

In summation, there seems to be little doubt that the Tamburlaine plays can be better understood with a knowledge of Marlowe's use of women and attitudes toward them. His hero is motivated and influenced by a woman. The sub-themes and motifs of both plays are dominated by ideas on women. Marlowe's aim in the plays, in one respect, seems to be to incorporate a variation of the anti-feminine notion that women are necessary evils; there seems also to be some emphasis on punishment of evil in women.

There is no intention here to belittle the importance of other well-known aspects of Marlowe's style and achievements in the *Tamburlaines*. One can appreciate the influence of Zenocrate on Tamburlaine and still recognize the Conqueror's
overreaching ambition, bombastic deliberation, and brutal self-assertion. Marlowe's concern with proper conduct of women has little to do with the sacrilegious tenor of much of the plays. The beautiful blank verse and striking prose of the plays are still there; much of the poetry in both plays is spoken to women and Zabina speaks the only prose passages in Tamburlaine I.

It is with the themes of the plays that this study has found a knowledge of Marlowe's use of women most pertinent. Success achieved for love, cruelty exploited to punish feminine weakness, honor and loyalty in women extolled as noble qualities, devotion of mates carried to the portals of death—these are the themes and motifs that Marlowe seems most concerned with in the Tamburlaine plays.
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