



The Image of the Eastern Ruler in the Works of Christopher Marlowe

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ABSTRACT

The given article claims to reveal the character of Eastern monarchs and Eastern medieval realities in total through the prism of such a renowned English poet and playwright named Christopher Marlowe. Thus, the actual goal of the research is to examine the image of the Orient on the basis of the following Marlowe's play: "Tamburlaine the Great". The author analyzes how this image corresponds to the historical Tamburlaine and the East of his time; how Marlowe represents relations between the Oriental and European worlds as well as how appropriate it is to put this Marlowe's play (and, generally, works by his contemporaries) into the post colonial discourse that is popular nowadays.

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Introduction

The history of world literature comprises the names of several outstanding writers and poets in whose works the theme of the East is revealed so vividly and figuratively, that these works have left an indelible mark on the souls of readers of different epochs and times. In the history of English romanticism, this is the name of the great English poet George Gordon Byron; in German classical poetry, this is the great Goethe. But few people know that this topic is also associated with the name of an outstanding representative of the English "University wits" of the era of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I - Christopher Marlowe who is rightfully considered the harbinger of another brilliant English poet and playwright of the Renaissance William Shakespeare.

Material and methodsw

Queen Elizabeth I of England (1558-1603) is the last queen of the Tudor dynasty, which ruled England

from 1558 to 1603. The period from the mid 1500s to the early 1600s is usually named after her. During this period, called the Elizabethan era, English writers and poets created many of the greatest masterpieces of poetry and drama that entered the treasury of world literature, deeply read and revered to this day. A number of cultural and economic events contributed to this outstanding literary boom of the Elizabethan era. One of the most important of these events took place in 1476, when William Caxton (1422-1492) invented the printing press, founded the first printing house in England and printed the first book in English.. Queen Elizabeth I of England (1558-1603) was the last monarch of the Tudor dynasty which ruled England from 1558 to 1603. The period from the mid 1500s to the early 1600s is usually named after her. During this period, called the Elizabethan era, English writers and poets created many of the greatest masterpieces of poetry and drama that entered the treasury of world literature, deeply read and revered to this day. A number of cultural and economic events contributed to this outstanding literary boom of the Elizabethan era. One of the most significant of these events took place in 1476, when William Caxton (1422-1492) invented the printing press, founded the first printing house in England, and printed the first book in English. He was the first person to print a book in the English language and to print a book in England. The first book in the language was “The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy” which was Caxton’s translation of a popular French adventure tale. Caxton printed this book in Bruges, in what is now Belgium, in about 1475. The first book printed in England was “The Dictes or Sayings of the Philosophers, produced in 1477 [6, p.322].

Printing made it possible to produce many more books at a much lower cost. The greater availability of books and their lower cost have stimulated the desire of many to learn to read. As literacy increased, so did the demand for books. During the 1500s, English scholars, along with other European scholars, rediscovered the culture, philosophy and literature of Ancient Greece and Rome, which they had largely neglected over hundreds of previous years. Translations of Greek philosophers and especially Roman literary works had a strong influence on the writers of the Elizabethan era. In addition, new literary forms were introduced into English literature. For example, English authors directly borrowed or modified such literary forms as essays from France (Michel Montaigne is the founder of this genre) and sonnets from Italy.

Another significant historical event took place in 1588 when the English fleet defeated the Invincible Spanish Armada. This great victory caused a surge of patriotism, which was reflected in poetry and especially in the drama of the time.

Another landmark event in the Elizabethan era was the fact that in 1576 James Burbage built the first theater in England called “The Theater”. Until this time, dramas were played out in the streets, in the homes of the nobility or palaces, and at English universities. After Burbage built the "Theater", other playhouses appeared which also contributed to the rapid increase in the popularity of the drama of the era of Elizabeth I, which was distinguished by new features - passion and liveliness [7, p. 317]. In this, a special role belongs to a group of leading Elizabethan playwrights, which were known as "University Wits" because they studied at well-known English universities - Oxford or Cambridge. These playwrights included Robert Greene, Christopher Marlowe, and George Peele. Christopher Marlowe was the most important dramatist among the Wits, a significant figure in the dramatic genre among them in England.

Results and Discussion

Christopher Marlowe (26.02.1564 - 30.05.1593) - English playwright of the XVI century, the founder

of the genre of high tragedy of the Renaissance in England. He wrote tragedies that center on strong personalities. He is a true representative of the art of the Renaissance, when “the ideals of individualistic humanism were clearly expressed, affirming the greatness of the earthly, human principle in all its fullness and creative activity” (1, p. 268). It is also true that the creative activity of Christopher Marlowe falls on the beginning of the modern period of the history of England (1485-1603) of the reign of the Tudor dynasty and, in particular, of its last representative Elizabeth I. He is the initiator of the tragedy about powerful historical figures, and among these works is the tragedy "Tamburlaine the Great" (about 1587). Christopher Marlowe gained his resounding theatrical reputation with the writing of this very drama "Tamburlaine the Great", where he portrayed the awe-inspiring conqueror Amir Timur, or as he was also called, Tamerlane the Great, with striking poetic prose and entertainment. The play reflects the widespread admiration of the scope and limits of the human will's striving for powerful domination which was widespread in the time of Christopher Marlowe. The liberation of the individual from the ascetic medieval morality, the theomachy pathos also characterizes the tragedy "Tamburlaine the Great" (published in 1587).

A true triumph was the appearance in the theatrical season of 1587-88 of the tragedy of Christopher Marlowe "Tamburlaine the Great". With the writing of this drama, Marlowe influenced the later drama of the era, focusing on the creation of a heroic figure – an awe-inspiring conqueror, and transforming poetry into a flexible poetic form of tragedy. In the center of the play is a titanic personality, a man who sets himself grandiose goals, which fit well with the spirit and letter of the Renaissance, when a person and his dignity were considered his only worthy. Accordingly, this is how Marlowe paints the image of Tamburlaine: golden-haired, "of stature tall, and straightly fashioned like his desire, lift upwards and divine. So large of limbs, his joints so strongly knit, such breadth of shoulders as might mainly beat Old Atlas' burden. ... His arms and fingers long and sinewy, betokening valour and excess of strength. In every part proportion'd like the man should make the world subdu'd to Tamburlaine» [5, p.119-120]. In the drama, Tamburlaine is an “unknown Scythian, a simple shepherd” possessing a strong will and physical strength, striving to create a huge empire and become the ruler of the world.

"Tamburlaine the Great" is a play in which Marlowe demonstrates the most consistent intensity, the most enduring creative power, and the most lavishly expended poetic resources of which he possessed skillfully. This is an unusually strong and distinctive creation, and most of the energy of the author's creativity is focused on the personality of the protagonist. Tamburlaine is the famous Timur who ruled in Samarkand in the XIV century, conquering the Persians, Tatars, Syrians and Turks, and only death prevented him from fighting the Chinese. In Marlowe's play, he is a Scythian shepherd who achieved greatness due to his character, followed by brave and strong-minded men, beloved by a beautiful and kind woman, always victorious. It may seem that these are not the strokes from which a great drama is built, for one may ask what is the vital element of the conflict, if not in a simple confrontation (repeated in many episodes) of one side against the other. But the conflict in the drama "Tamburlaine the Great" takes on a special form, including reactions and judgments.

“View but his picture in this tragic glass” is said in the Prologue, “And then applaud his fortunes as you please” [5, p.105]. There is a characteristic note of challenge in this, since soon, both for the audience and for the characters themselves, the question arises as to how the fate of this conqueror should be considered:

What god, or fiend, or spirit of the earth,

Or monster turned to a manly shape,

... Whether from earth, or hell, or heaven he grow. [5, p.131)

This is the question asked by Ortygius at the beginning of the play (act 2, scene 6), and it firmly directs our attention to the conflict of judges, which is fundamental. For Christian judgment should tell the audience that the fate of this person should not be applauded at all; nevertheless, drama helps counteract this and inspire admiration for those whose values are opposite to those of Christians.

The protagonist is a fighter with tremendous ambition and tremendous vitality. He spills out his soul in the long monologues full of pathos, which Christopher Marlowe introduced into the arsenal of techniques of Elizabethan drama. The poet saw the true origins of the tragic character not in the external circumstances that determine his fate, but in the internal spiritual contradictions tearing apart this truly gigantic personality, who had risen above the ordinary and common norms: already in the Prologue of Tamburlaine the Great, the author's intention to pave new paths to dramatic art is noticed to intrigue the audience with the image of world-historical events, pictures of the fall of kingdoms and peoples.

Conclusion

To sum up, it should be noted that Christopher Marlowe was the first to attempt to put the action of the drama on a psychological basis, to comprehend it with internal motives. And for this he chose the image of the eastern ruler. In the person of Tamburlaine he brought out the type of an ambitious person who is consumed with an insatiable thirst for power; Tamburlaine is consumed only with a passion for conquest. At the same time, he is a living person, capable of love. But even in love dreams next to his beloved woman he indulges in dreams of future power. Tamburlaine's monologues are devoted to reflections on human greatness and beauty. In battles, he is cruel and merciless. And even knowing that death awaits him, he continues the battle and wants to subordinate both illness and death to his will. He wants to be victorious even over the natural course of things. The writer sees the unity of the tragedy in the fact that all faces are brought in connection with this tragic character trait of the eastern conqueror, they rise and die through it.

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