

Re-reading Marlowe's *Dido* and Its Influence

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For Christopher Marlowe: *quod me nutrit, id me esurientem relinquit.*

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Thesis under embargo until at least 28 November 2008

Errata sheet detailing the sections to be removed from the digital copy to minimise risk of allegations of copyright infringements.

Introduction

- p. 1: beginning para 1 'The main aim of this thesis' to same para ending 'genre of Elizabethan tragedy'
- p. 2 : beginning second para 'First, the performance' to same para ending 'as it is expressed in dramatic practice'
- p. 3: beginning para 1 'Critics differ, however' to p. 4 para 1 ending 'propels some Renaissance literary theory'
- p. 5: beginning top of page 'I argue that catharsis has' to end of same para ending 'or reversal of fortune'
- p. 5: beginning start para 2 'I re-read *Dido* as a serious academic exercise' to same para sentence ending 'kind of emotions tragedy is meant to move'
- p. 5: beginning bottom of page 'I discuss the effect of *Dido*'s enactments' to p. 6 end of para 1 ending 'currency for Marlowe that has not yet been studied'
- p. 7: beginning para 3 'H. J. Oliver notes in his introduction' to p. 3 top of page para ending '*Dido* was a 'box-office flop' (2004, 209)'
- p. 8: beginning para 2 after endnote 6 'I argue that *Dido*, Marlowe's box-office flop, prompted him' to p. 9 para 1 'from the theory that underpins *Dido*'

Endnotes to be removed from Introduction: 1, 4, 7, 8

Chapter 1

- p. 18: beginning para 3 'Early modern plays that mix comedy and tragedy' to p. 19 para 1 'outcomes of both texts are the same—Aeneas leaves and Dido dies'
 - p. 22: beginning para 2 'According to Cheney, *Dido* is' to p. 23 end para 1 'from amatory love poetry to tragedy'
 - p. 23: beginning para 2 'One concern is that Cheney's argument' to p. 24 end of para 1 'new sites of inquiry, not only for criticism of *Dido*'
- Delete all of section 1.2 (Catharsis Criticism) beginning p. 26 and ending p. 33

Endnotes to be deleted from Chapter 1: 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 23, 24,

Chapter 2

- p.43: section 2.1 beginning '*Dido*'s opening scene' to p. 49 para 1 ending 'remains true to Virgil's epic in the final analysis'
- p. 49: section 2.2 beginning 'When Marlowe's Aeneas leaves Dido, he explains' to p. 54 para 1 top of page ending 'a difference that is suitably Virgilian'
- p. 56: beginning para 2 'The kind of catharsis that Aeneas experiences' to p. 63 para 1 ending 'when the *Outlet* interpretation of catharsis begins to drive the *Structural* one'
- p. 64: beginning para 2 'While the *Outlet* interpretation of catharsis that Aeneas performs' to p. 65 final para ending 'to pursue the course mapped out for him by Virgil's epic'
- p. 73: beginning last para 'Dido, like Aeneas, responds emotionally' to p. 79 end of section 2.3 ending 'rather than Virgilian *furor* kills the Carthaginian queen'
- p. 91: beginning para 3 'We come now to the art of orchestration in Aeneas' narrative' to p. 96 end of chapter ending 'at least one of the emotions 'proper to tragedy's specific pleasure'

Endnotes to be deleted from Chapter 2: 6, 9, 11, 12, 17, 21, 23, 31, 32, 73

Chapter 3

p. 117: beginning para 2 'Critics agree that *Aeneid* 1, 2, and 4 are the principle' to p. 118 middle para 1 ending 'about *Dido*, which opens up new sites of inquiry'

p. 121: all of para 1, beginning 'This is not to say that *Dido*'s deployment' to 'than we have hitherto given them'

p. 122: beginning para 3 'Aeneas' struggle with *pietas* is the backbone' to p. 123 para 1 ending 'the very point of the epic's second half'

Endnotes to be deleted from Chapter 3: 22

Chapter 4

p. 163: beginning of section 4.1 'What was it about *Dido* that the play's original audience' to p. 165 end para 1 ending 'the kind of tragedy that theoretically it is meant to defend'

p. 166: beginning para 1 'I suggest that *Dido*'s failure prompted Marlowe to re-consider' to almost end of same para ending 'in other literary theoretical texts of the period that defend tragedy'

p. 167: beginning section 4.2 'Damascus is the hometown of Tamburlaine's' to p. 169 end para 1 ending 'antecedent text to show a theoretical difference from it'

p. 171: beginning para 2 'In *1 Tamburlaines*'s revision of *Dido*, Zenocrate' to p. 177 para 1 ending 'rather than restrict them, as does Aeneas' performance of catharsis'

p. 178: beginning para 1 'Zenocrate's lament fails to persuade even her maid' to end of para 1 'the status of a rhetorical figure that does not work'

p. 179: beginning para 3 'Tamburlaine claims that the Damascus episode' to p. 180 end of para 2 ending 'Marlowe achieved a comic conclusion in *1 Tamburlaine*'

p. 188: beginning para 3 'Tamburlaine's desire to 'glut' himself' to p. 189 end of para 1 ending 'do the 'bloody spectacles' of tragedy end'

Endnotes to be deleted from Chapter 4: 13

Conclusion

p. 214: beginning para 2 'George Hunter has traced the widening gap' to same para ending 'does not seem to exist in *Dido* but does in the *Tamburlaine* plays'

p. 219: beginning para 1 'In Hamlet's opinion, the play was too intellectually' to p. 221 para 1 ending 'liberated aesthetic that the revision of *Dido*'s aesthetic enabled'

Endnotes to be deleted from Conclusion: 6, 9

Abstract

Over the last 30 years, a number of critics have sought to rescue Christopher Marlowe's *Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage* from its status as an apprentice work. These attempts have produced two, equally dominant strands of criticism: the first attributes importance to the play's comic elements; the second attributes importance to the influence of non-Virgilian traditions of the Dido and Aeneas story. Both critical strands find *Dido*'s treatment of the *Aeneid* largely incompatible with the idea that the play is a tragedy.

This thesis suggests an alternative, new approach to *Dido*, one that is based on re-reading the play in the light of the currency of Aristotle's *Poetics* in the period. My main aim is to demonstrate that *Dido* is a serious exercise in generic transformation. I argue that the play enacts two interpretations of Aristotle's theory of catharsis, the therapeutic and the structural, to "translate" the entire *Aeneid* as a tragedy and promote the authority of Virgil's epic in the emerging genre of Elizabethan tragedy. The mobilization of these interpretations of catharsis works to construct an ideal audience for tragedy. Marlowe's authorial aspiration, I suggest, is to overtake Virgil by attempting to end the *Aeneid*, which, in the period, was sometimes considered narratively incomplete. In the process of generic translation, *Dido* becomes a "modernized" *Poetics*, an English Renaissance tragedy that defends tragedy.

Dido appears to have been a box-office flop. How did Marlowe respond to the failure of his first play? The thesis examines Marlowe's next plays, *Tamburlaine the Great I & 2*, in the light of *Dido*'s lack of success. I suggest that the failure of his first play prompted Marlowe to reconsider his aesthetic practice in the *Tamburlaine* plays, in particular the role that catharsis plays in *Dido*. The *Tamburlaine* plays revise the sense of

the tragic that *Dido* enacts, liberating Marlowe's aesthetic from the theory that underpins his first play. In the conclusion, I track the influence of this liberated aesthetic in other Marlowe plays, and in *Hamlet*.

Critics agree that the *Tamburlaine* plays exemplify and enabled a new kind of tragedy in the period. I argue that the plays' revision of *Dido* was crucial to the aesthetic that liberated the drama and audiences of early modern England from the restrictions that theories of tragedy's function placed upon them both.

Re-reading *Dido* invites us to reconsider the place of Marlowe's first play in early modern literary theorizing, and indeed, in the critical history of catharsis. Re-reading *Dido*'s influence invites us to reconsider the ways in which the play contributed to the Marlovian dramatic canon, and the nature and development of English Renaissance tragedy.

Statement

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis being made available in the University Library.

The author acknowledges that copyright of published works contained within this thesis (as listed below) resides with the copyright holder/s of those works.

“Marlowe’s *Dido* and the Staging of Catharsis.” *AUMLA* 107 (May 2007): 1-23.

Review of Georgia Brown’s *Redefining Elizabethan Literature*. Marlowe Society of America Book Reviews. *Marlowe Society of America Newsletter* 26.2 (Fall 2006): 3-4.

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For me, reading acknowledgements pages is always a delight because it is here that authors recognise neither themselves nor their projects but the extraordinary people who have made those projects possible. In writing this thesis, I have received help from numerous people and accumulated many debts.

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I am grateful to the editors of *AUMLA* and the *Marlowe Society Review of Books* for permission to use previously published material. I am also grateful to an anonymous reader of “Marlowe’s *Dido* and the Staging of Catharsis” for directing my attention to, and offering helpful suggestions about, Aeneas’ narrative and the difficulties of representing extreme emotional suffering. Thanks are also due to the following people: to Mr Phil Waldron for leading me, via a nightingale, towards an understanding of empathy and a life-long love of poetry; to Professor K. K. Ruthven and Dr Alan Brissenden AM for maintaining an active interest in my work; to Mr Alan Keig, most generous and obliging of librarians. I also wish to extend my thanks to Dr Maggie Tonkin, who has been a gracious companion on this journey of mine.

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To my family, my love and respect. In particular, thanks to my parents for giving up their study so I could have a room of my own when I turned thirteen. They left the books. To the A-team at home—Andrew and Adrienne (Bella)—my gratitude for your understanding and patience, and for helping me to “keep the faith,” in the Bon Jovi sense. I love you both. Bella, as always, you are my joy, and your many achievements are a constant source of pride for me. To Andrew, my thanks for just about everything, including your encouragement for my idea to dedicate this thesis to Christopher Marlowe. The support that this indicates has made writing the thesis not only easier but also more enjoyable. My thanks, too, for telling me when to get out of the study, to stop talking with dead people and start talking with live ones. Most of all, thank you for your love, and for your relentless good humour.

Notes on the Text

1. Editions

- a. References from Christopher Marlowe's plays are from editions for the Revels Plays.

Dido, Queen of Carthage and *The Massacre at Paris*. Ed. H. J. Oliver. London: Methuen, 1968.

Tamburlaine the Great. Ed. J. S. Cunningham. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981.

Edward the Second. Ed. Charles R. Forker. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994.

Doctor Faustus: A- and B-Texts. Ed. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993.

The Jew of Malta. Ed. N. W. Bawcutt. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978.

References are from act, scene, and line numbers, and are given parenthetically in the text: e.g. (2.1.35-40).

- b. References from the *Aeneid* are from G. P. Goold's edition for the Loeb Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996). All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. References are from book and lines numbers, and are given parenthetically in the text: e.g. (2.89-95).
- c. References from Aristotle's *Poetics* are from Ingram Bywater's translation (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909). References are cited by the page numbers in Bywater's translation and given parenthetically in the text: e.g. (*Poetics* 29).
- d. References from Shakespeare's plays are from the second edition of the *Riverside Shakespeare*, edited by G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), and are given as for Marlowe's plays in (a), above.

2. Spelling

- a. I use "Virgil" rather than "Vergil".
- b. I use the anglicised spelling "catharsis" rather than "katharsis" to signify the modernization of the *Poetics* underway in *Dido*.
- c. I preserve original spelling in quotations.

3. Possessive Apostrophes

- a. *Classical names ending in -s*. Add the apostrophe after the -s: e.g. "the quest of Aeneas" = "Aeneas' quest".
- b. *Modern names of one syllable ending in -s*. Add the apostrophe after the -s and an additional "s": e.g. "the argument by Deats" = "Deats's argument".
- c. *Modern names of two syllables ending in -s*. Add the apostrophe after the -s: e.g. "the claim by Bowers" = "Bowers' claim".
- d. I preserve original use of possessive apostrophes in quotations.