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**'Dido Enflambyt': The Tragic Queen of Carthage in
Gavin Douglas' *Eneados* (1513)**

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(Research)

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Contents Page**Acknowledgements p. 3****Abstract p. 4****Chapter I**

- **Research Questions and Contexts p. 6**
- **Biography of Gavin Douglas p. 7**
- **An Overview of the *Eneados* p. 10**
- **Literary Context of the *Eneados* p. 12**
- **Humanism and Transcreation p. 21**
- **Clerical Masculinity p. 29**
- **Cambridge MS O.3.12 p. 32**

Chapter II

- **Close Reading of the Fourth Prologue p. 38**
- **The Context of the Fourth Prologue p. 53**

Chapter III

- **Chaucerian Dido p. 64**

Chapter IV

- ***The Testament of Cresseid* p. 76**
- **The 'other' mater: Lavinia p. 92**

Conclusion p. 96

Appendices

- i) Timeline of Prominent Portrayals p. 99**
- ii) Summaries of the Prologues p. 100**
- iii) Illustrations p. 103**

Bibliography

- i) Primary p. 105**
- ii) Secondary p. 107**

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Abstract

This thesis aims to provide a new analysis of Gavin Douglas' portrayal of the Dido episode in his vernacular *Eneados* of 1513. Previous readings have readily excused Douglas' strict adherence to the tradition of the 'Virgilian' Dido as symptomatic of nothing more than a loyal and accurate translation of his source text, with others going so far as to attest that Douglas creates an overtly sympathetic figure (such as J. Derrick McClure) or rather one who circumvents a didactic outlook on desire (such as Sarah Couper in her 2001 thesis). I disagree with this assertion of a sympathetic author and wish to argue that the addition of Douglas' Dido to the trajectory of her character's development over time is in fact a retrograde step, made by Douglas deliberately in light of his attitudes to humanism and the trajectory of literature in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth-century. I aim to exemplify what Douglas does with Dido's narrative and suggest why he chooses to do this, using both a theoretical stance and close textual analysis.

Utilising the work of critics such as Marilyn Desmond, Priscilla Bawcutt and Helen Cooney, I will trace the development of the Dido narrative up to and including the 1513 *Eneados*, extending and complementing the work of Desmond's monograph by locating Douglas in a distinctly Scottish tradition. A comparison of Douglas' Dido and Robert Henryson's 'Testament of Cresseid' will be executed to establish this tradition, following a section on the relevant work of Geoffrey Chaucer, with whom Douglas sets himself up in direct opposition, in particular through his *Legend of Good Women* and *House of Fame*. From these comparisons, I will draw conclusions as to whether a modern, and more

instinctive reading of Douglas' Dido can be sustained in light of the evidence presented. Particular attention will be paid to the notion of Douglas as a humanist and Cooney's proposed 'crisis of allegory' contemporaneous with his work. Finally, consideration will be given to the inclusion of Maphaeus Vegius' thirteenth book in the *Eneados* and the representations of Lavinia therein, and the implications thereof for the narrative of Dido.

Chapter I

Research Questions and Contexts

This thesis will investigate the following questions:

- How does Gavin Douglas treat the story of Dido within the *Eneados* and is his depiction justifiable?
- How have historical and biographical details been utilised to defend Douglas' treatment of Dido?
- Can these claims be refuted?

Within this thesis it will be argued that the continuous critical assertions that factors such as Douglas' social standing, political leanings and ambition supply an adequate explanation as to his didactic treatment of Dido are insufficient.

Though the question of Dido has pervaded studies of the *Aeneid* for centuries, in terms of critical work pertaining to Gavin Douglas such discussion is sparse. Even research as recent as Alistair Fowler's April 2012 article on a new edition of the *Eneados* focus on questions of agrarian vision and classical poetics, rather than Douglas' treatment of the Carthaginian queen and the ensuing questions of his attitudes towards feminine desires and historical truth.

Therefore two key research contexts are proposed: the temporal positioning of Douglas in a line of developing narratives of the Dido myth, contiguous to writers such as Chaucer and Caxton; and a direct comparison of Douglas with the work of his peer Robert Henryson on the legend of Cresseid.

These contexts draw this thesis unerringly towards the conclusion that Douglas' narrative develops a conventional argument and morality that does not subvert.

The first chapter will utilise a cross-section of Douglas' biographical detail and literary technique, as well as the relationship between the *Eneados* and other medieval readings of the *Aeneid*. This will be followed by an overview of key topics pertaining to the research questions: medieval literary reception, particularly Cooney's proposed 'Crisis of Allegory', humanism and transcreation, masculinity, desire and commentary culture. Chapter Two will focus on a close reading of the 'Preamble to the Ferd Buke' in order to establish Douglas' stance on the material therein, while the third chapter will offer a contextualised reading of the prologue in relation to Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* and *House of Fame*. The fourth chapter will attempt to offer a Scottish context for analysis, by contrasting Douglas' Dido with Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid*, before considering the depiction of Lavinia within Douglas' text.

Biography of Gavin Douglas

As Priscilla Bawcutt describes, we 'probably know more about [Douglas] than about any earlier poet writing in English, Chaucer excepted'.¹ This knowledge reflects his life as a member of the establishment, related to two Earls of Angus and pursuing a career involving litigation and administration on a national level. Douglas lived from circa 1475 to 1522 and he is by no means known solely as a poet; if anything, his poetry is an aside to his wider political career. His poetic output is widely accepted as ending with the 1513 completion of the *Eneados*, a

¹ Bawcutt 1976 p. 1.

poignant publication date after which he turns his full attention to politics, in the aftermath of the disastrous battle of Flodden.²

Douglas' life runs parallel to a period of great turbulence in Scottish history, and he witnessed the reign of three Stewart monarchs in his time. This idea of a nation in political flux informs much of Douglas' work, and arguably is a large part of his motivation to write the *Eneados*, hoping to supply Scotland with the vernacular epic of national creation it sought. Despite this national temperament, Douglas' particular treatment of Dido is not one that can be readily excused by such political leanings, and this fluctuation does not excuse or explain the misogyny of Douglas' rendering of her narrative. I will return to this 'national' argument further on in the study, using the work of James Simpson on 'The Tragic'.³

The aspects of Douglas' biography that most appeal to any study of his *Eneados* relate closely to the type of education he would have received, and how this may have shaped his opinions regarding contemporary issues. It is within the work of Douglas that the paradoxical nature of Scottish poetics in the late medieval era becomes most evident, as Christian, pagan and humanist sensibilities all vie for prevalence on the page. Furthermore, examining Douglas' formative educational experiences, in particular relation to the texts he would have been exposed to and familiar with, extends our understanding of the agenda which underpins his creative output. Bawcutt provides 'The 'Library' of Gavin Douglas', in which she offers deductive conclusions as to the literary materials with which the poet would have been familiar. His exposure to the

² One poem occasionally attributed to Douglas, 'Conscience', is impossible to date precisely, and Bawcutt asserts that 'it may have been written after 1513' but also that '[it] might well have been written at any time between the reigns of James I and V'. (Bawcutt 2003. p. liii.)

³ Simpson, 2004.

classics and subsequent familiarity with the classical texts suggested by Bawcutt are undoubtedly a factor in his decision to retell and reshape the *Aeneid* narrative. Bawcutt comments on the nature of Douglas as a writer who references knowledgeably, enjoying the deployment of his opinion wherever possible⁴, creating a clear sense of subjectivity in his writing.

It is because of this subjectivity that Douglas' creativity flourishes, Bawcutt comments that: 'Where Dunbar makes poetry out of a headache, Douglas makes it out of a book review',⁵ a remark which indicates an element of Douglas' work more akin to literary criticism which arguably does not exist in the work of his counterparts. Of particular importance to the present study are two further points made by Bawcutt. Firstly she pinpoints the emergence of a 'distaste for certain aspects' of medieval theology⁶ and goes on to assert that Douglas 'may have felt something of [Lorenzo] Valla's contempt for medieval Latin',⁷ a key factor in the argument for Douglas' enthusiasm towards humanist tendencies, in particular a belief in the value of a return to the classics.

From the work of Bawcutt and R.D.S. Jack, one can easily see that the Italian influence is as strong in Douglas as it was in Chaucer: depicted in his library, the interest of Douglas in genealogy such as the quasi-historical narratives created by Giovanni Boccaccio gives the reader a sense of the target which Douglas would later set himself in terms of his own nation. This interest is in turn corroborated biographically by his interaction with Polydore Vergil, in

⁴ Bawcutt 1977, p. 108.

⁵ Bawcutt 1977, p. 109.

⁶ Bawcutt 1977, p. 109.

⁷ Bawcutt 1977, p. 118. Bawcutt refers to Lorenzo Valla as being someone for whom Douglas 'undoubtedly had a great admiration' (p. 117) and speculates that Douglas also shared views with Valla in 'disputes concerning logic and theology' (p. 118). This close textual relationship is corroborated by Bawcutt through Douglas' own reference to 'the wothy clerk hecht Lawrens of the Vaill' in the First Prologue, l. 127.

which he puts forward the case for a Scottish creation epic based around the legend of Gathelus, this exchange becoming an argument used in favour of there being nationalist thematic tension in the *Eneados*.⁸

Interested in the *bonae litterae*,⁹ Douglas was part of a number of diplomatic missions within Europe. Bawcutt asserts that Scotland was at the time a country much less isolated than many believe, thriving on continental influence in trade and commerce.¹⁰ Douglas' saturation in the culture is evident: his literary output was rich with innovation, inasmuch as he placed importance on the recovery of the classics, uniquely punctuated by use of the Scots vernacular. Where writers such as Chaucer focussed on re-tellings or re-imaginings of established narratives and specific episodes, in the *Eneados* Douglas took it upon himself to translate the epic in its entirety into Scots under the patronage of Henry, Lord Sinclair. In doing this, Douglas tied himself in his re-imagined *Aeneid* episodes to the source text in a way in which Chaucer did not, thus denying himself an element of poetic licence, a point which will become pertinent within this study.

An Overview of the *Eneados*

Douglas' *Eneados* comprises fourteen books and fourteen prologues, each of which is individually summarised in Appendix ii of this thesis. The *Eneados* is marketed by Douglas as a vernacular translation of the source text, Virgil's *Aeneid*. As will be argued in the later section 'Humanism and Transcreation',

⁸ Simpson 2004, p. 71.

⁹ Bawcutt 1976, p. 31.

¹⁰ Bawcutt 1976, p. 23.

what emerges from the translation transcends a basic recreation of meaning, turning instead into a transcreation of the source text. Douglas actively refutes previous translations, such as that of William Caxton in his 1490 *Eneydos*, where Caxton allowed his narrative to be conflated by the Dido episode. Where authors such as Caxton and Chaucer were interested in examining certain aspects of Virgil's narrative, Douglas wished to provide a true translation, in the sense of its content.¹¹

However, what is most innovative in the *Eneados* is Douglas' inclusion of prologues and 'subtitles', illuminating the action of the *Aeneid* narrative as told by Virgil and translated by Douglas. The prologues in particular offer Douglas a way in which to underpin the 'true' translation with his own opinions, musings on the matters covered within the text and subversions of themes therein.

Christopher Baswell states that

the justly famed Prologues are a virtual conspectus of late-medieval vernacular forms and make up almost a competitive dialogue with the varieties of Virgilian style that Douglas registers, often dazzlingly well in the translation itself.¹²

Though critics such as Ruth Morse are keen to point out that 'to take the Prologues in isolation from the rest of the translation...is at once to misunderstand Douglas and his understanding of Chaucer', it is indubitable that their inclusion sets Douglas' translation apart from its predecessors. As Morse elucidates, 'they introduce and tell us how to read; they are variations on the themes of the different books; they are counters to the temptations of the text'.¹³ As will appear later, there is perhaps no greater temptation as well as challenge to the faithful translator than the episode of Dido, resplendent with opportunity

¹¹ For further information on earlier depictions of Dido, please see Appendix ii.

¹² Baswell, 1995 p. 277.

¹³ Both Morse, in *Chaucer Traditions*, 2006 p. 116.

to elaborate upon Virgil's sparse narrative and interpolate meaning therein. It is for this reason that 'Prologue IV' is of particular interest to this study, and will be returned to in due course. Lois Ebin's 1980 article on the role of the narrator in the *Eneados* prologues provides a useful reading of them. Summarising the key critical perceptions of the prologues as 'unrelated poems, set-pieces',¹⁴ placed in the *Eneados* as a 'gesture of poetic frugality'¹⁵ on Douglas' part, the poet having previously conceived them and found them 'too good to waste'¹⁶ Ebin identifies a narrative within the prologues themselves, a kind of *Bildungsroman* whereby the poet-narrator goes on a journey culminating in self-knowledge, having separated from his *auctour*, Virgil, along the way. In Ebin's interpretation, 'Prologue IV' takes place in the first half of this journey, the part which deals with 'the poet-narrator's conflicting responses to earthly experience'.¹⁷ Ebin draws further parallels whereby 'the prologues alternate in their emphasis on the joy and woe in the world' – 'Prologue IV' falling under the latter taxonomy.¹⁸ This notion of conflicting responses apparent within the text is one that ties into the key topic of this thesis, the problematic juxtaposition of Douglas alongside his subject matter, i.e. that of the ordeal of Dido.

Literary Context of the *Eneados*

When formulating this dissertation, a problem regarding its perception of 'literature' became apparent. Having approached the *Eneados* from a twenty-

¹⁵ Ebin, 1980 p. 353.

¹⁶ Coldwell, Vol. 1, p. 88.

¹⁷ Ebin, 1980 p. 362.

¹⁸ Ebin, 1980 p. 355.

first century perspective, the analysis had fallen immediately into the Foucauldian trap whereby the reader is viewed as being responsible for constructing the meaning of the text, and the author is denied sovereignty of meaning. This is problematic in a number of ways, particularly given the contrasting nature of how literature was perceived in pre- and post-Romantic society, a key temporal shift highlighted in the work of Ruth Morse. Morse's commentary on the appropriation of 'the rhetorical method' in medieval texts proves useful in establishing a general sense of the difference that exists between the two eras.

Morse's monograph argues for a strong link between the creative output of later medieval writers and the strict rules of classical rhetoric with which they would have been familiar, linking poetic devices to aspects of speech.¹⁹ The 'Introduction' to her study on *Truth and Convention in the Middle Ages: Medieval Rhetoric and Representation* concerns itself largely with the nebulous differences between truth, fiction and history in the Middle Ages, precipitated by the 'prolegomenon' of rhetoric.²⁰ Though her key argument relates to another debate in medieval scholarship, that of the position of history as a 'true' account of events, her observations of the sea change attributable to 'the rise of empiricism in the seventeenth century, that great watershed in western culture' and the barriers it subsequently erects for writers offers an exemplum of the crucial problem at hand.²¹ There is a clear difference between what we expect as readers of modern texts and how medieval readers would have approached a given text.

¹⁹ For more detail, see Morse, 1991 'Imitation of Speech, Style and Action' pp. 45-63.

²⁰ Morse, 1991 p. 3.

²¹ Both Morse, 1991 p. 2.

R.D.S. Jack describes much of the Scottish literary tradition of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century in one of his entries in the *Oxford Companion to Scottish History*. There he describes contemporary poetry as '[a] subtle instrument of expression which modern Scottish poets envy' and speaks of Douglas' overtly 'patriotic linguistic agenda'. In terms of literary reception, Jack describes the Henrysonian propensity towards didactic literature, in a literary climate where 'surface oddities' encouraged the reader to search for meaning, 'another "hidden" sense'.²² The 'formal allegorical framework' apparent in the works of Dunbar was also indicative of this expectation of education within literature. Jack returns to, and expands upon, these points in his essay 'Henryson and the Sense of an Ending', where he states:

Today if a student finds a type character, he usually condescends it on naturalistic grounds. It isn't real with a small 'r'. Step back to the Middle Ages and the higher object of mimesis becomes the fanciful representation of the Real — the Platonic form rather than its shadow.

Jack's defence of the preference for allegorical texts gives us a substantial idea of the concepts of literature in Douglas' era, the 'more challenging and more philosophical'²³ allegories were preferred to more literal histories.²⁴

Douglas' work on the *Eneados* is interesting, therefore, as it deals with the overlapping territory between the two, being part poetic achievement, part classical historical epic narrative. The implications for Dido are that, though a moral exemplum may be sought, to draw a clear and defined conclusion is problematised. Dido cannot be successfully reduced to an exemplum yet lacks the established and consistent biography and psychological presence to become

²² All quotations from Jack, 2001 p. 125.

²³ Both Jack, 2000 p. 65.

²⁴ For detailed discussion of the role of allegory in medieval texts, see C. S. Lewis *The Allegory of Love: A Study in the Medieval Tradition* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 1975).

a fully capable character: in Jack's terms, an object of 'realism with a small "r"'.²⁵ The inconsistencies in her story as retold by generations of male scholars have added our perceptions of any true historical character who once existed. There may be a fully explicable allegorical, albeit misogynist, reading of Dido, and certainly writers such as Simpson are at pains to highlight their views of this. The paradox which this thesis examines within Douglas' work, that of a framework into which his tragic heroine will not neatly fit, makes this simple categorisation of allegory versus realism an impossibility.

Awareness of the medieval expectations of literature is a crucial asset when examining such literature, as Jack rightly asserts; should we not maintain this awareness, 'we may fail [the author, specifically Henryson in this excerpt] on criteria he was not intending to satisfy'.²⁶

To clarify the stance of this thesis, then, is to establish that an accepted role of literature within the fifteenth century was to instruct its readers on how best to live a moral and virtuous life, whereas post-Romantic theories of literature focused on the role of literature in reflecting human experience and expressing more purely affective emotion. The reverence with which classical texts were regarded by learned authors such as Douglas thus posed a problem in the assumed instructive nature of poems by the latter, as the texts themselves relied on an inherently pagan infrastructure. Texts such as the *Aeneid* of Virgil were written in a pre-Christian context, thus removing themselves from familiar moral trajectories and introducing multiple figures of deity, such as the planetary gods. As we witness in works such as the *Eneados* and Henryson's 'Testament of Cresseid', this paradox was circumvented in a variety of ways, for

²⁵ Jack, 2000 p.65.

²⁶ Jack, 2000 p. 69.

example through the mediation of Boethian philosophy within Cresseid's plight or the Marian imagery of Douglas' tenth prologue.

What ultimately emerges from Douglas' *Eneados* is a text which on the one hand holds itself to be a faithful translation of a core text, yet on the other interrogates itself with a variety of prologues and internal commentary therein. If we regard the *Eneados* and its prologues as an instructive text, we must conclude therefore that the majority of 'instruction' presumably emerges from Douglas' prologues. What we then take issue with is the strict morality put forth by the poet in relation to Dido in these prologues, and the didactic nature of his polemic.

With the reader removed from their Foucauldian responsibility to establish meaning on his or her own authority, at most piecing together what the author has sown, Douglas is heavily implicated in the creation of sense within the text. This thesis wishes to examine just why Douglas may have opted for such a didactic response when moderation was not only plausible but possible, as exemplified by Chaucer's earlier textual incarnations of Dido. This pedagogical approach is reinforced by the juxtaposition of excerpts from the text within the Bannatyne MS, where Douglas' 'Prologue IV' is placed at the end of a section tellingly entitled 'The Contempt of Blyndit Love', concluding the section after Scott's 'Ye blindit Luvaris, luke'. 'Prologue IV' is further subtitled in the Bannatyne MS as 'treting of the Incommoditie of Lufe and Remeid thaireof', the suggestion of remedy in particular alluding to a sense of instruction to be sought within the text, encouraged by the manuscript compilers and thus arguably indicative of common reception, thus corroborating the comments of Ebin as mentioned on pages 11 to 13 of this thesis. Granted, Douglas did not title his

'Prologues' in suggestive manner, adopting a plain numeric system, and it could be argued that this evasion of implicit moral statement framing the text as a whole is indicative of a desire for openness of interpretation.

The question of literature's purpose is inextricably linked to the idea of persona within the text, that is to say the voices appropriated by Douglas in elaborating upon his narrative. A number of potential Douglases exist: the man, espousing his own views; the writer, adhering to the conventions of genre; the cleric, bound to the theology of a pre-Reformation church or indeed the translator, guided solely by his devotion to Virgil. One single voice is hard to isolate.

Antony Hasler's 1989 article on Douglas' fellow makar William Dunbar is of particular interest to the *Eneados*. Where Hasler's critique of Dunbar's perceived poetic voice spans an entire career, it is a critique which is highly valid in terms of the *Eneados* as an entity within itself, where we arguably see Douglas adopt as many as thirteen different personas within his prologues, aside from which there is also the translation itself. Hasler's argument takes issue with the application of earlier twentieth-century literary criticism to the narrative persona of Dunbar, where in extremis the poet's persona is 'read as the self-consistent autobiography of a unitary post-Romantic subject'²⁷. However, Hasler also pinpoints a distaste for a more simplistic view of the medieval narrative subject as merely predicating the Renaissance emergence of self, seeing such critique as a 'naïve periodization, a reduction to a simple linear process of what is in reality a historical field of complex and constantly shifting formations'.²⁸

While this thesis concedes the problems inherent in the retrospective

²⁷ Hasler, 1989 p. 194.

²⁸ Hasler, 1989 p. 195.

application of more modern theory, the religious preoccupation of Douglas' *Eneados* is indubitable. The interpolated 'I' of the text is, as Hasler puts it in the title of his article, elusive.

If one attempts a 'unitary' examination of Douglas, it can be easily ascertained that Douglas' use of poetic persona is erratic, with contradictions instantly apparent between the prologues. Rather than adopting the view that this weakens the text as a whole, some argue that this clash of voices illustrates an attempt by Douglas to experiment with literary conventions, discussed further on in this thesis. An attempt to define each voice highlights the conflicting strands of the *Eneados* narrator. Four potential Douglases vie for prominence in each instance: in 'Prologue I' we have the writer and translator coming to the fore, asserting their pre-eminence over Chaucer and other predecessors, in particular their deviation from the source text of Virgil:

Yit with thy leif, Virgile, to follow the,
I wald into my **rurall vulgar gross**
Wryte sum savoryng of thyne Eneados,²⁹

indicative of an initial use of the modesty topos. 'Prologue IV' is arguably the work of a moralist cleric, structured around the condemnation of passion (deftly re-arranged and fashioned as 'love' in Chaucer's works) though not removed entirely from the writerly aspect of Douglas' personae, utilising a highly poetic structure to emphasise its point, as discussed in Chapter II. 'Prologue VI' returns to a sense of the common dilemma of paganism as faced by writers, attempting to attribute to Virgil a kind of pre-Christian Christianity by addressing the Virgilian 'Sibil' in Marian imagery, 'clepit a maid of goddis secret preve',³⁰ and stating that

²⁹ 'Prologue I' ll. 42-4, emphasis my own.

³⁰ 'Prologue VI' l. 137.

Quha bettir may Sibilla namyt be
 Than may the gloryus moder and madyn fre
 Quhilk of hir natur consavit Criste...³¹

Furthering this synthesis of Christian and pagan imagery 'Prologue X' deals obliquely with the matter of translation and religion, as applied to a pagan text, stating Douglas' overwhelming devotion to his god 'thocht furth I write so as myne author dois'.³²

Underpinning all of these passages, one assumes from a modern perspective, is the most elusive of all the voices, that of Douglas the man and his own perspective of proceedings. If one indulges a post-Romantic consideration, one cannot help but feel that, of the various possibilities, Douglas the man correlates most closely to his expressed clerical self, if only on the basis of his enthusiasm for sermon as expressed in the reverent rhetoric of 'Prologue IV'. Whether the post-Romantic view is the appropriate framework from which to study the prologue is moot yet ultimately of great use to the reader. In terms of the question at hand, the treatment of Dido within 'Prologue IV' can be argued to give strong evidence to the case for a clerical enthusiasm on Douglas' part.

The implications of this discussion for the thesis as a whole are as follows: in terms of the text, we shall accept the notion that the *Eneados* was prepared at a time when instruction was at the forefront of a literary audience's mind and that its inclusion in the Bannatyne MS both substantiates and exemplifies this acceptance and expectation in wider literate society. We further note that a discussion of Douglas' poetic voice is compromised throughout the prologues by Douglas adopting a confluence of conflicting roles. In terms of the

³¹ 'Prologue VI' ll. 142-4.

³² 'Prologue X' l. 155.

Dido question, what interests us is the proclivity of Douglas to approach the tale in such a particularly didactic way, despite the evident availability of alternatives – both in the work of Chaucer and elsewhere in the *Eneados* itself.

The appropriation of classical tropes for Christian ends is a thematic context which inextricably shapes discussion of Douglas' poetic personae. Faced with the paradox of a pagan narrative and its translation into a Christian morality, Douglas chooses to synthesise the ideas of each: Douglas moulds Virgil's paganism into a prototype of Christianity and substitutes Christian imagery into pagan symbolism (as seen in the meditation on the sibyl in 'Prologue VI'). The collusion of cleric and translator forces the hand of the translator Douglas into utilising the classical narrative as a prop for patriarchal Christian ideals of womanhood. Where the sibyl is merged into the role of Mary, no such reprieve is to be had for Dido. Instead, her tale becomes appropriated as a warning exemplum against the dangers of lust.

This apprehension regarding the consumption of human lust and the satisfaction of appetite complicates Douglas' narrative. Couper's thesis would argue that Douglas allows for 'leful love', but at no point is this generosity attached within the text to the physical act of love-making, something which is treated in an evasive and therefore provocative manner. It is as though Douglas' overall concept of love is so tenuous, and one-dimensional, it simply cannot allow for a moderation of physical desire; therefore he evades the question of the values of sexual experience as a moral agent altogether. Instead, he focuses intently on the imagery of love as dangerous, a 'serpent reddy to styng!',³³ thus limiting his interpretation.

³³ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 211.

Within the framework of a compromised pagan narrative there is still room for negotiation of morality and it is, this thesis argues, still a valid line of enquiry to ask how and why Douglas chooses to condemn Dido so darkly. As Craig Kallendorf mentions, epideictic rhetoric plays a part in the shaping of the Dido myth,³⁴ and the inclusion of Christianity and synthesis with a pagan set of ideas seems to amplify this conflict between the 'good' Aeneas and 'bad' Dido to new heights within Douglas' prologues as we will discuss further.³⁵

Humanism and Transcreation

In addition to the translation itself, Douglas makes the transition from mere translation to *transcreation* through the textual innovation of the prologues, coming full-circle to fill his work once again with the license initially limited by his source material. Though his use of rhyme royal and poetic conventions are akin to those of Chaucer, the content of the poem differs from other works concerning Dido. Where Chaucer re-imagines entire narratives using ekphrastic vision,³⁶ such as he does within his *House of Fame*, or indeed dream vision as utilized in *The Legend of Good Women*, Douglas rejects this poetic freedom in favour of a close textual translation. That is not to say that Douglas is never a subjective presence. In addition to outlining his method of 'Prologues', a

³⁴ Epideictic is one of the three types of rhetoric listed in Aristotle's *Ars Rhetorica*, to be used for public praise or blame. It is a term commonly used to describe a particular rhetorical style of writing in the late medieval period. See any edition of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, e.g. *Aristotle. On Rhetoric*, trans. George A. Kennedy (Oxford, 1991), and *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, ed. Chris Baldick (Oxford 1990, p. 71).

³⁵ See Kallendorf, 2007 p. 51.

³⁶ Ekphrasis, or ecphrasis, is defined in the *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, (4th edition, 1999) as being 'the intense pictorial description of an object... [a]virtuosic description of physical reality (objects, scenes, persons) in order to evoke an image in the mind's eye as intense as if the described object were actually before the reader' (p. 252).

definition of *transcreation* is at this point desirable, in order to ascertain the difference between a potentially objective and direct translation and what emerges from the *Eneados*.

J. Derrick McClure describes candidly a trend of *Übersetzungskultur* prevalent in Renaissance Europe, generally seen as being heralded by the (what is now considered to have been) 'false dawn' of Douglas' *Eneados*.³⁷ The term *Übersetzungskultur* itself refers to

a literary ambience of which the production and appreciation of poetic translations is an integral part: one in which not only specific poems but themes, tropes, and verbal constructions are freely transferred from one language to another, and cross-linguistic influences are deliberately exchanged in a mutually stimulating inter-relationship.³⁸

What McClure defines is something he views as a matter of potentiality within the late fifteenth century, and he is keen to point out the anachronistic nature of the *Eneados*, in which he sees Douglas as precluding later works such as those of the Castalian Band.³⁹ Nonetheless, the concept of *Übersetzungskultur* provides a portal by which to understand the concept of transcreation.

Understood best in opposition (though by no means in contradiction) to translation, transcreation refers to not just a direct projection of the sense of one source text into another language but to an entire transformation, bounded by the cultural-textual parameters of its contemporary production. A simple translation of the *Aeneid* would not have conveyed the nationalistic overtones of Douglas' *Eneados* or the political and historical realities of early sixteenth-century Scotland. These features are testament to the prowess of the *Eneados* as a piece of literature, in its own right, as opposed to a mere translation. It is a

³⁷ McClure, 1991 p. 185.

³⁸ McClure 1991, p. 186.

³⁹ McClure 1991, p. 185.

transcreation of the source, making Virgil's original relevant to a sixteenth-century vernacular audience, in a register that is 'braid and plane'⁴⁰. This national pride is ultimately symbolized in the use of Scots as the language to be translated into rather than English.⁴¹

Morse highlights one of the key issues with Douglas' apologetic use of 'true translation' as a motivating factor and driving force behind his *Eneados*. Implicitly concurring with Lois Ebin's observation that Douglas interprets the role of translator as 'directing the audience to the sentence of the text',⁴² indeed a statement similar to one Douglas himself makes in his 'Introduction in reference to his 'rurall wulgar gross',⁴³ Morse describes how an aim of true translation led to Douglas

also creating a kind of meta-*Aeneid* which would go Virgil and Chaucer one better by enveloping the Roman epic in the English pastoral, rolling the wheel of Virgil into one.⁴⁴

To challenge Douglas' depiction of Dido within this larger work and broader ambition is not dissimilar to positing the philosophical adage of 'why not?' to a question which in this circumstance academia has largely seen fit to ignore. Why should Douglas treat Dido with any consideration even remotely parallel to what we conceive as being appropriate in today's context? Certainly at first glance he is an orthodox Christian moralist, and this dictates much of what transpires in the subtext of his *Eneados*. Yet to entirely excuse his reading in these terms is a limited reading of a complex text. To make the opposing arguments viable, terms

⁴⁰ *Eneados*, 'Introduction' l. 110.

⁴¹ For further reading on transcreation and *Übersetzungskultur* see Armin Paul Frank, 'Translation as System and *Übersetzungskultur*: On Histories and Systems in the Study of Literary Translation' in *New Comparison* 8 (1989). pp. 85-98.

⁴² Ebin, 1980 p. 355.

⁴³ 'Introduction' l. 43.

⁴⁴ Morse, 2006 p. 107.

of reference need to be clarified, and the most problematic of these is perhaps humanism, which both sides of the argument rely on at alternate points Douglas is a humanist in its embryonic sense: he adhered strictly to the *ad fundum* tradition of return to source material, and interest in *literae humaniores*. This strongly supports the notion that his depiction of Dido is justifiable through his humanism. The problem, and converse point, is that as a modern audience we retroactively attribute largely secular faculties to humanism, in many respects a concept we have formed in opposition to religiosity, with a strong focus on the value of the individual, rendering Douglas' Dido entirely contrary to our understanding.

If we concede (as we should) that humanism itself develops over time, Douglas evades a simple yes or no definition as humanist. What is most important is the intellectual environment frequently associated with humanism (though sometimes arguably done so incorrectly)⁴⁵ in which Douglas immersed himself and the impact this could have upon his writing. Perhaps the strangest matter is that in a time of *ad fundum* humanism, a paradox becomes apparent whereby the desired result of a return to the original, unblemished *auctoritas* is heavily mediated by Douglas' poetic persona and the subjectivity inherent in that process of mediation. Sarah Couper's thesis articulates the problem with Douglas' *ad fundum* approach as 'the paradoxical assertion that he can achieve newness through the closest proximity to the old',⁴⁶ a key facet of humanist thought.

⁴⁵ For further discussion of the intricacies of humanism, see Grafton and Jardine, 1986, where they pose the argument that humanism was in many ways a transient idea which was often compromised by so-called 'humanists' in their search for patronage. Therefore, to equate humanism with progressive thinking is inadvisable, as many humanists – or at least their texts – would be guided by the preferences of their potential patron.

⁴⁶ Couper, 2001 p. 163.

This fealty to the source text does not thwart all attempts at subjectivity. Baswell argues that Douglas' anger in the introductory prologue 'suggests how personal a project this is for him, and how much he has emotionally (and even politically) invested in it'.⁴⁷ In accordance with this McClure is quick to point out the way in which Douglas leaps upon ambiguity in the source text to emphasise his pious interpretation through translation; for example,

By expanding Virgil's *Dixerat*⁴⁸ to an entire line *Thus said the queyn Dido, in febil estate*, Douglas brings in an interpolated phrase of which, though certainly it arouses compassion for Dido, the main function is surely to emphasise by contrast the positive adverb *fermly* (for *obnixus*) applied in the next line to Aeneas: the semantic opposition being underlined by the alliteration and the symmetrical positioning of the words in their lines.⁴⁹

One can become easily confused by contemplating humanism solely in terms of rejecting God's omnipotence in favour of personal autonomy. This is a definition that only really gains strength when contemplated from a modern perspective. For Douglas, humanism was not so far removed from medieval scholasticism in terms of the way in which it was transmitted and absorbed, and the concept of self-fashioning was in its incipient stages. To assess Douglas' *Eneados* against a post-Renaissance overview of humanism is misguided and unrepresentative of the humanist ethos as the author himself would have understood it, whereby the fidelity to continuing a tradition of *auctoritas* was of prime importance.

Graham D. Caie summarises the key concept of *auctoritas* neatly in his 2003 essay 'Henryson as Auctor', citing that the term is

much more than the modern concept of 'author', indeed it is closer in a sense to 'authority'. The 'auctour' possessed sanctioned knowledge and considerable authority and was regarded as someone who bore full responsibility for what he had written. He is worthy of being believed, can

⁴⁷ Baswell, 1995 p. 276.

⁴⁸ *Eneados*, Book IV line 331.

⁴⁹ McClure, 2010 p. 51.

be trusted to tell the truth, and is worthy of being imitated... [and] must have intrinsic worth and authenticity...⁵⁰

This fealty to the source would have dictated Douglas' actions within the translation, yet where his attitudes are most strongly and subjectively professed is within the prologues, a liminal space *beyond* the translation, a space created by Douglas where an opportunity existed for a more sympathetic view of the narrative protagonists such as Dido. Couper's doctoral thesis argues that '[*The Eneados*] as a whole is as interested in sanctioning as proscribing desire',⁵¹ a point I will return to later: this dissertation will argue that to view Douglas as an advocate of compromise is misguided.

Rather than hide behind definitions and circumstances in which the depiction of Dido by Douglas is excused in its misogyny, we should interrogate the dogmatic morality with which Douglas' narrative and *Eneados* as a whole dismisses her. Considering his literary predecessors, as we will do through the work of Marilyn Desmond, we see a plethora of interpretations, perhaps most notably Chaucer's anachronistic and arguably 'feminist Dido' in his *House of Fame*. Even if this was an anomaly (debatable in itself, due to the contemporary prevalence of *Heroides*-like reinterpretations),⁵² it was an anomaly which Douglas sought to vehemently reject: there was something in Chaucer's work that inspired Douglas to considerable heights of *disputatio*, and the passion of this evoked response deserves closer examination.

Ruth Morse discusses both the question of translation and the issues of Chaucerian inheritance in her 2006 essay, eloquently summarizing Douglas'

⁵⁰ Caie, 2003 p. 5.

⁵¹ Couper, 2001 'Abstract' p. v.

⁵² Such as the 'Letter of Dido' in the 1526 Pynson MS, see Boffey 1988.

relationship to Chaucer thus:

[Douglas] went to Chaucer for the literary idiom he needed but he fought both Chaucer's interpretation of Virgil and his elevation of love as a premier subject.⁵³

Like Henryson before him, Douglas entered into discourse with Chaucer's work. This challenge to Chaucer cannot hide behind the guise of 'true translation' when the inclusion of prologue and the extension of sparse Latin sentences into heavily elaborated vernacular draws the reader's attention at all points to the personal feeling of Douglas. Although Douglas was a man of the church in a distinguished position, whose words were therefore under pressure to conform to key moral doctrines, there is a balance to be struck between piety and compassion in a tale of such complexity as the *Eneados*. However, Douglas's identity as a churchman may be seen as one reason why he seems one-dimensionally to push Dido into the margins, unable to define her beyond her perceived sin. This perception, the view that any sympathy in Douglas' fourth prologue is 'construed as an ambivalent or divisive force in [his] psyche...', is one that Couper tries to dispute.⁵⁴ Couper argues ultimately for 'a less proscriptive or dualistic perspective on desire... than has yet been recognised',⁵⁵ but while accepting the rationale of her argument, insofar as that Douglas could be argued to display a less didactic stance than generally assumed, this thesis posits that ultimately a dual conscience does pervade the text and impacts upon Douglas' treatment of Dido.

There is arguably even a sense of Douglas' own opinion towards Dido

⁵³ Morse, 2006 p. 107.

⁵⁴ Couper, 2001 p. 158.

⁵⁵ Couper, 2001 p. 159.

hardening with time — she is mentioned briefly in *The Palice of Honour*, twelve years prior to the *Eneados*, alongside famously Chaucerian figures:

Thair wes Arsyte and Palemon als wa.
Accumpanyit with fare Emylya
The quene Dido with her fals luf Enee.
Trew Troylus, vnfaythfull Cressida.⁵⁶

In this fleeting glance one can see an arguably simple construction of the scene which allies Dido with Chaucerian interpretations of the classical narratives, and furthers this in the ‘fals luf’ attributed to Eneas. While the appearance of Dido in such a list is perhaps unsurprising and her consequent framing in a ‘positive’ light therefore inevitable, what we must concede is that Douglas has clearly engaged on some level with the Dido myth and has also become familiar with the connected works of Chaucer. Couper argues that this depiction demonstrates ‘a flexible attitude responsive to the demands of exemplarity’⁵⁷ – i.e. the true flexibility is found in Douglas’ approach to genre, a vast knowledge of which he displays throughout the prologues. I agree that a flexible approach to genre is apparent throughout Douglas’ prologues; however, I do not feel that genre is the only factor at play within his treatment of Dido, given the varied nature of genre within the prologues, and should therefore not be used to excuse her depiction.

It remains to be seen whether this siting of Dido was a description to which Douglas paid little attention, adhering only to the courtly love tradition in

⁵⁶ *The Palice of Honour*, Bawcutt, ed., 2003, ll. 562-5. NB: The full list in the *Palice* runs from ll.562-96, relating a figure ‘innumerabill’ of Venus’ victims. This is reminiscent of Chaucer’s ‘Parliament of Fowls’, ll. 288-94, Douglas having extended and interpolated his list with more subjective adjectival descriptions. Again, parity and familiarity between Chaucer and Douglas is made apparent.

⁵⁷ Couper, 2001 p.160.

which he wrote, or the beginning of a deeper fascination with the Dido narrative, but certainly the vicissitudes he aims at Caxton within the first prologue to the *Eneados* indicate a distaste for any attempts to pinhole Virgil's epic into a tragic or romantic framework, its sum being much greater than either trope. Crucially, Chaucer allows for an open-ended narrative, despite the constrictions of form, as in his *House of Fame* where Dido is given voice and space for discussion of her plight; Douglas shies away from this possibility and adheres strictly to the normative form of the narrative, which, given his later vehement rejection of any 'feminist' interpretation in the *Eneados* (i.e. Chaucer's more positive representation of Dido), is symptomatic of his fidelity to his source text.

Clerical Masculinity

The concept of problematic lust is by no means unique to Douglas' prologue and is not inherently indicative of a misogynist proclivity. Predecessors such as Blind Harry in his *Wallace* and Barbour in his *Brus* detail dilemmas of duty versus love, precipitated by abstract notions of loyalty. In the 'Brus' this loyalty takes the form of feudal service and the interests of the community. This is mirrored in the problematized nationalist interests of Wallace:

Qwhat is this luff? It is bot gret myschance
 That me wald bryng fra armes utterly.
 I will nocht los my worschip for plesance;
 In wer I think my tyme till occupy.
 Yeit hyr to luff I will nocht lat forthy;
 Mor sall I desyr hyr frendschip to reserve
 Fra this day furth than evir befor did I,

In fer of wer quhethir I leiff or sterve.⁵⁸

Both of these older texts are formulated as epics (though with considerable injections of romance) and it is within reason that Douglas utilises this structure of tribal mission against personal desire to justify his translation of Dido within the prologue as a wholly negative influence on Aeneas' journey. Where *Brus* and *Wallace* have stayed away from the territory of 'lust', Douglas has taken their conflicts of interest and applied them to matters carnal, adding a new level of moral condemnation. Indeed, Douglas' earlier reference to Dido in *The Palice of Honore* could be viewed as generic rather than sympathetic: she is mentioned within the context of a tragedy, and this confirms her status as victim. What the consideration of the *Brus* and *Wallace* offers is an argument to support the notion that, once again, Douglas is waylaid from expressing sympathy by his duties as a translator, much like the dilemmas faced by the heroes of our epics.

Whether this is the case or not is impossible to prove, yet from the evidence found in 'Prologue IV', a prologue which is conclusively not structured as an epic or an episode therein, it would appear that Douglas is utilising genre and translation as a smokescreen for a passionate piety, if not inherent misogyny.

The question of how and indeed *if* Douglas victimises women hangs over this argument. While critics such as James Simpson are firm in their insistence that Dido is a narrative casualty of a misogynist narrator, it is important to separate what happens to Dido from how Douglas elects to respond to it. In Virgil's narrative, as in Douglas, she is approached and abandoned by Aeneas,

⁵⁸ Selections from *The Wallace*, ed. Ann McKim, 2003 Book 6 ll. 33-40.

who does so at the behest of the gods and his quest to found Rome. In her despair she slays herself on a pyre. These are the salient facts of Virgil's narrative. What Douglas interpolates primarily draws on the inclusion of his prologues, though it can be argued that such elements as the intervention of the pagan gods are played down within his translation (perhaps a necessity for a Christian cleric). The uncertain nature of what has been said between Dido and Aeneas within the boundaries of the cave leads the reader to a crossroads at which they must make a moral engagement with the text based solely on outcome, with little knowledge of the process. Douglas' determination to dismiss Dido as a hysterical female is indicative of a need to promote Aeneas at all costs, relinquishing any blame the reader may place at his feet.

One could pose a cross-gendered example, whereby the female princess is pursued by a king, to the extent that his passion detracts from his role as leader. Perhaps she would disappear after a conjugal encounter, leaving the king bereft. Would this king be berated, would he be culpable of doing the 'wrong' thing? It is irrelevant: such a gender reversal highlights the most crucial aspect of Dido's story, the notion that marriage and sexual relations were a gendered transaction between two individuals where, in a fifteenth-century context, the male traditionally held power. Dido contradicts this generalisation in that she is a widow, a political anomaly in medieval society, whereby she holds both power and status in her own right. This power is negated by the moral choice that each widow faces: whether to commit to a life of widowed chastity or continue to exercise her sexual appetite.⁵⁹ In acting like a man and leader by exercising her right to choose and decide for herself, Dido chooses to indulge her desires,

⁵⁹ For further discussion of widowhood, see Desmond, 1994 p. 221.

giving in to her passion and weakening herself. If any valid argument can be made about the 'gendering' of the Dido problem, it is that at times her relationship with Aeneas takes an almost homoerotic turn, giving her status as 'virago' embodiment of the masculine traits of leader.

Cambridge MS O.3.12

Jane Griffiths writes with particular regard to one extant manuscript of the *Eneados*, Trinity College, Cambridge MS O.3.12. What makes this particular manuscript of interest, as Griffiths argues, is that it is

[a]lmost an anachronism, closer to what we imagine now that a 'book' should be than it is to manuscripts of its own period...the transcript of a single work, with a definite date of 1513, and a demonstrable association with a named author.⁶⁰

One of the contributing factors in this assessment is the prolific use of marginal annotation and authorial gloss within the first book. Douglas documents his translation process, 'conspicuously mediating sources...bear[ing] witness to his negotiation of the difficulties involved...'.⁶¹ Annotations beyond the first book tend towards a more direct interpretation of Virgil, 'reassert[ing] a less challenging reading',⁶² and spaces left in the manuscript's physical construction indicate that Douglas' original intention may well have been to continue his glossing throughout the text. The nature of the source text and its legacy was such that Douglas would have been crucially aware of the commentary culture into which he was entering; therefore Griffiths argues that

⁶⁰ Griffiths, 2009 p. 185.

⁶¹ Griffiths, 2009 p. 185.

⁶² Griffiths, 2009 p. 185.

the commentaries supplied by Douglas in his gloss were a ‘vernacular counterpart’⁶³ to those academic commentaries that had come before. Douglas places himself conspicuously as a mediator, circumventing others such as Servius or Ascensius⁶⁴ and referring directly back to Virgil, another incidence of his desire to promote himself as a worthy and authoritative translator of classical authority. It is to Douglas’ credit that we note that in order to circumvent the works of Servius et al in such a way required a level of engagement and understanding of their texts testament to his prowess as a scholar.

Despite this desire to self-promote, or perhaps in light of it, Douglas displays a propensity to be open about the lexical choices he has made in his translation, as mirrored in his anxieties in ‘Prologue I’ regarding the translation of ‘sentens’ into the vernacular:

Nocht for our tong is in the selvyn skant
 Bot for that I the fowth of langage want
 Quhar as the cullour of his properte
 To keep the sentens tharto constreynt me.⁶⁵

This thesis would argue that a modesty topos is present in Douglas’ self-deprecation, whereby he wins the reader’s trust through his admissions. As Griffiths points out, his proclivity for explanation reveals something of the translation process and ‘emblemizes the translator’s influence over the text’.⁶⁶ While Douglas may expect a response of admiration from his audience, from a

⁶³ Griffiths, 2009 p. 186.

⁶⁴ Griffiths, 2009 p. 187 (in reference to Bawcutt, 1977).

⁶⁵ *Eneados*, ‘Prologue I’ lines 119-22.

⁶⁶ Griffiths, 2009 p. 187.

critical eye such an emblem gives rise to questions of authorial intent and subjectivity. What this thesis posits is the question of whether Douglas is claiming innocence in terms of manipulation of the reader's interpretation, whilst embracing his poetic licence.

Douglas supplies a variety of readings to choose from within the glosses, as exemplified by Griffiths in her discussion of Douglas' gloss of 'Jove',⁶⁷ which she rightly asserts 'emphasizes the processes of interpretation vested in the commentator and translator rather than the Virgilian text itself'.⁶⁸ Ultimately, as Griffiths concedes, the reader is 'faced with at least two complementary interpretations of the Virgilian original –or more than two, if Douglas' prologues and his glossing of Book I are taken into account'.⁶⁹ Active, participative reading is doubtless promoted, the reader being encouraged to 'continue Douglas' work'⁷⁰ in establishing meaning, interpolated ultimately by Douglas as an ethical activity. One must remember, however, that it is Douglas' prerogative that guides the 'options' available to readers.

Therefore, this ethical reading activity, despite its interpretive slant, is ultimately guided by Douglas' own piety, a crucial factor in the position of this thesis: he is in command of the morality he wishes to promote. Griffiths discusses the 1553 Copland printing of the *Eneados* and the exact replicas of secretarial annotations present in the Trinity MS that are present therein. The glosses that accompany the printed text are 'universalizing' and regard Douglas as authoritative ('the auctor'), though they are 'vested in the meaning, rather

⁶⁷ Griffiths, 2009 p. 189-90.

⁶⁸ Griffiths, 2009 p. 190.

⁶⁹ Griffiths, 2009 p. 190.

⁷⁰ Griffiths, 2009 p. 191.

than the medium, of his writing'.⁷¹ This observation leads to Griffiths' binary distinction between the two kinds of humanist influence she sees expressed in the Copland edition as pitted against Douglas' own annotations. The first category, reflected in Douglas' own interpretation of humanist values, acknowledges the differences between classical and contemporary cultures;⁷² it produces glosses concerned with the writing process, which acknowledge the influence and instability of meaning therein⁷³ and ultimately privilege 'the text **and** its mediators'⁷⁴ in the process of producing *sentens*. The second, depicted in Copland's 1553 edition, concerns itself with gathering and framing 'universally applicable sententious wisdom',⁷⁵ whereby glosses reflect the *reader's* interests in exhortation and morality, 'stable and timeless sentence',⁷⁶ and the worth of the text is ultimately assessed through its usefulness to the reader. Where Copland's method tends to 'homogenize' a text,⁷⁷ the method apparent in the Trinity MS is steeped in difference and dialogic, argues Griffiths.

Yet in the context of 'Prologue IV' this dissertation argues that the initial uncertainties and considerations of the translator in his introduction are lost, and give way to a narrative voice much more consistent with the 1553 commentary. While Douglas' direct translation may well adhere to that first set of humanist values as described by Griffiths, within the prologues his propensity to promote a didactic and dogmatic Christian moral is released, free from the constraints of the pagan structure that draws it back to Virgil within the

⁷¹ Griffiths, 2009 p. 194.

⁷² Griffiths, 2009 p. 194.

⁷³ Griffiths, 2009 p. 195.

⁷⁴ Griffiths, 2009 p. 196, emphasis my own.

⁷⁵ Griffiths, 2009 p. 195.

⁷⁶ Griffiths, 2009 p. 195.

⁷⁷ Griffiths, 2009 p. 194.

narrative.

Sarah Couper highlights particular additions to the Trinity MS that seem to pass judgement on the pro-Aeneas stance therein. Dissent in the marginal comments argues in favour of Dido, whereby the intervention of the gods ‘excusis nocht’ the consequent behaviour of Aeneas who ‘falit then gretly to the sueit Dido’.⁷⁸ Yet as Couper points out, this objection is rooted in theology, disputing the existence and therefore the relevance of the gods’ will: ‘the focus of this disagreement is neither Dido nor Aeneas, but theology’.⁷⁹ Couper agrees with the common consensus that these marginal comments are transcribed by Matthew Geddes in 1522 prior to Douglas’ death and that it ‘seems certain that these represent the “schort comment” ... Douglas himself compiled’.⁸⁰ It is telling, therefore, that Douglas’ own contribution to the argument surrounding Aeneas’ behaviour is rooted in theology, with little room for an empathetic or even emotional connection to his actions, fundamentally opposed to the laments portrayed by Chaucer, in his use of the Dido narrative.

What emerges from an examination of the marginalia surrounding the Trinity MS is that Douglas conceals as much as he reveals in his admissions to the reader: he mediates the possibilities of interpretation only so far as he is willing to do so, in his controlled representation of the narrative. His extension of a modesty topos into the margins of the text, commenting on his translation process, lull the reader into a belief in the commentator’s sense of objectivity that is not supported within the text itself, given its nature as a sermon-like reflection on the pitfalls of love. Tellingly, Douglas’ attempt to gloss the text is

⁷⁸ Both quoted in Couper, 2001 p. 165.

⁷⁹ Couper, 2001 p. 165

⁸⁰ Couper, 2001 p. 164-5.

not sustained and what begins as a highly-analysed translation soon lapses into reliance upon the content in its own right. This is indicative, perhaps, of the fact that the mediation of reader interpretation is in fact inherent in the poem itself, with no real need for further intervention on Douglas' part.

Chapter Two

Close Reading of the Fourth Prologue

One must always consider the 'Preamble of the Ferd Buke' ('Prologue IV') as a structure within a larger structure, namely that of the epic whole of the *Eneados*, which constricts the content of the prologue and at all times pervades our understanding of it: ultimately we know where the story is going and the narrative trajectory it must adhere to. The positioning of 'Prologue IV' prefacing the tale of Dido and Eneas immediately casts a negative shadow upon the content, through its well-known status as a narrative with a tragic outcome. As paratexts to a vernacular translation of an epic, the abstract prologues of the *Eneados* serve often as 'glosses' of broader themes. In this sense the prologue of the fourth book is one of the most important, as the thematic material of love and the impact of this emotion on the lives of Dido and Eneas are what define and distinguish between different medieval interpretations of the *Aeneid*. Through the variations on the classical source text tensions between humanism and Christianity arise, and are synthesized from Douglas's point of view, creating a tension which we will return to in the later chapters.

The fourth prologue is made of two distinct parts. It begins with a thirty-stanza reflection on the nature of love, followed by an eight-stanza rumination on the plight of Dido, addressed as though directly to the Queen of Carthage herself. The relationship between the two parts helps to articulate the problematic nature of Douglas' own treatment of the Dido material. Within the first part of the prologue, detached from 'reality', or rather from the minutiae of

the narrative, he adopts a lyrical, philosophical approach to the notion of love as a motivation for behaviour. Though ultimately scathing of the nature of love's 'fykkil sed',⁸¹ he alludes to broader themes of past epics and speaks in reverent tones of the power of love, false though it may be: 'Thou makist febill wight and lawyst the hie; / Thou knyttis frends chyp quhar thar beyn na parage...'.⁸² In separating love and lust thus, Douglas plays into the tradition of the 'two Venuses', choosing to focus upon the side which he feels to be most detrimental to man, that of his physical senses.⁸³ Crucially, Douglas devotes time to highlighting the importance of love as a facilitating element of Christian worship, believing it an outrage should one love 'ony creatur mair than God'.⁸⁴ This sacred aspect is the true meaning of the term 'love' for Douglas. What is important in this context is recognition of Douglas' use of 'love' within the prologue: the 'love' which he denigrates is not romantic love, it is a misappropriation of the term 'love' by man, a misrepresentation showing only love's negative side. Douglas' responds to this synonymy with carnal desire and refutes it in favour of his understanding of love as holy, virtuous and godly. Douglas deliberately embraces only the rational side of a multi-faceted concept: for Venus to be present and positive, her energies must be directed heavenward. Rather than mitigate the presence of a concupiscent element, Douglas intimates

⁸¹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 8..

⁸² *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', ll. 43-4.

⁸³ While this thesis was aware of the background of the 'two Venuses' argument, no time was given directly over to its discussion in light of the relatively small scope of the MPhil. A return to this subject matter is inescapable for further PhD study. For now, valuable references on the topic of the 'Two Venuses' are George D. Economou, "The Two Venuses and Courtly Love" in *Pursuit of Perfection: Courtly Love in Medieval Literature*, ed. Joan M Ferrante, and George D. Economou (1975), pp. 17-50; and Theresa Lynn Tinkle, *Medieval Venuses and Cupids: Sexuality, Hermeneutics, and English Poetry* (1996), in particular her remarks in the first chapter, "Beyond Binary Thinking: The Two, Three or Ten Loves" (pp. 9-42), that pertain to the commentary of Silvestri on the *Aeneid* in the twelfth century and the work of Chaucer.

⁸⁴ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 129.

that outwith this piety only a complete lack of Venus' presence can be construed as a positive force. There is no room on his page for self-improvement through physical desire.

Many critics, notable examples being Elizabeth Archibald and Priscilla Bawcutt, have sought to defend Douglas and argues that his work in the prologue is ambiguous, shaped by the attitudes of his contemporary audience towards virtue.⁸⁵ However, a more morally directive attitude is displayed by the author, particularly elaborate in the prologue. I wish to examine how Douglas' negative attitude is bound in his verse, and to build this conclusion upon close reading. While I agree with many of the ideas put forward by previous analyses, particularly in terms of Douglas' indebtedness to Chaucer, my overall impression is of an ultimately pious and pragmatic bishop.

Douglas' literary skill is displayed throughout the *Eneados*, and the prologue to the fourth book is no exception. Features typical of medieval literature appear in the text, notably the use of anaphoric address within the lines of a stanza (see, for example, ll. 43-49, with 'Thou [love]'). Though inconsistent and by no means all-pervasive, such manipulation of language creates a sense of parity with both Chaucer and Douglas' fellow Scottish makars, particularly when considered alongside the rife alliteration within the text, exemplified in the plosive 'bustuus bullys' of line 64 and the 'fervent flambe' of line 59, echoing the vehement manipulation of language for rhetorical effect evident in poems such as Dunbar's 'Done is a battell on the dragon blak'⁸⁶ and the insistent refrains of Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice*. One might argue that this aural resonance is a superficial parallel with his predecessor, but critics

⁸⁵ See Bawcutt 2006; Archibald 1989.

⁸⁶ Dunbar, Poem 10, Bawcutt ed. 1998 p. 69-70.

have instanced that Douglas' indebtedness to Chaucer runs much deeper than rhetorical echoing, taking a profound interest in Chaucer's thematic material and perspective on Dido and entering into discourse with what Chaucer had written centuries prior.⁸⁷ An important intermediary between Chaucer and Scottish writers is, undoubtedly, the *Kingis Quair*. While the constraints upon this dissertation do not allow for detailed discussion on this text in itself, forthcoming research by Kylie Murray⁸⁸ substantiates the notion that as well as Chaucer, a dialogue was constructed between writers such as Douglas and the *Quair* itself. Relevant to this dissertation is the notion that the *Kingis Quair* is a dream vision in which a positive outcome from non-dogmatic engagement with Venus' 'appetite' is attainable. As Douglas' patron, Sinclair, was the sole possessor of the *Kingis Quair* manuscript, an argument can be made for a knowing 'correction' of existing discourse on the 'double Venus'.

Once addressing the question of Dido, 'the text of our mater',⁸⁹ Douglas' projections take a turn towards specificity, with the use of 'thyne' and 'thi' marking the shift in tone from the generalities of his discourse on love to an almost accusatory address to Dido, singling her out as an exemplar. His despair is made plain in lines and stanzas beginning with exclamations of 'O', 'Quhat' and 'Allace', all culminating in a sense of Douglas' frustration with the tragic queen and her succumbing to the whimsy of love, her 'lusty pane'⁹⁰ and undoing.

Structurally, the indebtedness to Chaucer is made plain throughout the

⁸⁷ Further examples of the importance of Chaucer and the indebtedness of writers such as Douglas and Henryson to his work will be instanced throughout this thesis. For further critical work on the Scots 'Chaucerians' thematic concerns, see Gray, 1990.

⁸⁸ Forthcoming research, 2012. With thanks to Kylie Murray for access to these texts, please see 'Bibliography' for further details.

⁸⁹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 214.

⁹⁰ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 270.

prologue, adopting a clear and consistent use of rhyme royal, with the opening reference to the 'bemys scheyn' of 'bricht Cytherea'⁹¹ reminiscent of openings to poems such as the 'Parliament of Fowls', in which Dido also appears⁹² and, more interestingly, the *Kingis Quair*, thus implying a further link to a Scottish tradition. Tellingly, although Douglas is willing to address Cytherea within the first line of his prologue, he rejects her as a muse. This inverse nod to Chaucer's courtly addresses immediately establishes a distance between the two, whereby Douglas recognises the key material of his auctour, but determinedly forges his own path. The deliberate placing of the self is not limited to matters of literary opposition and indebtedness: within the *Eneados* Douglas utilises the prologues as a space outwith the core text in which to give voice to a poetic persona pitted against the restricted poet of the translation, each prologue a performance of generic diversity with its own unique poetic identity.⁹³

This distinction between prologues and translation can also be found in the style adopted. The stanzas of 'Prologue IV' exist as coherent entities within themselves, always reaching a neat ending, generally illustrated by editors such as Coldwell with assumed punctuation, using the full stop and question mark.⁹⁴ This contrasts starkly with the more limited style of the main translation, rife with awkward enjambment and a strong rhyme scheme of heroic couplets. In the prologues, the poet Douglas is thus distanced stylistically from the faithful translator.

By deliberately marking objectivity and subjectivity by means of style, whereby the objective interpretation is tied to the more prosaic translation, and

⁹¹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 1.

⁹² See *Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Benson, 1987 'Parliament of Fowls' l. 113, l. 289.

⁹³ See Appendix ii.

⁹⁴ As utilized in Coldwell, 1957 ed. e.g. ll. 6-7, 15-6.

subjectivity to the artful poetic prologues whose individuality is mediated once again by their genre as well, Douglas fashions himself not only in opposition to the content of Chaucer's poetry, but introduces a game of one-upmanship. Here Douglas will not only dismiss Chaucer's conjecture with regard to the tale of Dido, but furthermore strengthen his case by re-establishing the 'truth' of the narrative through the art of faithful translation, borrowing the form of the heroic couplet, which held an established association with the work of Chaucer (admittedly among many others), particularly in the 'Legend of Good Women' and the *Canterbury Tales*.⁹⁵ Given Douglas' outspoken challenge to Chaucer, however, and his engagement with Dido, whose tale is the longest one in Chaucer's 'Legend', the use of the couplet takes on more significance.

The language of 'Prologue IV' is consistent with the vernacular lexis of the *Eneados*. However, we can observe that the language is more florid than when fidelity to a source text is of paramount importance. Douglas revels in the vernacular, particularly in his use of religious vocabulary and a traditional Christian discourse, referring to 'pennance'⁹⁶ and 'hait desire byrnyng',⁹⁷ reminiscent of a warning sermon against carnal misadventure, furthered by his admonition to 'drynk bot quhen thou art dry'.⁹⁸ This earthy language is further established in typically Scottish poetic tropes of the time, with frequent use of phrases such as 'lykyng in langour' (l. 24) and 'onfructuus fantasy' (l. 19), highlighting a dependency on alliterative verse and Latinate language respectively, while love is depicted as 'bustuus bullys oft, for the 3ong ky'⁹⁹ in

⁹⁵ See Chapter III, 'Chaucerian Dido'.

⁹⁶ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 6.

⁹⁷ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 59.

⁹⁸ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV', l. 99.

⁹⁹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 64.

her powerful personification.

In 'Prologue IV', Douglas picks his key references with deliberation, referring to a mixture of classical heroes and religious figures. No reference is extended beyond a sentence or two; Douglas instead adopts the technique of listing (allowing space for a degree of comment). This technique is once again reminiscent of Chaucer's 'Parliament of Fowls', where Dido is mentioned in a list of those who have suffered for love, a passage mentioned above in relation to *The Palice of Honour*. In 'Prologue IV' Douglas conjures up images where Samson, Salomon and David sit alongside Aristotle in the fifth stanza, and it is here that the tension between a classical past and a Christian present is first negotiated, uniting these disparate figures as victims of 'love', unlike Chaucer who focuses solely on the classical figures. Alongside this symbiosis of fiction, fact and fundamental belief, common to poetry of the time, Douglas introduces the figure of Virgil, 'myne author of thi forss / in hys *Georgikis*',¹⁰⁰ imparting a sense of power upon the Roman poet and his presence, and therefore intimating a respect for his source. Archibald argues that Douglas' listing is 'traditional, but also random'.¹⁰¹ Indeed, it is a miscellany but, as with much poetry of the time, the assimilation of classical, literary and legendary harks to an era where Christian messages become bound in classical motif, and, in an issue as wide-ranging as the effect of 'love', this conflicting interconnectedness is potent. Though Douglas' intention may be to promote a Christian morality, the material with which he is working is inherently pagan in its content, and conflicts with the morality therein. Therefore, this dissertation argues that far from 'random', Douglas' listing exemplifies a cunning use of connotation to suggest a pervasive

¹⁰⁰ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' ll. 57-8.

¹⁰¹ Archibald, 1989 p. 246.

problem¹⁰² while at the same time mediating the difficulties it entails through prose juxtaposition of terms.

Recurrent references to 'grace' and God alongside 'service'¹⁰³ ensure that the religious vocabulary of the prologue mirrors its concerns. More broadly, the words chosen echo other contemporary works ruminating on the theme of love, particularly poems such as Dunbar's depiction of the 'merle and the nightingall' in which refrains of 'a lusty lyfe in luvys service' and 'all love is lost bot vpon God allone'¹⁰⁴ vie for supremacy.

The most pervasive image within the prologue is that of love itself, or rather, herself, depicted by Douglas as personified as 'brydilly[ng] Aristotyll as ane horss'.¹⁰⁵ Though a post-medieval perspective would view this image as a typical example of personified sentiment, it is important to note the nature of the medieval audience as subject to a literature of ideas rather than character, remarked upon by R. D. S. Jack, and referenced earlier in this thesis. The very image of Aristotle being bridled was a key image of the medieval period, further reinforcing the idea that Douglas is adhering to rules of literature codified by 'categorical' rather than 'individual' ideas. Jessica Rosenfeld states that '[w]hile scholastic philosophers were translating and commenting on newly available Aristotelian texts, Aristotle became a figure of fun and a symbol for the power of erotic love', as seen in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. Furthermore, 'This topos of the "mounted Aristotle," bridled ... was deployed in all manner of contexts, but at least one strand focused on the philosopher as a figure for the dominance of the intellect at the expense of both bodily and spiritual desire, with the seduction

¹⁰² Couper also discusses Douglas' use of listing, see 2001, p. 169.

¹⁰³ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' ll. 135-150.

¹⁰⁴ Dunbar, Poem 24, Bawcutt ed. 1998 ll. 8 and 16.

¹⁰⁵ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 31.

and humiliation of Aristotle functioning as revenge for intellectual hubris.¹⁰⁶ Even Virgil was subject to similar treatment, with medieval legends conflating and culminating in Andrew Lang's 1901 *Violet Fairy Book*. Therein Lang embellishes the familiar legend of 'Virgilius the Sorcerer' in which Febilla taunts the poet, publicly humiliating him. Both Aristotle and Virgil's plights are well documented in contemporary art, as selectively illustrated in 'Appendix iii' to this thesis.

The love described in these animalistic terms within Douglas' 'Prologue IV' is certainly exemplary of lust, in both contemporary and modern sense, humiliating the reason and rationality of man. The misuse of the term 'love' by humankind to excuse its misdemeanours indicates the explicitly physical element of human love, (which if we accept the argument for two kinds of Venus as omnipresent) whose devious nature is tangible, described by Douglas as having the agency that 'knyttis frendschyp quhar thar beyn na parage' and provoking victims with a 'lusty dart'.¹⁰⁷ Not only does this interpretation provide an example of a misused term, it also highlights once again Douglas' myopic view of the sides of Venus, actively choosing to limit his understanding and depiction of the emotion to her negative – from an orthodox Christian point of view – aspects. The personification of carnal lust as a nuisance articulates Douglas' scepticism towards the institution of secular, and in his view irrevocably carnal and therefore sinful, love. Inherent in Douglas' personification is a sense of great power, rendering those in her path to states of passivity. It is this passivity that poses the problem for Douglas: though willing to state and illustrate the great power of love as lust, he nonetheless degrades

¹⁰⁶ Both Rosenfeld, 2010 p. 112-3.

¹⁰⁷ Both *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 34.

those who fall prey to its powers, ultimately unforgiving in his criticism of this 'weakness'. It is this frame of mind that rests uneasily beside more positive depictions of Dido, such as Chaucer's, and casts doubt on any progressive thought on the part of Douglas. Even beyond his denigration of the physical elements of love, Douglas fails to illustrate the potentially positive value of love in developing self-governance and improving oneself, refusing to display a 'simultaneous interest in public and private conduct and the importance of self-knowledge for all men, irrespective of status',¹⁰⁸ opting instead for a rather one-dimensional sermon on strict moral conduct.

Douglas' personified misnomer of love pervades all aspects of Douglas' frame of reference: she has ridden the poets ('Aristotyll as ane horss'),¹⁰⁹ frolicked with the Biblical heroes ('David thou byreft')¹¹⁰ and meddled with the classical deities ('thou techit Hercules go lern to spyn').¹¹¹ The power of love to 'febill the strength'¹¹² is indiscriminate, and its implications exclusively negative, surmounting obstacles of disparate religion, reality or vocation. This notion allows Douglas to write a compelling narrative within a complex epic exegesis of theme (the conquering debilitating power of 'love' within the *Eneados*, notably a story stemming from Trojan legend, again underpinned by the desire for Helen), a comment upon themes with universal relevance within classical texts that, because of their quasi-pagan morality, troubled the medieval audience. Where once a moralized guide to appropriate love was the full extent of a poetic text's message, the introduction of more secular emphases within the works of

¹⁰⁸ Martin, 2008 p. 325.

¹⁰⁹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 31.

¹¹⁰ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 30.

¹¹¹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 48.

¹¹² *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 94.

humanists and their approach to individual experience and its verbal representation drew literary narrative and its audience into the secular realm, a struggle mirrored in Douglas' depiction of a human psyche within an epic of divine intent.

Structurally, the opening thirty stanzas are divided neatly in half, with groups of references placed pointedly together between lines 36 and 84, and the first fifteen lines of the prologue as a whole condemning the nature of love, misrepresented by Douglas' contemporaries as a equivalent to lust. The latter section promotes Douglas' own set of values and beliefs on the nature of 'true love', preaching a wholesome and virtuous life in God's service. This attitude is reinforced when one considers the placement of 'Prologue IV' within the Bannatyne MS, as discussed earlier in this thesis.¹¹³

From the beginning, Douglas makes use of the rhetoric of religion, appropriating language centred on traditional concepts of vice and virtue: 'lust, and ... pennance', 'carnail, hait delyte'¹¹⁴ are good examples of the sinister, sinful nature of carnal love as Douglas understands it, i.e. lust. His negative attitude towards love is imbibed in his characterisation of it as a strident, powerful force, represented by the language of action.¹¹⁵ Carnal love begets lethargy and passivity, these vices further propelling Douglas' ire against the trappings of passion.

Douglas inverts common imagery of love in the third stanza:

Quhat is 3our forfs bot feblyng of the strength?
3our Curyus thochtis quhat byt musardry?

¹¹³ See pages 16 and 20.

¹¹⁴ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' ll. 4 and 7.

¹¹⁵ *Eneados*, Prologue IV, ll. 44-56.

3our Fremmyt glaidnes lestis not ane howris lenth;
 3our sport for schame 3e dar not specify;
 3our frute is bot onfructuus fantasy;
 3our sary ioys beyn bot ianglyng and iapys,
 and 3our trew servandis sylly goddis apys.¹¹⁶

This pessimistic inversion of tropes highlights Douglas' firm belief in the capacity of man to utilize faith, not love, to underpin and overcome the minutiae of mortal existence, belittling the realm of affective desire and action to mere 'iapys'.¹¹⁷ His impatience with the institution of love as carnal and lustful is palpable throughout. So inflamed are his own passions within this crusade against sin, that stanza thirteen sees fire fought with fire, as Douglas succumbs to passionate proclamations of 'Lo!' to illustrate his woe. While it can be argued that this exclamation merely highlights a figurative dialogue with the classics, the arguments and evidence above (and advanced below) suggests that the subjective quality to the prologues, particularly instanced in the emphatic discourse of 'Prologue IV', indicate a more personal connection between Douglas and his text. Recovering himself after his woeful interjection, Douglas refers to 'myne author',¹¹⁸ entangling the art of literary creation with authority (be it auctorial or divine). This leads into his own preaching, in which he assumes the role of a conduit of a greater force advising all to 'drynk bot quhen thou art dry'¹¹⁹ — an adage which neatly summarises his attitude to moderation. Where critics such as McClure and Couper have utilised this moderate outlook to project a more apologetic Douglas, conscious of his limited compassion in light of his translation ambitions, this thesis argues that, if anything, Douglas is

¹¹⁶ *Eneados*, Prologue IV ll. 15-21.

¹¹⁷ *Eneados*, Prologue IV l. 20.

¹¹⁸ *Eneados*, Prologue IV l. 92.

¹¹⁹ *Eneados*, Prologue IV l. 99.

compromising his piety, and grudgingly.

Regardless of motive, this desire for moderation continues into the latter half of the first thirty stanzas, and seems to underpin Douglas' philosophy. Manipulating language into the realm of virtue and 'kyndly passioun', Douglas condemns the 'defectyve' implications of excessive love and advises his readers to place their faith and fervour in God: 'Lufe God for his gudnefs, / With hart, hail mynde, trew servyce, day and nycht'.¹²⁰

The virtues of ruth and piety are exalted and the 'schame' of carnal love is highlighted in the beautifully alliterative phrase 'slotteris...in sluggardry'.¹²¹ Douglas fervently advocates virginity, advising young women to not 'disteyn 3our kellys'¹²² before marriage. Interestingly, a depiction of courtly love is entwined in these remonstrations, which holds implications for the relation of the prologue to another Chaucerian text, that of *Troilus and Criseyde*, and the conventions therein, as discussed in Chapter III of this thesis.

It becomes ever apparent in the latter stanzas that for Douglas, true value and strength lies in the application of 'resson'¹²³, virtue and moral humility, as exemplified in the penultimate stanza of the first section, stanza 29:

Refreyn 3our curage syk paramouris to persew;
Grund 3our amouris on charite al new;
Found 3ow on resson – quhat nedis mair to preche?
God grant 3ou grace in luf, as I 3ou tech.¹²⁴

Whether it is a deliberate intimation and implication of Venus' negative side or indeed a genuinely felt belief, 'love' for Douglas is inherently connected to carnal

¹²⁰ *Eneados*, Prologue IV ll.114, 123 and 135-6.

¹²¹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' ll. 164 and 165.

¹²² *Eneados*, Prologue IV l. 165.

¹²³ *Eneados*, Prologue IV l. 206.

¹²⁴ *Eneados*, Prologue IV l. 204-7.

love and desire, and is nought but a 'serpent reddy to styng!' It is through this conservative view that Dido's 'dowbill wound'¹²⁵ is opened up for discussion.

It is not fair to say that Douglas is unsympathetic towards the queen, but it can be argued readily that he is disparaging of her plight. He feels sorrow for her undoing, yet his literary choices and interventions suggest that, underneath his outward supplications, a more retributive Douglas exists, to whom the tragedy of Dido is little more than a self-made destiny whereby she receives her due punishment for submitting to her passion. This attitude is best portrayed in his conspicuous lack of empathy for his female subject, despite McClure's suggested evidence to the contrary.

A strict close reading of Douglas' fourth prologue can only take us so far in terms of establishing a comprehensive sense of tone within the piece. Sarah Couper's 2001 doctoral thesis purports to reconsider the 'extent of Dido's exemplarity'¹²⁶ and argues for Douglas' invoking legitimacy into the discourse of sexual desire. A drive for self-definition as an author on Douglas' part is evident in Couper's reading,¹²⁷ a crucial point in my own argument, and is established through a mixture of both text and prose marginalia. Though Douglas may outwardly venerate Aeneas, marginal comments such as those of the Cambridge Manuscript provide an insight into a 'curiously fluid and noncommittal'¹²⁸ Douglas, should we extend the parameters of close reading into the margins and beyond, which we should.

Couper's thesis further questions the very usefulness of the text as a medium for understanding the underlying contemporary principles regarding

¹²⁵ *Eneados*, Prologue IV ll. 211 and 215.

¹²⁶ Couper, 2001, p. 160.

¹²⁷ Couper 2001, p 164.

¹²⁸ Couper 2001, p. 165.

love and lust –she describes how comments such as references to St Augustine's tears have become lost in translation, their original context long forgotten and rendered irrelevant through years of imposed meaning. She wishes to avoid the 'overweighted' tendencies of traditional Douglas criticism¹²⁹ and the proposed importance, inherent in her argument, of the text as a whole.

Couper highlights the paradoxes of language previously mentioned, i.e. the juxtaposition of opposites. Though these comparisons are widely accepted as testament to the poem's negative portrayal of desire (bound up in references to figures such as Medea and Alexander), Couper theorises that 'other exempla... resist comparison... or negative moralization'.¹³⁰ References to David and Jacob¹³¹ reflect a notion that is implicit in her reading of the text, namely the need for moderation, a sentiment which is indeed displayed by Douglas. Where Couper's thesis deviates from my understanding of the text is in her assertion that the greatest defence against any accusation that the poem is 'against love' (in the physical sense) is the imagery of 'Christ, bound by love in his mother's body'.¹³² This is incorrect: love as Douglas dismisses destabilises and defames it is not an entity of universal understanding and accepted meaning, nor is it even a double-sided entity ('the two Venuses'): it is lust, inherently sinful and undesirable. As Christ's conception was immaculate, any reference to the image of Christ *in utero* in order to problematize Douglas' argument is a *non sequitur*, as the reference serves only to enhance Douglas' allying of love with devotion and religious fervour. This dissertation does not adhere, however, to the opposite problem, that is to say allying love solely with affection and emotion –

¹²⁹ Couper 2001 p. 167.

¹³⁰ Couper, 2001 p.169.

¹³¹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' l. 29 and l. 47.

¹³² Couper, 2001 p. 170.

rather, it argues for a balanced view of the two sides, the two 'Venuses'.

The Context of the Fourth Prologue

As a brief examination of Couper's main argument has hinted, the role of context in terms of understanding 'Prologue IV' is manifold. Three 'contexts' vie for their presence around the parameters of the text: the temporal, the Scottish, and the metatextual. I will isolate and comment upon these apparent frames of reference and how they influence our expectations and, in turn, perceptions of the content.

One must consider the duality of perspectives that have approached the source text over the years, i.e. the temporal context of the text. A classical audience would receive the notion of omnipotent intervention and the sacrifice of autonomy in the spirit of Greek tradition of acquiescence to the gods. A medieval audience would contest this perspective with the restraints of a broadly monotheistic society, in which the notions underpinning Christianity would sit awkwardly in the pagan narratives through which these notions were reinvented. Redefined by Renaissance, Romantic and Modernist sensibilities is the perspective of a modern-day audience, to whom the concept of a society and moral code dictated by religion and (by now outdated) conventions may well seem alien. Trying to provide a purely literary analysis of Douglas' work is therefore a taxing process, and historicist concerns of perception and context are impossible to evade entirely.¹³³

Stylistically, the positing of Douglas alongside his fellow 'Makars' (Dunbar and Henryson) under the contested term 'Scottish Chaucerians'

¹³³ See further discussion in earlier section 'Literary Context of the *Eneados*' pp. 12-21.

highlights parity between the authors, if not an accurate assessment of their literary indebtedness. In this sense, an additional context appears whereby Douglas' work is positioned at the end of an era of aureate production and, in adhering to this convention, must also fulfil the criteria associated with such a poem. It is important that an analysis of the fourth prologue should not become limited by the term 'Scottish Chaucerians': as Morse points out 'to take the Prologues in isolation from the rest of the translation and read them as the last gasp of Scottish Chaucerianism is at once to misunderstand Douglas's ambition and his understanding of Chaucer'¹³⁴ as discussed earlier on page 11 of this thesis.

The Makars themselves are part of a larger intertextuality, comprised of annotation, marginalia and translation of source texts. To attain a high standard of literary achievement was not synonymous with originality, and the frequent references to contemporaries and predecessors indicate that each text must, to an extent, be read in tandem with those it challenges or otherwise engages with, in order for their full meaning to be grasped.

The confluence of these temporal, Scottish and metatextual contexts results in a complex text. On one hand, we have a classically established tale of the will of the gods, within which the moral worth of a hero is gauged by his obedience to a higher authority and capacity to fulfil a stated task. In relation to Dido, her narrative is one of omission, whereby questions are raised as to the morality of her actions and her abandonment, but rarely is voice given to these concerns. Conversely, the Chaucerian interpretation is bolder, adopting and adapting the *Aeneid* tropes to illuminate a tale of injustice to women. This

¹³⁴ Morse, 2006 p. 116.

surprisingly pro-feminine aspect is expressed articulately, despite its problematic nature as a piece of fourteenth-century literature.

Where Douglas fits into this context is, much to the delight of Couper's 'moderation' theory, somewhere in-between. Just as Robert Henryson does with 'Orpheus and Eurydice', Douglas intervenes in the ongoing development of a classical narrative. In the process, he also transforms it from Caxton's purely Dido-driven narrative and draws the tale back to its pre-Chaucerian interpretation, adopting a classical outlook on the events portrayed. Though Douglas sits at a temporal shift, the precipice of the Renaissance, his role as poet is restricted. Be it by his beliefs or by common expectation, the book of Dido as told by Douglas deliberately refracts Chaucer's narrative back into obscurity, highlighting in contrast the forward-looking nature of Chaucer's work. To delineate Douglas as primitive is too large a generalisation by far. However, as the above argues, to try and read his narrative as a subversive literary text, thwarting any expectations of clerics' moral behaviour, such as the argument Couper posits, is at best problematic and at worst impossible.

Tracy Adams' article in the 2009 volume *Masculinities and Femininities in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* concerns itself with clerical masculinity and its construction against female identity in the medieval era. Interestingly, a large part of her argument is centred around contemporary interpretations of the writing of St Augustine; despite common doubts as to the prevalence of his 'Confessions', the influence of Augustine is particularly relevant given Douglas' clear reference to this source in his 'Introduction'. There, Douglas utilizes his high esteem for Augustine to highlight his distaste for the work of Caxton

It hass na thing ado tharwith, God wait,

Ne na mair lke than the devil and Sanct Austyne
 Haue he na thank tharfor, bot loys hys pyne
 So schamefully that story dyd pervert.¹³⁵

Describing the impact of the Gregorian Reform upon the clerics of the church, Adams notes that ‘reformers found it effective to formulate the struggle for self-mastery as a duel with a wily and even deadly female foe’¹³⁶ in order to contain clerical sexuality through abstinence. This primarily twelfth-century view is furthered within the *Eneados* through the relevance of St Augustine’s teaching with regard to this mentality, linking this anxiety to Douglas’ own personal religious views and subsequent attitudes to sexuality.

Adams states that, although, like Augustine, ‘the cleric had to abandon his earthly lady, he did not, also like Augustine, need to forsake his love’.¹³⁷ The intimation apparent in this attitude is that one could learn from past misdemeanours and thus take something positive from carnal adventures. This supports the argument posited by Couper that in theory a moderation of earthly love can be negotiated within religiosity; however, this moral generosity is not indicated within Douglas’ *oeuvre*, where matters carnal are glossed over and evaded textually. His ire and preoccupation centre on the temptations posited by the existence of Dido as a woman.

Adams goes on to say that ‘material traces of medieval social agencies... offered their clerical readers a way of imagining their sexuality that allowed for emotional relationships with women to be dovetailed into the ascent towards wisdom’,¹³⁸ an argument that could arguably excuse Douglas’ treatment of Dido,

¹³⁵ ‘Introduction’, ll. 142-145.

¹³⁶ Adams, 2009 p. 6.

¹³⁷ Adams, 2009 p. 3.

¹³⁸ Adams, 2009 p.4.

again as a means to an heroic end for Aeneas. This ties in further with the epic notion of heroism through resisted temptation and tested loyalties. However, if there is a positivity to the outcome of Aeneas' dalliance with Dido within the *Eneados* this is certainly obliquely expressed by Douglas, particularly given Aeneas' later marriage to Lavinia, the 'leful' union to which Dido provides a foil.

As regards St Augustine, Adams locates his *Confessions* as the starting point for further exploration of clerical identity, detailing his 'tormented preparation for the chaste life'.¹³⁹ This torment showed his devotion to human relationships emotionally and physically, having previously confessed his erstwhile enthusiasm for sexual congress in *The City of God*. As a result of this enthusiasm, Augustine is himself a father, which further complicates the 'arduous'¹⁴⁰ transition to a celibate life. Study of Augustine's conversion confirms that, ultimately, to a medieval clerical audience sex was a requirement of inherently sinful humans 'for the greater good of reproduction'¹⁴¹ performed by bodies 'not evil, simply disobedient'.¹⁴²

The thrust of Couper's thesis is that this moderate view is continued and expanded in Douglas' prologues, yet this is difficult to argue: lust and physical intimacy are evaded as a topic throughout the prologues, even evaded in 'Prologue IV' ostensibly dealing with such matters, indicating a deep uneasiness in the validity of its 'leful' state. A reader of medieval Scottish texts can immediately cast their gaze back to the work of Dunbar and 'The Golden Targe', containing the image of 'Reson with scheld of gold so schene' being attacked, '[q]uhill Presence kest a pulver in his ene / and than as drunkyn man he all

¹³⁹ Adams, 2009 p. 5.

¹⁴⁰ Adams, 2009 p.6.

¹⁴¹ Adams, 2009 p. 6.

¹⁴² Adams, 2009 p. 7.

forvayit'.¹⁴³ It is conceivable, therefore, that Douglas is so cautious yet resolute in his stand against lust that he dare not even entertain the idea of intimacy within his text.

Certainly, Augustine and Douglas both recognize, as Adams articulates it, the confusing presence of desire 'inevitably... in male/female relationships',¹⁴⁴ yet Douglas again appears more constrained in his approach than Augustine, shown through his omission of matters carnal rather than an expression of them, a stance which seems to allow no room for the presence of sexual intimacy.

James Simpson's work on 'The Tragic' in 2004 proposes that the 'translation of the Virgilian epic in the early sixteenth century... revived ideals of imperial conquest'.¹⁴⁵ He begins his chapter by recounting the interaction of Gavin Douglas and Polydore Vergil recounted in Vergil's 1534 *Anglia Historica*. Therein Vergil describes Douglas' enthusiasm for the Gathelus creation narrative, promoting a genealogical history for Scotland to rival that of England and Brutus. Interestingly, this encounter occurred after Douglas' writing of the *Eneados* ('eight years after the battle of Flodden'¹⁴⁶ situating it in 1521) and, as Simpson comments, the Scottish author's attempted intervention into Vergil's work 'cannot be innocent of the ways in which myths of origin are deployed for imperial purposes'.¹⁴⁷

Previous mention has been made of the *Eneados* as anachronistic: within this thesis, the sense is that the depiction of Dido is regressive when taken in

¹⁴³ 'The Golden Targe', Bawcutt ed. l. 200, ll. 203-4.

¹⁴⁴ Adams, 2009 p. 8.

¹⁴⁵ Simpson, 2004 p. 68.

¹⁴⁶ Simpson, 2004 p. 71.

¹⁴⁷ Simpson, 2004 p. 68.

comparison with Chaucer's; within wider criticism McClure refers to the *Eneados* as a 'false dawn'¹⁴⁸ of Renaissance Europe. Simpson furthers this argument by describing Douglas' post-*Eneados* enthusiasm for the Gathelus myth. According to Simpson, the Gathelus myth sits in contrast to the *Aeneid*. The former is symptomatic of the medieval historical tradition, whereby genealogy and primogeniture dictate the progress of power, thus allowing only for alternation through marriage and/or war. The latter, exemplified in the *Aeneid*, depicts a centralized monarch, the decline of feudal systems and predicates the Renaissance by encouraging the imitation of the classic 'noble exemplar'¹⁴⁹ by non-noble classes. If we are to concede Simpson's analysis of the historical method, in which national history is written in an inherently misogynist grammar of conquest, what we see is a movement within Douglas' own consciousness from a forward-looking political stance to a tradition more akin to the fourteenth or fifteenth century. Again, this thesis would argue that Douglas' own stance is in reality far from progressive in its social implications, instead adhering strictly to certain very specific strains of humanism, namely dedicated translation of a source classical text, thus conveying its politics.

What Simpson proves, arguably, is that the context of the *Eneados* 1513 publication ('publication' in manuscript, that is) does intimate a motivation on Douglas' part to create a national epic but that further in his career he retracts his efforts, conscious of their inconsistencies. This has interesting implications for his portrayal of Dido. Desmond argues in conclusion to her chapter on Douglas that

¹⁴⁸ McClure, 1991 p. 185.

¹⁴⁹ Simpson, 2004 p. 75.

the *Aeneid* could perform an important role in claiming cultural preeminence and authenticating Scottish identity in opposition to the English, who are symbolically feminized in Douglas's view by their identification with their pro-Dido translator Caxton, and their pro-woman poet Chaucer.¹⁵⁰

This view is shared in part by Simpson, insofar as he is keen to discuss Douglas' disdain for Dido, going so far as to state that in this willing return to misogyny post-Chaucer 'Douglas shows himself the [kind of] author for whom the text is what an author wrote, rather than what a reader makes of it'.¹⁵¹ This statement accurately sums up a large contributing factor in Douglas' stringent adherence to depicting an unsympathetic Dido — public opinion is not the goal, in the sense of popular opinion. Douglas wishes to be recognized as a master of the material he translates, prior to any moral therein (although I would argue strongly that he delights in the dogma of Virgil's sexual politics).

Simpson's argument is based on the presumption of an overriding nationalist argument to Douglas' translation. I feel that such a reading relies too much upon abstract notions within the text as opposed to direct statements or exemplary quotations. However, where I concur with Simpson is that a sense of nationalism pervades the text in the sense of its construction, that is to say the use of Scots vernacular as a vehicle for translation. Furthermore, the publication dates of the manuscript, so close to the fatal Battle of Flodden, indicate the arguable necessary presence of a national consciousness, with the text standing as a parable against war addressed to James IV, highlighting the necessity of interaction with the underworld and the evils therein. While I would argue that there is truth and validity to Simpson's argument in the context of this

¹⁵⁰ Desmond, 1994 p. 194.

¹⁵¹ Simpson 2004, p. 91.

dissertation, a complete nationalist reading of the *Eneados* is not one which I feel to be viable or even possible given the content of the text.

Susan C. Hagedorn makes the further point in her 2004 monograph that for Augustine, the rejection of Dido takes on a deeper symbolism, '[standing] allegorically as a figure for the Virgilian text that Augustine himself must leave behind as he pursues his Christian destiny'.¹⁵² This argument could be applied to Douglas' treatment of the episode also, were it not for his willingness to apply Christian epithets to Virgil elsewhere in the text, showing no drive to abandon him, rather an eagerness to subordinate the pagan through absorption into the Christian. This contrast leads us once again to question just why Dido is treated in such a dismissive way: Douglas is clearly willing to negotiate the morality of symbols where Augustine erred on the side of an outward rejection, in terms of paganism and Christianity, so why should Dido be exempt from such nuance? Simpson goes so far as to state that 'a need to victimize women seems to drive Douglas' own poetic mission',¹⁵³ drawing the parallel that the forward movement of history demands the sacrifice of women, utilized 'metonymically for territories'.¹⁵⁴ This 'need' could be subject to many interpretations, most notably the psychological approach, which Bawcutt outwardly rejects.

Both Simpson and Desmond discuss the Augustinian influence on Douglas' portrayal of Dido. Simpson points out an apparent fluctuation in Douglas' empathy, whereby he 'begins by declaring his own tears for Dido, and those of St Augustine',¹⁵⁵ but goes on to attack her lack of controlled emotion. Desmond delves deeper into the matter and takes the content of St Augustine's

¹⁵² Hagedorn, 2004 p. 2.

¹⁵³ Simpson, 2004 p. 91.

¹⁵⁴ Simpson, 2004 p. 91.

¹⁵⁵ Simpson, 2004 p. 92.

Confessions back into context.

The original passage reads:

I was later forced to learn about the wanderings of some legendary fellow named Aeneas (forgetful of my own wanderings) and to weep over the death of a Dido who took her own life from love. In reading this, O God my life, I myself was meanwhile dying by my alienation from you, and my miserable condition in that respect brought no tear to my eyes. (21) What is more pitiable than a wretch without pity for himself who weeps over the death of Dido dying for love of Aeneas, but not weeping over himself dying for his lack of love for you, my God...¹⁵⁶

From this excerpt, as Desmond elucidates further, it is clear that the act of weeping over Dido is closely intertwined with anxieties regarding understanding and discipline, rather than being an act of empathy on Augustine's part. As Desmond puts it, his 'concern that reading be disciplined by specific interpretive models is matched by his concern that sexuality be brought under control of the will'.¹⁵⁷ This concern underpins precisely the anxieties that, this thesis argues, Douglas brings to bear in his 'Prologue IV'. Though Desmond and Simpson do not express the same level of analysis in decoding what Augustine's tears signify, they agree strongly that, despite Douglas' inferred empathy (be it sincere or misconstrued), Dido nonetheless becomes an 'ethically reduced exemplum' who is 'detached from the historical process that destroys her'.¹⁵⁸ In Douglas' translation and interpretation of the *Aeneid*, Dido is little more than a peripheral casualty of a greater journey, the protagonist of which is of course Eneas who is held up as a model of 'wirschip, manhed and nobilite'.¹⁵⁹

There is a strong argument that Dido's suppression and ultimate

¹⁵⁶ Chadwick trans., 2008 p. 15.

¹⁵⁷ Desmond, 1994 p. 77.

¹⁵⁸ Both Simpson, 2004 p. 92.

¹⁵⁹ *Eneados*, 'Prologue I' l. 330.

dismissal by countless translators, Douglas included, relies in part on the relation of her character to that of Aeneas. The *Aeneid* is an epic, emergent from the ashes of Troy, whereby Rome sought to forge its own creation myth. In constructing the tale thus, Aeneas becomes emblematic of a leader, a warrior and, ultimately, a Roman. To criticize his actions would be to lower his status in the eyes of his followers and, latterly, his readers. Kallendorf speaks extensively about the influence of epideictic rhetoric on Petrarchan and Boccaccian interpretations of the *Aeneid* and in particular their representations of Dido.¹⁶⁰ The intimation of this argument perhaps distils into differing ideas of leadership and humanity: where modern readers may feel that in literary texts a fallible, realistic leader be desirable, such as one who may succumb to lust yet learn from it, for Douglas' era the strict moral exemplum of Aeneas' adherence to his mission and the gods' will is the more desirable as well as being more palatable in terms of contemporary poetics and their adherence to ideas over character.

¹⁶⁰ See Kallendorf, 1989 Chs. 'Francesco Petrarca' and 'Bocaccio's Two Didos'.

Chapter III

Chaucerian Dido

As previously discussed, the importance of Chaucerian influence on Scottish poetic production in the period 1450-1513 is best summarised in the controversial misnomer of 'Scots Chaucerians'. This study will evade this area of discussion as far as possible, by asserting that although the general influence of Chaucer upon these poets is a matter of much debate, Douglas' own familiarity with Chaucer is an apparent feature of the *Eneados*, particularly so in the Dido episode, which addresses Chaucer directly.

Whether this renders Douglas a 'Chaucerian' or not is another matter, though the suspicions of this reading ally with those of Bawcutt, that to reduce the Anglo-Scottish influence to one author is to over-simplify matters, reducing the merit of the variety of works at hand in Douglas' sizeable capacity for reference. Nonetheless, the association of Chaucer with the development of the Dido legend is well established and bears fruit when analysed in relation to Douglas.

In terms of representations of Dido, two of Chaucer's texts stand out: *The Legend of Good Women* and *The House of Fame*. While the former is the more frequently and more thoroughly scrutinised of the pair, it is to the latter that this study initially turns its attention. Within this text a more independent representation of Chaucer's own perspective is accessible, unlike the politically charged *Legend* with its roots in confrontation, its very creation the result of a literary challenge to depict 'good' women. The nature of reference and allusion

in the *House of Fame* focusses strongly on an organic mesh of imagery and symbolism, brought together in the rich alchemy of a dream vision, synonymous with a sense of freedom for the medieval writer.

The earlier of the two texts, the *House of Fame* dates from circa 1380 and ponders the concept of fame, and indeed infamy. As John M. Fyler outlines, it is generally agreed that the Italian influence shown within the parameters of the text are what date it and perhaps link the texts of Douglas and Chaucer on a more influential level.¹⁶¹ Common dream vision features are prevalent in this assertion: the narrator of the *House of Fame* is a dreamer, not a lover, an observer rather than an active participant, and the text instances a fascination with the very nature of dreaming, and, with it, the nature and effect of love and desire. The prevalence of dream vision in Scottish literature of the medieval period immediately draws a connection between the work of Chaucer and the Scottish Makars, again further reinforced by current research such as that of Kylie Murray.¹⁶²

In terms of the narrative persona adopted by Chaucer, the 'Geffrey' of *The House of Fame* is an outwardly simple construction insofar as he represents Chaucer himself, rather than an intermediary or censor of the poetic vision. However, Marilyn Desmond points out that the Chaucer we see is the 'reader' Chaucer,¹⁶³ the vessel through which art is interpreted rather than the creator of an artefact itself. This opinion seems to free Chaucer to display a more subjective nature that would perhaps be becoming of an original – in the modern sense of the word – poem, where the proportionate 'blame' for any ensuing

¹⁶¹ *The Riverside Chaucer*, 2000 p. 347.

¹⁶² See Murray, 2011.

¹⁶³ Desmond, 1994 p.131.

controversy would lie solely with him. In choosing an ekphrastic vision in which to comment upon the questions posed by Dido's character, Chaucer relieves himself of the responsibility of creation – 'creation' in the modern sense of the word – and focusses instead on interpretive representation, the medieval sense of 'creation'. As a result, it is easier to draw conclusions as to Chaucer's stance, the veil of subtlety and constraints of remit having been removed.

With the 'temple ymad of glas',¹⁶⁴ the reader Geoffrey finds his attention captivated by the definitively brief courtship of Aeneas and Dido, which he approaches as a voyeur, observing its representation in a mural. This in itself may be viewed as echoing Aeneas' observation of his own story, told in murals in Dido's palace. Geoffrey, detached from any kind of immediately observable action, he reflects upon the tale as he is familiar with it, and conjectures as to the 'reality' of the action beyond Virgil's representation. The exposition of this reflection is shaped by a growing realisation for both the characterised reader Geoffrey and reader proper, that is to say the audience of the text, that Dido can and arguably *should* be read as victim. Chaucer enhances this sense of autonomous realisation on the part of the reader by mirroring Geoffrey's thought process with the reader's, starting out from a relatively impartial stance, and developing this into a lament for Dido, Aeneas having 'betrayed hir, alas'.¹⁶⁵ Unsurprisingly for the time, there is also criticism implicit in this lament, as Chaucer remarks:

Loo, how a woman doth amys
to love hym that unknowen ys!
For, be Cryste, lo, thus yt fareth:
"Hyt is not gold al that glareth."¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ *House of Fame*, l.120.

¹⁶⁵ *House of Fame*, l. 294.

¹⁶⁶ *House of Fame* ll.268-72.

which seems to claim a level of ignorance on Dido's part. Nonetheless the tone of the passage is such that, rather than condemn Dido and 'hir nyce lest',¹⁶⁷ he feels pity for her and this is reflected in his overall interpretation of her narrative.¹⁶⁸ Indeed, she may be foolish and 'nyce' but her actions are ultimately understandable and it is this humanity that creates the sympathy felt in Chaucer's work, we find ourselves drawn into Geoffrey's own subjective sympathy thus shaping our interpretation of Dido's character.

With this stance in mind, Chaucer becomes bolder and goes so far as to give voice to the abandoned queen. Within this frame, Dido gives voice to her sorrow and it is from this that we garner a sense of the progressive thought regarding the autonomy of a woman which pervades Chaucer's narrative. Where Dido mourns, it is not for a love lost or a passion subsumed; it is a bereavement of and from the self. She is a queen who has lost her ability to define herself, female fame having become synonymous only with the names of the men whom they encounter. The traditional narrative of a tragic love is supplanted by a different kind of tragedy:

'Oh wel-away that I was born!
 For thorgh yow is my name lorn
 And alle myn actes red and ronge
 Over al thys lond, on every tonge,
 O wikke Fame! – for ther nys
 Nothing so swift, lo, as she is!¹⁶⁹

In a further move away from the canonical Virgil, Chaucer does not excuse Aeneas on the basis of omnipotent intervention or a sense of 'fatedness'. His

¹⁶⁷ *House of Fame* l. 287.

¹⁶⁸ *House of Fame* ll. 293-363.

¹⁶⁹ *House of Fame*, ll. 345-50.

criticism is of the fallacy of appearance, and a reader's responsibility to interpret, 'what it is fals in existence'.¹⁷⁰ He depicts Dido as having been hoodwinked, and moreover, manipulated by Aeneas. The capacity of the woman to be a person in her own right is implicit in Chaucer's argument, in the very notion that it is possible to mistreat a woman, who contemporaneously had been argued to be a mere object. He emboldens this assertion further by allowing Dido to voice her arguments in a rational and schematic rhetoric, attributing masculine capabilities to her approach and thus empowering her character and emasculating Aeneas:

..Alas is every man thus trewe,
That every yer wolde have a new,
Yf hit so long time dure,
Or elles three peraventure?¹⁷¹

She goes on to elaborate upon the reasons men may have for abandonment and cowardice, namely fame, friendship or profit. Where many authors such as Douglas, as we will observe later, are quick to attribute Dido's response to Aeneas' abandonment as a result of foolish and transient passion, Chaucer emphasises her rationality, and the understandability of her sorrow, serving to enhance Aeneas' betrayal into something beyond the realm of fitful passion.

There is a change in Chaucer's Dido compared to previous representations of her character: where once she was merely an object, Chaucer's decision to give her voice transforms her into a subject. An allegorical transformation can therefore be argued, whereby the role of the reader changes from someone who is being read, to someone who actively reads. These questions of reading link closely to the material covered in Cooney's work on

¹⁷⁰ *House of Fame*, l. 267.

¹⁷¹ *House of Fame*, ll. 301-4.

'The Crisis of Allegory', specifically the reluctance of Douglas to accept the potentiality of free expression, discussed further on pages 81 and 82 of this thesis. With reading comes responsibility for the assimilation of meaning, reliant upon the exercise of reason before passion: Chaucer allows Dido to become a 'reader' of her situation, that is to say an active participant. Douglas, however, is keen to limit Dido's power of interpretation and therefore limit our appreciation of it. Where Chaucer allows that Dido may have been a successful ruler, tied to her capacity as a capable reader, Douglas argues for a figure who fails to interpret her situation correctly and accordingly fails in her role as leader. Douglas' denigration of Dido in terms of her agency may be defensible to the author, as she is a victim of her own passion, however this is only symptomatic of a greater indictment of both Dido and women generally as incapable 'readers', delivered in a sermon-like fashion.

The final act of suicide can be read as an act of supreme self-definition, an assertion of one's autonomy and selfhood by taking one's very existence within one's own control. The action of Dido ending her life is understandable as an attempt to retain power over her public perception, of which she is now ashamed. Chaucer absolves himself of the responsibility of depicting this particular scene, instructing readers instead to refer to 'Ovyde'¹⁷² for further detail of Dido's demise. His apparent reluctance to involve himself in depicting this death serves to enhance the reader's sense that the Chaucer of *The House of Fame* has an empathetic connection to the tragic queen that is missing in other more graphic representations of her story.

The Legend of Good Women is the culmination of many references and re-

¹⁷² *House of Fame*, l. 379.

imaginings peppered throughout Chaucer's literary output. Within the text, Chaucer, having been chided by Cupid, details the lives and deaths of ten women from history and mythology – with more planned – featuring Dido's tale in the third book. Ann McMillan's translation of the text offers a particularly neat summary of his task whereby Cupid asks Chaucer:

Why could you not have said good things as well
As bad ones in the stories that you tell?
Was there no worthy subject in your mind,
Or in your books could you have failed to find
For me some tale of women good and true?¹⁷³

McMillan's translation into plain, modern English enhances the notion of simplicity underlying the task which is posed to Chaucer, the basic, accusatory nature of which may be lost in the original language for a modern audience.

The text as a whole is a complex one, inaccessible in terms of a clearly established tone and overarching theme. Chaucer scholars are quick to deflect the claim that Chaucer lacked interest in the text, pointing out that the rhetorical devices many cite as exemplifying this disinterest are in fact merely a crafty use of an established convention.¹⁷⁴ For the purposes of this study, the tempestuous nature of the text and its reluctance to adhere to one clear viewpoint are viewed as testament to the frustration of Chaucer in the restrictions of his contemporary environment, such as Boffey and Edwards discuss in their contemplation of 'double imperatives'.¹⁷⁵ The conclusion of his *Legend* seems to

¹⁷³ *Legend of Good Women* (McMillan trans.) ll. 268-72. The original text reads: 'Why noldest thou as wel [han] sed goodnesse / Of wemen, as thow hast seyde wikednesse? / Was there no good matere in thy mynde, / Ne in alle thy bokes ne coudest thou nat fynde / Som story of wemen that were goode and trewe?' (Riverside ed., ll.268-73)

¹⁷⁴ Cf the introduction to the *Riverside* edition of *The House of Fame*, p. 994. For wider reading on Chaucer's use of convention, see Holton, 2008.

¹⁷⁵ Boffey and Edwards, 2003.

plunge unendingly towards the unsatisfactory conclusion that a good woman is indeed a dead woman, denied the capacity to further complicate her own narrative.

The text itself is stylistically bound to the *House of Fame* in its structure, utilising rhyming couplets to drive the poem forward. *The House of Fame* is never far from the reader's mind, as Chaucer uses the *Legend* to further articulate the feelings he expressed in the earlier poem. This reserve leads to a diluted text in many ways, with the immediacy of Geoffrey's sympathy removed from the narrative, and Chaucer somewhat romanticising aspects of Dido's tale. Aeneas becomes a wretched, devastated man who is nurtured back to health by maternal Dido, yet despite this incongruity, Chaucer utilises this more sympathetic Aeneas in such a way that his weakness enhances the sense of Dido's betrayal, portraying a weakened Aeneas in a state of recuperation, which he surmounts with the compassion and kind treatment of Dido. Accordingly, a sense of expected reciprocity is introduced into the text, Dido's care ensuring Aeneas 'nevere beter at ese was in his lyve',¹⁷⁶ enhancing a sense of injustice for the reader when Aeneas takes his leave. Chaucer intimates strongly that Aeneas' growing desire to move on, a desire that increases parallel to his recovery, is nothing short of disrespectful to Dido, and that her kind treatment has created a debt between them which Aeneas is flagrantly refusing to fulfill. The trajectory of Chaucer's narrative indicates a sympathy for the tragic dimension of the story, the implication of Aeneas in a situation of woman wronged. In this sense, Chaucer utilises genre in such a way that Dido cannot exist merely as an exemplum, and is necessarily given greater dimensions than in Douglas, where

¹⁷⁶ *The Legend of Good Women*, (McMillan trans.) l.1099.

she is utilised as a tool for Aeneas' self-development, an essential victim of his journey and a foil for his eventual marriage to Lavinia. So too, in Chaucer, is Aeneas portrayed as more nuanced a character, capable of weakness and interaction with Dido as an equal in his recovery, serving only to enhance the pain of his decision to leave.

Where Chaucer is happy to point his readers in the direction of Ovidian interpretation, as he does in both *The House of Fame* and the *Legend of Good Women*, Douglas refuses this view and opts for a didactic prologue, in the style of a sermon, to foreground his interpretation. Surely this is indicative of a deeper, misogynist (lack of) engagement with the subject matter? The use of didactic prologue as demonstrated by Douglas is not in itself misogynist by definition; however the fact that Douglas lets the question of Dido merge from his source text into a self-penned prologue suggests a preoccupation with the Aeneas Dido story. In continuing this preoccupation on into his prologue, he is indicating a dissatisfaction with the way in which the story is covered in the source text and within that prologue he could legitimately have pursued a more Chaucerian or Ovidian line of argument, freed from the constraints of direct and loyal translation. He could have represented conflict repressed within the text, of two individuals conflicted within the context of lust - yet he unequivocally chooses to chastise Dido and defend Aeneas. This suggests that it was not a mere question of translation or genre that lead Douglas to indict Dido so vehemently, and 'correct' Chaucer so enthusiastically.

Thus, an ulterior motive may be posited whereby Douglas seeks to regulate, not explore, sexual love and in turn, the readerly autonomy one may legitimately have expected in light of the text's relation to Chaucerian poetics.

This motive is further substantiated by the presence of the thirteenth book, an additional deviation from the source text he professes such fealty to. Within this deviation Douglas prioritises and praises the legitimacy of married love, underlining a notion that is not addressed in such a direct manner in Virgil's text. Therefore, Douglas betrays his own agenda in these additions, as so many interlocutors before him, revealing his own damning verdict on sexual politics and morality, as well as the purpose of literature itself, as he would have it, a vehicle for didactic teaching.

The *Legend* is a much more self-conscious text, unlike the *Eneados*, it responds to a set critical challenge with the terms clearly defined: the role of Chaucer as creator, rather than reader, is visited in his vivid description of the eventful hunt which culminates in the courtship of the couple, and the pathetic fallacy of the ensuing storm, depicting 'bestes wilde' and 'rumbelen' skies.¹⁷⁷ The lack of ekphrastic framing, unlike in *The House of Fame*, places the reader and the poet more immediately in the action. Chaucer further utilises the device of rhetorical questioning, directly addressing 'women' in an extract that can be read in a number of ways:

O sely women, full of innocence,
 Full of pite, of trouthe and conscience.
 What maketh yow men to truste so?¹⁷⁸

On the one hand Chaucer presents an outwardly patronising, despairing enquiry as to the naïvete of women; yet on the other it can be seen as a more respectful sentiment, whereby women such as Dido are, simply put, far superior to the men

¹⁷⁷ *The Legend of Good Women*, (McMillan ed.) ll. 1217-8.

¹⁷⁸ *The Legend of Good Women*, (McMillan ed.) ll. 1225-7.

that traditionally define them in legends.

The argument for Chaucer's as an Ovidian Dido is furthered as the *Legend* concludes, and Chaucer derives a voice for Dido in the form of a letter, the epistolary form of which is predicated on Ovid's *Heroides*. The tone of this letter, as it is interpreted by Chaucer, is once again hard to pinpoint precisely, but it certainly strays far from an hysterical lament of passion into questions of identity and autonomy. A recent translation by Daryl Hine concludes with a direct reference to Dido's role in her demise, thus eliminating a sense of the passionate 'victim':

Sychaeus' wife I shall not be described
And when my epitaph is thus inscribed:
'Aeneas furnished her the motive and
The means, but Dido died by her own hand'.¹⁷⁹

Following on from this sentiment, Chaucer once again leaves Dido pondering the nature of her remorse and autonomy in her own demise, and directs our attention once more to the tragedy of identity she is suffering. A parallel is drawn between her definition now as Aeneas' abandoned love, and her earlier renown as Sychaeus' widow. A strain of the philosophical permeates the text, exemplified in Chaucer's observation that 'love wol love, for nothing wol it wonde',¹⁸⁰ this lamentation directly contrasting with Douglas' later assertions.

Within the *Legend* the tragedy of Dido is not limited to the symbolic, as Chaucer transcribes the allusion of Virgil to Dido's desire to be with child into a literal pregnancy. Thereby, as Desmond accurately asserts, Chaucer now 'makes

¹⁷⁹ Hine, p. 115.

¹⁸⁰ *The Legend of Good Women*, (McMillan ed.) l. 1187.

her body the central casualty',¹⁸¹ reinforcing his argument from mere emotional betrayal to a literal ruin. This, combined with an intimation of Aeneas' unjust betrayal on a number of levels, epitomises Chaucer's anachronistically 'feminist' presentation of Dido. Where he seems questioning or dismissive of women within *The Legend*, one can attribute this to his frustration with his contemporary social and literary expectations rather than any kind of thwarted misogyny, unable to be expressed due to by the textual task at hand.

Such was Chaucer's apparent feminism that Gavin Douglas attacked his work directly on this count, famously stating that Chaucer 'was evir (God wait) all womanis friend'.¹⁸² This comment, located in the introduction of his *Eneados*, immediately poses a challenge to Chaucer's interpretation of Dido, and this challenge is manifested throughout the fourth book of Douglas' poem.

¹⁸¹ Desmond, 1994 p. 160.

¹⁸² *Eneados* 'Introduction' l.459.

Chapter Four

The Testament of Cresseid

Quha wait gif all that Chauceir wrait was trew?
 Nor I wait nocht gif this narratioun
 Be authoreist or fenyeit of the new
 Be sum poeit throw his inventioun,
 Maid to report the lamentatioun
 And wofull end of this lustie Creisseid
 And quhat distress scho thollit and quhat deid¹⁸³

There is distinct parity between Gavin Douglas and Robert Henryson, both in their propensity to create something 'fenyeit of the new' and their interaction with the literary traditions surrounding classical figures, as in Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice*. For Douglas, the 'new' consisted of the application of vernacular language to a classical tradition, as opposed to the overt content of the piece, whereas Henryson took his lead from Chaucer and developed his own parenthesis to an established tale. This chapter will examine Douglas' Dido in conjunction with Henryson's Cresseid, in the context of what are often grouped together as 'Chaucerian' texts. In doing this, I hope to further Desmond's investigation into a developed Dido tradition by isolating and discussing the Scotland-specific traits of classical and post-classical re-interpretation in the 1450-1513 period. Establishing a unity between the two makars through comparative reading in terms of style and content will shed further light on Douglas' authorial intent and offer an alternative means of interpretation for the *Eneados* and in particular 'The Preambill to the Ferd Buke'. In particular, the contrast between Henryson's narrative technique, whose plurality draws attention to the fictitious nature of poetry, and Douglas' propensity to advocate

¹⁸³ 'The Testament of Cresseid' lines 64-70.

the value of linguistic truth and accuracy in translation will draw out the distinct attitudes of each 'makar' towards their respective heroines and, moreover, the areas of overlap between the two authors.

The above excerpt from Henryson's *Testament of Cresseid* offers a cogent platform on which to base a comparison of the texts. The basic framework of this stanza predicates what the *Eneados* sets out to do, in terms of interrogating and challenging *auctours* or previous interpretations under the guise of 'truthful' translation or adaptation. Henryson questions the textual authority of Chaucer, and adopts a modesty topos in proffering his 'inventioun',¹⁸⁴ much like the self-effacing Douglas in his 'Introduction' to the *Eneados*. The reference to 'lustie Cresseid'¹⁸⁵ could easily be interchanged with a reference to Dido. Although these could be argued to be merely cosmetic similarities, as we delve further into the texts it becomes apparent that, where Cresseid is often observed by the reader as a victim of fate (though notably **not** by the narrator), the agency and centrality of Dido is paradoxically implicit in Douglas' critique, that is, he expects better of her, and judges her on her choice to act contrary to this better (and more masculine) nature. Henryson's 'Testament' further complicates matters in its complex narrative framework, which must be considered alongside Douglas' role as a translator, a conduit to an established tale. A comparison of the two texts will be of great benefit in enhancing our understanding of both, as such nuanced analysis of the two texts will bring out more accurately the different approaches towards the classical heroines.

Sally Mapstone has supplied a concise and informative study of the

¹⁸⁴ 'The Testament of Cresseid' l. 67.

¹⁸⁵ 'The Testament of Cresseid' l. 69.

genesis of the Criseyde myth,¹⁸⁶ which shares the concerns of Desmond's monograph. Both collate and juxtapose the plethora of interpretations and representations in the development of their female figure, both of whom come from confused beginnings. Though not a classical figure per se, Criseyde begins as an amalgamation of Chryseis and Briseis, two separate Trojan women, while Dido appears as 'Elissa' in Timaeus' fourth-century writings, and, more importantly, as a distinct figure of virtue in pre-Virgilian tellings, as discussed in Chapter Two of this study. What Mapstone and Desmond offer is a chronology of development that illuminates the progress of each character and highlights the ideas surrounding each representation, and, in Desmond's case, the contrapuntal development of two different basic interpretations (Ovidian and Virgilian). Where they do not stray is into the territory of the Scottish tradition, that is to say they do not ask which distinguishing factors contribute to, and which characteristics emerge from, the recreation of these myths in Scotland from 1450 onwards, and this is the matter to which this study now turns.

As previously discussed within this study, the epithet 'Chaucerian' is hotly contested in the area of Older Scots studies, yet the link of both the 'Testament' and the *Eneados* to the work of Geoffrey Chaucer is undeniable, it is explicitly stated both within the texts and through their form and content. Such was the strength of the 'Testament' as a Chaucerian text that in the sixteenth century it was ascribed to Chaucer himself, included in a number of editions as an epilogue to *Troilus and Criseyde*. Not only is this connection with Chaucer undeniable, it is important — Chaucer's work catalyses several Scottish responses, Douglas' reworking of Chaucer's subjective re-interpretation of a

¹⁸⁶ Mapstone, 2000.

classical text as proposed in the *Legend of Good Women* and in *The House of Fame*, and Henryson's proposed continuation of the *Troilus* narrative. Anne McKim describes the 'Testament' as having been seen as a continuation of Chaucer's poem; an alternative conclusion to it; a penetrating, sometimes ironical, commentary on it; and as bearing a relationship to it not unlike that of a moralitas to a fable.¹⁸⁷

As years of critical practice prove, it is impossible to isolate one of these suggestions as the definitive description of the 'Testament', but McKim's stance does highlight the plurality of understanding inherent in Henryson criticism, and the presence of a more obvious didactic than is immediately apparent in Douglas' *Eneados* as a whole, where the ultimate aim is ever the true translation of a source text. In this sense 'Prologue IV' stands out even more as being a strong indictment of love, in itself an obvious deployment of didactic poetry.

Kevin J. Harty's 1982 article is quick to point out the necessity of a complete reading of the text, to prevent inconsistent and problematic readings of 'proto-Presbyterian'¹⁸⁸ morality. He states that 'the poem's narrator, not its author, is the stern moralist'¹⁸⁹ and highlights the presence of Henryson at the poem's conclusion, where the heroine is offered 'a redemption that the narrator is incapable of appreciating or sharing in'.¹⁹⁰ This redemption allows Cresseid to transcend her earthly plight and, as Harty states, 'depends upon a Boethian assessment of the true value of all that pertains to earthly existence and a subsequent rejection of its transience'¹⁹¹. In drawing comparisons between

¹⁸⁷ McKim, 2006 p. 112.

¹⁸⁸ Harty, 1982 p. 753.

¹⁸⁹ Harty, 1982 p. 753.

¹⁹⁰ Harty, 1982 p. 753.

¹⁹¹ Harty, 1982 p. 753.

Chaucer's work and that of Henryson's 'stern moralist' narrator, Harty finds parity not with the narrator of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* but in the heartless Reeve of *The Canterbury Tales*: 'Both tell stories whose ironic self-implications totally escape them'.¹⁹² Parallels can be drawn between Cresseid and her narrator in their dissociation from society. However, Henryson's voice emerges most strongly against the dogmatic narrator when he allows Cresseid her moment of epiphany, of self-realisation that will allow her to transcend her punishment and attain peace through her recognition of her own responsibility in shaping her fate. As Harty attests, this allows Henryson's poem to transcend the pagan world in which it has become imbibed and reach a pinnacle of Christian meaning, successfully moralising the narrative,¹⁹³ something that is arguably more problematic within Douglas' more didactic texts, which lack the flexibility of Henryson. As Cresseid states in her climactic moment of clarity: 'Quha findis treuth, lat him his lady ruse, / Nane but myself as now I will accuse'.¹⁹⁴ Douglas is perhaps unable to 'humanise' Dido as Henryson does with Cresseid, due to his sense of duty to preserve the original pagan text in translation, thus resulting in the arguably moralising prologues, an effort to shape the reading of an awkward morality within Virgil's narrative.

Like Chaucer before him, Henryson famously gives Cresseid voice, and, as Mapstone points out,¹⁹⁵ both authors allow her to perform her 'final speaking act' through an epistolary medium. The act of letter-writing poses a striking contrast to Douglas, who actively rejects Chaucer's expressive Dido and the letters of Dido in classical and contemporary literature, by limiting her

¹⁹² Harty, 1982 p. 754.

¹⁹³ Harty, 1982 p. 757.

¹⁹⁴ 'The Testament of Cresseid' lines 573-4.

¹⁹⁵ Mapstone, 2000 p. 147.

expression to that outlaid in Virgil's original text; in fact, Douglas' own fourth prologue constrains Dido's agency and voice even more. If one is to read the 'Testament' and the *Eneados* as symptomatic of a crisis of allegorical meaning, as suggested by Cooney in her 'Crisis of Allegory',¹⁹⁶ perhaps Douglas' fear of an autonomous and articulate woman mirrors his concerns about a fluctuating system of meaning, expressing a desire to repress free (and therefore potentially controversial) expression. Both Douglas and Henryson are at times referred to as humanists, and although Cooney's article does not concern itself directly with matters Scottish, the substantive part of her argument as regards humanism is nonetheless pressing in relation to the makars, and she goes on to discuss Scottish material in her later scholarship.

Emergent humanism compromised the use of allegorical writing, the latter being keen to promote the nature of language as essentially variable and ultimately context-dependent. For the medieval allegorical method, this renewed approach to language "wrested" [writing] from its proper meaning'¹⁹⁷ and threatened the stable medieval view of matters literary, where the outwardly transitory nature of allegory was inherently reliant on fixed referents to establish its meaning. If we adopt Cooney's position, an argument also emerges that puts the repression of humanist belief in the canon of Douglas in light of this linguistic fear, with a didactic Dido the result of this. Henryson allows his Cresseid to participate in the act of writing, and, in doing so, attributes to her the right to self-definition, something which Douglas stridently limits to source material and accurate translation. In doing this, so too is Dido's self-definition limited and arguably refuted by the imposition of Douglas' narrative

¹⁹⁶ Cooney, 2001.

¹⁹⁷ Cooney, 2001 p. 162.

voice within 'Prologue IV'. However, Cresseid's act of writing is ventriloquized by a male author and a male narrator, enhancing the inescapable presence of the patriarchal tradition. Alicia Nitecki accuses Henryson of 'characterising the narrator as the impotent senex of the medieval literary tradition'.¹⁹⁸ This characterisation can be literally interpreted as the sexually deprived older man such as the aforementioned Reeve of Chaucer; yet Nitecki passes comment on the limitations of the narrator's ability to transcend the minutiae of Cresseid's sin and attain Boethian redemption, a spiritual impotence. This parallels what one can argue about Douglas' narration of the *Eneados*, whereby the plight of Dido is received by the reader through the medium of a man (Douglas) unable to sympathise or empathise with the queen he describes. Nitecki highlights this distinctly masculine limitation in her description of Troilus' epitaph for Cresseid, who is herself culpable of 'spiritual myopia' in her lament,¹⁹⁹ crying that 'o fals Cupide, is nane to wyte bot thow'.²⁰⁰ Troilus' epitaph moves away from tradition, 'dropping the traditional use of the first person' customary to an epitaph,²⁰¹ which Nitecki argues crucially 'renders the tone of the epitaph accusatory'²⁰² rather than universally moralising:

'Lo fair ladyis, Cresseid of Troyis toun
sumtyme countit the flour of womanheid
Under this stane, lait lipper, lyis deid.'²⁰³

This lack of vision is mirrored in the narrator and ultimately transcended by Cresseid, with Henryson's encouragement. This transcendence is what separates

¹⁹⁸ Nitecki, 1985 p. 125.

¹⁹⁹ Nitecki, 1985 p. 122.

²⁰⁰ 'The Testament of Cresseid' line 134.

²⁰¹ Nitecki, 1985 p. 123.

²⁰² Nitecki, 1985 p. 124.

²⁰³ 'The Testament of Cresseid' lines 607-9.

Douglas from Henryson: Douglas uses his mode of subjectivity (the prologues) to emphasise his moral stance and the punitive trajectory of Dido's narrative, where Henryson subtly liberates his heroine by giving her the capacity to testify, where she succumbs to a complete confession of her own guilt thus completing her journey of self-knowledge and penance. Ultimately, while their plights differ, for Cresseid and Dido, the outcome is the same: they are both killed by their authors. For Henryson this is an articulated act of penance which allows Cresseid to be released from her punishment. Based on the above evidence, one cannot help but feel Dido's death rather curtails what Douglas may wish to put upon her: in the end, she retains her autonomy through the ultimate act of self-definition, her suicide. It is paradoxical yet apparent that Douglas is, from a modern perspective, more liberal in this aspect of his approach to Dido: where Cresseid is forced to find herself in a framework of patriarchy, Dido defies this constraint in her refusal to succumb to a lingering life as a victim, defining herself through her death.

Henryson drives his 'Testament' with a strong sense of narrative purpose, utilising the traditional *moralitas* framework, though lacking an explicit *moralitas* such as that of his *Fables*, building upon the earlier narrative foundations which Chaucer has laid. Where Henryson asks a rhetorical question of Chaucer's authority, Douglas begins his *Eneados* on the defensive, asserting his intention to contest Chaucer's work from the very first Prologue. Although he veils his criticism in pleasantries and saves the majority of his vitriol for Caxton, he is nonetheless responding to Chaucer from a position of conviction and, I would argue, self-righteousness veiled in assumed humility:

Lo, [Horace] reprevis and haldis myssemyng,
 Ay word by word to reduce ony thing.
 I say nocht this of Chaucer for offens
 But till excuse my lewt insufficiency.²⁰⁴

This shows us a prime example of highlighting Chaucer's own shortcomings, such as his pro-Dido stance and lack of fidelity to his source text, whilst sending Douglas up as a humbler and more loyal translator.

Henryson's narrator has, in particular, been characterised as 'extremely Chaucerian' and just as 'passionately' involved with the story he tells as is his Chaucerian counterpart. Yet Henryson's narrator is very unlike Chaucer in terms of his perception of Cresseid. Chaucer's narrator is bumbling, but well meaning. Henryson's is not. He is old and cold — in all senses of that latter term. He does not share the love Chaucer's narrator has for Criseyde. Chaucer's narrator systematically, though not always successfully, attempts to excuse Criseyde at every turn[...] Henryson's narrator is incapable of love or sympathy.²⁰⁵

Harty's succinct summary of the difficulties faced by Henryson's narrative technique, ventriloquised through the 'impotent senex',²⁰⁶ are thus interchangeable with the concerns the reader holds about Douglas' narration. Douglas' sense of *moralitas* and, moreover, his desire to retain fidelity to his source text from, paradoxically, a Christian perspective, drives the *Eneados*, and shapes its content, both as an epic whole consistently peppered with the subjective prologues, and within the fourth prologue when examined as an entity in itself. As the earlier close reading has shown, the 'Preambill to the Ferd Buke' adamantly states its aversion to matters of carnal love, though acknowledging its power. The poetic turn in this 'Preambill' serves no greater purpose than to isolate Dido's particular case and highlight her folly through the

²⁰⁴ *Eneados*, 'Proloug of the First Buke' ll. 403-6.

²⁰⁵ Harty, 1982 p. 754..

²⁰⁶ Nitecki, 1985 p. 125.

narrator's direct address to Dido, moving from the general observations of love to 'thy dowbill wound, Dido, to specify'.²⁰⁷ This turn to specificity occurs after a break in the poem at l. 214 as though to emphasise the indictment. What Douglas deliberately represses is that third layer of perspective: Douglas' relationship to the ethical implications of his tale is expressed through his prologues, arguably providers of that third layer, whom he neglects to utilize to redeem Dido, his primary comment on love taking the shape of a sermon.²⁰⁸ A variety of modes and voices are experimented with through the prologues (consider the traditional dream vision of 'Prologue VIII' and 'Prologue X' as a sermon on the trinity as an example of this variance) yet within all the experimentation it is difficult to pin down a heteroglossic interpretive stance adopted by Douglas.

These dialogues with Chaucer raise questions of metatextuality in its broadest sense: questions of what was expected knowledge at the time, and what was accepted literary authority for a late-medieval audience. A particularly Scottish strain of scrutiny is prevalent, directed specifically at Chaucer. But why Chaucer is the catalyst for these works is a many-faceted question. Is he the best-known source from which to begin, thus ensuring an audience for the piece? Given Cooney's concerns about the perceived crisis of allegory, does the open-ended nature of Chaucer's narrative, in terms of meaning and narrative persona, threaten the literary sensibilities of writers such as Douglas? Or is this fixation with Chaucer a manifestation of Scotland's desire to define itself in opposition to the English, whereby the English are seen as effeminate (emphasized in the work of Caxton and his fixation with Dido, as ballasted in the

²⁰⁷ *Eneados*, 'Prologue IV' line 215.

²⁰⁸ *Eneados*, 'Prologue iv'.

'Introduction' to the *Eneados*) and the Scots offer a morally more resilient set of values?²⁰⁹ In terms of language the latter is a weaker proposal, given the chameleon nature of Henryson's 'Testament' so often appended to the work of Chaucer, indicating a lack of linguistic difference between the two, insofar as English editions would have it. In terms of further textual comparison, it appears that the religious attitudes expressed within the texts are disparate. While Henryson adopts the structure of a moralising example, the auld schoolmaster seems to allow his reader agency in determining the overall moral of the tale through his authorial ambiguity and eventual transcendence of the concerns of everyday life, elevating Cresseid to Boethian self-knowledge. The final moralitas is somewhat confusing, as Henryson's narrator states: 'ming not your lufe with fals deceptioun'.²¹⁰ Though this abstract maxim can be applied to the act of adultery, the maxim is expressed in a more vague sense which, combined with the debatable nature of Cresseid's crime (blasphemy or adultery), confuses the overall morality of the tale, as portrayed by the myopic narrator. Henryson's approach to the poem's conclusion highlights a crucial difference between his work and that of Douglas: Henryson's final sentiment works on a number of levels, encouraging a multitude of interpretations, but such playfulness is a quality lacking in the *Eneados*, be it through Henryson's greater aptitude for subtlety or otherwise. Henryson's engagement with the concept of agency within the poem is subverted in the narrator, who defers power to the Gods, attributing to them the power to adjudicate and dispense punishments as well as citing any recalcitrance on the worshipper's part to be a weighty crime. This is not dissimilar to Douglas' attitude to Dido within his overall ethos of being

²⁰⁹ Simpson, 2001 'The Tragic'.

²¹⁰ 'The Testament of Cresseid' line 613.

faithful to his *auctour*, whether these narrative voices be viewed as performances to be held at an ironic distance or not (this dissertation would argue they are not). Douglas provides an ostensibly sterner, more overtly moralising force in his work than Henryson. Douglas' morality is defined strictly in terms of Christianity, as exemplified in the fourth prologue to *Eneados* where he talks openly and reverently of the superiority of love for God over passionate love: 'lufe every wyght for God, and to gude end / thame be na wyss to harm, bot to amend'.²¹¹ Where Douglas revels in piety, Chaucer and Henryson tend to mediate their Christian sensibilities with a more nuanced approach to the 'two Venuses', an acknowledgement of the value and power of human experience missing from Douglas' 'Prologue IV'. Henryson's dalliance with the pagan gods creates a more complex morality within the 'Testament', though he is unafraid to depict their foibles in a negative light. Where Douglas' 'Preambill' can be read as an argument for moderation in earthly love,²¹² Henryson's court of pagan deities seems to advocate the complete submission of Cresseid to their self-centred nature with little room for manoeuvre as depicted by the narrator, a self-absorbed stance negated by the author. Henryson's later release of his heroine into Boethian understanding transforms the text and Cresseid and asserts his capacity as a confident intermediary between the classic and the contemporary.

Like many writers of the period, Henryson utilises dream vision to create a liminal space for the use of allegory, and the exploration of abstract concepts. The pagan conference therein sits in counterpoint to the potential Christian interpretation of the narrative. Douglas provides a more limited spectrum of morality, limiting the intervention of the Gods to unimportant issues and placing

²¹¹ 'Prologue IV' ll. 132-3.

²¹² See Couper, 2001.

the blame firmly on Dido's exercise of will, forever condemning her as a fallen woman through adherence to a basic moral code, in which the heroine 'throw fulych lust wrocht [her] awyn ondoynng' (l. 228).

Concepts of the self are raised in opposition to one another. Dido is her own woman, in keeping with the Ovidian Dido tradition and Chaucer's Criseyde, and dies at her own hand. Cresseid is arguably autonomous also, but her death and punishment are forced upon her by outside forces and she reaches self-awareness at the end of this ordeal. Where Cresseid is literally passed from situation to situation (sought and subsequently rejected by Diomedes, lifted from reality into dream vision with the Gods), Dido seems to create her own problems, so to speak, once she is separated from Aeneas and arguably even before. For Henryson, the tragedy and moral culpability of his Cresseid are inherently limited, due to her initial lack of autonomy, having had her fate placed upon her by the gods, though he does empower her through self-expression and ultimately self-awareness. She finds spiritual freedom despite the constraints placed on her by her situation. It can be argued that Henryson's treatment of Cresseid in terms of her demise indicates an equally strong adherence to patriarchal ideology as that held by Douglas, a topic worthy of investigation within itself but not within the confines of the present dissertation, yet his narrative of Cresseid's journey to self-knowledge and her literal 'testament' give her voice in a way which Dido is not privy to.

Where Henryson is not hesitant to point out the limitations of Cresseid's character, Douglas paradoxically empowers Dido by expecting more of her, in a

secular sense. Desmond's monograph speaks of the vision of Dido as a *virago*²¹³ and highlights Boccaccio's assertion that she 'took on the strength of a man'. It seems that the capacity to act upon one's own volition and utilise autonomous agency is an act gendered as masculine, and in embodying this strength Dido wins Douglas' initial respect. Where she falls down is by giving in to her passion and lust, which is implicitly gendered as a feminine sensibility, thus securing her own fall. This image of a *virago* of volition is furthered when one considers that Dido is one of the more prominent threatening social anomalies in medieval society: she is a widow, a sexually, politically and socially empowered woman with no regulated links to any living male. Because of this, the power and status she wields could threaten that of a man. Whether her suicide increases or decreases the gravity of her situation and its moral implications is another question. Notably the Ovidian strain of Dido depictions emerges from an historical figure whose suicide preserved her nobility and virtue — the act of suicide is not, therefore, seen as inherently sinful, and in the case of Chaucer's Dido in *The House of Fame* can be garnered as an attempt to reclaim one's own self-definition. The *Legend of Good Women* seems to continue this, arguably concluding that the only way in which a woman can secure her worth is to be dead, a martyr to the cause of a woman's fight to express themselves. Sex within the texts is nebulous, from Dido's visit to the cave with Aeneas, to Cresseid's dismissal 'quhen Diomedede had all his appetyte / and mair fulfillit...'.²¹⁴ A sense of threat is implicit, with both women allowing the act of sexual congress and its confused implications to enhance their indignation and despair; particularly Dido, who arguably misinterprets the carnal relationship with Aeneas for a

²¹³ Desmond, 1994 p.15.

²¹⁴ 'The Testament of Cresseid' lines 71-2.

deeper connection, even a marriage. Mapstone argues the point of Cresseid's indisputable participation in her physical relationship with Diomedes in Chaucer's *Troilus*, but within the parameters of Henryson's text, Cresseid's participation is greatly diluted, to the point of it seeming questionable, and even her passion and love for Troilus somewhat lukewarm. Nitecki talks of Cresseid's 'confusion about what is contingent and what is essential' (122), primarily her propensity to interlink her physical appearance with her spiritual self, a symptom of her ignorance. This self-obsession is mirrored in her approach to Troilus, the loss of whom becomes secondary to the loss of her beauty:

Thie greit triumphand fame and hie honour
 Quhair thou was callit of eirdlye wichtis flour
 All is decayit, thy weird is welterit so
 Thy hie estait is turnit in darknes dour.²¹⁵

In discussing the case of Criseyde, Mapstone states, in reference to Benoit, that he is one of the first to 'utilize to great effect this contrast between what Criseyde may say and what may be said of her'.²¹⁶ This liminal space between self-expression and educated opinion poses questions which recur for both Cresseid and Dido. As we can see from considering Cooney's article, greater conflicts are at play in the tragedies of these women. There is a battle between allegory and metaphor for the assertion of true meaning, as depicted in Cooney's article,²¹⁷ which is echoed in the relationships these women have with the men who surround them, and upon whom they depend for definition. Cooney argues that there is no place for the survival of allegory in an environment of displaced, or rather transient meaning, thus rendering the use of literary metaphor

²¹⁵ 'The Testament of Cresseid' lines 434-7.

²¹⁶ Mapstone, 2000 p. 143.

²¹⁷ Cooney, 159-161.

inimical to the arguably progressive thrust of humanism. Where allegory once relied upon a system of fixed meanings and accepted definitions, the variables of allegory are now in themselves variable, with no fixed meaning possible. The love of wisdom was moving to a love of the word itself as opposed to an established, absolute and accepted meaning,²¹⁸ and the struggle of Dido against the moral and misogynist codes of behaviour of her social setting and her subsequent character assassination at the hand of the author represent an attempt to freeze the narrative and retain a sense of acceptable codified meaning. As Alexander Broadie details in his *Tradition of Scottish Philosophy*, a greater shift from realism to nominalism was being negotiated amidst philosophers contemporaneous with Douglas, such as John Ireland and his *Mirror of Wisdom*.²¹⁹ Again, though this dissertation cannot devote appropriate space to discussion of such a matter, it is important to note the continental aspect to this movement, and in turn, Douglas' status as a well-read and socially mobile figure. The conflict between the tendency towards 'absolute', and in turn fixed, nature within realists and the culture of flexible nomenclature apparent within nominalism mirrored this allegorical 'crisis'. Broadie further points out the association of Douglas with John Mair, '[Douglas was] sent to France to persuade Mair to return to Scotland'²²⁰, indicative perhaps of an affinity between the two men and their arguably 'realist' perceptions of their world.

To return to the text: as well as with arguably moral men of romantic interest, Aeneas and Troilus, Dido and Cresseid both have another relationship to mediate and be shaped by: namely the relationship with their narrators, and

²¹⁸ Cooney, 2001 p. 161.

²¹⁹ Broadie, 2011 p. 23-32.

²²⁰ Broadie, p. 35.

in turn their authors. Harty tracks the acceleration of the narrator's indictment of Cresseid in his article (757), moving from hints of her actions, to rumour, to outright accusation, all facilitated through the biased outlook of a cold and unsympathetic narrator. Within the *Eneados* the result of this battle for definition is spoken best through that which is not said, the silencing of Dido throughout the narrative, despite her final act of defiance. Douglas denies her a voice, yet she denies her author the capacity to define her life and death, and slays herself upon the pyre, a final act of defiance against a patriarchy in which she is trapped. One cannot help but wonder what would have become of Douglas's Dido, had the Scottish poet not been tied to Virgil's original conclusion to her tale.

The other 'mater': Lavinia

A sense of juxtaposition as a means to definition has pervaded the analysis thus far: for Aeneas to triumph, Dido must be sacrificed.²²¹ For Dido to triumph, fidelity to the text must be sacrificed, as is implied by Douglas. For men to discover themselves, women must be objectified.²²² For the moral development of Christian values, women must suffer and learn from this as 'abject odious'.²²³

Yet within the *Eneados* itself a direct comparison exists that is often overlooked by critics. Sarah Couper's thesis ultimately cites this comparison as definitive proof of Douglas' capacity to legitimise desire. Ironically, this comparison is not drawn from Virgil directly: it is the inclusion of Aeneas'

²²¹ Simpson, 'The Tragic' in *Reform and Cultural Revolution*, 2002.

²²² Adams, 2011.

²²³ Riddy, 1997; also *Testament* l. 133

marriage to Lavinia and the ensuing depiction of the thirteenth chapter of the *Aeneid* as interpreted by Maphaeus Vegius (Vegio), which stands in direct comparison to Aeneas' earlier dalliance with Dido. Arguably, this inclusion interpolates a conclusion more palatable to a Christian audience than that of the original *Aeneid*. In the work of Virgil, though Aeneas' union with Lavinia is prophesied in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*,²²⁴ the wedding itself is not described, merely implied. The culmination of Aeneas' journey, therefore, is his vengeful confrontation with his opposing suitor Turnus, the ominous closing image being that

Turnus' limbs went limp in the chill of death.
His life breath fled with a groan of outrage
Down to the shades below.²²⁵

In the *Eneados* the same scene is translated as

...and tharwithall
The cald of deth dissoluyt hys membris all.
The spreit of lyfe fled murnand with a grone,
And with disdeyn vnder dyrk erth is goyn.²²⁶

which is then followed by an entirely appended episode depicting the marriage and union of Aeneas with his bride. In the Coldwell edition of the text, Douglas interpolates two small passages of verse preceding Book XIII (see appendix v, below) which intimate the status of Virgil's text as a 'pryncipall wark' (p. 139), and a poetic play on Douglas' name. Such features suggest that Book XIII was

²²⁴ In the sixth book, the spirit of Anchises speaks to Aeneas, prophesying that: 'Silvius, your son, your last-born, ... late / in your old age your wife Lavinia brings him up...' (ll. 883-4, Fagles trans. 2006).

²²⁵ Book XII, ll. 1111-3, Fagles trans. 2006.

²²⁶ *Eneados*, Book XII p.138 ll. 151-4.

seen as an appendix, rather than part of the main translation (having not come from a 'pryncipall' text), yet this thesis argues that its inclusion under any auspices hold unique implications for 'Prologue IV' and Dido when read in retrospect.

Within the prologue to the thirteenth book, Douglas depicts himself encountering the spirit of Vegius and discussing the work of Virgil with him, in a dream vision. Vegius urges Douglas to consider his thirteenth book as a worthy addition to the Virgilian canon and after a rather loaded and violent confrontation in which he is physically beaten, Douglas awakens and acquiesces. He recognises the movement away from Virgil at this point ('for, thocht hys stile be nocht to Virgill lyke')²²⁷ intimating that he sees 'Prologue IV' as strictly adhering to Virgil, but nonetheless sees fit to 'compleit [his] promys'²²⁸ to Vegius for the benefit of the text as a whole:

For thocht hys stile be nocht to Virgill lyke,
 Full weill I want my text sall mony like,
 Sen eftir ane my tung is and my pen,
 Quhilk may suffys as for our vulgar men.
 ...
 Lat clerkis ken the poetis different,
 And men onletterit to my wark tak tent.²²⁹

If Douglas is, as we can certainly argue, focussed on creating a text that appeals to the general reader of the medieval period, the inclusion of the thirteenth book and prologue can be seen as a conscious attempt to moderate the paganism of the text and draw it to a more explicitly Christian conclusion.

Accordingly, where in 'Book IV' the desire and sexual tension between

²²⁷ Prologue XIII, l. 189

²²⁸ Prologue XIII, l. 186.

²²⁹ Prologue XIII, ll. 189-196.

Dido and Aeneas was described in terms of its negative impact and destructive quality, here Douglas has a chance to depict the alternative, embodied in Lavinia. The settled union of Aeneas with this female figure, a more placid, submissive character than Dido, at the end of his journey suggests to the reader that a (hetero)sexual union can be fulfilling and morally right when performed under the correct conditions. Couper goes so far as to state that this admission on Douglas' part legitimises sexual desire itself, as outlined in her 'Abstract': I disagree. Certainly, it promotes the harmony of sexual congress within the union of marriage in religious terms, but it is not explicit in its attitude towards sexual congress as an expression of human selfhood. As Anchises' premonition has suggested the existence of their future son, it can be argued that Douglas is once again legitimising sexual congress only for the greater good: procreation.

Unfortunately for Dido and feminist thinkers alike, the conditions of successful union seem to centre on a submissive and ultimately passive partner. Where Dido offered Aeneas a platform against which to rally his masculinity, Lavinia seems to offer a point whereby Aeneas can settle in his established identity, regardless of the female casualties along the way. Where Dido stands as the catalyst, the test of Aeneas' morality, Lavinia is the reward for his perceived endeavour, the mediation for his earlier indiscretion.

Conclusion

This thesis has given a broad overview of scholarship relating to the question of Dido generally, and a more succinct analysis of Douglas' treatment of this tragic queen in particular. While conclusions remain, as ever, elusive, there are certain recurring tropes throughout the existing critical canon of Douglas that have distinct implications for both the *Eneados* generally and Douglas' treatment of Dido specifically.

Craig Kallendorf elucidates the impact of epideictic rhetoric on the definition of character in medieval texts, in particular the establishment of a 'good' Aeneas against a morally empty Dido. These dualistic perspectives are mirrored throughout interpretations of Virgil through the ages: from Petrarch to Boccaccio, Virgil to Ovid and Douglas to Chaucer. The desire to define one's characters on the page, and one's literary self in a long lineage of literary inheritance is omnipresent. For Douglas, this desire centres on a journeying hero who must develop in a morally right way — Baswell would argue, and Ebin concurs, that this is utilizing Aeneas as an 'avatar' of the writer himself,²³⁰ as Douglas' utopian masculinity writ large. Douglas' desire to define himself as different from his predecessors, most notably Chaucer and Caxton, drives his virulent portrayal of Dido as a figure of sin, a victim as well as a prototype of lust. Broader questions of truth and historicity are broached by the trajectory of the *Aeneid* over time, the way in which it is adapted, altered and transcreated multiple times. While the space devoted to showing the vastness of this issue is unavoidably limited in this thesis, as a progenitor of a doctoral project, Douglas

²³⁰ Baswell, 1995 p. 277.

serves as a valid example of where these preoccupations can lead us, in terms of contradiction and verification.

As ever, the problem of agenda pervades not only the work of Douglas, but also the work of his critics. While arguments have been sustained for Douglas as nationalist, misogynist, humanist, even as love's apologist, each of these arguments has framed the *Eneados* in a particular light, limiting the impact of Dido's story to suit their ends. Douglas himself has propagated this tendency through his evasive tendencies, offering little in the way of definitive answers regarding the fourth book: what did happen in the cave? Were there ever grounds for a claim of marriage? Douglas is reticent to say, yet in the contrasting case of Lavinia, in the thirteenth book, he espouses the virtues of Aeneas' union with this placid soul. The reader is left to interpolate their own agenda in turn to come to any conclusions as to what happened in the cave (and, therefore, to judge what happened subsequently), thus precluding definitive conclusions even further. One certainty that can be drawn from this examination of the Dido episode is the moral awkwardness inherent in the action described. This dates back to the tears of St Augustine, and his self-deprecation at his perceived straying from God, thus tarring Dido's tale with a sense of secular depravity; our awareness of this sentiment is furthered by Hagedorn's observation of the movement away from the classical past as a necessity for Christian progression.²³¹ The pagan narrative offered by the *Aeneid* is a complex framework in which to interpolate a Christian narrative, and despite Douglas' persistent endeavours, his apologies on behalf of Virgil and subsequent movement away from his *auctour*, a sense of discord remains between the pagan

²³¹ Hagedorn, 2004 p.2.

and the Christian content therein. Naturally, the problems posed by human sexuality and secular love are convenient casualties of this discomfort, and thus Dido's tragedy is once again compromised by morality.

Having looked over questions of authorship, textual 'truth', sexual politics, the transient definitions of 'humanist' thought, the idea of a Scottish tradition of classical interpretation, and the ongoing dialogue between Scotland and Chaucer, this thesis has highlighted the depth of potential study still available in relation to Douglas' *Eneados*, both as a whole and in terms of Dido as a specific episode. While Douglas' role as an overt misogynist can never be conclusively proven, due in part to the complications posed by his politics, time and relative literary constrains, it is abundantly clear that the traditional 'excuse' of Aeneas, and the genre-based defence of Douglas' interpretation, provide neither the sole and certainly not the only or most arguable interpretations of the text. 'Prologue IV' in particular, should be regarded and examined in tandem with the broader issues explored within this thesis.

Appendix i: Timeline of Prominent Portrayals of Dido

B.C.E

3rd-4th century → Appears as Elissa in lost writings of Timaeus

3rd century → Appears as Elissa in report of Junianus Justinus

3rd century → First linked to Eneas in poem fragment of Gnaeus Naevius

29-19 → Appears as Dido in the 'Aeneid' of Virgil

20-0 → Appears as Dido in the 'Heroides' of Ovid

A.C.E

12th century → Guido delle Colonne's 'Book of Troy'

14th century → Dante's 'Inferno'

14th century (circa 1360) → Boccaccio's 'Genealogia Deorum'

1380 → Chaucer's *House of Fame*

1386 → Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*

1390 → Gower's 'Confessio Amantis'

1423 → Lydgate's 'Fall of Princes' and 'Troy Book'

{1428 → Maffeo's 'Supplementum'}

1490 → Caxton's 'Eneydos'

1513 → Gavin Douglas' 'Eneados'

1526 → Anonymous 'Letter to Dido' (Pynson MS)

Appendix ii: Summary of the Prologues

Prologue I: Puts forth Douglas' views on translation, with particular vitriol reserved for his predecessor Caxton. Chaucer's influence is addressed and Douglas' negative attitude towards the prominence of the Dido episode in retellings of the *Aeneid* made plain.

Prologue II: Consisting of three stanzas of rhyme royal, this prologue poses rhetorical questions and a rejection of 'feigning', guided by Virgil and divine grace.

Prologue III: This prologue is addressed to pale Cytherea, lunar goddess, associated with shipmen and pilgrims, perhaps suggesting a parallel between Aeneas and Douglas. It is peppered with metaphorical applications of this reference to 'barge' of the translator, paralleling the journeys of the poet and the Trojans.

Prologue IV: This 'preamble' provides, ultimately, a contrasting view of the Dido/Aeneas relationship, where the role of classical deities is (necessarily) minimised and Dido's plight arguably trivialized.

Prologue V: This prologue sees a complete change in tone: funeral games marking the death of Aeneas' father are held on his anniversary, and within the poetic vision of the text Christ and joy are celebrated. An implicit analogy is drawn between reborn Troy and Douglas' translation, commenting on the value

of reworking traditional material.

Prologue VI: This prologue is concerned with re-reading and influences of Christian figures such as Augustine, paralleling the classical and the Christian.

Prologue VII: A poetic prologue which provides images of movement, and the violent energy of nature in Winter, with a seasonal metamorphosis underpinned by planetary movement. The violence of nature is explored and paradoxically this outwardly descriptive prologue becomes very expressive, with effective use of Scots.

Prologue VIII: This prologue supplies a dream vision offering acerbic social criticism in strongly alliterative stanzas, where the narrator is rebuked for time wasted on poetry and its lack of effectiveness. This dialogue is more widely significant, with implications in place for the relationships between critic and narrator; narrator and reader; Douglas and Virgil; and for the intertextuality of commentary culture and classical inheritance.

Prologue IX: In the ninth prologue, the narrator rejects the criticism of 'Prologue VIII', and instead criticises Virgil's style of poetry, discussing the idea that teaching by example is superior to railing at a social level.

Prologue X: This passage is formed as a sermon on the trinity where events are given a Christian reading and Classical deities are implicitly rejected. Virgil is attributed a pre-Christian Christianity, perhaps in an attempt to legitimize the

morality Douglas has applied to his *Eneados*. The book of the *clipeum ardentem* appears as a burning shield reflecting the sun, and the parity of the might of nature and the might of humanity is reflected upon.

Prologue XI: Exultations upon the vindication of Trojan seizure of Italian lands, celebrations of a spiritual and physical return to home. This prologue bears a strong sense of the nearing of the journey to its conclusion and contains a dedication of trophies to Mars.

Prologue XII: The 'lusty craft' preamble in which the renewal of May and the rites of Spring are celebrated, indicating the potential and hope of lands still to be covered and claimed.

Prologue XIII: Describes Douglas' imagined encounter with Vegius, and introduces the idea of moving away from Virgil's text.

Appendix iii: Illustrations



Aristotle, bridled by Phyllis

'Aquamaline in the Form of Aristotle and Phyllis' [South Lowlands] (1975.1.1416). In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000.

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1975.1.1416> (October 2009)



Virgil in a basket

The Poet Virgil in a Basket, Lucas van Leyden (Netherlandish, Leiden ca. 1494–1533 Leiden)



Dido's Suicide

The Death of Dido by Claude Augustin Cayot. Marble sculpture from 1711, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Dido's Suicide by Liberale da Verona. Painting, probably panel from early 16th century. National Gallery, London.



'Bas-de-page' manuscript miniature of the suicide of Dido and Aeneas sailing away. MS Royal D I f.99. Naples, Italy, late 14th century. British Library, London.

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