The subject of the tragic plays may be extremely tragic, like Trojan War, and other wars fought by people like Alexander and Tamburlaine but they have a moral purpose as well. There are certain tragedies which are centered around a single character like Faustus, and other have many characters like hamlet. One of the the purpose of writing these dramas is to gain monetary benefits. But the people who wrote about sufferings have untied themselves in these dramas as well and have also given at certain places their autobiographical note. Some dramatists have propagated their ideologies in these dramas and some have restricted themselves to social phenomena. Those who have discussed their ideologies, and that also against the norms and values of society, have become the subject of controversial debate like Marlowe. The work of a man reveals himself especially in arts; therefore people somehow try to find out those things manifested in his work compulsorily. In certain cased it is true as in case of Marlowe and his Tamburlaine. The climax in a play or a drama arises from intense conflict and if conflict is of gigantic nature, it is true of Tamburlaine. The warriors, and wars have been the issues in literature for centuries, but their relevance is still presence as we are in this globe, today facing a worst war.

Key words: Catharsis, renaissance, war.

INTRODUCTION

Marlowe was one of the most controversial figures of his times. The Oxford Classics of Marlowe’s plays opens with these remarks of its editors, “Robert Greene a playwright, thus speaks about him: of daring God out of heaven with that atheist Tamburlaine, and later repents the folly of having said in heart, like a certain “famous grocer of tragedians” (that is, Marlowe) that “There is no God [A Groatsworth of Wit (1592)]. (Bevington and Rasmussen, 1995; p.viii). The editors further point out “These and other testimonials need to be discounted for their exaggeration and for their having been produced under legal circumstances we would regard as a witch-hunt”. (Marlowe et al., 1995, p. ix)

With this background in his contemporary world, Marlowe persuasively wrote four plays. “Tamburlaine The Great” brought him immediate fame in 1587-88. The
Tamburlaine was written in two parts. It could be said that fervor of Renaissance had compelled Marlowe to write such plays. In Elizabethan England, stage drama prevailed not only to gain fame, but also to describe the courtly manners. The dramatic performance of Tamburlaine was done by Lord Admiral’s Men. The brilliance of Renaissance; as asserted in the realm of knowledge in many ways, to revive learning; people like Marlowe wrote not only to show their excellence in the field of literature, but also to bring forth in light the exuberance of thought, definitely attached with Renaissance.

Marlowe has been called an over-reacher and truly all his plays have lofty themes. From Tamburlaine and Faustus to Edward II, he has depicted the fall of over reacher. This is the sign of his tragic historical and along with the tragic history of his dramatic heroes. All his characters are cruel and skeptic like him, and also they highlight his free thinking liberal attitude.

Citing this tendency Bevington writes in introduction to his plays in Compendium of Oxford like this, “still, there can be little doubt that Marlowe explored and even reviled in the intellectual skepticism articulated by the mathematician and astronomer Thomas Harriot, by Giordano Bruno (who visited England in (1583-5), and by others whom the age generally regarded as free thinkers and atheists. No one at any rate seems to have doubted that Marlowe was what Kyd had called him, “irreligious”, and “intemperate” and of a cruel heart. The reputation is a reality, even if we cannot be certain of the exact degree of Marlowe’s non conformity”. (Bevington and Rasmussen (ed), 1995, p. ix)

This makes clear the personality of Marlowe and selection of his themes. The Tamburlaine is solely reflection of what has been called “intemperate” and “cruel hearted”.

As Marlowe’s life ended in a tragic incident of a street brawl, his Tamburlaine, his Faustus, are captivated with this kind of tragical episodes.

Professor Emile Legouis (Parisian) no less admirer of Kyd, writes about Tamburlaine of Marlowe in a way, that the spirit of defiance and revolt are its basic themes. (Legouis 1984, p. 124). He says that Marlowe had a little knowledge about the stage. Professor Legouis furthers his point as such, “Not for him to set forth the horror of crime and its punishment, but to claim admiration for the most sanguinely of men and exalt him as a demi god” Legouis. 1984, p. 124). This shows the inner power of Marlowe which was restless. He selected Tamburlaine as his hero because he himself was like him; a man with his exalted image in his mind.

Did Marlowe has a negative tendency? This is the only debate in the history of English Literature about Marlowe and or the recurrent one.

Michael Schmidt writes about Marlowe the poet as, “Christopher Marlowe the playwright achieves quite different effects from Christopher Marlowe the poet. The playwright explores ambition and power, but the poet is a younger man creating or translating a world of balance and proportion. The poems lack the exaggeration of language and action, the grandiloquence of the ‘mighty line’”. (Michael, 1979, p. 113) Puttenham dispraised Marlowe’s hyperbolic dramatic style; the over reacher, otherwise called the loud liar; (Michael, 1979, p. 113) and Nashe commented on the specious volubility of a drumming decasillaban. And the poet further says, “the poems are not implicated in these strictures. They neither over reach nor drum. They are not voluble nor specious but economical of language and serious in content even when the tone is light – hearted”. (Michael, 1979, p. 113).

In our daily life, even against an ordinary man if a controversy is fabricated that spreads throughout his life and after his death but the person who has become part of history in a controversial manner, he is despised somehow or the other by the successive generations.

There is a greater need to unveil that controversy that it should be evaluated from all sides. The historical person in question must not be hated on frivolous accounts and speculations. It is true, contemporaries of an author; admit his contribution to his field of knowledge very assiduously. And it is very strange phenomenon, that the poets and writers of an age use satirical remarks on each other, play puns and go so far as Thomas Kyd went to pronounce blasphemy against Marlowe which led to his murder. Every poet or a writer has a specific ideology and that must be respected, but in case of Marlowe, as Church directed and influenced the Queen Elizabeth and Elizabethan England, so Marlowe had to suffer. It is a question whether Pope Gregory is cited in history, respectfully, or Marlowe is considered as one of the finest men of Renaissance. History has given its verdict that Marlowe despite being accused by the Pope is still alive and could be seen peeping through the lines of Tamburlaine, Faustus and Jew of Malta.

Writing about his poetic brilliance i.e. of Marlowe, Michael Schmidt briefly points out his biographical sketch as follows: Marlowe was born in Canterbury in 1564. His father was a shoemaker. Christopher became a scholar at King’s school, Canterbury, and afterwards at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He took his B.A in 1584 and his MA in 1587, by that time he had probably completed Tamburlaine (Michael, 1979, p. 113).

The statements mentioned above about Marlowe need fresh critical analysis. It seems that Marlowe’s skepticism and his being prone towards atheism, has led since Kyd and Greene to minor critic like Hardin Craig; Emile Legouis and in modern times Anderew Sanders and Avaramah Oz, as an obsession. The above mentioned critics are few, and there are many who repudiate Marlowe for his alleged charge of blasphemy, as an
unredeemed off act. It reflects that it has been the greatest anomaly seen in a Briton, like Marlowe. This obsession is plagic among critics of Marlowe up to the extent of mania, spanned over the last four hundred years and which is still unending.

This shows the sordid and narrow vision of British society which in its deep roots, is still feudal, as having a queen sitting at the throne since 1951 i.e. Queen Elizabeth II. This narrow feudalism is still prevailing in England, who likes to be called as U.K., and is due to the non-division of property equitably. So much of the subject of Marlowe’s atheism has been cited time and again it seems these critics seem to be herbivores and have a plenty of time to chew this minor fodder. This could be inferred easily that Papal dynasty of Protestant church in England (U.K) has not forgiven Marlowe. This Protestant church is also in favour of Queens and Kings; a trite substance and symbol of feudalism and this dynasty of Pope is still being tickled by the words of Marlowe, which on the other hand in Indian subcontinent have relishing nature and has been the subject of austere mysticism, propagated by Sufis of this land. This is the difference between Western and Eastern logic. People like Sarmad, Shah Hussain, Bullah Shah, Averroes, Av-Nasar-Al Farabi, Khayyam, Ibn-e-Sabah, Mansoor, Ibne-Arabi, to cite a few, were not only hostile to courts but also against the superstitious culture as well. The dance of Shah Hussain in ecstasy at one side and Mansoor’s slogan on the other side was not at all harmful deeds in East. They, that is, the saints and ascetics of East, have propagated more human side of religion. Even they went so far in admiring the humanity and have a respect for the human-self that they considered God to be set aside before the respect of man or human beings. An example of this is well elaborated by a Dohah of Baba Farid; a fine from of couplet as such:

Demolish the mosque, demolish the temple, demolish each and everything, Don’t demolish the heart of simple man as God has a place there (Dawoodi, 1987).

Another example is of Bullah Shah as such:

To offer prayer before the God is like the vanity of women
And to keep fast is being thrifty in eating bread (Dawoodi, 1987)

This makes us question tragedy; and why Kings and Queens are chosen for this type of tragical dilemmas? F.L, Lucas writes about the master, Aristotle, in defining tragedy, “There is something Roman about Aristotle. He has not soared into immortality with the bright grace of the Greek; he has conquered it, province by the province, with the resolution, the monumental strength and the practical good sense of Rome. Long after the ancient world had fallen into ruin, the ways his thought had paved still guided the medieval mind amid thickets of its theology; just as the Roman roads across the wasted lands where the eagles had yielded place to the raven and the crow. And as, even today, when we whirl along our highways, we still cannot go far without following or crossing some undeviating vestige of the march of Rome, so beneath the lines of modern thought endure the foundations laid by the master of Alexander The Great. This is particularly true of the criticism of tragedy”. (Lucas, 1972, p. 11) This could then also fairly be said as Lucas says that Aristotle is Roman in his conquest of knowledge; he is rather essentially a Grecian, a Grecian who conquered Egypt and a Grecian whose pupil conquered the known world and established the second World Government in history of the world. The conquest of territories though rest on knowledge of warfare and knowledge in general; but the battlefield of knowledge is quite different. Here, you have to conquer history and immense amount of time and space. The millions of people and their minds have to be conquered by the words you leave behind. Even then you are not sure that you have been preserved in the pages of the history. As audience in the history changes from era to era, and as every era of the history is unique and modern from the previous era; it is next to improbability, that your words may survive. In case of certain Greek masters, it is felt that they are still holding classes in the Olive groves and Lyceums. It is likely Socrates has just ended his dialogues, and just Plato is writing about imitative concepts of art in his “Republic” based on the ideas of his master, the Socrates.

Plato in his metaphysical thoughts did not give place to poets in his state, but Aristotle describing the general theory of art went against Plato and considered tragedy as the highest form of literature. In the days of Aristotle drama was written in poetry and enacted on the theatre of Athens. The Aristotelian theory of arts and tragedy is mainly focused on Greek drama, its characteristics and parameters are still valuable. It would be justified to see the “Tamburlaine” in this context as well but at this stage, readily definition of tragedy is necessary to be seen and what affects tragedy, brings on the minds of the people.

Dante calls him “the Master of those who know” (Lucas, 1972, p. 21). Aristotle as said by Lucas considers that poetry must be verse literature that reflects life in creative fiction (Lucas, 1972, p. 21). Here Aristotle has made a Parthenon or rather captivated a Roman theatre in a single sentence. He has refuted the theory of his master, Plato and in affect wants to say that literature is the highest form of imaginative thinking, “Poetics” as the meanings given by Lucas, means (poien, ‘to make’). So, make means to create. Aristotle in opposition to Plato wants to emphasize poet doesn’t imitate; but creates, though thought is considered immaterial by Aristotle.

According to Lucas, “poetics” is concerned with serious
drama (the Greek tragoidia need not end unhappily) and rather perfunctorily with epic (Lucas, 1972, p. 21). The famous definition cited by Lucas; by Aristotle is, “tragedy”, he says is a representation of an action, which is serious, complete in itself, and of a certain length, it is expressed in speech made beautiful in different ways in different parts of the play; it is acted, not narrated, and by exciting “pity” and fear it gives a healthy relief to such emotions” (Lucas, 1972, p. 23).

The question raised in the early pages of the article, why Queens and Kings and Princes and Princesses are selected for tragedy is rightfully answered here in the definition of tragedy by Aristotle. He says that tragedy excites “pity and fear” and gives healthy relief to such emotions. Therefore, the unusual characters of courts are the heroes of tragedy; as their manners and follies are grand and their manners and follies led them to the lowest ditches of the earth. People derive pity and fear from their stories enacted on the stage and be relieved.

Lucas returns to Aristotle’s definition of tragedy again and discusses in this manner, “tragedy is a representation of an action” (Lucas, 1972, p. 30). He further says that it is very simple. He is of the view: how much should there be? (Lucas, 1972, p. 31)

Elaborating and extending his idea to later critics; Lucas says, “Brunettetle’s insistence on “conflict” as the one essential, and Archer’s on ‘crises’. We see, looming in the future those revolts against tyranny of more action, as in Maeterlinck’s Static Drama, Shaw’s Discussion play. And we come to realize how surely and steadily during the centuries between Marlowe and Chekhov “the action” of tragedy has passed from outside the characters to within them, from the boards to the theatre of the soul, so that at last the whole frontier between action and passion tends to fade away. 26

The last line of Lucas is very important, that is, ‘action’ and ‘passion’ fade away. It is true as in Tamburlaine of Marlowe, Hamlet, Macbeth and Lear of Shakespeare, passion and action are dissolved. Tamburlaine as an over reacher, with lofty ambitions, Hamlet, irreconcilibly towards the dilemma of death and in the end becoming impulsive, Macbeth’s agony to attain power, and moving him to the cruel attempt of murder, and ultimately captive of severe guilt; Lear in his wrong perception of love to Cordelia, and destroying himself and his daughter; who is the victim of jealousy show, all these characters destroyed by a certain hidden force inside them. It seems to be in these cases that action travelled from outside to inside, or within them in shape of agonized passion.

The discussion about what tragedy is very long and spanned over the centuries. For middle ages it was a drama with an unhappy ending. For Greek and ancient world it was a grave or serious drama and for modern mind, it is a drama with extreme tragic incidents and unhappy ending.

In the light of these inferences drawn by Lucas, it could be well said that Renaissance drama is serious and in this sense ancient; fulfilling the requirements of essentials told by Aristotle and modern, in the sense of being extremely tragic.

The two remarkable Renaissance dramatists are Marlowe and Shakespeare, of which first one is under study with his passionate drawings of “Tamburlaine The Great”, the play completes every definition of tragedy; modern, ancient and medieval discussed above; specially with reference to Aristotelian concepts of tragedy. It was necessary to see the sublime concepts of tragedy, historically, in order to have an understanding of the play which is seen in ideas of a contrastive foregrounding figure again of Renaissance, that is, Machiavelli.

Highlighting the genius of Shakespeare, Emrys Jones quotes thus, “the only one of the wits with anything substantial to teach him was Marlowe” (Jones, 1978, p. 4).

Emrys Jones considers the period from 1590 – 1690 as the most fertile period of England as the England was never so much educated before it. Tracing the history from Henry VIII and the reigns of Edward, Elizabeth 1, Charles I, Charles II are according to him quantitatively very ripe for England, regarding the education of English people. His point of view for giving this perception is actually to focus that English audience watching stage at that time was well versed in the art of drama and that appraisal from that audience was not a simple affair (Jones, 1978, p. 7). The fantasy discussion whether Shakespeare existed or not, or whether the plays were written by Earl of Oxford, is trite now. It is proven that a person with the name of Shakespeare was present, though less of his biographical features even still are known. It is still difficult to write a biography of Shakespeare. But Shakespeare is admired throughout the world for his brevity and ingenuity of crafting phrases and sentences, which have become quotable quotes. And this also doesn’t mean that while comparing Shakespeare with Marlowe; Marlowe is at a lower stature. The only difference of genius lies in the fact that Shakespeare learned from the variety of experiences which he had in life and Marlowe learned from the university, but now it is clear that both were affected by Italian Renaissance. It is an established fact that the source of Shakespeare’s history plays is “Plutarch”. To compare Shakespeare and Marlowe is a difficult task as genius of both is unremarkable.

As Shakespearean biographies are rare, same is the case with Marlowe. Marlowe’s life was also though very brief, but he has been ignored by many critics throughout the centuries. He has been denied place or given less space by writers of “History of English Literature” like David Daiches to quote one example.
Marlowe’s life and works are briefly discussed so far. The reason seems to be his bohemian attitude towards religion and his temperament of being “reckless libertine”. But even then as surveyed by Emrys Jones that; England had been and has never been so educated than 1590s to 1690s, it could be said that to attract that educated audience one had to be at a lofty pulpit (Jones, 1978, p. 7).

According to Emrys Jones, one had to be impressive before that audience and as the Renaissance was heralding its dawn in England the variety of knowledge flourished, as he further says that Elizabeth; along with James I, Charles I, and Charles II, was interested in intellectual pursuits of brilliant kind. This could be meant then the environment of the England of that time was very ‘sombre’ and flourishing for art and theater (Jones, 1978, p. 7).

J.B. Priestley in his book “(Literature and Western Man) and in its part one (The Golden Globe) writes about the Italian Renaissance, and Renaissance in general, like this; “The New Age flowered first in Italy. All that was necessary was there: classical and other learning; the prosperous cities, with their new kinds of men, that were now independent republics or principalities; the changing papacy itself, still unchallenged as a political power, still far from the reformation and counter reformation; the arts that could flourish under ruling patrons who understood them and could reflect sumptuous new style of life; and the idea of Man the inheritor of the golden globe, no longer a humble creature of God on trial there for a brief season, no longer fixed in the medieval hierarchy, but free to reach the heights or plunge into the depths and by his own abilities, choices, actions, to triumph or to ruin himself” (Priestley, 1960, p. 10).

In such a rapturous and sonorous flow, Priestley has talked about Renaissance, or revival of learning of arts and sciences, or in essential every field of knowledge. He considers that it is not the discovery of learning but the discovery of human soul and his inner self. It seems as Man himself was carving out himself from his inside. Even the rulers of the new republics and principalities were patronizing the new fashion and function of arts and sciences. One of the towering personalities of Arts, Angelo, said, “the man who knows him, knows his work” (Rolland, 1962, p. 125).

The scene of Priestley is set with the most giantly of the men of politics and literature, the Machiavelli. The opening of the book of Priestley is with its first chapter as “The Italian Scene and Machiavelli”. Without any doubt Machiavelli has not only affected his age through his poetry and his remarkable treatise “The Prince”, but still his thought has a relevance today, in order to understand the nature of war, peace, function of republics and principalities, rulers of past and present and function and duties of the rulers and the ruled.

Priestley sees in Machiavelli the whole cult of Renaissance and aptly. He describes the features of his work and personality like this: A far less brilliant but far more renowned contemporary of Piccolo’s - the Florentine political theorist and historian, Nicolo Machiavelli who also wrote one of the best Italian comedies of the fifteenth century ‘La Mandrogala, and was the official and diplomat in the service of the Florentine Republic, who took to writing only when the Medici family dissolved the republic and had him placed under house arrest may appear a rather humdrum literary figure when compared with an Ariosto or a Tano; but, after all, he is one of that very small group of authors whose names have contributed an adjective to all the languages of western man. Millions of people who have never read a word, he wrote, know that ‘Machiavellian means, though, ironically enough, it does not mean what Machiavelli meant. He was not a conspicuously successful diplomat, but his various missions to Rome, France, Germany, enabled him to take a close view of ruling princes in action, notably Cesare Borgia, whom he knew at the height of Cesare’s swift and dazzling triumph. He was also a thoughtful student of Roman ancient history. The combined result of these studies and his immediate experiences is to be discovered, though he wrote other historical and political works, in his most famous book “The Prince” (Priestley, 1960, p. 15).

The Editor of Oxford World’s Classics of “The Prince” writes about the book: it provides an analysis of the usually violent means by which men seize, retain and lose political power (Bondanella, 1998).

So, often Machiavelli has been termed a villain, and as Bertrand Russell calls that since him world has become ‘Machiavellian’ (Priestley, 1960, p. 16). It is relevant to discuss him by correlating Marlowe’s Tamburlaine, with the text of ‘The Prince’, and highlight how the world today needs to reassemble its motives of power politics.

Machiavelli present this book in honour of respectable Lorenzo de’ Medici in such a way: Those who strive to obtain the good graces of a prince are accustomed to come before him with such things as they hold most precious, or in which they see him take most delight: where one often sees horses, arms, cloth of gold, precious stones, and similar ornaments presented to princes, worthy of their greatness (Machiavelli, 1990, p. 1).

‘The Prince’ unfurls like this as a precious ornament to history. If we see ironically, King of Persia, Myetes just placed his kingdom before Tamburlaine as a precious gift, though he fought with him but he didn’t manage to wage the war properly. “Tamburlaine of Marlowe” also unfolds in this manner as already Myetes has acknowledged the loss of Kingdom. Look at this statement, “Brother Cosroe,

I find myself aggrieved,
Yet insufficient to express the same,  
For it requires a great and thundering speech.  
Good brother, tell the cause unto my lords:  
I know you have a better wit than I.  
(1 Tamburlaine 1.11-5) (Marlowe et al., 1995, p. 4)

The subject of being hated and despised of a prince or a king, is very well discussed by Machiavelli, and of which is hinted out in the above dialogues of Zenocrate as well, that is avoidance of being rapacious. Machiavelli, so cites, "It makes him hated above all things, as I have said, to be rapacious, and to be a violator of the property and women of his subjects from both of which he must abstain. And when neither their property nor honour is touched the majority of men live content, and he has only to contend with the ambition of few, whom he can curb with ease in many ways."  

Tamburlaine fulfils Machiavellian criterion in this regard also. Though he has risen from a lower parentage, but he did not dishonor any woman, he even honored Zenocrates, and is in effeminate as well. In the play his affair with Zenocrates could be seen as a digression and a suitable one and in elaboration worthy of his stature as a mighty King. His affair and love with Zenocrates is just like a jest to woman. He talks about her beauty to the extent of flattering her and appeasing her at the loss of her own kingdom.

Tamburlaine of Marlowe and Machiavelli join hands on the matter of fate and fortune. Tamburlaine says to Therimadas, "In thee, thou valiant man of Persia, I see the folly of thy emperor."

Art thou but a captain of a thousand horse,  
That by characters graven in thy brows  
And by thy martial face and stout aspect  
Deserv’sto have the leading of an host?  
Forsake thy King, and do but join with me,  
And we will triumph over all the world,  
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  
(1 Tamburlaine. 2 166-177) (Bevington and Rasmussen, 1995; p13)

And what Machiavelli says about fortune well matches the speech of Tamburlaine as such, "I compare her to one of those raging rivers, which when in flood overflows the plains, sweeping away the soil from place to place; everything flies before it, all yield to its violence, without
being able in any to withstand it; and yet, though its nature be such it does not follow therefore that men, when the weather becomes fair, shall not make provision, both with defenses and barriers, in such a manner that, rising again, the waters may pass away by a canal, and their force be neither so unrestrained nor so dangerous. So it happens with fortune, who shows her power where valour has not prepared to resist her, and thither she turns her forces where she knows that barriers and defences have not been raised to constrain her (Machiavelli, 1990, p. 35). These poetic remarks about fortune also look same like the famous soliloquy of Hamlet,

“To be or not to be”.  
That is the question  
Whether it is nobler in mind  
To suffer the slings and  
Arrows of an outrageous Fortune,  
Or to take arms against  
Sea of troubles” (Wright, 1958)

The Persian king and other kings were unprepared against the outrageous Fortune carried by Tamburlaine, on the other hand, Tamburlaine was so well planned in warfare and arms and armors that he turned the wheel of Fortune. This is true Machiavellian spirit that a prince must get hold of all the affairs and also as said by him, Fortune plays a significant role and becomes a deciding factor in the matters of Kingdoms, but if a prince is well designed and crafted in the study of war; as he also points out that ‘fate’ doesn’t mean to neglect the affairs, he can’t lose or mismanage the kingdom. In case of Tamburlaine the fate herself has bowed on his feet, though he is well trained, courageous, valorous and also like fox and lion alike.  

This aptly shows that Tamburlaine has plied the strings of Cosroe, and which are kept in secrecy before Mycetes. Mycetes does not know this as he has assumed everything overwhelmingly that he could face Tamburlaine. The Mycetes, the King of Persia again if seen in Machiavellian perspective is unable to visualize the trap laid before him, and Tamburlaine excels him in this regard, by playing tactfully. See what Machiavelli has got to say about such situation. “A Prince, therefore, being compelled knowingly to adopt the beast, ought to choose the fox and the lion; because the lion cannot defend himself against snares and the fox cannot defend himself against wolves. Therefore, it is necessary to be a fox to discover the snares and a lion to terrify the wolves” (Machiavelli, 1990, p. 25).

Tamburlaine befits this statement as he has created a snare in the form of the conspiracy of Cosroe. This shows that he is like a fox. And by threatening. Mycetes, he is a lion; as Meander says’: Oft have I heard your majesty complain

Of Tamburlaine, that sturdy Scythian thief,  
That robs your merchants of Persepolis  
Trading by land into the Western Isles,  
And in your confines with his lawless train  
Daily commits in civil outrages,  
Hoping misled by dreaming prophecies,  
To reign in Asia and with barbarous arms  
To make himself the monarch of the East. (Bevington and Rasmussen,1995, p. 5)

These lines are very important. In these lines Meander has talked about very significant issues that lead to war and those are still relevant. In his speech to Mycetes he says that Tamburlaine and his men are committing daily the crimes of looting the tradesmen of Persia. This poses a serious question to him as this issue is the basis of the one of oldest conflicts in prevailing war between and among warring factions. This shows that war had and has an economic basis. The modern war is like this. Why? Because, not only the revenue brought by the traders is of high value to any kingdom, but the traders’ route must be safe, or that they may easily trade across the different countries. Though Marlowe hasn’t delineated the ancient art of war, but he has very aptly described the nature and basis of war. Though war is loathsome, but it is inevitable as it is today. In the modern warfare one of the reasons is economic, because in the recent scenario, war is not only being fought on multiple factors, but it has also become a kind of business across the globe. The ancient war was also very lethal and based on economy. It can well be inferred from, Tamburlaine, “The warlike soldier and the gentleman”

That here to fore have filled Persepolis  
With Africa Captains tak’n the field  
Whose ransom made them  
March in coats of gold  
With costly jewels hanging at their ears  
And shining stones upon their lofty crests,  
Now living idle in the walled towns,  
Wanting both pay and martial discipline,  
Begin in troops to threaten to civil war  
And openly exclaim against the king  
Therefore to stay all sudden mutinies,  
We will invest your highness  
Whereat the soldiers will conceive the more joy  
Then did the Macedonians at the spoil of Great Darius  
and his wealthy host.

(1 Tamburlaine 1.1 (140-153) (Marlowe et al., 1995 p. 7)

The specific case of Darius has also been cited by
Machiavelli, Machiavelli has clearly demarcated the rule about the governing of principalities in the chapter where he had discussed the case of Darius which was conquered by Alexander and where after the Great Alexander mutiny or rebel didn’t occur. It’s a shining rule still having a validity for those who have a tendency like Alexander the Great and Tamburlaine the Great. Alexander and Tamburlaine didn’t make colonies as done by British Imperial Kingdom, which had a basis in the Queen Elizabeth’s age, and the fervor of such dramatic heroes for portrayal in that time is clearly related to the fervor to conquer the world. The revival of learning in arts and sciences in the sixteenth century England, though has a background in Renaissance, but these intellectual efforts have a significance to add the power of imperialism. Alexander and Tamburlaine subdued the whole kingdoms and didn’t make colonies, but as rightly put by Machiavelli, they followed one of the two rules proposed by him to govern the principalities. 

He that is, Machiavelli says, in the discussion regarding Darius, that, “I answer that principalities of which one has record are found to be governed in two different ways; either by a prince, with a body of servants, who assign him to govern the kingdom as ministers by his favor and permission; or by a prince and barons, who hold that dignity by antiquity of blood and not by the grace of the prince. Such barons have states and their own subjects, who recognize them as lords and hold them in natural affection. Those states that are governed by a prince and his servants hold their prince in more consideration, because in all the country there is no one who is recognized as superior to him, and if they yield obedience to another they do it as to a minister and official and they do not bear him any particular affection” (Machiavelli, 1990, p. 7).

He further takes example of his time and says, “The example of these two governments in our times is the Turk and the king of France. The Turkish monarchy is governed by a single sultan and in France the King is surrounded by lords and barons” (Machiavelli, 1990, p. 7). The cause of rebel not occurring in Darius after Alexander was simple that he after conquering it established the government like Turks.

It seems now clear that Persia as depicted in the play, wasn’t governed by a single monarch, but barons and lords were there. This made a bit ease for Tamburlaine to conquer Persia; Egypt Turkey and Syria. This aptly makes him the ‘Hero of Machiavelli’, for the above mentioned reasons, as Tamburlaine ravaging the ravens of Persia and conquering one Kingdom of the East after the other, did not leave a single or a slight discrepancy in controlling all the kingdoms by him, and this was justly done by Alexander the great after Cyrus the Great, and thereby he that is, Tamburlaine falls in the paradigm of the rule set by Machiavelli as the best form of government and administration of different principalities, first by uniting them and then ruling them under one majesty, like the example given by him of Turk of histories.

The play rightfully depicts the genius of Marlowe as a Cambridge graduate. It also embodies, whereby the cult of Renaissance, thereby the megalomaniac self of Marlowe himself in the flesh of ‘Tamburlaine’. If the play is viewed from the modern feminist perspective, it shows an interesting note that Zenocrate, or sweet Zenocrate is just a jestful instrument in the hands of Tamburlaine, and he only considers her worthy of coronation, after his mighty deeds of conquests. If Zenocrate is equated with Elizabeth 1, it would give a more interesting result, that Elizabeth I, surrounded by handsome courtiers and suitors like Sir Philip Sydney and Marlowe, only was a plied tool. The play can also cater the attention of modern youth (or youthful leaders of the world) in this transnational world, where the youth aspires to rise in a single flight to major offices of different trans-national companies. Why? Because in their view as ‘Tamburlaine’ acquired one principality after another, same is their case as fruitful offices are the principalities to be acquired by the young generation, and that also one after another. But the play has an opposite side as well. If the sword and spear-stucken breasts, and blood stained hearts of soldiers and mercenaries are shown at the stage, that might find way in the heart of our young generation, to really hate the war and as the title of Hemingway suggests, “Can we or Shall we say ‘Farewell to Arms’ forever”.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflicts of interest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank the worthy vice principal and in charge of Library Govt. Emerson College Multan for his extended support. Thanks are also due to respected Principal Govt. College Civil Lines, Prof. BaqirJaffary for providing open access to the library of the same college. Mr. SajjadLarr, Chief Librarian, Central Library Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan need special thanks for getting copy of the standard text of Machiavelli. To Mr. Roa Fraz Younas, the author is especially thankful to him for carefully proof reading of the article.

REFERENCES
