Gloucester’s castle. Enter CORNWALL, REGAN, GONERIL, EDMUND, and Servants

CORNWALL Post speedily to my lord your husband; show him this letter: the army of France is landed. Seek out the villain Gloucester.

[Exeunt some of the Servants]

REGAN Hang him instantly.

GONERIL Pluck out his eyes.

CORNWALL Leave him to my displeasure. Edmund, keep you our sister company: the revenges we are bound to take upon your traitorous father are not fit for your beholding. Advise the duke, where you are going, to a most festinate preparation: we are bound to the like. Our posts shall be swift and intelligent betwixt us. Farewell, dear sister: farewell, my lord of Gloucester.

[Enter OSWALD]

OSWALD How now! where’s the king?

My lord of Gloucester hath convey’d him hence:

Some five or six and thirty of his knights,

Hot questrists after him, met him at gate;

Who, with some other of the lords dependants,

Are gone with him towards Dover; where they boast

To have well-armed friends.

CORNWALL Get horses for your mistress.

GONERIL Farewell, sweet lord, and sister.

CORNWALL Edmund, farewell.

[Exeunt GONERIL, EDMUND, and OSWALD]

Go seek the traitor Gloucester,

Pinion him like a thief, bring him before us.

[Exeunt other Servants]

Though well we may not pass upon his life

Without the form of justice, yet our power

Shall do a courtesy to our wrath, which men

May blame, but not control. Who’s there? the traitor?

[Enter GLOUCESTER, brought in by two or three]

REGAN Ingrateful fox! ’tis he.

CORNWALL Bind fast his corky arms.

GLOUCESTER What mean your graces? Good my friends, consider

You are my guests: do me no foul play, friends.

CORNWALL Bind him, I say.

[Servants bind him]

REGAN Hard, hard. O filthy traitor!

GLOUCESTER Unmerciful lady as you are, I’m none.
CORNWALL  To this chair bind him. Villain, thou shalt find--

[REGAN plucks his beard]

GLOUCESTER  By the kind gods, 'tis most ignobly done
To pluck me by the beard.

REGAN  So white, and such a traitor!

GLOUCESTER  Naughty lady,
These hairs, which thou dost ravish from my chin,
Will quicken, and accuse thee: I am your host:
With robbers' hands my hospitable favours
You should not ruffle thus. What will you do?

CORNWALL  Come, sir, what letters had you late from France?

REGAN  Be simple answerer, for we know the truth.

CORNWALL  And what confederacy have you with the traitors
Late footed in the kingdom?

REGAN  To whose hands have you sent the lunatic king? Speak.

GLOUCESTER  I have a letter guessingly set down,
Which came from one that's of a neutral heart,
And not from one opposed.

CORNWALL  Cunning.

REGAN  And false.

CORNWALL  Where hast thou sent the king?

GLOUCESTER  To Dover.

REGAN  Wherefore to Dover? Wast thou not charged at peril--

CORNWALL  Wherefore to Dover? Let him first answer that.

GLOUCESTER  I am tied to the stake, and I must stand the course.

REGAN  Wherefore to Dover, sir?

GLOUCESTER  Because I would not see thy cruel nails
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head
In hell-black night endured, would have buoy'd up,
And quench'd the stelled fires:
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.
If wolves had at thy gate how'd that stern time,
Thou shouldst have said 'Good porter, turn the key,'
All cruels else subscribed: but I shall see
The winged vengeance overtakes such children.
See'd shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.
Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

GLOUCESTER  He that will think to live till he be old,
Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods!

REGAN  One side will mock another; the other too.

CORNWALL  If you see vengeance,
First Servant  Hold your hand, my lord:
I have served you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.

REGAN  How now, you dog!
First Servant  If you did wear a beard upon your chin,
I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?

CORNWALL  My villain!

[They draw and fight]
First Servant  Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

REGAN  Give me thy sword. A peasant stands up thus!

[First Servant takes a sword, and runs at him behind]
First Servant  O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left
To see some mischief on him. O!

[Dies]
CORNWALL  Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!
Where is thy lustre now?

GLOUCESTER  All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,
To quit this horrid act.
Out, treacherous villain!
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;
Who is too good to pity thee.

GLOUCESTER
O my follies! then Edgar was abused.
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!
REGAN
Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to Dover.

[Exit one with GLOUCESTER]

CORNWALL
How is't, my lord? How look you?
I have received a hurt: follow me, lady.
Turn out that eyeless villain; throw this slave
Upon the dunghill. Regan, I bleed apace:
Untimely comes this hurt: give me your arm.

[Exit CORNWALL, led by REGAN]

Second Servant
I'll never care what wickedness I do,
If this man come to good.

Third Servant
If she live long,
And in the end meet the old course of death,
Women will all turn monsters.

Second Servant
Let's follow the old earl, and get the Bedlam
To lead him where he would: his roguish madness
Allows itself to any thing.

Third Servant
Go thou: I'll fetch some flax and whites of eggs
To apply to his bleeding face. Now, heaven help him!

[Exeunt severally]

1-King Lear, Act 3 Scene 7. Guy Williams (Cornwall) and Monica Dolan (Regan) rehearse killing Cornwall's servant (Adam Booth) after he's opposed their blinding of Gloucester. The fight was choreographed by Malcolm Ranson.


Jan Kott [in Shakespeare Our Contemporary] quite properly treats his own historical moment as a textual field within which Shakespeare's work lives. He frankly argues that we can only encounter Shakespeare—or any author, for that matter—from within the context in which we find ourselves. However Kott's Shakespeare is not in dialogue with a reader's experiences but subservient to them. The experiences of a European in the aftermath of the Second World War have created certain expectations:

And that is why [the reader/spectator] is not terrified—or rather, not amazed—at Shakespeare's cruelty. He views the struggle for power and the mutual slaughter of the characters far more calmly than did many generations of spectators and critics in the nineteenth century. Cruel Death, suffered by most dramatis personae, is not regarded today as an aesthetic necessity. The violent deaths of the principal characters are now regarded rather as historical necessity or as something altogether natural.

In fact these expectations have generated a view of history that is unhisorical. The cruelty and terror that are given of one's daily life under Nazi occupation and Soviet domination lead Kott's readers/viewers of Shakespeare to perceive violent deaths as historical necessity or as "something altogether natural." The image of history attributed to Shakespeare is static, allpowerful, absolute, what Kott calls the "Grand Mechanism": "For Shakespeare history stands still. Every chapter opens and closes at the same point. Every great Shakespearean act is merely a repetition".

For Kott's Shakespeare history is perpetrated by individuals—"power has names, eyes, mouth and hands" but not altered by them. There are "no gods in Shakespeare, only kings" (15), but there are also "no bad kings, or good kings, only the king's situation, and the system." It is a system that "leaves no room for freedom of choice" (13). Individuals have power but no choice. History is a Grand Mechanism but "has no meaning and stands still" (31). History becomes a protagonist, tragic in its meaninglessness (30). It is not that there is no moral order but rather that, confronted with the "order of history" (35), the moral order has no force; it cannot win.
Analyse this scene from *Tamburlaine* (doc.1) and confront it with the representation (doc.2)

Note: Turkish military commander Timur Lenk ["Timur the Lame", English: Tamerlane or Tamburlaine] was born near Samarkand 1336-died 1405. A conqueror of central Asia, he is chiefly remembered for his conquests - from Egypt and Syria to the borders of China, and for the cultural achievements of the Timourides dynasty he founded.


**DRAMATIS PERSONAE.**
* TAMBURLAINE, a Scythian shepherd
* TECHELLES, USUMCASANE: his followers
* AGYDAS, MAGNETES: Median lords
* ZENOCRATE, daughter to the Soldan of Egypt

**Act 1, Scene 2, v. 1-108**

Enter TAMBURLAINE leading ZENOCRATE, TECHELLES, USUMCASANE, AGYDAS, MAGNETES, LORDS, and SOLDIERS loaden with treasure.

1. TAMBURLAINE. Come, lady, let not this appal your thoughts;
2. The jewels and the treasure we have ta'en
3. Shall be reserv'd, and you in better state
4. Than if you were arriv'd in Syria,
5. Even in the circle of your father's arms,
6. The mighty Soldan of Aegyptia.

7. ZENOCRATE. Ah, shepherd, pity my distressed plight!
8. (If, as thou seem'st, thou art so mean a man,)
9. And seek not to enrich thy followers
10. By lawless rapine from a silly maid,
11. Who, travelling with these Median lords
12. To Memphis, from my uncle's country of Media,
13. Where, all my youth, I have been governed,
14. Have pass'd the army of the mighty Turk,
15. Bearing his privy-signet and his hand
16. To safe-conduct us thorough Africa.

17. MAGNETES. And, since we have arriv'd in Scythia,
18. Besides rich presents from the puissant Cham,
19. We have his highness' letters to command
20. Aid and assistance, if we stand in need.

21. TAMBURLAINE. But now you see these letters and commands
22. Are countermanded by a greater man;
23. And through my provinces you must expect
24. Letters of conduct from my mightiness,
25. If you intend to keep your treasure safe.
26. But, since I love to live at liberty,
27. As easily may you get the Soldan's crown
28. As any prizes out of my precinct;
29. For they are friends that help to wean my state
30. Till men and kingdoms help to strengthen it,
31. And must maintain my life exempt from servitude.—
32. But, tell me, madam, is your grace betroth’d?
33. ZENOCRATE. I am, my lord,—for so you do import.
34. TAMBURLAINE. I am a lord, for so my deeds shall prove;
35. And yet a shepherd by my parentage.
36. But, lady, this fair face and heavenly hue
37. Must grace his bed that conquers Asia,
38. And means to be a terror to the world,
39. Measuring the limits of his empery
40. By east and west, as Phoebus doth his course.—
41. Lie here, ye weeds, that I disdain to wear!
42. This complete armour and this curtal-axe
43. Are adjuncts more be seeming Tamburlaine.—
44. And, madam, whatsoever you esteem
45. Of this success, and loss unvalued,
46. Both may invest you empress of the East;
47. And these that seem but silly country swains
48. May have the leading of so great an host
49. As with their weight shall make the mountains quake,
50. Even as when windy exhalations,
51. Fighting for passage, tilt within the earth.
52. TECHELLES. As princely lions, when they rouse themselves,
53. Stretching their paws, and threatening herds of beasts,
54. So in his armour looketh Tamburlaine.
55. Methinks I see kings kneeling at his feet,
56. And he with frowning brows and fiery looks
57. Spuming their crowns from off their captive heads.
58. USUMCASANE. And making thee and me, Techelles, kings,
59. That even to death will follow Tamburlaine.
60. TAMBURLAINE. Nobly resolv’d, sweet friends and followers!
61. These lords perhaps do scorn our estimates,
62. And think we prattle with distemper’d spirits:
63. But, since they measure our deserts so mean,
64. That in conceit bear empires on our spears,
65. Affecting thoughts coequal with the clouds,
66. They shall be kept our forced followers
67. Till with their eyes they view us emperors.
68. ZENOCRATE. The gods, defenders of the innocent.
69. Will never prosper your intended drifts,
70. That thus oppress poor friendless passengers.
71. Therefore at least admit us liberty,
72. Even as thou hop’st to be eternized
73. By living Asia’s mighty emperor.
74. AGYDAS. I hope our lady’s treasure and our own
75. May serve for ransom to our liberties:
76. Return our mules and empty camels back,
77. That we may travel into Syria,
78. Where her betrothed lord, Alcidamus,
79. Expect the arrival of her highness’ person.
80. MAGNETES. And wheresoe’er we repose ourselves,
We will report but well of Tamburlaine.

TAMBURLAINE. Disdains Zenocrate to live with me?
3. Or you, my lords, to be my followers?
4. Think you I weigh this treasure more than you?
5. Not all the gold in India's wealthy arms
6. Shall buy the meanest soldier in my train.
7. Zenocrate, lovelier than the love of Jove,
8. Brighter than is the silver Rhodope,
9. Fairer than whitest snow on Scythian hills,
10. Thy person is more worth to Tamburlaine
11. Than the possession of the Persian crown,
12. Which gracious stars have promis'd at my birth.
13. A hundred Tartars shall attend on thee,
14. Mounted on steeds swifter than Pegasus;
15. Thy garments shall be made of Median silk,
16. Enchas'd with precious jewels of mine own,
17. More rich and valorous than Zenocrate's;
18. With milk-white harts upon an ivory sled
19. Thou shalt be drawn amidst the frozen pools,
20. And scale the icy mountains' lofty tops,
21. Which with thy beauty will be soon resolv'd:
22. My martial prizes, with five hundred men,
23. Won on the fifty-headed Volga's waves,
24. Shall we all offer to Zenocrate,
25. And then myself to fair Zenocrate.

TECHELLES. What now! in love?

TAMBURLAINE. Techelles, women must be flattered:
27. But this is she with whom I am in love.
Figure 56: "Timur Holds a Great Feast with Amir Huseyn after they have Raised a Chinghisid to the Rank of Great Khan", from a manuscript of Sharaf al-din ‘Ali Yazdi’s Zafarnama, Shiraz, 1523 – 52, British Library, OR. 1359, fol 35v, London
Je ne l’avais jamais croisée dans le hall de l’immeuble, ni dans les escaliers. Je connaissais tous les autres habitants, du moins les noms et les visages, mais Clémence Barrot restait un mystère. Lorsque je passais devant sa porte, aucun bruit ne me parvenait, et si je posais des questions la concernant, c’était chaque fois des réponses laconiques et des airs entendus… Un personnage ! Elle occupait son appartement depuis très longtemps, ce qui lui conférait le statut de doyenne, que son âge justifiait par ailleurs. J’habitais là depuis peu.

J’avais pris un jour le prétexte d’un dîner chez moi pour venir sonner au deuxième étage porte gauche et m’excuser par avance de la gêne éventuelle, cependant improbable, nous ne devions être que trois ou quatre autour de la table. Une jeune fille était apparue et une voix venant des profondeurs de l’appartement avait demandé, Qu’est-ce que c’est ? Sans attendre la réponse de la jeune fille, je m’étais annoncée, Votre voisine du dessus. Entrez ! J’avais franchi le seuil et je l’avais aperçue au fond de ce couloir étroit et sombre qu’une fenêtre ouvrait sur un peu de ciel et devant laquelle le canapé était installé. Approchez ! avait ordonné la frêle silhouette.

Elle m’avait écoutée lui proposer, en plaisantant, de me donner un gage si nous faisions trop de bruit le soir même. Avec un large sourire, elle avait rétorqué qu’elle préférait que nous procédions autrement : pour les dîners passés, celui-là et les prochains, elle ne demandait en contrepartie qu’un peu de lecture, de temps à autre, si j’en avais le temps. D’abord interloquée, j’étais restée muette, puis je m’étais engagée pour le lendemain, en fin d’après-midi, en ajoutant que ce n’était pas un gage mais un plaisir.

The whine had changed to a sort of humming purr that seemed to come from every quarter of the compass. It was the noise that bewilders woodcutters and gypsies sleeping in the open, and makes them run sometimes into the very mouth of the tiger.

"Man!" said Father Wolf, showing all his white teeth. "Faugh! Are there not enough beetles and frogs in the tanks that he must eat Man, and on our ground too!"

The Law of the Jungle, which never orders anything without a reason, forbids every beast to eat Man except when he is killing to show his children how to kill, and then he must hunt outside the hunting grounds of his pack or tribe. The real reason for this is that man-killing means, sooner or later, the arrival of white men on elephants, with guns, and hundreds of brown men with gongs and rockets and torches. Then everybody in the jungle suffers. The reason the beasts give among themselves is that Man is the weakest and most defenseless of all living things, and it is unsportsmanlike to touch him. They say too—and it is true—that man-eaters become mangy, and lose their teeth.

The purr grew louder, and ended in the full-throated "Aaarh!" of the tiger's charge.

Then there was a howl—an untigerish howl—from Shere Khan. "He has missed," said Mother Wolf. "What is it?"

Father Wolf ran out a few paces and heard Shere Khan muttering and mumbling savagely as he tumbled about in the scrub.

"The fool has had no more sense than to jump at a woodcutter's campfire, and has burned his feet," said Father Wolf with a grunt. "Tabaqui is with him."

"Something is coming uphill," said Mother Wolf, twitching one ear. "Get ready."

The bushes rustled a little in the thicket, and Father Wolf dropped with his haunches under him, ready for his leap. Then, if you had been watching, you would have seen the most wonderful thing in the world—the wolf checked in mid-spring. He made his bound before he saw what it was he was jumping at, and then he tried to stop himself. The result was that he shot up straight into the air for four or five feet, landing almost where he left ground.

"Man!" he snapped. "A man's cub. Look!"

Directly in front of him, holding on by a low branch, stood a naked brown baby who could just walk—as soft and as dimpled a little atom as ever came to a wolf's cave at night. He looked up into Father Wolf's face, and laughed.