Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* plays and Machiavelli´s *The Prince:* A Study in Renaissance Intertextuality

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Tämä pro gradu-tutkielma perustuu kolmeen keskeiseen tekstiin. Lähteinä ovat Niccolò Machiavellin *Ruhtinas* sekä Christopher Marlowen *Tamburlaine*-näytelmät (osat I ja II). Tutkimuksen aiheena on tarkastella Marlowen renessanssinäytelmiä Machiavellin näkemysten kautta ja etsiä yhtäläisyyksiä niiden väliltä.. Kyseiset yhtäläisyydet viittaavat siihen, että Marlowe on mahdollisesti luonut näytelmiensä protagonistin, Tamburlainen, Machiavellin kirjan ideoiden mukaisesti. Machiavellin teoksessa *Ruhtinas annetaan* ohjeita siitä, miten ihanneprinssin tulee käyttäytyä.

Tutkielmassa käsitellään sekä aiheen historialliset taustat että protagonisti Tamburlainen henkilöhistoria. Sen jälkeen selvitetään ruhtinaan hallitsemiskulttuuria. Sekä *Ruhtinaan* että *Tamburlainen* keskeisiä teemoja ovat julmuus ja viha. Niiden merkitystä luonnollisesti myös tutkitaan.

Tamburlainella on selviä yhtäläisyyksiä kuuluisien muinaisten ja keskiaikaisten prinssien kanssa. Eräs tärkeimmistä on Cesare Borgia. Tutkielmassa pohditaan näiden yhtäläisyyksien merkitystä. Muita tärkeitä tutkimusalueita ovat Tamburlainen sotilaalliset taidot sekä prinssin viholliset, virheet sekä vaikeudet.

Tamburlaine on erittäin julma hallitsija, mutta selvitän myös hänen maltillisia piirteitään. Viimeisenä tutkimusaiheena on Kohtalon rooli *Ruhtinaassa* ja *Tamburlainessa*.

Tutkimustuloksena voidaan pitää sitä, että Marlowe mitä ilmeisimmin sekä tunsi että käytti apunaan Machiavellin teosta luodessaan näytelmiensä protagonistiaan. Näytelmän ensimmäinen osa julkaistiin 1587. Silloin kuningatar Elisabetin Englanti oli sodassa Espanjaa vastaan. Luomalla äärimmäisen vahvan fiktiivisen hallitsijan Marlowe luultavasti kritisoi hallitsijattaren puutteellisia hallitsemis- ja johtamistaitoja. Marlowen uskotaan toimineen silloin Englannin hallituksen palkkaamana vakoojana.

Asiasanat: ihanneprinssi, hallitsemiskulttuuri, julmuus, viha, Cesare Borgia, sodan taide, vaikeudet, Kohtalo

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1. Introduction: History and Intertextuality

This thesis deals with Christopher Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* plays (Part One and Two) and their relationship to Niccolò Machiavelli´s *The Prince (Il principe).* Marlowe´s Elizabethan plays, published in 1587 and 1588, are not necessarily easy to understand for the reader at the dawn of the Twenty-first Century. Accordingly, it seems to me that it may be helpful to use Machiavelli´s *The Prince* as a tool for opening up a reading and understanding of Marlowe, for as the present thesis attempts to show, there are a large number of parallels between the Italian´s guide to Renaissance politics (published in 1517) and Marlowe´s innovatory plays. And even though there is no actual proof of the fact that Marlowe consciously used *The Prince* when, for instance, he created the character of Tamburlaine (the protagonist of the plays mentioned above), the results of the analysis that I will be presenting make it look increasingly as if Marlowe´s dramatic imagination was, in some respects, directly indebted to Machiavelli. For Machiavelli developed what many in the Renaissance acknowledged to be guidelines for the pragmatically ´ideal´ prince, and many of the details of Tamburlaine´s life (as rendered – and to some degree constructed– by Marlowe), offer a striking fulfilment of Machiavelli´s prescriptions. Beyond this, a knowledge of Machiavelli´s book enriches a contemporary reading of Marlowe, for, irrespective of any direct authorial knowledge of *The Prince,* the intertextual relations between this work and the *Tamburlaine* plays open the doors to a more complex understanding of the playwright´s ideas.

My analysis of *Tamburlaine* and *The Prince* is structured as follows: The first large section surveys the historical background: featuring the biography of Tamerlane, the historical figure on whom the play is based, as well as supplying information on the *Tamburlaine* plays and Machiavelli in England. This is followed by an examination of the protagonist´s background in terms of nationality, language, names and his outward appearance. "What and How to Govern" deals with Machiavelli´s prescriptions on principalities, how to govern

in general and how new princes in particular should govern, requirements for the job, a prince´s worthiness and the fact that he has to allow violence. The second large section - "Cruelty, the Art of War and Opposition" - is concerned with cruelty, hatred, Tamburlaine´s relationship to other famous cruel men in history such as Julius Caesar, Maximinus, Cesare Borgia, Agathocles, and Oliverotto. This is followed by research on the soldier Tamburlaine, coupled (towards the end of the section) with Machiavelli´s views on how to handle enemies, errors and difficulties encountered. A consideration of moderation and an analysis of fortune´s influence form the core of the last section before my conclusion, which investigates a number of Elizabethan perspectives relating to the reading of *Tamburlaine* in conjunction with *The Prince* with the help of Machiavelli. I will try to project Marlowe´s plays from the figurative to the literal level (using Miller´s metaphysical hierarchy as it is recounted in Selden 1993:157). This means that I will use the dramas to not only establish an intertextual connection to Machiavelli´s *Prince,* but also to the political developments of the time the *Tamburlaine* plays were published. When trying to describe my approach against the background of Kristeva´s ideas (see Selden 1993), then we are dealing with semiotic systems first. *The Prince,* when looked at isolatedly, is a semiotic system, for there is no connection with the subject of this thesis yet, for there is no intertextuality. When you, however, make use of *The Prince* as a helpful book for a contemporary reading of Marlowe, you establish a wider dimension of meaning, which Kristeva calls the symbolic level, for now we have a clear distinction what intertextual relationships there exist between *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine.* To find a connection between *Tamburlaine, The Prince* and the political reality of Elizabethan England, we could consider our symbolic system of *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine* a semiotic system which has to be connected with this reality first. And hence, by "reading literature as philosophy" (Selden 1993:151) - political philosophy in this case – I will come up with a new interpretation of the play which establishes a connection between Marlowe´s world and Elizabethan politics. In this context it may be worth bearing in mind Barthes´ definition of literature as a "message of the signification of things"

(Selden 1993:130f.). Signification produces meaning, and this is valid for Marlowe as well, who – at least this is one way of interpreting it - has produced a piece of political criticism, which resonates suggestively against the background of the Machiavellian text.

Furthermore, Machiavelli´s *The Prince* is not only a political, but also a historical work. Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* is based on a historical person; and history is thus an important element in the present thesis. There are, however, many problems considering the use of history in these texts for the simple reason that "history" itself is something of an open term in contemporary debate. Hayden White, for instance, has noted that history embodies most of the problems implicit in fictional narrative. One problem he observes among historians concerns differences in opinion, especially in regard to what has happened, how it happened, and the kind of knowledge that is in question (White 1978:1-3). Furthermore, as White points out, "most historical sequences can be emplotted in a number of different ways, so as to provide different interpretations of those events and to endow them with different meanings" (White 1978:85). According to Roland Barthes, different texts encourage the recipient to come up with his own meanings (Selden 1993:134). One has thus to be conscious of the fact that there are different views on how to proceed, regardless of how well one tries to justify one´s doings. White (1978:3) suggests one way of going about texts such as *The Prince.* The conventional technique for assessing the validity of prose discourses was to check them, first, for their fidelity to the facts of the subject being discussed (as far as they can be ascertained) and, then, for their adherence to the criteria of logical consistency.

By looking at both *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine,* I am going to establish a number of facts that are exclusively relevant for my analysis. These facts are either of the nature that they clearly hint at a connection between *Tamburlaine* and *The Prince,* or *vice versa*. Hayden White makes the useful point that "the discourse is intended to constitute the ground whereon to decide what shall count

as a fact in the matters under consideration and to determine what mode of comprehension is best suited to the understanding of the facts thus constituted" (White 1978:3). For our case this means that Machiavelli as well as Marlowe provides us with the necessary material. The aim of reading Marlowe using Machiavelli is to provide the reader with a new perspective that enriches his or her understanding. *The Prince* is a helpful book for understanding Marlowe.

The historian tries to show a new perspective of the world, which is one way among many of disclosing certain aspects of the field studied. However, what constitutes the facts themselves is the problem that the historian must try to solve, as White demands (1978:46f.). This is true as well for Machiavelli as well as for Marlowe. Machiavelli bases his book on accounts of the deeds of princes throughout the ancient and medieval history and by choosing this approach, he eliminates the facts that do not belong to this special field. Marlowe´s case is also about establishing his own circle of facts, but he does not entirely use historical facts, even though he relies on sources concerning the Turkic emperor Tamerlane. There are numerous parallels to Machiavelli´s *The Prince* in *Tamburlaine,* and it looks as if Marlowe may indeed have used Machiavelli´s historical account as a source of his fiction, even though (as I have already pointed out) there is no *concrete* proof for this hypothesis. Marlowe interprets the different factual levels in his own way, and we can admire the result in the *Tamburlaine* plays. According to White´s point of view, theorists of historiography agree that all historical narratives contain an irreducible and inexpungeable element of interpretation. Thus, the historian "must ´interpret´ his data by excluding certain facts from his account as irrelevant to his narrative purpose" (White 1978:51).

Calling Marlowe a historian here may seem like a surprising use of terminology, but Oakeshott explains this point further, for he thinks that ´to write history is the only way of making it´ (see Carr 1987:22). When we now consider history as a text, as Hayden White does, (see Jenkins 1995:32-42), then we can

see Marlowe as the maker of his own history. He uses history to make his own (however, we have to bear in mind that it is fictional). White takes up Kant´s point that one is free to appreciate history in the way one chooses. This is not only what Marlowe does, but it also is valid for Machiavelli, for he confines his view to certain aspects of history. Both of them have structured their texts in a certain way. At this moment it is useful to look at Elisabeth Fox-Genovese´s theorization of the subject: She thinks that both in the past and in the interpretation of the past, history follows a certain structure, according to which some relations and events are more significant than others. Structure governed the writing and reading of texts (see Veeser 1984: 213-24). The structure Machiavelli uses in *The Prince* is to single out the most significant systems and events concerning an ideal emperor. What Marlowe seems to do in *Tamburlaine* is to apply these systems and events to his protagonist. The present analysis accordingly explores the richness implicit in the intertextual reading of these Renaissance works and, in the process, accumulates evidence which increasingly point towards the suggestion that the Machiavellian elements in Marlowe are more than a mere coincidence.

Textual Note

For this thesis I have used the following editions: Christopher Marlowe, *The Complete Plays.* Ed. J.B. Steane, London: Penguin 1969; Niccolò Machiavelli. *The Prince.* Ed. Tom Griffith, translated by C.E. Detmold, Ware: Wordsworth, 1997. All references to *Tamburlaine* and *The Prince* refer to these editions.

2. Background

This section contains information on the historical as well as Tamburlaine´s own background. Additionally, it deals with Machiavelli´s pronouncements on the question of what and how to govern.

2.1. Historical Background

Christopher Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* dramas are fictions, and they are often considered to be plays of very high quality. As Donald Peet has put it: "Literary historians generally agree" that Christopher Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* plays contained "the most exciting verse which had ever been declaimed from an English stage. They agree, moreover, that the influence of Marlowe´s poetic style upon that of his fellow playwrights was enormous" (Peet 1959:137). This imaginative *richesse,* in all its exoticism, did not come from nowhere. The political philosopher Edward Said (1978:63) has observed that "between the Middle Ages and the eighteenth century such major authors as ... Marlowe ... drew on the Orient´s riches for their productions, in ways that sharpened the outlines of imagery, ideas, and figures populating it." This is the case for *Tamburlaine,* for it deals with a protagonist, based on the medieval Turkic conqueror Tamerlane, and his rise to power. Marlowe chose the figure of Tamerlane quite cleverly because the historical person of Tamerlane actually was an exceptional emperor in many respects. Read together with the elements of Machiavelli´s ideal picture of the head of a principality as presented in *The Prince* (with special reference to fortune and the person of Cesare Borgia), the oriental emperor in *Tamburlaine* seems even more larger than life. His rise from rags to riches and his relatively easy existence, together with his successful expansion of his empire, make him an extraordinary person. The oriental setting, presenting a world relatively little known to most of Marlowe´s audience in Europe, made the character of Tamburlaine even more outstanding.

Despite his due acknowledgements of the ambiguities in its treatment of the colonial theme, Heaney (1995:21) admires the "sheer rhetorical power" of *Tamburlaine,* noticing that, in the two plays

> the reader or audience is in thrall to the poetic equivalent of a dynamo-hum, a kind of potent undermusic ... It has equally to do with the stamina of his taunting intelligence, since what keeps the metre at full stretch is not only the energy of the beat but an extra propulsion that comes from what Yeats once called ´a powerful and passionate syntax´ (1995:29).

This strength in the syntax reflects the massive power of the play´s protagonist and pays tribute to him. The idea of transporting Tamburlaine´s strength by the means of making the drama´s language strong is the work of a genius, for now the recipient is not merely being *told* how strong Tamburlaine is either by Tamburlaine himself or the other characters: he or she is able to feel it by just concentrating on the tone of the language.

The figure of Tamburlaine, the Scythian shepherd, is based (as I have already mentioned) on a historical person. This man was called Tamerlane and he was a Turkic emperor. The name Tamerlane was derived from the Persian *Timur-i lang* ("Temur the Lame") by Europeans during the 16th century. For, as Wehling has shown, "Timur the invincible lived up to his name Timur, ´iron´. Crippled in a robbery he became Timor Lenk (Timur the Lame) whence Tamburlaine. The name Tamburlaine certainly fits blank verse better than the spondaic Timor" (Wehling 1958:244f.). Historically, this figure is known to have lived from 1336 to 1405 and, of course, is still remembered for his conquests. During his life he took more territory than any other emperor, except maybe for Alexander the Great. Tamerlane´s conquests certainly rivalled those of Genghis Khan both in their territorial scope and in the carnage they inflicted on communities throughout Asia (The Applied History Research Group/ University of Calgary 2000). His armies crossed Eurasia from Delhi to Moscow, from Anatolia to

Central Asia. Tamerlane managed to establish a powerful empire and was the last of the great nomadic leaders (Silk Road Foundation 1997-2000).

There are various ancient sources on Tamerlane, for instance by the Spaniard Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo, the Persian Ali Sharaf ad-Din and the Arab Ahmad ibn Arabshah. Tamerlane claimed direct descent from Genghis Khan through the house of Chagatai. This, however, was not the case. Nevertheless, he regarded the great warrior as his spiritual ancestor and later married two of Genghis' descendants (The Applied History Research Group/University of Calgary 2000). His birthplace was Kesh, about fifty miles south of Samarkand, and he was the son of a lesser chief of the Barlas tribe. According to Sharaf ad-Din, he received arrow wounds while stealing sheep as a young man. These wounds left him with a lame right leg and a stiff right arm for the rest of his life.

As stated above, the protagonist in *Tamburlaine* is of a different social origin, whereas the geographical origin is the same as that occupied by the historical Tamerlane: Tamburlaine, for instance, speaks of "my native city Samarcanda" (*Tamburlaine* II, IV, iii, 107). The sheep-stealing incident probably helps to explain why Marlowe came up with the idea of making his main character into a shepherd. The low social origin of the fictional character makes his rise to the throne of Persia even more glorious. "In this first historical play Marlowe incorporated an idea of history which was largely classical. His models were probably the historical writings of antiquity, and perhaps chiefly those of Polybius whom he may well have read at Cambridge" (Ribner 1953:252). And in addition, as Irving Ribner has made clear in his classic study of the subject:

> Marlowe found his chief source for *Tamburlaine* in Thomas Fortescue's *The Forest,* a translation of *Silva de Varia Lection* of Pedro Mexia, but he used other sources as well, perhaps most notably George Whetstone's *The English Mirror* and the *Magni Tamerlanis Scytharium Imperatoris Vita* of Petrus Perondinus. The story of the Scythian conqueror was widely known in Elizabethan

> England, and it may be found in many places. By the time it reached Marlowe, the character of Tamburlaine had thus pretty well been moulded by literary and historical tradition. This tradition had two facets. On the one hand, Tamburlaine had been glorified in the writings of Italian humanists, beginning with Poggio Bracciolini in his *De varietate fortunae libri quattuor* ... as the perfect prince, the symbol of Renaissance *virtù.* Although a pagan himself, Tamburlaine was glorified as the defender of Christian Europe against the Turks.
>
> (Ribner 1953:256)

Marlowe did not stick completely to his historical sources on the Mongolian cavalry leader, which in some cases provide contrary information, but constructed his character in the way he wanted him to be (Kopetsch 1990:89). Izard (1943:411) states that it has been usually assumed Marlowe used *The Forest* as his principal source for the plot, supplementing it with details drawn from wide reading. And, as the same commentator has printed out:

> In addition to most of the plot that Marlowe took from any source he could also have found in *The English Myrror* his theme and his central character "outlined with considerable clarity. Whetstone has of Tamburlaine: ´Notwithstanding the pouertye of his parents: euen from his infancy he had a reaching & an imaginatiue minde, the strength and comelinesse of his body, aunswered the hautines of his hart.´ He was dominated by ´a ruling desire.´ ... He is already in *The English Myrror ´Tamberlayne* ye Great, surnamed *flagellum dei*... worthy the name of vengeance.´ What more in the way in the way of impetus could Marlowe ask?
>
> (Izard 1943:414f.)

Izard, similarly, has noted that "*The English Myrror* may have provided Marlowe with the original suggestion that Tamburlaine was a worthy subject for a play"(Izard 1943:413). Marlowe, however, also appears to have gleamed much for the creation of his Tamburlaine character by using Machiavelli´s *The Prince* as a guidebook on what an ideal prince should be like and to have used many features from it, without sticking to this work too closely. And it is on this aspect of his relation to sources that I would like to concentrate for the rest of the

present thesis: focusing on how closely connected *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine* indeed are.

The Prince had been available in a printed Italian version since 1532 and in manuscript before that. In England, however, printed Italian versions of Machiavelli´s works did not start to circulate until the 1580s (initially in an unlicensed form). Copies of *The Prince* were available from 1584 onwards, although printed translations of Machiavelli into English were not available until 1640 (partly due to a governmental ban on Machiavelli in England). The works banned were *The Prince* and the *Discourses,* both of which according to the government contained too much controversial material, mainly with respect to religious questions. This is why the government refused to license the printing of English editions of the works mentioned above and successfully delayed this for approximately sixty years. French translations, however, had been available since 1553 (Raab 1964: 30-53). It was obvious that Englishmen were reading Machiavelli, and that they had been doing so from the time of his death. Mazzeo comes to a similar conclusion: "In any case it is clear ... that in informed circles, at least, a more accurate knowledge of Machiavelli was available, whatever his popular reputation may have been..." (Mazzeo 1964:119). If what Machiavelli had said about Italian affairs had not been relevant to England, Tudor Englishmen would not have continued to read him – and all the evidence indicates that they did continue to read him, in ever-increasing numbers (Raab 1964:54).

Thus it seems that Machiavelli was indeed quite widely known in England during the latter end of the Sixteenth Century. According to Raab, Machiavelli´s books caused very different reactions among his recipients. In Elizabethan times, the reactions were similar to those which had come about in the pre-Elizabethan period, such as horror, lack of interest, and, above all, a curious dualism (which meant that on the one hand, one approved of Machiavelli´s political points: whereas, on the other hand, one maintained a theological view of the world).

Christopher Marlowe, according to Edward Meyer, clearly had a good knowledge of Machiavelli´s *The Prince,* even though, as we have seen, the first English version of the book only became available in 1640. Scholars, such as Marlowe himself, and people with knowledge of French and Latin could have access to French (1553) and Latin (many editions, starting 1560) translations (Meyer 1897:3). Edward Meyer studied the impact Machiavelli had on English drama in general, and also specifically refers to Marlowe´s works. The two plays he deals with in more detail are *The Jew of Malta* and *Tamburlaine.* As far as Marlowe is concerned, the first Machiavellian ideas are mentioned in *The Jew of Malta* in approximately 1590 (Meyer 1897:30). Meyer chose these plays because in them we get almost direct access to the Machiavellian material. Meyer (1897) calls Tamburlaine, together with Faustus and Barabas (who are also characters (re-)-created by Marlowe) "[t]he most colossal figures to be met with in the Elizabethan drama". Machiavelli, he continues, "breathed the very soul of his existence" into them – "a wild craving for infinite power" (Meyer 1897:33). Meyer makes some vital observations in his work *Machiavelli and the Elizabethan Drama*. Accordingly, for the moment, I will follow him closely.

Marlowe, as far as Meyer is concerned, had studied Machiavelli very extensively, which was a "notable exception" among the Elizabethan dramatists. Meyer is absolutely certain, that if *The Prince* had never been written, Tamburlaine as well as the other characters mentioned above "would not have been drawn with such gigantic strokes" (Meyer 1897:33f.). As he continues, the multiple proximities between Machiavelli´s *The Prince* and Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* are examined in detail. First, Tamburlaine´s opponents are analysed: Mycetes, the weak king of Persia, looks like a remodelling of the prince in a hereditary principality (II, 6), who, according to Machiavelli, can only be deprived of the crown if he either makes himself hated or if some superior force deprives him of his throne. From the outside, Turks and Tatars fight him, and his being considered a tyrant by his own subjects (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i) arouses suspicion.

Capturing a throne by force, which indeed might involve a lot of cruelty, is not unnatural in Machiavelli´s opinion and is even admirable, if the new prince is able to maintain his position. It is however to be despised if someone, having captured the throne, loses it soon afterwards. This will happen either to those who are not strong enough, or to those who bring some powerful foreigner into their principality. The prince should be eloquent, even though he does not necessarily, however, possess the required amount of force and is dependent on luck (II, 6). For Meyer, Cosroe, Mycetes´ witty brother, belongs to this class. He is known at Mycetes´ court for his rhetorical skills; he makes use of them and as a result, his fellow vassals submit Mycetes´ crown to him; he calls only one of them "my lord". Without enough confidence in himself he entrusts himself to Tamburlaine´s "approved Fortunes" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, iii) and believes that he has found a modest ally for the future; a situation which is directly followed by the death ofCosroe at the hand of Tamburlaine, the giant (*Tamburlaine* I, II, vi).

Meyer continues that, in Marlowe, only those leaders are successful who, according to Machiavelli, have the ability to constantly exercise power over their subjects; and they are given the opportunity to do this by fortune. Tamburlaine is an exact copy of this ideal of a man striving for the highest power. Born a shepherd, he correctly grasps that "I am a lord, for so my deeds shall prove." He hates "to play the orator". His subjects are "friends and followers" to him. Even an opponent respectfully calls him "His fortunes maister" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i). Even though Tamburlaine´s thinking patterns can be characterized as being barbarous, he is undoubtedly clever. Meyer (1897:35) compares Tamburlaine´s efforts to charm the imprisoned Zenocrate with Shakespeare´s Richard III´s efforts to charm Anna, after the king has destroyed her husband.

Everything Machiavelli recommends a tyrant in order to stabilize his position and maintain his power is carried out by Tamburlaine in the following stages of the drama: He does away with those who envy him, he is a strict ruler, however, cleverness and magnanimity are also features of his actions; he is quick-witted

and continues his military campaigns. He peacefully dies in bed, leaving a stable empire for his sons to inherit. Meyer (1897:36) calls this the highest triumph of a Machivellian *parvenu*. Tamburlaine gives his eldest son the advice that if he were not full of power, he would be deprived of his new kingdom very soon.
Meyer´s observations are important for this thesis, since they are one of the very few examples of research done on the very same subject. He succeeds in pointing out crucial resemblances between Machiavelli´s *The Prince* and Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* dramas. It has to be stated, though, that his analysis is brief and is not entirely confined to *Tamburlaine,* since he also focuses on Faustus and Barabas. I nevertheless agree with his results and see them as useful material to strengthen my argumentation, for my own more detailed observations and results point clearly in the same direction.

By making use of Machiavellian ideas in his *Tamburlaine* plays, Marlowe accentuated cruelty as one of Tamburlaine´s central features. As Camden puts it, the type of the ´choleric man´ was well known to all classes of people, and "this is the type which Marlowe chose for his first powerful drama." Tamburlaine was an "admirable portrait of a man in his own humour". Marlowe had done full justice to the physiological and psychological authorities when creating him (Camden, Jr. 1929:435). Starting from the idea of the simple choleric man, he extended this idea into the character of a highly ambitious choleric shepherd who eventually becomes a great emperor. Ribner remarks that Tamburlaine was regarded as "a scourge of God" who punishes both evil rulers for their tyranny and wicked people for their sins (Ribner 1953:256). Peet (1959:154) makes the point that Marlowe was largely unconcerned with detailed character delineation and that the dramatist´s main aim was to arouse continual astonishment at the awe-inspiring figure of his protagonist. One more striking thing was that there seemingly were no obstacles for the protagonist (Kopetsch 1990:89). Tamerlane, the historical person, was clearly born into a higher social position, which made it less difficult for him to actually become an emperor. One of course has to all the time bear in mind that Tamerlane was a real person and Tamburlaine is a

fictional character. Moreover, it is a fictional character in a specific historical setting. As Izard has shown, *Tamburlaine,* Part I, seems to have been completed and performed for the first time during the winter of 1587/8 (Izard 1943:413). And at that time, there was something new to these new plays by Marlowe, for ,as Birringer reminds us, the recipients´ reactions were strong: "[T]he audience of the original *Tamburlaine* plays was left breathless because the hero´s portrait is Herculean and thus full of characteristics that must evoke admiration" (Birringer 1984:230-6). The extraordinary career of a successfully overreaching hero was being portrayed on stage.

What we learn from the various biographies is that, apparently, Tamerlane was strongly built and "well-proportioned, with a large head and broad forehead. His complexion was pale and ruddy, his beard long and his voice full and resonant". Arabshah describes the Tamerlane of almost seventy years, a master politician and military strategist, as "steadfast in mind and robust in body, brave and fearless, firm as a rock. ... He loved bold and valiant soldiers, tore men to pieces like lions, and overturned mountains. He was faultless in strategy, constant in fortune ... and truthful in business" (The Silk Road Foundation 1997-2000). The Applied History Research Group of the University of Calgary (2000) calls him a "superb, ruthless and highly ambitious soldier". Tamerlane possessed not only this military talent: one of his most prominent features was charismatic courage, which won him many followers early in his life. By 1371, he had risen into the position of Chagatai leader through both diplomacy and coercion. His major conquests took place between the years 1381 and 1405. In 1402, Tamerlane succeeded in capturing one of his most dangerous enemies, the Ottoman ruler Bajazet (ibid.). In the first part of the *Tamburlaine* dramas, we find a corresponding character called "Bajazeth, Emperor of the Turks" in the *dramatis personae.* This character is captured by Tamburlaine, held hostage and finally commits suicide while he is still imprisoned (*Tamburlaine* I, V, ii).

Tamerlane was famous for his multicultural army, a huge conglomerate of different peoples and religions. Muslims as well as Christians fought for him, Turks, Tajiks, Arabs, Georgians as well as Indians. His conquests were famous not only for their extent and their success, but also for their ferocity and massacres. His army operated on a constant basis, and Tamerlane himself was full of ambition that could not be stopped even at a high age. Apart from his conquests, Tamerlane was greatly interested in trade and planned to re-establish the Silk Road and make it the monopoly link between Europe and Asia. Monopolization was to be achieved by war. However, this project was never to be finished, although he had made great progress. Tamerlane died during his campaign to invade China in the year 1405 (The Silk Road Foundation 1997-2000). Marlowe, in *Tamburlaine*, Part I, manages to capture many of Tamerlane´s features. Hopkins (1996:11) claims that "[H]e also originates in the East – so radically demonised in English Renaissance culture – and advances steadily ever closer to the West: as he says, ´So from the East unto the furthest West / Shall Tamburlaine extend his puissant arm´ (*Tamburlaine* I, III, iii, 246-7), until his imminent death reduces him to mere speculation on ´what a world of ground / Lies westward´"(*Tamburlaine* II, V, iii, 146-7).

2.2. Tamburlaine´s Background

Machiavelli mentions language (III, 8), and whether a new prince is able to understand his subjects. We know that Tamburlaine comes from Scythia and becomes king of Persia. Scythia lies in what is the Ukraine today and there, as far as the historical person of Tamerlane is concerned, there must have been linguistic differences between the ruler and his army. In the drama, all characters speak English. In spite of this *lingua franca* there are serious difficulties due to different racial origins in the drama, as Hopkins (1996:7) points out:

> In the case of Tamburlaine, his Scythianness and, concomitantly, his otherness, is the one fixed element of a

> life during which we see him traverse countries and change from shepherd to king to corpse, and from bachelor to husband to widower. Wherever he goes, he is always racially different from those amongst he finds himself; his close lieutenant, Theridamas, is a Persian, and his wife, Zenocrate, an Egyptian, and thus even his three sons are only half-Scythian. ... Indeed, one of the notable elements of Tamburlaine´s career is the marked racial prejudice he consistently encounters, which leads both Persians and Turks to despise and prematurely dismiss him. It is perhaps partly in response to this that he embarks on his career of subjecting other lands to his dominion.

Having looked at the names of the characters, Wehling comes up with some interesting observations: "´Mycetes´ comes directly from Greek where it is μυκήτος, mushroom, which today is the suffix in names of such drugs as chloromycetin. ... How then could Marlowe better point up the red, black and gold character of Tamburlaine, enhance his enormous self-confidence than by contrast with the mushroom king?" (Wehling 1958:244f.). Mycetes indeed is the incarnation of a very weak and hesitant king. This manifests itself in utterances like: "Would it not grieve a king to be so abus´d, / And have a thousand horsemen ta´en away?" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, ii, 5f.). Tamburlaine senses this at an early stage and makes fun of him: "Are you the witty king of Persia?"(*Tamburlaine* I, II, iv, 23), only to answer this – basically rhetorical - question himself: "Thou art no match for mighty Tamburlaine." (*Tamburlaine* I, II, iv, 39). Mycetes´ lords also bear names which implicitly characterize them in a ridiculous way, as if they have been damned to lose from the very beginning: Ceneus (the Vacuous One), Menaphon (the Loud Mouth), Meander (the Aimless Wanderer) and Ortygius (the Coward). Merely through their names, Tamburlaine´s followers - Techelles (the Cunning One) and Theridamas (the Reaper) – appear to be on the winning side (Wehling 1958:245f.).

These differences are also made obvious by the different ways in which the characters use language. Tamburlaine´s rhetoric is by far the most eloquent in the drama; thus, it is not surprising that Birringer has picked up this issue, noting that

"The splendour of the language, its pace, its rhythm, imagistic density, and persuasive force not only parallel Tamburlaine´s actions but also gain symbolic status because they identify the successful use of rhetorical power as political power (in contradistinction to the relatively inarticulate Mycetes, Cosroe, Bajazeth, Zabina, Agydas, etc.) and thus shape the hero´s successfully disruptive rise" (1984:227).

These are justified comments on Tamburlaine being superior to the other characters in terms of language. There is already a notion of his superiority both in terms of language and military matters in the prologue of *Tamburlaine Part One,* in which the protagonist will threaten "the world with high astounding terms" and scourge "kingdoms with his conquering sword". In performing these two acts, according to Hopkins (1996:2), Tamburlaine demonstrates excellence in the fields most highly privileged in the cultures of those same classical civilisations which first despised the Scythians as inferior to them. Tamburlaine knows about the problem of himself being of other origin than the peoples he conquers and many individuals with whom he has to deal on a constant basis. Racial prejudices evoke problems, and Tamburlaine chooses a way to avoid clashes that fits him only too well: He bluntly shows his potential adversaries who is superior and thus does away with their ´false´ assumption that Scythians are to be considered inferior to most other races. To the Elizabethan reader of *Tamburlaine* the fact that Scythians were allegedly regarded as inferior was quite clear, as Hopkins has shown: "In Elizabethan ideology, the term Scythian demarcated an absolute otherness, a being so sharply inferior to civilised Western man that his very membership of the same species was open to doubt" (ibid.). Assuming that this assertion is correct, the theatre audience must have been able to understand Tamburlaine´s low origin perfectly well, since it is a combination of both ethnically and socially low positions.

What is the effect when someone else´s deeds are credited? Peet provides us with the answer, and not surprisingly the one who benefits is once again

Tamburlaine: "Most of the time, Marlowe´s lines magnify him and his deeds directly, but when any of the other characters are amplified as well, this simply adds additional splendour to Tamburlaine. If his followers are endowed with heroic grandeur, then he seems all the more marvellous in commanding their obedience. If his enemies are depicted as possessing immense power, then even more powerful must be the conqueror who subdues such mighty adversaries" (Peet 1959:151). This observation is correct, for Tamburlaine overthrows mighty noblemen and kings to get where he wants to get to. He conquers countries and expands his empire on a constant basis. His opponents are not always of the weakest kind. This is why I consider Peet´s observations convincing and coherent.

Machiavelli discusses the situation of the new prince being of another nationality to his new subjects in the principality that he has just conquered. This is the case in *Tamburlaine* as well, for Tamburlaine is from Scythia and ends up reigning over the mighty empire of Persia. Machiavelli´s suggestion for the new prince is to

> make himself the chief and protector of the smaller neighbouring powers. He must endeavour to weaken the most powerful of them, and must take care that by no chance a stranger enter that province who is equally powerful with himself.
>
> (III, 10)

Machiavelli sees the possible danger of men who by their cruelty, skills etc. might live up to the guts of the new prince. This is something that is certainly possible in real life, but concerning Marlowe´s drama it is not of any major importance, for Tamburlaine is *the* dominating character and nobody comes even close to him in any respect. Fieler (1961:41f.) even goes so far as to claim that Marlowe magnified Tamburlaine´s virtues by making his hero´s adversaries unjust. "Marlowe plays upon this facet of human nature to gain sympathy for his hero ... No matter what the conqueror undertakes, there is never any question in

his mind what the outcome will be." Tamburlaine, according to Fieler, is such a virtuous man that his deeds, even though they are unlawful, somehow seem right and justified and do not need any sort of artificial improvement. He does not encounter difficulties; thus Fieler´s last point is absolutely correct.

Strength in the military sense was also expected of the emperor in his outward appearance, since this is a powerful means to cow enemies, as becomes explicit in the following passage:

> As princely lions, when they rouse themselves,
> Stretching their paws, and threatening herds of beasts,
> So in his armour looketh Tamburlaine.
> Methinks I see kings kneeling at his feet,
> And he with frowning brows and fiery looks
> Spurning their crowns from off their captive heads.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 52ff.)

This description of Tamburlaine in his armour makes him almost seem supernatural and certainly superior to "normal" human beings; even other kings, at this stage of the drama superior to the still-shepherd Tamburlaine, could kneel at his feet. Techelles, who describes Tamburlaine in this way, is so impressed by the extremely charismatic appearance of the future king of Persia that he classifies him as *de facto* invincible. Fieler (1961:32) is of the opinion that the way in which Tamburlaine is described by other characters does not necessarily serve the purpose of explaining the reasons why this man is so great, but rather contributes to the creation of a myth: "Descriptions of Tamburlaine by other characters convey magnitude and power, not by credible, persuasively accurate details, but by figures calculated rather to dazzle than to clarify." This is a correct observation, for Tamburlaine from the very beginning enjoys the reputation of being an exceptional soldier and is almost too strong to be a normal human being.

An appropriate exterior appearance can add to the cruel reputation of an emperor. Mycetes, for example, says to Theridamas :"[W]ith thy looks thou

conquerest all thy foes" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 74). By saying so, he attributes a vast amount of power to the mere outward appearance of a prince, not taking his actions at all into consideration. The "normal people" do not get to see their emperors on a regular basis; they might see them at an official, but public ceremony, or when returning triumphantly (or sometimes much less so) from battle. To emphasize the emperor´s position in the hierarchy, a useful means would be to make him look in a way supernatural or above the others, e.g. by special armour (we find a description of Tamburlaine in his armour in *Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 52ff.; and Menaphon describes Tamburlaine´s impressive outward appearance at length in *Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 7-30). The future monarch looks very charismatic by nature, and this makes his position even stronger.

Theridamas believes Tamburlaine´s appearance gives him a special aura: "His looks do menace heaven and dare the gods" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 157). That is why he will easily be spotted as someone extraordinary, regardless of whether the person judging him knows about his deeds or not. Tamburlaine has the gift of making people afraid of him just by entering a room; his looks certainly are an important hint as to why his rise to power is so fast; he seems irresistible, both to the people he meets and to his opponents on the battlefield.

After these rather general remarks concerning the appearance of Tamburlaine and the princes let us analyse *Tamburlaine* in more detail, for we find specific descriptions of some of the most prominent features of the protagonist´s appearance. More than one comment is dedicated to his eyes which express his excessive ambition and hunger for power. Menaphon calls them "piercing instruments of sight" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 14); "imperious eyes" (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, i, 14) is another description of them. Tamburlaine´s whole visage can, according to Menaphon, show also two extremes: "His lofty brows in folds do figure death, And in their smoothness amity and life" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 21f.). This description reinforces the idea of the charismatic ruler.

In his description, Menaphon continues to see in Tamburlaine an archetype of an emperor whose hair resembles that of the ancient hero Achilles, while his arms and fingers show "valour and excess of strength" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 28). At the end of his description, he draws the conclusion that "In every part proportion´d like the man / Should make the world subdu´d to Tamburlaine" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 29-30). One could not easily come up with a more impressive description of a monarch´s outward appearance. This image of Tamburlaine as a menacing, almost superhuman being can only be devastating for the morale of troops fighting against him, or any kind of opponent.

Tamburlaine is blessed by possessing the ideal looks for a king (assuming that Menaphon´s description is accurate). Firstly, Tamburlaine can rely on the fact that his opponents are astonished and intimidated as soon as they see him. Secondly, word spreads about this charismatic, frightening-looking warrior. This reputation created by the stories passed on from one friend to another proves crucial when it comes to taking power. The first impression created by powerful words like these minimises the resistance faced by Tamburlaine when he becomes king. Theridamas, for instance, is so utterly impressed by Tamburlaine, who is "gross and like the massy earth" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, vii, 31) that he cannot help but become one of his followers:

> Won with thy words and conquer´d with thy looks,
> I yield myself, my men, and horse to thee,
> To be partaker of thy good or ill,
> As long as life maintains Theridamas.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 228ff.)

Tamburlaine on the whole is a charismatic ruler. How exactly is a prince supposed to act and behave, and does Tamburlaine act accordingly? This will be the main focus of the following section.

2.3. What and How to Govern

Machiavelli states that the forms of government known at the time of his writing *The Prince* are either republics or principalities. He divides the states that are subject to his analysis into hereditary and new principalities (I, 5). New principalities are the vital point for the analysis of *Tamburlaine*, for Tamburlaine captures the throne by killing Cosroe and not by inheriting it (Accordingly the topic of republics, which forms the subject of Machiavelli´s other masterpiece, the *Discourses,* will not be dealt with in this thesis). Since Tamburlaine is a shepherd by origin, he would never be able to wear a crown unless he used some manner of acquisition mentioned by Machiavelli: "either by the arms of others, or by the conqueror´s own, or by fortune or valour" (ibid.). What factors (apart from arms when killing Cosroe, the King of Persia) contribute to Tamburlaine´s rise to power remain to be seen in the course of the analysis, but for now we are going to concentrate on the prerequisites and general conditions a prince and his empire are faced with.

Hereditary states, Machiavelli claims, are much easier to maintain than newly acquired principalities. In a hereditary principality, a prince should merely ensure that he does not disturb the order of things established by his predecessors. If it were not for some "extraordinary and superior force" (II, 6) that deprived him of his state, he should not have any difficulty maintaining it. In *Tamburlaine* we at first have the situation with Mycetes being king; the crown is then taken away from him by his brother Cosroe. Cosroe does not use force to capture the crown, but his wit helps him to become king himself. At this moment we must ask the question as to whether Cosroe´s principality is a new one or whether one would tend to call it hereditary, for Mycetes and Cosroe are brothers.

Cosroe shows valour and wit when he gets the crown for himself; the manner of acquisition fits with the definition Machiavelli gives at the beginning of *The Prince;* this is why it can be seen as a new principality. On the other hand, power

stays within the family, which could mean the continuation of the so-far hereditary principality. However, we do not learn enough about how Cosroe plans to proceed and reign over Persia, for he cannot enjoy his position very long before he is killed by Tamburlaine. This mix of systems with someone being a part of the king´s family and thus belonging to the hereditary principality depriving his elder brother of the throne, which means forming a new principality, is slightly confusing when one tries to analyse the actions of the play by taking *The Prince* into consideration. We cannot be entirely sure if Marlowe follows one of the models provided by Machiavelli here, or whether he wants to follow any of these models at all.

In terms of plot development it is plain that Marlowe does not make use of the concept of a new principality until Tamburlaine he has killed Cosroe. From this point onwards there cannot be any doubt that we have now been presented with an entirely new principality. The shift of power from Mycetes to Cosroe, however, is not clear. The most likely explanation for Marlowe´s strategy here is to emphasize Tamburlaine´s actions (which are brutal and ruthless, for he commits murder) and make them seem even more unbelievable compared with how Cosroe succeeds in taking away the crown from Mycetes (by using his wit and being conscious of having a brother whose wit is not good enough to be king).

When a new principality has been gained, how is it to be governed? A new prince has to keep in mind that his actions are

> much more closely observed and scrutinised than those of a hereditary one; and when they are known to be virtuous, they will win the confidence and affections of men much more for the new prince, and make his subjects feel under greater obligations to him, than if he were of the ancient line.
>
> (XXIV, 92)

Machiavelli discusses several cases, but the one relevant for this discussion is a state accustomed to live under a prince. He recommends that when

> the line of the prince is once extinguished, the inhabitants, being on the one hand accustomed to obey, and on the other having lost their ancient sovereign, can neither agree to create a new one from amongst themselves, nor prompt to take up arms, and the new prince will readily be able to gain their good will and to assure himself of them.
>
> (V, 19)

In *Tamburlaine* the situation is as described by Machiavelli, with the exception that Mycetes is not killed, but he is outwitted by Cosroe is and therefore no longer a contender for the throne. Now that Tamburlaine sits on the throne, how can his strength be assessed? Machiavelli´s suggestion is to measure the power of a principality by means of "whether a prince is sufficiently powerful to be able, in case of need, to sustain himself, or whether he is obliged always to depend upon others for his defence" (X, 41). He continues this argumentation by specifying that enough human and financial resources to put a sufficiently powerful army on the battlefield are the prerequisites if one wishes to defend oneself as a prince. One more point concerning the defence of a state is that the prince knows how to act in conflicts that do not concern him directly; for his enemies will demand neutrality of him, while his friends might expect armed support (XXI, 85f.). Tamburlaine does not get into any similar situation, for it is he who is actively involved in battles all the time. A prince´s main aim should be the successful maintenance of his state, and every single effort directed at this aim will "always be accounted honourable, and will be praised by everybody" (XVIII, 69). Furthermore, those who contribute to enlarging a prince´s city or state should be rewarded, for their deeds are also quite precious (XXI, 87). Machiavelli in this context mentions Ferdinand of Aragon, who "never preached anything but peace and good faith; but if he had always observed either the one or the other, it would in most instances have cost him his reputation or his state" (XVIII, 69).

Maintaining one´s state thus cannot mean just trying to live in peace, for there will always be threats from within the kingdom as well as from the outside. It is clear that Tamburlaine follows this maxim quite closely, for he succeeds in maintaining and expanding his kingdom, divides it up between his sons and peacefully dies in bed. At this point it is not to be questioned whether the means he used always complied with those prescribed, but whether they served a generic purpose. Tamburlaine´s actions once again fit with the Machiavellian ideas, as Mazzeo (1964) interprets them. Machiavelli´s view of human nature was traditionally pessimistic and allied him with the Augustinian tradition within Christianity: "Both St. Augustine and Machiavelli", Mazzeo writes (1964:70), "would have agreed that men are born badly and generally do not do well unless they are forced to do so." Cruelty is one of Tamburlaine´s dominating character traits, and he only acts in a calmer and more quiet manner than usual when these actions serve the purpose of promoting his position. To himself, his actions may seem the only ones justified and thus good ones, but when observed neutrally, most of his conquests, murders and wars are driven by a very strong negative energy. For as Mazzeo puts it, "Machiavelli and St. Augustine would have agreed that power seeks more power, that the nature of the state is essentially expansive..." (Mazzeo 1964:71). If this is correct, then Tamburlaine is the slave of two factors, namely the negative nature of man and the expansive nature of states. This explanation sounds plausible at first, because Tamburlaine´s actions fit quite well into this grid. However, this pattern of explanation does not comply with Tamburlaine´s ambition at all, and also divine intervention (i.e. fortune) is left out completely. These aforementioned factors do play a big role when it comes to Tamburlaine´s actions, and this is why Mazzeo´s explanation cannot be taken as true, even though his approach is interesting and justified as long as one sticks to the aspects that he covers. For the whole picture of Tamburlaine´s character his statements, however, do not apply completely.

Tamburlaine acts in the Machiavellian sense. This sentence could be used throughout this whole thesis as a recurring means of emphasis, but writing it

expressis verbis once should suffice, for the resemblances between *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine* are quite obvious throughout this discussion. In the following, there are more similarities between *Tamburlaine* and *The Prince* to be found concerning the question of how to act. Machiavelli´s general comment on what is important for a new prince acquiring a territory is this:

> [S]o soon as a powerful foreigner enters a province, all those of its inhabitants that are less powerful will give him their adhesion, being influenced thereto by their jealousy of him who has hitherto been their superior. So that, as regards these petty lords, the new prince need not be at any trouble to win them over to himself, as they will all most readily become incorporated with the state which he has there acquired. He has merely to see to it that they do not assume too much authority, or acquire too much power; for he will then be able by their favour, and by his own strength, very easily to humble those who are really powerful; so that he will in all aspects remain the sole arbiter of that province. And he who does not manage this part well will quickly lose what he has acquired; and whilst he holds it, he will experience infinite difficulties and vexations.
>
> (III, 10)

The situation in *Tamburlaine* mostly follows this textbook pattern, for Tamburlaine´s almost superhuman appearance, his fame, predestination, etc. practically make him invincible. Not only are the ordinary people "on the street" very impressed, but also many noblemen are astonished impressed by what kind of special person in many respects Tamburlaine is. He has a charismatic aura and thus it is easy for him to win over the support of the people. Through the course of world history, people have been looking for strong leaders, and Tamburlaine certainly belongs to this category.

It was important for a king not only to match the requirements of a "kingly" outward appearance, to be wise enough and skilful in the art of war and to know in what way to act, but also to be considered worthy enough to rule his kingdom. This worthiness is a criterion dealt with in *Tamburlaine.* Mycetes asks Cosroe:

"Is it not a kingly resolution?" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 55ff.) and tries to act worthily enough. Cosroe´s direct answer is reluctant, for he is his king´s subject and does not see himself in the right position to judge Mycetes´ behaviour: "It cannot choose, because it comes from you" (ibid.). The reasons for Cosroe being reluctant in his answer are obvious. As we learn later in the drama, he deprives the weak Mycetes of his throne. He already fancies the throne himself when he is giving this answer, and thus is of the opinion that Mycetes is not the right man to be king. Neither is Cosroe, for he is killed by Tamburlaine fairly soon after having made himself king. In this context a comparison between Mycetes and Tamburlaine is worth mentioning. Kopetsch (1990:92) writes that Tamburlaine must seem much more able to be king by the way he is described when compared to Mycetes, who confronts the audience with a what seems like a ridiculous imitation of kingly speech, dignity and power. Against this quite rightly observed background, it is clear who was not skilled enough to be king and has made a fool of himself (Mycetes), and who is his (not entirely immediate) natural successor (Tamburlaine). Tamburlaine is considered so mighty that Theridamas does not hesitate to compare him (in a metaphor that we have come across before) with the planet Earth:

> And that made me to join with Tamburlaine;
> For he is gross and like the massy earth
> That moves not upwards, nor by princely deeds
> Doth mean to soar above the highest sort.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, II, vii, 30-34).

After being subject to the unskilful Mycetes, people now seem glad to have a proper and worthy ruler. Theridamas´ comment sums up the Persians´ feelings and praises Tamburlaine at the same time.

When Cosroe becomes king, he wants to serve his country, i.e. to prove his worthiness through his actions: "I willingly receive th´imperial crown, / And vow to wear it for my country´s good..." (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 157f.). He adds an even stronger oath of commitment almost immediately after that: "And Jove may

never let me longer live / Than I may seek to gratify your love..." (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 170f.). As the protagonist Tamburlaine voices this theme himself for the first time in the following scene: "I am a lord, for so my deeds shall prove..." (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 34). Cosroe shows his respect for Tamburlaine by referring to him as "...the man of fame, / The man that in the forehead of his fortune / Bears figures of renown and miracle" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 2f.) and one can sense from this comment that Cosroe considers Tamburlaine worthy to be a king. His own fate, being killed by the same man he just has given so much credit to has at this stage not crossed his mind; Tamburlaine is too magnificent a figure for Cosroe at this point to recognize the present threat this man is to him more than to anybody.

Cosroe, however, is not the only person to be amazed by Tamburlaine. Theridamas´ comment on Tamburlaine is so openly supportive and admiring that it even goes beyond Cosroe´s previously quoted utterances: "You see, my lord, what working words he hath; / But, when you see his actions top his speech, / Your speech will stay" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, iii, 25f.). In other words, Tamburlaine in all his actions - which even go beyond his ability to win people to his ideas through his rhetorical skills - just leaves people stunned in admiration and amazement. This kind of compliment lifts him up above the ordinary mortal human beings, even though he himself is one and not a god. For more on this point, see also Levin (1953:42), who contributes to this discussion by stating that the "stage becomes a vehicle for hyberbole ... [by] taking metaphors literally and acting concepts out." This makes the protagonist an "overreacher". Tamburlaine is being looked at as a superhuman figure and this way of worshipping him and considering him more than worthy to be king does not come as a surprise, as this position of his manifests itself throughout the drama and is certainly not confined to this worthiness we are dealing with at the moment.

There are other examples of a king´s worthiness being assessed as vital in *Tamburlaine.* Cosroe once again makes his position quite clear when saying that

"...the Persian King is chang´d / From one that knew not what a king should do / To one that can command what ´longs thereto" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, v, 21ff.) It has to be borne in mind that at this particular moment Cosroe is speaking of himself, who has succeeded the incompetent Mycetes, and therefore tends to sound rather ambivalent. On the one hand this statement can be seen as a general comment on a king´s worthiness, but on the other hand it certainly is Cosroe praising himself.

Once this worthiness has been made clear, there is a slight shift in focus to be noticed in *Tamburlaine.* Worthiness is the one thing a king must have, and once he has reached this place in society, he enjoys an almost infinite prestige. Usumcasane and Theridamas elaborate much more clearly on the king´s prominent position at the top of a society´s hierarchy and all the prestige that goes with it:

USUMCASANE: To be a king, is to be half a god.
THERIDAMAS: A god is not so glorious as a king:
I think the pleasure they enjoy in heaven,
Cannot compare with kingly joys in earth;
- To wear a crown enchas´d with pearl and gold,
Whose virtues carry with it life and death;
To ask and have, command and be obey´d;
When looks breed love, with looks to gain the prize,
Such power attractive shines in princes´ eyes.
(*Tamburlaine* I, II, v, 57-65.)

Royal prestige is praised by the King of Argier, who has a high opinion of Bajazeth, and accounts that "...all flesh quakes at ... [his] magnificence" (*Tamburlaine* I, III, i, 48). Tamburlaine makes a similar utterance when he rewards Theridamas, Techelles and Usumcasane with the crowns of Argier, Moroccus and of Fez. He thinks they "deserve these titles I endow you with / By valour and magnanimity" (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, iv, 134f.). The First Virgin describes the world as a playground for a king "In whose sweet person is compris´d the sum of / Nature´s skill and heavenly majesty" (*Tamburlaine* I, V, ii, 15f.). Tamburlaine himself mentions kings having been crowned due to "proved worthiness" (*Tamburlaine* I, V, ii, 430).

Nowhere in *Tamburlaine* is it questioned that Tamburlaine has the support of the ordinary people, for most of the noblemen (including Cosroe, who pays respect to Tamburlaine and does not recognize him as a major threat right away) have the most positive views of him. Once the most important individuals in a kingdom are of this opinion, it seems most unlikely that the common people will oppose their views; unless, of course, if they have been treated really badly and their desire for a new leader is strong. Tamburlaine kills Cosroe, who has reigned only for a very short time and has not had the chance to act against the will of his subjects. In this he uses his own strength and does not face resistance by others. This is a sign of quiet tolerance and respect for what he does to reach his goals. Nobody is brave enough to stop him, and thus he becomes the most powerful man of Persia. This rise to power is put into practice in a very short period of time, and one must take the view that Tamburlaine carries out his plan very well. At no stage can there be the chance to criticize him in the Machiavellian sense, for *The Prince,* as Mazzeo reminds us, clearly allows violent actions:

> ... Machiavelli insists, that will is selfish and limitless and man is ... the creature that cares only for himself. A man will reconcile himself sooner to the murderer of his own father than to the thief of his property ... [F]ew men can learn to disregard their personal interest and truly labour for the common good ... The nature of man´s will never changes ... All the large public monuments of history and politics may be seen as resulting from the achievement or disturbance of the uneasy equilibrium between infinite desire and actual gratification.
>
> (Mazzeo 1964:132f.)

This interpretation is the essence of Tamburlaine´s character in a nutshell. His will is too strong to let him leave the path he has chosen; and this path leads towards the throne of Persia and a vast empire. Mazzeo´s analysis of Machiavelli could as well have been a characterization of Tamburlaine with special focus on his will and ambition. Marlowe used this willpower described by Machiavelli to make Tamburlaine the way he is. Randall Martin (1999:69) uses the term

"ambitious Machiavel" for the main historical figures in Dowriche, Cary and Marlowe. This term fits very well with Tamburlaine in this respect, since it emphasises the same phenomenon Mazzeo describes.

Tamburlaine is very skilled in the things he does. After becoming king, he has no difficulties staying on the throne. This fits with Machiavelli´s position that a new prince

> will experience more or less difficulty in maintaining himself, according as he has more or less courage and ability. And as such an event as to become a prince from a mere private individual presupposes either great courage or rare good fortune, it would seem that one or the other of these two causes ought in a measure to mitigate many of these difficulties.
>
> (VI, 20)

Speaking of Tamburlaine, as dealt with in other sections of this thesis, it must be said that he certainly is blessed with both excessive courage *and* the favour of fortune, factors which make him the "Machiavellian prototype" of a prince, so to speak. He belongs to the group of new princes who have acquired their kingdom by means of violence. There are other examples of rulers in ancient history who made use of arms whom Machiavelli quotes to show that there sometimes can be a necessity to resort to the use of weapons: In his opinion, neither Moses, Cyrus, Theseus nor Romulus would have been able to uphold their reigns, had it not been for arms (VI, 22).

Machiavelli in the following passage concentrates at length on princes who simply by noble conduct rose to power after successfully struggling against many difficulties. Tamburlaine clearly does not belong to this group, but the comparison of his biography to that of Hiero of Syracuse (VI, 22f.) is interesting inasmuch as both rose from being private citizens to be leaders. Hiero, among others, might have contributed to Marlowe creating his Tamburlaine characters, but certainly only marginally, for Hiero´s qualities differ enormously from those

of Tamburlaine; however, their origins are similar. Urry (1988:xxviii) quotes Kocher´s argumentation that in all four of Marlowe´s chief dramas there was an opposition between a central figure, with or without a few supporters, and the system which hems him in. With Tamburlaine, Barabbas, and Gaveston, moreover, the social iconoclasm was intensified by the fact that they, like Marlowe, are of base or detested lineage. It was difficult not to conclude that this was Marlowe´s own position and that he felt in varying degree "not merely an aloofness but a positive enmity to the generality of mankind". Marlowe, who died at the age of only 29 years, was in some way an outsider to the system himself. Rumour has it that he not only was a playwright, but he also worked as a spy. Assuming that this was true, this would mean a parallel with Tamburlaine, who as a shepherd not only spies on, but intrudes into the royal court of Persia.

From his private position as a shepherd, Tamburlaine definitely manages to become king because he is favoured by fortune. Machiavelli´s position on this matter is as follows:

> Those who by good fortune only rise from mere private station to the dignity of princes have but little trouble in achieving that elevation, for they fly there as it were on wings; but their difficulties begin after they have been placed in that high position.
>
> (VII, 24)

Machiavelli is of the opinion that a prince should never exclusively think about the events taking place at that very moment, he should also take into consideration what is going to be of importance in the days, weeks, etc. to come. This was what

> all wise princes ought to do; namely, not only to look to all present troubles, but also to those of the future ... For it is by foreseeing difficulties from afar that they are easily provided against; but awaiting their near approach, remedies are no longer in time, for the malady has become incurable.
>
> (III, 11)

That is why constant thinking about the future can make a prince´s life noticeably easier, for the measures he has to employ to prevent possible future difficulties will in most cases be clearly less radical than those required in the midst of a conflict when all the parties involved tend to use rather extreme measures to pursue their interests. Machiavelli puts it this way:

> [F]or when the evils that arise ... are seen far ahead, ...
> then they are easily remedied; but when, in consequence of
> not having been foreseen, these evils are allowed to grow
> and assume such proportions that they become manifest to
> every one, then they can no longer be remedied.
>
> (ibid.)

For the prince this means in practice that one should virtually never let go of one´s duties if one wishes to maintain constant status. Even in times of peace, when one could get the very misleading impression of perfect harmony, the prince has to be on the alert and on the lookout for potential enemies trying to form conspiracies against him. Tamburlaine does not face any threats from conspiracies, since no one dares to challenge "...the Scourge and Wrath of God, / The only fear and terror of the world" (*Tamburlaine* I, III, iii, 44-45).Thinking about the future, then, is one of the prince´s main duties. He has to be of special ability combined with valour, as Machiavelli describes it, to be able to reach his position in the first place. This was true especially for new principalities, since they were quite vulnerable and unstable after they had just been established (VII, 24). Tamburlaine certainly is a character who has an almost superhuman aura about him. Marlowe describes him as so powerful, by looks, by what he does and by how others treat him, that he must be called an example of exceptional ability.

Tamburlaine certainly has very little trouble in climbing the ladder of society, but he does not entirely have to rely on good fortune, for he shows valour as well. This is why he does not face major resistance after capturing the throne. Indeed, as Birringer puts it, "The organization and speed of Tamburlaine´s successes are almost breathtaking" (1984:228). He manages to maintain control

over his empire and dies peacefully, having distributed his territory among his three sons. In the Machiavellian sense, there must be more to his reign than mere fortune, for he leads a fairly easy life after he has become king. Zenocrate´s death is in fact the only major conflict he has to deal with, but since this is a private matter, it is not of interest in this context, for the death of a loved one is no factor when it comes to state philosophy as in *The Prince.*

We find a model for Tamburlaine both being blessed by fortune and ability in the same chapter of *The Prince:*

> Moreover, states that spring up suddenly, like other things in nature that are born and attain their growth rapidly, cannot have those roots and supports that will protect them from destruction by the first unfavourable weather. Unless indeed, as has been said, those who have suddenly become princes are gifted with such ability that they quickly know how to prepare themselves for the preservation of that which fortune has cast into their lap, and afterwards to build up those foundations which others have laid before becoming princes.
>
> (VII, 24f.)

Machiavelli continues by reflecting on the manner of a prince´s behaviour after his primary goal has been achieved and he has gained control over the principality. If he wished to stay in control, he would have to make sure that the family of the former lord was extinguished to eliminate possible future threats (III, 8).

In principle, according to Machiavelli, there are only two ways of acting when reigning over a principality: either to follow the law or to use force. He characterizes the second ways as primarily being reserved for the animals, but "as the first [for men] is often insufficient, it becomes necessary to resort to the second" (ibid.). From this he then concludes that princes should know how to employ the nature of a man as well as of a beast. Tamburlaine favours the use of force, since his actions, ideas and goals do not comply with the law of Mycetes,

King of Persia, and Cosroe, his successor. The former shepherd captures the throne by unlawful means and thus displays a thorough knowledge of how to employ the nature of a beast. In this respect it might be interesting to think about Tamburlaine´s profession in Scythia, where he was a shepherd and looked after animals, i.e. "beasts". His profession might hint at his violent and cruel behaviour, even though the actual animals he is involved with – sheep – are of fairly peaceful nature.

Machiavelli then continues his elaboration on the nature of the beasts, characterizing it in more detail:

> It being necessary then for a prince to know well how to employ the nature of the beasts, he should be able to assume both that of the fox and that of the lion; for whilst the latter cannot escape the traps laid for him, the former cannot defend himself against the wolves. A prince should be a fox, to know the traps and snares; and a lion, to be able to frighten the wolves; for those who simply hold to the nature of the lion do not understand their business.
>
> (ibid.)

Tamburlaine for sure knows how to deal with "beasts" and as a beast. Ritter (1940:36) calls this ability *kämpferische Tüchtigkeit* (aggressive efficiency) and characterizes the Scythian´s skills appropriately, even though his remarks are about *The Prince.* Tamburlaine´s ability to come up with a solution for every problem lets him be "the admirable hero to the end" and spares him somehow, even though he has the urge to fight wars and shed blood, from suffering or death (Cole 1964:99-102). His *virtù* was a tiger-like power which had also satanic elements (Ritter 1940:36). On the one hand his comparison is good in the sense that one gets a clearer idea of the rawness of Tamburlaine´s character, on the other hand it is also slightly dangerous, for Tamburlaine may be evil, but he certainly is no reincarnation of the devil, even though Machiavelli´s opponents would have cheered at this point. The soldier Tamburlaine wants to rule over as many peoples as possible, he does not want to destroy mankind, for then he

would not have anybody to rule over. My point does not agree with Ritter (1940:43) who claims that war does not seem to Machiavelli as bad, so much as inevitable; Ritter claims that war meant the peak of a glorious development of power. I cannot follow him here, for even Tamburlaine, as much of a soldier as he might be, eventually becomes a father and wants to see his sons grow up. For the young, ambitious Tamburlaine striving for the throne of Persia this ideal of Ritter´s, who calls Machiavelli´s rules "hypothetical imperatives" (1940:21), is true, but if you consider the entire development of the drama, it cannot be upheld as such. If this had been the case at all times, why didn´t Cesare Borgia fight wars continuously, but instead resorted to using violence only where necessary (even though people would remember these incidents due to their massive cruelty)?

Tamburlaine is certainly a hero in his own opinion, but using unlawful means, even though they are legitimate according to Machiavelli, and the label of "hero" do not necessarily match. If one looks at great leaders throughout history, such as Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan or Hannibal, one has to admit that these were men who were considered heroes *because* of their great cruelty. Calling Tamburlaine a hero and giving him this positive label can thus be understood and justified, but I am not entirely convinced by this point of view.

Machiavelli adds to this that the one who knows how to play the fox best has been the most successful of princes (ibid.). Although it would be perfect for a prince to possess all these qualities mentioned above, it is not necessary to have them all. Rather, one should *pretend* to have them. A prince has to handle many tasks at the same time, especially in the period after he has just acquired a principality, and he simply cannot be good at all these tasks. This is why he should act as if he were "all charity, integrity and humanity, all uprightness and all piety" (XVIII, 64).

These motifs of the lion and the fox can be found in the *Tamburlaine* plays as well. In *Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 52ff. Techelles compares Tamburlaine to a lion when he is describing him:

> As princely lions, when they rouse themselves,
> Stretching their paws, and threatening herds of beasts,
> So in his armour looketh Tamburlaine.

In this passage we find exactly the same concept that has been stated before by Machiavelli. Whereas in most places Marlowe´s reference to *The Prince* is of noticeable, but rather implicit nature, this example takes up the same motif used by Machiavelli. The picture the reader has got of Tamburlaine in the drama most clearly supports the similarity of the "leonine conception". However, how magnificent and mighty Tamburlaine may seem, there also was a dark side to this emperor that manifested itself in such a way that, as Cole (1962:102f.) has noted: "One cannot ignore the ironic contrast between the magniloquent words in which Tamburlaine expresses his achievement and the macabre sight which defines it in visual terms." His victorious and titan-like appearance could not be separated from the dark shadow of human suffering cast by himself. This is an aspect of the drama one has to bear in mind at all times, for Tamburlaine as an over-achiever tends to evoke a positive picture after all because of his sheer endless streak of success (see also Levin 1953 for a more detailed analysis); however, Tamburlaine has got to his position largely by unlawful means and cleverness.

Mycetes compares Tamburlaine with "a fox in the midst of harvest-time" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 31). In this utterance we also have an explicit taking-up of the Machiavellian concept. Mycetes expresses respect and what may be fear for Tamburlaine, who resembles a hungry, dangerous and at the same time cunning beast trying to get its prey. Mycetes´ judgement is significant, for he himself is a king and as a ruler he has to know how to use the concepts of the fox and the lion – if he has not got them, at least he (according to Machiavelli) will be likely to pretend to have them.

In Tamburlaine´s case the only potential threat for the protagonist would have been Cosroe, who is a skilled leader, but he happens to have deprived his weaker brother Mycetes, who stays alive, of the throne of Persia before Tamburlaine had had a chance to go for the throne himself. Thus Cosroe has to be assassinated, because he is in Tamburlaine´s way. Concerning Mycetes, it is made clear from the very beginning that he is quite an incompetent leader and thus no threat whatsoever for the valorous Tamburlaine. There is no necessity to kill Mycetes because there is no danger or threat coming from him and this is a point in which *Tamburlaine* differs from the recommendation given in *The Prince;* however, leaving Mycetes alive does not mean Tamburlaine runs a risk of endangering his own position. Tamburlaine is the man to scare other peoples to death, to invade and conquer them, to expand his empire and die peacefully, having distributed his massive kingdom among his sons. There is no space in this drama for other powerful foreigners who could scare him, for it is Tamburlaine´s task to be the one feared by everybody.

Apart from this, a prince should be slow to believe and to act and should not be too easily influenced by his own fears. He should show modesty, prudence and humanity and not let excessive confidence get too strong a hold of him. At the same time, he should not allow himself to become intolerant due to too much mistrust (XVII, 65). Tamburlaine is not exactly this ideal modest person. His rise to power takes place with incredible pace, and he is certainly blessed with an excessive amount of confidence. For him, however, this confidence, together with his infinite ambition, makes him the person he is; this cannot be considered negative, for these character traits dominate him and make him act the way he actually acts. Fear does not seem to belong to Tamburlaine´s vocabulary, and the only weakness he shows is after the death of Zenocrate, which makes him suffer enormously.

Cruelty for his part certainly dominates over modesty, prudence and humanity, so that in this respect he is not the entirely Machiavellian prince. He is a very

egoistical person and thus his skills in tolerance are also quite limited. For the protagonist of the drama, too much tolerance would simply be a rather large obstacle to what he is after. Marlowe thus makes him act unscrupulously, which once again differs from the Machiavellian ideal. However, there still are striking resemblances between *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine* which could indicate that Marlowe consciously made use of certain Machiavellian ideas.

3. Cruelty, the Art of War and Opposition

This section will examine the theme of cruelty and hatred in *Tamburlaine* and *The Prince*. It will also offer an analysis of Tamburlaine´s relations to other famous cruel men, a subsection on the soldier Tamburlaine as well as a discussion of enemies, errors and difficulties in the drama and *The Prince*.

3.1. Cruelty and Hatred

The negative qualities enumerated above recur in both texts, in Machiavelli and in Marlowe, and play an important part in them, since violence in general and cruelty and hatred in particular were involved in many a prince´s rise to power throughout history, and Tamburlaine is no exception.

Let us look at cruelty first. Machiavelli remarks that a prince "should not mind the ill repute of cruelty, when he can thereby keep his subjects united and loyal" (XVII, 64). By frightening them constantly, he could count on their loyalty because they would be too afraid to employ measures against him. This situation is typical of the *Tamburlaine* dramas and is made explicit from the very beginning of the first part. But how exactly is this cruelty to be used? Machiavelli provides princes with the following advice (XVII, 65): They should make themselves feared in such a manner that, if they have not won the affections of the people, they should at least not incur their hatred. Cruelty serves as a device to evoke respect for the emperor in the people. With his people, though, the prince cannot be cruel and strict at all times. As it is hinted at in this previous quotation, there also have to be more merciful qualities in an emperor to keep his subjects loyal and happy.

This manner works with the civilians, but his troops need other treatment. Cruelty towards soldiers should be a permanent means of ensuring the princes´ armies´ proper mental state and motivation (XVII, 66), "for without such severity

an army cannot be kept together, nor disposed for any successful feat of arms." Summers quite correctly interprets that "Tamburlaine´s sadistic cruelty cannot be called ´indiscriminately cruel´ or ´inhumane´" and is, in fact, "... a means of Machiavellian policy" (Summers 1974:43), for Machiavelli clearly allows the use of violence. However, not all of Tamburlaine´s actions can be judged very easily. His behaviour when torturing the imprisoned Bajazeth and threatening him with cruel consequences if he refused to eat his food ("Take it up, villain, and eat it; or I will make thee slice the brawn of thy arms into carbonadoes and eat them" (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, iv, 45-47)) sheds an ambivalent light on this matter. On the whole, though, there are not many occasions like this one in which one could doubt whether Tamburlaine´s cruelty goes beyond what Machiavelli appears to have in mind.

At the same time as he acts as a strong and merciless commander-in-chief, the prince should on the whole, and that is for both civilians and soldiers, avoid being hated. What makes one hated is enumerated by Machiavelli (XIX, 70): A prince should avoid

> the reputation of being variable, inconstant, effeminate, pusillanimous, and irresolute; he should therefore guard against this as against a dangerous rock, and should strive to display in all his actions grandeur, courage, gravity and determination. And in judging the private causes of his subjects, his decisions should be irrevocable.

Tamburlaine arouses the feeling of hate. He is called "wicked Tamburlaine" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 64); together with his followers he is referred to as "Tamburlaine and that Tartarian rout" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 71). He also is the "rogue of Volga" (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, i, 4) who does not care about his reputation at all. Cosroe even goes one step further and associates Tamburlaine´s deeds with those of Satan:

> What means this devilish shepherd, to aspire
> With such a giantly presumption,

> To cast up hills against the face of heaven,
> And dare the force of angry Jupiter?
> (*Tamburlaine* I, II, vi, 1-4)

He is not alone with his opinion. Zabina criticizes him severely: "Unworthy king, that by thy cruelty / Unlawfully usurp´st the Persian seat" (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, ii, 56-7). She also expresses her deep hatred for Tamburlaine in her suicide speech (*Tamburlaine* I, V, ii, 247-256). The Governor speaks of Tamburlaine´s wrath (*Tamburlaine* I, V, i, 44) and chooses relatively mild words to express his feelings, in contrast to the King of Amasia: "The monster that hath drunk a sea of blood, / And yet gapes still for more to quench his thirst" (*Tamburlaine* II, V, ii, 13f.) Soldan also feels disgust when thinking about the former Scythian shepherd:

> My lord, it is the bloody Tamburlaine,
> A sturdy felon, and a base-bred thief,
> By murder raised to the Persian crown,
> That dares control us in our territories.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, iii, 11-14)

Tamburlaine is conscious of the fact that his actions give rise to the feeling of hatred for him and is willing to take this risk. His actions cannot be called Machiavellian in this respect; however, he gets away with it and thus does the right thing, for he is never beaten by anybody, there are no opponents who can harm him, etc.

However, it is too simple an approach just to say a prince is being either hated or not. We have to specify this aspect inasmuch as the prince should "strive not to be hated by the mass of the people; but failing in this, they should by all means endeavour to avoid being hated by the more powerful" (XIX, 74). This means that even if a prince is not popular at all among the ordinary people, they do not, in most cases, pose a real threat to him, whereas noblemen are far more dangerous opponents. Let us look at the examples of shifts of power just quoted: First, Cosroe uses his wit to deprive his brother Mycetes of the throne. Here it is

not just one of the many "ordinary" noblemen who seek to become king themselves, it is the emperor´s own brother. We here clearly have a direct parallel to Machiavelli´s ideas. When Tamburlaine deprives Cosroe of the throne, he is already general lieutenant of his armies, even though he is, nevertheless, by origin a mere shepherd and more a member of the common people.

We have heard about the unlikelihood of an attack by just an ordinary citizen and that a prince in general should not be too afraid of such efforts. Here we have one of the apparently very rare examples of such an effort being successful. This of course reinforces the point of Tamburlaine being an exceptional man in almost all respects. To rise from being a shepherd to become a king is a quite extraordinary chain of events, and Machiavelli sees only very little probability in something comparable to this actually happening.

3.2. Tamburlaine and Other Famous Cruel Men

This section will deal with Tamburlaine and his connection with other famous cruel men in history. There are interesting parallels that can be drawn between these men, four of whom are referred to in Machiavelli´s *The Prince,* and Tamburlaine. The men Tamburlaine is connected with are Julius Caesar, Maximinus, Agathocles, Oliverotto, and Cesare Borgia. Their special connection with Tamburlaine will now be explained in detail.

Some of the greatest and most charismatic ancient emperors came from Rome. It is not surprising that Tamburlaine sees a connection between himself and one of these great leaders: "At an early point in his career, he directly compares himself with one Roman emperor when he says ´My camp is like to Julius Caesar´s host´ (*Tamburlaine* I, III, iii, 152)" (Hopkins 1996:12). The example of Caesar must suit Tamburlaine, for he self-consciously picks not only one of the greatest personalities among the Roman emperors, but perhaps the biggest one. Caesar must be considered one of the greatest personalities of all times. Tamburlaine does not hesitate to put himself in the same category, but there must

be doubt about as to whether he can live up to Caesar´s example. It is clear that we are dealing with a charismatic person, but this comparison to Caesar himself is a bit out of line. Connecting Tamburlaine with Roman emperors in general, though, is justified in my point of view because he shows charisma, a quality that was/is associated with Roman emperors (and any great emperors regardless of where they hailed from).

Machiavelli refers to one person whose biography resembles Tamburlaine´s very much. The man in question is called Maximinus, who became the successor to Alexander Severus after his death. Maximinus is characterized as a "most warlike man" (XIX, 77); he is of "extremely low origin, having been a shepherd in Thracia (which was generally known, and caused him to be held in great contempt by every one)" and "had moreover earned the reputation of extreme cruelty in consequence of the many acts of ferocity which he had committed" (ibid.). What we have here is the person in *The Prince* who reminds the reader the most of the protagonist in Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* dramas. The resemblance is almost too obvious: Tamburlaine is called "a Scythian shepherd" in the *dramatis personae* of the drama´s first part, and his rise to the throne of Persia must be characterized by extreme cruelty.

In Maximinus´ case his predecessor, the teenage emperor Alexander Severus is murdered, and Maximinus is elected his successor. There are different views among the historians who reported this incident concerning how actively Maximinus was involved in this murder. One theory is that his followers carried out the assassination, the other one is that Maximinus did participate in the plot against Alexander Severus (Timonen 2000:148-151). Tamburlaine uses violence since he kills Bajazeth to become king. In the drama, Tamburlaine´s move to kill the emperor is the logical consequence of his actions up to that point in the drama and forms a climax of violence. The plot of *Tamburlaine* is similar to Maximinus´ manner of becoming king, for it takes a murder (regardless of whether Maximinus actually was involved in Alexander Severus´s assassination)

in both cases to enable the former shepherd to capture the throne. As far as we know about the Turkic emperor Tamerlane, there is one example of him defeating another great leader in order to expand his empire. In 1402, Tamerlane is victorious over the Ottoman Turk sultan Bajazet I (Pantheon of the World Brotherhood of Light 2002). We have no proof of Tamerlane having Bajazet executed. However, Tamerlane´s cruel reputation and behaviour make the assumption that he had the Ottoman killed a fair one.

Machiavelli devotes a chapter of his *Prince* to those who have "achieved sovereignty by means of crimes" (VIII, 32). From what we have heard so far, the mere title suggests a strong connection to the *Tamburlaine* plays. By killing Cosroe, he has committed a crime and become king. This is the situation we are familiar with. But how does Machiavelli tackle this question of how to judge men who use criminal means in order to get to the top of the society´s ladder?

He refers to two examples from history, the one being Agathocles and the other being Oliverotto. Agathocles rose to be king of Syracuse from a very low position in society. He had been born the son of a potter and thus was at the bottom of the social ladder, as was Tamburlaine. However, he rose in society by eventually acquiring a high position in the military. Machiavelli describes his acts of cruelty on his way to becoming king and concludes that nothing or very little in his deeds can be attributed to fortune. He even maintained his sovereignty with great courage and

> if we consider the valour of Agathocles in encountering and overcoming dangers, and his invincible courage in supporting and mastering adversity, we shall find no reason why he should be regarded inferior to any of the most celebrated captains. But with all this, his outrageous cruelty and inhumanity, together with his infinite crimes, will not permit him to be classed with the most celebrated men.
>
> (VIII, 33)

Here one can get a clear idea of what Machiavelli´s opinion is with respect to unlawful conduct: he sees it as negative, but does not entirely despise it. The fact that Agathocles cannot be seen as one of the *most celebrated* men, does not necessarily imply that he is not one of the *celebrated* men, regardless of his evil deeds.

Oliverotto (ibid.) becomes sovereign after a massacre and due to this has an aura of fear around him. This is quite similar to what is attributed to Tamburlaine concerning his outward appearance and to what means he uses to eventually capture the crown, i.e. by killing Cosroe. Machiavelli criticizes Agathocles as well as Oliverotto, but does not completely despise them because he accounts for the use of evil and unlawful means (crimes) being sometimes quite necessary. He specifies this by stating that

> it is to be noted that in taking possession of a state the conqueror should well reflect as to the harsh measures that may be necessary, and then execute them at a single blow, so as not to be obliged to renew them every day[.]
>
> (VIII, 35)

Crimes should be committed all at one time, for when this occurs, the impact of one single crime in this larger number of offences is felt less strongly, which means that the consequences evoked by this single crime will most probably be less severe. Tamburlaine does not encounter any negative consequences after committing his crimes, and he commits them within a fairly short period of time and thus complements Machiavelli´s advice.

Regardless of what a prince´s conduct is, there are examples of both extremes. How is it possible, asks Machiavelli, for Agathocles, and others like him, such as Tamburlaine, that they

> after their infinite treason and cruelty, could live for any length of time securely in the countries whose sovereignty they had usurped, and even defend themselves successfully against external enemies, without any attempts on the part

> of their own citizens to conspire against them; whilst many others could not by means of cruelty maintain their state even in time of peace, much less in doubtful times of war[?]
>
> (VIII, 35)

The best way, he answers, is to find the right balance, "For a man who, in all respects, will carry out only his professions of good, will be apt to be ruined amongst so many who are evil. A prince therefore who desires to maintain himself must learn to be not always good, but to be so or not as necessity may require" (XV, 59). Plamenatz (1978:24) supports this by claiming that "... a successful prince will only need to deceive the people who matter." This is the Machiavellian conclusion one must draw at this point. Necessity is the decisive factor which shows whether evil methods such as deceit are justified. Plamenatz continues to argue in this direction and takes the debate even one step further:

> For politics, ... the idea is that it is sometimes legitimate for political rulers, precisely because they are rulers, to deceive, cheat, betray or even torture and murder, where these acts are clear violations of the moral code that seems to bind us all.
>
> (1978:60)

The point here is not that we are also talking murder now, because this is already implied in *The Prince.* Plamenatz frees the rulers from being bound by a common moral code, an attitude which has to be doubted in the original Machiavelli. *The Prince* does not tackle this question, at least explicitly. As far as Plamenatz is concerned, and interpreted loosely, that would mean that princes could go about extremely cruel deeds without the slightest shadow of a doubt. When dealing with Machiavelli, one has to bear in mind that this work was produced in the beginning of the Early Modern period, when moral standards (still overshadowed by the traditions of the Middle Ages) were certainly much less liberal then than they are from a contemporary point of view. Tolerating cruel deeds certainly caused a massive uproar among those who were among the first readers of *The Prince* in the 1520s. Pushing a common moral code

consciously aside sounds like an ultimate decision, even though Plamenatz points out that this was the case only occasionally. However, once you declare the moral code invalid for you, there is no way back. In my opinion one has to take positions, either for or against the moral code. Act according to it or against it. Either you do or you do not. If one chooses to use cruelty once with a positive effect, the threshold to resorting to it again will not be very high. Committing a cruel deed and then switching back to the moral code is hypocritical.

Although it would be brilliant for a prince to only have good qualities, in practice this is not possible, for no man is perfect:

> I am well aware that it would be most praiseworthy for a prince to possess all of the above-named qualities that are esteemed good; but as he cannot have them all, nor entirely observe them, because of his human nature which does not permit it, he should at least be prudent enough to know how to avoid the infamy of those vices that would rob him of his state; and if possible also to guard as such as are likely to endanger it.
>
> (XV, 60)

The crucial point in a prince´s behaviour is to "live upon such terms with his subjects that no accident, either for good or for evil, should make him vary his conduct towards them. For when adverse times bring upon you the necessity for action, you will no longer be in time to do evil; and the good you may do will not profit you, because it will be regarded as having been forced from you, and therefore will bring you no thanks" (VIII, 35f.). Tamburlaine does not really worry about all of this. He acts cruelly in order to get where he wants and thus his subjects can with a high probability forecast the manner in which he is going to go about future endeavours, i.e. he is going to use force. There is no large scale reflection on his deeds, the dominating element we encounter being Tamburlaine´s massive will. He does not care about negative consequences in terms of hatred at all.

When writing *The Prince,* Niccolò Machiavelli had a clear picture in his mind about how the ideal prince should be. In his work, he refers to emperors both from ancient times and from the more recent, medieval past, even to contemporaries. The most important figure he mentions in respect to this analysis is Cesare Borgia, for he has traits that resemble those of Tamburlaine. But who is this man? Machiavelli himself comes up with the necessary background information. Cesare Borgia is the common name for Duke Valentino, son of Pope Alexander VI (III, 14). From this point of view, he has nothing in common with Tamburlaine, who comes from extremely poor circumstances. As the pope´s son, the world is his oyster, as Machiavelli reports. Borgia acquired his principality by being a protégé of his father, a situation that is characterized as "good fortune" in *The Prince* (VII, 25). We learn a lot about Tamburlaine´s connection with fortune in section 4.2. In this respect, they have the common blessing of being favoured by fortune, even though the quality of their fortunes differs quite clearly. Whereas Tamburlaine´s fortune is more the kind of direct divine intervention, Cesare Borgia´s motor of fortune is his father, the pope, who is the highest representative of God´s interests on earth. In Borgia´s case, the source of fortune is a strong one, but cannot quite live up to Tamburlaine´s.

In the end, Borgia´s fortune only lasts as long as his father lives. After his death, he is not able to maintain his state for very long, even though "he employed all the means and did all that a brave and prudent man can do to take root in ... [a] state" (ibid.). Even though he eventually is nowhere near as successful as Tamburlaine, his behaviour and efforts to stabilize his state are exemplary, and Machiavelli does not know "what better lesson I could give to a new prince, than to hold up to him the example of the Duke Valentino´s conduct" (ibid.). He continues his argumentation by stating that Borgia simply fell victim to the malignity of fortune. His father Alexander VI invested much effort in order to aggrandize his son, and by this protection Cesare Borgia reached his rank of emperor (ibid.). Tamburlaine has the stars on his side, apparently, for he does not encounter major difficulties or obstacles impossible to overcome when trying to

reach the throne of Persia. The pope on the one hand and the stars on the other hand guarantee the rather easy rise of Borgia and Tamburlaine to the position of emperors.

One more similarity between Tamburlaine and Borgia is their attitude towards violence. They both consider it a necessary and legitimate means to secure their position and bring about peace in their region. Warburton (2000:8) comments on Borgia´s cruelty in the following way: "Borgia´s main aim in ... cruelty was to maintain his power ... and to pre-empt opposition or insurrection." There is nothing manic about his behaviour, Borgia simply calculates in which situations it is necessary for him to resort to violence. If there was the need to do so, so be it. Borgia, after having conquered the Romagna region, appointed a man called Don Ramiro as his minister there to do away with the petty tyrants who in practice had been in control of that region (VII, 27). This minister used extreme cruelty and brought the province to peace. This violent approach to politics continued also after peace had been established there; this is why Borgia feared Ramiro could become too powerful. He established a civil tribunal in order to show the people that the cruelty practised on them had originated from Ramiro and not from him. He had Ramiro put to death, and his cut-up body was on display in Cesena´s marketplace (VII, 28). He used the means of killing a potential enemy to ensure his position and finally bring about peace after having tolerated the necessary amount of violence.

Borgia had demonstrated that he understood the great importance of avoiding the hatred of the people while at the same time keeping them in awe. This is why he had appointed Ramiro as his minister, to get the people living under Ramiro´s government to hate it (Skinner 1981:40f.). The solution for him now was to kill Ramiro and thus become more popular with his people once again. Skinner (1981:46) calls Borgia´s cruelty "well-known" and refers to chapter XVII of *The Prince* in this context. Borgia used this quality of his to bring peace and loyalty to the Romagna. He achieved all these beneficial results by means of his alleged

viciousness. Here we see that Borgia was in the long run striving for a positive outcome and did not exercise violence for its own sake. He was not passionate about fighting the way Tamburlaine was, but knew about the necessity and usefulness of knowing how and when to fight. Borgia was able to avoid being hated while retaining the people´s love and fear, in accordance with Machiavelli´s advice in chapter 19 of *The Prince* (Scott, Sullivan 1994:894).

In Tamburlaine´s case we deal with a natural warrior. Tamburlaine loves to fight, and whereas in Borgia´s case there is an end to the violence when Don Ramiro is executed, Tamburlaine´s life is characterized by numerous conquests. He is not satisfied after killing Cosroe and Bajazeth´s suicide. At that particular moment he could lean back and relax because his potentially biggest enemies are dead and basically there is no one who could harm him. But instead of behaving like Borgia, who in spite of being exceptionally cruel puts an end to the violence because he wants to, Tamburlaine continues with his conquests and expands his empire constantly. His excessive ambition outscores Borgia´s by far. This explains their eventually differing conduct; however, the similarities between these two men are only too apparent.

Machiavelli sees Cesare Borgia (Duke Valentino) as a potential candidate for the label of perfect prince. According to Skinner (1981:33) one vital point is his deep admiration for him as a military leader and his exemplary conduct in this role. In this context, Skinner refers to Borgia´s ruthless decision to eliminate all mercenary lieutenants and to replace them by his own troops, in other words to form a citizen army. Skinner´s assessment of this point does not differ too greatly from Machiavelli´s opinion. There is also more support for this view from other directions: "Machiavelli was full of his idol, Duke Valentino," declares Montesquieu (*Spirit of the Laws* 29.19)... Some interpreters have therefore argued that Cesare, whatever his shortcomings, is Machiavelli´s idealized ´man of *virtù*´ (Hulliung 1983:192). Also, Warburton (2000:7-9) comes to the same judgement and sees Borgia as a role model for princes, in contrast to Agathocles,

who, in spite of being a successful tyrant, lacked *virtù,* for he "gained power but destroyed a free republic, thereby decreasing the common good ..." Wootton (1994:xii) sees more negative examples:

> Both Agathocles and Oliverotto destroyed free states, murdering their friends and fellow citizens. This is the one crime Machiavelli will not forgive. Where it is concerned, success is irrelevant...

Wootton is supported in this view of Agathocles acting entirely counter-productively. Plamenatz (1978:23) explains it this way: "For Machiavelli, the crucial difference between these two men [Agathocles and Borgia] is that Borgia, if he had achieved his ambition, would have created a strong state where there was not one, whereas Agathocles, in achieving his, left Syracuse worse than he found it." Among scholars there is a common agreement on the point of Borgia being the perfect stereotype of a Machiavellian prince. During the background reading for this thesis, there was not one differing opinion to be found in this case. Agathocles serves as the worst possible example. Warburton (ibid.) comes up with an explanation as to why that is: *Virtù* is the quality that "any new prince who wishes to maintain long-term control of the state, and thereby promote the common good, must cultivate." After analysing Borgia´s actions, Machiavelli comes to the conclusion that there is only very little to be criticized about his conduct:

> Upon reviewing now all the actions of the duke, I should not know where to blame him; it seems to me that I should rather hold him up as an example (as I have said) to be imitated by all those who have risen to sovereignty, either by the good fortune or the arms of others. For being endowed with great courage, and having a lofty ambition, he could not have acted otherwise under the circumstances; and the only thing that defeated his designs was the shortness of Alexander´s life and his own bodily infirmity.
>
> (VII, 30)

Against the light of Machiavelli´s observations Skinner´s and Warburton´s points of view of the matter cannot really contain any surprising element, for Cesare Borgia is the quasi-incarnation of the perfect prince, whose life in medieval times was inevitably tied to his military success. Any other view of this matter would have made it necessary to reconsider this matter, but here we have agreement – and for a reason. Skinner refers to Cesare Borgia in a passage of his book called "On a virtuoso Prince" and makes clear how deep Machiavelli´s admiration for Borgia actually was. Machiavelli "...wished to hold him up ... as a pattern of *virtù* for other princes" (Skinner 1981:41). Skinner´s definition of virtue is the following:

> Following his classical and humanist authorities, he [Machiavelli] treats it as that quality which enables a prince to withstand the blows of Fortune, to attract the goddess´s favour, and to rise in consequence to the heights of princely fame, winning honour and glory for himself and security for his government.
>
> (Skinner 1981: 35)

Returning, then, to *Tamburlaine,* we have to ask ourselves whether the protagonist shows virtue in this sense. Keeping in mind that he is obviously favoured by fortune, he does not have to show any kind of virtue in Skinner´s terms to get into the kingly position he is so keen to get into. Fortune shines on Tamburlaine like the summer sun, and there are no blows by fortune he has to deal with, at least not when it comes to state affairs. Zenocrate´s death is the only entirely negative moment Tamburlaine has to cope with, and it is not immediately connected to his ruling. Certainly there is a deep feeling of grief in Tamburlaine, but Fortune has smiled on him so many times during his life before that there has to be space for negative experiences as well. After all, he is only a man of flesh and blood, a fact that tends to easily be forgotten in the course of the drama due his image as a larger-than-life overachiever.

Tamburlaine does not have to show how to withstand the blows of Fortune, for Fortune is his strongest ally, at least in Skinner´s words. Tamburlaine is a man

who is largely in control of his own fate because he thinks he can rely on fortune almost completely. He puts this into words in the following way:

> I hold the Fates bound fast in iron chains,
> And with my hand turn Fortune´s wheel about;
> And sooner shall the sun fall from his sphere
> Than Tamburlaine be slain or overcome.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 174-177).

However, these are merely Tamburlaine´s "working words". His rhetoric is overwhelmingly strong and leaves the other characters stunned by admiration, unable to critically reflect Tamburlaine´s position. He manages in his manner of an overreacher (see Levin 1953) to convince the people to take his side. The other characters do so immediately. This quality to win over people makes Tamburlaine strong, but does not actually say very much about his being favoured by fortune. For the other characters, however, are won over so easily that they believe in Tamburlaine being a protégé of that *dea bona.* Orcanes says that "... Fortune hath made him great" (*Tamburlaine* II, I, i, 60), which shows the admiration for his ´supernatural´ powers. Just a few lines below, Orcanes talks about Tamburlaine bringing a world of people onto the battlefield (*Tamburlaine* II, I, i, 67), which exemplifies the earthly dimension of his powers, him being the commander of a massive and cruel army.

Skinner´s definition of virtue might not fit with Tamburlaine´s behaviour, but there is no doubt that Tamburlaine is a virtuous leader himself as well. Fortune being his companion outscores those who manage to deal with her blows, for Tamburlaine avoids blows occurring in the first place. In a quest like his, fortune is the best ally one can possibly have. This is why Tamburlaine and Cesare Borgia are also similar in this respect, even though their ways of dealing with fortune are of different nature.

On the whole, the similarities between Cesare Borgia and Tamburlaine are quite striking indeed. It is not surprising if after having read *The Prince* and

become aware of Borgia´s qualities, Marlowe would have created his protagonist for *Tamburlaine* on the basis of this Italian duke. However, by endowing Tamburlaine with the blessing of fortune, Marlowe takes the idea of an "ideal prince" one step further. Tamburlaine is more than the initial Turkic emperor Tamerlane, and he is more than Borgia. He is a combination of the ruthlessness of Tamerlane, Borgia´s features, the divine intervention of fortune favouring him, and the description of an ideal emperor in *The Prince*. When all these things are added together, the single original historical persons out of whom Tamburlaine appears to have been composed inevitably seem extremely inferior to him. When the theatre audience is aware that the protagonist of the *Tamburlaine* plays is based on the medieval Turkic emperor Tamerlane, it will appreciate that the character indeed is very powerful, in spite of his low origin. Taking fortune, however, which is offered as an explanation in the play, as the single reason for him being almost superhuman, cannot be called sufficient on the basis of this analysis. Tamburlaine was created by singling out the best, toughest, most valorous etc. traits of either very cruel and powerful princes (Tamerlane) as well as the ideal of an emperor (Borgia, *The Prince).*

3.3. The Soldier Tamburlaine

Machiavelli describes his views on the relations of a prince with arms, soldiers and the art of war at great length. This cannot be called a surprise since acquiring a new principality throughout history was achieved for the most part through the agency of military action. If there were no actively involved troops, there certainly were some soldiers waiting to intervene. Thus, military forces, used either actively or passively, their equipment and the "art of war" (XIV, 56) deserved to be considered in such an extensive manner in *The Prince.*

Machiavelli gives a general statement concerning the level of importance of military forces: "The main foundation which all states must have ... are good laws and good armies" (XII, 47). He gets into more detail immediately after that:

> I say, then, that the armies with which a prince defends his state are either his own, or they are mercenaries or auxiliaries, or they are mixed. Mercenary and auxiliary troops are both useless and dangerous; and if any one attempts to found his state upon mercenaries, it will never be stable or secure; for they are disunited, ambitious and without discipline ... The reason of all this is, that mercenary troops are not influenced by affection, or by any other consideration except their small stipend, which is not enough to make them willing to die for you.
>
> (ibid.)

Thus a prince should, in Machiavelli´s opinion, avoid employing either type of soldiers and exclusively rely on his own, loyal, troops to avoid plots being hatched against him. He goes so far as to say that "no prince can ever be secure that has not an army of his own" (XIII, 55). The emperor is bound to use his arms or troops, and to be able to use the military successfully, he must have certain skills. By this he means constant military training for his soldiers and for himself (the *art of war)*, and he as a leader should very carefully organize and discipline his army, "for that is the only art that is expected of him who commands" (XIV, 56). This involved practical exercise as well as scientific study. These studies

should involve history, in particularly the "actions of eminent men, ... how they bore themselves in war, and ... the causes of their victories and defeats". Men endowed with these abilities can, according to Machiavelli, make it from a "private station" to "the rank of princes" (ibid.). Machiavelli sees the neglect of this art as the main cause for the loss of a prince´s state.

Tamburlaine does not neglect this art at all, on the contrary, since a "stately tent of war" is mentioned as early as in the Prologue to *Tamburlaine, Part One.* Wilson (1996) describes his cruel fighting style like this: "[T]his ´Scythian slave´ (*Tamburlaine* I, III, iii, 68) is the placeless New Man or *Conquistador* of the Renaissance; but he is also that most transgressive of all executants of commercial expansion, one of those ´vile outrageous men / That live by rapine and by lawless spoil´ (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, iii, 66), or pirate" (quoted in Urry 1988:58). This quotation shows both the positive and the negative aspects of Tamburlaine´s military skills. He is called placeless, for his will to expand his territory never ends, and is also called a pirate who commits many lawless acts and behaves in a brutal manner. At the same time, however, the term *Conquistador* is used, and this term definitely has – apart from the cruelty that it certainly implies – also some positive connotation to it. The *Conquistadores* helped expand the Spanish empire in Middle and South America by being very successful invaders and expansionists themselves. They, Fernando Cortez being one of the most famous of them, paved the way for the Spaniards being able to get their hands on previously undiscovered riches. These men are considered heroes in Spain to this day, and by calling Tamburlaine a *Conquistador* he is being given a fair amount of credit for his achievements. In spite of all the cruelty, this title is deserved, for there cannot be any doubt about Tamburlaine´s qualities as a military leader.

In order to be in control of his troops at all times, Machiavelli suggests that a prince command his army in person and does not leave this duty to others (XII, 48), for "[e]xperience has shown that princes ... achieve the greatest success in

war when they themselves direct the movements of their own armies". This suggestion we find represented in *Tamburlaine,* where Tamburlaine himself is the commander-in-chief of his troops and is successful (with the help of his soldiers) in capturing the throne. Tamburlaine is the prototype of a natural military leader, which certainly is a necessity and at the same time very favourable for a (future) king. Marlowe reinforced this by using "imagery of destruction from the sky" at the end of the third act of *Tamburlaine* I, so that the recipient saw a giant Tamburlaine, whose head reached so high that it was close to the stars; his "physical courage ...[was] unquestionable" (Fieler 1961:35f.). The idea that Tamburlaine by this description is made larger than life to scare off his opponents on the battlefield is justified, for Tamburlaine is a leader who is somehow larger than life. He wants these military skills of his to be continued by his sons, but their outward appearance does not please him, for they do not look strong and valorous enough:

> Their hair as white as milk and soft as down,
> Which should be like the quills of porcupines,
> As black as jet, and hard as iron or steel.
> (*Tamburlaine* II, I, iv, 25-7)

Hattaway, when analysing this passage in his essay *Christopher Marlowe: Ideology and Subversion,* comes to the conclusion that "the hero has become a monster", for his sons´ outward appearance did not please him; they simply looked "unwarlike" (quoted in Urry 1988:211). We know that Tamburlaine is always drawn towards fighting and war, and he of course wants his sons to continue this tradition. When recalling that Tamburlaine´s looks are those of a natural warrior, one can relate to him expressing his disappointment at the fact that his immediate offspring do not match his expectations (in the sense of looks) in such blunt words. Going so far as to call him a monster is not justified. Tamburlaine sees in them more Zenocrate´s offspring than his own, for they resemble their mother much more than they resemble him. Zenocrate is the woman Tamburlaine loves, thus there is no sign of immediate abandonment of

his sons. However, he strongly doubts whether they are able to live up to his high expectations, as he says that

> Their fingers made to quaver on a lute,
> Their arms to hang about a lady´s neck,
> Their legs to dance and caper in the air ...
> (*Tamburlaine* II, I, iv, 29-32).

However, Zenocrate and Celebinus, his youngest son, after that manage to convince him that his doubt is nonsense, for he was the most skilful teacher for his sons, who most surely would be able to make him proud and become strong men and soldiers the equal of their father. Tamburlaine´s advice for his sons is quite clear:

> Be all of scourge and terror to the world,
> Or else you are not sons of Tamburlaine.
> (*Tamburlaine* II, I, iv, 63-4)

Tamburlaine has different kingdoms to distribute among his offspring, Persia being the most famous and important. The son of his who is willing to later reign over the most precious of Tamburlaine´s territories will have to do the following:

> For he shall wear the crown of Persia
> Whose head hath deepest scars, whose breast most wounds,
> Which, being wroth, sends lightning from his eyes,
> And in the furrows of his frowning brows
> Harbours revenge, war, death, and cruelty;
> For in a field, whose superficies
> Is cover´d with a liquid purple veil,
> And sprinkled with the brains of slaughter´d men,
> My royal chair of state shall be advanc´d;
> And he that means to place himself therein,
> Must armed wade up to the chin in blood.
> (*Tamburlaine* II, I, iv,74-84)

This shows that military skills are his dominant qualities and it is natural that he wants to pass them on to his sons who shall fulfil his dream and conquer those parts of the world Tamburlaine has not conquered because he has died too early.

Foreign policy in Tamburlaine´s time was almost exclusively confined to warfare. A king or leader thus had to be a role model for his soldiers and subjects concerning courage and will to fight to be able to motivate them in the best possible manner. Apart from having his own troops, the study of the "art of war" (XIV, 56) should be his primary interest. As we have seen earlier there were, generally speaking, two ways of "carrying on a contest: the one by law, and the other by force. The first is practised by men, and the other by animals; and as the first is often insufficient, it becomes necessary to resort to the second" (XVIII, 67). Machiavelli considers this art the only relevant skill that is demanded of an emperor. Men who are endowed with this ability can, according to him, rise in society and become rulers: "... [I]t often enables men born in private station to achieve the rank of princes" (XIV, 56). Tamburlaine, who rises (as we have already seen) from being a mere Scythian shepherd to become king, is a prototype of men of this kind. This description could have been developed out of Tamburlaine´s actions, if it had not been for the fact that *The Prince* was written before the *Tamburlaine* plays.

Until his death, Tamburlaine contests many battles successfully. He started as

> Hoping (misled by dreaming prophecies)
> To reign in Asia, and with barbarous arms
> To make himself the monarch of the East[.]
> *(Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 41-43)

Having accomplished this goal, he reigned over the following provinces Ortygius enumerates when crowning Cosroe. Tamburlaine deprives him of his throne and thus makes himself ruler over the same territories:

> Emperor of Asia and Persia,
> Great lord of Media and Armenia,
> Duke of Africa and Albania,
> Mesopotamia and of Parthia,
> East India and the late-discover´d isles,
> Chief lord of all the wide vast Euxine Sea,
> And of the ever-raging Caspian Lake.
>
> (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 162-168)

This is a massive empire this shepherd of low parentage suddenly reigns over. We can apply Menaphon´s comment originally meant for Cosroe, "Since Fortune gives you opportunity / To gain the title of a conqueror" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 124-5), to Tamburlaine, since his actions are quite closely linked to fortune (see also section 2.3.2.). His thirst for more power, however, is not quenched after making himself emperor of this vast territory. Tamburlaine openly tells of his visions on how to proceed with his conquests. He discloses his initial ideas to Theridamas:

> Why, then, Theridamas, I´ll first assay
> To get the Persian kingdom to myself;
> Then thou for Parthia; they for Scythia and Media;
> And, if I prosper, all shall be as sure
> As if the Turk, the Pope, Afric, and Greece,
> Came creeping to us with their crowns a-piece.
>
> (*Tamburlaine* I, II, v, 81-86)

Here he is already thinking about establishing an empire, but there still are his allies who are supposed to help him carry out this mission. Later, though, when he is trying to enlarge his empire, he thinks of himself as the only governor. His allies do not play a role in his thoughts anymore, he is the centre of everything:

> ...when holy Fates
> Shall stablish me in strong Egyptia,
> We mean to travel to th´antarctic pole,
> Conquering the people underneath our feet,
> And be renowm´d as never emperors were.
> Zenocrate, I will not crown thee yet,
> Until with greater honours I be grac´d.
>
> (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, iv, 143-9)

He wants to expand his spheres of influence until he wins "the world at last" (*Tamburlaine* I, III, iii, 260). This does not come as a surprise when we examine the way in which Tamburlaine sees himself: "greater man" or "my mightiness" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 22-24) are just two comments on himself which show that Tamburlaine goes for the highest of positions a ruler can obtain: to be the governor of the whole world.

Birringer (1984:222) makes the point that Marlowe comes up with a play that has some features previously unseen in Elizabethan literature: "The self-conscious annunciation of an agonistic principle of Word and Sword, and especially the exulting manner in which the new poetry is introduced, sets up a new horizon of expectation for the audience, even though the militant images of presumptuous ambition seem to imply an ethical evaluation of the new ´terms´ the listeners are about to ´hear´." After the extraordinary success of Part One, which made Marlowe write a sequel, even his harshest critics acknowledged the power of his new "mighty line".

Tamburlaine is a warrior by nature. This character trait is of great importance for someone striving for a throne, since in ancient times foreign policy was almost exclusively made on the battlefield. Tamburlaine´s elaboration on the art of war (*Tamburlaine* II, III, ii, 53-92 and 95-129) gives proof of Tamburlaine being a skilled soldier when he explains the stages of a soldier´s career to his sons at great length and goes into details. A prince thus had to be a role model for his people and his soldiers concerning bravery and the will to fight in order to win them for his goals. Machiavelli is right to assess arms, soldiers and the art of war as very important. In the *Tamburlaine* dramas can be found many passages that pay tribute to these ideals.

The protagonist, as can be expected, is passionate about weapons. He makes this explicit by stating that "This complete armour and this curtle-axe /Are adjuncts more beseeming Tamburlaine" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 42-43). In the same scene we find further evidence for fighting being of utmost importance for an

emperor. Techelles characterizes an armed clash as a legitimate means of negotiation, and his comment almost makes battle seem the only proper way of showing bravery:

> No, cowards and faint-hearted runaways
> Look for orations when the foe is near:
> Our swords shall play the orators for us.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 130ff.)

With this statement it becomes clear there is no room whatsoever for hesitation in case of a conflict. An emperor must be eager and willing to use force to put his demands into practice.

If one now imagines this natural born warrior on the battlefield or during important negotiations, his mere appearance makes it clear from the very first moment that this man is a master at the art of war which (as we have seen) is the only art a prince, according to Machiavelli, has to master. Tamburlaine paints a magnificent picture of himself at war (*Tamburlaine* I, II, iii, 7-24). However, even though blessed with almost superhuman strength, Tamburlaine is only a man of flesh and blood and no god who can live forever. Hopkins sees clear signs of Tamburlaine´s position gradually fading, which in my point of view is a justified observation. This was especially so in Part Two, "where the Scourge of God is seen as a harassed single parent subject to illness and mortality; and by the end of his story his singularity and otherness have vanished" (1996:20), for he dies in bed as an old man.

3.4. Enemies, Errors and Difficulties

How is a new prince to tackle difficulties, what does he have to bear in mind when it comes to enemies and which are errors he should avoid making? This section is going to try to answer these questions for *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine.* There is only one chapter in *The Prince* (chapter III), which deals with these issues, but it treats them at quite some length. It is of importance to gain some insight into how an emperor should behave in difficult stages of his reign, for even an almost superhuman character like Tamburlaine cannot always avoid tricky situations.

Machiavelli considers new principalities as most likely to be faced with difficulties (III, 7). He explains his point in more detail:

> [T]he new prince finds that he has for enemies all those whom he has injured by seizing that principality; and at the same time he cannot preserve as friends even those who have aided him in obtaining possession, because he cannot satisfy their expectations, nor can he employ strong measures against them, being under obligations to them. For however strong a new prince may be in troops, yet will he always have need of the good will of the inhabitants, if he wishes to enter into firm possession of the country.
>
> (ibid.)

As an example of when the emperor did not have the support of his subjects, Machiavelli mentions French King Louis XII, whose actions quickly evoked the disgust of his subjects (III, 7f.). When looking at *Tamburlaine,* we do not get the impression that the protagonist really could get into serious difficulties, even though it would clearly be natural for a prince, having reached this position from as low a position in society as shepherd, to find himself in troubled times. However, Marlowe chooses two ways in which potential problems for Tamburlaine, namely potential opponents, get out of his way. The cruellest option is killing, as in the case of Cosroe, who could have become one of

Tamburlaine´s most dangerous threats. Bajazeth chooses to kill himself while he is imprisoned by Tamburlaine. By committing suicide he escapes the unavoidable, which is that he would most probably have died under Tamburlaine´s sword. Bajazeth cannot bear the humiliation of being killed by this former shepherd and chooses to die with at least some dignity left.

Tamburlaine was not an active part of Bajazeth´s suicide (and how could he be?), but by capturing him did not leave Bajazeth with much of a choice. The elimination of two powerful opponents can be interpreted in the Machiavellian sense, as being wise, for Tamburlaine did

> what all wise princes ought to do; namely, not only look to all present troubles, but also to those of the future, against which they provided with the utmost prudence. For it is by foreseeing difficulties from afar that they are easily provided against; but awaiting their near approach, remedies are no longer in time, for the malady has become incurable.
>
> (III, 11)

Thus, Machiavelli continues, it would be good for a wise prince to act like a doctor trying to identify a disease in a very early state, for then it was easier to cure it than, say, recognizing it only little prior to the patient´s death. The same rules apply to matters of state:

> for when the evils that arise ... are seen far ahead, which it is given only to a wise prince to do, then they are easily remedied; but when, in consequence of not having been foreseen, these evils are allowed to grow and assume such proportions that they become manifest to every one, they can no longer be remedied.
>
> (ibid.)

Tamburlaine, being an intelligent man, knows about the potential danger coming from both Bajazeth and Cosroe. This is why he does not hesitate, but eliminates them at a very early stage. Luckily for him, Bajazeth takes care of killing himself, which is only good for Tamburlaine´s reputation among his subjects. Because he has not slain Bajazeth, he appears less cruel and Bajazeth,

having run out of ideas, seems the weaker. However, from his own point of view, Bajazeth died in the most dignified way possible, although his option was not necessarily accessible to the common man in the street for whom such questions of royal dignity were completely strange patterns of thought.

These cases of Cosroe and Bajazeth offer examples of one way in which Tamburlaine manages to get rid of opponents. The other case involves much less effort and trouble from Tamburlaine himself, but is nevertheless worth mentioning. Many people are very impressed, scared or even terrified by the stories told about him. His reputation and the fact that for the most part he lives up to it makes even strong warriors back off and seek the approval of this man they realize they will not be able to beat. This is why they consider it the best alternative to join forces with him as his subjects and consequently will not be harmed by him from this point onwards. Techelles, who praises him as "Puissant, renowm´d, and mighty Tamburlaine" (*Tamburlaine* I, III, iii, 96), and Usumcasane are his allies from the very beginning of the drama, Theridamas makes himself a subject of Tamburlaine´s in *Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, when he is won over by Tamburlaine´s words and looks, attributes which supposedly make him a strong man (see *Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 74f.). In the following, Theridamas calls Tamburlaine "Arch-monarch of the world" (*Tamburlaine* II, I, v, 3); he offers his full support, including armed forces, for Tamburlaine, who gladly accepts this offer (*Tamburlaine* II, I, v).

Apart from being exposed to exterior enemies and difficulties, there can also be the possibility of the emperor causing problems for himself by the way he acts. Machiavelli uses the example of Louis XII of France to remind the audience of the measures to absolutely refrain from taking. The first point of criticism is that Louis, when carrying out his conquest of Italy, acted too carelessly when not securing and protecting his friends (III, 12), a factor which might have easily worked towards securing himself against the remaining strong powers of Italy.

He simply weakened himself by "alienating his friends and those who had thrown themselves into his arms" (ibid.).

Machiavelli blames Louis XII for having an interest in Italy in the first place, having no allies there at all. He states that

> The desire of conquest is certainly most natural and common amongst men, and whenever they yield to it and are successful, they are praised; but when they lack the means, and yet attempt it anyhow, then they commit an error that merits blame.
>
> (III, 13)

Conquest itself is not negative, but the manner in which Louis XII pursues his own in Italy makes Machiavelli warn other princes to carefully consider how they are going to go about their endeavours. As a summary of potential *taboos* for a prince, Machiavelli lists other major errors by Louis XII:

> [H]e destroyed the weak; he increased the power of one already powerful in Italy; he established a most powerful stranger there; he did not go to reside there himself; nor did he plant any colonies there.
>
> (ibid.)

Coming back to *Tamburlaine* with this in mind, one has to say that the protagonist goes about his conquest with utmost dedication and seems to have a clear battle plan in mind. Relying on the powers he was allegedly endowed with by fortune, he fearlessly takes every single step of the way towards kingship and succeeds in capturing the throne. We do not initially learn about friends or allies Tamburlaine has, but as soon as word spreads about his skills and his valour many people feel strong support for him, either because they are genuinely impressed by who/what he his or, thinking pragmatically, make friends with him or stay on good terms simply to avoid becoming his enemy. Through his personality Tamburlaine makes sure, willingly or not, that there is a strong

positive attitude towards him when he is carrying out his operation to become king.

He appreciates the fact that people are ready to support him and gladly accepts them. Theridamas is the most important of them and later even becomes king of Argier. Tamburlaine, a clever strategist, knows that this behaviour of the people is partly a gift for him, for he does not have to convince or beat them militarily in order to win them over, but can rely on them from the very start. He certainly does not alienate these men and is proud of having won new supporters.

Speaking about conquest, Tamburlaine is a natural warrior. He has a constant wish to expand his territory, as had the historical figure of Tamerlane. Both are renowned for their conquests, and as far as Tamburlaine is concerned, we do not learn anything about the flaws of his endeavours. Thus, there is no danger of him embarking on one of his conquests without having a clear picture of how everything is supposed to happen. Apart from that, he does not commit any of the major errors of Louis XII quoted above: He does not destroy the weak, but goes straight for Cosroe, who is the man who stands up to him the most; he does not increase anyone else´s power but his own – on the contrary, he kills King Cosroe to become king himself and humiliates the Ottoman leader Bajazeth long enough by imprisoning him that he commits suicide; he goes to reside there himself; and Persia is the centre of his empire.

I have consciously left out one point that was dealt with in Machiavelli´s discussion of errors: namely, the point regarding not establishing a most powerful stranger in the country conquered. In Tamburlaine´s case, this behaviour cannot be called an error, for conquest literally is his life. He wants to become King of Persia, and conquering it is the only logical solution. It does not occur to him that he basically is a stranger with initially no allies (as I pointed out, he however manages to get support very soon) who could be easily endangered. His excess of self-confidence, of ambition and the good will of

fortune guarantee him a relatively easy way to the throne. As we learn in the course of the drama, this manner of acting does not return to haunt him, for he successfully continues his policy of conquest and leaves his sons with a large empire.

4. Moderation and Fortune

4.1. The Moderate Emperor

This section will deal with the moderate qualities of an emperor, in contrast to, for example, the military attributes. In *The Prince* these moderate attributes involve liberality, benefit, clemency, love, friends, faith, wisdom and the emperor´s relationship with his advisors, other noblemen and his people in general. Firstly, Machiavelli considers it a good thing for a prince to be "deemed liberal" (XVI, 61). Too much liberality, on the other hand, was not appropriate, since once the people do not fear the king any more and show him no respect, he will become vulnerable. Thus, excessive liberality could easily be misinterpreted as weakness and endanger the prince´s position. In Machiavelli´s opinion, liberality eventually causes the prince to be hated (XVI, 63), with one exception. In the case of leading his armies into enemy territory, a king should be extremely liberal concerning "plunder, pillage and exactions" (XVI, 62), because otherwise his soldiers arre most unlikely to follow him.

Tamburlaine is the absolute counterpart of what one would consider a liberal person. Leech (1964) cannot see any sign of a moderate emperor in his actions at all: "[I]t was held by most authors that man´s passions are beneficial, provided they are kept temperate ... But Tamburlaine lacks the moderation" (57-59). His actions therefore could not be good at all, because Tamburlaine had no control over his temper. For the most part, this is a view one can take. However, Tamburlaine is not entirely bad; the idea of this section is to point out that there are also positive traits about him, although it has to be said that these characteristics of a moderate emperor cannot hide the fact that the Scythian is clearly more dominated by his ambition and cruelty. Perhaps a more balanced assessment of Tamburlaine´s actions could be achieved by positioning oneself between Leech´s view and that of Waith (1964; quoted in Leech 1964:69f.), who

sees Tamburlaine as a reincarnation of ancient Greek hero Hercules and thus the essence of his character had to be the one of a "world conqueror". He draws the conclusion that Tamburlaine was "a proud and noble king at heart."

In his character there is no space for liberality, which means that there are no hints in the drama at him in fact acting liberally. When thinking about the exception Machiavelli mentions - the liberality of letting his troops plunder enemy territory freely to keep them loyal to him - and one can be sure that Tamburlaine, a man very skilled in the art of war (see also section 3.3.), would let his soldiers act in this manner. There is proof of this in the drama. In *Tamburlaine* II, Tamburlaine gives his soldiers the permission to rape concubines and steal their jewels:

> Hold ye, tall soldiers, take ye queens a-piece, -
> I mean such queens as were kings´ concubines.
> Take them; divide them, and their jewels too,
> And let them equally serve all your turns.
> *(Tamburlaine* II, IV, iii, 70-73)

The conferring of benefits (VIII, 35) is one theme Machiavelli refers to only very briefly. His main point is that good deeds should be done one at a time to become more appreciated than if there had been multiple benefits at the same time. When it comes to evil and cruel actions the situation and manner of actions are different.

Machiavelli classifies clemency and mercy among the desirable qualities of an emperor:" I say that every prince ought to desire the reputation of being merciful, and not cruel; at the same time, he should be careful not to misuse that mercy" (XVII, 64). He continues with the assertion that

> [a] prince, however, should be slow to believe and to act;
> nor should he be too easily alarmed by his own fears, and
> should proceed moderately and with prudence and

> humanity, so that an excess of confidence may not make
> him incautious, nor too much mistrust make him intolerant.
> (XVII, 65)

Tamburlaine - even though he is of exceptional strength and has the ability to climb up the ladder of society really quickly - does not have all qualities mentioned in this quotation. He certainly is not influenced by fear; in the whole drama we only find one occasion during which he shows fear, and this is at the very end of *Tamburlaine* II, when he senses he is going to die very soon:

> What daring god torments my body thus,
> And seeks to conquer mighty Tamburlaine?
> Shall sickness prove me now to be a man,
> That have been term´d the terror of the world?
> Techelles and the rest, come, take your swords,
> And threaten him whose hand afflicts my soul.
> Come, let us march against the powers of heaven,
> And set black streamers in the firmament,
> To signify the slaughter of the gods.
> Ah, friends, what shall I do? I cannot stand.
> Come, carry me to war against the gods,
> That thus envy the health of Tamburlaine.
> (*Tamburlaine* II, V, iii, 42-53)

Even though he feels the inevitable death approaching fast, he turns the situation on its head when still willing to challenge the gods who want to deprive him of his precious life. Fear works as a motor for him in this moment, and this enables him to accumulate his well-known fighting spirit for one last time, in spite of the hopelessness of his situation. On the verge of his death, he thus manages to scare enemies away by just appearing on the battlefield. After this very last deed as a soldier he wants his sons to fulfil his dream of conquering the rest of the world:

> Thus are the villains, cowards fled for fear,
> Like summer´s vapours vanish´d by the sun;
> ...
> Give me a map; then let me see how much
> Is left for me to conquer all the world,

That these, my boys, may finish all my wants.
(*Tamburlaine* II, V, iii, 116 f. and 124-6)

His actions cannot be characterized by moderation, prudence or humanity, since his character´s dominating quality is ambition, which more than once causes him to try to take more than one step at a time, very often using brute force to achieve what he has planned. Tamburlaine is very focused on himself and his goals, and concerning his confidence one might consider it to be not just being high but too high, i.e. excessive. The final result is his death in bed as an old man. One of his last questions is: "And shall I die, and this unconquered?" (*Tamburlaine* II, V, iii, 151). This question, asked just moments before he passes away, sums up his life very well. He has brought his project of becoming a strong emperor to a successful end and can die as a proud man. On his way up the hierarchy he has relied to a very great extent on himself and has been very intolerant when it comes to the needs of the people around him, with the exception of his wife Zenocrate.

What we have just seen is that Tamburlaine is not an emperor blessed with excessive clemency. Machiavelli answers the question of whether a prince should be loved or hated with "both the one and other" (XVII, 65). Now that we have already examined the evidence relating to Tamburlaine´s cruelty, the next question is: Is there any love expressed for the protagonist in the *Tamburlaine* dramas? The mentioning of Zenocrate makes it clear that there is someone who falls in love with the emperor eventually, after at first feeling hatred for him because he wants to force her into a marital relationship. Zenocrate puts her disgust this way: "I must be pleas´d perforce, wretched Zenocrate!" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 259). She initially had not believed in his plans to rise from shepherd to emperor and relied on the divinities who were to prevent him from rising above the others: "The gods, defenders of the innocent, / Will never prosper your intended drifts, … thou hop´st to be eternised / By living Asia´s

mighty emperor" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 68-73). However, Tamburlaine makes clear what his priorities concerning Zenocrate are:

> Thy person is more worth to Tamburlaine
> Than the possession of the Persian crown,
> Which gracious stars have promis´d at my birth.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 90-92)

Slowly but steadily, the tables turn in favour of Tamburlaine. What began as a one-sided interest develops into love on both sides. Zenocrate does not let people speak badly of Tamburlaine in her presence and defends him with truly Machiavellian words:

> Leave to wound me with these words,
> And speak of Tamburlaine as he deserves.
> The entertainment we have had of him
> Is far from villany or servitude,
> And might in noble minds be counted princely.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, III, ii, 35-39)

Defending Tamburlaine is the first step towards love, which Zenocrate later expresses as follows (in a language suggestive of that between Shakespeare´s *Antony and Cleopatra*):

> As looks the sun through Nilus´ flowing stream,
> Or when the Morning holds him in her arms,
> So looks my lordly love, fair Tamburlaine;
> His talk much sweeter than the Muses´ song
> They sung for honour ´gainst Pierides,
> Or when Minerva did with Neptune strive:
> And higher would I rear my estimate
> Than Juno, sister to the highest god,
> If I were match´d with mighty Tamburlaine.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, III, ii, 47-55)

Her wish becomes true and she becomes Tamburlaine´s wife and thus queen of Persia. For a short time the royal couple is able to enjoy their marriage and

Zenocrate sees her husband´s character even while he sleeps: "Ah, Tamburlaine, my love, sweet Tamburlaine, / That fights for sceptres and for slippery crowns... Thou that, in conduct of thy happy stars, / Sleep´st every night with conquest on thy brows" (*Tamburlaine* I, V, ii, 294-5 and 297-8). However, their love has a tragic ending because she dies at the beginning of the second part of the drama, and her death is the only major loss Tamburlaine has to deal with in his successful life.

After dealing with love, the next focus is on friends and a prince´s relation to other noblemen and his people. Machiavelli considers it very difficult, if not impossible, for a prince, especially in a new principality possibly just recently acquired with the help of military forces, to make new friends and even to maintain the good relationships with his old friends (III, 12). For the new prince, it were neither possible to keep his old friends because he would not be able to satisfy their expectations, nor could he impose extreme measures upon them because they helped him to power using their influence, providing him with weapons, etc., which on the other hand makes the new prince dependent on his old friends (ibid.). This is not the case for Tamburlaine, who is not dependent on anyone at all.

How is a prince supposed to treat his people and other noblemen? When it comes to his people, Machiavelli makes it clear that without the good will and the affection of the people, it will be difficult to reign, especially in hard times (IX, 39). A prince cannot change the people he governs over, but he could in any case quite easily do away with noblemen he does not approve of. If the prince has achieved his rank with the help of the nobility, maintaining his principality is bound to be difficult. However, if the people back him, then he will have much less trouble in keeping power (ibid.). Noblemen either support the prince entirely and with full dedication, or they do not, Machiavelli asserts. For the emperor, thus, it is important to have around him nobles who are loyal to him and deprive those opposing him of their titles (ibid.)

Tamburlaine has two strong allies in Usumcasane and Techelles. Usumcasane describes their relationship to Tamburlaine, in terms of the promise of kingship: "And making thee and me, Techelles, kings, / That even to death will follow Tamburlaine" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 58-9). Indeed these two men stay loyal towards Tamburlaine throughout the course of the two parts of the drama and are rewarded for their loyalty and military support with the crowns of Fez (for Techelles) and Morocco (for Usumcasane). A third ally is Theridamas, who later becomes king of Argier. He also is a strong man who resembles Tamburlaine in some respects. He is described in the following manner: "Go, stout Theridamas, thy words are swords, / And with thy looks thou conquerest all thy foes." (*Tamburlaine* I, I, i, 74-75) Theridamas praises the Scythian as "thrice-noble Tamburlaine" (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 249) and gains his favour. His loyalty is, as mentioned above, also rewarded with a crown.

Tamburlaine is glad to have these allies, but he is on his own in the key situations of his rise to power. This does not mean that his friends have left him, but Tamburlaine carries out his unlawful deeds himself and does not rely on his subjects doing the ´dirty work´. Princes should also always keep their faith. Machiavelli, however, points out that "the experience of our ... times has shown that those princes have achieved great things who made small account of good faith" (XVIII, 67). This quotation can without a doubt be applied to Tamburlaine, because his behaviour is the complete opposite of showing good faith.

4.2. Fortune

In this section the influence of fortune will be examined. What is Machiavelli´s point of view, and where in the *Tamburlaine* dramas can we find evidence pointing in this direction? Fortune is a central theme of both *The Prince* and *Tamburlaine.* This is why it will be analysed in detail. Machiavelli and his contemporaries turned to Roman historians to describe the phenomenon of fortune better. Skinner, in his discussion of Machiavelli and fortune (1981:25),

refers to book 30 of Livy´s *History of Rome (Ab urbe condita)*. In this book Hannibal capitulates to the young Scipio. In his speech of surrender he calls Scipio "a man whom Fortune has never deceived". The Roman view of fortune was to see "her" as a *dea bona,* a good goddess. However, she still was a woman and thus attracted by the *vir,* i.e. "the man of true manliness". The Christian view, as described by Boethius in *The Consolation of Philosophy,* denies the key assumption that Fortune is open to being influenced. The goddess was to be seen as a "blind power" or a "pitiless force" (Skinner 1981:26).

Now what exactly does Machiavelli say about fortune in *The Prince*? Fortune can, according to him, be a strong motor and favour someone to such an extent that becoming king seems the easiest task in the world to fulfil:

> Those who by good fortune only rise from mere private station to the dignity of princes have but little trouble in achieving that elevation, for they fly there as it were on wings; but their difficulties begin after they have been placed in that high position.
>
> (VII, 24)

Here there is a warning connected to his statement. Once having climbed to the highest position in society (and quickly!), problems will arise. This warning is only too logical, for a prince´s rapid rise in society has notions of having been preordained by God or the gods this prince happens to believe in. Kopetsch (1990: 87) supports this view by clearly attributing "forces of within and without man´s nature" to Tamburlaine´s rise to power.In *Tamburlaine* evidence can be found that points in this direction. Sales (1995:67), however, considers this question unsolved and does not agree with those who are of the opinion that Tamburlaine´s actions actually are influenced by divine power. I will try to demonstrate this point in the following, as well as there was the necessity of some kind of evidence in the drama itself, not exclusively for those appreciating the drama, but also for the character and to make the plot coherent.

It certainly is ideal for every emperor to present proof to his subjects, enemies etc. that he reigns because a god wanted him to become emperor. This is necessary because, as Kahn points out, "in a world of Fortuna, in short, the hero becomes of necessity the embodiment of *Virtù*. In such a world, then, the virtues no longer seem to be attributes of individual agents; rather, they recover their original sense of powers or forces, of *virtù*. As Fletcher remarks, the allegorical hero can act without the usual moral restraints, "even when he is acting morally, since he is moral only in the interests of his power over other men" and thus acts like a Machiavellian prince (1964:68). Being legitimated by heavenly powers makes the prince in question seem invincible and massively increases his subjects´ respect, and also fear, of him. This divine support in most cases will mostly make people refrain from attacking the ruler, for a consequence could be the gods´ wrath. The more proof a ruler can provide for his having been chosen by the gods, the stronger will his status be.

The first hint at predetermination in Tamburlaine´s case can be found in *Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 91f. when Tamburlaine himself tells Techelles that "gracious stars have promised at ... [his] birth" that he one day would own the crown of Persia. A similar passage can be found later in the drama, when Tamburlaine implores the stars: "Smile, stars that reign´d at my nativity, / And dim the brightness of their neighbour lamps" (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, ii, 33f.). Meander also considers Tamburlaine´s life to be predetermined, but with a clear negative connotation: "Some powers divine, or else infernal, mix´d / Their angry seeds at his conception" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, vi, 9f.). The image created of Tamburlaine is not one of a person who is mortal as the common man on the street, thinks Fieler (1961:33-35). One way of emphasizing this fact was to compare Tamburlaine with only three people: namely Achilles, Aeneas and Julius Caesar, which meant that Tamburlaine could be compared with the stars, but most of all with the sun (ibid.). Tamburlaine´s empire is also referred to as "the chiefest lamp of all the earth" (*Tamburlaine* I, IV, ii, 36).

In thinking about the different views on Fortune, one could easily start an argument as to whether Fortune in *Tamburlaine* is dealt with according to the Christian or the Roman view. My answer is that there is no clear answer, for we have a combination of both Christian and Roman elements. The predetermination and Fortune´s continuously positive attitude towards Tamburlaine belong to the Christian elements in the sense that Fortune is not open for influences of any kind. Fortune is a strong ally for Tamburlaine throughout his life; there are no changes in this respect. As far as Roman elements are concerned, Tamburlaine clearly belongs to the *viri,* and being a *vir,* or a very "manly man", makes him attractive to Fortune. Even if he had not been favoured by Fortune from the very beginning, he would have been likely to get her favour by his manly deeds. However, Tamburlaine at no stage has to be in fear of being abandoned by Fortune. Anippe believes the same when telling Zenocrate that

> Your love hath Fortune so at his command,
> That she shall stay, and turn her wheel no more,
> As long as life maintains his mighty arm
> That fights for honour to adorn your head.
> *(Tamburlaine* I, V, ii, 312-15)

Despite bringing up the fact of Tamburlaine being compared with the great ancient men mentioned above, the comparison with the stars and the sun goes too far. Stars and sun refer to the infinite solar system and, even though Tamburlaine in his position as the king of Persia can be considered one of the most powerful men on earth, one has to be careful about seeing him as the master of the entire universe. It has to be taken into account that Tamburlaine resembles the perfect stereotype of a prince as described by Machiavelli in some ways, but placing him above everything else in the universe is wrong. However, if you look at his immediate environment and stay within the boundaries of his empire (which at its best certainly was very large indeed), then the assessment of him being a shining star or even the sun of this certain microcosmos is justified. One has to only be careful about which scale to apply, for seeing Tamburlaine at the top of

the universe´s hierarchy is to make him bigger than he actually is, even though it is true that the way he is described throughout the play is quite bombastic. Cole (1962:87) calls this a "sensational revelation of Tamburlaine´s character and ability", for

> the imagery intensifies the impression of magnitude and awe-inspiring achievement, surrounding Tamburlaine and his deeds with enhancing figures of speech drawn from the divinities of classical mythology, from jewels, treasure, precious stones and metals, stars, planets and other heavenly bodies.

However, he ceaselessly tries to rise, as O´Neill quite rightly notes. His ambition did not have a clear aim and existed in itself and for its own sake. "His aspiring mind is drawn upward as naturally as gravitation draws a stone downward ... Tamburlaine is god-like but his accomplishments are limited to human possibilities." (1969:28f.) Kopetsch (1990:100) considers the scene in which Tamburlaine makes himself into a god when he is distributing the insignia of secular power to his generals: a god, that is, by position, even though he was still a man of flesh and blood. This does, in my opinion, do not go together, for he is still an emperor, even though Techelles calls him "an earthly god" (*Tamburlaine* II, I, vi, 11). He is by description and by ambition clearly above the level of a normal mortal human being, but considering him equal to the divinities is by no means justified. Tamburlaine also still accepts the existence of other divinities that have influenced his own life, which makes him inferior to the gods. Concerning Zenocrate´s death, he for instance says: "For amorous Jove hath snatch´d my love from hence" (*Tamburlaine* II, II, iv, 107), which clearly shows his position below the divinities. Kopetsch (1990) sees also a shadow of doubt about Tamburlaine´s position when he quite rightly points out Tamburlaine´s mention of a "God, full of revenging wrath,/ .../ Whose Scourge I am, and him I will obey" (*Tamburlaine* II, V, i, 181-3), whom even the protagonist eventually regards as superior. The Soldan refers to the influence of two other gods when he searches for the reasons of Tamburlaine´s success:

> Mighty hath God and Mahomet made thy hand,
> Renowmed Tamburlaine, to whom all kings
> Of force must yield their crowns and emperies...
> (*Tamburlaine* I, V, ii, 418-20)

Tamburlaine sees Jove, above all, as his personal protecting divinity, and this god favours him because of having to do with shepherds. Tamburlaine believes he is the chosen man to reign:

> Jove sometimes masked in a shepherd´s weed,
> And by those steps that he hath scal´d the heavens
> May we become immortal like the gods.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 199-202)

Having found a striking similarity between him and this god, Tamburlaine is absolutely certain that this god will protect him from any harm in case of an attack. He provokes his opponent and relies on Jove:

> Draw forth thy sword, thou mighty man-at-arms,
> Intending but to raze my charmed skin,
> And Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven
> To ward the blow, and shield me safe from harm.
> (*Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 178-181)

Tamburlaine is right. He neither falls victim to attacks, nor is he wounded seriously. We must assume that there indeed is some divine protection for him.

In addition to that, there are two more hints that he obeys the gods in the way he answers the question of when he was going to stop fighting and conquering:

> And, till by vision or by speech I hear
> Immortal Jove say ´Cease, my Tamburlaine,´
> I will persist a terror to the world...
> (*Tamburlaine* II, IV, i, 201-3)

This quotation refers to the gods (or rather one specific god, Jove) interfering and telling Tamburlaine to stop his fighting. But we can also find an indirect hint. Zenocrate wants to know when there will be an end to Tamburlaine´s violence. This is what he answers:

> When heaven shall cease to move on both the poles,
> And when the ground, whereon my soldiers march,
> Shall rise aloft and touch the horned moon,
> And not before, my sweet Zenocrate.
> (*Tamburlaine* II, I, iv, 12-15)

Tamburlaine describes Armageddon, the end of all times. When now keeping in mind the mythology and the gods which are referred to in *Tamburlaine,* we can draw the conclusion that the end of the world most probably will lie in the gods´ hands. In other words, Tamburlaine expects a clear sign by some divinity before he is going to cease. When expecting this, it is a fair assumption that there are gods who can influence Tamburlaine.

Due to his own fate being predetermined, Tamburlaine feels he has a vocation to be a mediator who has the ability to influence fate to a great extent (see the already quoted *Tamburlaine* I, I, ii, 174f.). At the beginning of the second act Cosroe is convinced that Tamburlaine must have been predetermined to become king of Persia, for he is very impressed by Menaphon´s description of Tamburlaine as a "superior human being". Cosroe expresses his respect by stating that "Nature doth strive with Fortune and his stars / To make him famous in accomplish´d worth" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 33f.). He concludes that "In fair Persia noble Tamburlaine / Shall be my regent, and remain as king" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, i, 48f.) It his striking, however, that the description and words suffice to convince Cosroe. Tamburlaine´s reputation only emphasizes his assertions. After having talked to him, his good opinion on Tamburlaine is reinforced by the impression he gets of him when talking to him in person. Cosroe finds that "Thy words assure me of success" (*Tamburlaine* I, II, iii, 61). Thus, there is respect for Tamburlaine right away.

We find evidence of direct divine interference or action during the drama, and it can be said with a great amount of certainty that the combination of Tamburlaine´s being favoured by the gods, his own assertions and his reputation does work very well to increase the respect and fear for him in all layers of society. Among the literary scholars, there have developed two branches of criticism, the *romantic criticism* (see also Ribner 1964), meaning that man is in control of his own fate, and the *orthodox criticism,* which sees the protagonist as God´s device, who in accordance to the biblical description of the scourge of God punishes mankind for its sins only to be judged himself by God after fulfilling his task (see Battenhouse 1964). This categorization is too strict for my approach, for it is confined to *Tamburlaine* only and has no connection with *The Prince.* My observations contain points from both branches of criticism, for I think that Tamburlaine´s will belongs to romantic criticism, whereas fortune and predetermination are elements of orthodox criticism.

Tamburlaine´s eventual accession of the Persian throne seems proof enough of his being favoured by fortune. This gives him an excessive amount of self-confidence:

> Though Mars himself, the angry god of arms,
> And all the earthly potentates conspire
> To dispossess me of this diadem,
> Yet I will wear it in despite of them,
> As great commander of this eastern world,
> If you but say that Tamburlaine shall reign.
>
> (*Tamburlaine* I, II, vii, 58-63)

After everybody answers in the affirmative, he has lost every fear and does not care who his opponents are, whether they are human or divine. He is convinced of himself to be ruler of the entire "eastern world". Tamburlaine´s first reaction is this:

> So; now it is more surer on my head
> Than if the gods had held a parliament,
> And all pronounc´d me king of Persia.
>
> (*Tamburlaine* I, II, vii, 65-67)

The support of his subjects is more important to him than the gods´ good will. As a soldier, he prefers strong-looking and motivated companions of flesh and blood to divinities beyond grasp whom he never entirely can rely on. From this moment on, Tamburlaine feels truly invincible, for he realizes what power is actually about. Goldberg now sees him, at his personal zenith, "as a source of energy – a sun." (Goldberg 1993:577) His position certainly is high above the play´s other characters, but comparing him to the sun goes a little too far, for he is a mortal human being. He becomes conscious about the fact that at this very moment there are only the gods who are above him, and they are somewhere up there in their own spheres. Divine negative interference does not seem to be something to be afraid of. This is why Tamburlaine loses all his fear and derives his strength from the firm support of his subjects and allies.

Goldberg supports my point that most characters in the plays simply take the gods´ favour for Tamburlaine for granted. Apart from Tamburlaine´s old friends Techelles and Usumcasane there are few characters who don´t believe that some deity is bound to intervene in behalf of Tamburlaine. "An audience steeped in traditional ideology likewise anticipates the downfall of a tyrant who not only rejects all worldly authority, but also has Mahomet, Jupiter, and some unnamed Persian gods gunning for him." (1993:574) When there is virtually everybody of the opinion that there is no doubt about Tamburlaine´s being favoured by the Gods, it automatically becomes easier for him to believe in his own stories. Since there are no interior monologues or other stream-of-consciousness type devices used (and how would they be used in Elizabethan drama?), we cannot gain direct access to Tamburlaine´s character, but only assume and conclude from what we hear the characters say. It is hard to say whether there is a straight divine intervention, but everything we learn about Tamburlaine´s relation to fortune points in this direction. Even though there is no waterproof evidence, we can be quite certain that there is.

Ribner supports my view of strong Machiavellian influence in *Tamburlaine*, for he sees Machiavellian *virtù* in the protagonist. It enabled him to master fortune and win success in his enterprises. The theme of the play was a glorification of *virtù,* and this theme places Tamburlaine outside the Christian world of divine providence which rewards man for good and punishes him for evil. "As history it belongs in the non-Christian world of Machiavelli which considers not what should be but what is, and which does not study the path to virtue, but rather the path to success" (1953:257f.). This *virtù* makes him feel superior to his opponents, and there is no doubt about the fact that this at some stage must become a conscious process for him. This must have a boosting effect on one´s self-confidence, and you will not find a hesitant Tamburlaine when he is still at full strength. His optimism and self-confidence would certainly not suffer a blow in the case of a possible war: "...Tamburlaine, Whose smiling stars give him assured hope / Of martial triumph ere he meet his foes" (*Tamburlaine* I, III, iii, 42ff.), excludes the possibilities of losing a battle from his mind and would go to battle not doubting his strength at all.

These characteristics of Tamburlaine just described are vital for a prince who just came to power. Machiavelli (VII, 24) believes that "states that spring up suddenly" cannot be very stable and thus are bound to be destroyed at the first occurrence of a difficult situation, unless these states´ leaders showed exceptional ability to cope with what fortune provided them with. The connection between what we have just learnt about Tamburlaine and Machiavelli´s comments are obvious. Marlowe´s protagonist is the personification of so many character traits and abilities of the ideal of a Machiavellian emperor that the parallels simply cannot be ignored.

Machiavelli in the following takes the discussion about fortune to a second level. Fortune does not merely make princes. but can also further promote their position (XX, 81):

> Princes undoubtedly become great by overcoming all difficulties and oppositions that may spring up against them; and therefore does Fortune, when she intends to make a new prince great (for whom it is more important to acquire a reputation than for a hereditary prince), cause enemies to arise and make attempts against the prince, so as to afford him the opportunity of overcoming them, and that he may thus rise higher by means of the very ladder which his enemies have brought against him.

Ribner sees clear parallels to this when reflecting on history:

> History, for Marlowe, is created by two things: fortune and human will. Fortune is not conceived of in the Medieval Christian manner as the instrument which executes God´s providence; Marlowe´s is a classical fortune, the capricious, lawless element in the universe which can be controlled and directed only by human wisdom and power. His hero, like the heroes of Machiavelli and Guicciardini, is the man who can master fortune and bend her to his will, for the classical fortune, it must be remembered, is a woman who can easily be swayed. Marlowe´s emphasis upon fortune is particularly close to Polybius who perhaps gave a greater place to fortune in human affairs than did the other classical historians. Polybius is probably the ultimate source of what was to become the *virtù* and *fortuna* of Machiavelli.
>
> (Ribner 1953: 258)

Ribner correctly describes these parallels and how Tamburlaine relentlessly manages to rise above fortune because of his extremely strong will. Rising above fortune in this respect means that he does not have to consider her an enemy, for she is on his side. Thus, he can act freely and does not have to face any restrictions from the side of fortune. Being endowed with her strength, he becomes even stronger than he was before and "rises above".

Machiavelli´s final comments on fortune (XXV, 94-97), however, come quite surprisingly, when bearing in mind how essential a quality fortune was praised to be. He states that many had been and still (at the time of him writing *The Prince*)

supported the view that everything in the world was controlled by fortune and divine power and human wisdom and foresight were not able to modify them. This statement is not surprising, for Machiavelli has made fortune seem a crucial factor throughout his reflection on it. Now, however, his argumentation changes at the very end of the book. Machiavelli, and this is a new aspect, is *not* of the opinion that everything in the world is brought about by fortune, but "fortune to the extent of one half is the arbiter of our actions[.] ... [S]he permits us to direct the other half, or perhaps a little less, ourselves." (XXV, 94). Diesner considers Fortune a counterpart of *virtù,* and it thus was an important neutral factor which could lead either way: the good or the bad way. One could rise very high as well as drop down very low (1993:179f.). For Tamburlaine, Fortune is like a one-way street leading straight up; there is no option of turning around and going down.

Machiavelli´s reasons for being of this opinion that Fortune is in charge of one half of our actions are that there were many examples of sudden changes in the fate of princes; fortune thus is too changing to be constantly favouring a prince. Now we have come to a point at which there has to be established a clear discrepancy between *The Prince* and the *Tamburlaine* dramas. What we have heard so far is that fortune plays a big role in both works, but in *Tamburlaine* we cannot spot the notion of Marlowe weakening the meaning of fortune in the way Machiavelli does in *The Prince.* Fortune is too strong an element in *Tamburlaine* to only be responsible for half of Tamburlaine´s deeds. Also Parr (1971:3) is of this opinion (and quite rightly so), for he considers Tamburlaine to be one of the *fortunati,* a Renaissance man "upon Fortune never failed to smile." Moreover, he was "gloriously invincible and heavenly-guarded in military affairs." The fact that there is so much evidence for predetermination and constant hints at fortune favouring him lead to the conclusion that fortune simply is the dominating element in *Tamburlaine.* One has to bear in mind that Marlowe´s plays are fictions, and it certainly can be possible that a playwright simply creates a character "larger than life" to be the all-dominating protagonist of his dramas. This is most likely, on the basis of what this analysis has shown so far, since

Machiavelli does not bother reflecting about fictional persons but confines himself to "ordinary" human beings. Even though Marlowe follows him very closely when breathing life into his Tamburlaine character, this fortune must be considered a stronger force in the *Tamburlaine* dramas than it is for Machiavelli in *The Prince.*

5. Conclusion: Elizabethan Perspectives

The goal of this thesis was to show the strong connection between the *Tamburlaine* plays and *The Prince.* Machiavelli´s work develops the image of the perfect prince and is a guidebook for this emperor on how to act in different situations. If an emperor is supposed to be ideal in each and every respect, then he has to have very many different character traits. He has to have the looks, the wit, the military skills, the virtue, he has to be worthy and of exceptional ability. Apart from all the earthly features, he has to have the favour of the divinities – fortune has to be on his side. If an emperor indeed can fulfil these requirements, he inevitably must seem larger than life, gigantic in both proportions and actions, scary and at the same time difficult to grasp and appreciate. An ideal emperor cannot merely be a man of flesh and blood, a common mortal. It is almost impossible to already find all the earthly requirements for an ideal prince in the same person, and the person who has all these features as well as the favour of fortune on his side, must seem very mighty. By this, he leaves the spheres of the normal human beings and takes one step towards becoming a god. From this point on, he is above the level of his subjects in terms of being (for the Renaissance at least) sort of a semi-god. We might prefer to see him as a carefully constructed image.

Tamburlaine is sure of the fact that he has been endowed with most of these qualities and acts accordingly, not being worried about possible negative consequences. One major force that drives him is his sheer infinite ambition, which makes him conquer and fight unceasingly. He certainly belongs to the *fortunati* who are simply favoured by higher powers and thus have to cope with relatively few difficulties during the course of their lives. Tamburlaine embodies a number of the ideal qualities mentioned in *The Prince.* Rising from being a simple shepherd into kingly spheres clearly shows that he is a very special and

blessed individual, otherwise this rapid ascent up the ladder of society would never have been possible.

In the two parts of Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* we get to know a character who makes it from rags to riches in virtually no time and at the end of his life reign over a vast empire. Tamburlaine is a man who was born a shepherd, yet he is also a born emperor. He is the embodiment of numerous Machiavellian qualities mentioned in *The Prince* his character and his actions are closer to those of a perfect prince in the Machiavellian sense than one ever would expect at first glance. Indeed, everything in Tamburlaine´s life with the exception of his wife´s, Zenocrate´s, death, seems relatively easy. He does not face resistance, partly due to his personality, but partly also because he eliminates his biggest potential enemy Cosroe and humiliates Bajazeth in such a manner that the latter decides to commit suicide. Tamburlaine is intelligent and by doing away with problems (here: potential enemies) before they arise, he acts in accord with Machiavelli´s advice in *The Prince*, using cruelty as a means of his policy.

Cruelty and Tamburlaine – this relationship is interesting, for cruelty goes hand in hand with two of his dominant traits: as he is a soldier on the one hand, and ambitious on the other hand. Being an exceptionally good soldier often requires cruelty, and his ambition makes him conquer all his life. His armies constantly invade new countries, and even moments before his death Tamburlaine thinks about his dream of conquering the world, a dream he could not make come true and which his sons shall take care of for him. Machiavelli sees cruelty as a necessary means of policy, but for Tamburlaine there is more to it than this. It is a way of life, and in this point Marlowe takes his fictional character beyond Machiavellian spheres, for Tamburlaine is a natural warrior for whom warfare is a way of life. Endowed with great confidence, Tamburlaine stubbornly goes his way, and there is only one direction for him: upwards. This easy ascent in society, with no criticism expressed except for his excessive cruelty (see the explanation above), is a reflection of the perfect Machiavellian prince. When

thinking of Machiavelli as a superior authority on Tamburlaine´s behaviour, what sort of criticism could he have in store for him? The answer is: not a lot, for Tamburlaine looks too much as if he had been constructed based on Machiavelli´s advice on how a perfect emperor should behave. The criticism would most probably deal mainly with cruelty, as I just pointed out. For Machiavelli, there is only one person who comes very close to being the perfect prince, and this is Cesare Borgia, who was renowned for his cruelty.

In fact, Marlowe probably did know Machiavelli´s *Prince* when he was writing *Tamburlaine.* We have evidence for this from his play *The Jew of Malta,* published in ca. 1590; however, this play was published after the performance of *Tamburlaine.* This means, as we have seen, that we cannot be entirely sure that Marlowe had read *The Prince* before starting to write *Tamburlaine.* He appears to have used it as a model when creating his protagonist, using various ideas such as Borgia´s cruelty, the background of Maximinus, etc. Tamburlaine is a quasi-incarnation of the perfect Machiavellian prince. Machiavelli does not see a single perfect prince, even though Borgia comes close to this ideal, and uses the best traits of princes in ancient and medieval history up to his life to give this idea of the flawless emperor a concrete shape. Marlowe takes these qualities laid down in *The Prince* and comes up with his incarnation of this perfect prince, with his own personal qualities, even if he knew Machiavelli´s text directly. Marlowe´s idea cannot have been to produce a one-to-one copy of Machiavelli, otherwise he could have just copied *The Prince.* By overaccentuating certain crucial details, such as Tamburlaine´s cruelty, he manages to create a character who is clearly independent of Machiavelli, even though the links between Tamburlaine and the ideal emperor of *The Prince* remain obvious, at least to those who consciously look for these parallels.

What was Marlowe´s purpose in painting such a portrait? His position in the Elizabethan society was quite an interesting one. He was a young and energetic writer with an alleged background in espionage, "travelling abroad as a foreign

agent" (Steane 1969:1). During the very time when the first part of *Tamburlaine* was performed (1587), Elizabethan England had already been at war for two years. The last eighteen years of Elizabeth´s reign (1585-1603) were to be constant warfare. Admiral Sir Francis Drake led the English fleet to a crucial victory over the Spanish armada in 1588 and prevented a Spanish invasion in England. However, by the time of the publication of *Tamburlaine, Part One,* English public opinion on how Elizabeth led her country was quite unequivocal: people were not happy with her efforts. Elizabeth apparently despised warfare and tried to find solutions for political problems in other ways. She had difficulties in organizing the army (partly due to the corruption of the system) and she also had to tackle logistical problems. Elton (1955:358) has even gone so far as to say that Elizabeth was incapable of conducting a war. She was seen as a hesitant leader. Her display of "indecision, procrastination, variability of mind, and cheeseparing parsimony" had been the reason for many failed governmental endeavours.

In this Elizabethan war situation, the queen (the fact that a woman was on the throne in times of major crises must have been a big problem for the male-dominated society) was hesitant and weak in the crucial war questions. Machiavelli´s *The Prince* contained the recipe how to cure these problems and how to get to grips with the "power of military might" (Black 1936:251). What I am trying to suggest is that *Tamburlaine,* against this background, may have been meant as a piece of criticism against Queen Elizabeth. At the time, Marlowe was a relatively unknown writer who was to become famous with the success of *Tamburlaine.* With his possible background as a spy, it is quite likely that he could have had access to governmental material and that he was thus well-informed about the criticism the queen had to face by politicians and advisors. England had been at war for two years already, and Marlowe would have been able to follow Elizabeth´s moves quite closely even without being involved in espionage. His protagonist forms a complete counterpart to Elizabeth: Tamburlaine is male, he is not a hereditary prince, he is cruel, and above all, a

brilliant soldier and commander-in-chief. If this was indeed Marlowe´s way of criticizing Elizabeth, it was very subtle and well-constructed, for one cannot easily make out the parallels between Marlowe´s *Tamburlaine* plays and Elizabeth without the help of Machiavelli.

The Spanish armada´s efforts to conquer other nations throughout the world could be seen as a parallel to Tamburlaine´s conquests. However, the armada suffered a defeat in 1588, whereas Tamburlaine is always victorious on the battlefield. The Scythian is a powerful conqueror. He is able to subdue many nations and peoples during his conquests, which makes him an almost untouchable monarch. The former shepherd even dares to challenge the gods. His feeling of superiority to the "common man", the fact that he is favoured by fortune and his cruelty make him – against the background of my analysis – a Machiavellian ruler, regardless of whether Marlowe intentionally created him using *The Prince* or not. If the protagonist Tamburlaine had been a real historical person, he would most likely have challenged Cesare Borgia´s position as the role model for the ideal emperor in *The Prince.* Machiavelli would have had the trouble of choosing between the two men for whom he would have felt the utmost.

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7. Finnish summary

1. Introduction: History and Intertextuality

Tässä pro gradu-tutkielmassa käsitellään kolmea tärkeää teosta, jotka ovat Niccolò Machiavellin *Ruhtinas* sekä Christopher Marlowen *Tamburlaine*-näytelmät (osat I ja II). Marlowen näytelmien protagonisti, Tamburlaine, on nähtävästi luotu Machivellin teoksen perusteella. Todisteita siitä ei kuitenkaan ole. Teosten väliset yhtäläisyydet ovat silti merkittäviä. Tutkielman tehtävä on auttaa ymmärtämään tätä yhteyttä, koska perehtyminen Machiavelliin helpottaa Marlowen näytelmien lukemista sekä niiden monipuolisempaa ymmärtämistä.

Analyysi suoritetaan vertaamalla edellä mainittuja lähteitä ja tekemällä niistä johtopäätöksiä. Historia on tässä analyysissä tärkeä tekijä. Historialla on oma struktuurinsa, kuten käy ilmi historian teoriakeskustelusta. Tämän pro gradu-työn keskeinen rakenne on Machiavellin näkemys ihannehallitsijasta, jonka hän *Ruhtinaassaan* muotoilee. Tämä perusnäkemys löytyy myös Marlowen näytelmistä, mutta selvää todistusaineistoa siitä ei ole olemassa. Tämän tutkielman tehtävänä on kuitenkin osoittaa, että teosten väliset yhtäläisyydet ovat suuremmat kuin pelkkä sattuman aikaansaannos.

2. Background and governing

2.1. Historical background

Marlowen näytelmiä pidetään korkeatasoisina fiktioina. Päähenkilö on skyytialainen paimen Tamburlaine, josta tulee Persian kuningas. Roolihahmon esikuva eli aikanaan todellisuudessa ja hänen oikea nimensä oli Tamerlane (turkkilainen hallitsija 1336-1405). Hän oli kuuluisa lukuisista valloituksistaan ja julmuudestaan. Historioitsijoiden mukaan Tamerlane on verrattavissa jopa Aleksanteri Suureen ja Džingis Khaniin. Tamerlane teki sotaretkensä pääosin Aasiaan. *Tamburlaisen* ensimmäinen osa sai ensi-iltansa vuonna 1587.

Machiavellin *Ruhtinas* oli julkaistu Englannissa ennen *Tamburlainea,* joten Marlowella oli mahdollisuus perehtyä valtio-opilliseen teokseen. Marlowe

käyttää Machiavellin käsitteitä näytelmässään *The Jew of Malta,* jota julkaistiin vuonna 1592 eli *Tamburlainen* jälkeen.

Tamburlainessa Marlowe luo hahmon, joka on vielä esikuvaansakin menestyksekkäämpi. Tamerlane oli menestyksekäs hallitsija, eli vanhaksi ja kuoli lopulta unessa, jättäen pojilleen suuren valtakuntansa. Tamburlaine pääsee yhtä pitkälle, mutta hän oli alkuaan pelkkä paimen, kun esikuva Tamerlane oli vaikutusvaltaisen heimopäällikön poika.

2.2. Tamburlaine´s background

Tamburlaine ei pelkästään ole Marlowen näytelmien protagonisti, vaan hän on selvästi ylitse muiden kaikissa asioissa. Hänellä on paras retoriikka, hän on paras sotilas ja hänestä tulee vahva hallitsija - hänen alaluokkaisesta taustastaan huolimatta. Tamburlainen voimakkaat sanat ja ulkonäkö puhuvat puolestaan. Tamburlaine on skyytialainen paimen, siis Persiassa ulkomaalainen. Nämä molemmat asiat englantilaisessa renessanssidraamassa merkitsivät yleisölle/lukijoille sitä, että kyseinen hahmo on täysin a) erilainen kuin kaikki muut ja b) myös selvästi alempiarvoinen. Tamburlaine kuitenkin selviää näistä lähtöasetelmista huolimatta elämänsä kaikista koitoksista ja vielä loistavin arvosanoin. Hänestä tulee Persian kuningas.

2.3. What and how to govern

Machiavelli hahmottelee teoksessaan kahta eri ruhtinaskuntaa, joista uusi ruhtinaskunta kiinnostaa meitä tässä yhteydessä enemmän. Tamburlainesta tulee uusi hallitsija. Alhaisen taustansa takia hänellä ei ole kruunun perintöoikeutta. Mycetes ja Cosroe kuuluvat kuningasperheeseen, mutta Myceteksen hallitsemistaito on olematon ja Tamburlaine surmaa Cosroen. Uutena prinssinä Tamburlainen on Machiavellin ohjeiden mukaisesti pidettävä ohjat tiukasti käsissään ja näin hän myös tekee. Ruhtinaan tavoitteena on vallan pitäminen vaikka voimakeinoin, jos tilanne sitä edellyttää. Siitä huolimatta tietty kuninkaallinen arvokkuus tulisi säilyttää. Väkivalta on ehdottomasti sallittu.

Prinssin tulee käyttäytyä samaan aikaan viisaasti ja voimakkaasti. Machiavelli vertaa näitä ominaisuuksia kettuun ja leijonaan ja sama vertailu löytyy myös *Tamburlainesta.*

3. Cruelty, the art of war and opposition

3.1. Cruelty and hatred

Julmuus ja viha ovat keskeisiä asioita sekä *Ruhtinaassa* että *Tamburlainessa.* Hallitsija saa Machiavellin mukaan olla julma. Tamburlaine on taas julman hallitsijan prototyyppi. Ennen kaikkea sotilaallisissa asioissa hallitsijan on oltava armoton ja Tamburlaine toimii sen mukaisesti. Entisestä paimenesta tulee – ei pelkästään tämän takia - äärimmäisen vihattu henkilö. Viha ei sinänsä ole paha asia, kirjoittaa Machiavelli. Prinssin on kuitenkin vältettävä vaikutusvaltaisten ihmisten viha, jotta valtakunta säästettäisiin hänen itsensä aiheuttamilta vaaroilta.

3.2. Tamburlaine and other famous cruel men

Tamburlainellä on paljon yhteistä muiden kuuluisien julmien miesten kanssa. Kyseisiä muinaisia ja keskiaikaisia hallitsijoita olivat mm. Julius Caesar, Maximinus, Agathocles, Oliverotto sekä Cesare Borgia. Kaikki miehet voidaan yhdistää Tamburlaineen jollakin tavalla. Caesarin tapauksessa Tamburlaine vertaa itse itseään roomalaiseen keisariin. Maximinus oli traakialainen paimen, josta tuli poliittisen murhan avulla hallitsija. Hänen elämänkertansa vastaa pitkälti Tamburlainen elämänkertaa. Myös Agathocles nousee hallitsijan asemaan kuultuaan alun perin yhteiskunnan alhaisimpaan kastiin. Oliverotto voidaan yhdistää Tamburlaineen hänen julmuutensa takia, kuten myös Cesare Borgia. Borgia on tässä tutkielmassa tärkein julma hallitsija, koska Machiavellin mielestä hän on miltei ihannehallitsija. Machiavelli kehuu jatkuvasti julman Borgian toimintaa. Borgian julmuus on samankaltaista kuin Tamburlainen, joten Tamburlaine on ehkä luotu sekä Borgian että Tamerlanen piirteistä.

3.3. The soldier Tamburlaine

Tamburlaine on äärimmäisen taitava sotilas. Se onkin Machiavellin mukaan lähes välttämätöntä, muuten hallitsijan olisi vaikeaa pitää valtaistuintaan. Toinen edellytys on hallitsijan oma sotajoukko. Tamburlainellä on erittäin vahva sellainen. Hänen armeijansa valloitusoperaatiot päättyvät poikkeuksetta voittoihin. Tähän ei vaadita pelkästään kenttäsotilaitten ammattitaitoa, vaan myös upseereiden ja sotapäälliköiden johtamistaidon on oltava kohdallaan. Tamburlainen tapauksessa tämä ei ole suuri ongelma, koska hän on synnynnäinen taistelija ja johtohahmo.

Machiavelli toteaa, että prinssin on hallittava sodan taide (*art of war*). Tamburlaine on tämän taiteen esimerkillinen taituri. Tämän taistelutaitonsa myötä Tamburlainen kunnianhimo on lähes loputon ja maailmanvalloitus on hänen mielessään jatkuvasti. Vain kuolema estää häntä saavuttamasta täydellistä voittoa.

3.4. Enemies, errors and difficulties

Uusissa ruhtinaskunnissa on usein ongelmia. Vallan ylläpitäminen voi osoittautua hyvinkin vaikeaksi. Machiavelli katsoo, että ruhtinaan vihollisten ei saa antaa vaikuttaa uuden valtionpäämiehen asioihin kielteisellä tavalla. Väkivalta on *Tamburlainessä* yksi tapa saada viholliset kuriin. Tamburlaine surmaa Cosroeen ja pääsee eroon mahdollisesti vaarallisimmasta vastustajastaan. Bajazeth murtuu vankeudessaan ja päättyy itsemurhaan.

Pitkän elämänsä aikana Tamburlaine ei joudu ylitsepääsemättömän suuriin vaikeuksiin, koska hän pitää valtion ohjat tiukasti käsissään. Machiavelli hahmottelee *Ruhtinaassaan* mahdollisia hallitsijan vaikeuksia, mutta Tamburlaine on yksinkertaisesti mitään pelkäämätön "hallitsija ylitse muiden ", koska hän tietää joka tapauksessa onnistuvansa.

4. Moderation and fortune

4.1. The moderate emperor

Machiavelli pohtii prinssin maltillisuutta ja toteaa, että suhteellisen liberaali maine olisi prinssille kuin prinssille hyväksi. Liika liberaalisuus johtaisi kuitenkin ruhtinaan kunnioituksen alenemiseen. Tamburlainesta ei löydy liberaaleja piirteitä lainkaan. Hän ei ole maltillinen, eikä hänessä ei ole armeliaisuutta tai lempeyttä.

4.2. Fortune

Kohtalon osuus on suuri sekä *Ruhtinaassa* että *Tamburlainessä.* Machiavelli varoittaakin heitä, jotka onnekkaasti pääsevät korkeaan asemaan. Ongelmat alkavat vasta sen jälkeen. Tamburlaine ei tätä varoitusta tarvitse. Hän luottaa täysin siihen, että kohtalo olisi hänelle aina myötämielinen. Elämänsä aikana Tamburlainellä ei juuri ole vastoinkäymisiä. Ainut todella vaikea hetki oli Zenocrateen, hänen vaimonsa kuolema.

Draamasta löytyy lukuisia viittauksia siihen, että kohtalo todella on Tamburlainen puolella. Tästä tosiasiasta (se on ainakin Tamburlainen mielestä tosiasia) hän saa aimoannoksen lisää itseluottamusta. Tamburlainen kunnianhimo on alusta lähtien lähes suunnaton. Tämä perustuu uskomukseen, että tähdet ovat hänelle myönteisiä. Lukuisten onnistumisten myötä Tamburlainen usko jumalallisiin voimiin vahvistuu ja hän kehittää ideaansa maailmanvalloituksesta. Hyvästä kohtalostaan huolimatta hän on pelkkä ihminen, ja on olemassa jumalia, joiden armolla jopa Tamburlainen kaltainen ´superihminen´ on.

5. Conclusion: Elizabethan Perspectives

Tamburlaine-näytelmillä ja *Ruhtinaalla* on selvä ja vahva yhteys. Machiavelli kuvaa ihannehallitsijan piirteitä, ja niistä monet löytyvät Marlowen näytelmistä. Täyttä varmuutta siitä, että Marlowe oli lukenut Machiavellin ja loi protagonistinsa *Ruhtinas* opaskirjanaan, ei ole olemassa. Tutkielmassa ilmenneet yhtäläisyydet kuitenkin vahvasti viittaavat siihen että niin olisi.

Mutta miksi Marlowe olisi tehnyt niin? Yksi mahdollisuus olisi se, että hän tarkoituksellisesti luonnosteli moitteettoman ja erinomaisen hallitsijan arvostellakseen kuningatar Elisabetia. *Tamburlainen* ilmestymisvuonna 1587 Englanti oli sodassa Espanjaa vastaan. Kuningattaren - erityisesti sotatoimien - johtamistaito joutui ankaran arvostelun kohteeksi. Marlowe oli tehnyt työtä hallitukselle, mahdollisesti jopa vakoilijana ja saattoi siten olla tietoinen kulissien takaisesta kritiikistä. Näytelmä voidaan tulkita myös kuningatar Elisabetin arvosteluksi.