

“The sweet fruition of an earthly crown”: Elemental mastery and ecophobia in *Tamburlaine the Great* and *Doctor Faustus*

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ABSTRACT

Although the elements have been exploited for human ends in early modern discursive practices, they have so saturated social and cultural life that writers of the period could not avoid mentioning elemental formations. Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine, Part I and Part II* (1587) and *Doctor Faustus* (1592) are significant representatives of early modern English drama that highlight the inter-relationships between the human body and the elements. This study examines elemental agency, to show how the agential capacity of the four classical elements unveils ecophobic treatment; and how the ecophobic strain in the human psyche is reflected in Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine* and *Doctor Faustus*.

KEYWORDS: ecophobia; elemental ecocriticism; Christopher Marlowe; *Tamburlaine*; *Doctor Faustus*.

“La dulce fruição de una corona terrenal”: dominio de los elementos y ecofobia en *Tamburlaine the Great* y *Doctor Faustus*

RESUMEN: Aunque se ha explorado el uso de los elementos con fines humanos en las prácticas discursivas de la edad moderna temprana, éstas han inundado de tal modo la vida social y cultural que los escritores de la época no han podido evitar mencionar las formaciones elementales. Las obras de Christopher Marlowe *Tamburlaine, Part I and Part II* (1587) y *Doctor Faustus* (1592) son ejemplos significativos del modo en que el teatro inglés de la época moderna temprana destaca las interrelaciones entre el cuerpo humano y los elementos. Este trabajo analiza la intervención de los elementos para mostrar que la capacidad agencial de los cuatro elementos clásicos desvela un tratamiento ecofóbico, y cómo esta tendencia ecofóbica de la mente hu-

“A doce fruição de uma coroa terrena”: Domínio elemental e ecofobia em *Tamburlaine the Great* e em *Doctor Faustus*

RESUMO: Embora os elementos tenham sempre sido explorados para fins humanos, especificamente através de práticas discursivas proto-modernas, também a vida social e cultural está saturada com eles, pelo que os escritores que descreviam o estilo de vida proto-moderno não podiam evitar mencionar formações elementais. *Tamburlaine, Part I and Part II* (1587) e *Doctor Faustus* (1592), de Christopher Marlowe, são exemplos significativos da forma como o drama do Renascimento inglês pôs em destaque as inter-relações entre corpo humano e os elementos. Assim, este estudo dedica-se à análise da agência elemental; à forma como esta capacidade de agência revela um tratamento ecofóbico; e ao modo como esta psique ecofóbica se vê refletida

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mana se refleksja en *Tamburlaine, Part I and Part II* y *Doctor Faustus*, de Marlowe.

PALABRAS CLAVE: ecofobia; ecocrítica de los elementos; Christopher Marlowe; *Tamburlaine; Doctor Faustus*.

em *Tamburlaine* e *Doctor Faustus*, de Marlowe.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: ecofobia; ecocrítica elemental; Christopher Marlowe; *Tamburlaine; Doctor Faustus*.*

According to ancient philosophers, the physical environment is essential in shaping human practices and discourses. In this framework, aggregating Thales' water, Anaximenes' air, Xenophanes' earth, and Heraclitus' fire, Empedocles underlined the agential capacity of the elements (water, air, earth, and fire) as the main roots (*rhizomata*) of the universe. He formed his cosmogony around two factors (*Love-*philia** and *Strife-*neikos**), and explicated that the balance of the elements depends on these two factors. Moreover, human civilization was shaped very much by the interaction between the human and the elements; for instance, human endeavors to transform natural forms such as metals found in the ground into useful tools marked new epochs throughout human history. Apart from their cultural impact on human civilization, the elements are significant in their own right, in that they are habitats for organisms. As the core of multiple becomings including those of humans, the elements are where beings (both human and nonhuman) come from, and form the material on which all lives are based. The elements are the backbone of existence. The elements are our home.

The rediscovery of the elemental cosmogony of ancient philosophy (*sapientia*) leads towards the rising awareness of the individual's significance in the Renaissance. This, according to Simon Estok, points to "a high point of anthropocentric thinking and desires for environmental control" (2008, 78). That is, human attempts to control the environment prove unsuccessful, with unpredictable results, and negative long-term repercussions for humankind. Paradoxically, nature is then blamed for being evil towards humanity. Estok clarifies this ecophobic mindset in relation to the control drive as follows: "If predictability defines order, then unpredictability (at the heart of ecophobia) is the essence of chaos" (2011, 80). Therefore, human beings' attempts to transform the bits of nature which can be controlled, or – perhaps more properly put –

* Translation into Portuguese by Miguel Ramalheite.

tamed by human hands and civilization leads to unpredictabilities—chaos—for which humanity would hold nature accountable. This chaos is contrasted to civilized, ordered human culture, producing an anthropocentric dilemma.

In other words, ecophobia uncovers itself when human beings try to control the elements. Inevitably, this control impulse has marked early modern history, and also interpenetrated into the imagination of the early modern writers. One of the famous English Renaissance playwrights, Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593) frequently captured ecophobia towards the physical environment in his plays. Despite his short career, Marlowe contributed to the English theatre with such monumental plays as *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587), *Doctor Faustus* (1592), *The Jew of Malta* (1592), *The Massacre at Paris* (1593) and *Edward II* (1594). Written in two parts (Part I in 1587 and Part II in 1588), and becoming “an overnight success” (Hopkins 2005, xii), *Tamburlaine the Great* is a tragedy about conquests. In the play, a Scythian shepherd, Tamburlaine, gradually ascends to the position of the conqueror of the Earth, which helps him establish his full identity as the ultimate ruler and the scourge and wrath of God on earth. His example illustrates how the ecophobic attitude prevails in human practices towards nature since the desire for conquest equates the colonial enslavement and rape of the earth with the desire to conquer the world. Similarly, *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* mirrors ecophobic practices of the time. Interestingly, there are two different texts of the same play, and these are referred to as the A-text and the B-text. Leah S. Marcus argues that the two

carry different ideological freight—the A text could be described as more nationalist and more Calvinist, Puritan, or ultra-Protestant, the B text as more internationalist, imperial, and Anglican, or Anglo-Catholic—but each version places the magician at the extreme edge of transgression in terms of its own implied system of values. (1996, 42)

Regardless of slight differences between these two texts, *Doctor Faustus* captures the early modern craving for knowledge to solve the mysteries of the universe as well as to determine the place of humans among other beings. The play, in this sense, significantly reflects Renaissance ideals of knowledge acquisition and self-enhancement; yet, Faustus commits himself to black magic, which,

consequently, becomes his doom. The play depicts a scholar, Doctor Faustus, who has sold his soul to the devil to acquire more knowledge, power, and status, but becomes a desperate man, doomed to eternal torture in hell. The protagonists of these two plays (*Tamburlaine the Great* and *Doctor Faustus*) are both remarkable heroes as they surrender themselves to “the sweet fruition of an earthly crown” (*Tamburlaine* I.2.7, 29) in their own ways; Faustus wants to be crowned with infinite knowledge while Tamburlaine desires to obtain infinite domination with a real earthly crown.

These two plays are significant in mirroring ecophobia towards the elements in the early modern imagination. Estok defines ecophobia as “an irrational and groundless fear or hatred of the natural world, as present and subtle in our daily lives and literature as homophobia and racism and sexism” (2011, 4). Ecophobia is one expression of the control impulse of the human within the physical realm. Nonetheless, “the more control we seem to have over the natural environment, the less we actually have” (Estok 2011, 5). Hence, the more human beings try to control the elements, the more catastrophic the results become. David Macauley labels this control as domination, and elaborates on this idea stating that

pollution took the form of an assault on the elements as places and environmental conditions. Mining technologies and the timber industry in particular adversely affected air, earth, and water. The quest for mercury, lead, and arsenic—which contributed to bone, brain, and blood diseases—often caused streams to be redirected, dried up, or contaminated. The increasing removal of forests visibly scarred the landscape. Herodotus, for example, took note of the fact that an entire mountain was upended in search of gold. Emerging metallurgy emitted smoke and poisonous gases into the air in addition to the wood and charcoal burned as fuel. And high noise levels were often reached in urban centers. (2010, 128)

Interestingly, especially in Renaissance ideals, the ecophobic control impulse in human psyche is also directed towards the body itself. The body is humans’ only extension into the earthy materials. Hence, similar to the control drive towards the physical environment, human beings have also declared their ultimate dominion over their inferior material body. The body is thoroughly soiled, as Jan E. Feerick and Vin Nardizzi contend, and this “shows how even live human bodies prove earth-like because they are host to creatures that we typically imagine as burrowing through the soil’s layers,

worms” (2012, 9). Within the same framework, Ian MacInnes, underscoring the potential of putrefication within all bodies, notes that “virtually everything, it seems, has worms within it, or at least the potential to develop worms” (MacInnes 2012, 258). In Bartholomew the Englishman’s monumental *On the Properties of Things* (1240), translated by John Trevisa in 1397, the formations of vermin are described in the following terms:

a worm is called “vermis” and is a beast that often is birthed from flesh and plants and often birthed from cabbage, and sometimes from putrefaction of humors, and sometimes from mixing of male and female [i.e., sexual reproduction], and sometimes from eggs, as it occurs with scorpions, tortoises, and newts. (Steel 2015, 214)¹

Hence, the body itself is home to various microorganisms; it is constantly penetrated, absorbed and digested by earthy microorganisms such as worms. Therefore, it has become a source of fear and hatred. Towards the physical environs or towards the human body, anthropocentric fear and hatred (ecophobia) have always revealed themselves throughout human history. Yet, the anthropocentric longing for ultimate control over material surroundings which prevailed in the early modern period had detrimental repercussions. These detrimental consequences resulting from human practices are linked to the wrath of nature, hence demonstrating how ecophobia works.

That is to say, the main reason for environmental deterioration is the denial of elemental agency. As the agential acknowledgment of the elements as living beings with potentials to act upon the human realm would threaten the anthropocentric primacy of the human, the elements are targeted as the source of fear and hatred. Yet, in Renaissance philosophies hatred and fear are directed towards not only the physical environment but also the material body itself because to appreciate the spiritual beauty as well as intellectual goodness, one has to avoid physical and bodily desires in order not to fall into such weaknesses as lust. Thus, human beings accommodate an inherent hatred, loathing and anger against their own bodies. This hatred is exercised since their bodies are the

¹ Trevisa’s original text: “A worme hatte *vermis* and is a beste þat ofte gendrep of fleisse and of herbes and gendrep ofte of caule, and somtyme of eyren, as it fareþ of scorpions, tortusesi and euetes” (18.115).

allegedly restrictive and bounding factor for the exertion of the rational and divine ascent of humans. The body materially becomes an elemental paradigm. Jeffrey Cohen and Lowell Duckert point to the inhabitation of the cosmic elements within the body (microcosm of the Bigger Nature), and they describe bodies as “temporary hosts for itinerant tales [that] are themselves elemental, every mind, soul, eye, or book a recording device to give local habitation as story proliferates, mutates, moves along. Our knowing the world is matter-mediated (enabled, impressed), an intimacy of substance, force, flesh, trope, plot, and weather” (2015, 11). Thus, the body becomes the lens through which the physical environment can be experienced by a human being. Estok points to the anthropocentric and ecophobic hatred towards the physical environment contending that “nature often becomes the hateful object in need of our control, the loathed and feared thing that can only result in tragedy if left in control” (2011, 6). Likewise, the body is perceived to draw the human towards earthly flaws causing descent from pure virtue; thereby the body becomes the principal “nature” for which human beings feel ecophobia inherently. From another perspective, the allegation that the perfect soul is captivated and contaminated by the material body is inherent in Western philosophy and religion. Ken Hiltner has drawn attention to the fact that “Eve (like all human beings, imagined as a split amalgam of spirit and flesh) was portrayed as falling because she privileged the flesh while marginalizing the spirit” (2014, 86); she thus encompasses the interminable clash of body and mind (soul). In this regard, this innate ecophobic impulse is directed towards the body (flesh), which is the key material point of exposure to the elements as well as to the natural phenomena. Therefore, the Renaissance aspiration was to ascend towards ultimate beauty employing mind and reason by discarding the material body. So as to exercise the mind, one has to have ultimate control over both the human body itself and the physical environment, an endeavor closely associated with the control impulse in human beings that arises from ecophobia.

In *Doctor Faustus*, the anthropocentric power is depicted as the domestication of the elements instrumental for human use:

EVIL ANGEL Go forward, Faustus, in that famous art
 Wherein all nature’s treasury is contained.
 Be thou on earth as Jove is in the sky,
 Lord and commander of these elements. (2008, 142)

Moreover, as the body is the material extension which links human beings to the physical environment, this struggle to belong to the proper sphere is directly observed within the human body. In the play, the body generates an “ontological duplicity” (2004, 468) as Richard Halpern points out. The problem around this duplicity brings forth a distinction between ontology (being-matter) and epistemology (knowing-discourse), which reveals itself through *on kai me on* (being, not being). Faustus states that “Bid *On kai me on* farewell. Galen, come! | Seeing *ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus*” (2008, 140), thus making a clear contrast between two disciplines—philosophy and medicine. Offering to abandon the epistemological questions philosophers ask, he desires to deal with physical and material formations since, as Faustus continues in Latin, *ubi desinit philosophus, ibi incipit medicus* (where the philosopher leaves off, the physician begins). Nevertheless, the play abounds with problems related to *on kai me on*. The play starts and ends with Faustus’s questioning his ontological and epistemological status. Halpern argues that this dilemma “of *on kai me on* pertains not only to theatrical language, of course, but to the spectacular or embodied play as well, marking its thereness as simultaneously empty or lacking, being and nonbeing at once” (2004, 468). Human beings harshly control their bodies, as an embodiment of their hatred for being bound to materiality, thus causing them to question their being/nonbeing. Blamed for digressing from ultimate goodness and eternal bliss, the human body, in this sense, is subjugated once mind is exerted on the material formations, which brings forth ecophobia.

Similarly, both parts of *Tamburlaine the Great* portray Tamburlaine extending and gradually developing his subjective identity via conquest of the physical environments, which firmly settles his anthropocentric reign. So as to exert his so-called power and control over the natural elements, he elevates himself to a status of pure intellect. Nonetheless, in order to achieve this supposed separation between human and nonhuman based on the dichotomy between body and mind, he has to detach himself from any natural ties. Thus, “Tamburlaine, after all, dramatically casts off his shepherd’s garb when he embarks on his career as a conqueror” (Borlik 2011, 138). In a similar vein, in the second part of the play, Tamburlaine sees the use of the four elements as preconditions for being a good warrior and conqueror, and he utters these words, worried about his sons’ future careers after his death:

I'll have you learn to sleep upon the ground,
March in your armour thorough watery fens,
Sustain the scorching heat and freezing cold,
Hunger and thirst – right adjuncts of the war;
And after this to scale a castle wall,
Besiege a fort, to undermine a town,
And make whole cities caper in the air. (2008, 97)

To attain the centric reign and ultimate subjectivity, one has to dominate and domesticate the natural environment, similar to the Neo-Platonic idea of taking the body under the control of the human mind to ascend towards the intellective soul. From this viewpoint, he/she should also properly educate the body as it is the only material intersection point of the physical environments and the human being. Therefore, human mind ordains the body to utilize the elements on his/her behalf.

Ironically though, throughout *Tamburlaine the Great*, Marlowe also makes numerous references to the elemental philosophy of the time, obtained with the rediscovery of the ancient classics and *sapientia* (wisdom). Drew Daniel points to Tamburlaine's elemental and material consciousness noting that "Tamburlaine dynamically experiences the human body as an elemental assemblage, materially composed of earth, air, fire, and water, set eternally in conflict with itself" (2014, 289). For example, Tamburlaine demands that his followers take an oath of allegiance by swearing their loyalty until their "bodies turn to elements, and both [...] [their] souls aspire celestial thrones" (2008, 15), which underlines the agency of the elements on bodies. More specifically, Tamburlaine talks about his material becoming with the recognition of his own elemental formation:

Nature, that framed us of four elements
Warring within our breasts for regiment,
Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds.
Our souls, whose faculties can comprehend
The wondrous architecture of the world
And measure every wand'ring planet's course,
Still climbing after knowledge infinite
And always moving as the restless spheres,
Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest
Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
The sweet fruition of an earthly crown. (2008, 28)

Tamburlaine utters the necessity of acquiring aspiring minds, which, he mentions, is to perceive the material and elemental formations within one's own soul. This ideology is in direct contrast with the anthropocentric point of view which strictly separates the intellectual existence of human beings (discursive formations) from the merely instrumental presence of nonhumans (material formations). Claiming to exist within the elemental and intellectual intertwinement, Tamburlaine puts forward the co-existence of mind and body in the human beings. Yet, this co-emergence is only attributed to the human body as the privilege of human mind that is celebrated throughout the play.

Apart from highlighting the ontological and epistemological arguments around human beings and the elemental bodies, these two plays are also crucial in disclosing the agencies of the elements, especially of fire in *Doctor Faustus* and of earth in *Tamburlaine the Great*. For instance, although Faustus' inspiration to obtain power is to dominate four main elements as he desires to be the "Lord and commander of the [...] elements" (2008, 142), fire predominates throughout the play. The play echoes that fire is active, and with its agency it modifies its surroundings. Fire contributes to the sustainability of the ecosystem through transforming beings and things. Although fire seems to annihilate biological life, it only modifies it: "There's always something left behind, some bodies or fragments, warm but insubstantial to the touch. These gray remnants make good fertilizer. Despite fire's violent ascents and turnings, not everything vanishes" (Mentz 2015, 73). The agential capacity of fire uncovers itself in the play especially during the contract scene in which Faustus sells his soul to Lucifer by means of Mephistopheles:

FAUSTUS But Mephistopheles,
My blood congeals, and I can write no more.

MEPHISTOPHELES I'll fetch thee fire to dissolve it straight. [...]

Enter Mephistopheles with a chafer of coals

MEPHISTOPHELES Here's fire. Come Faustus, set it on.

FAUSTUS So. Now the blood begins to clear again. (2008, 152)

The congealed blood hints at the agential movement of the body that is ignored for the sake of acquiring more knowledge about the nature of human beings and the universe. This ecophobic

subjugation of material agency at the cost of Faustus's soul embodies the period's lust for learning more *sapientia*. Furthermore, although Faustus desires to exercise his reason to discard his materiality which is required to ascend towards the divine reign, he, on the contrary, descends, trapped in his greed. Interestingly though, despite its subjugation as the main source of the existential descent, the body endeavors to inhibit this descent. That is to say, as the body is the elemental representation of the human existence, Faustus also tries to control his body; yet, the body reacts against Faustus' oppression in cooperation with the agency of fire. On similar grounds, Stevie Simkin underlines that "Faustus's own body rebels against him as he prepares to seal the pact with Lucifer is further proof both of his foolishness and the terrible danger he is courting" (2001, 97). On the other hand, the interaction between fire and blood uncloaks the power of fire in changing the material and discursive formations.

The agency of fire endures throughout the play with several references to fireworks especially in cases of displaying lust, wrath, and chaos. For instance, when Faustus demands a wife, the stage direction makes it clear that fireworks are existent on stage: "[Exit Mephistopheles, then re-]enter with a Devil dressed like a woman, with fireworks" (2008, 155). Though Simkin highlights that "the fireworks most likely signify venereal disease" (2001, 140), fireworks, in this case, embody lust and prurience. Similarly, the devils enter the stage with special firework effects to represent how Faustus feels. Hence, fireworks become the mediator for Faustus to express himself. Fireworks are also used to create a chaotic atmosphere on the stage, which adds a carnivalesque dimension to the play: "[Faustus and Mephistopheles] beat the Friars, and fling fireworks among them, and so exeunt" (2008, 165). Following the Pope's feast, Faustus reverses the celebratory mood into a chaotic and unholy situation. Moreover, to attack the clergymen further polishes Faustus' rebellion against religious dogma. Faustus desires to transcend limited human knowledge bestowed by divine rule via black magic. Therefore, Faustus channels his wrath for being endowed with a limited power toward the clergymen. In demonstrating his wrath, he makes use of the destructive agency of fire embodied in fireworks.

Significantly, beginning with the Renaissance, fireworks have been "used to mark royal or state events into the modern period" as

Nicholas Daly notes, “including births, birthdays, and marriages; military victories; peace agreements, such as that at Aix-La-Chapelle in 1749, which ended the War of the Austrian Succession and was marked by firework displays all over Europe, and so on” (2011, 258). Hence, prior to when “flamethrowers, bombs, and guns filled the world with their terror, gunpowder was the servant of delight and the handmaiden of wonder” (Kelly 2004, x). Nevertheless, the use of fireworks as a way to show off transmits “a literal reminder to the populace of the state’s firepower” (Daly 2011, 258), which links entertainment to power demonstrations as well. Moreover, fireworks have also served for the purpose of spectacle, especially on the stage, and this corresponds to the period’s vigor to display nationalistic spectacle. From another perspective, the instrumental use of fire as fireworks procures the domestication of a natural force within the human domain which confirms the anthropocentric control impulse, that is ecophobia. Even the special effects along with fireworks were mainly “to mimic volcanoes [, which began] [...] at least as early as the Renaissance” (Daly 2011, 257–58). Fireworks, in this sense, are a vehicle to demonstrate power over nature. The presence of fireworks on stage is the mobilization of pyrotechnology solely for human entertainment. Whereas the tamed agency of fire with fireworks is a demonstration of human triumph, uncontrolled fiery agencies, such as destructive volcanoes, are still the source of fear and hatred.

In addition to fireworks, the play is also filled with descriptions of hell demonstrating the furious agency of fire. The portrayal of hell in the play promotes the idea that it is a place where humans agonize because of their sins, and hell is correlated with fire due to its destructive and cleansing power:

MEPHISTOPHELES Within the bowels of these elements,
 Where we are tortured and remain for ever.
 Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
 In one self place, for where we are is hell,
 And where hell is must we ever be. (2008, 154)

Fire, in this regard, serves as a means of punishment. Hence, human imagination projects hell mostly as a psychological and/or physical sphere with “engravings and pictures representing the devil with his tongue of fire” (Bachelard 1964, 102); hell is “a place of fire, smoke, and arid waste” (Nicolson 1938, 500) along with sulphur. Moreover, Anne Harris argues that fire is identical and unique to hell in

monotheist religions as there is no fire, for instance, in the Garden of Eden. There is

no sputter of spark, no lick of flame, no fright of flash, no spread of blaze, no glow of ember. The cycle and spread of fire is still far off, its quality of light promised by God's "Fiat lux!" but yet to be materialized and manipulated. Nor is there rain.[...] No rain means no storms, no flashes of lightning, no tree limbs left burning for Adam and Eve to find, no discovery of ways to disrupt the dark with fierce light. (2015, 27)

Accordingly, throughout the play, Lucifer always enters the stage with thunder and lightning as reminiscences of the fiery agency in hell. The absence of fire at first and its appearance in hell in due course further the power of fire as a destructive and annihilating force, hence contributing to ecophobia towards the agency of fire.

Ironically though, once it is controlled, fire becomes an ultimate symbol of enlightenment and improvement, as in the myth of Prometheus. In Greek mythology, humanity can be fully developed only when Prometheus, "the archetypal rebel" (Rudnick 70), steals fire from the gods, thereby acquiring the "capacity for the mechanical arts (*techne*) from Zeus, bestowing it upon us" (Macauley 36). However, throughout the play, fire cannot be controlled by human beings since it is unique to hell specifically to punish and torture the ones who disobey or revolt against the universal divine order. Even the devils at Lucifer's command are touched by the agency of fire. For instance, in the B-Text, the audience first sees Mephistopheles in the shape of a dragon. The choice of the dragon is symbolical in terms of extending the agency of hellish fire to Faustus' domain. On similar grounds, most of the devils in hell are creatures depicted as "the black sons of hell" (B-Text 2008, 239) because of constant burning. Moreover, hell is always referred to as a sphere in which one's torture depends on the agency of fire. For instance, the Bad Angel describes hell as follows:

Now, Faustus, let thine eyes with horror stare
Into that vast perpetual torture-house.
There are the Furies tossing damnéd souls
On burning forks; their bodies boil in lead.
There are live quarters broiling on the coals,
That ne'er can die. This ever-burning chair
Is for o'er-tortured souls to rest them in.
These that are fed with sops of flaming fire

Were gluttons, and loved only delicates,
 And laughed to see the poor starve at their gates.
 But yet all these are nothing. Thou shalt see
 Ten thousand tortures that more horrid be. (B-Text 2008, 242)

In this description of fiery agency in hell, the focus is on the destructive power, contributing to the ecophobic portrayal of fire in accordance with the ecophobic attitude in human beings.

On the other hand, *Tamburlaine the Great* employs the agency of earth while depicting Tamburlaine's struggles for power. For example, despite Tamburlaine's attempts to alienate himself from the material and natural bonds to foreground his so-called intellectual dominion over the earth, he still needs earthy materials to accomplish his full identity as a conqueror of the earth. The most significant symbol of a successful conquest of a land is a handed-over crown decorated with precious stones and gold. Theridamas, the chief captain of, and later traitor to, the king of Persia, mentions the satisfaction of confiscating a crown, as the symbol of the ultimate power over nature and people of that land:

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 enchased with pearl and gold,
 Whose virtues carry with it life and death;
 To ask, and have; command, and be obeyed;
 When looks breed love, with looks to gain the prize –
 Such power attractive shines in prince's eyes. (2008, 24–25)

Significantly, this anthropocentric power within the control of the earthy agency is celebrated by a stipulation enriched with earthy materials processed in accordance with the aesthetics human civilization imposes. Hence, natural but especially earthy, materials are essential even in establishing one's developed social identity, which underlines that discursive formations are bound to material and natural ones. To pronounce social and discursive superiority over a land demands a symbol embellished with earthy materials. Matter and discourse (nature and culture), in this sense, cohabit the human existence. Hence, the delusional detachment and boundary between nature and culture is dissolved.

Yet still, *Tamburlaine the Great* is filled with descriptions of how ecophobia works in human practices. For instance, an ecophobic

control impulse is displayed in Tamburlaine's references to the mapping practices of the time. Humans, as the so-called unique subjects of the universe, desire to comprehend the Earth with its openness, its depth, its motions, its time, its exact place and its infiniteness within human limitations. Hence, "in order not to be crushed by the weight of the Earth (we can't presume to be Atlas) we are mapping multiple routes into comprehending this planet as an object and attempting to convey why such comprehension matters" (Cohen and Elkins-Tanton 2017, 69). Inasmuch as "most basically, a map takes measure of the earth" (Macauley 2010, 22), human beings try to squeeze the earth into human comprehension with mapping, which would provide the human with a power to limit and shape the earth according to human knowledge. Tamburlaine, as the wrath of God, wants to limit the whole world to his geological and geographical knowledge, and he desires to squeeze the locations into his authority:

I will confute those blind geographers
That make a triple region in the world,
Excluding regions which I mean to trace
And with this pen reduce them to a map,
Calling the provinces, cities, and towns
After my name and thine, Zenocrate. (2008, 52)

The privilege of naming unveils delusional power of the human over the nonhuman. This, automatically, reduces the intrinsic value of the named by subjugating her/him/it to the status of non-being. Stripping off one's essence of life means labelling that thing as non-existent and passive matter, similar to the mapping practices which exactly squeezes an independently living earth into a passive category. Likewise, Tamburlaine also subjugates some human beings. He, for example, forces Bajazeth, the Turkish emperor, to eat his own flesh, and urges him to kill his wife. Thus, this analogy with cannibalism reinforces the usurpation of both Bajazeth's land and his kingly soul by Tamburlaine (simply because land is equated with kingship). Behaving as if Bajazeth and his wife are just a piece of flesh, hence emphasizing their material weaknesses, Tamburlaine inwardly strips them of humanity and intellectual soul, and diminishes them to a nonhuman status. Enclosed in cages like nonhumans, Bajazeth and his wife, Zabina, forget their human essence of life and existence, as a result of which they both brain themselves against the cage.

Similar to the material influences on the human body, humans also impinge on the material surroundings especially with their bodily imprints on the earth. For instance, in *Tamburlaine the Great*, battle scenes are depicted to track the “human trampled under feet of horses, crushed among stones, dying cries of agony” (Spence 1927, 611). In this way, just as much as the human is framed by nature and elemental forces, nature is also framed by human agency. As regards to this reciprocal formation, Cohen asks: “How long does it take [...] for a body to be no longer a person or a life, but material that can be moved, that can be used to build a place like this?” (2015, 70). Bajazeth, in the play, draws attention to this process by stating: “Let thousands die, their slaughtered carcasses | Shall serve for walls and bulwarks to the rest” (2008, 38). Likewise, Doctor Faustus also refers to human-elemental entanglement:

O, Pythagoras' *metempsychosis*, were that true,
 This soul should fly from me and I be changed
 Into some brutish beast.
 All beasts are happy, for, when they die,
 Their souls are soon dissolved into elements;
 But mine must live still to be plagued in hell. (2008, 243–44)

The more the human body gets tangled with the earthy formations through decay, deterioration, and decomposition, the more it turns into another being born out of the agency of earth. The body or its parts left in the field dissolves into other beings because the body of the defeated is denied the imperial agency, and simply left to become disintegrated into the elements, as also referred to in *Tamburlaine*: “Now shall his barbarous body be a prey | To beasts and fowls, and all the winds shall breathe | Through shady leaves of every senseless tree | Murmurs and hisses for his heinous sin” (2008, 88–89). Everything in life bears another potential of life within itself, and this material link with earth is uncovered especially through the battle scenes in the play.

Nonetheless, contrary to the acknowledgement of the material and earthy formations depicted in the battlefield, a denial of the material dissolution of the human body into the earth is demonstrated through the attempt to preserve the body of a dead person. When his wife dies, Tamburlaine does not want to give her body to the earth since it would mean to give birth to another being at that locale out of his wife's essence. In order not to “beautify

Larissa plains" (2008, 97), Tamburlaine wants to retard his wife's bodily decay as much as possible:

Where'er her soul be [turning to address Zenocrate's body],
thou shalt stay with me,
Embalmed with cassia, ambergris, and myrrh,
Not lapped in lead but in a sheet of gold;
And till I die thou shalt not be interred.
Then in as rich a tomb as Mausolus. (2008, 93)

Tamburlaine does not want her body to be digested by other beings in the earth, and stops, in a sense, her from transforming into a kind of vermin in the soil, which also signifies his anthropocentric role-adoption in the play. Tamburlaine disrupts the natural process, and converts Zenocrate's body into a spectacular hearse, as a result of which he claims to preserve the intellectual essence of his wife. This practice also implies an anthropocentric impulse to put human beings into a distinct category from nonhuman beings.

In *Doctor Faustus*, the description of fire demonstrates its action upon the environment as well as the human body and imagination. Moreover, the devils are staged to show the extension of fire into the human sphere. Different references to fireworks throughout the play not only hint at a variety of fiery agencies but also expose the influence of fire on human beings, hence acknowledging the agential existence of fire. In *Tamburlaine*, on the other hand, the protagonist claims to be the master of earth which, he thinks, is passive and mute towards human conquests. However, he is conclusively defeated by the natural cycle and the earthy agency. Refusing to bury Zenocrate's body, Tamburlaine tries to have more control over her body since, in this way, he will retard the body from becoming an earthy being. This implies the denial of the material side of the human, and ironically at the same time the acknowledgement of material awareness. Yet still, human beings endeavor to alienate themselves from the physical environments. This, in return, points to ecophobia since Tamburlaine tries to control both the lands with the purpose of taming them within his terms and Zenocrate's body, which grants him the agency of a wiser substance than nature itself. Similarly, *Doctor Faustus* is important in revealing the early modern efforts to control fire, with special references to fireworks. Hence, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine the Great* and *Doctor Faustus* are significant representatives of how early modern human beings attempted to

control the classical elements (specifically earth and fire) within an ecophobic worldview.

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