

A HISTORY OF THE COMMENT ON CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE'S

THE TRAGEDY OF DIDO QUEEN OF CARTHAGE

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis is an historical survey of the critical commentary on Marlowe's Dido Queen of Carthage from its first printing in 1694 until 1976. It demonstrates the unjustified neglect and careless treatment the play received until very recent times, and suggests areas and approaches which might be usefully explored in future. The two introductory chapters outline the early neglect of Dido and suggest reasons for this neglect. Chapters three to seven present the comment in chronological order, with evaluation where necessary. The final chapter provides a thematic analysis of past considerations, evaluation of these considerations and suggestions for future studies of the play.

## PREFACE

This compilation of comment on Dido is intended to be comprehensive rather than selective. Accordingly, the material is arranged in chronological order, permitting the use of the bibliography as an index. Whenever possible, first editions are cited. Where this was not possible, the original publication date is given. It is hoped that the chronological order of the material will provide an opportunity to appreciate the changing styles and schools of criticism of English literature in the last four centuries. A thesis of this type reflects the work of many librarians, and I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts of the staffs of the Sir George Williams Library of Concordia University, McGill University, the Robarts Library of the University of Toronto and the Metropolitan Toronto Central Library. My warmest thanks to Professor Leonard Mendelsohn, who suggested the topic and has been my conscientious guide and acute critic at every stage.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### The Effect of Marlowé's Life and Reputation<sup>1</sup> on Criticism of Dido

Christopher Marlowe's life was short and turbulent. Born the son of an obscure Canterbury shoe-maker in 1564, he died violently in a London tavern brawl only 29 years later. In that brief life-time he earned a Master of Arts degree, wrote some of the finest lines in English literature, was the friend of famous men, and developed an unsavory reputation as a blasphemer, homosexual and spy. Although much of his life is documented, an air of mystery surrounds him still. His friends called him "Kind Kit" while his enemies said he "cursed and blasphemed to his last breath."<sup>1</sup> There is evidence to support both the view that he was a scholarly, loyal citizen and the one that says he was a wild, rebellious roisterer.

Presented with such contradictory portraits, it is hardly surprising that theories concerning Marlowe the man have influenced studies of Marlowe the writer to a far greater extent than would have been the case with a less puzzling and lively subject. Equally important as an extraneous force on the criticism of his work is the fact that Marlowe never clearly declared his beliefs in his writing. His point of view is ambiguous, his attitude to the action and characters in his writings frequently as complex and contradictory as is his own reputation. Consequently, interpreters have often sought clues to the plays in the facts of his life. Dido Queene of Carthage provides much material for this exercise in deduction. What, exactly,

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Beard, The Theatre of Gods Judgments (London: Adam Islip, 1597), p. 148 (University Microfilms, Reel 376; STC. No. 1659).

does Marlowe want us to think about the actions of the gods, of Dido, of Aeneas? What view of life are we expected to extract? Critics have turned to his life and reputation to help them find the answers to these difficult questions. To understand and evaluate the criticism of Dido, therefore, it is necessary to know the outlines of Marlowe's troubled life.

The early part was seemingly unexceptional. The second of nine children of John and Catherine Marlowe (alternatively recorded as Marlin, Marlow, Marloe, Marlyn, Merling, Morley, Marley), he was educated at King's School in the precincts of Canterbury Cathedral and attended Cambridge for six years as a scholarship student, receiving his B.A. in 1584 and his M.A. in 1587.<sup>2</sup> It is believed he was at this time a candidate for holy orders. However, in this year the first mystery appears. On June 29, 1587, the Queen's Privy Council wrote a letter to the university authorities denying a rumour that Marlowe had travelled to Rheims, the centre of Catholic plots against the Queen, stating that "it was not her Majesty's pleasure than any one employed as he had been in matters touching the benefit of his country should be defamed." It is from this letter that the belief that Marlowe was a government agent or spy has arisen.

Although there is no documentation, it is generally assumed that he moved to London shortly after leaving Cambridge. Most of the information

<sup>2</sup> Biographical material and quotations in this chapter are from C.F. Tucker Brooke, The Life of Christopher Marlowe and "Dido Queen of Carthage" (London: Methuen & Co., 1930), Vol. 1.; Brooke, Essays on Shakespeare and Other Elizabethans (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948); Philip Henderson, Christopher Marlowe (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1956); E.D. Pendry, ed., Christopher Marlowe (London: Dent, 1976); Judith O'Neill, Critics on Marlowe (London: Allen and Unwin, 1969); Dictionary of National Biography (New York: MacMillan & Co., 1893), Vol. 36. Direct citation is given where deemed useful.

concerning these six final years of his life is found in police records. The next certifiable fact is that he was briefly jailed two years after his arrival in London for his part in a murder in a London street. As well, in 1592 he was fined twenty pounds for assaulting two police constables. How he supported himself during these last years in London is not known. He wrote only seven plays and they show no sign of the hurried writing one might expect if Marlowe were dependent on their production for his livelihood. He was neither a pamphleteer nor an actor, as far as we know. He did seem, however, to live well and to know influential and well-to-do people such as Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Thomas Walsingham. It appears he mingled with the powerful and took part in the dangerous politics of the Elizabethan times. Yet his companions in his final hours were men of low repute, suggesting at least the possibility that his death was an assassination. This theory is given weight by the fact that he was under order at the time to appear before the Privy Council. Whatever the circumstances, the established fact is that Marlowe was killed with his own dagger in a brawl in a tavern in Deptford, near London, on Wednesday, May 30, 1593. His killer was Ingram Frizer, a petty criminal and an agent of Thomas Walsingham.<sup>3</sup> He was buried at St. Nicholas Church, Deptford, on June 1. The nature of the information and misinformation that surrounded Marlowe's death has given rise to much conjecture and speculation, culminating in the persistent idea that Marlowe did not, in fact, die at this time but lived on secretly, writing under the name of Shakespeare, a fascinating but

<sup>3</sup> See Leslie Hotson, The Death of Christopher Marlowe (1925; rpt. New York: Haskell & Co., 1965); Samuel Tannenbaum, The Assassination of Christopher Marlowe (Hamden, Conn.: The Shoe String Press, Inc., 1928).

unlikely theory.<sup>4</sup>

Marlowe lived in an unsettled time, against the background of a plague-ravaged city where political intrigue created a tension-filled atmosphere. His friends have written of his hyperbolic talk and his reckless joking about religious and political matters. Three days before his death he was accused of atheism and homosexuality -- "All they that love not Tobacco and Boies were fooles."<sup>5</sup> Government documents and police records attest to his tempestuous nature. In such times Marlowe's flamboyant personality was bound to attract unfavourable attention. After his death serious accusations of disloyal, irreligious and vicious behaviour were raised against Marlowe but concurrently his friends wrote warmly of his genius and worth. The drama, mystery and contradictions of Marlowe's life, together with the impossibility of ascertaining his beliefs with certainty in his works, have greatly influenced criticism of the Marlowe canon. This influence must be kept clearly in mind when comment is studied. The majority of writers until very recent times were strongly influenced by Marlowe's reputation and their approaches were often inspired by a desire to untangle this complicated man's morality. Indeed some, such as Paul Kocher, felt the prime purpose of Marlowe criticism was to discover the man behind the

<sup>4</sup> See Calvin Hoffman, The Man Who Was Shakespeare (London: M. Parrish, 1955); Review of Nathan Drake's Shakespeare and his Time, New Monthly Review, 89 (August 1819), 361-2; Lewis Grant, Christopher Marlowe, The Ghost Writer of all the Plays, Poems and Sonnets by Shakespeare from 1590-1613 (Orillia: The Author, two vols., 1967, 1970); David Rhys Williams, Shakespeare, Thy Name is Marlowe (London: Vision Press Ltd., 1967) et al.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Baines in a note to the Privy Council, A Note containing the opinion of one Christopher Marly concerning his damnable judgement of religion and scorn of God's word. The so-called Baines Libel. See Henderson, Christopher Marlowe, p. 11.

writings.<sup>6</sup> Others felt a great writer was lost because his turpitude destroyed his talent. Typical of this belief was the statement in 1800 of Charles Dibdin: "He would probably have written much better, but his weakness of mind led him into all manner of licentiousness and abominable doctrines...and fits of drunken phrenzy."<sup>7</sup>

The dichotomy of opinion on Marlowe the man which has since so affected the criticism of Marlowe the writer began even before his death. His fellow playwright Robert Greene, in his Groatsworth of Witte, called Marlowe an atheist, a plotter and an epicure.<sup>8</sup> Some of Greene's more savage comments were eliminated by the publisher Henry Chettle, even though Chettle himself commented that he wouldn't care to know Marlowe.<sup>9</sup> Even more damaging were the accusations of Thomas Kyd, who shared a room with Marlowe for a time. Heretical papers found in the room were the writings of Marlowe, Kyd claimed under torture. He also said Marlowe was "intemperate and of cruel heart" and often attempted "sudden privy injuries to men."<sup>10</sup> Other unkind comments followed. Gabriel Harvey said in September of 1593 that the death of "Tamburlaine" (i.e., Marlowe) was the "notable event of the wonderful year."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, Paul Kocher, "Christopher Marlowe, Individualist," University of Toronto Quarterly, 17 (Jan. 48), 111-120.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Dibdin, A Complete History of the English Stage (London: The Author, 1800), III, 106-7.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Greene, Groatsworth of Witte (1592; rpt. London: Bodley Head Ltd., 1923), pp. 43-44.

<sup>9</sup> Henderson, Christopher Marlowe, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 2, 14.

<sup>11</sup> Gabriel Harvey, "A New Letter of Notable Contents" (1593), The Works of Gabriel Harvey, ed. Alexander Grosart (London: The Editor, 1884-85), I, 129.

Thomas Beard said another man stabbed Marlowe in self-defence and he died with an oath on his lips.<sup>12</sup> Francis Meres said he was "stabd to death by a bawdy serving-man, a rival of his in his lewd love" -- but listed him as one of the best writers in the English tongue.<sup>13</sup> Richard Baines' famous "libel" against Marlowe, mentioned earlier, contained seventeen accusations of blasphemy and lewd beliefs. (Baines himself was hanged the following year.) In addition to Meres and Thomas Beard, one other early biographer, William Vaughan, described the life and death of Marlowe in critical tones.<sup>14</sup> Although all these men were presumably using hearsay material, it cannot be ignored that Marlowe's moral reputation during and immediately after his lifetime was decidedly bad. Yet his writing colleagues expressed admiration and, sometimes, affection for him. In the year of his death, George Peele called him, "Marley, the Muse's darling."<sup>15</sup> The following year, Nashe mourned "Poore deceased Kit Marlowe."<sup>16</sup> Henry Petrowe, in his edition of the second part of Hero and Leander, referred to him as the "king of poets" and "Prince of Poetrie."<sup>17</sup> Shakespeare praised his writing (perhaps Dido) as caviare to the general, and quoted Marlowe's "saw of might," namely the line "Who ever loved; that loved not at first sight?" from Hero and Leander

<sup>12</sup> Beard, p. 48.

<sup>13</sup> Francis Meres, Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury (1598; rpt. New York: Scholars' Facsimiles and Reprints, 1938), pp. 286-7.

<sup>14</sup> William Vaughan, The Golden-grove, 3 vols. (London: Printed by Simon Stafford, 1600) 1, ch. 3, c5 (University Microfilms, Reel 335, STC #24610).

<sup>15</sup> George Peele, The Honour of the Garter (London: Printed for John Bushie, 1593 [?], BL. (University Microfilms, Reel 348, STC #19539).

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Nashe, "To the Reader," Christs Teares Over Jerusalem (2nd ed., 1594) The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow, 5 vols (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), II, 180.

<sup>17</sup> Henry Petrowe, The Second Part of Hero and Leander (London: Printed for Andrew Harris, 1598), sig B2. University Microfilms, Reel 857; STC #19807.

in As You Like It. Perhaps the most quoted tribute is Michael Drayton's:

Neat Marlow, bathed in Thespian springs  
Had in him those brave translunary things,  
That the first Poets had, his raptures were  
All ayre and fire, which made his verses cleere,  
For that fine madness still he did retaine,  
Which rightly should possesse a poets braine;<sup>18</sup>

Although the brilliant efforts of several researchers, especially Hotson and Broughton, have provided relatively full documentation of the legal aspects of Marlowe's life (see Appendix "A"), the evidence concerning his personal life, his temperament and his convictions will probably always remain confusing and incomplete. It is however probably safe to conjecture that Marlowe was a powerful and contradictory person of vigorous temperament. This would explain the fascination the man exerts, if not excuse the excesses of imaginative interpretation of his plays that this fascination has sometimes inspired.

Criticism based on Marlowe's life and reputation has played a large part in the consideration of Dido, as the following chapters will show. The play opens with an altercation between jealous gods, quarrelling over the fate of the human beings in their power. Pettiness, sexual jealousy, homosexuality and child molesting are blatantly displayed. Are these gods fit to dictate the destinies of the protagonists in the play? Which of these deities are we to admire? From the very first scene Marlowe tempts one to seek the man in his writings.

And what are we to make of the hero and heroine? Is Dido truly a great queen, is she a pawn of the gods, or is she merely a love-besotted

<sup>18</sup> Michael Drayton, "elegie to my most dearely-loved friend Henery Reynolds Esquire, of Poets and Poesie," in The Works of Michael Drayton, ed. J. William Hebel (Oxford, 1932), III, 228-229.

widow? Is Aeneas a hero or a weakling, a false lover or a man who loves honour more than he loves Dido? Does he act with free will or is he a destiny-driven victim? What part do the other characters, especially Anna and Iarbas, play in these conundrums? What are the meanings of the changes Marlowe made from Virgil's epic?

These are some of the major problems to be solved by the student of Dido. Free will, atheism, honour, homosexuality, romanticism, duty, destiny, love -- the problems are complex, and are presented in most ambiguous terms. Little wonder, then, that frequently writers have sought the solutions to these problems in the complex character of Dido's creator. Unfortunately, all too often the fascination of the inquiry into the question "Who was Marlowe?" has resulted in neglect of critical appreciation of his writing.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Problems in Evaluating Dido

Dido was accorded scant critical consideration until very recent years. There are a number of reasons for this neglect. An early one was its rarity. The original 1594 quarto is one of the rarest of Elizabethan printings and early writers did not discuss the play for the good reason that few had ever seen it. There was only one edition for more than 200 years and when the play first began to be mentioned in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries only three known copies of the original printing remained.<sup>19</sup> Although small reprintings appeared in the early nineteenth century, it was not until the 1850 Dyce edition that the play became widely available.

Three additional problems in the publication of the play, namely date, authorship and translation, unduly attracted all of the attention of early writers. "The Tragedie of Dido Queene of Carthage: Played by the Children of her Maiesties Chappell. Written by Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nash. Gent." was printed by the Widow Orwin for Thomas Woodcock in 1594, the year after Marlowe's death. How much of the play was Marlowe's and how much was written by Nashe is a question still unresolved, although the majority opinion is that Nashe played a very small part in the writing, probably confining himself to preparing the play for the printer. Nevertheless the uncertainty over authorship has been given by a number of people as a reason for refraining from comment. Although it was published after Marlowe's

<sup>19</sup> The three copies are in the Folger, Huntington and Bodleian libraries.

death the major opinion has also been that Dido was the earliest of Marlowe's plays, perhaps written while he was at university. This belief provided hasty critics with two more reasons to ignore Dido or dismiss it with a line. It was termed a mere university exercise and therefore not worthy of serious analysis, and it was deemed only a translation containing no original work.

Authorship, date and translation have occupied a great deal of space in the history of Dido comment, up to and including the present time. Nor have the topics yet been satisfactorily resolved. Of the three, only consideration of translation, of comparison with the source, Books I, II and IV of the Aeneid, has rewarded the Marlowe student with much useful and insightful comment so far. As H.J. Oliver points out,<sup>20</sup> careful bibliographical analysis is unhelpful in determining authorship and the conjectures on joint authorship must at present remain conjecture. As to dating the play, the question is still very much in doubt. There are no external clues as to when the play was actually written, no evidence that the Chapel children or indeed any other Elizabethan company ever played it. Internal evidence suggests that it was written before Tamburlaine which in turn is thought to have been written about 1587. On the other hand a number of authorities such as Charles Crawford, Felix Schelling, Arnold Wynne, T.S. Eliot and T.M. Pearce, cited in later chapters, believe Dido was written at the same time as Tamburlaine, or at a later date. Dido is assumed by a clear majority of scholars to have been written about 1585 or 86. The statement that the play was written for the Children of Her Majesty's Chapel is of little help as the history of the company after 1584 is

<sup>20</sup> H.J. Oliver, ed., Dido Queen of Carthage and The Massacre at Paris, Christopher Marlowe (London: Methuen, 1968), p.xxiii. References to lines from Dido are from this edition.

uncertain. A number of writers have used this connection as the basis of conjectural articles on dating, however. These literary puzzles overly concerned many commentators who spent much more time mustering evidence for various unprovable theories than they did actually discussing the play. Add to this activity the many conjectural pieces on Marlowe himself, as outlined in chapter one, and the reader can see why it is only now that Dido is receiving the attention it deserves.

Another reason for neglect of Dido was that it does not fit certain theories of Marlowe criticism. Some writers have perceived Marlowe's career as a straightforward progression in philosophical thought, with early, middle and late phases--despite the fact that he died at 29 "at the tickle point between youth and age" and could hardly have had time for early, middle and late stages of development. Dido could not be fitted into these ingeniously discerned phases and so was slighted. Then there were some who just thought it was a boring play, "pretty quaint, and painful" as Anthony Trollope noted in his copy of the 1850 Dyce edition, even though some of the pages were never cut.

The first mention of Dido after the re-opening of the theatres came from Edward Phillips in 1675. The first lengthy consideration of it as a work of art came in 1958. The only known performances of it were in 1959 and 1964. But by 1964, the 400th anniversary of Marlowe's (and Shakespeare's) birth, Dido criticism had come into its own and has continued to develop since then. Marlowe's drama suffered two centuries of almost complete neglect after his death. Interest in his major plays revived in the nineteenth century. Interest in Dido had to wait until our own time.

This is not to say that no useful comment was made about the play during

the early years of increasing respect for Marlowe's genius. On the contrary, some early general comments have summed up the essence of his thought with an elegance and succinct clarity that a number of later writers could emulate with benefit. As a capsule commentary, few could improve on the words of A.W. Ward, written in 1875, on the worth of Dido: "The play shows no incompleteness or unevenness...It is a very beautiful version of the oft-told tale of Dido's love for Aeneas....The construction is neat and firm. The intervention of the gods is very successfully managed; it is sensuous but finely-written. Some sections remind one of Shakespear."<sup>21</sup>

Yet even in this praise lies the suggestion for another reason why Dido has only recently received the attention it deserves; Marlowe has all too frequently been seen as a predecessor, almost an instigator, of the works of Shakespeare, a mere sign-post on the way to English literature's greatest glory. Swinburne, for example, was responsible for much of the revived interest in Marlowe during the nineteenth century yet in 1908 in his last prose composition before his death he wrote "Marlowe is the one and only precursor of that veritable king of kings and lord of lords among all writers and all thinkers of all times."<sup>22</sup> In an earlier essay he had referred to Marlowe as "the father of English tragedy" and expressed the opinion that Shakespeare had used Marlowe's work and expanded it.<sup>23</sup> Almost 100 years later Brian Morris was to remark that most writers still seemed more

<sup>21</sup> A.W. Ward, A History of English Dramatic Literature to the Death of Queen Anne (London: MacMillan, 1875), I, 199-200.

<sup>22</sup> Algernon Charles Swinburne, Contemporaries of Shakespeare, ed. Edmund Gosse and Thomas James Wise (London: William Heinemann, 1919), p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "The Three Stages of Shakespeare," Fortnightly Review, NS. 19, (Jan. 1876), 24-25.

interested in Marlowe's influence than in his inheritance.<sup>24</sup> The exact nature of his inheritance has puzzled writers through the decades, sometimes to the point of irritation, as readers of the following chapters will perceive.

He has been praised, sometimes inaccurately, for a number of virtues. First he was acclaimed for his poetry, his "mighty line" as Ben Jonson termed it. As already mentioned, he was honoured as the influential predecessor, almost the inventor of Shakespeare. He has also frequently been called the father of blank verse, although in fact the Early of Surrey and Thomas Wyatt had essayed the form 40 years before Marlowe began to write. Surrey, indeed, translated two books of the Aeneid into five-foot unrhymed lines. As well, Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton wrote the first blank-verse play, Gorboduc or Ferrex and Porrex, three years before Marlowe was born. It is generally believed to be the first blank verse play in the English language, although as Charles Norman has remarked "perhaps it was only the first good one."<sup>25</sup> Other known deca syllabic blank verse before Marlowe's included Gascoigne's The Steel Glass and Peele's The Arraignment of Paris. It is obviously incorrect to say that Marlowe invented blank verse drama. His accomplishment, in the words of Tucker Brooke, was to change "the sow's ear into the silken purse," to transform the homely tool of the translators and satirists and dialogue makers into the divinest instrument of all English meters."<sup>26</sup> If, as most agree, Dido really was

<sup>24</sup> Brian Morris, ed. Christopher Marlowe, First York Symposium, 1968 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1969), p. vi.

<sup>25</sup> Charles Norman, Christopher Marlowe: The Muses' Darling (1946; rpt. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1971), pp. 34-5.

<sup>26</sup> C. F. Tucker Brooke, Essays on Shakespeare and Other Elizabethans (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), p. 181.

Marlowe's first attempt at drama, one can only marvel at the brilliance of many of its lines, at the already apparent genius at work in this young innovator fresh from university studies. Brooke attributes two more innovations to Marlowe. One is the use of "the splendor of romance...the difference between living and life." The other is the discovery of dramatic action. Brooke doubts that even Shakespeare contributed much more to dramatic art than did Marlowe.<sup>27</sup> Yet even this great Marlowe scholar had little time for Dido, preferring to hurry on to the more exciting still untapped treasures that lay before him in the consideration of Tamburlaine. Herein lies yet another reason for Dido's late entry into the mainstream of Marlowe criticism. All Marlowe criticism was postponed unnaturally for many generations. It has only now reached the stage of maturity where, the major works having been studied extensively, a more leisurely consideration of this presumably first and perhaps less polished piece of writing is possible.

Awareness of the brevity of Marlowe's life also seems so often to hover over the shoulder of the playwright's evaluators. T.S. Eliot, speculating on the course that Marlowe's genius might have taken if he had lived longer, suggested that the extravagance of characterization he used indicates he was moving toward the comedy of gigantic caricature that found its apotheosis in Volpone.<sup>28</sup> Taking up this theme later, D.C. Stuart said that making character the keystone of his dramatic structure was Marlowe's major contribution to the dramatic art in English.<sup>29</sup> Another of this belief was F.S. Boas who

<sup>27</sup> Brooke, pp. 183, 185.

<sup>28</sup> T.S. Eliot, Elizabethan Essays (1919; rpt. London: Faber and Faber, 1934), p. 123.

<sup>29</sup> D.C. Stuart, "English Medieval Drama," The Development of Dramatic Art (1928; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1960), p. 213.

said "His distinctive achievement was to endow the protagonists in his dramas with his own elemental vitality so they stormed their way into the imagination of gallants and groundlings alike."<sup>30</sup> As mentioned earlier, Dido has sometimes been ignored because it doesn't fit mainstream critical theories, and here again is a point of view with which the play does not easily conform. Giant caricature and storming vitality are not the most obvious terms that spring to mind when thinking of the protagonists in Dido. Indeed, compared to such as Marlowe's Tamburlaine and Faustus, his Dido and Aeneas seem quite ordinary recognizable lovers, at least until the traditional denouement.

Two further if not final words on the reasons for Dido's relative neglect may be left to two of Marlowe's fellow poets. Leigh Hunt said Marlowe's protagonists carried "to their heights the vices as well as the wit of the time"<sup>31</sup> but this is not true of Dido. Alfred Noyes, after commenting that Marlowe "had the gift of writing splendid single lyrical lines ...that bear no relation to the characters that say them" sums up the reader's feelings when reading much Dido criticism and, indeed, the play itself: "Nothing is more difficult than to assess his real achievement."<sup>32</sup> It is hoped that the following chapters contribute a little to the achievement of that difficult assessment. The fact that an increasing number of dissertations by tomorrow's scholarly experts have appeared in recent years suggests that we may see an abundance of insightful comment on the play in the near future.

<sup>30</sup> F.S. Boas, Christopher Marlowe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), p.312.

<sup>31</sup> Leigh Hunt, Imagination and Fancy (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1845), p. 98.

<sup>32</sup> Alfred Noyes, Pageant of Letters (1940; rpt. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1968), pp. 14, 16.

### CHAPTER THREE

Early Comment - 1675 to 1896

From the closing of the theatres in 1642 until well into the eighteenth century Marlowe, although admired for his poetry, was almost forgotten as a playwright. A number of seventeenth century writers such as John Aubrey, Fuller, John Dryden, John Dennis, and Thomas Rymer failed to mention him at all. The first authentic work of Marlowe's to appear in more than 100 years was Edward II in 1744. When Edmund Kean revived Tamburlaine in 1818 it was the first performance of a Marlowe play in 155 years.<sup>33</sup> In the nineteenth century, however, admiration for Marlowe grew enormously, reaching its climax with the romantic outpourings of Algernon Swinburne in the last decades of the Victorian era. But if it was not until the nineteenth century that Marlowe's drama received much more than the occasional brief mention, it was not until the second half of the twentieth century that Dido received full and serious study.

Those early literary historians who did include Marlowe frequently omitted Dido because of the problems of authorship arising from the joint attribution to Marlowe and Nashe. As well, they sometimes had not read the play because of the scarcity of copies before 1850. Perhaps the first to mention Dido was Edward Phillips, Milton's nephew, who attributed five plays to Marlowe, including Dido in collaboration with Nashe, adding that the playwright came to a violent and untimely end in "some riotous Fray."<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> O'Neill, p. 6.

<sup>34</sup> Edward Phillips, Theatrum Poetarum (London: Printed for Charles Smith, 1675), pp. 24-25.



Other seventeenth century writers who included Dido in the Marlowe canon were William Winstanley,<sup>35</sup> Anthony à Wood<sup>36</sup> and Gerard Langbaine. In 1691 Langbaine wrote of Marlowe: "His Genius inclin'd him wholly to Tragedy, and he has obliged the world with Seven Plays of the kind, of his own Composure, besides One, in which he join'd with Nash, call'd Dido Queen of Carthage, which I never saw."<sup>37</sup> More than 50 years later Theophilus Cibber repeated this information almost word for word.<sup>38</sup> And in 1764 David Erskine Baker wrote "His turn was entirely to tragedy, in which kind of writing he has left the six following testimonials of his ability:" Baker lists the plays (including Lust's Dominion, a play later universally excluded from the Marlowe canon) named by Langbaine together with the jointly attributed Dido. Baker notes the Orwin edition--"This play is uncommonly scarce"--and mentions a Dido and Aeneas acted by the Lord Admiral's servants in 1597, which he erroneously says was probably Marlowe's Dido.<sup>39</sup>

One of the first to pay closer attention to Marlowe's drama was Thomas Warton in his history of English poetry. Emphasizing the difficulty

<sup>35</sup> William Winstanley, The Lives of the Most Famous English Poets (1687; rpt. Gainesville, Florida, Scholars Facsimiles and Reprints, 1963), p. 134.

<sup>36</sup> Anthony à Wood, Athenae Oxonienses (London: Thomas Bennet, 1691-92), I, 337.

<sup>37</sup> Gerard Langbaine, An Account of the English Dramatic Poets (1691; rpt. Menston: Scolar Press, 1971), p. 342.

<sup>38</sup> [Theophilus] Cibber, The Lives of the poets of Great Britain and Ireland to the Time of Dean Swift (London: R. Griffiths, 1753), I, 85.

<sup>39</sup> David Erskine Baker, Biographia Dramatica or a Companion to the Playhouse (1764; rpt. London: Longman & Co., 1812), I, 492; II, 162.

of finding copies of Dido, he comments that the play shows "traces of a just dramatic conception, but abounds with tedious or uninteresting scenes and extravagancies."<sup>40</sup> This dismissive tone would be repeated frequently for almost 150 years. Both Nathan Drake and Edmund Malone also mentioned Dido in their literary histories. Drake, in his list of dramatic poetry preceding Shakespeare, said the play was a joint production, adding only "This rare play was purchased at the Roxburgh sale, for seventeen guineas!"<sup>41</sup> Malone's history of the English stage includes Dido in a table of plays written before 1592, and then lists it, in joint authorship, in the performances in 1594 by the Children of Her Majesty's Chapel.<sup>42</sup>

A flurry of printings of Marlowe's works occurred in the 10 years from 1818 to 1827 but the question of Dido's authorship continued to vex both writers and editors. Between 1818 and 1820 the actor and editor William Oxberry produced his landmark editions of Marlowe's plays, including Dido, but said the play was chiefly the work of Nashe. The series was later printed in one volume.<sup>43</sup> In a series of articles on Marlowe in 1821 an anonymous author in British Stage expresses regret at the lack of a complete edition of the works and adds that his study of Dido is taken from one of

<sup>40</sup> Thomas Warton, The History of English Poetry from the Eleventh to the Seventeenth Century (1778; rpt. London: Warwick House, 1806), p. 907.

<sup>41</sup> Nathan Drake, Shakespeare and his Times (London: Cadell and Davies, 1817), II, 248.

<sup>42</sup> Edmund Malone, An Enlarged History of the English Stage, in The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, 7th ed. (London: F.C. & J. Rivington, 1821), III, 6, 428.

<sup>43</sup> Dramatic Works of Christopher Marlowe, with prefatory remarks, notes, critical and explanatory, ed. W. Oxberry (London: W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, n.d. [1827]). Individual plays issued separately in The New English Drama series, 1818-1820.

three known copies of the play. Summarizing the play for the benefit of his readers, who were unlikely to have read it themselves, he then comments on the luxuriant imagery, finding it similar to that of Faustus. It is, he says, unworthy of the author of Faustus but "definitely Marlowe's."<sup>44</sup> This opinion was not shared by another anonymous writer the following year in Retrospective Review who believed that Marlowe only "assisted Nashe in the writing of Dido."<sup>45</sup>

Another historic event in the Dido chronology took place in 1825 when the play was printed as part of a four-volume series entitled Old English Drama.<sup>46</sup> Attributing the play largely to Nashe, the unknown editor said the play possesses "very little intrinsic merit," adding that it was reprinted chiefly to illustrate "the progress of dramatic art in this country." The play is in modern spelling. The following year the first collected edition of Marlowe's work was printed in three volumes.<sup>47</sup> It included Dido. The editorship was not given although it is generally credited to George Robinson. He and Hurst have both been suggested as the 1825 edition editor. Although they are important historically, these small printings did little to enlarge awareness of the play. It was not until the 1850 Dyce edition that the play gained any general attention, and it was ignored by important

<sup>44</sup> "K," "Excerpta," The British Stage and Literary Cabinet, 5 (June 1821), 191-196.

<sup>45</sup> "The Early English Drama," Retrospective Review, 4 (1822), 181.

<sup>46</sup> Dido, Queen of Carthage. A Tragedy, Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Nashe, in Old English Drama (London: printed for Hurst, Robinson, & Co., 1825), A8.

<sup>47</sup> The Works of Christopher Marlowe, ed. George Robinson, 3 vols. (London: W. Pickering, 1826).

nineteenth century critics such as Lamb and Coleridge.

In 1828, another unsigned article in Retrospective Review also assigns the greater part of Dido to Nashe. Marlowe is given credit only for part of the first scene of the third act and the conclusion of the second act. The play is dismissed as "very defective" and "almost without pathos or passion of any kind." The sections assigned to Marlowe are deemed overrich and typically Marlovian in their "gorgeousness of imagery in which Marlowe, sometimes indulged." Two passages are quoted to show the difference between the poetry of Nashe and Marlowe.<sup>48</sup>

In a series of articles ironically entitled "Coincidence," another anonymous writer in 1829 pointed out some of the similarities in the writing of Shakespeare and Marlowe, a topic that has continued to attract scholars. He was perhaps influenced and inspired by the Oxberry and "Robinson" editions of Marlowe which for the first time gave readers ready access to the plays. One reason to support this conjecture is the fact that like these pioneer editors the author slights Dido, despite the rich possibilities in the play of comparing the writing of the two men. The author concludes that Shakespeare was very indebted to Marlowe.<sup>49</sup> As the first of the "Marlowe was Shakespeare" theorists had appeared just 10 years earlier,<sup>50</sup> the author might well have been inspired in his pursuit of similarities by this intriguing idea that one man wrote all the plays.

<sup>48</sup> "Summer's Last Will and Testament," Retrospective Review, 11 (1828), 10-13, [Southern, Henry].

<sup>49</sup> "Marlowe," Dramatic Magazine, 1 (Sept. 1829), 209; 2 (Feb. 1830), 12-13.

<sup>50</sup> "Review of Nathan Drake's Shakespeare and His Time," New Monthly Review, 89 (Aug. 1819), 361-2.

The first longer consideration of Dido was undertaken in an important series of articles on Marlowe in Gentlemen's Magazine in 1830 by that busy writer, editor and researcher, James Broughton. It was Broughton who first began the serious investigation of Marlowe's death that led nearly 100 years later to the scholarly sensation of Hotson's work.<sup>51</sup> Broughton was the first Marlowe scholar to search government records and it was he who discovered the (misread) name of Frazer as Marlowe's killer. He also published editions of five Marlowe plays in 1818 but Dido was not one of them.

In his Gentlemen's Magazine article, Broughton first discusses the rarity of copies of Dido and the scholarly anguish that resulted from the inability of Shakespeare critics of the time to compare this "seemingly mythical" play with Hamlet. At length a copy was discovered among the books of a Dr. Wright, and Broughton quotes The European Magazine for June, 1787 as recording the sale of a copy of the 1594 printing of Dido from the Wright library to Malone for sixteen pounds. Unfortunately, Broughton reports, after much earlier speculation the critics were disappointed to find the play "to be remarkable for little save its rarity."<sup>52</sup>

Broughton devotes most of his article to a history of the three copies of Dido and their owners, but states, as will most of the writers who follow him, that he doubts there is much of Nashe in the play, despite his name on the title page. He too feels the play is unworthy of the author of Faustus. Most of the scenes, he says, are literal translations from the Aeneid. He

<sup>51</sup> Leslie Hotson, The Death of Christopher Marlowe (1925; rpt. New York: Haskell, 1965).

<sup>52</sup> James Broughton, "Life and Writings of Christopher Marlowe," Gentlemen's Magazine (April 1830), pp. 314-315. See also Dorothy Selye, "James Broughton, Editor of Marlowe's Plays," PBSA, 69 (1975), 311-22.

chooses for special exemplary contempt two lines that many later scholars also chose to scorn: "Gentle Achates, reach the tinderbox." (I.1.165) and "And in his eyelids hanging by the nails." (II.1.245).<sup>53</sup>

In an influential history printed the following year, J.P. Collier dealt with Marlowe at greater length than had most scholars up to this time. Stating that it was important to know the order in which the plays were written in order to assess them satisfactorily, he assigned Dido to Marlowe's earlier writings. It is easy to pick out the work of Nashe because of his inferior monotonous verse, he said, while Marlowe's hand by contrast provides a greater variety of rhythm, pause and modulation as well as a richer vein of poetry. Collier was the first to suggest this method of distinguishing the contributions of the two playwrights. He thought the play on the whole "very graceful and beautiful" as a poem, although the sacking of Troy was inflated almost to absurdity. He makes some suggestions as to who wrote what and concludes that the play was written before Marlowe was fully at home in blank verse, with nothing in it to compare with the power of Edward II.<sup>54</sup>

Another influential literary historian, Henry Hallam, says Marlowe gave to blank verse "a variety of cadence and an easy adaptation of the rhythm to the sense," but he fails to mention Dido,<sup>55</sup> and in 1841, a reviewer

<sup>53</sup> Broughton, p. 315.

<sup>54</sup> John Payne Collier, The History of English Dramatic Poetry To The Time of Shakespeare (1831; rpt. London: George Bell and Sons, 1879), III, 46-50.

<sup>55</sup> Henry Hallam, Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the 15, 16 and 17 Centuries (1837; rpt. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1848), pp. 368-9.

of Robinson's editions of Marlowe's works suggests several alternative readings for various lines in Dido but offers no evidence but his own feeling for the sense of the lines.<sup>56</sup>

The most important publication in the nineteenth century of the complete works of Marlowe was the edition of Alexander Dyce, who posited the principle that the earliest editions should be authoritative. Dyce established the canon and compiled the most complete account of Marlowe's life to that date. He maintained that Marlowe was a very uneven writer and that it is in single scenes rather than in any one play that he "displays the richness and vigour of his genius." Of Dido he says that, the Aeneid is "so truthful and passionate" that Marlowe's play tends to be compared unfavourably to it, and thus there is a danger of underestimating its value. There are in it "many passages of richness and colour and beauty of expression" even though the characters themselves have little force. Nashe's contribution was, he believed, small.<sup>57</sup>

Despite this useful work, nineteenth century criticism continued on the whole to consist of brief assessments. Anthony Trollope wrote in his copy of Dido that it was a "burlesque" of Virgil.<sup>58</sup> In an article on Marlowe in Appleton's Journal, in 1871, A.S. Richardson said Shakespeare drew from the "great mass of crude material" provided by Marlowe, and quotes from

<sup>56</sup> M.J., "Review of Robinson's edition of Marlowe," Gentlemen's Magazine, Series 2, 15 (Jan. 1841), 45-48.

<sup>57</sup> Alexander Dyce, ed., The Works of Christopher Marlowe (1850; rpt. London: Routledge, Warne and Routledge, rev. ed. 1859), pp. xxxvii, liii.

<sup>58</sup> Oliver, p. xix.

Marlowe's works to demonstrate the influences.<sup>59</sup> From Dido she chooses the queen's statement to Aeneas:

Because it may be, thou shalt be my love:  
Yet boast not of it, for I love thee not  
And yet I hate thee not.

(III.1.169-7)

Miss Richardson does not say which lines in Shakespeare this quotation inspired, but it could have been the speech of Beatrice in Much Ado About Nothing:

It were as possible for me to say I loved  
nothing so well as you; but believe me not,  
and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I  
deny nothing:

(IV.1.266-9)

Alternatively, she may have had in mind the speech of Phoebe in As You Like It which follows Shakespeare's direct quotation from Hero and Leander of "Who ever lov'd that lov'd not at first sight" mentioned in chapter one. In it Phoebe vacillates many times in the mode of Dido, concluding:

I love him not, nor hate him not: and yet  
I have more cause to hate him than to love him.

(III.5.126-7)

It is interesting to note that all the Shakespeare-plays in which Marlowe's influence is most often noted were believed to be written within a three-year period around 1600.

The Francis Cunningham edition of Marlowe's works in 1872 terms the play "a very pleasing poem occasionally rising to beauty" although the editor does not give examples of what he feels constitutes its beauty.

<sup>59</sup> Abby Sage Richardson, "Christopher Marlowe," Appleton's Journal, 6 (Sept. 1871), 347-50.



Once again, the "Gentle Achates" line comes in for criticism. Cunningham feels this line is so inferior it must be attributed to Nashe, thus repeating opinions already promulgated by Broughton and Collier, among others.<sup>60</sup> Another of this school of thought was "G.B.S." in The Cornhill Magazine of 1874. He claims the play presents a "chequered appearance...as though it had been collaborated by a master mind and a poetic buffoon," suggesting that the work of high quality is Marlowe's while the buffoonery is provided by Nashe. He too objects to the "tinder-box" line but has high praise for Aeneas' description of the fall of Troy and says the queen herself is presented in "noble guise" suitable to her personage. He commends the great beauty and bold language of the play.<sup>61</sup>

In a consideration of the First Player's Pyrrhus-Priam speech in Hamlet, F.G. Fleay raises the question of whether the speech is a parody of Marlowe's description of the death of Priam in Dido, a query that was to become a popular literary puzzle. Fleay believes that the Hamlet speech is so superior to Marlowe's handling of the same subject that Shakespeare must have chosen it to demonstrate how much more skillful a writer he was. Fleay continued to give Dido brief mention in his publications over the next two decades but never a more careful consideration.<sup>62</sup> In 1874, William

<sup>60</sup> Francis Cunningham, ed., The Works of Christopher Marlowe (London: Chatto and Windus, 1872), p. xvl.

<sup>61</sup> G.B. S[mith], "Christopher Marlowe," The Cornhill Magazine 30 (Sept. 1874), 346-7.

<sup>62</sup> Frederick G. Fleay, "On the Extract from an Old Play in Hamlet," MacMillan's Magazine, 32 (Dec. 1874), 136-7; Shakespeare Manual (London: Macmillan & Co., 1876), p. 301; A Chronicle History of the Life and Works of William Shakespeare, Player, Poet and Playmaker (London: John C. Nimmo, 1886), pp. 113, 118; A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama 1559-1642 (London: Reeves and Turner, 1891), p. 147.

Minto also mentioned Dido. After a brief but vivid account of Marlowe's death he added that among the papers left behind him was part of the tragedy of Dido "afterwards completed by Nash."<sup>63</sup> The play was becoming accepted as a literary work of sufficient importance to require mention.

A.W. Ward early appreciated the major importance of Marlowe to English drama. After Marlowe, he stated, there would be no more Spanish Tragedy or Gorboduc. Marlowe's gift of passion and "his services to the outward form of the English drama, makes him worthy to be called not a predecessor, but the earliest in the immortal company, of our greatest dramatists." In addition to his opinions on Dido quoted in chapter one of this work, Ward added his belief that the play owed little to Nashe.<sup>64</sup> Swinburne, too, emphasized the importance of Marlowe to the development of English drama, and to the full realization of the genius of Shakespeare. Marlowe was to Swinburne "the Father of English Tragedy."<sup>65</sup>

In a lengthy study of Marlowe the same year, Hermann Ulrici said he would not comment critically on Dido. His remarkable reason for "ignoring" the play is that it was written to suit the taste of the Queen. He infers this conclusion from the title-page inscription: "Played by the Children of Her Majesties Chappell." (Later researchers, however, clearly demonstrated the unlikeliness of the group having ever performed the play at court.<sup>66</sup>)

63. William Minto, Characteristics of English Poets from Chaucer to Shirley (1874; rpt. Edinburgh: Wm. Blackwood and Sons, 1885), p. 232.

64. Ward, I, 203.

65. Algernon Swinburne, "The Three Stages of Shakespeare," Fortnightly Review, NS 19 (Jan. 1876), p. 28.

66. See Gertrude Marian Sibley, The Lost Plays and Masques, 1500-1642 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1933), p. 43; Henslowe's Diary, eds. R.A. Foakes and R.T. Rickert (Cambridge: University Press, 1961), pp. 86, 319-20, 323; E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), III, 374.

Ulrici nevertheless concludes that "the inner character of the drama seems ...to be pervaded by the perfumed air of the Court." Dido, he says, because of her second name Eliza, is a poetical portrait of the Queen." He speculates that the Latin passages from Virgil were inserted to flatter the Queen's learning. The whole piece has a "thoroughly undramatic character." As well, the play turns on love, and only love, and so, says this serious German scholar, the play is nothing but sentimentality based on womanly susceptibility. Ulrici concedes that several passages are well done but "they are entirely wanting in signs of Marlowe's bold powerful mind." One wonders what more he might have said if he had not decided two pages earlier to refrain altogether from commenting on the play for the curious reason that it was written to flatter a queen. In addition to its eccentric opinions, however, the piece is noteworthy in that it is one of the first comments to deal with Dido at length.

In 1884, J.A. Symonds dismissed Dido as mainly translation reminiscent of the "tumid" style of the First Player in Hamlet. Dido's description of the fleet is "hyperbolic splendour of description running over into nonsense" and he renders a unique opinion in stating ~~that the blank verse~~ "cries aloud" for rhymes.<sup>68</sup> The same year Br. Nicholson raises an interesting footnote to the history of the play concerning the story of a purported elegy of Marlowe by Thomas Nashe on a copy or copies of Dido.<sup>69</sup> He remarks that both Bishop Tanner and Thomas Wharton had claimed there were copies of Dido

<sup>67</sup> Hermann Ulrici, Shakespeare's Dramatic Art, trans. L. Dora Schmitz (London: George Bell & Son, 1876), I, 161-3.

<sup>68</sup> John Addington Symonds, Shakespeare's Predecessors in the English Drama (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1884), pp. 663-4.

<sup>69</sup> Nicholson, Br., "On Dido," Notes and Queries, 69 (June 28, 1884), 508.

containing the elegy. Wharton wrote to Edmund Malone that he had seen a copy in Osborne's shop, and that it was in the latter's catalogue for 1754. (This latter statement was untrue.) The elegy was said to list five of Marlowe's plays. Nicholson asked any owners of the original Dido to look for the elegy on the page after the title page but to this day there has been no trace of the "ghost" elegy. That year also K. Elze reviewed the text of Dido with some minor suggestions for changes in the readings<sup>70</sup> and Ellen Crofts dismissed the play as not holding a very high place in dramatic literature.<sup>71</sup>

The year 1884 also saw the publication of Bullen's edition of the complete works. Dido, he said, was slight; instead of daring imagination, we have quaint conceits and dainty "play of fancy." He quotes various passages to prove both that Dido was an early work and that Marlowe was the major contributor. Bullen suggests Nashe worked up the bombast "laughing up his sleeve."<sup>72</sup> A review in The Athenaeum warmly welcomed the edition, saying Marlowe had been "sadly neglected."<sup>73</sup>

In the years immediately following, Dido in fact received attention from a number of scholars. In Shakespeariana an anonymous reviewer of Symonds' book commented that "to no single man does our drama owe more than to this ill-starred genius." Marlowe, the reviewer writes, determined the

<sup>70</sup> K. Elze, "Reviews," The Athenaeum, 5 (May 10, 1884), 609-10 and (May 17, 1884), 644.

<sup>71</sup> Ellen Crofts, Chapters in the History of English Literature, from 1509 to the close of the Elizabethan Period (London: Rivington, 1884), p. 187.

<sup>72</sup> A.H. Bullen, ed., The Works of Christopher Marlowe (London: Nimmo, 1884), I, xlvii-xlix.

<sup>73</sup> "Drama," The Athenaeum, 5 (November 15, 1884), 634-645.

form of historical tragedy, dealt the death-blow to rhymed plays and formulated English romantic tragedy. Noting his importance to the development of Shakespeare, the writer adds "In his hand tragedy reclaimed its ancient sway over the heart," leaving the "drumming decasyllabon" behind to write triumphant blank verse.<sup>74</sup> A.W. Verity echoes other nineteenth century commentaries that Dido should be considered as a long poem rather than a drama and should be classified with Hero and Leander as an example of the typical Italianate Renaissance spirit of purely sensuous love of beauty.<sup>75</sup> George Saintsbury was impressed with Marlowe's writing as a whole, saying he was as good as all but the greatest. Dido, however, is quickly disposed of as "the worst thing he ever did." The famous Victorian critic is, however, impressed with "Marlowe's fortuitous and purely genial [sic] discovery of the secret of blank verse."<sup>76</sup> Edward Dowden withheld comment on Dido, saying he could not safely assign the work to either Marlowe or Nashe.<sup>77</sup> But in his 1887 edition of Marlowe's works; Havelock Ellis said that he believed Dido was considerably enlarged by Nashe. He agreed with Verity that it should be compared to Hero and Leander rather than the other plays, adding that there is a "certain mellifluous sweetness in the best scenes" such as the love scene in the cave.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>74</sup> "The Predecessors of Shakespeare," Shakespeariana, 2 (1885), 555, 557.

<sup>75</sup> A.W. Verity, The Influence of Christopher Marlowe on Shakespeare's Earlier Style (Cambridge: Macmillan and Baines, 1886), p. 29.

<sup>76</sup> George E.G. Saintsbury, A History of Elizabethan Literature (London: Macmillan and Co., 1887), pp. 77-79.

<sup>77</sup> Edward Dowden, "Christopher Marlowe," in Transcripts and Studies (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench & Co., 1888), p. 435.

<sup>78</sup> Havelock Ellis, ed., Christopher Marlowe (London: Vizetelly & Co., 1887), pp. xlii-xliii.

In another edition of the works, Percy Pinkerton displayed an eccentric Victorian literary style in contrasting the freshness, energy and passion of Marlowe to "this worn-out, languid age of ours" with its three unities, "adultery, arsenic, and tea-cups." Of Dido, he says the curious opening scene shows little dramatic skill but is good poetry. The play is the only Marlowe drama to depend upon love or portray an interesting female figure, but was from "the first and feeblest period." Possibly, Mr. Pinkerton adds, the duller parts of this "incoherent" play are by Nashe.<sup>79</sup>

A number of admiring minor comments on the play were made in the closing years of the century. One who believed Nashe had a large hand in Dido was J.H. Ingram, who suggested Marlowe left the play unfinished "and the labour of completing it fell to Nashe." It contains some of Marlowe's "magic" but Ingram felt the theme was not congenial to Marlowe "and he left it unfinished of 'set purpose'."<sup>80</sup> The following year Harry Plowman said he found in the play "passages of the rarest beauty, but as a whole, it is more poetical than dramatic."<sup>81</sup> J.G. Lewis, too, felt the play to be "resplendent with glowing beauty and well worthy of Marlowe's reputation." He quotes at length from Jupiter's speech to Ganymede and Aeneas' description of the fall of Troy as examples, saying the lines have "the unmistakable Marlowe ring."<sup>82</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Percy E. Pinkerton, The Dramatic Works of Christopher Marlowe, Selected (London: Walter Scott, 1889), pp. viii, xv, xviii, xxv, xxvii.

<sup>80</sup> J.H. Ingram, "A New View of Marlowe. Illustrated," Universal Review, 4 (1889), 397.

<sup>81</sup> Harry Plowman, "Christopher Marlowe," Theatre, NS 16 (July 1890), 11.

<sup>82</sup> J.G. Lewis, Christopher Marlowe: Outline of His Life and Works (London: W.W. Gibbings, 1891), pp. 20-21.

Others were not as impressed. James Russell Lowell found Dido somewhat tedious despite many touches of Marlowe's "burning hand." It is regularly plotted like Edward II, but is typical of Marlowe's willingness to substitute luxury of description for "the business at hand."<sup>83</sup> He suggested a number of amended-textual readings, and Kenneth Deighton four years later suggested six more.<sup>84</sup> John Williams Cunliffe believed that Marlowe's "self-appointed task" was to win the popular ear from low drama to the classics and that he achieved his ambition by choosing the Senecan traits that would appeal to popular taste, ignoring the philosophical disquisitions. Thus one finds in his plays "few sage reflections but all Seneca's horror of incident and exaggeration of expression."<sup>85</sup> J.C. Collins found the widow Dido to be "preposterously untrue to nature." Only in Edward II, he said, did Marlowe display admirable dramatic characterization.<sup>86</sup>

The nineteenth century saw a remarkable revival of interest in the plays of Marlowe after generations of neglect, but a revival in which Dido had small share. Scholars on the whole were content to dismiss the play with a mention on the grounds that it was an immature dramatic conception and a mere translation or that the authorship was uncertain. The brevity of the commentaries suggests that it was deemed unworthy of serious study. Only as the century drew to a close was the first call made for more thorough critical application to the play.

<sup>83</sup> James Russell Lowell, The Old English Dramatists (London: Macmillan & Co., 1892), p. 40.

<sup>84</sup> Kenneth Deighton, The Old Dramatists: Conjectural Readings (Westminster: A. Constable, 1896), pp. 122-4.

<sup>85</sup> John Williams Cunliffe, The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy (1893; rpt. New York: G.E. Stechert & Co., 1907), pp. 58-9.

<sup>86</sup> John Churton Collins, Essays and Studies (London: Macmillan & Co., 1895), p. 159.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Foundations of Modern Criticism: 1896-1924

F.S. Boas was perhaps the first to suggest that more than perfunctory attention be paid to Dido. He found its construction admirable and its use of the Aeneid material thoroughly original. The fact that it contains Marlowe's most complete picture of a woman is another major reason for more careful readings. The play is typical of Marlowe, he said, in that it displays his prevailing vision of exigent aspirations, in this case sexual passion. Boas feels Marlowe is fairly successful in making Dido respectable and bold in courtship but he compares the description of her suicide unfavourably with the "theatrical magnificence" of Shakespeare's death of Cleopatra. As well, Aeneas' description of the murder of Priam reads like intentional burlesque. Despite the brilliance of many passages, Marlowe, he believed, could never have been another Shakespeare because he had no sense of humour (an opinion he had changed by 1914 - see p. 37), and he knew no love lifted beyond the level of sensuousness. Marlowe, Boas concludes, "is the rapturous lyricist of limitless desire."<sup>87</sup>

Appreciation of the play was expressed by a number of writers in the first quarter of this century, although the problems raised by the Victorians naturally continued to play a prominent part in the comments. New to the discussion, however, and increasingly noticeable throughout this

<sup>87</sup> F.S. Boas, Shakespeare and His Predecessors (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896), pp. 58-61.



period, were the early signs of the movement toward what later would be termed New Criticism and explication de texte.

Continuing the incompleting study of earlier literary puzzles, J.H. Ingram expressed the belief that there is no likelihood Dido was either printed or played during Marlowe's lifetime but the major part of the work was his. Nashe and Marlowe were little acquainted, if at all, he believed, and the likelihood is that Nashe's contribution was confined to editing and polishing. Marlowe's earliest mannerisms pervade Dido and frequently show a fresh memory of Virgil. Many lines from the play are echoed in more polished form in later works. Ingram quoted several passages, such as Aeneas' tale of his adventures, Jupiter's "Vulcan shall dance" speech to Ganymede and Dido's "And he'll make me immortal with a kiss" as proof of Marlowe's vigorous poetic mind, as opposed to that of the "biting satirist" Nashe. Ten years later Ingram published a second book on Marlowe but his judgement (and wording) had changed little in the interim and he quoted the same passages.<sup>88</sup>

Scholars continued during this time to find similarities between Dido and the works of others. G.C. Moore Smith points out similarities of lines in Marlowe and Shakespeare, especially the dying words of Juliet: "stay, Tybalt, stay; Romeo, I come!" (IV.iii.57) and the last lines of Dido: "Now, sweet Iarbas stay! I come to thee."<sup>89</sup> Charles Crawford proposed the theory that Marlowe wrote a longer poem, now lost, which expanded

<sup>88</sup> John H. Ingram, Marlowe and His Associates (London: Grant Richards, 1904), pp. 130-33; Christopher Marlowe (London: George G. Harrop, 1914), pp. 208-9.

<sup>89</sup> G.C. Moore Smith, "Shakespeariana," Modern Language Review, 1, No. 1 (1905-6), 53-4.

the theme of "The Passionate Shepherd," that this poem was imitated by Richard Barnfield in his "Affectionate Shepheard," [sic] and that the material was also used in Dido. By comparing lines from Dido and other Marlowe plays to Robert Greene's Selimus, he hypothesizes that Dido and Tamburlaine were written at the same time and that Marlowe is the real author of Selimus. He also offered the opinion that "Although Marlowe left Dido unfinished at his death, it is pretty safe to say that his friend Nashe, who completed it, added but little to the play."<sup>90</sup> Charles A. Herpick added another small note to the task of finding similarities between lines in Marlowe and other playwrights when he brought to the attention of the literary world the parallel in the lines of Greene's Orlando Furioso describing the fleet with its "fleece of gold...sailes of sendall ...ropes and tackling all of the finest silke, the gleaming ivorie," etc. and the famous lines when Dido promises Aeneas she will repair his fleet with "tackling made of rivalled gold...oars of massy ivory...sails of folded lawn" and so on. Both passages mention mermaids and Thetis.<sup>91</sup>

In 1907 J.D. Bruner argues with the implications of Moore Smith's earlier article in which Smith compares the dying words of Anna and Juliet. Bruner says that while the lines resemble each other in style, the intent is different. A closer parallel to the motifs of Dido's line lies, he believes, in the final scene of Schiller's Kabale and Liebe: "Luise! Luise! — Ich komme" as well as in Victor Hugo's Hernani. This idea of

<sup>90</sup> Charles Crawford, Collectanea (Stratford: Shakespeare Head Press, 1906-07), I, 3, 91-100.

<sup>91</sup> George A. Herpick, "Greene-Marlowe Parallel," Notes and Queries, Series 6, 114 (Sept. 8, 1906), 185.

star-crossed lovers anticipating reunion in another world comes from mediaeval Christianity, and is therefore not wholly tragic, he points out. Bruner also cites Cleopatra as she applies the asp to her breast: "Husband, I come" and he suggests this is no borrowing or influence but is rather an adherence to a romantic Christian tradition.<sup>92</sup>

Felix Schelling, following Boas' lead, speaks favourably of Dido as a well-composed specimen of epic narrative converted into drama. While lacking the poetry of Marlowe's greater works, it is worthy of association with his name. He believes, unlike most others to date, that the construction and the excellent blank verse suggest it was written after Tamburlaine and The Jew of Malta. The play is free, he notes gratefully, of the contemporary Senecan traits, as well as of bombast and rant. (But see Cunliffe, p. 31.) Two years later he added that Dido is one of the more important dramas on classical subjects.<sup>93</sup> The same year that Marlowe enthusiast Algernon Swinburne dismissed Dido as "thin-spun ... hasty ... feeble and incomposite."<sup>94</sup>

In the next few years a number of writers added small notes to the understanding of the play. Ronald B. McKerrow's edition of Nashe attributed the play "almost entirely" to Marlowe, adding that the increased importance of Iarbus is the chief change from Virgil.<sup>95</sup> As McKerrow's Nashe is

<sup>92</sup> J.D. Bruner, "The Subsequent Union of Dying Dramatic Lovers," Modern Language Notes, 22 (Jan. 1907), 11-12.

<sup>93</sup> Felix E. Schelling, Elizabethan Drama (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., 1908) II, 18-19; English Literature During the Lifetime of Shakespeare (1910; rpt. New York: Henry Holt & Co., rev. ed., 1928), p. 240.

<sup>94</sup> Algernon Charles Swinburne, The Age of Shakespeare (London: Chatto and Windus, 1908), p. 8.

<sup>95</sup> Ronald B. McKerrow, ed., The Works of Thomas Nashe (London: A.H. Bullen, 1908), IV, 295, 298.

generally accepted as the model of superlative editing, his comment on Nashe's part in the play is most significant, although all opinions based on style must by their nature be conjectural. In a survey of Elizabethan drama published in 1909 John Le Gay Brereton confines his comments on the play to three small suggested emendations in the reading. Two years later he added three more in a small note in Modern Language Review.<sup>96</sup> There were two editions in 1909. In one, M.R. Ridley said that Dido contains a sweetness of tone not found in Marlowe's later writings. Although the play as a whole is "undisciplined and crude," certain scenes such as the description of the death of Priam exhibit a powerful style. Ridley conjectures that the play dates from undergraduate days along with Marlowe's translations of Ovid and Lucan.<sup>97</sup> In the same year Edward Thomas commented, in an introduction to another edition of the plays, on the intense poetic nature of Dido and on Marlowe's obvious enjoyment of the many opportunities it afforded him to express luxury and "the barbarian simplicity of love and hate."<sup>98</sup>

The following year Tucker Brooke said in his old-style-spelling edition of Marlowe that the dramatic looseness of the play marks it as immature yet there is considerable "finish" which suggests that Dido is a university work later revised and contains some of Marlowe's most characteristic verse. No question in Marlowe criticism is more vexing than the dating and author-

<sup>96</sup> John Le Gay Brereton, Elizabethan Drama (Sydney: William Brooks & Co. Ltd., 1909), pp. 5-6; "Marlowe, Some Textual Notes," Modern Language Review, 6 (1911), 96.

<sup>97</sup> M.R. Ridley, ed., Marlowe's Plays and Poems (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1909), p. xix.

<sup>98</sup> Edward Thomas in The Plays of Christopher Marlowe, ed. Ernest Rhys (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1909), p. xiii.

ship of this play, he says.<sup>99</sup> Despite the pioneering efforts of Brooke, Schelling and Boas, however, W.L. Phelps, Lampson Professor at Yale, could publish as late as 1912 an edition of Marlowe's works without including or even mentioning Dido and two years later assert that the play was "unimportant as literature."<sup>100</sup>

Other versions of Dido and their relation to Marlowe concerned two writers in 1914. Boas discusses the Gager version as compared to the Aeneid, concluding that he doubts that it influenced Marlowe (and Nashe). There is "not the slightest internal evidence of connexion between the two works," he notes.<sup>101</sup> In addition to a striking lack of verbal similarity, Boas points out, Gager added to his play "Senecan sententiousness and Elizabethan pageantry" while the English-language Dido contributes humour as well as Elizabethan romanticism. Boas here may well have been the first to notice the humour in Dido, contradicting opinions he himself expressed eighteen years earlier concerning Marlowe's lack of a sense of humour. He adds: "Where Marlowe (for it can be no other than he) set the stamp of his genius upon his handling of the tale was in the atmosphere of voluptuous charm that he threw round it."<sup>102</sup> In Modern Language Review T.S. Graves notes an occasion in London on June 8, 1607, when entertainment presented for the visiting Prince de Joinville included "une 'Tragedie d'Enee et de Didon.'" Graves suggests that this could have been a

<sup>99</sup> C.F. Tucker Brooke, ed., The Works of Christopher Marlowe (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), p. 387.

<sup>100</sup> William Lyon Phelps, ed., Christopher Marlowe (New York: American Book Co., 1912); Essays on Books (New York: MacMillan, 1914), p. 225.

<sup>101</sup> Frederick S. Boas, University Drama in the Tudor Age (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914), pp. 188-9.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., pp. 190-1.

performance of Marlowe's play,<sup>103</sup> but later scholars think not.

In The Growth of the English Drama, published the same year, Arnold Wynne devotes eight pages to Dido, the longest article to date. He terms it a well-constructed tragedy that moves the audience to pity of the unhappy queen's cruel fate. Wynne approves of the construction of the play, although he feels the first two acts are too elaborate an introduction to the main plot. He outlines the action of the play in some detail and then points out the power of the portrait of Dido. She is the only woman of such stature and reality in Marlowe's works and shows that Marlowe "could paint a faithful and impressive likeness of a woman when he chose."<sup>104</sup> He adds that the poet's fiery spirit might not have been able to present a gentler type with such success. The verse style Wynne approves of, noting that such extravagances as do occur are natural to the action. Quoting Aeneas' farewell to Dido, he comments that there is an increasing talent for easy spontaneity in Marlowe's verse from Tamburlaine to Edward II to Dido, which he implies is Marlowe's last play. In the writings of Marlowe and Kyd, he concludes: "a poet may be a dramatist at last without feeling that his imagination must be held back like a restive horse lest the decorum of human speech be violated."<sup>105</sup> Two years later, on the same theme of poetry and drama W.M.A. Creizenach asserts that Marlowe was the first to reveal fully the possibilities available in blank verse, exploiting a freedom that borders on that of prose. He points out that Marlowe avoided the monotony

<sup>103</sup> T.S. Graves, "A Tragedy of Dido and Aeneas acted in 1607," Modern Language Review, 9 (1914), 525-6.

<sup>104</sup> Arnold Wynne, The Growth of English Drama (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1914), p. 260.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp. 261-3.

of Sackville and Norton's Gorboduc by varying the place of the caesura and occasionally inserting two unaccented syllables instead of one between the accented syllables. This freedom, he adds, seems to have a natural affinity with Marlowe's tendency towards the vast and the infinite and with his delight in the rhetorical and bombastic, in hyperbole and antithesis.<sup>106</sup>

The First Player's speech in Hamlet and its connection with Dido concerned a number of people at this time. In Studies in Philology in April of 1917 Tucker Brooke said the speech was intended as a parody of the style of Marlowe's play. Shakespeare chose that particular incident because of the parallels in the two stories and also to have fun with Marlowe's "turgid" style.<sup>107</sup> In the next issue of the journal, Samuel Tannenbaum replied that Brooke was mistaken and that the use of that particular speech was not for parody, but for specific psychological needs. Citing Freud's recently-published The Psychopathology of Every-Day Life, Tannenbaum argues that Hamlet is subconsciously salving his conscience.<sup>108</sup> Dr. Tannenbaum is more concerned with Hamlet's motives than with Marlowe's style and so does not elaborate on the question of parody. Henry David Gray in 1920 also examines this subject of the similarity between the First Player's Pyrrhus-Priam speech and the description of Priam's death in Dido. He notes the admiration for the Shakespeare speech on the part of Warburton, Caldscott, Coleridge, Fleay and Ward as well as the "parody of Dido" school led by

<sup>106</sup> W.M.A. Creizenach, The English Drama in the Age of Shakespeare, trans. Cecile Hugon (London: Sidgwich & Jackson, Ltd., 1916), pp. 315-6, 331.

<sup>107</sup> C.F. Tucker Brooke, "Hamlet's Third Soliloquy," Studies in Philology, 14 (April 1917), 119.

<sup>108</sup> Samuel A. Tannenbaum, "Hamlet Prepares for Action," Studies in Philology, 14 (July 1917), 239-241.

Tucker Brooke. Gray doubts that it is a parody of any kind, and rejects also the idea that the speech was written by Jonson. "Is it not odd that the same passage could be regarded by some scholars as a serious performance of Jonson and by others as a burlesque on Marlowe?" he asks. He conjectures that the speech was taken from Shakespeare's own juvenalia, and is perhaps the earliest bit of Shakespeare's authorship extant. He believes it was written before Marlowe's play.<sup>109</sup> Both conjectures are difficult to accept.

In an inevitably influential comment, T.S. Eliot termed Dido a hurried play but suggests, although he does not boldly state, that it is a later play because there is progress in the style. The account of the sack of Troy is in the "new style of Marlowe's, this style which secures its emphasis by always hesitating on the edge of caricature at the right moment." As examples, he cites the excerpt that begins "The Grecian soldiers, tir'd with ten years war," and concludes "We saw Cassandra sprawling in the streetes." (II.i.126-274).<sup>110</sup> Comment from such an important critic would undoubtedly inspire others to examine their copies of Dido more closely, and indeed his opinion has been quoted a number of times since, but a few years later Arthur Symons continued the majority opinion by commenting "There is little to be said in favour of Dido."<sup>111</sup> The same year the Times Literary Supplement reported the sale of a copy of Dido for the record sum of \$12,900 to an American. (This would be the copy now in the Folger Library, as the article mentions the Bodleian and

<sup>109</sup> Henry David Gray, "Did Shakespeare Write a 'Tragedy of Dido'?", Modern Language Review, 15 (July 1920), 217-22.

<sup>110</sup> T.S. Eliot, Elizabethan Essays (1919; rpt, London: Faber and Faber, 1934), p. 29.

<sup>111</sup> Arthur Symons, "A Note on the Genius of Marlowe," English Review, 36 (April 1923), 315.



Huntington copies.) The writer seems to feel the chief interest in the play, besides the rarity of the copies, lies in the fact that Shakespeare perhaps imitated some passages from it in Hamlet.<sup>112</sup>

In 1922 Tucker Brooke published three important works on Marlowe. In a thorough discussion of the Marlowe canon, including contested works, Brooke states his belief that Dido may have been Marlowe's first drama. He believes Marlowe wrote the play while still at college and that Nashe, acting as a literary executor, revised the play after Marlowe's death for the use of any London company which might undertake so academic a piece. He cites in his support Warton, Broughton, Dyce, Ellis, Ward, Creizenach, Knutowski, Ingram, Bullen, Sir Sidney Lee, Charles Crawford and McKerrow. The idea that the two men collaborated on the play is supported only by Collier, Fleay and W. Wagner.<sup>113</sup> Brooke suggests that the play was probably an academic university exercise, as demonstrated by the large number of Latin lines in the text. He then presents explicatory evidence of metre and style to link it to Marlowe's early works, such as the large quantity of alliteration and rhyme and the relatively small proportion of feminine endings, caesural pauses and trochaic first feet. He gives line-by-line analysis followed by a comparison of parallel lines in Dido and in other plays, especially Tamburlaine. Brooke examines the hypothesis that Dido was a late play, or an early play revised near the end of Marlowe's life, but is not convinced.<sup>114</sup>

<sup>112</sup> "Notes on Sales," Times Literary Supplement, 22 February 1923, p. 128.

<sup>113</sup> This generalization is somewhat misleading. Ellis, for example, believed Nashe considerably enlarged the play, while others believe he added nothing to it.

<sup>114</sup> C.F. Tucker Brooke, "The Marlowe Canon," PMLA, 37 (Sept. 1922), 367-417.

In a criticism of Marlowe's style, especially in Tamburlaine, printed the same year Brooke elaborates on the fact that Dido has far more alliteration than have Marlowe's other works. "His most striking passages seldom exhibit it in any remarkable degree." He suggests its use is largely due to the influence of Spenser on this early work.<sup>115</sup> In "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe" Brooke dates the rediscovery of Marlowe from the publication of Edward II in the original edition of Dodsley's Old Plays in 1744; the rediscovery of Dido in Hurst, Robinson & Co.'s Old English Drama of 1825, followed in 1826 by the Robinson collected edition and in 1827 by the inclusion of Dido in the Oxberry complete works. (Oxberry attributed the play chiefly to Nashe.) Noting the rivalry at the close of the eighteenth century among scholars to collect the rare editions of Marlowe, Brooke recounts the sale of a copy of Dido for the large sum of sixteen guineas in 1787 paid by Edmund Malone in the sale of the library of a Dr. Wright. This is the only mention of Dido other than publication information in this lengthy article. It is however a useful survey of Marlowe commentators, some of whom have something to say about the play.<sup>116</sup>

E.K. Chambers in his four-volume history of the Elizabethan stage also mentions Dido only briefly, dismissing it merely as a play jointly attributed, although Nashe's contribution is "uncertain." He disagrees with Fleay's earlier opinion that the play was performed for Queen Elizabeth

<sup>115</sup> Tucker Brooke, "Marlowe's Versification and Style," Studies in Philology, 19 (1922), 196.

<sup>116</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, "The Reputation of Christopher Marlowe," Connecticut Academy of Arts and Science: Transactions, 25 (1922), 389-90, 392.

by the Chappell Children.<sup>117</sup>

In an unpublished thesis L.V. Allen undertook the first lengthy comparison of Dido and its Virgilian source. He points out that while Virgil traces the glorious history of the Roman Empire by telling the story of Aeneas, Dido contains only one incident. The Roman Empire plays no part. Dido is the protagonist and her love is the unifying theme. Other changes from the Aeneid include an invention of dramatic scenes where the original lacked drama, a decline in maturity to suit a children's company, a confining of material to incidents leading to catastrophe and an intensifying of the horror to satisfy Elizabethan tastes, at the expense of restraint and beauty. Aeneas' motivation is changed from motivation by the gods to an outgrowth of character. The conspicuous lack of respect for the gods, Allen feels, results in the loss of poetic atmosphere and beauty, one major reason why the drama is less than the epic. The ending loses its tragic tone because of the lack of a religious element with its resultant sense of fate and destiny. Dido, as protagonist, never approaches the Dido of the epic in tragic tone because she is "too much the affectionate woman and too little the queen, a victim of hapless fate."<sup>118</sup> It is a pity this pioneering study did not receive wider publication.

The same year in another thesis Barbara Swain compares Marlowe's Dido with Jodelle's play written thirty years earlier. She concludes that the plays used the same source but otherwise there is no external connection and Marlowe was not influenced by Jodelle. Marlowe's play is a conglomerate

<sup>117</sup> E.K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), I, 229; III, 427.

<sup>118</sup> L.V./Allen, The Dido, Queen of Carthage and the Aeneid: A Study in the Use of Source Material, Diss. The University of Texas 1924, pp. 7-9, 24, 121-125.

tion of scenes and personages devoid of visible structure, unlike Jodelle's play which was shaped by Senecan simplicity and promulgates a well-defined moral. Marlowe, she says, chose the subject not for the accessible moral but for the possibilities of pageant and romance. It is based on living Elizabethan drama of the time, not on academic Senecan theory. Marlowe's play "is adorned with verses whose glow would make one attentive to it, even before the warmth of the characterization had stirred one's affection." It is a romantic tragedy with aspects of both the pastoral and comic dramas. Miss Swain made no comment on the complexities of the relationships in Marlowe's play, seeing it as a rather simple love story.<sup>119</sup>

Beginning with F.S. Boas and continuing with such important critics as Tucker Brooke and T.S. Eliot, the first years of this century marked tentative steps toward regarding Dido as a serious work worthy of detailed analysis, scholarship and thought. While dating, joint authorship and Marlowe's influence on Shakespeare dominated much comment still, his versification and style, character development, plotting and underlying philosophy as exemplified in Dido are for the first time given some careful analysis as the idea begins to gain acceptance that the play is a piece of literature rather than a schoolboy exercise or an academic oddity. New methods of criticism and new fields of study assist in these early evaluations of the work as a worthwhile piece of writing. Much remains to be done, however, before even the groundwork of topics in need of study is laid out.

<sup>119</sup> Barbara Swain, The Dido Plays of Marlowe and Jodelle, Diss. Columbia University 1924, pp. 5, 91, 120.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Development of Themes: 1926-1950.

During the second quarter of this century writers gave Dido increasingly thoughtful analysis, with themes such as love, sex, religion, romantic temperament and the supernatural being at least tentatively explored for the first time in any depth. Structure, authorship and dating were also given more attention. As this quarter century proceeded, considerations of Dido became fuller, more concrete and more specific than they had been in most earlier studies.

In one such article in 1926, outlining his technique of using rationalism as a test of the authorship of Marlowe's plays, H.W. Herrington pointed out that Dr. Faustus is unique among the works because of its magic theme. "One searches in vain among the six other plays accepted as his, and indeed (except in his translations) among his non-dramatic work, for a single scene which presents magician, witch, devil, ghost or any agency of the supernatural whatever."<sup>120</sup> Herrington notes the uniqueness of this rational emphasis among the works of sixteenth century writers. Even as a figure of speech the supernatural is confined in Marlowe to an infrequent "devil" or "hell." Herrington analyses the various situations and characters other writers might have transformed to the supernatural, showing that even Tamburlaine and Barabas do not consider themselves devils, or "devil-aided," but rather men of superhuman powers or of inhuman cruelty. The only time

<sup>120</sup> H.W. Herrington, "Christopher Marlowe, Rationalist," Essays in Memory of Barret Wendell (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926), p. 142.

a character in one of Marlowe's plays is called an "old witch" is in Dido when the words are addressed to Juno by Venus. It is in this play, too, that almost the only other such allusion in the whole Marlovian canon, except in Faustus, is made. Dido's "cursed hag" flung at the nurse who is bringing her bad tidings is followed by the more pointed "Trairess too keend and cursed sorceress."<sup>121</sup> (V.1.221).

Another Marlovian distinction is observed by Ellis-Fermor when she notes that Dido's main theme -- love -- is unique in Marlowe's works. In her 1927 study of the playwright, however, she considers his efforts at portraying love "unusual" and frequently inept. The concentration upon human relations rather than the relationship of man to universe is not found in Marlowe except in this play which, she believes, therefore must belong to the "earliest stage of his career, before his strongest interests had grown clear, or in the latest stages, in which he had begun to lay them aside."<sup>122</sup> In this rather confusing comment on interests, one must assume that Ellis-Fermor means that Marlowe by the time of his death at 29 had run through all his interests -- from the universe to man and then back again to the universe. It hardly seems an argument for dating the play.

Ellis-Fermor briefly outlines the changes Marlowe made from the epic. Like Herrington one year earlier she notes the rejection in Dido of the supernatural element. The expanded roles of Iarbus and Anna are introduced, she believes, to intensify human relationships. Commenting on the poetry of Dido, Ellis-Fermor says it is a spontaneous expression of a sense of beauty "not yet made poignant by doubt nor touched by finer issues as it is

<sup>121</sup> Herrington, p. 143.

<sup>122</sup> Una M. Ellis-Fermor, Christopher Marlowe (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1927), pp. 18-20.

in Tamburlaine." It is "sunny, effortless and uncrossed by thought or strong emotion."<sup>123</sup> The character of the Nurse and the introductory dialogue between Jupiter and Ganymede she finds ugly and without parallel in the works which followed. Dido, she contends, is a simple first work only interested in love. Then come the major plays, during which Marlowe apparently worked through everything he had to say about destiny and then returned to love with Hero and Leander, where we find "again the richness and the repose of a poetry that is content with 'simple beauty and naught else."<sup>124</sup> That a man might be concerned with destiny one week and love the next is apparently excluded by Miss Ellis-Fermor's method of dating.

In the summer of 1928 a flurry of letters to the editor in The Times Literary Supplement discussed the popular subject of similarities in the works of Shakespeare and Marlowe. The correspondence, each one titled, "A Shakespeare Problem," began with a letter from Middleton Murry which raised again the matter of the similarity between the First Player's speech in Hamlet and Aeneas' tale of the death of Priam in Dido. Murry suggested that Shakespeare may have been satirizing Marlowe. He repeats Gray's earlier suggestion that the speech is early Shakespeare and he asks for more scholarly interpretations.

G. Wilson Knight replied on August 2 that he was struck not with the parallel to Hamlet but to Macbeth, comparing the Dido lines "Then from the navel to the throat at once / He ript old Priam," (II.i.255-6) to Macbeth's "till he unseams him from the navel to the chaps, / And fixed his head upon our battlements." (I.ii.22-23). He suggested that both the Player's speech

<sup>123</sup> Ellis-Fermor, Christopher Marlowe, pp. 20-21.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., pp. 22-23.

in Hamlet; and the Sergeant's speech in Macbeth were from Shakespeare's early writings, inserted into these plays of Shakespeare's maturity. He did not attempt to explain the similarity to Marlowe's work. On August 9 William Poel confined his contribution to a discussion of Hamlet's motivation of revenge. Finally on August 16 Edgar I. Fripp wrote of several similarities between Dido and A Midsummer Night's Dream in both plot and language. He believed that Marlowe's language "doubtless clung to Shakespeare (for parody) in Hamlet (the Player's speech) and (certainly not for parody) in Macbeth (the broken speech of the wounded, panting, almost-spent Sergeant)." Thus bringing to a temporary end this inquiry into analogues. <sup>125</sup>

The same year in his history of drama in England, D.C. Stuart commented on the play's structure: "With the exception of the passages in which the fall of Troy is narrated, the play could almost be classed as well-made." The play is structurally closer to modern form than any other Elizabethan play, he says, following as it does a strict development of plot which reaches a climax and a conclusion. Although there is no observance of the classical unities of time and place, it does have the unity of one action. Stuart points out that never again (assuming this is Marlowe's first play) does he choose such a "well-made" form, using the looser form of the chronicle play in his other writings. <sup>126</sup>

In a controversial article the same year, W.J. Lawrence, commenting on the necessity Elizabethan dramatists felt for collaboration because of

<sup>125</sup> "A Shakespeare Problem," Times Literary Supplement, J. Middleton Murry, 12 July 1928, p. 520; G. Wilson Knight, 2 August 1928, p. 568; William Poel, 9 August 1928, p. 581; Edgar I. Fripp, 16 August 1928, p. 593.

<sup>126</sup> D.C. Stuart, The Development of Dramatic Art (1928; rpt. New York: Dover Publications, 1969), p. 214.



the insatiable market for drama at the time, claimed Dido is the earliest known collaboration by professional authors. He assumed it was designed for performance at court, possibly the outcome of a hasty commission. In a reprinted lecture, he posited his own textual law that when two names appeared on a play, it means that one writer produced the first three acts, the other the remaining two. Thus he finds "quite maddening" the notions that Nashe wrote only fragments of Dido or was only a posthumous reviser.<sup>127</sup>

The following year an issue of the Philological Quarterly carried two articles which discussed Dido. In one, E.H.C. Oliphant angrily rebuts Lawrence's unsupported theorizing, suggesting he try looking for evidence in the plays themselves.<sup>128</sup> Lawrence would then be overwhelmed with an abundance of proof to refute his fanciful theory "whether the appeal was made to his literary taste and judgment and feeling for verse, to verbal and phrasal parallels, or to those mechanical and statistical devices that are the main reliance of the tone-deaf."<sup>129</sup> Carroll Camden, Jr. in the same issue raises the interesting question of what Marlowe knew of the science of psychology, newly revived by the English Renaissance.<sup>130</sup> He cites evidence from several plays and the poems to answer the question. Anger and desire for revenge, Elizabethans believed, came from the gall, which must be confined to the gall bladder. If it escapes it brings rancor to the entire

<sup>127</sup> W.J. Lawrence, Pre-Restoration Stage Studies (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), pp. 346-7.

<sup>128</sup> E.H.C. Oliphant, "Collaboration in Elizabethan Drama: Mr. W.J. Lawrence's Theory," Philological Quarterly, 8 (Jan. 1929), 1-10.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>130</sup> Carroll Camden, Jr., "Marlowe and Elizabethan Psychology," Philological Quarterly, 8 (Jan. 1929), 69-78.

body. Juno, in Dido, explains her inability to succeed at revenge: "Tut, I am simple, without mind to hurt, / And have no gall at all to grieve my foes:" (III.ii.16-17).

A reference to the sorrow of old age is given in the Nurse's lines:

. . . I may live a hundred years;  
Fourscore is but a girl's age; love is sweet.  
My veins are wither'd, and my sinews dry;  
Why do I think of love, now I should die?  
(IV.v.31-4)

Camden quotes Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy to support this view of the dryness of old age. He concludes: "In Marlowe then we have seen a dramatist whose precise use of scientific terminology has evinced him thoroughly familiar with both the mental and physical sides of Elizabethan psychology."<sup>131</sup>

C.E. Lawrence makes the point that the Nurse in Dido is an exception to the general rule that there are no vital common folk in Marlowe's works. Then, after praising the quality of Marlowe's "unexcelled" heroic verse as exemplified by Aeneas' account of the downfall of Troy he points out that Marlowe's "complete vision" can however sometimes achieve a grotesqueness which is almost comic in scope, as in "And feast the birds with their blood-shotten balls."<sup>132</sup> (III.ii.35).

The first unabashedly enthusiastic consideration of Dido might well be the unpublished dissertation in 1930 of T.M. Pearce, who was still writing of the play 30 years later.<sup>133</sup> In the introduction to his thesis

<sup>131</sup> Camden, p. 78.

<sup>132</sup> C.E. Lawrence, "Christopher Marlowe, The Man," Quarterly Review, 225 (July-Oct. 1930), 235-6.

<sup>133</sup> Thomas Matthews Pearce, Marlowe's Tragedie of Dido in Relation to its Latin Source, Diss. University of Pittsburgh 1930.

Pearce says that "line after line occurs...which might be accepted as a touchstone of the perfection of imaginative thought in verse."<sup>134</sup> Dido, he says, is a treasure house of Marlowe's poetic and dramatic experiments. The thesis carefully studies the Latin text and advances conclusions on dating and authorship (he dates it as late as 1592), the relation of the plots, the characterization in the play and its debt to sources. Theorizing on the reason for changes from Virgil, he provides a detailed chart comparing Virgilian and Marlovian plot actions, then compares characters and comments upon the "considerable maturity" of the play's stage craft. To support his late dating, he analyzes Dido's Elizabethan rather than classical structure. Pearce utilizes Boleslaus Knutowski's influential dissertation Das Dido-Drama von Marlowe und Nash on the five characteristics of Marlowe's style: 1. Parallel structure of passages or themes; 2. Stichomythia; 3. War images; 4. Pictures from the regions above earth; 5. Pictures from the God world of the Greeks and Romans as a means to understanding and dating the play.<sup>135</sup> In conclusion Pearce writes: "The play has passages of great beauty and finish in style, of mature prosody, of subtleties in characterization, of practical stage technique."<sup>136</sup> As well as being the first to acknowledge many of the values in Dido Pearce is also it would seem the first person, in English at least, to apply such detailed scholarship to the play.<sup>6</sup> Like L.V. Allan's thesis of 1924 it was a major study but unfortunately a little-known one, as the dissertation remained

<sup>134</sup> Pearce, "Marlowe's Tragedie," p. vi.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., pp. 12, 37, 96.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

unpublished. Pearce himself seems to have confined further comment on the play to one article published in 1959.

The publishing event in the Marlovian world of 1930 was Tucker Brooke's Life and Dido, volume one of the Case edition.<sup>137</sup> In his introduction the well-known Marlowe scholar brings together the varying opinions on the play, its source, date and history. He believes that the work is almost entirely Marlowe's and that there is no evidence that the play was acted before Marlowe's death. He believes Nashe only prepared it for the Chapell Children (this opinion conflicting with some other scholars' views that the play was written specifically for children). Brooke says it may be the same Dido that was performed under Henslowe's auspices in 1597 and for the French ambassador in 1607 (others, however, doubt that these plays were Marlowe's - see p. 26). In style the play resembles Tamburlaine in its use of regular decasyllables, end-stopped, "which close with a long polysyllabic word so often as to constitute a distinct mannerism."<sup>138</sup> In Dido, Brooke points out, run-on lines are rare and feminine endings almost lacking. Nine-syllable lines are freely used and hexameters, trimeters, tetrameters and syllabic-pause verses employed with some frequency. Rhyme is used in this play more frequently than in any others of Marlowe's and alliteration "is here so marked as to be a vice," as is repetition of phrases and whole lines. Word-patterns and images which appear in later plays find their first expression here.<sup>139</sup>

Brooke could find no indebtedness to previous English translations of the Aeneid. He praises Marlowe's skill as a translator in sections where

<sup>137</sup> C.F. Tucker Brooke, The Life of Marlowe and The Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1930), pp. 115-123.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.; p. 116.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., pp. 116-7.

the play closely follows the original source. The chief additions, he states, are the opening prelude and the Iarbas-Anna love story and suicide. The confusion of identity between Ascanius and Cupid is much more complicated than in Virgil, he notes. Also new are the double use of Mercury's warning to Aeneas, and the hero's first unsuccessful attempt to leave Dido.<sup>140</sup>

Affirming the rarity of the text, he concludes that the first printing took place between March 25, 1594 and the following April 22. There was no other printing until 1825. The mysterious "fourth copy" which was reported to contain a prefixed elegaic song on Marlowe's death by Nashe is recalled, together with mention of it by Tanner and Warton, but, as Brooke regrets, this copy is "still God knows where." Dido is the only play, he adds, in which Marlowe chose sexual love between man and woman as the main theme, and the only one in which a well-rounded portrait of a woman appears.

"The most useful aesthetic criticism is...not that which concerns the total effect conveyed by this work...but that which deals with the many illuminating individual passages where we see the impact of Virgil's splendid gravity upon the most exuberantly Romantic of the Elizabethan dramatists, or mark the blend of ardent impulse with austere intellectual insight that best defines Marlowe's view of life."<sup>141</sup>

In a review of Brooke's edition, the anonymous reviewer of the Times Literary Supplement welcomes the book and the entire Case series because Marlowe had become in recent times too much a battlefield for warring experts and too little a "source of beauty and enlargement to the lover of literature." The reviewer commends Brooke's Life for emphasizing the admirable in Marlowe and the choice of Dido as the first of the series for the debatable reason.

<sup>140</sup> Brooke, Life, pp. 117-8.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., pp. 118 ff., p. 123.

that it offers a pleasant interlude from vexing scholarly problems. The play itself he praises for its neat planning and frequent improvements on the lack of drama in the Virgilian account. It shows promise of the virtuosity of later Marlowe writings, the reviewer says, but often falls short of the level of his subsequent poetry. Commenting that not yet were Marlowe's "raptures all ayre and fire" he concludes that with Brooke's scholarly notes to assist, many will want to read more of a poet "whose immaturity could make a play of so much power and beauty as this."<sup>142</sup>

Perhaps such suggestions that Tucker Brooke would be an aid to reading and appreciation rather than a critical aid were precisely the requisite needed to make this literary work live instead of becoming another embalmed cadaver fit for naught but dissection.

Two years after the subject had been discussed at some length in the same publication, Oliver W. F. Lodge wrote in another letter to the Times Literary Supplement that Brooke was wrong in his assumption that the speech of the First Player in Hamlet is a burlesque of Marlowe. Lodge says such an interpretation is against the whole tone and spirit of the passage. The reason for the heightened and turgid style of the speech is according to him, a device used by Shakespeare to differentiate the speech of the Player from the ordinary speech of the play in which people conduct their lives. Shakespeare wished to praise Dido "and did so in Hamlet's noble words, but quote it in its proper style he could not, without confusing the values of his own play, so he wrote a new speech on the same theme, but in a heightened and turgid style."<sup>143</sup>

<sup>142</sup> "A New Edition of Marlowe," The Times Literary Supplement, 21 August 1930, p. 665.

<sup>143</sup> Oliver W. F. Lodge, "Dido, Queen of Carthage," The Times Literary Supplement, 4 Sept. 1930, p. 700.

Henry Buckley Charlton and R.D. Waller, in an edition of Edward II, raise in a footnote the possibility that Dido as well as Edward II could be associated with the five members of the Pembroke Players who joined the Admiral's in 1597. They discuss evidence and suggestions made by Chambers, Greg and Tucker Brooke, concluding that there is a possibility.<sup>144</sup>

In another consideration of Marlowe's verse style, Muriel Clara Bradbrook makes the valid point that not enough study has been made of the similarities between Hero and Leander and Dido. Both contain the themes of Marlowe's detachment coupled with direct passion. The story of the Destinies' love for Cupid is a burlesque version of the theme of love as exemplified by Hero and Leander, just as the Nurse's infatuation with Cupid is a burlesque parallel version of the love of Dido. The prologue scene in Dido with Jove and Ganymede parallels Leander and Neptune. The poem contains similarities of expression and is, she believes, from the same writing period as Dido.<sup>145</sup>

Despite the impetus the Brooke edition of Dido should have provided, Bradbrook's comment on the play was one of only a handful during the years immediately following the Case publication. Most comment was of minor but interesting nature. One such study in 1935 by Morris P. Tilley and James K. Roy was an article on the use of proverbs in Marlowe. They observed that the common Elizabethan use of proverbs to enliven dialogue is almost lacking in Marlowe. He confined himself chiefly to what the authors term "old truths," a considerable number of them in their Latin form. In Dido the

<sup>144</sup> Henry Buckley Charlton and R.D. Waller, eds., Edward II (London: Methuen and Co., 1933), p. 26.

<sup>145</sup> Muriel Clara Bradbrook, "Hero and Leander," Scrutiny, 2 (June 1933), 59-64.

authors found only three such usages, viz: "Aeneas is Aeneas, were he c'ad / In weeds as bad as ever Irus wore."(II.1.85-89); "Ay, this it is which wounds me to the death, / To see a Phrygian, far-fet O' the sea, / Preferr'd before a man of majesty."(III.iii.63-65); "O serpent, that came creeping from the shore. / And I for pity harbour'd in my bosom."(V.i.165-166). The authors discuss the probable sources of these sayings.<sup>146</sup>

Rupert Taylor attempted to date Marlowe's plays on the basis of similarities of lines between his works and contemporary plays. The eleven parallels he notes between Dido and the anonymous The Tragical Reign of King John (1591) suggests, he said, that there was a version of Dido as early as 1590.<sup>147</sup> The following year Mary Matheson Wills expressed disagreement as to the direction of the borrowing, saying she had discovered in Marlowe's plays and poetry lines which have their counterpart both in expression and substance in books that were in print as early as 1567, when Marlowe was barely three years old.<sup>148</sup>

Marlowe's puzzling personality was the inspiration for the next major comment on Dido. A love of cruelty, perversion and abnormal emotion characterizes Marlowe's works, according to Philip Henderson. He cites the exchange between Venus and Juno, and the description of the sack of Troy in Dido as examples. The playwright gives free rein "to that taste for cruelty that is so often found in the sexually abnormal." Marlowe was not interested in

<sup>146</sup> Morris P. Tilley and James K. Roy, "Proverbs and Proverbial Allusion in Marlowe," Modern Language Notes, 50 (1935), 348-9.

<sup>147</sup> Rupert Taylor, "A Tentative Chronology of Marlowe's and Some Other Elizabethan Plays," PMLA, 51 (1936), 660, 673.

<sup>148</sup> Mary Matheson Wills, "Marlowe's Role in Borrowed Lines," PMLA, 52 (1937), 902-5.



women, mentioned them only with repugnance. "The theme of Dido, sexual passion, is derived from literature, not life," he says, and is preceded by the "quite unnecessary" love-scene between Jupiter and Ganymede. Henderson quotes Baines' report of Marlowe's supposed comment about boys and tobacco, adding as a final pejorative, "and we all know that Marlowe had no sense of humour."<sup>149</sup> This frequent claim regarding Marlowe's lack of a sense of humour is rather baffling. One would think that it would be hard to miss the humour of, for example, the famous lines of Hero and Leander:

And, drunk with gladness, to the door she goes;  
Where, seeing a naked man, she screeched with fear.  
(Such sights as this to tender maids are rare.)  
And ran into the dark herself to hide.  
(Rich jewels in the dark are soonest spied.)  
(Third Sestiad, 236-40)

Perhaps Henderson's sense of moral outrage at Marlowe's purported sexual preference dulled his sense of humour as completely as it swayed his literary judgment. It was not until recent times that changing mores perhaps permitted more writers to appreciate Marlowe's talent without undue influence concerning his sexuality. This change was of great importance to the consideration of Dido, where both the sexuality and the humour are fairly blatant.

In another type of dismissive comment John Bakeless, in a book on Christopher Marlowe published in 1938, says that Dido holds little interest for the modern reader except as "a kind of unconscious first draft of many of the most felicitous lines and phrases, to which Marlowe owes his enduring reputation."<sup>150</sup> Marlowe, like other Elizabethans, echoed himself many times.

<sup>149</sup> Philip Henderson, And Morning in His Eyes (London: Boriswood, 1937), pp. 289-90.

<sup>150</sup> John Bakeless, Christopher Marlowe (London: Jonathan Cape, 1938), pp. 255-60.

Bakeless says, however that the echoing from Dido is of a different kind because in this first play the material is so vastly inferior to the expression of the same ideas in his later greater works. Bakeless believes the inferiority sprang from the fact that Marlowe lacked the maturity, skill and experience to deal with these inspirations so early in his life. He discerns in all some twenty-five passages in Dido which reappear in purified form in later works, including three resurrections of Marlowe's famous passage, the lines of the "thousand ships" in Dr. Faustus, and "quenchless fire" as repeated from Dido once in Edward II and twice in Tamburlaine. Bakeless cites a number of instances in which the Elizabethan Marlowe transforms the Augustan Virgil's classical descriptions into romanticism—"Pius Aeneas" becomes a swashbuckling adventurer; Virgil's Aeneas escapes doomed Troy under cover of darkness, Marlowe's Aeneas fights his way out, and so on. He discusses the Player's speech in Hamlet in this regard, saying that Shakespeare was poking fun by exaggerating the exaggerations of romantic Marlowe.<sup>151</sup>

In his oft-quoted and sometimes misquoted treatise on Marlowe published in Sofia in 1938, Marco Mincoff says Dido is interesting only as a youthful experiment: "Its loss could not affect any criticism of the poet in the least."<sup>152</sup> He adds that in none of Marlowe's works can the reader be certain that it is from any given period and Dido's poor plot, the lack of dramatic action and dramatic interest and the classical theme all suggest university days. Contradicting Bakeless' view cited above, he claims that the play with its austere style is more reminiscent of the Latin poets than is the

<sup>151</sup> Bakeless, Christopher Marlowe, pp. 258-9.

<sup>152</sup> Marco K. Mincoff, "Christopher Marlowe. A Study of His Development," Studia Historico-Philologica Sordicensia, 1 (1938), 2.

floridity of the Italian school of Tamburlaine.<sup>153</sup> No other poet, Mincoff asserts, has lavished "his beauties so absolutely on the surface of his work, or can make so immediate and direct an appeal." He cites lines containing figures of speech from Dido that are repeated in later plays.<sup>154</sup>

In 1938, Paul Kocher, a prolific scholar dedicated like Henderson to the school of thought that believes that the main reason for reading the plays is to understand the character of Marlowe and that by understanding his character one can understand his plays, espoused this belief in an article in the Philological Quarterly.<sup>155</sup> Agreeing with Brooke that Dido was the earliest of Marlowe's plays, Kocher says the play lacks "the immense and pervading consciousness of the self" contained in Marlowe's other works. In itself, this lack is proof to Kocher that it was written considerably before Tamburlaine. The immature Marlowe did not possess the sense of identity with which he permeates the later plays. Thus, although he could involve himself in Dido's tragedy, Marlowe did not bring to her tragedy the feeling of one ego against the world which pervades the great plays. Dido does not struggle enough; she fails to portray the despairing conflict of the single person against a hostile world. That understanding must wait until the later plays, when Marlowe's ego was more mature and formed, he concludes.

Complementing Kocher's approach, which deals only with substance, are the comments of Howard Baker, which concentrate on style. Speaking of Marlowe's metres Baker said that for a brief period in English literature the

<sup>153</sup> Mincoff, pp. 17-19.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., pp. 5, 46-48.

<sup>155</sup> Paul H. Kocher, "The Development of Marlowe's Character," Philological Quarterly, 17 (Oct. 1938), 332-3.

style of verse was "the greater part of drama." he described this style as a balanced line in which the first part plays against the last part "either verbally or alliteratively and often in both ways."<sup>156</sup> The alliteration in Dido, already mentioned by others, is a notable example of this verse style.

In his 1940 book on Marlowe,<sup>157</sup> Dr. Boas examines in some detail the possible contributions Nashe may have made to Dido, including words never used elsewhere by Marlowe--"famoused" and "Getulian" for example. Boas says he cannot explain the reference to the Children of Her Majesties Chapel as the company never played in London between 1584 and 1601. The company did visit Ipswich and Norwich during 1586-7 but if they played Dido then it would have meant the play was a collaboration written at Cambridge, an unlikely occurrence. In any event, the play would hardly be fare for provincial theatre, he adds. Boas doubts that three earlier versions of Dido, all in Latin, were sources for Marlowe, thinking it more likely that he was influenced by the classical subjects of Lyly's court-comedies.

Expressing the belief that the inspiration for the opening scene came from Marlowe's general classical reading, Boas discusses at length the adaptations and departures in the play from its Virgilian source. Especially impressive is the skill with which Marlowe compresses the 800 lines of the Aeneid's recital of the downfall of Troy into 180 lines of "vivid narrative, broken at intervals by Dido's sympathetic outcries. Translating and adapting, omitting, transposing and adding...the horse's entry is marked by a roll of

<sup>156</sup> Howard Baker, Introduction to Tragedy (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1939), pp. 56-7.

<sup>157</sup> F.S. Boas, Christopher Marlowe: A Biographical and Critical Study (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), pp. 49-67.

unmistakably Marlovian, not Virgilian, music."<sup>158</sup> The events of the play are then summarized, Boas commenting that even with celestial intervention Aeneas' announcement of his departure is "unplausibly abrupt after his unconditional vows of fidelity to Dido." That Aeneas, robbed by Dido of his oars, tackling and sails, should have them supplied by the jealous rival Iarbas is, to Boas, "an excrescence on the original tale."<sup>159</sup>

Then comes Marlowe's greatest challenge, to present the agony of a woman scorned and, according to Boas, "Marlowe does not stand the test." Too involved with the emotional aspects of Dido's story, he decks them out with fantasies which fail to rise to the heights of Virgil's insight into the human heart and the true tragedy of a woman caught in the divinely ordained sequence of events involving the fall of Troy and the founding of Rome. Yet, Boas notes, anyone who tries to speculate on Marlowe's future from this play would go far astray. Only in this play is sexual love dominant, he declares. In an arguable statement, Dr. Boas says there is no hint of the "atheist" Marlowe of Tamburlaine and Dr. Faustus. "Nor does there throb through Dido the passionate aspiration after the fullness of power and beauty and knowledge which, in one aspect or another, links Marlowe's other plays."<sup>160</sup>

In a dissertation discussing the types and numbers of images in Marlowe's plays, Marion Smith discovered that compared to the other plays in the canon Dido has relatively few images.<sup>161</sup> The imagery content is so low, he says,

<sup>158</sup> Boas, Marlowe, pp. 55-6.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., pp. 63-6.

<sup>161</sup> Marion B. Smith, Marlowe's Imagery and the Marlowe Canon, Diss. University of Pennsylvania 1940, pp. 96, 108-113.

that the percentage figures are misleading. Dido has only forty-seven images in the entire 1736 lines, an average of one to every thirty-six lines. The chief sources of imagery in Dido are from nature and daily life. Listing the critics who believe Marlowe was the chief author of Dido (Tanner, Warton, Dyce, Broughton, Ward, Bullen, McKerrow, Tucker Brooke) and the small opposition favouring Nashe (Collier, Fleay and especially Grosart), Smith says the majority opinion is fully borne out by the imagery of the play: "The individual images themselves are characteristically Marlovian. There is scarcely a single image that strikes a false note."<sup>162</sup> Smith gives several examples of similarities of imagery in Dido and in other works.

In 1942 Bakeless greatly expanded his study of Marlowe published four years earlier, producing a two-volume work in which consideration of Dido is increased from five pages to twenty-seven.<sup>163</sup> He repeats his earlier belief that the play is interesting chiefly as an unconscious draft of Marlowe's later work, then discusses in some detail the most likely part played by Nashe in its creation. After reviewing the conflicting opinions of scholars and the conflicting evidence derived from the known facts about the two men, he concludes wisely and safely that a definite decision is impossible. He contents himself with the innocuous observation that "Certain passages are without question Marlowe's." Bakeless explores the theme of similarities, quoting thirty-seven different passages from Dido which are echoed, imitated or revised in Marlowe's later plays, if later they be.<sup>164</sup>

<sup>162</sup> Marion B. Smith, p. 109.

<sup>163</sup> John Bakeless, The Tragical History of Christopher Marlowe, 2nd ed., rev. (1942; rpt. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1964), II, 41-68.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., pp. 46-54.

Bakeless then reviews the opinions on dating the play and offers objections to various theories proposed by Ward, Knutowski, Tucker Brooke, Ingram, Ellis-Fermor, Cunningham, Collier and Pearce, concluding "We are probably safe in regarding Dido as a play written in Marlowe's earliest years and perhaps revised later."<sup>165</sup> Bakeless compares Marlowe's version to Virgil as well as various translations of the Latin epic available at the time. No translations or other play versions of Dido influenced Marlowe, he concludes. Discussing stage history, Bakeless repeats the work of E.K. Chambers, Walter Greg, T.S. Graves and Tucker Brooke. He then says the play seems to have had little effect on Marlowe's contemporaries, listing only lines from Nashe, Kyd, The True Tragedy and, of course, the Player's speech from Hamlet.<sup>166</sup> All in all, the discussion is an orderly presentation of the work of others but offers little new information or insight of its own.

In the on-going work of determining the Marlowe canon, George Coffin Taylor has contributed an exhaustive study of Marlowe's use of the word "now." More than any of his contemporaries or imitators, says Taylor, Marlowe was addicted to the use of the word, beginning sentences, long speeches and addresses with it far more frequently than any other playwright of his time. Taylor gives a sampling of the uses of "now" by Marlowe in all his generally-accepted plays, including Dido. One typical use is before the name of a character addressed, e.g. "Now Faustus," "Now Cupid," "Now Guise." An introductory "now" is used twenty times in Dido. On the other hand, The Contention and The True Tragedy are markedly deficient in the use of this Marlovian characteristic. Finding "now" in the works of contemporaries

<sup>165</sup> Bakeless, Tragicall History, pp. 54-8.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., pp. 65-8.

such as Peele, Greene and Kyd is by comparison like finding the proverbial needle. Under this test, Dido holds up only fairly well as a Marlowe play and Lust's Dominion not at all.<sup>167</sup>

Accepting that Dido is a Marlowe play, and his first, Charles Norman says it displays in tentative form all the best of Marlowe--the bright images, the "mighty line," the sensuous writing of the later plays, in apprentice form. Norman goes so far as to hypothesize that Marlowe the student visited the Chapel Children in 1587 while he was still at Cambridge and they were performing at Norwich and Ipswich in order to induce them to play Dido, thus explaining how their name became associated with it. He offers no evidence for this theory, and as has been noted by Boas the play is hardly the stuff for provincial audiences of a touring company. Norman makes the excellent point that unlike most writers, who begin by imitating others and go on to develop their own style, Marlowe right at the beginning of his career used his own brilliant fiery style and original form. (Again, assuming this is his first play.) Norman also observes that it was Virgil who inspired the first known English blank verse, by Surrey, written 40 years before Marlowe took it and made it his own.<sup>168</sup>

The question of whether or not Marlowe was a homosexual, a belief espoused all the way from Baines to A.L. Rowse, was raised by Paul Kocher in a book on Marlowe published in 1946. He cites the Jupiter-Ganymede scene in Dido as evidence, as well as the friendship between Edward and Gaveston and

<sup>167</sup> George Coffin Taylor, "Marlowe's 'Now'," in Elizabethan Studies and Other Essays in Honor of George F. Reynolds (Boulder, Colorado: University of Colorado Press, 1945), pp. 93-100.

<sup>168</sup> Charles Norman, Christopher Marlowe: The Muse's Darling (1946: rpt. New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. Ltd., 1971), pp. 30-35.



Neptune's toying with Leander. This homosexuality sets Marlowe's works apart from the other erotic poems of Elizabethan times, he states. "At the very least, its treatment in three of Marlowe's works shows his willingness to tamper with a dangerous topic, and more probably it betokens some degree of personal passion."<sup>169</sup> In the same book, commenting on Marlowe's political opinion, Kocher quotes as of outstanding importance Dido's lines:

Those that dislike what Dido gives in charge  
Command my guard to slay for their offence.  
Shall vulgar peasants storm at what I do?  
The ground is mine that gives them sustenance,  
The air wherein they breathe, the water, fire,  
All that they have, their lands, their goods,  
their lives,  
And I, the goddess of all these command  
Aeneas ride as Carthaginian king.

(IV.iv.71-78)

This attitude, for which there is no source in Virgil, is important because it raises the issue of the power of the sovereign and because it probably represents Marlowe's view. Dido states that her will is supreme law. As Kocher points out this idea is directly opposed to the main traditions of Western thought from the classical period to the Renaissance.<sup>170</sup> Kocher reviews the development of the growth of parliamentary liberty and then outlines a contrary ideal springing from French sources and expounded in King James' The True Law of Free Monarchies. This work, advocating the same despotic power as does Dido, appeared in 1598, shortly after Marlowe's death. Kocher suggests that Marlowe foresaw that James would be the next king of England "and knew the advantage of coming early into his favour... the resemblance between the Dido speech and the views of James remains a

<sup>169</sup> Paul H. Kocher, Christopher Marlowe: A Study of His Thought, Learning, and Character (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1946), p. 209.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., pp. 176-180.

tantalizing coincidence."<sup>171</sup> Marlowe, Kocher infers, believed in absolute monarchy, another aspect of his non-conformist stance.

Marlowe's humour is also discussed in this book. Kocher mentions the playful dalliance of Jupiter with Ganymede which will transmute into the toying of Neptune with Leander, both incidents which show the "zestful amusement" of a man who, to quote Baines, said "That all they that love not Tobacco and Boies were fooles." Juno's sarcasm in her speech over the sleeping Ascanius (III.ii.12-17) he says is "too blatant" but will be improved when heard again in the replies of the barons in Edward II. Wit is also provided by Dido in her descriptions of how she rejected her would-be suitors, a "crisply humorous effect" that will appear again in The Massacre at Paris. He also mentions the humour of the swiftly alternating love and common sense provided by the Nurse when she deals with the incongruity of love at her age. "A husband, and no teeth!" Kocher judges this the best comic bit in the play.<sup>172</sup> (But J.W.H. Atkins the following year dismissed Marlowe's effort as "nondescript tragical comedy.")<sup>173</sup>

Tucker Brooke, studying the writings of Marlowe to discover his personality,<sup>174</sup> first and firmly declares Marlowe a scholar who vindicates the literary uses of sound learning. Saying that Marlowe is most the poet when he is most the scholar, Tucker Brooke quotes Aeneas' telling of the story of the wooden horse as an example of the poetic use of learning. Marlowe's

<sup>171</sup> Kocher, Christopher Marlowe, p. 179.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>173</sup> J.W.H. Atkins, English Literary Criticism: The Renaissance (London: Methuen, 1947), p. 241.

<sup>174</sup> C.F. Tucker Brooke, Essays on Shakespeare and Other Elizabethans (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948), pp. 191-197.

scholarship gave him a sense of form, a passion for truth, and a hatred of hypocrisy. Straying into the realm of controversy, the eminent Marlowe authority then declares that nothing in the playwright's writing suggests he is either an atheist or a sensualist.<sup>175</sup>

In an article in the University of Toronto Quarterly the same year Paul Kocher continues his interest in the "central" problem of studying Marlowe, namely, "to study his plays in relation to his complex personality."<sup>176</sup> Although pointing out that one must keep firmly in mind the fact that Marlowe was an Elizabethan, he reminds his readers that in matters of religion Marlowe emphatically did not maintain conventional attitudes. He believes that too many critics try to refute the evidence of Kyd and Baines, evidence which was given support in the writings of contemporaries such as Greene, Beard, Vaughan and Harvey. Pointing out that Marlowe was a divinity student, Kocher says the Baines note shows "a carefully calculated, brilliantly ironic assault on the foundations of Christian dogma."<sup>177</sup> Discounting Dido as "very immature and imitative," he says that perhaps the paramount theme in all the other Marlowe plays is religion. He believes that Marlowe was chiefly an iconoclast, a tortured spirit, and his works must be studied in this light.<sup>178</sup>

Thus by 1950 the foundations had been laid for the study of various aspects of the play which have since been more fully explored. Authorship and dating were considered from broader bases such as contemporary theatrical

<sup>175</sup> Brooke, Essays on Shakespeare, p. 191.

<sup>176</sup> Paul Kocher, "Christopher Marlowe, Individualist," University of Toronto Quarterly, 17 (Jan. 1948), 111-120.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., pp. 113-117.

history and technical uses of language and image, although the result was more, not less, uncertainty. The important theme of Dido's character was studied in some depth for the first time. Writers considered the questions of Marlowe's sexual, political and religious beliefs as they affected the play, as well as the play as it illuminated Marlowe's beliefs and proclivities in these matters. Style, structure and techniques were given some detailed attention. The Virgilian sources were studied with greater care. In sum, new areas of study were opened but no major elements in the play were given the thorough discussion they so patently needed, and would soon receive.

## CHAPTER SIX

### New Respect: 1951-1964

In the years from 1951 to 1964 writers still gave their attention to the topics of source, date, poetic line and authorship but interest in the actual themes of the play continued to grow, with a sunburst of articles on Marlowe in 1964, the 400th anniversary of his birth. Dido was granted some new respect and attention in these quadricentennial considerations, although comment earlier in this period was not necessarily as respectful. Michel Poirier, for example, wrote in 1951 that Dido is very typical of the type of work one would expect of a gifted student. He believes "beyond question" that the play was written at Cambridge about 1586 and that Nashe's contribution was negligible. Marlowe's use of Virgil amounts almost to plagiarism, he says, with about one-third of the lines translated or expanded from the original text. The main change is in Aeneas' motives. Marlowe drops the theme of patriotic duty expressed by Virgil and substitutes Jupiter's will and Aeneas' desire for heroic deeds as motives.<sup>179</sup>

Marlowe made a mistake, Poirier declares, in expanding the part played by the gods. Much better, much more poetical, would have been to allow the characters to comment on the supernatural. In Marlowe's version, the characters are mere puppets manipulated by the gods. The play has neither the feeling of inescapable doom of a Greek drama nor the tension of a psychological study of two people torn between love and duty. Marlowe's own

<sup>179</sup> Michel Poirier, Christopher Marlowe (London: Chatto and Windus, 1951), pp. 80-82.

additions, such as the old nurse in love or the account of Pyrrhus' over-throwing of Priam, display faulty taste, he says. Far more successful is Marlowe's portraits of love, especially that of Dido, a portrait that will not be found in the female portraits in Marlowe's later plays. Although the play reveals a great lyrical poet, Marlowe's thought is not yet developed: "the time has not come when he will use the drama to expound his own ideas."<sup>180</sup>

There were a number of brief comments in 1950-51. J.Y. Liu enumerated the image clusters shared by Shakespeare and Marlowe, especially connecting images of love and of books.<sup>181</sup> John Gassner commented that Marlowe is the symbol of the theatre's great age because he "expressed the romantic strivings more directly and singularly than any of his predecessors or successors" but he dismisses Dido as "indifferent."<sup>182</sup> Discussing the Player's Speech in Hamlet, Harry Levin expressed doubt that Dido was the inspiration, but rather Ovid.<sup>183</sup> In his full-scale study of Marlowe two years later he scants Dido but says the over-reaching speech of Marlowe's protagonists was an expression of his ethos of living dangerously. He then discusses some of the examples of blank verse that preceded Marlowe's work. Generalizing on Marlovian tragedy he states: "The over-reaching image, reinforced by the mighty lines, sums up the whole dramatic predicament

<sup>180</sup> Poirier, pp. 82-87.

<sup>181</sup> J.Y. Liu, "A Marlo-Shakesperian Image Cluster," Notes and Queries, 196 (Aug. 4, 1951), 336-7.

<sup>182</sup> John Gassner, Masters of the Drama ([n.p.]: Dover Publications, 1951), pp. 191, 206.

<sup>183</sup> Harry Levin, "An Explication of the Player's Speech," Kenyon Review, 12 (1950), 273-296.

and affords the actor a maximum of opportunity."<sup>184</sup> Levin believes our appreciation of the dynamism of Marlowe's language has been dulled by his imitators, who reduced his style to bombast. To renew our appreciation he introduces us to Dido by reviewing passages in earlier works by Surrey and in Gorbuduc, showing by quoting similar passages in Dido the mastery that is evident even in this early play. "The Marlovian line may not yet have gathered the full might that Ben Jonson would attribute to it, but in Dido its characteristics are manifest" (p. 15). The prevailing mood of the play, its tenderness towards youth, its passivity towards woman and its treatment of courtship is set, Levin argues, by the use of the curious word, "ticing." The play is full of enticements, but duty wins. "Just as Aeneas is conscious of his imperial mission, so Marlowe seems ready to invade a more heroic field" (pp. 16-17).

In a book on Marlowe published in 1952 and later revised, Philip Henderson joins the argument about the dating of Dido. He dates Dido as written 1586-7 and revised 1592-3. Clearly prepared for a juvenile company, the immature work still contains all the characteristics of Marlowe's verse, he says, although it is his only play in which sexual love is the motivation. Some parts of it show a highly imaginative handling of the source material, Henderson notes. He particularly admires Aeneas' description of the sack of Troy, quoting T. S. Eliot's comment of 1919 that Marlowe's style achieves its effect by stopping just this side of caricature. The play contains "a queer mixture of verse styles" and the play as a whole is "little more than a charming piece." In the later revision, Henderson adds that

<sup>184</sup> Harry Levin, The Overreacher: A Study of Christopher Marlowe (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1952), pp. 10-11, 23-24.

the use of calculated hyperbole is very Marlovian but the play contains more than any other of his works a preponderance of weak and "over-sweet" lines.<sup>185</sup>

Developing the theme of the treatment of sexuality, Alfred Harbage finds that there is more suggestiveness in Dido than in all of Marlowe's other plays combined. As example he quotes such lines as "And let me link my body to thy lips" (IV.iii.28) and the succession of scenes in which the lovers disappear into the cave and then reappear, having consummated their love. He suggests this theme was developed because the Chapel Children devoted themselves to classical subject matter and topics such as heroic friendship, but above all to love. The Player's speech is intended by Shakespeare as a parody and not a compliment, he decides.<sup>186</sup> Other brief comments on Marlowe contributed by scholars during this time include an article by J.C. Maxwell dealing mainly with Shakespeare. Maxwell points out that one stylistic feature of Marlowe's heroic narrative is the use of incomplete lines in deliberate imitation of Virgil. He cites one line from Dido, "Thither made we," (I.iii.25) as a direct rendering of the incomplete line, Aen. I, 534: "Hic cursus fuit."<sup>187</sup> Two years later, oddly enough, he wrote a commissioned article on Marlowe without even mentioning Dido.<sup>188</sup> Clarence Forbes states that Dido's fatal error is her decision

<sup>185</sup> Philip Henderson, Christopher Marlowe (London: Longmans, Green, 1952), pp. 80-83; rev. ed. 1956, pp. 17-18.

<sup>186</sup> Alfred Harbage, Shakespeare and the Rival Traditions (New York: MacMillan, 1952), pp. 66-7, 201.

<sup>187</sup> James Coutts Maxwell, "Virgilian Half-Lines in Shakespeare's Heroic Narrative," Notes and Queries, 198 (1953), 100.

<sup>188</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, ed., The Plays of Christopher Marlowe (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1955).



to break her vow of fidelity to her dead husband. After that "the chain of conflicts spells inevitable doom for Dido." She becomes a symbol of the tragic in human life. He notes that there have been 50 tragedies and 25 operas written about her life and death.<sup>189</sup> H.J. Muller feels that although Marlowe is seen as a wild Byronic figure, he is much more interesting as a symbol, a "lonely wanderer between the medieval and modern worlds, in a sense the tragic hero of his age." But symbol or no, he concludes, Marlowe wrote some pretty bad plays: "I doubt that his premature death cost us dramatic masterpieces."<sup>190</sup>

Another contribution to the growing body of Shakespeare-Marlowe discussions was made by Thomas P. Harrison who put forth the theory that while direct paraphrasal influence from Dido can be seen in Shakespeare's Hamlet and Macbeth, it is the "predominating sensuous and lyric qualities of Marlowe's youthful play" that had its most extensive if less obvious influence on Shakespeare.<sup>191</sup> He deals briefly with Dido's influence on A Midsummer Night's Dream then devotes the bulk of his article to a consideration of the influence of Marlowe's play on Antony and Cleopatra. The description of Cleopatra's barge and Dido's promise of a ship for Aeneas are both, he believes, influenced by Plutarch. He adds that considering the plays as dramas, apart from their sources, Marlowe "anticipates remarkably" Shakespeare's play with similarities of situation, mood and language. In both plays, he comments, protestations of loyalty

<sup>189</sup> Clarence A. Forbes, "Tragic Dido," The Classical Bulletin, 29 (March 1953), 53, 58.

<sup>190</sup> Herbert Joseph Muller, Spirit of Tragedy (1956; rpt. New York: Knopf, 1965), pp. 132, 139.

<sup>191</sup> Thomas P. Harrison, "Shakespeare and Marlowe's Dido Queen of Carthage," University of Texas Studies in English, 35 (1956), 57.

on the part of heroes are followed by unfaithfulness. Both plays use intermediaries to attempt to forestall desertion. Both queens are in turn fearful, reproachful and then resigned. This resignation is followed by reconciliation. Cleopatra's "Eternity was in our lips and eyes," (I.iii.35) compares with Dido's "For in his looks I see eternity," (IV.iv.122). Other smaller similarities in language and situation are also quoted (pp. 58-63). This detail expands the generalization on the similarities of the two plays observed earlier by Fripp and Poirier.

In response to this type of criticism, the note of unjustifiable neglect of Dido was sounded by John P. Cutts in Notes and Queries in 1958, a note which did not noticeably swell into a chorus for a number of years. Pointing out that comment on the play to that date had been confined chiefly to its influence on other plays, Cutts boldly sets out to consider the play on its own merits and finds much to praise. This was indeed a breakthrough, one of the first articles in which Dido is analyzed and found worthy in its own terms rather than as an historical footnote. Professor Cutt's relatively short article concentrates almost entirely on a consideration of the opening scenes and particularly the seduction of Ganymede by Jupiter as "a most carefully planned introduction to a play for which it sets the ironic mood of Marlowe's contempt."<sup>192</sup> He takes his initiative from C.F. Tucker Brooke's 1922 comment that certain lines in the play are reminiscent of "The Passionate Shepherd." Cutts would add the opening scene. He quotes both Jupiter's opening words "Come, gentle Ganymede, and play with me: I love thee well" (I.i.1-2) and the closing "And shalt have, Ganymede, if thou wilt be my love."

<sup>192</sup> John P. Cutts, "Dido, Queen of Carthage," Notes and Queries, 203 (September 1958), p. 374.

(I.i.49) with their striking resemblance to "Come live with me, and be my love."

Cutts points out that Marlowe subtly and ironically perverts the myth of Fate and Time in the scene, as Jupiter of course controls both. Free of Fate and Time, Jupiter proceeds to seduce "that female wanton boy" with promises of great luxury and pleasure, a fact made all the more ironic because Ganymede needs no persuasion. The scene is a foil for the rest of the play. Jupiter's ease provides the contrast to the desperate attempts of Dido in her bid to win Aeneas; Ganymede's willingness the foil for the unwilling resistance of Aeneas. The contrast emphasizes the difference between love in heaven and love on earth. The love of Dido and Aeneas is contrary to the will of heaven. The love in heaven is contrary to normal human relationships in love. In sum, Cutts believes, Marlowe here shows his contempt for the authority of heaven: here, he says, is "an implicit scourge of God." It is the unifying force for the whole play. Thus in Cutts' work Dido is seen as part of the whole thrust of Marlowe's work rather than a mere University exercise (pp. 371-4). The following year in the same journal he takes issue with writers who believe the Faustus prologue refers to Dido.<sup>193</sup> Cutts' new interpretation of Dido is carried further in his later longer considerations of Marlowe (see chapter seven).

Discussing sources, Ethel Seaton suggests that Marlowe was well aware of medieval versions of the Aeneas story.<sup>194</sup> Concentrating mainly on

<sup>193</sup> John P. Cutts, "The Marlowe Canon," Notes and Queries, 204 (February 1959), 71-4.

<sup>194</sup> Ethel Seaton, "Marlowe's Light Reading," in Elizabethan and Jacobean Studies Presented to Frank Perry Wilson, ed. Hubert Davis and Helen Gardner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 23.

Aeneas' description of the sack of Troy, she provides parallels between the deviations from Virgil in the Marlowe play and the same lines in Lydgate's Troy Book. She states that the three main elaborations of Virgil in Marlowe's account are similar to Lydgate's versions of the same events. These are the slaying of children, the death of Priam and the opposition and torture of Hecuba. Another, less important, source for Marlowe is Caxton's Eneydos. Marlowe was aware of the conflicting portraits of Aeneas as vile traitor or loyal hero in medieval writings. As Seaton notes, "If Aeneas knew in such dire detail how Priam died, it was because he and Antenor had led Pyrrhus to the king's place of refuge, and had even stood by and consented to the murder" (p. 27). The conflicting possibility of an unheroic Aeneas is suggested tactfully in the play, when Dido says to Aeneas: "Some say Antenor did betray the towne, / Others report 'twas Sinon's perjury;" (II.i.110-11). Much of the gorgeous imagery in the play comes from Richard Coeur de Lyon, she says (pp. 27-32).

In the same year, repeating some of the material he had used in his dissertation almost 30 years earlier, Thomas Pearce reviews the evidence used by various experts to date the play.<sup>195</sup> Dido displays much more skill in technical stage-craft than does Tamburlaine, he argues. Costuming, stage directions via dialogue, properties and settings all point to experience in staging plays. "It is inconceivable that he should have written the Dido play before the Tamburlaine plays, which are almost devoid of the arts of stage technique" (p. 239). Speech length, Pearce says, indicates Dido comes between Tamburlaine and Dr. Faustus, and Marlowe was assisted in his technical

<sup>195</sup> T.M. Pearce, "Evidence for Dating Marlowe's Tragedy of Dido," in Studies in the English Renaissance Drama, ed. Josephine W. Bennett, Oscar Cargill and Vernon Hall (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1959), pp. 231-37.

knowledge by that "old hand" Thomas Kyd when they shared a chamber in 1591. Pearce cites similarities to Kyd's work. Marlowe may well have translated the books of the Aeneid during his college days, Pearce concludes, but the preparation for the stage came in his middle writing period, perhaps 1591. (p. 247).

In a development of Cutts' earlier work Eugene M. Waith emphasizes the importance to the rest of the action of the introductory scene in Dido.<sup>196</sup> To anyone familiar with Virgil's epic, the initial scene startles the audience and "we no longer know what to expect." This unexpected opening achieves a number of things, including the suggestion of a new look at an old story, Waith asserts. Its main point is to show how dependent on the whims of the aloof gods are the human protagonists.

Waith points out a series of parallels. Jupiter dandles Ganymede on his knee and promises him treats. Thus too Venus lures Ascanius with promises. Then Dido takes Cupid in her lap and speaks of love. Finally Dido offers Aeneas luxury in return for his love. Preceded by the indulging of three boys, the effect is to throw emphasis on the power of infatuation rather than the power of Aeneas. This emphasis appropriately places Dido in the centre of the play. Dido by this means becomes analogous to Jupiter. "What is merely pastime for Jupiter, however, is fatal for her, and thus the comparison of comic and tragic infatuation may lead to a sombre reflection on human, as opposed to divine, existence" (p. 80).

In his study of the set speech in Marlovian drama, Wolfgang Clemen echoes Pearce in saying he is inclined to agree with Tucker Brooke that

<sup>196</sup> Eugene M. Waith, "Marlowe and the Jades of Asia," in Shakespeare's Contemporaries: Modern Studies in English Renaissance Drama, ed. Max Bluestone and Norman Rabkin (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961), pp. 79-80.

while Dido undoubtedly dates from university days it was probably revised late in his life. Dido's extravagant promises are similar to those of Tamburlaine in both content and style. On the other hand Dido's final attempt to hold Aeneas is very different from Marlowe's earlier style and is similar to the writing of Edward II. Dido's words "rise immediately out of the situation, and the fact of Aeneas' presence is conveyed in every emotion and every movement implied in her speech." The free and direct handling of the "richly modulated blank verse" of the final scenes is far removed from the tirades of Tamburlaine, he says.<sup>197</sup> (These opinions are directly opposed by H.J. Oliver in 1968.)

On another tack, Robert Y. Turner deals briefly with aspects of the lament in Dido. "If we assume that it is Marlowe's earliest play, we see that he established the pattern for all the succeeding climactic laments by later Dido's." When Dido learns that Aeneas has left, she engages in a series of dreams in an attempt to avoid reality. Then in Senecan fashion she "sees" Aeneas' ship wrecked and her love washed back to shore. Following the old division of the lament, Dido then shifts from dreams to action, ordering the building of a fire. Turner compares this sequence of actions to similar ones in Tamburlaine, Faustus and Edward II to exemplify Marlowe's use of the lament. "Marlowe consciously builds his tragedies upon contrast, dramatizing the heights vividly so that the fall carries a full impact."<sup>198</sup> Turner mentions Clemen's work of the previous year.

<sup>197</sup> Wolfgang Clemen, English Tragedy Before Shakespeare: The Development of Dramatic Speech, trans. T.S. Dorsch (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1961), pp. 161-2.

<sup>198</sup> Robert Y. Turner, "Pathos and the Corboduac Tradition, 1560-90," Huntington Library Quarterly, 25 (1961-62), 117-20.

As late as 1962, Leo Kirschbaum excludes Dido from his collection of Marlowe's plays because "Marlowe's share is not clear."<sup>199</sup> On the other hand, in a study of Nashe the same year G.R. Hibbard also omits Dido, saying "an examination of the play leads to the conclusion that Nashe's share in it can have amounted to little or nothing."<sup>200</sup>

In 1962 a festschrift in honour of Hardin Craig contained three articles, by Don Cameron Allen, Clifford Leech and Irving Ribner, dealing at least in part with Dido. Discussing Marlowe's Dido against the background of traditional views of her, Allen says that over 1500 years Dido developed a dual reputation as the historical founder of Carthage who died to defend it and the lover invented by Virgil, with her tragically amorous career.<sup>201</sup> He reviews her reputation from Justin through Virgil and Ovid, Servius, Macrobius, Ausonius, Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Chaucer and others. He notes that almost forty dramatists have written plays on the Dido legend but "to my knowledge no playwright of the Renaissance used the historical queen ... it was Virgil's Dido who took the fancy of poets" (p. 60).

The three most important plays written about her before Marlowe were by the Italian writers Cinthio, Dolce and Jodelle, Allen points out. He discusses these plays in some detail and then turns to Marlowe, whose play "has been curiously unprized by critics partly because they do not know where in the Marlovian chronicle it belongs and partly because it seems

<sup>199</sup> Leo Kirschbaum, ed., The Plays of Christopher Marlowe (Cleveland and New York: Meridian, 1962), p. 9.

<sup>200</sup> G.R. Hibbard, Thomas Nashe: A Critical Introduction (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 86.

<sup>201</sup> Don Cameron Allen, "Marlowe's Dido and the Tradition," in Essays on Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hosley (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1962), pp. 55-68.

not to move in the great swinging orbits of the universal tragedies" (p. 64). He believes critics have failed to understand Marlowe's intent. Allen dismisses criticism that Dido is an inept portrait of a woman, saying that Marlowe is essentially a rhetorician. In his sexless declamations it is indeed difficult to tell the men from the men, let alone the women from the men, Allen asserts. He agrees with others that Dido's expressions of love are more like those of an adolescent than of a seasoned widow. "In spite of these defects, she cannot be shoved away with a customary statement; she must be observed within the formula, good or bad, that the poet has assumed" (p. 65).

It is Aeneas, he argues, who is the difficult character, first humble, then loving, then eschewing love to seek "Fame's Immortal House." He cravenly denies his first attempt to flee, declares himself an iron man; and then falls into Dido's arms. Marlowe, Allen believes, looked down on "pius Aeneas." The gods, too, are something less than god-like. Jupiter's dalliance, his neglect of duty until moved by disapproving Venus, the undignified squabbling of Venus and Juno—all these are in keeping with "Marlowe's usual denigration of the divine." This emphasizes the irony of Aeneas' action in forsaking love at the gods' behest. The play, says Allen, states as clearly as any of his others the Marlovian belief that "men are surely better than their gods and have only one mortal weakness; they lend their ears and then their hearts to the advice and direction of the silly hulks they have themselves created" (p. 68).

In the same collection of essays, Irving Ribner takes a different view of Aeneas.<sup>202</sup> To him Aeneas is a superman marching towards his destined

<sup>202</sup> Irving Ribner, "Marlowe's 'Tragicke Glasse'," in Essays on Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hosley (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1962), pp. 97-100.



goal, with only a momentary weakness threatening to keep him from his duty. Ribner believes Marlowe developed Iarbus far beyond his portrayal in Virgil in order to use him as the representative of male passion. Although the play is about a woman who kills herself for love, the larger context is of a hero who will not let love stand in the way of his important role. This theme of the human cost of power is a constant in Marlowe's works, he contends. The play, therefore, is not a tragedy. It deals with human achievement. Aeneas succeeds, and if it is hard for him to leave Carthage and to throw off the weakness of love, this action only emphasizes the difficulty of his role: "the hero must rise above the human feelings of the ordinary man" (p. 99). Dido and Tamburlaine thus both use the same theme. Ribner disagrees with the belief of Pearce (1959) that the two plays were widely separated in time. "Taken together they represent the first stage of his development, a stage still far removed from tragedy yet showing faint signs of the matrix from which tragedy is to emerge" (p. 99).

Arguing against critics who deny Marlowe a capacity for humour, Clifford Leech writes in the same collection that in Dido and also in Hero and Leander the humour differs from that found in the other works. "Although both stories end in death, the dominant tone is that of a gentle and delighting humor: the affairs of men and gods are seen as a spectacle engagingly absurd."<sup>203</sup> In Dido the humans are always subordinate, in thrall to the gods' bidding. But the gods, copying the patterns of the humans with whom they interact, are also trivial. The initial exposition of Jupiter's

<sup>203</sup> Clifford Leech, "Marlowe's Humor," in Essays on Shakespeare and Elizabethan Drama in Honor of Hardin Craig, ed. Richard Hooley (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1962), pp. 70-74.

infatuation with Ganymede sets the tone. Leech observes that Marlowe departs from Virgil in his account of the sack of Troy when he tells of how Aeneas abandons three women. This speech prepares for the abandonment of Dido. After solemnly vowing faithfulness, he behaves in trivial fashion in his unworthy attempts to deceive Dido and, apparently, abandon his son. Dido, too, does not escape Marlowe's denigration. "She has not much reticence or dignity as love comes on her, and she is as lavish with gifts as an insecure lover can be" (p. 73). Her arrogance echoes Tamburlaine's yet her actions are those of a besotted woman, not as she claims to be "The Goddess of all these." (IV.iv.77) Her ending is stately but the rapidly consecutive suicides hint at the comic. In addition to this indirect humour, says Leech, there is direct comedy in the scene of the nurse and Cupid, in which Dido's love is parodied. Gods, masters and servants are all "comically affected by the interrelation" (p. 75). In an essay published the following year Leech adds that Dido is the only Marlowe play which does not contain a "sick giant." Instead, in this play the gods and the humans are all puny, objects of contempt.<sup>204</sup>

Dramatic irony, however, is a consistent device in all of Marlowe's works, according to Douglas Cole.<sup>205</sup> Dido is no exception. The sorrows of the main characters are transmuted from the Virgilian account specifically to heighten their dramatic effectiveness. Typical, he observes, is the opening scene of mourning by Aeneas for Troy, and Aeneas' later remarks to

<sup>204</sup> Leech, When Writing Becomes Absurd and The Acting of Shakespeare and Marlowe (Boulder: University of Colorado, 1963), p. 29.

<sup>205</sup> Douglas Cole, Suffering and Evil in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 75-86.

Dido of his great sorrow which "makes it all the more inevitable that he should later be able to break the personal tie of love for Dido in response to his higher duty" (p. 78). In the final scenes, it is Dido, not Aeneas, who is the tragic figure, a victim of love and of the gods. Cole states that Marlowe reworks the Virgilian parting from one in which Dido burst in on Aeneas in a rage to one in which Dido is at first unsure and only as the scene proceeds takes on the heightened emotions which dramatized the parting. She is "less mad, less vengeful, and more human and pitiable" than in Virgil (p. 80). The extravagant images of Dido emphasize the ironic tragedy of her situation. Cole compares her final lines to those of Faustus. Imagery as well as plot heighten the irony, he says, citing Dido's image of flames and burning arms when she is at her happiest with Aeneas and her prophetic "It is Aeneas' frown that ends my days." (IV.iv.120) Cole, like Leech, remarks on the humour in the play. The irony is counterpointed by comedy. The gods are treated with levity. As well, Dido's first attempts to fight her love for Aeneas present her as a comic victim, just as later she becomes a tragic victim. Analogous comedy is contained in the nurse scene (pp. 80-85).

"It would be an over-simplification, though one not far from the truth, to say that the human suffering and destruction in this play, the evil that befalls the characters, can all be traced to passionate love," Cole concludes. Even the fall of Troy is the result of love. Marlowe emphasizes both human responsibility and sporting gods in his tale of destruction by love. All three suicides, including the two who are not victims of Cupid, "stem from an agonizing and unbearable sense of loss" (pp. 85-6).

In the same year G. Wilson Knight said the essence of drama lies in

the tension between normal experience and "another order of being; the dark against the light." Marlowe faced this Elizabethan conjunction of light and dark with an honesty that was in fact too unflinching. As a result, he gives revelation and truth but fails to provide catharsis. Marlowe's homosexual interest, Wilson adds, is suggested in the Jupiter-Ganymede scene, as well as in Hero and Leander and Edward II.<sup>206</sup> That year too Inna Koskenniemi observed the emphasis in Marlowe's plays of such usages as the compound adjective, interjection, conversion as a means of word-formation and other such considerations of a lexical nature.<sup>207</sup>

More than his contemporaries, Marlowe reflected in his plays his own changing and developing vision of man's place in the universe, Irving Ribner declares in his 1963 edition of the plays. But Marlowe's concept of tragedy developed after he had written Dido. "It is far short of tragedy, despite the death of its heroine."<sup>208</sup> Dido exemplifies Marlowe's first stage of change and development, from Christian contemplation to pagan sexuality and to politics and war. The play itself is a static series of pageants, he says, but there are tragic implications in the human cost of Aeneas' obedience. The Christian humanist position is opposed by this play with its declaration that the denial of love is a legitimate concern of the gods, and that the gods are "capricious, quarrelsome and cunning" (p. xxix).

In a different interpretation of the material, David M. Rogers states

<sup>206</sup> G. Wilson Knight, The Golden Labyrinth: A Study of British Drama (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1962), pp. xii, 54, 57-8.

<sup>207</sup> Inna Koskenniemi, Studies in the Vocabulary of English Drama, 1550-1600, excluding Shakespeare and Ben Jonson (Turku: Turun Yliopisto, 1962), passim.

<sup>208</sup> Irving Ribner, ed. The Complete Plays of Christopher Marlowe (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1963), p. xxv.

that love and honour in conflict is the basic theme of Dido. "Love compels man to deny his role in the design of fate and seek only immediate pleasure."<sup>209</sup> Rogers examines the changes in the play from the Virgilian source as they bear upon the theme of love versus honour. First the gods establish the conflict, with Venus playing the role later to be expanded by Dido, both impatient with the vagaries of fate. Aeneas arrives in Carthage and thinks of Troy. His moral confusion leads him to wonder if he should found a new Troy in Carthage rather than the destiny-decreed Rome. Unlike Virgil's version, where Dido sins against honour by neglecting her vow to her dead husband and her queenly duty, there is no such conflict for Dido in the Marlowe play. She is a dramatic contrast to the rejection of love by Aeneas. Marlowe's Dido assumes the romantic optimism of Virgil's Anna, who in Marlowe plays the part of romantic failure. She and Iarbas act as commentators on Dido's hapless love. Aeneas' indecision has no counterpart in Virgil. Unable to accept the destiny of the gods, Dido kills herself. Dido, Anna and Iarbas are bound together by love; they perish. Aeneas is bound to fate; he lives. Rogers declares that at the end the passionate die. Aeneas, honour-bound, survives (pp. 3-7).

In another comment on structure, Robert Y. Turner remarks that the use of the induction in a causal relationship to the events of the drama appeared only in a few plays in the 1580's and 90's. One of these is Dido, where Cupid and Venus reign over the queen. Marlowe and others used the induction to stress a malevolent universe, he writes.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>209</sup> David M. Rogers, "Love and Honor in Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage," Greyfriar Lectures, 6 (1963), 3.

<sup>210</sup> Robert Y. Turner, "The Causal Induction in Some Elizabethan Plays," Studies in Philology, 60 (1963), 183-90.

The following year, 1964, marked the 400th anniversary of the birth of Marlowe. It also of course marked the same anniversary for his more famous fellow playwright and attention to Marlowe was somewhat less than if he had been born in another year. The year did however result in a number of major articles, two books and a special edition of the Tulane Drama Review devoted entirely to Marlowe. Dido shared in the attention.

In an article on Edward II Leonora Leet Brodwin discusses the tragic treatment of Dido's love as a means to better appreciation of the tragic quality of the love of Edward.<sup>211</sup> While she has Aeneas, Dido is alternatively honeyed and venomous, maintaining her sovereign will and angered when it is suggested the citizens might object to her private whims. She contrives to imprison Aeneas with her love. Only when he has actually gone does she fully understand the meaning of her loss. "Dido's tragedy lies in the fact that, while her insistence on personal sovereignty has destroyed her love, it is the destruction of this love which makes her sovereign life no longer meaningful" (p. 142). The proposition here, while it may fit Professor Brodwin's thesis about Edward II, seems to bear little relation to Dido's tragedy. Aeneas forsook Dido because of the "higher" call of destiny. There is little in the play to suggest his motive was to escape a domineering, shrewish sovereign, except his one self-justifying excuse of "female drudgery."

In his 1964 book on Marlowe, A.L. Rowse lists the mysteries of Dido.<sup>212</sup> Was it ever performed? Did Nashe really contribute anything to the play? (He points out that Nashe's name is added in small italics on the title-page,

<sup>211</sup> Leonora Leet Brodwin, "Edward II: Marlowe's Culminating Treatment of Love," Journal of English Literary History, 31 (1964), 137-55.

<sup>212</sup> A.L. Rowse, Christopher Marlowe (London: Macmillan, 1964), pp. 44-49.

far less prominently than Marlowe's.) In his customary sweeping and colourfully imaginative fashion Professor Rowse states "It is likely enough that they put their heads together over the play, discussed it and enjoyed the naughty strokes in it" (p. 44). The theme of love in the play is from the "female" or "receiving" end. This was evidently what excited Marlowe's sympathy; thus the best poetry in the play involves Dido's passion for Aeneas. Like others, Rowse notes the similarities between Dido's promises to Aeneas and Shakespeare's description of Cleopatra's barge, and goes on to point out the similarity in theme between the two plays--the conflict of public duty and private pleasure. "It points to the fundamental difference of temperamental sympathies between Shakespeare and Marlowe that, whereas with the one we have the feeling that the world has been well lost for love, with the other politics and power win." The similarity between Aeneas' description of the fall of Troy and the Players' scene in Hamlet he attributes to Shakespeare's "fabulous aural memory" (pp. 47, 49). (No proof provided.)

In a major study of Marlowe marking the 400th anniversary of his birth, J.B. Steane devotes 32 pages to Dido, a play he feels has been unjustly neglected.<sup>213</sup> Much of the chapter is summary and comparisons with Antony and Cleopatra and other of Shakespeare's plays. Marlowe, Steane states, put the best of himself into the play and although it contains limitations that would prevent a successful stage revival, it is, in Drayton's words, "All air and fire." "The energy and fire shine out brilliantly, in a more admirable way than in Tamburlaine and without the destructive bitterness of the other works" (p. 29).

<sup>213</sup> J.B. Steane, Marlowe: A Critical Study (Cambridge: University Press, 1964), pp. 29-61, 343, 346.

Marlowe's energy is at its best in Dido, Steane maintains. While immature when compared to Shakespeare's more famous work, it nevertheless contains all the same delight, enthusiasm, romantic relish and respect and pride in man. A review of the points of similarity between Dido and Cleopatra include famous lovers in world-shaking situations, the conflict between desire and duty and a counterbalancing comic note. Both dramatists use the same vast canvas. Steane compares many lines and situations in the two plays to emphasize the similarities. An example:

Cleo. I'll set a bourn how far to be belov'd.  
Ant. Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.  
(I.i.17-18)

Jupiter. Why are not all the Gods at thy command  
And heaven and earth the bounds of thy delight?  
(I.i.30-1)

One of the play's strengths, he says, is that it is not intoxicated by its own eloquence, as is Tamburlaine, even though its eloquence is fine. "The imagery is not an embroidery or an ornament, but the substance of the creation, the dramatist's essential means of expression; and even in Elizabethan drama this Shakespearean working is not common" (p. 33).

The opening scene of love between Jupiter and Ganymede sets the theme for the more normal love of Dido and Aeneas and the counterpointing humour of the old nurse's love for Cupid, just as doomed as that of the protagonists. Dido and Cleopatra both exemplify two inimical worlds, the "timents" of love on the one hand and the reality of divine duty on the other. Yet the darkest tragedy of the play is not Dido's death, Steane believes, but rather the sack of Troy. Steane too terms the description of this event a lament, adding that the savage violation of dignity is as much Marlovian as is his air and fire (pp. 34-42).



Yet the play is not all high drama. There is much that is human and humane and Marlowe combines with some success the difficult blend of the heroic and the prosaic, Steane points out. He joins with me in finding "Gentle Achates, reach the Tinder box," the line chosen so frequently by critics as proof of Marlowe's lack of humour, not nearly so inept or inadvertently amusing as so many seem to find it. As he observes, this is a stage play, and stage action calls for movement which changes moods. He does, however, find the humour in the play, especially the treatment of the gods, blundering (pp. 43-47). But the great weakness of the play, Steane feels, lies in the fifth act which in the last scene is "quite fatal" (p. 48). Like Eliot before him, he believes Marlowe was in too much of a hurry, his willingness to do little more than quote Virgil, as contrasted to his earlier elaborations, being evidence. Dido's final frantic preparations with their businesslike methods, the rapid piling up of suicides, greatly detract from what should have been a scene of great tragedy. Steane makes no attempt to explain this abrupt ending. In his conclusion he objects to the speculations about Marlowe, specifically rejecting both Kocher and Battenhouse for their interpretation of plays on the basis of biographical preconception. The most striking thing about Marlowe's work, he states, is the range and changes within it: "there never was an author less static" (pp. 343, 346).

Steane belongs to the textual analysis school of criticism which rejects the idea of studying the author's life as a means of interpreting his works, or of his work to interpret the author. In this view he is directly opposed by the biographical and historical critics who in Dido's case have had a most energetic spokesman in Paul Kocher. Another of the Kocher bent, Herman Peschman, lacerated Steane's book in an article, published the same year in

English.<sup>214</sup> He says that Steane is unsatisfying because "apart from an overdose of pedantry and unnecessary summarizing," he carries too far his attempts to dissociate the man and the work. Claiming that Marlowe's work (except Edward II) shows a narrow range of characters which therefore must indicate something of the author himself, Peschmann writes "If it is objected that this is not a literary but an historical concern, one may counter that it does enable us to see the degree of subjectivity in Marlowe's work, and more importantly, the quality of the subjective elements in relation to the rest in any given play" (pp. 87-88). Peschmann believes Shakespeare and Marlowe collaborated; like Steane, he notes the similarities between Dido and Antony and Cleopatra. He also cites other Marlowe-Shakespeare similarities (p. 89).

During Marlowe's quadricentennial, The Tulane Drama Review (since renamed The Drama Review) devoted an entire issue to Marlowe, with articles by such well-known scholars as Levin, Harbage, Waith, Leech and Ribner. Writing of Marlowe's reputation Levin said "his strongest claim is bound to be the fact that he did so much more than anyone else" to bring the Shakespearean context into being. The distinguishing difference between the two, he adds, is that Shakespeare is everyman but Marlowe is always himself. Dido receives only passing mention from Levin, in a section discussing Marlowe's purported homosexuality.<sup>215</sup>

In fact, contrasting sharply with the York Symposium on Marlowe only four years later, the Tulane Drama Review issue slights Dido. It contains

<sup>214</sup> Herman Peschmann, "Christopher Marlowe, 1564-1593," English, 15 (Autumn 1964) pp. 85-9.

<sup>215</sup> Harry Levin, "Marlowe Today," Tulane Drama Review, 8 (Summer 1964), pp. 22-31.

three articles devoted to Dr. Faustus, two each to Tamburlaine and Edward II and one to The Jew of Malta but only short references to Dido in two articles and a slightly longer consideration in a general article by Jocelyn Powell.<sup>216</sup>

Discussing spectacle, Powell gives as a "beautiful example of the extension of a verbal action into an emblem" the fourth act scene in which Dido orders that Aeneas' sails and tackling be removed from his ship to prevent his leaving, then accuses these inanimate objects of betraying her. (IV.iv.151-158) Powell points out that Dido's plight is emblemized by the tackling which recall Aeneas' shipwreck, as well as the net of love in which she is entwined. "The relationship created in the speech between the character and the objects that surround her, makes the entire stage-picture expressive of her passion" (pp. 199-200). Imagery throughout the play emphasizes both the compulsiveness of Dido's love and its irresponsibility. The banquet scene and the hunting scene are examples. Her death draws together reminiscences of previous scenes to become an image of the entire action (pp. 201-3). This was the only mention of Dido of any note in the Tulane anniversary edition.

Irving Ribner on the quadricentennial of the two playwrights makes several comparisons between their different, in fact diametrically opposed, attitudes to life.<sup>217</sup> From Dido he observes that Marlowe believes that kings exercise their power in a hostile world in which absolute power must be used, while Shakespeare's kings must learn to exercise their power in a world of "degree and order in which the divine presence is always felt." Marlowe's heroes can, like the Guise, become monsters. Ribner attributes this to

<sup>216</sup> Jocelyn Powell, "Marlowe's Spectacle," Tulane Drama Review, 8 (Summer 1964), pp. 195-210.

<sup>217</sup> Irving Ribner, "Marlowe and Shakespeare," Shakespeare Quarterly, 15, No. 2 (Spring 1964), 41-53.

Marlowe's "alienation from common human concerns" as evidenced in the treatment of love in Dido as compared to Romeo and Juliet. In Dido love is a weakness which briefly beguiles Aeneas from his true destiny as a superhero, and which is of little consequence in light of his mission to found Rome. Shakespeare, on the other hand, sees love as "an all-embracing commitment" (p. 44). This conclusion is similar to that of A.L. Rowse in his book on Marlowe published the same year (see page 86).

The actual printing of the first edition of Dido is studied in Robert Welsh's 1964 dissertation on the publishing of Marlowe's plays. He uses methods of analytical bibliography to affirm the printer, date of printing, the order of the formes through the press, the number of compositors involved and allied questions. He concludes that Dido was the work of only one compositor. It was the only play published by the Widow Orwin. The title page of the 1594 printing in its entirety reads "The Tragedie of Dido/Queen of Carthage./ Played by the Children of her/ Maiesties Chappell./ Written by Christopher Marlowe, and/ Thomas Nash. Gent./

ACTORS.-

Iupiter.	Ascanius.
Ganimed.	Dido.
Venus.	Anna.
Cupid.	Achates.
Iuno.	Ilioneus.
Mercurie, or Hermes.	Iarbas.
Aeneas.	Cloanthes.
	Sergestus.

(device) / At London, /Printed by the Widdowe Orwin, For Thomas Woodcocke, and / are to be solde at his shop, in Paules Church-yard, at / the signe of the blacke Beare. 1594."

The information contained on this page is all that is known about the early history of the play. Studies of the history of the acting companies,

actors and theatrical records of the time have so far provided nothing more.<sup>218</sup>

In a brief mention in a revised edition of his analysis of Tamburlaine Battenhouse stated his belief that Dido, like Zehocrate, is intended to represent the essence of earthly beauty, endowed with nature's gifts, but devoid of religion or conscience.<sup>219</sup> An inadvertently comic note was also contributed during the celebration of this joint 400th birthdate. In the venerable Notes and Queries in 1964, F.N. Lees takes issue somewhat belatedly with an argument by J.M. Nosworthy in the Review of English Studies of 1948, in which Nosworthy suggested that Virgil's Aeneid was a source of and influence on Shakespeare's The Tempest. Lees argues that Dido provides a closer link. He finds such incidents as the safe landings, the pageants, the re-uniting of shipmates and the aerial messengers are similarities between Marlowe and Shakespeare rather than Shakespeare and Virgil. He adds "Aeneas and Dido could have floated into Shakespeare's mind as being so unlike Ferdinand and Miranda." Such a "connection" as the latter statement could be made, presumably, between almost any two works. Professor Lees' conjectures add little to the field of Marlowe-Shakespeare comparisons, but his absurd remark provides a little light relief in the succession of critical hypotheses.<sup>220</sup> Thus concludes the spate of 400th anniversary tributes to Marlowe.

<sup>218</sup> Robert Ford Welsh, The Printing of the Early Editions of Marlowe's Plays, Diss. Duke University 1964, pp. iv, 74-5.

<sup>219</sup> Roy W. Battenhouse, Marlowe's "Tamburlaine": A Study in Renaissance Moral Philosophy (1941 ; rpt., corrected; Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1964), p. 167.

<sup>220</sup> F.N. Lees, "Dido, Queen of Carthage and The Tempest," Notes and Queries, 209 (1964), 147-49.

In the years from 1950 to Marlowe's quadricentennial both attitude to and depth of thought about Dido continued to change and develop. Older concrete problems remained unsolved but scholars increasingly turned their attention to more complex matters. The themes and philosophies developed in Dido were observed and discussed in greater length and detail. Comparison of divine and human conditions, the worthiness of the gods, love, the human cost of power and the implications underlying these themes were considered with some care. The motivations and character of the personae received almost their first analysis. The puzzles of the complex relationship of the gods, of Dido and Aeneas, of man's place in the universe were in part decoded. Technique was discussed with respect. It was observed almost for the first time that there is humour in the play, and the question of Marlowe's suspected homosexuality was examined. All in all, a seminal period, and the subjects of the scholarship, analysis and interpretation initiated during this period of heightened interest in Marlowe are still being developed at the present time.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Contemporary Comment -- 1966 to 1976

The York Symposium on Marlowe in 1968 was an occasion of increased respect for Dido, as the editor of the published papers commented. This new respect has resulted in an increase in both number and length of considerations of the play. Recent years have also seen a larger number of dissertations dealing in part or in whole with Dido. This fact will undoubtedly mean more attention and publication in future years as these younger scholars take their place in the academic world.

One such dissertation, analyzing the Troy legends, devoted two chapters to Dido.<sup>221</sup> "A film of dissatisfaction dulls the luster of the many Marlovian jewels" in this play, writes Leonard Mendelsohn in a study supervised by Marc Eccles (p. 180). The theme dictates a narrative style which blurs the dramatic presentation, he believes. Dramaturgic effect seems mechanically grafted onto the telling of the story, with little inter-play between the characters. The main reference is to the past and future of the Trojans; the present is abridged to these considerations. "Dido and Aeneas are never alone in the moment, but are forever a part of a tradition," Mendelsohn notes. "The tale of Troy refuses to remain in the background" (pp. 183-4). He then provides a close analysis of the play and its source, emphasizing the subordination of dialogue, action, development and perspective to the needs of the narrative. Drama takes over only during the explication of Aeneas' dilemma during the last two acts in scenes. "almost like another play altogether" (p. 240), as Aeneas fluctuates between

<sup>221</sup> Leonard Richard Mendelsohn, The Legends of Troy in English Renaissance Drama, Diss. University of Wisconsin 1966, pp. 180-249.

being narrator and character. "In many ways Marlowe has been more successful than Shakespeare in placing the matter in dramatic frame," Mendelsöhn says (p. 248), but ultimately founders, as do all the Troy chroniclers in drama, on the same narrative rock.

Two key scenes of the play are discussed by two scholars in the year 1965-66. Discussing the first scene of Dido, L.C. Knights refers to it as a curious prologue that paints a picture of indulged infancy and of unlimited power achieved without effort. This concept first explored in Dido enters largely into the "enormous fantasy" of similar kind shown in Tamburlaine and Dr. Faustus.<sup>222</sup> In a lengthy hymn of praise reprinted from a lecture delivered at Leeds, Robert Speaight quotes Aeneas' description of the fall of Troy and adds "Ask yourself if Milton could have done better--or if he could have done it as well." The description, he says, is epic poetry; there is nothing like it in Shakespeare except when in Hamlet the First Player's speech deliberately borrows from Dido. The play is a tragedy of free will struggling against determinism in scenes irradiated with irony and humour.<sup>223</sup>

In a new approach, G.S. Rousseau in 1968 considers the play as rhetoric rather than poetry.<sup>224</sup> To do so, he first reviews the history of the play and the general modern agreement on the excellence of some of its poetry. (He notes the disagreement of John Bakeless.) He then points out the suc-

<sup>222</sup> L.C. Knights, Further Explorations (London: Chatto & Windus, 1965), p. 85.

<sup>223</sup> Robert Speaight, "Marlowe: The Forerunner," Review of English Literature, 7 (1966), 39-40.

<sup>224</sup> G.S. Rousseau, "Marlowe's Dido and a Rhetoric of Love," English Miscellany, 19 (1968), 25-49.



cess of its effective blank verse, which had much greater influence upon contemporary writers than that of Norton and Sackville's Gorbuduc. Although Gorbuduc contains much verbal intricacy, especially repetition and parallelism, Marlowe achieved his dramatic effect without much use of these devices (pp. 25-6).

"How then does Marlowe achieve these dramatic effects in his verse?" he asks, pointing out that critics have never more than touched on the question. Most scholars, he says, have concentrated upon metrics and the regular iambic decasyllabic line. Rousseau believes more attention should be paid to rhetoric. Dido, he avers, reflects the work of a rhetorical poet, as well as a young poet, both in the quality of the verse and the structure of the play. Study of this subject reveals more clearly how Marlowe's line was not only "mighty" but also so dramatic that it enhanced the structural clarity of his plots (pp. 27-8).

"Marlowe the rhetorician is important when we consider the way Marlowe the poet adapted his theme of love to the drama," Rousseau asserts. The playwright is interested primarily in the world of his characters, rather than the idea of love itself. To dramatize this world he found verse forms and speech were more important than ideas. As he was writing a play, rather than a translation, he probably tried to use persuasive techniques of the orator based on Cicero and Aristotle, a tradition shared with his audience. The question of just what Marlowe wished to persuade his audience to is, however, not easily answered, Rousseau observes. Dido, the incarnation of Pathos, tries to persuade Aeneas of her love. Aeneas, on the other hand, tries to convince Dido of his worthiness, so he can enlist her aid in his mission. Thus he must convince Dido of the importance of his God-given task.

Rhetoricians from the time of the Greeks had given his type of persuasion the name Ethos, as they did Pathos to Dido. The third division of rhetoric, Logos, appeal of reason, is little seen here. (pp. 30-35).

In an attempt to evaluate Marlowe in today's terms, Barry Phillips points out that the playwright's "heady brew is not everyone's cup of tea." Marlowe appealed to the Romantic critics for the same reasons that he was ignored by Neo-Classicists. This same headiness accounts for Marlowe's appeal to critics in the twentieth century.<sup>225</sup> Although his dissertation deals chiefly with The Jew of Malta, Tamburlaine I and Edward II, Phillips does comment on Dido's wonderfully human qualities and the sensuously-detailed "pastoral setpieces, at once exquisitely lyrical and delicately ironic" (pp. 184, 190). He also notes the homosexual theme, with its quality of "ironic needling," an attitude that does not appear in the homosexuality of Edward II (pp. 206-8).

The year 1968 also saw the publication of the proceedings of the symposium on Marlowe at York University in England. Dido, as editor Brian Morris remarked, receives respectful attention. It is discussed in three articles.

In one of them, Brian Gibbons says little of use has been written about Dido as a play (he excepts Steane, Leach and Seaton). He attempts to rectify this lack, emphasizing the fact that the play was a court drama calling for boy actors. He deems it "fine enough to deserve the closest and most sympathetic critical attention."<sup>226</sup> In the court tradition, the play must be

<sup>225</sup> Barry Phillips, Marlowe: A Revaluation, Diss. The University of Connecticut 1968, p. iv.

<sup>226</sup> Brian Gibbons, "Unstable Proteus: The Tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage," in Christopher Marlowe, ed. Brian Morris (London: Ernest Benn, 1968), pp. 27-46.

considered an "independent" as it does not end with glorious tributes to Elizabeth, but rather with the tragic and triumphant death of a queen. As in Hero and Leander, the style is mock heroic, both influenced, Gibbons believes, by the style of Arthur Golding's translations of Ovid. Court drama mirrored the theatrical nature of the court itself, demanding elaborate if emblematic scenery--in Dido, a cave, trees, a pavilion, clouds, a throne, a city and a pyre, as well as flamboyant costuming (pp. 33-37).

The style is suited to the highly-skilled boy actors, who were capable of complex patterns of exchange. Gibbons summarizes the play with the concept of boy actors in mind. The controversial description of the sack of Troy he terms a deliberate and "disturbing mixture of shocked compassion, and insane humour" (p. 40). This key scene shows Marlowe's Aeneas as a combination of the portraits by Virgil and Lydgate, a hero-villain and "consequently radically unstable, Protean; a hero, a wretched and impotent coward, a tragic victim of destiny" (p. 41). Gibbons compares the play to Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra, and says Dido reveals an Aeneas with a disintegrating personality collapsing into impotence (pp. 42-45).

He makes the original point that the play is not a unified heroic tragedy and that to attempt to evaluate it on that basis is vain. It is, rather, a play dealing with a variety of attitudes to eroticism. "It is this multiplicity which we are called on to appreciate and which finally determines the special quality of Marlowe's achievement [in exploring] the Protean nature of personality and identity under the stress of passion" (p. 45).

At the same symposium J.R. Mulryne and Stephen Fender used Dido as an example of a paradigm of Marlowe's plays.<sup>227</sup> "Contradictory views of ex-

<sup>227</sup> J.R. Mulryne and Stephen Fender, "Marlowe and the 'Comic Distance'," in Christopher Marlowe, ed. Morris, pp. 49-52.

perience are brought together and left unresolved: the ideal and the common sense; the hint of a comprehensive order and the rejection of all order; the socially concerned and the individualist; the moral and the libertine; metaphor and fact," they point out (p. 50). All of this necessary contradiction produces Marlowe's intended picture of an absurd world. Marlowe uses "comic" devices to achieve the picture of this absurdity. Examples in Dido are the unsettling portraits of Aeneas in his King Priam speech; the undignified gods contrasted with Venus' speech about Aeneas, Jupiter's comments on Rome and Aeneas' safe arrival.

Mulryne and Fender cite the divergent opinions of Leech and Steane concerning the humour of the play. This divergence proves, they suggest, that another approach must be taken to resolve these differences, in this and other Marlowe plays. Their new approach they term the "sympathy/withdrawal" alternation. Dido, they believe, fails because it is not consistent, as the later plays are, in using the technique. Marlowe still lacked the deft control of the contrary interpretations available for every action, a control he was able to exhibit more skilfully in Tamburlaine (pp. 51-2).

In an article on Hero and Leander in the same collection, editor Brian Morris discusses the greater attention given to homosexual than to heterosexual love in the poem. "This preoccupation with unnatural love has its analogues in the plays." In Dido there is of course the opening scene between Jupiter and Ganymede. Unlike most of the rest of the play, this scene bears little resemblance to Virgil. Heterosexual love, as exemplified by Dido, is on the other hand "hard, jewelled and cold." Morris comments on Dido's bribes, but fails to notice the parallel bribes of Jupiter.<sup>228</sup>

<sup>228</sup> Brian Morris, "Comic Method in Marlowe's 'Hero and Leander'," in Christopher Marlowe, ed. Morris, pp. 127-8.

In a consideration of how staging and properties are used to reinforce the intent in Marlowe's plays, David Zucker says of Dido "At key moments in the play, Marlowe uses properties, stage settings, and character groupings for emblematic purposes in either reinforcing or ironically undercutting theme and character" (p. 14). Zucker uses the first scene as an example, with powerful Jupiter in repose while his power is conveyed by emblematic objects. The most effective combination of image, context and words occurs when Dido, before she kills herself, handles the emblems of her love for Aeneas, he adds. A common Marlovian device, Zucker remarks, is the juxtaposition of verbal and stage images. An example is the contrast between Aeneas' violent description of the sack of Troy and the pastoral tranquillity which follows, with Venus standing over the sleeping Ascanius, the floral images of her speech preparing for the love scenes of Act III. Zucker concludes that Marlowe's emblematic images present both ideas and dramatic action.<sup>229</sup>

In the introduction to his 1968 edition of Dido and Massacre,<sup>230</sup> H.J. Oliver is unwilling to accept the conventional wisdom that Nashe had little or nothing to do with the writing of Dido, but finds that what little evidence there is for dating the play suggests it is an early work. He believes the play may be "a fusion of 95 percent Virgil and 5 percent Lydgate," disagreeing with Ethel Seaton about the importance of the Troy book to the play (p. xxxviii).

<sup>229</sup> David H. Zucker, Stage and Image in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe, Diss. Syracuse University 1968, pp. 14-18.

<sup>230</sup> H.J. Oliver, ed., Dido Queen of Carthage and The Massacre at Paris, The Revels Plays (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1968), pp. xix-xlvi.

Oliver believes that Marlowe must take some of the blame for the widely differing interpretations of Dido, especially in regard to Aeneas' desertion of Dido. There can be little doubt, he states, that Marlowe intended to belittle the gods, but not to belittle the humans. Aeneas' abandonment of three women in Troy was not intended to be unheroic. But Aeneas is no superman. His promises are false; his reasoning is rationalization. Dido may be arrogant, but her love is unshaken: Aeneas wavers. Oliver takes exception to the interpretations of Brodwin, Ribner and Steane in their belief that Marlowe demeaned Dido (pp. xxxix-xliv). In this one must agree with him. The theme of the play, he points out, differs little from Virgil: love lost at the behest of the gods. The difference is that Marlowe has much less respect for the gods, and so the tragedy loses the dignity of destruction by divine wisdom. Rather it is divine politics of a petty nature. The founding of Rome, however, is a worthy plan, even if it means the destruction of Dido. Marlowe suggests a better man than Aeneas would have managed to avoid her destruction (p. xlv). Oliver, however, suggests no alternative action that Marlowe could have provided to avoid this seeming confusion.

The fact that the play was written for children meant Marlowe placed less emphasis on character and more on "purple passages." Oliver tells of seeing the performance of the play by the schoolboys of Southampton in 1964 and finding that the women's parts, as played by boys, convincing but that there was no way in which an immature boy could present Aeneas as a believable hero (p. xxxiii).

Noting that there is, despite some fine poetry, insufficient integration of "words, melody, and dramatic action," Oliver adds: "Nevertheless ... an Elizabethan watching the children of Her Majesty's Chapel acting

Dido might even have been able to predict that English drama would leap ahead now that it had a dramatist who combined with classical knowledge not only poetic genius and a willingness to exploit the theatre as an artistic medium but also a passionate, direct, unbookish response to life" (pp. xxxix-xlvi).

In a review of Oliver's edition of Dido and Massacre, Pearsall disagrees with Oliver's opinion that Aeneas is weak. He believes that in this play Marlowe has gone to great lengths to avoid any easy allocation of sympathies. He presents a portrait of the divided loyalties of Aeneas which "force critical faculties into almost total suspension." Also, Pearsall asks, what are we to make of Dido's love? The play is a mass of ambiguities, and Oliver has failed to grasp the intricate weaving of these irreconcilable ambiguities. Pearsall suggests that this ambiguity, this distancing, indicates mature as well as early work.<sup>231</sup>

Wilbur Sanders comments on the play in a book on Marlowe and Shakespeare printed in 1968. He says Marlowe had an obsessive preoccupation with destruction which gives rise, among other instances, to the dramatic description of the burning of Troy. He also notes that Marlowe uses in both Dido and Edward II the conceit of a "fleeting land" (see Dido IV.lv.134-5) and discusses Marlowe's interest in homosexuality in Dido, Hero and Leander, Edward II and The Massacre at Paris.<sup>232</sup>

<sup>231</sup> L.E.F. Pearsall, "Review of the Oliver Edition of Dido Queen of Carthage and The Massacre at Paris," Review of English Studies, 20 (1969), 209-211.

<sup>232</sup> Wilbur Sanders, The Dramatist and the Received Idea: Studies in the Plays of Marlowe & Shakespeare (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 23, 30, 135.

The following year saw another consideration of the First Player's speech in Hamlet.<sup>233</sup> After reviewing other short echoes of Marlowe in Shakespeare, Clifford Leech devotes the major part of his article to this speech "for of course it was on an occasion in Hamlet that Shakespeare had a piece of Marlowe's writing most strongly in his mind--perhaps indeed open on the table before him" (p. 42). Leech asserts that Shakespeare here eschewed burlesque, which he had to save for the key moment in Act III of the "play-within-a-play" and chose instead pastiche, a method which brings another style to mind but does not mock it. Hamlet's tribute to Marlowe's play that "was never acted; or, if it was, not above once" is genuine, he states (pp. 42-4).

Marlowe's account of how Troy fell condenses the account in the second book of the Aeneid of more than 800 lines to 179 lines. Shakespeare reduces it further to 68. "A king, a queen, a revenger of a father's death are the elements stressed" by Shakespeare, Leech notes. Hamlet, he says, sees himself as Pyrrhus, the revenger who pauses. "Pyrrhus is both Hamlet and Claudius; Priam is both Claudius and the elder Hamlet; Hecuba in both equations is Gertrude" (p. 48). Thus Leech believes the Pyrrhus speech must be taken seriously or it makes nonsense of Hamlet's praise, the actor's tears and Hamlet's recognition of genuine emotion. In Dido the slaughter of Priam works to a climax with Pyrrhus stone-still, but in Hamlet the climax is central, before the killing of the king. This is the position in which Hamlet finds himself. The structural change was made to emphasize the position of Hamlet in his grappling

<sup>233</sup> Clifford Leech, "The Hesitation of Pyrrhus," in The Morality of Art, ed. D.W. Jefferson (London: Routledge & Regan Paul, 1969), pp. 41-49.



for understanding of his motives, Leech concludes. It in no way undermines the genuine expression of praise for Dido (pp. 47-9).

In a consideration of the humour and satire in all of Marlowe's plays except Massacre, Donna Bobin sums up her study by saying that his humour reveals Marlowe's obvious fascination with the displacement of rulers and the struggle for power, "the source of both the tension and the humor in the plays."<sup>234</sup> In Dido the humour is generally lighter in tone than in the other works. Love, the obstacle to Aeneas' destiny, becomes the object of "mildly satiric humor" as shown in Marlowe's treatment of both Dido and the nurse. They both lose their dignity and reason because of love. There is humour in the irony of Dido's manipulation by Cupid and in her transparent denials of her love for Aeneas. The comic effect of love is even more emphasized in the aged nurse who suddenly finds herself, 80 years old and with "no teeth," contemplating taking a lover in the form of the boy Cupid. The implication is that love is both a powerful and irrational force and "it is evident from Dido's example that a ruler in love is not the best ruler" (pp. 30-31).

The puzzle of Aeneas' character is dealt with at some length by Robert E. Knoll in his Twayne study on Marlowe the same year.<sup>235</sup> Dido strikes two themes that re-occur throughout Marlowe's plays, he says. They are that the gods are frivolous and men are noble. "Throughout the play the gods are self-indulgent and seem unworthy of human sacrifices" (p. 33). Knoll asserts the arguable premise that on the other hand Aeneas is more impressive,

<sup>234</sup> Donna Bobin, "Marlowe's Humor," Massachusetts Studies in English, 2 (1969), 29-40.

<sup>235</sup> Robert E. Knoll, Christopher Marlowe (New York: Twayne, 1969), pp. 32-40.

more forceful, than the gods. He concedes that Aeneas' behaviour is "unsettling" and admits the reader has difficulty making out how to react to him but explains these difficulties on the grounds that the play is Marlowe's first and he lacked the skill to control the play. Dido as a foil to Aeneas is a female Tamburlaine. "Like other Marlowe protagonists, she is too great for the role in which she has been cast; and she breaks out of her mortal limitations" (pp. 33-6). The inconsistencies of Aeneas can be solved by realizing that Marlowe is trying to show in him an inner conflict similar to Dido's. Knoll draws attention to the fact that Dido's gift of jewels from her dead husband to Aeneas parallels the gift of Venus' jewels by Jupiter to Ganymede. The assumption may be made that both are illicit loves. But the humans are nevertheless more ethical, more dignified, "superior to their superiors." The play contains Marlowe's favourite themes: power, the feebleness of the gods, the nobility of men, the destructiveness of love, the attraction of the sensual world. "And, like the other plays, it lacks a sympathy with charitable emotions" (pp. 37, 39).

Three dissertations discussed Dido in 1969. Two of them dealt with structure. In a study of the use of the induction, the archaic word for prologue or introduction; Thelma N. Greenfield decides that the gathering of the gods in scene one of Dido shows Marlowe using a variation rather close to the traditional induction of the drama of the time, even though it is also a part of the action of the play.<sup>236</sup> In another study of structure, this time of stage techniques, George Shand makes the point

<sup>236</sup> Thelma N. Greenfield, The Induction in Elizabethan Drama, (Eugene: University of Oregon Books, 1969), p. 52.

that the physical context of Dido is difficult to establish. He doubts it was first performed at court, believing that the first performance was probably by a touring group.<sup>237</sup> Nine of the thirteen scenes give some physical setting. Like Chambers and Oliver, Shand agrees that a fixed setting is intended (pp. 59, 72). Following a discussion of Marlowe's use of properties and costumes, positioning and gestures in an integral relationship with the language, he contends that many of Dido's stage properties "image" the themes of tension between private love and public responsibility. The properties also reflect the corollary theme of faithfulness. There are many visual images of falsehood and deception in the expressions of love in the play. One such example is the elevation of Aeneas to improper positions. The general air of impropriety is set in the opening scene, he comments (p. 146).

Another 1969 dissertation examines changing attitudes to Dido, beginning with Virgil. Harold Schramm thinks that Marlowe's view, unlike the medieval view of the woman betrayed, concurs with that of the original epic. Like Virgil, Marlowe deals with the role of fate in man's life. The basic theme, he declares, is the choice by Aeneas of destiny over love.<sup>238</sup>

In a small footnote to scholarship the following year, Thomas Stroup argues that although Milton was familiar with Virgil, he was more influenced when writing his sonnet xviii, with its reference of "blood and ashes sow" by Marlowe's Dido, specifically Dido's final speech. He supplies

<sup>237</sup> George Brian Shand, Stage Technique in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe, Diss. The University of Toronto 1969, p. 57.

<sup>238</sup> Harold B. Schramm, William Gager and the Dido Tradition in the English Drama of the Renaissance, Diss. University of Delaware 1969, pp. 163, 186.

textual comparisons to support his thesis.<sup>239</sup> In another brief consideration the same year, Larry Alan Goldberg says that while most Marlovian heroines do not generate action, Dido is capable of doing so. Unfortunately for her, to Aeneas and the gods she is "something treated in passing ... It is almost as if Marlowe had (perversely) taken for the subject of the drama the fringe of the action itself."<sup>240</sup>

The dissertation also includes a comparison of the Aeneid and Dido.

In a study of the comic as a method of understanding Marlowe's tragic vision, Mutsumi Nozaki terms Dido both comic and pathetic.<sup>241</sup> The immature and amusing nature of Dido's love is emphasized by the Jupiter-Ganymede and the Nurse-Cupid scenes. Yet the story is tragic because the gods interfere with human desires. Without Cupid in disguise and the commands of Jupiter, the tragic love story would have been avoided. Nozaki disagrees with the critical idea that irony was Marlowe's primary aim in his sympathetic portrait of Dido and his harsher one of Aeneas. Levin's idea that the opening scene comments on the absurdity of human passion would have resulted in more direct reference to Virgil, rather than to the medieval influences pointed out by Seaton. Marlowe's reason for presenting comical human frailty in Dido was to express his irritation that humans should pray to the gods, who were the cause of all their problems in the first place (pp. 8-10).

<sup>239</sup> Thomas B. Stroup, "Dido, The Phoenix, and Milton's Sonnet xviii," Milton Quarterly, No. 4 (Dec. 1970), 58-9.

<sup>240</sup> Larry A. Goldberg, The Role of the Female in the Drama of Lyly, Greene, Kyd and Marlowe, Diss. Northwestern University 1970, pp. 99-100.

<sup>241</sup> Mutsumi Nozaki, "The Comic Sense in Marlowe Reconsidered," Shakespeare Studies (Japan) 9 (1970-71), pp. 1-27.

Nozaki argues that the comedy in Dido, as in Tamburlaine and Doctor Faustus, is "neither so intentional nor strong as to make us change our traditional view of Marlowe, but that, far from destroying the tragic theme, it intensifies it." His humour is not good-natured: it is a symbol of frustration and irritation (pp. 18, 22).

In her 1971 edition of the plays, Roma Gill states that Marlowe succeeds remarkably in his self-imposed difficult task of making a tragic figure out of the puppet Dido, manipulated by the gods but maintaining respect because of her dignity while in the grip of passion.<sup>242</sup> The part of Anna has been greatly expanded, she suggests, to further this task, by helping the audience to forget how Dido has been treated. She disagrees with Steane's opinion that Dido's death is too hasty but agrees that Anna and Iarbus die with unseemly speed. The play is "essentially Marlovian in its energy and its "odd mingling of the tragic and the comic" (p. xii). A bridge between the early poems and the great plays, Dido is an experiment and a young man's play, she decides.

Dido, unmistakably Marlowe in both language and stage technique, was an early play later revised, says Gámini Salgádo, citing as proof the fact that parts of the play are Virgil in strict translation while other parts are much freer. Although its love theme is unique, the play shows typically Marlovian "restlessness of spirit, exuberance of imagination" and capacity to evoke horror edging on a caricature of the grotesque. The action is too static and too predictable but "occasionally we hear in it the voice of a great dramatist, confident in his capacity," Salgádo believes.<sup>243</sup>

<sup>242</sup> Roma Gill, ed., The Plays of Christopher Marlowe (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), pp. x-xii.

<sup>243</sup> Gámini Salgádo, "Christopher Marlowe," in History of Literature in the English Language, English Drama to 1710, ed. Christopher Ricks (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1971), III, 131-2.

Marlowe was the only Elizabethan to use classical poetry as a source for a tragedy of Worldly Love, and even then he had to change the source considerably to write his play, according to Lenora Leet Brodwin in a 1971 study of Elizabethan love tragedy.<sup>244</sup> Virgil's Dido is consumed by a cursed madness, but Marlowe's heroine loves in the opposite mode, that of worldly passion. Brodwin explains worldly love as characterized by the fact that its concern with its own interests blinds it. Quoting the lines "henceforth I'll call thee Lord./ Do as I bid thee" (IV.iv.84-5) Brodwin comments "Dido is willing to give everything she has to Aeneas but herself" (p. 186). She considers Aeneas god-like so that he could be a fitting companion to her own "goddess" self-image. Aeneas' reaction is to run away from this "female drudgery."

When defied, Dido sees Aeneas as a peasant, like her subjects, and in her heart condemns him to death for defying her. Thus the pattern of worldly love prevails: "the insistence upon sovereignty will first corrupt and destroy the rival claims of love, only to be itself destroyed by its loss." And although Dido and Iarbas both die because of unrequited love, his is the true courtly love, while Dido dies to affirm her dignity and punish the rebellious Aeneas (pp. 188, 190). Brodwin does not deal with the fact that Dido is tricked into loving Aeneas.

Aeneas is a creature without stature in an interpretation of the play by John Cutts. In the most imaginative analysis of the character of Aeneas to date, Cutts declares "He is neither a warrior on the battlefield nor

<sup>244</sup> Lenora Leet Brodwin, Elizabethan Love Tragedy, 1587-1625, (New York: New York University Press, 1971), pp. 185-191.

in bed." <sup>245</sup> He is a Ganymede, seduced by the presents and presence of the great queen Dido. He is even willing to leave his son, his "boy" image, behind in his search for manhood. This act which has puzzled other critics is no oversight, Cutts argues. Aeneas feels dreadfully inadequate, is a "shattered being." He leaves Dido with relief, not because he has resolved his problem, but because Mercury provides him with his excuse. Aeneas, says Cutts, displays a narcissistic negativism. Cutts cites various changes Marlowe made in the epic which he believes are intended to indicate Aeneas' unworthiness (pp. 75-91).

As foil to Aeneas, Marlowe developed the figure of Iarbas, the man who would probably have won Dido if the gods had not intervened. Iarbus genuinely loves Dido. It is he who makes possible Aeneas' departure. His and Anna's suicides, as well as Dido's, are tragic dignity compared to the Dido-Aeneas relationship. Dido ultimately triumphs over Aeneas. "In her death she is the phoenix symbol forever generating war against Rome in revenge for Aeneas' treason" (p. 93).

Calling Dido a neglected play, Godshalk says in a thorough analysis of love motives that the opening scenes set the theme of love as "unnatural, disruptive and potentially destructive ... a thematic microcosm of the play's entire action." <sup>246</sup> He remarks that Aeneas deserts three women in his escape from Troy, and the cry of Polyxene, "Aeneas stay" is echoed

<sup>245</sup> John P. Cutts, " 'By Shallow Rivers': A Study of Marlowe's Dido Queen of Carthage," in Studies in Medieval, Renaissance, American Literature, ed. Betsy Feagan Colquitt (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1971), p. 75.

<sup>246</sup> William Godshalk, "Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage," Journal of English Literary History, 38 (March 1971), pp. 1-18.

throughout the play. The theme set in the first scene is emphasized again when Juno arranges the storm which will turn Aeneas from his fated destiny to Dido; just as love has caused Jupiter to neglect his duty. Godshalk too mentions the parallel giving of marital jewellery as gifts to the new illegitimate love. In one case, he says, it is homosexual and in the other unnatural in that the woman woos aggressively. (!) Dido attempts to make a permanent change in Aeneas, ironically linking him with the unnatural husband Jupiter. He symbolically leaves her unnatural garb as he escapes attempts to emasculate him (pp. 3-8). The destructive power of love is shown, too, in the loves of Iarbas and Anna, as well as in the comic lust of the old nurse, which results in her imprisonment, Godshalk states. Fire is another metaphor for destructive illegitimate passion--the burning of Troy; the symbolic lighting of a fire by Aeneas as soon as he arrives in Carthage; Dido's image of Aeneas as Prometheus, the fire bringer; the fires of passion and finally the suicidal funeral pyre (pp. 11-16).

Who is responsible for this destruction? The gods use their human pawns, but on the other hand the gods themselves are prey to human passions. Godshalk suggests the gods are not real forces but rather the expression of inner desires--Juno is hate, Venus love, and so on. This interpretation "does not so much assign responsibility to the characters as to suggest that character is fate ... Dido and Aeneas still have no choice." The play shows that unnatural loves lead to disaster (pp. 17-18).

These longer considerations by Cutts and Godshalk, concentrating on specific themes in great detail, were accompanied by some shorter, broader comments the same year. Dido, despite some "tiresome gallantry and cloying



wantonness," was a sign that English heroic drama was about to take a great leap forward, said Reuben Brower. The description of the treatment of Hecuba was "A Marlovian swing indeed" and must have been "great fun, a schoolboy's revenge." Aeneas' description of Pyrrhus' killing of Priam shows that heroic violence taken out of the traditional idiom with the values it consecrates, becomes brutality.<sup>247</sup> Discussing another "fire" image in Dido, A. Bartlett Giametti writes that the Icarus myth, which fascinated Marlowe all his life, appears in this earliest play when Dido passionately laments Aeneas' departure, saying she will fly like Icarus over his ships and melt into his arms. In an article devoted mainly to Faust, Giametti adds that all Marlowe's plays follow a Faustian pattern of promises which "the hero either rejects or overreaches." In Dido, it is the marriage pledge, which Aeneas rejects.<sup>248</sup>

In an article in 1972 Inna Koskenniemi reviews the work on the question of whether or not Marlowe was influenced by earlier versions, Italian and English, of the Dido story. Favouring the majority view that the plays did not influence Marlowe, he makes one exception, the possibility that Dolce's Didone contains some similarities. Koskenniemi cites examples in other plays by other authors that show echoes of Dolce's work. Publishing data shows it is possible Marlowe was familiar with his works. The suicide of Anna, not found in Virgil, is one main similarity the two versions share. Both dramatists transfer words from

<sup>247</sup> Reuben A. Brower, Hero and Saint: Shakespeare and the Graeco-Roman Heroic Tradition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 113, 174.

<sup>248</sup> A. Bartlett Giametti, "Marlowe: The Arts of Illusion," Yale Review, NS 61 (1971-72), 535-6.

Venus to Cupid. Both introduce the idea of Scythia to one of Dido's speeches. The snake image is also used in common. In an admirable example of academic restraint in the face of lack of firm evidence, Koskenniemi modestly concludes that "it seems possible" that Marlowe knew and made use of Dolce and that he had probably read Cinthio's Orbecche.<sup>249</sup>

Marlowe, declares Charles Masinton, felt a great void at the centre of life, and Dido, like his other plays, implies that will is fate. Will, untempered by reason, is inevitably deterministic. The play describes the typical Marlovian action of the tragic fate of a protagonist who fails to cope with new circumstances. The protagonist creates the situation in the hope of gaining power or delight but his inability to handle the situation that he has himself created "deprives him of his sustaining dream."<sup>250</sup> Dido, Tamburlaine, Barabas and Edward "are lonely figures who find that both physiologically and philosophically the centre cannot hold when they serve their anarchic impulses through the furious drive to replace what they see to be man's lost perfection" (pp. 122-3).

This puzzling problem of fate also formed part of a discussion of the play the same year in a dissertation, later published, by Judith Weil. She points out that Dido encourages diverse interpretations,

<sup>249</sup> Inna Koskenniemi, "Did Marlowe Use Any Dramatic Sources for Dido Queen of Carthage?", Neophilologische Mitterlungen, 73 (1972), pp. 143-52.

<sup>250</sup> Charles G. Masinton, Christopher Marlowe's Tragic Vision: A Study in Damnation (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1972), p. 10:

"more independent and imaginative response" from its readers than most other plays because it relates personal changes to historical ones. The first response is to feel that the humans are mere puppets, that they lack the grandeur of the struggle between love and duty shown in Virgil's epic. But as Weil points out, there is more to Dido than these initial responses suggest, as shown by the strong disagreements between critics about the interpretations of the lovers, the induction and the subordinate lovers. "Marlowe must have wished his audience to sense a disproportion between the strong forms and forces which control his characters and the natures of those characters."<sup>251</sup>

By coincidence two more dissertations appeared in 1972 which took Weil's argument one step further and boldly rejected the idea that the play deals primarily with the conflict between love and duty. In a clear and thorough study of the play, Francis Xavier remarks the problems of interpreting the play have been compounded by the fact that most interpreters concentrated on Aeneas instead of Dido.<sup>252</sup> She is the protagonist and "invariably the Marlovian protagonist is brought face to face with our human limitations--with tragic consequences" (p. 4). The play, in other words, is Dido's tragedy, just as the title states. The opening line sets the tone of the game that everyone in the drama wishes to play. Dido, says Xavier, "explores the possibility of achieving apotheosis (it is no less) by means of love" (p. 64). Dealing with other

<sup>251</sup> Judith Weil, Expository Techniques in Marlowe's Plays, Diss. Stanford University 1972; Christopher Marlowe; Merlin's Prophet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 16, 17-19.

<sup>252</sup> Francis Xavier, Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage, Diss. University of Ohio 1972.

aspects of the play, he disputes Oliver's statement that it contains 13 words not seen elsewhere in Marlowe's works (e.g., "ticing" does not appear elsewhere, but "tice" does) and concludes that there is no Nashe in the play. He also discusses the possible reasons for the various changes from Virgil, as well as the "Ovidian overtones" (pp. 3, 31, 53).

Marion Glen Brashear, Jr.,'s dissertation states that critics have unconsciously been reading into Dido the themes of Virgil's Aeneid and if the work is viewed independently a substantially different view appears.<sup>253</sup> Noting the most obvious divergences from the epic, Brashear finds reasons for the differences in the theme of the play. The result, he says, is a rejection of the epic hero as presented by Virgil. Aeneas is shallow, weak, humble and prudent, and a liar. His relation to Dido is bourgeois, conventional, weak and flighty (pp. 43-74). Dido, on the other hand, is authoritarian, powerful, energetic, vital, wild and primitive. She has a poetic imagination that romanticizes Aeneas. Her version of him diverges more and more from reality as the play progresses. The gods are downgraded; like Aeneas, they are opportunists. The subplot of Anna and Iarbas underlines the main theme, rejected but constant love (pp. 78-115).

These considerations of character lead to thematic concerns of abstract ideas. In Virgil Aeneas' falsity was a blessing to the world; in Dido it is not. Marlowe's treatment of the gods, of destiny, was a covert opposition to the Christianity of the times, Brashear claims. Dido longs for perfection, for a combination of sensuality and the divine, the metaphysical, but her ultimate tragedy displays a nihilistic theme in which

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Marion Glen Brashear, Marlowe's Tragedy of Dido, Diss. University of Washington 1972.

the universe is inferior to the protagonist (pp. 119-140). The play, *Bra-shaar decides*, contains unrecognized originality of an iconoclastic mind and the subtle presentation of revolutionary ideas (pp. 270-271).

The following year Russell Fraser wrote that Marlowe was "a distempered sensibility gifted with genius" who was able to translate his love of sensation into art. While Virgil was writing of the founding of Rome, Marlowe was writing domestic tragedy. Where Virgil is reticent, Marlowe becomes "vociferous and inventive," as in the sack of Troy, the cave scene and Dido's lament. He is celebrating a brief incandescent love, ignoring the past and the future to which that present love is tied. In the traditional way, Fraser at this late date still dismisses *Dido* as prentice work. His most notable comment is on Marlowe himself: "The pointless violence and the early demise are the appropriate culmination of Marlowe's achievement as a playwright and poet."<sup>254</sup>

The same year Fredson Bowers published a well-received old spelling edition in two volumes of Marlowe's complete works. *Dido* is contained in the first volume.<sup>255</sup>

The extent and importance of rites and ceremonies in Marlowe's plays has been ignored as much as the spectacle in them has been excused, Thomas B. Stroup contends. Thus critics have been misled into believing the plays are fine lyrical poetry rather than works to be acted. His article emphasizes the dramatic use of rites and rituals which the audience or reader can recognize. Although there are, Stroup estimates, sixty formal proces-

<sup>254</sup> Russell Fraser, "On Christopher Marlowe," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 12 (Spring, 1973), 136-44.

<sup>255</sup> Fredson Bowers, *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 2 vols.

sions to bring the characters onto the stage in Marlowe's plays, only three can be considered in this category in Dido. Most spectacular would be the opening of Act III scene iii with Dido, Aeneas and the whole court resplendent in their hunting costumes. The only other one Stroup mentions occurs near the opening of Act IV scene iv when a procession is followed by the presentation of the crown of Libya to Aeneas. This lack of formal procession is no doubt one reason for the relative lack of dramatic attraction in the play.<sup>256</sup>

In the area of ceremony, four betrothals occur in Marlowe's plays, the most notable and effective being that of Dido and Aeneas in the cave, in which Aeneas vows his undying love and Dido rewards him with jewels and creates him king of Carthage—a combination of betrothal and coronation, "the turning point of the play....heightened dramatically by grim irony." Noting that the incident was passed over briefly in Virgil, Stroup comments that the ceremony "makes drama out of narrative" (pp. 204-5).

Three publications from Salzburg University in 1974 celebrated the value of Dido. In one, Claude Summers sums up well the theme of human destiny.<sup>257</sup> As in all of Marlowe's plays, Dido deals with power, in this case the limits of the power of human beings in the hands of arbitrary gods. Thus it is an example of "the chilling underside of the celebration of Renaissance aspiration which has come to be so closely associated with Christopher Marlowe." The play questions the propriety of the limits of power. The iconoclasm is set, of course, in the very first scene. Understanding

<sup>256</sup> Thomas B. Stroup, "Ritual in Marlowe's Plays," Comparative Drama, 7 (1973-74), 199.

<sup>257</sup> Claude J. Summers, Christopher Marlowe and The Politics of Power (Salzburg: Salzburg University, 1974), pp. 20-40, 188-91.

this scene is crucial to understanding the play, Summers states. It shows clearly that the play is not merely a translation. Venus' bitter speech sets the theme of humans adrift in a world dominated by frivolous gods. Set against them, the humans are both noble and helpless (pp. 21-3).

Aeneas' destiny is the specific concern of the play. He is controlled by his sense of divine purpose, yet Dido is the main character and Marlowe implicitly criticizes Aeneas' divine destiny. "For Virgil Aeneas' devotion to his divine purpose is admirable and ultimately justified by the founding of Rome; but for Marlowe...that devotion is a chilling manifestation of the arbitrary power of the gods to control the wills of men" (pp. 24-5).

Summers emphasizes the theme of the indifferent gods and the suffering they cause the hapless mortals in their control. The pivotal scene comes when Aeneas wavers immediately after Dido most firmly asserts her immense powers. "When the conflict between kingship and destiny is joined, destiny triumphs easily" (p. 35). Summers disagrees with Ribner that the play is about the conflict between love and destiny. It is, rather, a battle between the power of Dido and the power of the gods. The bitterness of uncontrollable destiny is compounded by the frivolity and pettiness of the gods. Like Faustus and Edward II, the play reflects spiritual despair (p. 40).

In his conclusion Summers says that Marlowe exploits politics in Dido as he does in all his plays. Dido is presented as an absolute monarch to display Marlowe's belief that the most powerful human is still controlled by destiny, by the whims of the gods. "Dido, Queen of Carthage bitterly documents the limitations of human power and the fruitlessness of aspiration" (pp. 188-91).

Steven Young places *Dido* among the "frame" plays of the period in which a dual plot operates throughout the drama "and ultimately answers the initial introductory process with a kind of valediction, a leading out into the real world."<sup>258</sup> The frame in *Dido* is the world of the gods, which contrasts and compares with the action of the human protagonists. Marlowe, Young points out, was faced with the necessity of changing an incident in Virgil into the central action of his play, and the means of achieving this was the frame. After a comparison of the original with Marlowe, he cites various devices, such as the giving of gifts, the endless deceptions and the broken promises which are elaborated and emphasized in both the play and the frame, i.e., the actions of the gods. The closer the connection between the play and the supernatural frame, the more human the supernatural characters appear. In *Dido* the connection is narratively close and so the gods are in behaviour almost indistinguishable from the ungodly (pp. 49-61).

Adrienne Roberts-Baytop summarizes early critical comment on the play and adds that the drama does three things: reflects Marlowe's knowledge of the classics, introduces his characteristic portrayal of overreachers and initiates the theme of sexual love as the centre of the action. The "haunting magic" of the play lies in the comic anthropomorphism of the gods and in the humanity of *Dido*. Marlowe has combined the love theme of medieval romance with the courtly love of the Renaissance, converting Virgil's unstable woman into the Renaissance woman who tests her lover with coy devices, she says.<sup>259</sup>

<sup>258</sup> Steven C. Young, The Frame Structure in Tudor and Stuart Drama (Salzburg: Salzburg University, 1974), p. 7.

<sup>259</sup> Adrienne Roberts-Baytop, Dido, Queen of Infinite Literary Variety (Salzburg: Salzburg University, 1974), pp. 99-103.



Jackson I. Cope decides that Dido has been neglected and unfairly dismissed as apprentice work because the critics have listened too frequently to the "siren song" of its sweet verse and failed to consider it as a play, and a farce at that.<sup>260</sup> Rendering a minority view, he declares it is perhaps Marlowe's best piece of "total theatre." Cope deals primarily with Marlowe's additions to Virgil, the opening scene, the nurse and the final suicides. The boy players have dictated the tone, he adds. The homosexual theme of the first scene was for Marlowe a private joke dependent on the public reputation of the boy players and their master, a reflection on children's theatre. This self-conscious satire broadens into farce as the play develops "but it will not reduce Dido to travesty; rather, it will interlace farce with poetry in an atmosphere where both can survive." Dido's alternating emotions after Cupid has touched her heart is not a falling-off in the standard of verse, but in fact an underlining of the fact that these are boys enacting "a farce of love." The Jupiter-Ganymede and nurse scenes too underline the homosexual potential of one boy embracing another. These scenes are Marlowe's answer to the limitations of making boy players into adult characters (pp. 319-21).

The faltering of verse as Dido declares her love to an obtuse Aeneas is another example. Cope suggests this was more humour brought about by a teen-age Dido seducing a smaller Aeneas. He offers no proof for this flight of fancy, which he says also explains Aeneas' later inability to flee Dido. While Dido dies with true Virgilian dignity, Marlowe then adds the other suicides in order to continue the theatrical game he has been playing by

<sup>260</sup> Jackson I. Cope, "Marlowe's Dido and the Titillating Children," English Literary Renaissance, 4 (1974), 315-25.

using children. After Dido's surprisingly dignified death, Marlowe "added a fillip" by ending as he had promised all along with a "silly story" superimposed upon the realities of passionate love and death. Cope concludes that the mixture of farce and romance in Dido was Marlowe's greatest gift to Shakespeare, resulting in A Midsummer Night's Dream (pp. 322, 324-5).

While an ingenious explanation of some of the seeming flaws in Dido, Cope's argument is not entirely convincing. Much of it is based on guess work and suppositions (e.g. Dido was larger than Aeneas) and the notion that the deaths of Anna and Iarbas can be considered a "fillip" seems, at least to twentieth century sensibilities, an unlikely idea. Others such as Leech, however, have also suggested that the suicides are comic.

In a book on Marlowe published in 1974 Godshalk continues his earlier contention that the play concerns destructive love and that Marlowe's additions and expansions on Virgil are written to heighten the perverted love theme.<sup>261</sup> Most of the chapter repeats almost unchanged his article of three years earlier (see page 111), but there is an additional final paragraph discussing the political overtones of the play. In it, Godshalk says that the thwarted love will lead to problems in the future. "The tragedy of love points to the tragedy of empire." Godshalk reminds modern readers that to Elizabethans romantic love was not "an ultimate value to be pursued at all costs." In his plays Marlowe declares that personal actions have much greater repercussions. The individual must consider the common good as well as his own desires (pp. 57-8).

Love and death are both antagonists and allies in Elizabethan drama,

<sup>261</sup> William Leight Godshalk, The Marlovian World Picture (The Hague: Mouton, 1974).

according to Charles Forker.<sup>262</sup> Love and death had a special force with the Elizabethans, who originated the genre of the love tragedy. Noting that Dido ends with three romantically induced suicides, he says that Dido's final words, "I never die/ For in his looks I see eternity" (IV. iv.121-122) are a summation of this nexus, and anticipate the dying lines of Cleopatra, (a topic that was also popular in 1906-7, see chapter four.)

In a 1975 study of Marlowe, Gerald Pinciss continues the theme that the play's intent is to show the gods in a belittling position compared to their human victims.<sup>263</sup> The opening scene sets the tone. In a summary of the action, Pinciss draws attention to Marlowe's skill in transposing Virgil, who would be familiar to all educated members of the audience, in the narrative of the fall of Troy, chiefly by his use of verbs. Active verbs describe the action, present participles link the narration and are interwoven with past participles followed by prepositions all occurring with increasing frequency "to convey the frenzied activity." Action is also emphasized by placing the verb before the subject. Rhetorical devices are used to heighten the emotion. "The ease of Marlowe's control over poetic effects, the assurance of his use of stress, caesura, end-stopped and run-on lines for theatrical forcefulness is astonishing" (pp. 115-6).

Pinciss also states that throughout the play Marlowe seizes many opportunities to compare humans favourably to the gods, ironically echoing Olympian lines in the mouths of the men and women. He adds that one of Marlowe's achievements in Dido is the innovation he brings to the children's theatre

<sup>262</sup> Charles R. Forker, "The Love-Death Nexus in English Renaissance Tragedy," Shakespeare Studies, 8 (1975), 212.

<sup>263</sup> Gerald Pinciss, Christopher Marlowe (New York: Ungar, 1975), pp. 111-125.

pattern set by Lyly. Marlowe borrows effects from Lyly but where Lyly's style reduces the intensity of emotion, Marlowe's blank verse intensifies it. Although written for a children's company, much of the play resembles material Marlowe wrote for adults. Pinciss says that there is no reliable record of a performance of the play until the Southampton schoolboy production of 1964 (pp. 122-4).

A recent dissertation deals with comedy in Marlowe, specifically in Dido the comedy of passion.<sup>264</sup> The author, Emmanuel Asibong, says Marlowe contrasts the pretensions of Aeneas and the reality of his actions as the source of his comedy in this play: "the would-be lover, orator and favourite of the gods contrasted with the reality of the shattered warrior" (p. iv). He cites such instances as Aeneas' confusion of the statue of Priam with the real man, and his unmanly tears at the sight of the approaching Carthaginians; the emotional and petty conduct of the gods; the distorted account of the sack of Troy and the verbal interplay of passion between Aeneas and Dido (pp. 85-88, 91). The exaggerated verbal behavior of Aeneas, Asibong avers, is purposefully farcical. What others (e.g. Steane) take for bad writing and uneasy hyperbole Asibong sees as intentional ironic comedy. "We may not laugh because [Aeneas] is not an orator, warrior, lover or hero; but we laugh because he is pretending to be all these (pp. 95-101).

In Dido the comedy of inversion, involving manipulation of parodic and ironic references to classical allusions, Latin and Biblical half-quotations, broadens into farce, Asibong continues (p. 151, 182). An example is the

<sup>264</sup> Emmanuel Bassey Asibong, Comic Sensibility in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe, Diss University of Massachusetts 1975.

opening scene with the gods. The comedy of inversion in Dido embodies the language of love and lyric seduction in which the action of Jupiter is ironically reversed by the mortals. The second type of inversion involves the inverse mirroring by other characters of the effect of Cupid's "love-inoculation" on the queen. She is the comic victim of a passion beyond her control--for example, as when she says "for I love thee not/ And yet I hate thee not...Aeneas speak" (III.ii.170-2). And this comic aspect is anticlimactically parodied by the aged nurse. Yet all this, together with the pointless death of Iarbus and Anna, inversely proclaim Dido's ultimate elevation to tragic-heroic stature because of her romantic sincerity (pp. 181-191). This interesting interpretation suggests that much that has been deemed clumsy and juvenile in Dido may in fact be comic inventiveness of the highest sophistication.

In a striking example of how literary criticism is affected by the temper of the times, Velma Bourgeois Richmond declares in 1975, Women's International Year, that Marlowe is a particularly good subject for analysis of the woman's point of view because of his "masculine assertiveness, his possible homosexuality and his atheistic, anti-Christian belief."<sup>265</sup> She notes that Elizabethan women were much freer than those of earlier times, and quotes a visitor to England in 1602 as saying that English women were freer than any others. Yet Marlowe presents ultimately ineffectual women such as Helen, a beautiful silent sex object who intervenes between man and his significant activity, and Dido, who attempts to keep Aeneas from his destiny but is outwitted and dies. The bulk of the article is concerned

<sup>265</sup> Velma Bourgeois Richmond, "Renaissance Sexuality and Marlowe's Women," Ball State University Forum, 16, No.4 (1975), 36-44.

with the women in the two Tamburlaine plays. Richmond decides that for Marlowe Christianity represents weakness and his women convey the Christian, ineffectual attitudes pitted against masculine "vigorous action, ambition, and self-glorification" (p. 44).

Marlowe's protagonists are "furiously engaged in the work of making themselves inaccessible to life" says Cyrus Hoy in a 1975 article. Aeneas is an example, one who "firmly sacrifices love to majesty"<sup>266</sup> as shown by the passage that begins "I fain would go but beauty calls me back," and concludes "To sea, Aeneas, find out Italy!" (IV.iii.46-56). Marlowe's world is static, Hoy claims, despite much incident in the plays, because the heroes do not undergo meaningful change and modification of character. Hoy states "There is nothing in Marlowe's frozen world to sustain love, so that its potential power of metamorphosis goes unrealized, and the spaces of the plays echo with a particular emptiness" (p. 458).

In a 1975 dissertation supervised by Robert Kimbrough, Michael Tinker suggests that Dido has been unappreciated because writers failed to understand that it was written for an elite private theatre audience. After analyzing the childrens' theatres of the time and eleven other plays written for the same kind of audience, Tinker devotes his final chapter to a consideration of Dido, which he points out was written for the same audience that enjoyed Lyly and Peele.<sup>267</sup> As a consequence, Dido is a play of ideas, rather than one in the tradition of morality and vice in which his other, public-theatre, plays are written. Although Marlowe observed the conven-

<sup>266</sup> Cyrus Hoy, "Shakespeare, Sidney and Marlowe," Virginia Quarterly Review, 51 (Summer 1975), 454-8.

<sup>267</sup> Michael Tinker, Dido, Queen of Carthage and The Children's Companies of the 1580's, Diss. University of Wisconsin 1975.

tions of balancing the characters on both sides of the debate on love and honour, he goes beyond the private theatrical modes of Lyly and Peele. Dido's death does not necessarily impute blame to Aeneas because of the theatre tradition of balancing, says Tinker, who feels critics are "engaging in useless argument.... We must understand what Dido is before we can understand what it means." The characters in Dido follow court drama tradition; the adaptation from Virgil follows the conventions of imitation and input. The differences in staging from Marlowe's other plays stem from the fact that private theatre combined medieval English and classical Roman staging, and has a far more important role to play in the action, with its multiple stage, than does the public stage of Marlowe's other dramas (p. 237).

Concepts of the play of ideas and allegory are the keys to understanding Dido, Tinker claims. England's Queen, too, had problems with foreign entanglements. And Iarbus specifically refers to Dido as "Eliza" (IV.ii.10). The play, says Tinker, is not about love and honour, but rather love versus honour and love versus chastity--in sum, the destructive effect of love on both honour and chastity. It is an attack on love. "It says that love is destructive, that it is debilitating and weakening." The characters in this play of ideas are not real people; they are the symbolic representations of this theme, he contends (pp. 275-6).

Two 1976 studies deal with the problem of Marlowe's view of passion opposed to reason. In his edition of the plays and poems E.D. Pendry says that most of Marlowe's heroes lose stature during the course of his plays. He then applies this observation to Dido, saying that Marlowe loses sympathy with her because of her worldly action in trying to dissuade Aeneas from his destiny as the founder of Rome. He adds that "For Marlowe, tragedy is

the lot of those whose wits have deserted them."<sup>268</sup> David Lakla terms Dido a pastoral play in which passionate love causes the downfall of the chief protagonist. Dido, he believes, is an important play in the de casibus genre, for it develops love as a passion which brings the horror of a fall. Love is a tragic flaw undermining reason.<sup>269</sup>

Marlowe never clearly states his beliefs, Richard Martin states in another 1976 dissertation. Calling Dido the first recognizably non-Senecan English tragedy, he notes the conflicting impulses that generate tragic choice.<sup>270</sup> Citing many dramatic utterances that create the tragic conflict between love and honour in the play, he sums up the presentation of conflict as "communicated less through opposing points of view than through a contrast in rhetorical modes" (pp. 89-93). Aeneas attempts to escape war but his dilemma raises the question of freedom of choice and leaves the issue of justice in human suffering unresolved. Marlowe, Martin concludes, believes that neither love nor heroism is absolute (pp. 101, 105).

A clear indication that more scholarship is needed before even seminal opinions can be expressed on many aspects of Dido is demonstrated in the article of Mary E. Smith of the University of New Brunswick.<sup>271</sup> Professor Smith states that contrary to the almost universally accepted idea that the play depends solely on Virgil, she has found resemblances to the Dido plays

<sup>268</sup> E.D. Pendry, Christopher Marlowe: Works, rev. ed. (London: Dent, 1976), pp. viii, xi.

<sup>269</sup> David G. Lalka, Christopher Marlowe: Some Studies in Genre, Diss. University of South Carolina 1976, pp. 207, 237.

<sup>270</sup> Richard Anderson Martin, The Theatre of Experience, Diss. University of California 1976, p. 83.

<sup>271</sup> Mary E. Smith, "Marlowe and Italian Dido Drama," Italica, 53, No. 2 (Summer 1976), 223-35.



of the Italian renaissance dramatists: five similarities in plot and character that are not found in Virgil, and one verbal parallel. The Italian plays she discusses are Alessandro Pazzi's Dido Carthagine, (?1524), the Didone of Giovambattista Giraldi Cinthio (c. 1543), and Ludovico Dolce's Didone (1547). (Only one earlier writer had noted any resemblance between Marlowe and these writers, and then only one instance--see Koskenniemi, p. 113.) Especially suggestive is Professor Smith's review of the treatment of the character of Aeneas, who had degenerated from Virgil's "pius Aeneas" to the role of false lover and betrayer of Troy in such medieval literature as Lydgate's Troy Book. There are strong parallels between Marlowe's Aeneas and the character portrayed by the Italian dramatists, with the greatest similarities found in Dolce. Smith proposes the theory that the progression was from the medieval to the Italians to Marlowe, with Dolce the direct preceding source.

In a published address to the English Institute in 1976, entitled "Infinite Riches in a Little Room," Marjorie Garber, after pointing out that dramatic tension derives from the contrast between aspiration and limitation, says that in Dido this tension arises from the juxtaposition of beauty and destruction. Dido calls herself a second Helen but it is she who is destroyed, upon a funeral pyre that is the metaphor of her despair. Aeneas is her Trojan horse. Dido wrongly believes she has the power to enclose but she is the one who is enclosed, by fire.<sup>272</sup> The same year also saw the publication of an exhaustive 721-page analysis and description of the syntax of

<sup>272</sup> Marjorie Garber, "Infinite Riches in a Little Room: Closure and Enclosure in Marlowe," in Two Renaissance Mythmakers: Christopher Marlowe and Ben Jonson, ed. Alvin Kernan (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977), pp. 3-5, 8.

Christopher Marlowe's language in all his works, including his translations. In his introduction to this huge work Sadao Ando writes that the study is intended to be a contribution to a deeper understanding of Marlowe's literary genius but the book more resembles a text of chemical formulae. By the fourth line the author is using phrases such as "nul set  $\emptyset$ " and non-finite complement; this technical celebration of Marlowe's genius would, one suspects, be confined to a special few--infinite riches for a little group, perhaps.<sup>273</sup>

Between 1966 and 1976 the scholarly world saw a great leap forward in the considerations of the complexities of Dido, but the result was even greater divergencies in interpretation. The most interesting change in emphasis was the movement of Dido herself from a supporting role to stage centre. For the first time Dido becomes the chief subject of many studies. This change has resulted in distinctly new views of the basic themes of this contradictory drama. The play increasingly is seen as part of the main thrust of Marlowe's work, as part of the depiction of a universe inferior to its protagonists, a world of spiritual disarray, of nihilism, of hopeless human aspirations. A sophisticated humour, a farcical approach, an ironic iconoclastic comedy are the means Marlowe uses to achieve this savage indictment--this by a playwright once universally deemed humourless, in a play once deemed a translation. As Aeneas and his destiny become subordinate, the secondary role of Iarbas (but not yet Anna) receives its first extensive attention. The fact that many of the most original interpretations of the play in this decade come from doctoral dissertations augers well for future imaginative enquiries into this puzzling play.

<sup>273</sup> Sadao Ando, A Descriptive Syntax of Christopher Marlowe's Language (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1976).

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### The Past, The Present and the Future

Christopher Marlowe wrote his plays during a time of turmoil in a country ruled by a powerful queen. He himself was a forceful and unconventional person. In our present climate of changing sexual roles and general moral ferment his plays have once again acquired a contemporary atmosphere. Dido, the story of a powerful queen and her reluctant lover, shares in that atmosphere. Attitudes expressed in the play which offended or bored earlier commentators have in recent years attracted the approving attention of an increasing number of scholars. This attention is deserved. Dido is a good, if not great, play by one of the most important dramatists in the English language. Read today, more than 350 years after it was written, the play joins social, historical, moral and literary aspects and interests in such a way as to give it fresh appeal to Marlowe's audience. An overview of the critical history of the play will demonstrate not only the sudden recent flurry of appreciation accorded Dido but also its social, political and artistic relevance to our era. Previous chapters have summarized the critical history in chronological order to demonstrate the development of the information and interpretations brought to bear on the play. This chapter will analyze this criticism on the basis of topics and themes, as well as suggest areas in need of further study and exploration.

The play was first printed in 1594 but for reasons outlined in the first two chapters it did not share in the early days of scholarly literary criticism. Early comment, then, is easy to summarize. For 200 years Dido received little more than citations in lists of the works of Marlowe or Nashe.

In the nineteenth century the play received somewhat more attention due in major part to the editions of the play in the first half of the century. Dating, authorship, sources and style have been constant concerns, interspersed by increasing interest in characterization, narrative, imagery, religion, ways of discovering Marlowe's character and beliefs in the work, humour, sexuality, structure and, latterly, themes--the ambiguous message in the play.

The first question addressed was authorship, a question still unresolved. Early historians were uncertain as to who wrote the play, some assigning it to Nashe, although current majority opinion holds that Nashe did little more than supervise its printing. Those who have believed the play belonged chiefly to Nashe, or owed a great deal to him, included Oxberry, Collier, Fleay, J.H. Ingram, Grosart, Ellis and Guy Lamrechts as well as anonymous opinions in Retrospective Review in 1822, and the Old English Drama series of 1825. The majority of scholars and critics, however, have assigned the play entirely or chiefly to Marlowe, including Broughton, Dyce, Ward, Bullen, Crawford, McKerrow, Pinkerton, Tucker Brooke and almost all later writers. In the "undecided" camp are Edward Dowden, who withheld comment for this reason; Leo Kirschbaum, who in 1962 omitted Dido from his edition of the plays; and H.J. Oliver. This is one area in which computer techniques could possibly be of use to literary scholarship. While one sympathizes with those who dismiss technical aids as props for the tin-eared, nevertheless computer study can greatly elaborate tedious dogsbody work. Concordances, for example, have been an expense of spirit in their compilation by pre-computer methods, but of course they have also provided many valuable insights for scholars. In the same way a complete stylistic analysis of the works of

Nashe and Marlowe could provide an accurate survey of their use of language and structure, in place of the present very incomplete discussion of their writing vocabularies. Computer methods would make the study feasible. Naturally a computer cannot distinguish between deliberately courted changes in style and Marlowe was hardly a static stylist. Nevertheless complete and exact analysis would be a sounder beginning to speculation based on stylistic considerations and conjectures than are the present ad hoc studies. And speculation would seem to be the only field open in this particular area of Dido study.

After the problem of authorship come the problems of order and dating. Throughout the nineteenth century it was usually taken for granted that Dido was a late play unfinished at Marlowe's death and completed by Nashe. Near the end of the century, John Symonds and Percy Pinkerton among others suggested that Dido was an early play, perhaps dating even from his university years. During this century the latter opinion has been the most favoured, although there are those who would find a place in virtually any "period" of Marlowe's short writing life to house Dido. Those who have dated the play as Marlowe's first include Collier, Bullen, Ingram, Ridley, Warton, Dyce, Broughton, Ward, Creizenach, Knutowski, Ellis, Lee, Crawford, McKerrow and Brooke. Crawford believed it was written at the same time as Tamburlaine, while Schelling, Pearce and Clemen, among others, believe it was written or revised after Tamburlaine. In 1919 T.S. Eliot termed it a later work because of the progress in style while recent students of the play believe it was an early work revised late in Marlowe's life. L.E.F. Pearsall says the ambiguities, the distancing, indicate mature work, while Salgado suggests it is an early play revised, offering as proof the fact that some of the play

is simple translation while other parts are free innovation. This latter opinion seems the most acceptable theory.

The final scene has been the subject of controversial interpretations, including the subject of dating. The effectiveness of the three suicides has been hotly debated. Some find it brisk and effective; others bathetic and unintentionally farcical, proof of early work. Obviously with such sharply diverging opinions, the problems here are still very much unresolved. It is most likely that the play is an early work, perhaps even a university translation, and that Marlowe was working on a revision at the time of his death. The occasional unpolished line or phrase contrasting powerfully with the skill and beauty of others, taken together with the rather abrupt dispatch of Anna and Iarbus suggest that the play was not quite completed. A corollary is the speculation that Nashe added only a little finish here and there. Or did he in fact collaborate with Marlowe? Is the less successful poetry his work? A more thorough analysis of the final scene will provide many interesting conjectures while increasing general understanding of the play.

To the comments on authorship, dating and translation have been gradually added increased considerations of the play's value as literature. As noted earlier, until the nineteenth century the play was either ignored or only mentioned briefly in literary histories and first critical evaluations were dismissive. In 1778, for example, Thomas Warton termed the play "tedious," the Retrospective Review of 1822 found it "very defective," and Broughton in his influential series of articles in 1830 in Gentlemen's Magazine said it is "remarkable for little save its rarity." Trollope called it "a burlesque"; Bullen, "quaint"; and Verity termed it "the worst thing he ever did." Later

nineteenth century writers, however, showed a gradual increase in interest. James Russell Lowell echoed Warton's judgement of tedium but added that the play shows Marlowe's "burning hand." Editor Ridley called it "crude" but added that some scenes display a powerful style. Gradually, the comment showed signs, albeit grudgingly, of moving towards the favourable. Yet Swinburne, possibly the greatest Marlowe enthusiast, felt the play was "hasty [and] feeble." Arthur Symonds reported that there is little to be said for Dido and John Bakeless agreed that it holds small interest for the modern reader. John Gassner found it "indifferent," and Philip Henderson said it contains a preponderance of weak and over-sweet lines. Knowledge of its source in the Aeneid seemed to influence some scholars negatively. J.A. Symonds dismissed it as mere translation while Michel Poirier said the use of Virgil amounts almost to plagiarism. Until very recent days, admiration for Dido has been hard to find. Besides Ward and Boas, there was Pearce's unpublished dissertation of 1930, deeming the play "perfection of imaginative thought in verse...a treasure house of Marlowe's experiments" (p. 51). John Cutts in 1958 complained of unjustifiable neglect and in 1964, Marlowe's quadricentennial, J.B. Steane said the play showed Marlowe's energy at its best. The play, he stated, contains the same enthusiasm for man that Shakespeare showed, the same vast canvas, even if the work is less mature. With generalized proclamations of worth such as this, the scholarly world began to give closer attention to Dido and the result has been a remarkable recent blossoming of study and comment. The quadricentennial generated increased interest in Marlowe and the York Symposium four years later marked a turning point for criticism of the play. More close analysis, more varied approaches and more study of themes have been produced in the years

since the symposium than in the previous 350 years.

Several areas of consideration, however, have appeared intermittently over the years since the play was first printed. One long-standing interest has been comparing the play to the Aeneid, to other plays by Marlowe, to other versions of the Dido story and to the works of other playwrights, especially those of Shakespeare.

Comparing Dido to its sources in the Aeneid (Books I, II and IV) has so far yielded the most productive criticism. Boas in 1896 remarked that Marlowe's use of the material was thoroughly original, and in a much longer study in 1940 he selected for special praise the skillful way Marlowe compressed the 800 lines of the description of the downfall of Troy into 100 lines. (Yet in 1951 Poirier called it "almost plagiarism.") The first lengthy comparison of the play and the epic was undertaken by L.V. Allen in a 1924 dissertation which found many differences and inventions, and a change in Aeneas' motives. In his 1930 dissertation, T.M. Pearce suggested thematic reasons for the changes and commented on the play's "considerable maturity" in stagecraft in its adaptation from Virgil. Oliver, Brooke and most recent dissertations give some attention to source. Most writers feel Marlowe worked directly from the Latin epic. The changes he made from the Aeneid have proven to be fruitful ground for deciphering the coded messages Marlowe has delivered. Additional works interpreting these changes will almost certainly provide more insight.

The area of comparison to other versions of the Dido story is more complicated and, as would be expected, there is greater disagreement. Boas and Barbara Swain believed Marlowe was unfamiliar with any version but Virgil's. Ethel Seaton, however, noted similarities between Marlowe's Dido and Lydgate's



medieval Troy Book. Oliver disagrees, saying Seaton goes too far and the evidence to connect the two versions is slight. Koskenniemi says there was no earlier influence except perhaps Jodelle, but Mary Smith finds resemblance in the Dido plays of Italian Renaissance dramatists Pazzo, Giraldi and Cinthio. Although obviously no definitive answer will be possible in this area, comparisons such as Smith's could well provide much interesting interpretation in the same way as the comparisons with the Aeneid have.

A number of scholars have made comparisons between Marlowe's own works with the hope that they might uncover the chronological sequence, suggest developments in Marlowe's thought or test authorship. A favourite comparison for Dido students is with Hero and Leander, both in style and subject. M. C. Bradbrook notes the parallels of love in the two pieces, claiming that the Dido infatuations burlesque those in the poem. The prologue of Dido resembles the adventure of Leander with Neptune and may have been written at about the same time. Brian Gibbons says both pieces are written in mock heroic style and both were probably influenced by Ovid. John Bakelless in 1938 found twenty-five passages in Dido that re-appeared "in purified form" in later works. By 1942, he had found twelve more.

Many students of Marlowe have, of course, discussed similarities between his work and Shakespeare's. The interest in comparison reached a climax in 1964, the quadricentennial of the birth of both men. Shakespeare plays in which echoes of Dido have been perceived include Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It, Much Ado About Nothing, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, The Tempest and, of course, Hamlet. Hermann Peschmann declares Shakespeare and Marlowe collaborated on Antony and Cleopatra.

Irving Ribner contrasted the two men's views on life. But the biggest Shakespearean problem in the Dido critical canon is the question of the First Player's speech in Hamlet (see Appendix "B"). Few question that Hamlet is referring to Dido in this scene. Harry Levin is a dissenter--he says the reference is to Ovid. The problem the writers cannot resolve is whether the reference is a compliment to Marlowe, or a parody of his style. And is one to believe that this scene proves that Dido was indeed performed? The parodist school includes Fleay, Brooke, Middleton Murry, Fripp and Harbage. And there are other interpretations. Henry David Gray asserts it is not parody but Shakespearean juvenalia. Rowse attributes the similarities to Shakespeare's brilliant aural memory. (This idea in turn suggests the play must have been performed.) Speaight says the speech is just straight borrowing by Shakespeare, in the accepted Elizabethan fashion. Tannenbaum says it is a sincere tribute; so does Clifford Leech. He sensibly points out that the Pyrrhus speech must be taken seriously or it makes nonsense of Hamlet's praise. As well, the concept of parody simply does not fit with anything in this scene. And much of the argument centres upon the word "wind" which in fact reads "wound" in the original quarto, as Oliver notes in his edition of the play. Shakespeare's "saw of might" had already indicated his admiration of Marlowe and any deficiencies perceived in the Player's speech can well be attributed to the fact that Shakespeare was attempting to provide a style other than his own natural voice. This point in the play would hardly be the place for diversionary irony.

Marlowe himself has inspired another field of study. His seemingly complex and contradictory personality has influenced the 'personal heresy' school and Dido has attracted its share of the school's attention. Students of the

playwright seek answers to such questions as his attitudes to religion, homosexuality and politics, his sense of humour and his over-reaching character in his works. Dido has been used less in attempts to discover Marlowe than have the other plays, perhaps because explication-criticism dominated the critical field by the time the play belatedly began to receive extensive attention. Writers who did use the play as a key to unlock Marlowe's mysteries include Charles Knight, G.B. Smith, Turner, Pinkerton, Verity, Ellis-Ferner and Kocher. The divergent opinions they reach suggest these subjective methods are not particularly reliable. As an example, Brooke says there is no evidence in his writing to suggest Marlowe is an atheist while Kocher in the same year holds that there is so much evidence that it cannot be ignored. Steane objects to attempts to uncover Marlowe the man in his work as he is the "least static" of writers, a fact which still would not necessarily disguise the hand behind the characters. Peschmann says Steane carries too far the attempt to disassociate the two, pointing out that Marlowe wrote of a narrow range of characters. This area of speculation, while good fun, does not seem to have added measurably to the understanding of the play.

As well as Henderson's remark on cruelty cited earlier, much has been written of the homosexuality in Dido. Kocher states the Jupiter-Ganymede scene, frequently offered as proof of Marlowe's homosexuality, sets his work apart from all other Elizabethans. Yet Levin mentions the scene only in passing. Obviously at least one well-known scholar is not impressed by its importance. Barry Phillips says that the homosexuality in the play has the quality of ironic needling, while Brian Morris declares that homosexual love in Dido is playful while the heterosexual love is hard and cold. Morris's comments seem one-sided, however, as he notes Dido's "bribes" but not Jupi-

ter's. And dying for love hardly seems a cold act, although indeed neither is it playful.

Jackson Cope categorizes Dido as a farce based on the sexual reputation of the boy players and their masters. He explains all the perceived weaknesses of the play as jokes about the age and sex of the players. Aeneas' inability to leave Dido is an example. Other interpretations of the play based on the idea that it was written for a company of children have also been presented by Henderson and Harbage. Oliver has suggested that the "purple passages" were necessary as a substitute for characterizations that would be beyond such a troop. He reports that in the 1964 performance by a company of Southampton boys the rest of the play was satisfactory but it was impossible to be convinced by a teenage Aeneas. Certainly much in the play becomes less puzzling if one accepts that in fact it was written for a company of boy actors of reputedly deviant behaviour.

Growing out of the suggestion that Dido is a farce based on a homosexual joke is a much-debated question: did Marlowe have a sense of humour? If one accepts that the Baines libel was not a libel, then the question is presumably answered there, in the "boyes and tobacco" remark, hardly the comment of a humourless man. The nineteenth century, however, was almost unanimous in agreeing that Marlowe had no humour. Indeed, some commentators evolved ingenious theories to explain away Marlowe's unmistakable humour, even suggesting that the comic scenes in Faustus must have been written by someone else. Robert Bell was probably the first to point out that yes, Marlowe did have a sense of humour. That was in 1856, when he remarked on the farce in The Jew of Malta.<sup>274</sup> But it was nearly 100 years before many more made the same

<sup>274</sup> Robert Bell, ed., Poems of Robert Greene and Christopher Marlowe (London: J.W. Parker and Sons, 1856), p. 151.

observation about Dido. Boas in fact in his 1896 call for more appreciation of Dido said that because of his lack of humour Marlowe would never have reached the heights of Shakespeare, although he later changed his mind on this topic. It was perhaps Paul Kocher who first expanded Bell's opinions. In his 1946 book on Marlowe he pointed out the comic scenes in Dido, including the Jupiter-Ganymede byplay, Juno's sarcasm, Dido's description of her rejected suitors and the old nurse's infatuation. In 1962 two men commented on the humour in Dido. Clifford Leech terms both men and gods "engagingly absurd." He then goes rather far by suggesting that even the rapid suicides hint at the comic. Others too have suggested the suicides are amusing. Douglas Cole says the play contains much dramatic irony, counterpointed by comedy, while Donna Bobin suggests the struggle for power provides both the tension and the comedy. In Dido, the humour is mildly satiric, as in the comic effect of love on both Dido and the old nurse. Matsumi Nozaki, however, believes the humour in the play is not good-humoured but rather a symbol of frustration, and E.B. Asibong says that the source of comedy is the contrast between Aeneas' pretensions and his actions. His exaggerated speech is farcical. What others think is bad writing, Asibong believes, is in fact intentional irony. Other sources of comedy, he states, include the opening scene and the parody of classical themes and biblical allusions. That Dido contains humour and farce is undeniable. That the humour is ironic also seems self-evident. The antithesis that this irony is intended to convey is, alas, still unclear.

Interwoven with these considerations of the kind of play that Dido represents are studies of the methods Marlowe employed to achieve these still unclear intentions. Aspects of structure, character, plot, images and above

all style have frequently received attention from the students of the play. In fact until very recent years, when interpretations of themes began to dominate, the view of Dido as a poem and the question of its poetic style were paramount. A number of nineteenth century critics observed that Marlowe was the first to fully exploit blank verse even though he did not, as was sometimes stated, actually invent the form (see chapter two). The beauty of the poetry, its richness and colour, was the first aspect of the play to commend itself to readers. Collier and Dyce were the first important critics to discuss the play's "very graceful and beautiful" poetry, to use Collier's phrase. Victorian critics such as Cunningham, Verity, Ellis and Plowman liked to refer to the play as a long poem. Wynne said that Marlowe was the first to show that a dramatist could use verse without ruining human speech.

In the past fifty years, interest has been shifting from generalized comments on the poet's skill to more closely considered aspects of his art. In 1930, Brooke said the play resembles Tamburlaine in style, that it has more rhyme than any other Marlowe play and the alliteration and repetition in it are "almost a vice." Howard Baker analyzed the balanced line. Charles Norman notes that Marlowe had no imitative stage (at least, not that we know of) and that he burst into his own brilliant fiery style right from the beginning. Harry Levin holds the opposite view, saying that in Dido Marlowe had not yet manifested his full "mighty line" but the characteristics of it are already apparent. As the chronology of Marlowe's plays is still very much a debatable point, and as Marlowe's writing life was so very short, stylistic comments based on dating are in fact not very useful. If Dido is less skillful than Marlowe's other plays, the reason could be explained as convincingly by incompleteness as by incompetence.

Other approaches to style have also been used. In 1975, Gerald Pinciss said Marlowe's transpositional skill shows chiefly in his use of verbs. Active verbs describe the action; participles provide the links. As the frenzy increases, so does the use of verbs, and their syntactical position often precedes that of the subject. Marlowe's control of style, the writer says, is "astonishing." G.S. Rousseau considers the play on the basis of the rules of rhetoric of Marlowe's university days. By this guideline, Dido's language of pathos is more appealing than Aeneas' language of ethos, but Rousseau admits he is not sure what Marlowe wishes to achieve with his rhetorical devices. Although the poetic style of the play has thus received some study, most aspects of means have caught the attention of relatively few writers. Marion Smith, Jocelyn Powell and David H. Zucker have written of various aspects of the use of images, emblems and symbols in the play but all of these subjects still await more detailed and definitive studies.

Early students of Dido criticized the characterization, structure and plot but did not specify their complaints. In 1928, D.C. Stuart praised the play as "almost...well-made," but Leonard Mendelsohn points out that the importance of the narrative overshadows the needs of the drama: dialogue, action, character development founder on the narrative rock, especially in the first part of the play. The dramatic action is blurred because the play is concerned with events that took place in the past or will take place in the future. Others have noticed this lack of drama. Irving Ribner says the play is a static series of pageants. Gãmini Salgãdo blames the lack of movement on the predetermined nature of the action. Cyrus Hoy adds that the protagonists in Marlowe do not change, giving the stationary feeling of a "frozen world." One wonders, however, how often protagonists change in

most dramas. They receive new information, they are placed in new situations, but if their character is consistently drawn their actions seem inevitable. The actions grow in fact from the basic personalities of the protagonists, not from changes in character. The fate of Shakespeare's great tragic heroes such as Hamlet and Othello seems inevitable, not the result of changes during the play in the men themselves. Hamlet inevitably reacts to his mother's actions; Othello cannot be indifferent to the suggestion of his wife's infidelity. If they had behaved differently, they would be different characters. Character is fate. Dido's passionate final scene is consistent with the powerful strong-willed character she has displayed throughout the play--a consistency that is surely a virtue of the play, not a defect.

It is the themes of Dido, however, that have elicited the most comment, especially in recent times. Interpreters of the play are justifiably puzzled by the message that Marlowe means to convey. He is obviously writing of the relationships between man and his destiny and between man and woman. But what does he say? Much is obscure--perhaps even to the poet himself. Marlowe was probably in his early twenties when he wrote Dido; at most he was twenty-nine. Was his view of life fully developed? We can but conjecture. Certainly he has not made it clear in this play. Was he obscure of purpose or from uncertainty? Dido, for example is a contradictory character. She is loving sometimes and sometimes she is vindictive. She is imperial; she is submissive. At times she vacillates. At other times she is swiftly decisive. Her very human inconsistencies have upset some interpreters, yet in fact these inconsistencies are but true to life. In this portrait, the young Marlowe may perhaps have been merely unpractised. It is more likely that he was employing a strikingly precocious understanding. It is, how-



ever, unlikely that one so young had developed a completed view of humanity and human relationships. A young man's Dido is bound to be different from an old man's. This puzzle gives rise to rich possibilities of interpretation within the play, indicating that much more will be written on Dido before we can satisfy ourselves that we have begun to exhaust its complexities. As appreciation of the play has increased, so have the divergencies in interpretation.

Scholars have agreed that the play concerns love, duty and fate, but controversy surrounds the themes taken from those subjects. The love story presents the first unsolved problem and Dido's character is a major part of that problem. Boas believed the play is about love, Una Ellis-Fermer pointed out that Dido is the only Marlowe play with love as its main theme and Tucker Brooke early on used the word "sexual" to describe that love. Brooke, Wynne, Poirier and others agreed that Dido is the only well-realized heroine in Marlowe, but beyond that point disagreement takes over. Kocher complains that the queen does not struggle enough and so fails to portray the despair of one person set against a warring world. He deems Dido arrogant, this arrogance suggesting that Marlowe believed in absolute monarchy. Boas declares she doesn't present a convincing picture of a woman scorned, fails to rise to Virgilian heights. Gill says Marlowe succeeds in the difficult task of making a tragic figure out of a puppet but Richmond contends that Marlowe's Dido is typically ineffectual, despite the relative freedom of Elizabethan women. Dido is obviously a complex figure.

While Ellis-Fermer thought Dido a simple play about love, Oliver sees it as a tale of love lost because of the gods. The difficulty, says Oliver, is that Marlowe doesn't respect the gods and so the tragedy loses its

dignity. Brodwin asserts that the queen is an example of worldly love. Her only interest is her own well-being and Aeneas wishes to flee her "female drudgery." Continuing the theme of love, Roberts-Baytop, like Brooke, emphasizes the fact that the passion in this play is blatantly sexual; others also note the variety of attitudes to eroticism exhibited. Gibbons thinks the play's aim is to study the Protean nature of the personality under the stress of passion, while Mulryne and Fender say it presents contradictory views of passionate experience brought together and left unresolved to heighten the picture of a ridiculous world. In recent studies love as portrayed in Dido is seen as a destructive emotion, and the play itself as an attack on love. Marlowe says love is a flaw, these writers believe. W.L. Godshalk says the opening scene sets the theme of love as unnatural, disruptive and potentially destructive. All the loves in the play are destructive, including those of Anna, Iarbas and the old nurse, who ends in jail because of her passion. Fire, he points out, is used as an important symbol of the destructiveness of love. Michael Tinker finds Dido a play of ideas rather than morality, a play which shows the destructive effect of love on honour and chastity. The characters, he avers, are only symbols. David Lalka claims love to Marlowe is a tragic flaw which causes the downfall of the queen.

The contention that the play presents love as the antagonist of duty, of honour, of destiny, or of the gods, has been explored by a number of scholars. Poirier feels that Marlowe erred in expanding the role of the gods in this respect; to do so severely weakens the impact of the main characters, who become mere puppets. Ribner contends that Aeneas is a superman marching to glory, momentarily weakened by love. This theme of the human need of power is a constant one in Marlowe, he points out. Thus, the play

is not a tragedy--man succeeds. David Rogers cites the changes from Virgil as they bear on the "love and honour" theme, adding that the passionate die; the honourbound survive. L.E.F. Pearsall disagrees with Oliver's interpretation that Marlowe's sympathy lies with Dido and with love. He maintains that the playwright went to great lengths to avoid an easy allocation of sympathies. It is almost impossible to criticize Aeneas in his state of divided loyalties. He concludes that the play is a mass of ambiguities. In the same vein, R.A. Martin says Marlowe raises questions but never answers them, questions of choice, destiny, justice. He decides that Marlowe believed that neither love nor heroism are absolute. E.D. Pendry believes Marlowe loses sympathy with Dido and her love because of her worldly attempt to dissuade Aeneas from his destiny. The conflicts of opinion on the conflict of love and duty-destiny are obviously numerous.

These studies usually conclude with the statement that the play's messages are ambiguous. Future work might benefit from starting, rather than concluding, at that point. An overview of all the themes of love considered to date, some detailed study of Platonic ideas current in the Renaissance and a review of Virgil would make a good beginning. A synthesis of the ideas developed so far might provide the means to determine what is really happening in the play. Obviously Marlowe's intentions are difficult to ascertain. But equally as obviously his sympathies lie with Dido, the love symbol, rather than Aeneas, the destiny symbol. Even on the printed page the queen seems vibrant while her lover is lifeless and blurred. Why does she die while the opportunistic Aeneas goes on to worldly success? The answer to that question may well hold the key to the entire tragedy.

And what of Marlowe's attitudes to the gods and, by extension, to

religion? Most critics agree with John Cutts that Marlowe shows contempt for the gods and that the opening scene is designed to display the heavenly authorities unfavourably in relation to their earthly subjects. Others who believe that the gods are inferior to the humans include Waith, Cole, D.C. Allen, Oliver, Knoll, Nozaki and Pinciss. Nozaki, saying the play is a tragedy in which Marlowe expresses his irritation with the gods, disagrees with Levin's theory that the opening scene is a criticism of human passion. It is, rather, a criticism of the gods that humans worship. In this question of the relationship of the gods and humans, others have expressed somewhat different points of view. Poirier asserts that Marlowe's expansion of the role of the gods in the drama was a mistake which leaves the protagonists as mere puppets. Judith Weil disagrees, saying Dido is a puzzling play with a more complex, almost undiscernable message that belies the reader's first response to the inductive opening scene. Godshalk presents the plausible thesis that the gods are not real, but are in fact expressions of human inner desires. Masinton adds that will is fate. The play demonstrates the tragedy of the protagonist, Dido, who fails to adjust her will to new circumstances. The situation she creates deprives her of her dream. Steven Young describes Dido as a "frame" play, with the actions of the gods repeated by the humans so that the gods and the ungodly become almost interchangeable. Tying the play firmly into the mainstream of Marlovian thought, Claude Summers says the ultimate theme is the impropriety of the limits of power imposed on humanity by supreme forces. Aeneas' destiny is the central question yet Marlowe criticizes this destiny. Summers disagrees with Ribner's statement that the theme is divine destiny, saying it is rather the conflict between the gods and Dido, the absolute monarch who is nevertheless powerless in the hands of

the gods. Ribner, on the other hand, concludes the play is not a tragedy because the central theme of Aeneas' fate is ordained. Instead, he says, the play is the first step on the former theology student's writing path from Christianity to pagan sexuality. Once again we find a theme in which the only constant in the approaches is disagreement. A definition of what is meant by tragedy would be a good starting point for an attempt to resolve the problems here. Some writers have maintained that a pre-ordained fate cannot be considered tragic, no matter what the outcome; others aver the exact opposite. Is Dido's fate tragic or is it trivial? The interpretation of the part played by the gods contains the answer to that question. A human being struggling to escape the inescapable is surely a tragic figure. One whose tragedy is decreed by trifling gods is surely doubly tragic.

Another approach to the play has appeared in recent years. The emphasis on Dido, the shift of attention and sympathy from Aeneas, while touched on briefly from time to time earlier, began in earnest in the 1970's. In 1971, Cutts reduced Aeneas to the stature of a child, saying he is a Ganymede seduced by presents, even willing to leave behind his son, his "boy" image in his search for manhood. Iarbas, on the other hand, shows tragic dignity and firmness of purpose. Dido ultimately triumphs over Aeneas in her consistency and valour. The following year Francis Xavier finds that problems in interpretation have stemmed from the fact that students of the play have concentrated too much on Aeneas. Dido is the protagonist and her tragedy is the tragedy of human limitation. The same year, Marion Brashear says Dido is powerful, mild, poetic, romantic--the antithesis of conventional, bourgeois, weak Aeneas. The queen longs for perfection but the universe is inferior to the protagonists in this play, a "subtle presentation of revolutionary ideas."

These attitudes to Dido contrast strongly with, for example, those mentioned earlier of Gill (a puppet); Brodwin (female drudgery); and Richmond (an ineffectual symbol of feeble Christianity). As these new and flattering interpretations are also products of the same decade's thought, Dido is obviously indeed a "subtle presentation!" The emphasis on the queen is welcome and warranted. The ambiguities of the play cease to be muddled and transform into subtle insights when one remembers that the subject is the tragedy of Dido, not the destiny of Aeneas.

A number of minor aspects of the play were studied at various times. Some have been touched on only briefly and would bear further study before their possibilities have been exhausted. Others are curiosities, sometimes interesting in themselves but leading nowhere. In the latter class is the work of Hermann Ulrici who claimed that the play should not be studied because it was written to flatter the Queen. This attitude would eliminate an entire genre of Renaissance composition. Offering writers scope for expansion would be Tilley and Roy's work on the use of the proverb in Marlowe, Robert Y. Turner's studies of the use of the lament and the induction, Wilbur Sander's analysis of Marlowe's seeming obsession with destruction and Thomas Stroup's work on the use of procession and spectacle. The studies of Herrington and Ellis-Fermer on Marlowe's rationalism, Carroll Camden's 1929 survey of Marlowe's knowledge of Elizabethan psychology and Robert Welch's 1964 bibliographical analysis of Dido's printing are all topics that point the way to more detailed consideration in future. While one would suspect that George Coffin Taylor's exhaustive study of the word "now" is perhaps the last word on that particular topic, the study of the use of other words may yet yield nuggets of perception.

So where else should scholarship now concentrate its efforts? The reply might well be "where not?" Every topic raised so far in the study and the evaluation of Dido remains incomplete. The preceding summary shows that the major aspects of Dido studies on which the scholars agree are very few indeed. Some possibilities for further work have already been suggested and a few more will be added here. While it is sheer optimism to hope for more breakthrough discoveries such as Leslie Hotson's documentary finds of 1925, there perhaps lies somewhere more information that would shed light on the unsolved problems of the play. Until that hypothetical time, it is obvious that the student of Dido is free to explore again every approach used so far, seek new interpretation of the themes, even work again on those most basic questions, authorship and dating. To begin at the beginning, when was it written? What part did Nashe play in its composition? Was it ever performed before this century? Such fundamental questions still remain unanswered. It is not satisfactory for scholars to express opinions based on nothing more than educated guesses when they are dealing with facts. Much nonsense was written about Dido in relation to the Aeneid, for example, by people who had not even bothered to compare the play to its source. In this century, scientific method with its demand for evidence has permeated critical literature, sometimes excessively but on the whole beneficially, to eliminate such gross laziness. Still there lingers a tendency to apply the impressionistic sensibilities so valuable in interpretation to areas unsuited to such talents. When careful editors such as Kirschbaum and Oliver say that they are unconvinced that Nashe had no part in writing the play, attention must be paid. In other words, Dido criticism should begin again at the beginning and work on the very basics of the known and unknown facts about the play. I doubt

that the final word has been written on the comparison to Virgil. What of the other earlier versions of the story and their possible influence, especially Ovid, the Troy Book and the Italian dramatists? More study of the highly skillful techniques of stagecraft displayed in Dido might well assist in the puzzles of dating and order. Of all the topics presented in this survey, not one has yet received a definitive treatment.

It is possible that Marlowe translated the Aeneid while at university or in his early manhood and at the time of his death was converting the translation into a play. The beauty of many of the lines, the relatively elaborate and skillful stagecraft and, especially, the complexity of the themes--all suggest that this is no student exercise. That the work was incomplete is also a possibility. The oddity of such lines as "I know her by the movings of her feet" (I.i.24) suggests that Marlowe left the work unfinished. (Although even in such lines there is a grasp and excitement that many a lesser talent might envy.) The fact that the play is part translation, part transformation, is even more suggestive of incomplete work. If the date was known, these hypotheses could be confirmed or dismissed. As to Nashe's part, does his name on the first page mean only that he put the play into printable order and oversaw its publication? Is the play too consistent in style to be the work of more than one man? Most students of Nashe have paid little attention to Dido. Perhaps a collaboration between Marlowe and Nashe scholars would pay rich dividends in solving this vexing puzzle.

As to the themes of the play, therein lies an even more mystifying enigma. The subjects are love, duty and destiny, but what does Marlowe really say about them? He seems to be deliberately obscure in his apportioning of sympathies, his allocation of praise, his advocacies of belief. The



loves here are destructive, of that there can be no doubt. But what kind of love is he writing about? Further studies are needed to solve the ambiguities. Is he really condemning all love, advocating a world without love? Is he writing of eros rather than agape? Is he condemning illicit love, adulterous love, unnatural love of every kind? Or does he approve? There is little sweet love here, no passionate shepherds, no maids and men, no married bliss, no life-time fidelity. The closest we come to decent and honourable love are the unrequited loves of Iarbas and Anna but they, like Dido, make a fatal error, the error of loving one who is not free: yet another variation of the illicit love (using the term in its broadest sense) that causes so much pain and tragedy throughout the play. Marlowe's expansion of the roles of Iarbas and Anna from their position in the Aeneid probably signifies that he means them to make an important statement on the themes, a topic that would provide more understanding. The various aspects of love in Dido have played an important part in the critical consideration of the themes but no aspect has as yet received thorough study.

What a roll call of victims of this illicit love there is! The carnage of Troy before the play begins, retold so vividly by Aeneas in the first act, this very carnage has sprung from just such a love. The opening scene in which the god of gods is reduced to the role of a silly licentious old fool sets the theme for the entire play. This scene needs more interpretation than it has yet received. As well as being a skillful shocker guaranteed to snare the audience from the first stage direction onwards, it almost explicitly sets out the contrast between the sacred and profane loves that Marlowe seems intent on underlining in almost every relationship throughout the play. Jupiter's "worthless love" for the wanton boy Ganymede is quickly shown for

the sordid situation it is, while Venus, symbol of licit maternal love, reminds Jupiter of the duty he is so blatantly and perversely neglecting. The mention of his wife, Juno, the displaying of the symbols of her sacred love, her jewels, on the profane love, Ganymede, make the contrast quite explicit. Throughout the play the characters enslaved by illicit "Ganymede" love, whether by choice or by fate, will pay for their lust. The tension in the play is achieved by the problem of Aeneas' choice. Will he succumb to love or will he fulfill his destiny by denying it?

The tragedy of the play lies with Dido, and herein lies the greatest puzzle still awaiting solution. Even in their first encounter, before Cupid has ensured that the queen has no choice but to love Aeneas, Dido shows signs of finding Aeneas a thrilling man. She hears but fails to note that he abandoned three women in his escape from Troy, and after he casually dismisses the death of his wife in one line, expresses great sympathy for Aeneas and hesitates delicately in avoiding the suggestion that Aeneas betrayed his fellows. She blames that "ticing strumpet" Helen, an ironic statement that will later ring in the ears of the audience when she prepares for death in the last scene, as yet another "ticing" female. She appears to be fascinated with Aeneas and offers him hospitality of almost excessive generosity. Then, when Cupid's arrow entraps her, she struggles in vain, often imperiously as the great queen she is, to remember and honour her widowhood. Profane love in the form of scheming goddesses has overwhelmed her. There is nothing she can do, and she is doomed by love. In the end she chooses to control her own destiny rather than accede to the deities' manipulations. The elaborate development of this tragic love holds rich possibilities for interpretation and study. Throughout, the comparison between her unproduct-

ive love for Aeneas and the morbid love of Jupiter for Ganymede, is emphasized. Like Jupiter, she bestows the symbol of her sacred love, the robes of her dead husband, on her new "worthless love." Like Jupiter, she imperiously abjures any suggestion of criticism of her behaviour. But while Jupiter chooses his fate, Dido is the victim of hers. And her love, too, is wrong, as Iarbas points out when the pair return from the consummation of their affair in the cave. Dido even suggests that Aeneas is Jupiter and has a "Ganymede to hold his cup." (IV.iv.45) Another aspect of this love that is in need of more elaboration is the image of fire as a symbol of destructive love. It is introduced by Jupiter in the first scene with his comments on the Phoenix-like ashes of Troy and the fires of his passion for Ganymede driving back the horses of the night. And the image becomes reality in the final scene as the flames consume the Queen while Anna and Iarbas die.

Further explication is needed, too, of Anna and Iarbas, victims of this destructive love. They are secondary victims, and willing victims, but victims nonetheless. Despite free choice, they choose unsuitable and doomed loves and persist in them even when it is clear that no good, no beauty, can come of them. Marlowe expanded and changed their roles from those in the Aeneid, an emphasis which should be interpreted. Even the old nurse, another victim of the caprices of love, is imprisoned for her passion. Only Aeneas, a man who seems to love no-one, escapes. The complexities of these relationships remain to be unravelled.

Thus a play written nearly 400 years ago seems almost to comment on the social phenomena that are sweeping the western world today. At a time when honour and duty are increasingly discounted, when love is deemed limited, when fidelity is out of style and virtue and chastity appear to be old-

fashioned jokes, at a time when the existence of the family, and with it the foundation of our civilization, seems to be foundering, Dido becomes a remarkably modern play. If one accepts the premise that the play, as its title says, is the tragedy of Dido, rather than the destiny of Aeneas, then many aspects of the play that some have found to be defects become in fact strengths.

An interesting study would be one which determines whether the seeming inconsistencies of Dido are confusion and incompetence on the part of this young playwright or whether in fact they are signs of an understanding of all aspects, good and bad, that go towards the construction of the character and personality of a real, rather than fictional, human being. A number of people have pointed out that this is Marlowe's most fully-rounded portrait of a woman. Dido is indeed a full portrait, a picture of a woman in love, with all the weaknesses, strengths and vacillating human qualities that condition implies. Certainly she displays flaws. Sometimes she is the too-regal queen, sometimes the too-fawning romantic. The presentation of such characteristics is implicit in the idea of a fully-rounded portrait. Marlowe, if one accepts the idea that he was writing the play at the time of his death, was just at the fulcrum point between youth and middle-age. At twenty-nine he would be beginning to see that life is gray, not black and white; that life is black and white at the same instant. Love is no longer a simple affair. Vacillation is as much a part of mature love as starry-eyed extremism is a part of neophyte romance. If, on the other hand, Dido was Marlowe's first play, the subtleties become even more astonishing. If scholars in future continue to develop the approach suggested by this emphasis on reality rather than romance, Dido will provide many rich insights into the primary

topic of literature, the relationship between one human being and another.

None of the various subjects, approaches and themes applied to criticism of Dido has yet received more than seminal consideration. Does the play deserve more consideration? The answer must certainly be yes. The increasing number and length of comments show clearly that our contemporary scholars believe it is important that this good play by a great dramatist take its rightful place in the critical canon of Christopher Marlowe.

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Appendix "A"

Marlowe's Life

A Chronology of Documents<sup>1</sup>

- 1564 26 February. Christofer, son of John Marlowe, baptized at St. George the Martyr, Canterbury [Register Book].
- 1579 14 January-December. Christopher Marley, scholar at King's School, Canterbury, receives his grant [Accounts of Treasurer of Canterbury Cathedral].
- 1580 December. Marlen first appears on the Buttery Book of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.
- 1581 17 March. Chrōf. Marlen matriculated in *convictus secundus*, i.e. the middle rank of students [University Registry: Matriculation Book].  
24 March. Marlin listed among *pensionarii*, i.e. commoners [Corpus Christi Registrum Parvum].  
7-11 May. Marlin formally elected to tied scholarship established by Archbishop Parker [Registrum Parvum]; had received payments for it since January [Corpus Christi Audit Books].  
29 October. Merling at class in dialectic [Lansdowne MSS, British Library].
- From this year until Lent 1587. Marlin, Marly, etc. resident in Corpus Christi, with some absences in 1585 and 1586 [Audit Books, Buttery Book].
- 1584 Lent. Christopherus Marlin permitted to proceed to B.A. [University Registry: Supplicats, Grace Book].
- 1585 November. Christofer Marley witnesses will of Katherine Benchkyr of Canterbury [Canterbury Public Record Office].
- 1587 March. Christopherus Marley permitted to proceed to M.A. [Supplicats, Grace Book].  
29 June. Privy Council certify that it had been incorrectly rumoured that Christopher Morley had determined to go to Rheims to stay; and that he had on the contrary done the Queen good service, and should be furthered in his degree at the next Commencement: i.e. in July [Acts of Privy Council, Public Record Office].  
10 November. Election of successor to college scholarship

<sup>1</sup> E.D. Pendry, ed., Christopher Marlowe: Works, rev. ed. (London: Dent, 1976), pp. xxvii-xxix.

[Registrum Parvum, College Order Book].

16 November. A shooting accident at a playhouse, possibly in performance of *Tamburlaine*. [See Preface to play.]

1588 29 March. Robert Greene refers to *Tamburlaine*. [See Preface to play.]

1589 18 September. Cristoferus Morley, gentleman of London, fights with William Bradley in Hog Lane, Parish of St Giles Without Cripplegate; Thomas Watson (the poet) intervenes, is attacked by Bradley and kills him in self-defence [Chancery Miscellanea, Public Record Office]. Thomas Watson, gentleman, and Cristoferus Marlowe, yeoman, both of Norton Folgate, Middlesex, are arrested by the Constable and committed to Newgate by the Lieutenant of the Tower on suspicion of murder [Middlesex Sessions Roll].

19 September. Inquest on Bradley [Chancery Miscellanea].

1 October. Christophorus Marley of London, gentleman, released on bail of £40: Richardus Kytchine, gentleman of Clifford's Inn, and Humfridus Rowland, horner of East Smithfield, stand surety [Middlesex Sessions Roll].

3 December. Marlowe appears before justices (including Sir Roger Manwood) and is discharged [Middlesex Sessions Roll].

1590 14 August. *Tamburlaine* published.

1591 (Or before.) Thomas Kyd, the dramatist, writing in one room with Marlowe [Harleian MSS, British Library].

1592 9 May. Christopherus Marle, gentleman of London, bound over in £20 to keep the peace towards Allen Nicholls, Constable of Holywell Street, Shoreditch, and Nicholaus Helliott, Sub-Constable of the same [Middlesex Sessions Roll].

3 September. Robert Greene reproves a gifted fellow-playwright for his atheism and Machiavellian self-seeking [*Groatsworth of Wit*].

10 November. Dedication by C.M. to late Thomas Watson's *Amintae Gaudia*.

8 December. Henry Chettle admits two playwrights were offended by Greene's posthumous *Groatsworth of Wit*: one of them he reverences for his learning, but would rather not get to know [*Kind-Harts Dreame*].

14 December. Sir Roger Manwood dies: Christopher Marlowe writes an epitaph [Oxinden Commonplace Book, Folger Library].

1593 12 May. Thomas Kyd arrested and heretical papers, which he attributes to Marlowe, discovered in his room [Harleian MSS].

18 May. Privy Council issue warrant for the arrest of Christopher Marlowe, at the home of Mr. Thomas Walsingham of Kent or elsewhere [Acts of the Privy Council].

20 May. Christofer Marley, gentleman of London, answers the warrant and is required to remain in daily attendance [Acts of the Privy Council].

30 May. Christoferus Morley killed in self-defence by Ingram Frizer, in the company of Robert Poley and Nicholas Skeres, at a house in Deptford Strand [Chancery Miscellanea].

1 June. Inquest held on Christoferus Morley [Chancery Miscellanea].

1 June. Burial of Christopher Marlow, slain by Francis Frezer [Register of St Nicholas Church, Deptford].

After 1 June. Thomas Kyd writes to the Lord Keeper, Sir John Puckering, about Marlowe's monstrous opinions [Harleian MSS].

2 June. A note by Richard Baines about the horrible blasphemies of Christofer Marly or Morly [Harleian MSS].

15 June. A writ of certiorari issued to summon the case of Ingram Frizer into Chancery [Chancery Miscellanea].

29 June. Pardon issued to Frizer [Patent Rolls, Public Record Office].

Appendix "B"

The Player's Speech from Hamlet

Hamlet. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted, or if it was, not above once, for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviary to the general, but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savory; nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation, but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in't I chiefly loved. 'Twas Aeneas' tale to Dido, and thereabout of it especially when he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line--let me see; let me see:

"The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian  
beast --"

'Tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus:

"The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble  
When he lay couch'd in th' ominous horse,  
Hath now this dread and black complexion  
smeared

With heraldry more dismal. Head to foot  
Now is he total gules, horridly tricked  
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,  
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,  
That lend a tyrannous and a dammed light  
To their lord's murder. Roasted in wrath and fire,  
And thus o'ersized with coagulate gore,  
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus  
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

So, proceed you.

Polonius. Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

Player.

"Anon he finds him,  
Striking too short at Greeks. His antique sword,  
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,  
Repugnant to command. Unequal matched,  
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,  
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword

Th' unnervèd father falls. Then senseless Ilium,  
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top  
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash  
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear. For lo, his sword,  
Which was declining on the milky head  
Of reverend Priam, seemed i' th' air to stick.  
So as a painted tyrant Pyrrhus stood,  
And like a neutral to his will and matter  
Did nothing.

But as we often see, against some storm,  
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,  
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below  
As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder  
Doth rend the region, so after Pyrrhus' pause,  
A rousèd vengeance sets him new awork,  
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
On Mars's armor, forged for proof eterne,  
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword  
Now falls on Priam.

Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune! All you gods,  
In general synod take away her power,  
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,  
And bowl the round nave down the hill of  
heaven,  
As low as to the fiends."

Polonius. This is too long.

Hamlet. It shall be to the barber's, with your beard.—  
Prithee say on. He's for a jig or a tale of bawdry,  
or he sleeps. Say on; come to Hecuba.

Player. "But who (ah woe!) had seen the mobled  
queen--"

Hamlet. "The mobled queen"?

Polonius. That's good. "Mobled queen" is good.

Player. "Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the  
flames  
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that head  
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,  
About her lank and all o'erteemèd loins,  
A blanket in the alarm of fear caught up--  
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steeped  
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pro-  
nounced.

But if the gods themselves did see her then,  
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,

The instant burst of clamor that she made  
(Unless things mortal move them not at all)  
Would have made milch the burning eyes of  
heaven  
And passion in the gods."

Polonius. Look, whe'r he has not turned his color, and has tears  
in's eyes. Prithee no more.

Hamlet. 'Tis well. I'll have thee speak out the rest of this  
soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well  
bestowed? Do you hear? Let them be well used, for  
they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the  
time. After your death you were better have a bad  
epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Polonius. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Hamlet. God's bodkin, man, much better! Use every man after  
his desert, and who shall scape whipping? Use them  
after your own honor and dignity. The less they  
deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take  
them in.

(II.ii.444-544)

Hamlet. Ay, so, God bye to you.--Now I am alone.  
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!  
Is it not monstrous that this player here,  
<But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit  
That from her working all his visage wanned,  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!  
For Hecuba!  
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weep for her? What would he do  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears  
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,  
Make mad the guilty and appall the free,  
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed  
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

(II.ii.559-576)

"He has much to tell us about power, knowledge, greed, suffering, human dignity, and human worth. We have not learnt his lessons yet."

Brian Morris  
York Symposium, 1968