Research

The New Robert Louis Stevenson Website (www.robert-louis-stevenson.org)

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The original RLS site and direct ancestor of the new site was founded by Richard Dury at the University of Bergamo in December 1996. It was a documentary, bibliographical and academic site with information about recent studies, editions, derivative works etc.

In 2008 Linda Dryden of Napier University won a £34,500 grant from the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland for a project to redesign and extend the website, adding extra pages, including pages of appeal to the general public in collaboration with Dr Penny Fielding (Edinburgh University), Prof. Rory Watson (Stirling University) and Richard Dury (Bergamo University). Richard Dury generously donated the whole of the Bergamo site to the new project.

The new site was overseen by Linda Dryden with most of the new content being specially written by research assistant Hilary Grimes. Callum Egan was web designer and David Benyon and Richard Dury acted as consultants.

The newly designed website contains pages devoted to each of Stevenson's texts, including plot synopses, full texts with page turner facilities, and information about their publication and reception. Also included are biographical pages on Stevenson, and information on his family, friends, and literary network. Other pages outline information about locations to visit for those wishing to follow in Stevenson's footsteps. Details of RLS museums and libraries with significant Stevenson collections and links to useful sites are also available.

Galleries of images of RLS himself are a special feature of the website, in particular images from the photograph albums the Stevenson family kept in Samoa (courtesy of the Writers' Museum and digitized by Capital Collections, Edinburgh), many of which have never been published before, and drawings (by RLS's step-daughter, Belle Strong).

Most of the files (mainly bibliographic) from the previous site are mainly in the "Archive" section. Richard Dury is gradually overhauling these and they will eventually join the other files. Files that have so far been reformatted and corrected include those devoted to films.

A Schools section contains information and resources for school students, including reading packs from the City of Literature and a recommended reading list for young scholars. Full-texts of past issues of the *Journal of Stevenson Studies* are available to download. An RLS Community section contains pages of information about Stevenson societies

throughout the world, upcoming events on Stevenson, the RLS Newsletter, and a forum, where enthusiasts can discuss and contribute to Stevenson scholarship.

For further information on the project readers may contact
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Belle Strong's sketch of Stevenson giving a history lesson to his step-grandson, Austin Strong.

Eliot's Hidden Agenda: Joyce?

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It is a common truth that Joyce and Eliot fathered Modernism simultaneously, and that it happened in 1922. No sooner and no later. All other attempts were proofs of the same ideas floating in the air long before (from Laurence Sterne to Henry James, subversively with John Galsworthy, openly with Virginia Woolf, partly with Joseph Conrad, arguably with DH Lawrence). Some think it was more Joyce, others favour Eliot. Obviously, *The Waste Land* and *Ulysses* bear striking resemblances, from words to themes and moods, but – above all – there are similarities in craft. Human life has not changed basically so much over the centuries as to change its themes and existential moods. But, while man is essentially the same, the way in which he produces literature, the way in which human beings tell their stories becomes obsolete and is renewed from time to time. Which means the subject matter may not vary, even though the form does. It is the craft (the telling) which changes, not the told.

Because the style *is* the man, and the craft ultimately stands for the author, any change in craft is pretty important for whatever it is a particular author has to say. The most spectacular change took place when the story (which had previously been told in a commonly understood language) was suddenly wrapped, in 1922, in a language that made the readers sweat, a language that was ambiguous (lyrical), and encoded. Modernism being essentially a shift from prose to lyricism, Eliot might have engendered it. Eliot is *the* poet of Modernism and After. But Joyce's intriguingly fertile narratives make one suspect that there may be much more to Modernism than lyricism.

When the radical changes in the 20th c took place (namely the theory of relativity and that of the relative psyche as seen by Freud, which led straight to the image of a world that self-destructs, and which we inhabit today), it seemed that Eliot was the man of the day. He was much more vocal than Joyce when it came to change. He chose to become the critic of change. Apparently.

Eliot came up with a radically different manner of writing poetry. He felt his mission was to 'refine the dialect of the tribe'. He proceeded by invalidating the traditional poetic jargon: he ruined most decorous words, by quoting urbane poets and ridiculing their polish. He found aggressively ugly/vulgar images and tried his hand at forbidden words – only here Joyce had the upper hand. The unease was more obvious with Eliot than Joyce, because Joyce was endowed with a sense of humour and a verbal joy that grim Eliot lacked.

Eliot was also obsessed with the need to belong. After he had left Puritan America, he plunged into Anglo Catholicism in London. He became a fervent practitioner. Some of his most uninspired lines ever come from the church (*The Rock*, which, as a euphuism, we can call a failure). He risked his poetry for the sake of belonging.

Joyce, on the other hand, left his native Ireland, left England altogether, and lived his life abroad. True, while Joyce was part of the establishment by birth, Eliot was coming from another universe, or so he often claimed, anyway. He consequently needed palpable proof that he was being accepted as a native Englishman, and considered part of the 'leading team' of writers, of the gang in power. Eliot felt that belonging to English letters was a desirable possession, while Joyce could not wait to get away from it all. Belonging was the least of his concerns.

This being the case, it seems quite unlikely that Eliot's repeated statements of change, novelty and difference should come from a solid, lifelong belief. As soon as he had his secure place in English letters (he even had a Nobel, eventually), he produced more and more texts to the effect of 'classicism'. He recanted his youthful vehemence when he stated that he was sorry he had sent his critics on a 'wild goose chase' (looking for reference embedded in his texts), and when he denounced in print his 'objective correlative' and other famous labels he had once coined (*To Criticize the Critic*).

For quite a while I used to think Eliot was lucky to have been a poet, because it takes half an hour to read *The Waste Land* (Eliot's good poetry amounts to no more than sixty pages all in all), while it takes a lifetime to finish Joyce's *Ulysses*. I felt that – had another Joyce been born – the novel as a literary species would have died. I saw the good in Eliot and the bad in Joyce. I am now trying to amend, and look at things the other way round.

What changed my mind was a look at Eliot's *Ulysses, Order, and Myth* (1922). He makes two significant statements there. First, when talking about 'classicism', he focusses on 'those who have won their own discipline in secret and without aid'. He means himself, of course. Any act of writing is a discipline and a kind of order, a discipline and an order that depend on each individual writer. The same as with the objective correlative, with this sentence Eliot discovered America.

Eliot's criticism was mainly self-expression, which any creation (criticism included), ultimately, though not exclusively, is. We know Eliot's attitude to literature because, as I said earlier, he was more vocal than Joyce, he published literary criticism of his own. Joyce did not. Joyce left letters, openly all about himself. Eliot took a roundabout way: he managed to talk about himself while riding other authors.

An example in point is *Ulysses, Order and Myth*. Eliot claims to be defending Joyce. He invokes a classical discipline to be acquired 'in secret' by a selected few ('only those', he says). He praises Joyce for all the wrong reasons. He extols his 'mythical method' of ordering the text. Actually, the farthest thing from Joyce's mind was order. As a matter of fact, if anything, he was very keen on putting down to paper the very soul of disorder.

Eliot's self-centred discourse makes Joyce a repository of things the poet would like critics/readers(many, many readers!) to notice (and acclaim) in himself. He is busy with his own struggle; after all, *The Waste Land* had just been published, had possibly already been called the hoax and the sacred cow of the century, a bejewelled toad, so much waste paper, a piece that passeth understanding, and so much more. That a critic, especially one who claims to be a poet before anything else, should have a hidden agenda is not unusual. Most authors

(see David Lodge, for instance) have often turned to non-fictional prose for one reason or another, and it has absolutely always ended in their supporting their own cause.

As if his idea of classicism had not been devious enough, Eliot adds to it a few ridiculously self-assured words: 'the novel is a form which will no longer serve,' it 'ended with Flaubert and with James'. The Eliot who made it a pattern *not* to make a statement, has suddenly made a faux pas. He usually started in his criticism with an analysis of the terms he was to use in an essay, and once the words had been made perfectly unreliable, he would stop in delight, as if he had taught his readers a valuable lesson. His lesson was never to commit to an opinion. As he used to say, 'acknowledge the gift of a book before there has been time to read it: if you wait, you have to commit yourself to an opinion'. And he would not do that.

In 1922 Eliot was thirty-four. If he had been older, he might have refrained from ruining the future of the novel in an imaginary script. I can understand the things he felt in the air, which he struggled with while writing. I can understand that it was the firm belief of the fateful year of change 1922 that lyricism was over and above everything else. He was not alone. Woolf, Conrad, even Galsworthy in his sketches got carried away by lyricism. Some lived to regret it, while others (like Galsworthy) stopped short just in time.

Eliot's hidden statement had, in fact, something to do with the fact that Joyce also wrote poetry, made use of poetic techniques in his *Ulysses*, and was more resourceful with words than Eliot, but he did not stop there. He used poetry as a narrative tool, he made it a vehicle for the story. I wonder if Eliot ever forgave him that.

That Eliot hated the story in a poem ('a bit of nice meat for the house-dog') is well known. He never dealt with the fact that he heavily relied on stories borrowed from others, which you are most imperiously commanded to find out, even though he complains that his Notes to *The Waste Land* led to no more than a 'wild goose chase'. There is much ambiguity in his poetic status. Did he want to write an epic poem? Did he aim at a longer narrative in verse, which he never managed? He most certainly started out writing *The Waste Land* as a long diary. In the absence of narrative imagination, he fed on his own life, which, he felt, was full of incidents in his youth. He most certainly resented being unable to tell a story (just like Virginia Woolf). That is the immense tragedy and the only reason for the big change from pre-Modernism to Modernism: the author had lost his essential, indispensable gift of narration.

Looking at it this way, I am no longer sure Modernism was such a good idea, and it seems that Eliot felt the same. He compared his poem to Joyce's novel, and felt that Joyce had escaped his predicament, had managed to hold on to the story. Under the circumstances, he being the un-narrative writer that he was, Eliot must have been at his wit's end. Cornered against the wall, he shouted that the novel had 'died'.

As we can see for ourselves in 2010, the novel is very much alive and kicking. The novel has learned immensely from Joyce, while the poets are all building themselves today on the now almost religious gesture of running away from Eliot... There are (besides personal, I suppose) literary reasons for which Eliot was for so long the opposite of a happy

person. A writer with no sense of humour is – to say the least of it – a question mark. And Eliot was the most humourless author ever.

Joyce, on the other hand, seemed to have been born to his name. He enjoyed words and stories and people and places, AND books – probably in that order. Eliot may have had this order in reverse. This must be the explanation of the fact that Eliot chose to promote himself while defending Joyce. As for Joyce, he had an outspokenly self-centred reaction to *The Waste Land*: 'Hurry up, Joyce, it's time!'

The difference between a writer with a sense of humour and one sadly lacking it is the difference between Eliot's poem (the end of a direction, *the* consummate poem, which could be called, to use his own lines, 'The awful daring of a moment's surrender / Which an age of prudence can never retract') and Joyce's novel – because a novel it is, and the starting point of all stories that are being written today. We are faced with a generous novelist and a miserly poet, as far as the space they leave for their followers goes. When talking about the need for literary history to make room for present poets, Eliot forgot he was not alone. Unlike him, Joyce fought no battles with literary history. He set about his work and never said a word as to 'how', he merely went ahead and did it, offering all his followers ideas for innumerable narrative tricks nobody had yet used, and which other authors were allowed to duplicate, because they were narrative tools, not just one mood of lyrical intensity. If Eliot created the mood, Joyce started more narrative adventures than he himself could tell. If anyone could have exhausted the novel, that would have been someone like Galsworthy, not Joyce. Galsworthy used and abused the narrative till it became too much of a good thing. Joyce spiced it up.

The book which opened my eyes to Joyce's love of words and stories was C. George Sandulescu's *The Joycean Monologue*. It made me *see* Joyce. A good professor has this gift, of making you see the (major) simple truths. C. George Sandulescu was my professor once. Forty years later, I learn from him again.

A reputed Joyce scholar started his career in Bucharest. One of the few names that changed the way universities teach English in Romania (Leon Levițchi, Dan Duțescu, Andrei Bantaş – all his older friends once), he mapped Modernist fiction in England, France, Italy, Monaco. This is just a sign of his enduring influence on a student whom he taught Joseph Conrad back in the late 1960s, and who cannot but think of old times when we meet again, in Joyce this time. This is the way stories go on.

References

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Sandulescu, C. George 1987. *The Language of the Devil*, *Texture and Archetype in* Finnegans Wake, Collin Smythe.

The Dido episode in Gavin Douglas's translation of the *Aeneid*

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It is a commonplace of literary history that the story of Dido as told by Virgil has been among the most controversial episodes in the entire epic, prompting extensive and often impassioned debates, over centuries, in which conflicting viewpoints on Dido's tragedy and Virgil's presentation of it have been upheld through the media of both scholarly and creative writing (an artificially polarised distinction, of course, in the pre-modern period). In the history of Virgil's status and reputation in post-classical Europe, Gavin Douglas as his first (and arguably finest) translator holds a central place; and Douglas, as both scholar and poet, contributed with his characteristic vigour to the debate.

His extensive Prologue includes a brief but decisive statement on the topic: since Virgil's intention was to present Aeneas as a pattern of *all wirschip* [honour], *manhed* [manliness] *and nobilite* (I Prol., 330),[6] he could not have attributed an act of treachery to him without undercutting and negating his entire poetic purpose. From this it follows, on Douglas's showing, that Aeneas's desertion of Dido was not blameworthy; and this he argues on various grounds: Aeneas acted according to the commands of the gods, so that the responsibility for his action was theirs and not his; Dido had been informed from the outset that the Trojans' ordained goal was Italy; Aeneas made no promise to her and therefore cannot be held guilty of promise-breaking; he left her *with reuthfull* [compassionate] *hart* (ibid., 432). Douglas in his Prologue expresses high praise of Chaucer; but takes issue with him (prefacing his stricture with the graceful acknowledgement that he himself is as far excelled by Chaucer as Chaucer is by Virgil) for his presentation of the Dido story in his *Legend of Good Women*. *My mastir Chaucer gretly Virgill offendit* (ibid., 410), he argues, by asserting that Aeneas was "forsworn";[7] but then Chaucer was *evir (God wait* [knows]*) all womanis frend* (ibid., 449). This decidedly "pro-Aeneas" stance was of course not the most popular, perhaps not even among Douglas's compatriots and contemporaries: his secretary and scribe Matthew Geddes presumed to add a note to the manuscript, among the sections of Douglas's own commentary, denying that the command of the gods excused *the tratory* [treachery] *of Eneas na his maynsweryng* [perjury] since they were not true gods and therefore

6 David F.C. Coldwell (ed.), *Virgil's Aeneid Translated into Scottish Verse by Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld*, Scottish Text Society Third Series, vols. 25, 27, 28, 30, Edinburgh and London (Blackwood) 1957-64. All references are to this edition.

7 Glorye and honour, Virgil Mantoan,
Be to thy name! and I shal, as I can,
Folwe thy lanterne, as thow gost byforn [thou goest before],
How Eneas to Dido was forsworn.
The Riverside Chaucer, ed. L.D. Benson, Oxford (OUP) 1987, p.608.
Most assuredly, Chaucer's slant on Aeneas's conduct is not Virgil's.

had no special authority, and saying of his third point *Heir he argouis better than befoir*.[8] Geddes' reference to *the sueit Dydo* shows clearly where his sympathy lay. Douglas, however, commits himself firmly to the other side in the debate.

His interpretation of Aeneas in this Prologue is complemented by his lines on Dido in the Prologue to Book IV.[9] The relevant section begins:

> Thy dowbill wound, Dido, to specify,
> I meyn thyne amouris and thi funeral fait [deadly action, i.e. her suicide],
> Quha may endyte [write], but teris [without tears], with eyn [eyes] dry? (215-7)

This acknowledgement of the heartbreaking force of her story, however, is balanced in the next stanza by the sternly judgmental

> Fra nobylnes, welth, prudens and temperance,
> In brutell appetite fall, and wild dotage;
> Danter [subduer] of Affryk, queyn foundar of Cartage,
> Vmquhil [formerly] in rychess and schyning gloyr ryngyng [reigning],
> Throw fulych lust wrocht thine awyn ondoing.

Brutell appetite — wild dotage — fulych lust: Dido's fate must make any man shed tears; but her unbridled surrender to passion in itself deserves only censure; and Douglas, churchman as well as poet and scholar,[10] proceeds to an eloquent denunciation of the power of *fals lust*, returning at the end to Dido as a potent illustration: … *honeste baith and gude fame war adew* [departed]. The tragedy of Dido, the reason for its power to stir our emotions, and its value as a moral exemplum, is not that she was abandoned by her lover, but that she was morally ruined by yielding to her passion: an interpretation which, of course, shifts the emphasis away from Aeneas and his part in the story.[11] (The one direct reference to him in this entire Prologue, the line *Allace the quhile thou knew the strange* [i.e. foreign] *Ene!*, presents him as a mere catalyst.)

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8 Coldwell ed., op.cit., notes to lines 425 and 437. That these notes are interpolations by Geddes is Priscilla Bawcutt's conjecture in her landmark critical study *Gavin Douglas* (Edinburgh 1976: p.108); but it is entirely plausible, and no other suggestion has been offered.

9 For a detailed discussion of this prologue see Elizabeth Archibald, "Gavin Douglas on Love: the Prologue to *Eneados* IV", in *Bryght Lanternis*, ed. J.D. McClure and M.R.G. Spiller, Aberdeen University Press 1989. 244-257.

10 The recorded events of Douglas's life show him to have been very much a man of his class and time — worldly, ambitious, and strongly motivated by concern for his own and his family's advancement; but his record as Bishop of Dunkeld appears to have been exemplary. See Bawcutt, op.cit., esp. ch. 1.

11 Cf. Dante, who puts her in the circle of Hell reserved for those who sinned by yielding to amorous passion: *Inferno* V, 61-2. Even allowing for the marvellous intricacies of Dante's cross-referencing, a reader's powers of extrication are defied by the full implications of Dante (the poet) making Virgil (in the poem) show Dante (in the poem) Dido in an after-life very different from that which Virgil (the poet) assigned for her — and not only this, but making Virgil (in the poem) state that Dido *ruppe fede al cener di Sicheo* when Virgil (the poet) shows us Dido and Sychaeus reconciled in death.

Douglas's comments on the story from the outside, as it were, are clear and explicit. Much more intriguingly, however, further clues to his stance are given in the translation itself, in the words and grammatical structures which he chooses to translate Virgil's Latin.

The loftiness of Douglas's intention in undertaking the translation, and his appreciation of the magnitude, and the momentousness, of his project, are abundantly clear from his Prologue. The paean of praise to Virgil with which it opens is followed by an equally eloquent statement of the inadequacy not only of his own talents but of his language — his *bad harsk* [harsh] *speche and lewit barbour* [unlearned barbarian] *tung* — to the task of re-stating Virgil's poem.[12] However (he goes on to say), having been prompted to the task by his patron *my speciall gud Lord Henry, Lord Sanct Clair*, he will make the attempt, dedicating the book to him. He proceeds, combining vigour of expression with a most attractive mixture of modesty and confidence, to expound his methods and principles as a translator: famously, he devotes many lines to lambasting Caxton's *Eneydos* as a monstrous insult to its model. Notwithstanding the ferocity of his attack, his tone here is unmistakeably not of mere malevolence but of what C.S. Lewis in another context called "just, generous, scalding indignation",[13] that a poet deserving of such reverence as Virgil should have been travestied by as inferior a talent as Caxton's. The obvious enthusiasm which he applies to the task of demolishing the English writer[14] does not alter the fact that his criticisms are sound and well-directed; and he contrasts his own attempt to produce a complete and faithful translation with the blundering effort of the English author and his French model:

> And bot [unless] my buke be fundyn [found] worth sik thre [three of that sort]
> Quhen it is red, do warp [throw] it in the see [.] (I Prol., 279-80)

Douglas was, in many respects, as well qualified as any man of his time could have been to translate Virgil. He was a man of extensive learning, familiar as a matter of course with the *Aeneid* itself but also with the massive apparatus of scholarly commentary which had accumulated around it and the great tradition of Renaissance humanist learning which had in recent times contributed to this;[15] he was deeply and intensely, even passionately, responsive to the work as poetry;[16] and he was an accomplished poet in his own right,[17]

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12 In fact the Scots tongue had already reached a high level of literary development, of which Douglas's *Eneados* was to mark the apogee: this, and the specifically political and patriotic aspects of his work as translator (his poem is *writtin in the langage of the Scottis natioun*), have been extensively discussed and will not be examined in the present paper.

13 *Letters to Malcolm, Chiefly on Prayer*, ch. XVIII; first published 1964, quoted from Fontana Books edn., 1966, p.98.

14 The element of national rivalry detectable in this passage calls for no apology.

15 That his own planned commentary is not only unfinished but barely begun, covering roughly half of Book I, is one of the greatest disappointments in the history of Scottish letters.

16 Bawcutt calls attention to this with characteristic accuracy and incisiveness: quoting ll. 101-10 of Douglas's *Envoi* she comments: "This is not just mock-modesty. The lines convey very touchingly the sense of humility and awe instilled in one poet by a far greater one" (p.91). The love, as well as admiration, which Virgil has been able to inspire through the ages (cf. Tennyson's *Roman Virgil, thou that singest …*) must be a source of envy to readers whose Latin skill extends no further than an ability to decipher his meaning.

working in the rich, lively and confident literary ambience of James IV's Scotland. He was also keenly aware that his work would be widely read and subjected to critical scrutiny: he had the confidence to write *Quha can do better, sa furth* [say on] *in Goddis name!*, but he manifestly wrote with an acute and powerful sense of his responsibility to his future readers, his scholarly contemporaries and predecessors, and above all Virgil himself. And he was under no illusions regarding the sheer difficulty of understanding Virgil: again and again he refers to the fact that even great scholars have been perplexed by some of the poet's utterances.

Any translator, however skilled and dedicated, has at any and every stage in his work a number of choices to make. A situation where one and only one word, or word sequence, in the target language can possibly be employed to represent a particular word or word sequence in the source text probably never arises; and certainly not when the source text is a literary work of great elaboration and complexity. Douglas was of course perfectly aware of the impossibility of "word for word" translation, discussing the issue at length in his Prologue: a good illustration of his response to this particular difficulty is his rendering of *sum pius Aeneas* (I, 378) as *Rewthfull* [compassionate] *Ene am I* and the note in which he explains that *I interpret that term* [i.e. *pietas*] *quhylis* [sometimes] *for "rewth", quhylis for "devotion", and quhilis for "pyete" and "compassion".* For the many occurrences of *pius Aeneas* in the epic, *rewthfull* is (so to speak) Douglas's "default" translation, used not only when the context appears to call for a stress on the quality of "compassion" but when no particular aspect or interpretation of *pietas* is emphasised; but his departures are often interesting: at its first occurrence (I.220 in Virgil, I.iv.105 in Douglas), in which Aeneas is mourning the deaths of Orontes and other comrades, he is ***pietefull*** *Eneas*; in the cheerful episode of the prizegiving after the ship race (V.685, V.vi.1) he is ***gentyll*** *Ene*; when performing the funeral rites for his nurse Caieta (VII.5, VI.xvi.10) he is *the reuthfull …* ***and devote*** *prince Ene*; sacrificing to Juno (VIII.84, VII.ii.39) again *the* ***devoyt*** *Eneas*; when vaunting over his fallen enemy Lucagus (X.591, X.x.107) *the* ***petuus*** *Eneas* — surely a choice at which even Douglas must have had some doubts; and finally when attempting to calm the warring factions after the breaking of the truce (XII.311, XI.vi.1), *reuthfull* ***and pacient*** *Eneas*.

Not only does actual ambiguity, or polysemy, in the original often present a translator with the need to choose: so too, of course, do the exigencies of rhyme and metre. Douglas often, though not always, renders a hexameter line by a decasyllabic couplet; and the constant need for slight expansion of Virgil's utterances enjoins the use of words with no specific equivalents in the Latin: Bawcutt discusses in fascinating detail his frequent resorting to words suggested by Ascensius and other commentaries for this purpose. Whatever factors necessitate, and condition, a translator's choice on any given occasion, however, a mark of his skill as translator is his ability to avoid being forced to write something unsuitable: to use an inappropriate word for the sake of a rhyme, or a vacuous word to give a line the requisite number of syllables. Douglas's translation is the work of a

17 Apart from the *Eneados,* only one substantial poem is extant which is incontrovertibly his, *The Palice of Honour*; but it is certain that he wrote others: his younger contemporary Sir David Lyndsay refers to his works "of nomber mo than fyve". For discussion see Bawcutt, op.cit., ch.3.

man determined, as an almost sacred duty, to render Virgil as faithfully as the vast differences between their respective languages and poetic forms will allow, and abundantly equipped with the intellectual and technical skills called for by the task: it may be taken as given, therefore, that everything in the translation was written intentionally, after careful thought, and with the unswerving intention of conveying Virgil's meaning as completely and as accurately as possible.

With these considerations in mind, let us begin by examining Aeneas's speech to Dido: Book IV, 333-361; in Douglas's version Book IV, c.vi, 105-160. It opens with *O gentil queyn*, Douglas shifting Virgil's unadorned vocative *regina* to the start and employing an adjective with no equivalent in the original. At once, this imparts a more tender and sympathetic tone to his speech. (If it should require to be demonstrated that this is a device specifically adopted for the context, compare his rendering of *Infandum, regina, iubes renovare dolorem* (II.3) as *"Thy desire, lady, is / Renewing of ontellable sorow"* (I.xii. 5-6), where the word corresponding to *regina* is not emphasised in any way.) The comparison which Douglas introduces in *Thy gude deid and desart* [deserving] *is* ***mair worthy / Than*** *thou with wordis or tong may expreme* [express] adds force to Aeneas's tribute to Dido. *Irk* (weary, tire out) corresponds in sense to *pigere*; but the added *misseym* (be unbefitting) lends a new implication to Aeneas's response by suggesting a recognition on his part of a public as well as a private responsibility to her memory; and the adjectives in *the* ***worthy*** *Dido* and *in* ***fresch*** *memory*, neither in the original, convey something of the respect and affection which Virgil's Aeneas — all too well, in many people's reading — *obnixus sub corde premebat*. Next, Virgil's imperative *ne finge* is softened to the rhetorical question *Quhat nedis ȝou sa to feyn?* The expansion of *Hic amor, haec patria est* to two whole lines is surely calculated to arouse a reader's sympathy with Aeneas's motivation; as is the later rendering of the abstract and general *fas* with the much more emotive *lesum and ganand* [proper and fitting]. The development of *quae … invidia est* to *Quhat wrang is it, causs of envy or schame* illustrates Douglas's careful choice of words: the general *wrang* is by implication divided into *envy* (Dido's) and *schame* (Aeneas's), the latter making overt his awareness that his action *could* be seen as shameful. Similarly in *Lat be to vex me, or thy self to* ***spill*** (destroy), Douglas translates *incendere* by two words, one semantically much weaker than the other, and makes Aeneas apply the stronger and more ominous to Dido: the suggestion that he has a foreboding of her death, at least as a possibility, is surely a touch of which Virgil would have approved.

That Douglas was constrained to alter Virgil's text in *some* respects is not an issue: what is interesting is that his choice of words seems consistently designed to invite a sympathetic response to Aeneas's speech and to avoid the cold and unfeeling tone which readers of all periods have found in it — mistakenly, Douglas would of course have argued. The same effect is found in passages which frame the dialogue section. By expanding Virgil's *Dixerat* (331) to an entire line, *Thus said the queyn Dido, in febil estate* [state], 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. The word *will*, most

probably with the implication of "desire", in the double translation of *curam sub corde premebat* as *Refrenyt* [restrained] *his will, hydand* [hiding] *in hart his thocht* makes overt the fact that Aeneas is forced to act against his inclinations. Later in rendering ll. 393-5, he again selects *rewthfull* to translate *pius*: often, as already noted, this choice has no special significance, but here it is surely intended to emphasise the tragedy of Aeneas's emotional conflict by focusing on the precise aspect of his *pietas* which at this moment he is forced to resist. *The dolorus queyn* is clearly suggested by *dolentem*; but it is of interest that the meaning of *solando* is conveyed, not by an etymon (such as *solace*, a perfectly familiar word), but by *meyss*, which by its phonaesthetic simplicity conveys a touching suggestion of closeness and intimacy. The overtones of *meyss* — placate, calm, soothe[18] — are somewhat different from those of *comfort* in the next line, Douglas carefully selecting his words to avoid otiosity. *Full bissy wes* (= *cupit*) is curious: *bissy* implies diligent activity (and has not the possible humorous or deprecatory overtones of modern *busy*); but Aeneas is *not* taking active pains to comfort Dido though he wishes he could. Douglas's indicative *wes* must therefore refer to *imaginary* actions, and convey the strength of his longing so to proceed. Finally in this passage, Douglas's expansion of *multa gemens* to *Bewalyng mekill* [much] *hir sorow and distress* not only emphasises Aeneas's painful awareness of Dido's sufferings but — a touch which shows his artistry as a poet, rather than as a translator — enables him to rhyme the last word with *netheless*: the contrastive adverb placed in this unusual position at the end of the line pointedly stresses the gulf between Aeneas's feelings and his actions.

Aeneas's encounter with Dido's ghost in Book VI is similarly retold in such a way as to maximise sympathy for him by emphasising his own unavailing sympathy for her. As Aeneas is *pius Aeneas* so Dido is *infelix Dido*, and Douglas's usual word for *infelix* is *onhappy*, which in Middle Scots (unlike Modern English) still retained its etymological sense of "unfortunate, ill-fated" (*miser*, by contrast, Douglas often translates by such a word as *wofull* (of Dido, I.xi.50), *sory* (Dido speaking of Sychaeus, IV.i.40), *catyve* (Sinon of himself, II.ii.22), or — a poignant example — *wrachit catyve* (Dido of herself, IV.vi.69)). The line in which Virgil first uses the phrase, *infelix Dido longumque bibebat amorem* (I.749) is translated as *Onhappy Dido … The langsum* [protracted] *lufe drynkand inwart ful cald*: Douglas's additions powerfully reinforce the chilling portent in the word's application to a queen who at this point is at the height of her *good* fortune. Here, however, he makes Aeneas address her with *"O **fey** Dido …"*. He used this word, meaning "doomed to die", early in the poem in the phrase *the fey onsylly* [unfortunate] *Dido*, translating *infelix* on its first application to her (I.712, I.xi.35), but thereafter not until *infelix … Dido / mortem orat* (IV.450-1): *the fey Dydo … eftir deth prayt*: its specific verbal association with her death gives it a bleak appropriateness here.

The expansion of *recens a vulnere* to the vividly emotive *The greyn* [i.e. fresh] *wound gapand* [gaping] *in her breist all new* is shortly followed by another amplification: in Virgil's *demisit lacrimas dulcique adfatus amore est* it is probably the adjective which has suggested Douglas's adverb *tendyrly*, but he underlines the strength of Aeneas's feelings by supplying

18 Another context in which Douglas uses it is of Neptune calming the storm in Book I. It is, in fact, a very common word in the *Eneados* and near-contemporary Scottish texts.

hartly (heartfelt) to modify *lufe* and the verb *begrat* (lamented). By contrast, *funeris heu tibi causa fui* is rendered straightforwardly and without expansion as *Allace, I was the causar of thy ded!* [death] — the ruthless clarity with which Aeneas perceives the consequences of his past action being forcefully suggested by the stark simplicity of the vocabulary and the emphasis which the trochaic inversion imparts to the pronoun. Careful placing of the words is also evident in the ordering of … *ymagin mycht I* ***nevir***. A tone of urgency is added to his final plea to her to wait and hear him out (*siste gradum teque aspectu ne subtrahe nostro*) by the breaking of Virgil's single sentence into three, each opening with an imperative. The interpolation of *thou gentill wight* carries a bitter irony in that the qualities associated with *gentillnes* are the last things he can expect from Dido at this moment. The unobtrusive *sa sone* [so soon] underlines the inexorability of her parting from him, and even the singular *my sight* (unlike Virgil's *aspectu … nostro*) places a momentary emphasis on his personal grief.

One of Douglas's finest poetic gifts and one of the most individual and most notable characteristics of his entire translation, his ability to present a scene with dramatic vividness, is shown in his use of a much-expanded translation of the following narrative passage (at both the beginning and the end, two lines become five) to convey the futility of Aeneas's pleas (VI.467-476, VI.vii.89-108). The interpolated *full of wo* is not so much balanced as hopelessly overbalanced by *ful of wreth and ire.* Virgil's *ardentem* has suggested both *all inflambit* [set aflame] and *glowand hait* [hot] *as fire*, the phrases being dexterously separated to avoid any seeming redundancy. The repetition of *aversa* from Dido's reaction to Aeneas's exculpatory speech in Book IV is faithfully rendered: in both instances Douglas writes *with acquart* [angry, aggrieved] *luk*. The word *wak*, applied to Aeneas's tears, is conspicuous through being placed in a rhyming position and has no corresponding word in Virgil's text: its connotation here is surely of helplessness or powerlessness: "lacking in ability to fulfil its suggested or intended function".[19] The change of the noun *sermone* to the active clause *as he spak* momentarily brings into explicit focus the contrast of Aeneas's eloquence with Dido's unmoved silence. *Corripuit sese* is rendered by the beautifully onomatopoeic *full swyft scho wiskis* [rushes] *away* (Douglas used that verb earlier of her, *Scho wyskis wild throu the town of Cartage* (IV.vi.40): this time the verbal correspondence is not in Virgil); and to match its implications Aeneas *fast eftir hir furth sprent* [rushed], Douglas again choosing a verb which is both semantically and phonaesthetically potent. Finally Virgil's *miseratur euntem* becomes *… and had piete / Of the distress that movit her so to fle*, expanding the phrase to emphasise the sorrow of both characters but retaining the comfortless conclusion of a verb signifying their final parting.

Douglas's translation in all these passages clearly invites a sympathetic reaction to Aeneas on the reader's part. By contrast, though he could never be charged with minimising the compassion for Dido which Virgil's writing evokes, in certain passages at least his choice of language seems to emphasise her guilt. In her first utterance of the thought of possible marriage to Aeneas (IV.19) she refers to it as *culpa*: Douglas strengthens this to *crime*, and interpolates *in this rage* (IV.i.39-40). Later, the same word *culpa* is again forcefully augmented: *But clepis* [calls] *it spousage, and with that fayr name / Clokyt and hyd hir cryme of*

19 Sense 6 in the online *Dictionary of the Scots Language*, www.dsl.ac.uk/dsl/.

oppin schame (IV.iv.89-90: for *coniugum vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam*: IV.172) underlines the condemnatory tone of Virgil's word both by the expansion and the contrast with *that fayr name*. Shortly afterwards, *ante, pudor, quam te violo aut iura resolvo* (IV.27) is again rendered with much greater emphasis:

> Or I becum so schamful wratchit wyght
> That I myne honeste fyle [defile] or womanheid,
> Or brek ȝour lawis — na, quhil I be ded![20] (IV.i.54-6)

Douglas is at pains to stress Dido's awareness of the moral culpability which she would incur by yielding to her passion and her determination to resist it. The potently dysphemistic Scots word *fyle* comes in effectively here: of course, the special expressive possibilities afforded by the Scots vocabulary are skilfully exploited by Douglas throughout; another instance of interest in the present context being Dido's horrifying thought in her last speech of how she could have destroyed Aeneas and his company (IV.600-2), further envenomed by Douglas's Scots vocabulary as *Syne swak* [fling] *the gobbettis* [pieces of raw flesh] *in the sey by fors … And eik ȝone sam Ascanyus … haue trynschit* [sliced up] *with a sword* (IV.xi.32-5).

Honeste, as a quality which Dido loses (cf. the line from the Prologue to this book already quoted: *honeste baith and gude fame war adew*: 255), is again referred to in Virgil's *neque enim specie famave movetur* (IV.170), which becomes *For nother the fasson nor the maner sche / Attendis nou, nor fame ne honeste*: the word has various associations and *nor fame ne honeste* could, conceivably, be intended to suggest a contrast between the way things are reported to be and the way they actually are; but it is much more likely, particularly in recollection of those earlier occurrences of the word, that the real meaning is the face-value statement that Dido forgot her good reputation and her principles of good conduct: a sense at most only implicit in Virgil's line. Similarly with *womanheid*: this is a highly-charged word denoting "the admirable qualities most becoming a woman", frequently used in Middle Scots poetry (it is a key word, for example, in Henryson's *The Testament of Cresseid*, also a poem of a guilty woman whose fate nonetheless excites compassion), and would certainly have resonated powerfully with Douglas's original audience: in *For the is womanheid went and wirschip bayth* (IV.vi.80: for *te propter … extincus pudor*, IV.321-2) the word is not chosen merely for the alliteration.

The moral interpretation of this crucial episode in the epic is thus clarified by Douglas, both in his statements as a commentator and in his poetic rendition of the story as a translator; and in his presentation of Aeneas and Dido he displays not only the verbal skill but the profound empathy with and loyalty towards the intentions of his model which mark the translator's art at its highest development: an achievement all the more remarkable when it is remembered that poetic translation as a literary form was still barely established. The conflict which readers through the ages have felt — as Virgil surely intended from the very outset — between respect for Aeneas's stern adherence to his duty and sympathy for Dido's

20 By abandoning the vocative *pudor* Douglas obscures the reference of the possessive in ***ȝour** lawis*: an unusual piece of carelessness on his part.

heartbreaking fate had been examined long before Douglas's time and has continued to arouse passionate debate ever since; but this pioneering translation constitutes one of the strongest and clearest statements ever made on the topic.

Finally, it is of interest to note that the Dido story has received memorable treatment in Scottish literature of recent times. A central episode in Iain Crichton Smith's novel *The Last Summer*,[21] set in a Highland community during World War II, is a class discussion among sixth-year pupils, one of whom is suffering the agonies of unrequited love, of the Dido story, prompted by one pupil's response to the word *pius* in IV.394: "It's just, sir, that I thought of his leaving her and then Vergil calling him *pius*". The ensuing debate leads the characters into deep waters and evokes strong emotional reactions, one boy expressing the view that "the race is more important than the individual" and another retorting that that is what Hitler says. In the course of the discussion, the teacher, impressed by the seriousness and intensity of his charges' feelings on the issue, develops one boy's rhetorical question "What kind of Rome would be founded by an Aeneas who could do that kind of thing?" to "Was Rome the kind of place that was corrupted from the beginning? An interesting idea. Very interesting indeed." More recently, the historical novelist (and classical scholar) David Wishart in *I, Virgil*[22] suggests precisely this by offering through the fiction a radically revisionist view of the *Aeneid* as a bitter criticism of Augustus and the results of his policies. And in the field of poetry, one of the high-water marks of the post-MacDiarmid "Lallans" movement is Sydney Goodsir Smith's *Dido* in his poem-sequence *Under the Eildon Tree.* Gavin Douglas would have recognised a brother and peer in the poet who wrote:[23]

> On the siller shore she stude, a simmer sea,
> The lippers curdlan cream at her sandalled feet,
> The sun like a titan's gong raired i' the emperean,
> Lowed on the gowden sail o' the furdest ship of aa
> Nou hauf out athort the bay, onheidan the fleean fleet
> Like an emperor erne abune his reivan kin —
> The gowden sheet like a sheet o' hammered, new mined ore
> Bare aff the fause Ænee wi Dido's leal hert …
> And never aince he lookt ahint,
> For fear, and traitorie, and shame at length.
>
> …The wind that drave his ships, rank on rank o' them,
> Sun on the flichteran-fedderie oars, the faem,
> Spindrift, spume, landbrist and speed,
> Sea-gaean wolves, a pack, wild geese owre the emerant spase
> Their pennands bricht like tongues i' the wind, swan-wings spreid,
> The greinan outraxed craigs o' swans.
> Drinkan the wind for Italie —
> Æneas' fleet
> Speedan awa frae Carthagie and Afric's burnan queen

21 London (Gollancz) 1969; later reprints: the passage referred to is Chapter 16, pp. 94-105.
22 London (Hodder and Stoughton) 1995.
23 See end for glossary to this extract.

Wi a lassie's broken hert and een owre-rin wi greit …

And the like wind that took her fause man aff
Streamed throu her sable hair outblawn
Schere-black as Ethiop nicht, wild her raven glorie
Streamed i' the wind, the speed-flung mane
O' a mear o' Arabie hinnyan i' the race
Owre siller sand — bluid cast til the wrack for libertie!
The unpent cloud o' midnicht streamed in the dry simoon
Sheenan like jet in sol's orsplendant nune.

But he would have had much to say against Smith's presentation of *fause Ænee* in his poem, in particular of his conclusion:

Yon nicht the luift owre Carthage bleezed
And Dian's siller disc was dim
As Dido and her palace burned —
The orange, scarlet, gowden lowes
Her ae wild protest til the centuries.

Queen Dido burned and burnan tashed
Æneas' name for aye wi scelartrie.[24]

— and both men would have thoroughly enjoyed the encounter.

Glossary

ahint – behind ; *aince* – once; *athort* – over; *bare* – bore; *bleezed* – blazed; *craigs* – necks; *drave* – drove; *een* – eyes; *emerant* – emerald; *erne* – eagle; *faem* – foam; *fause* – false; *flichteran-fedderie* (an invented poetic compound) – fluttering-feathery; *furdest* – furthest; *gaean* – going; *gowden* – golden; *greinan* – eager; *greit* – weeping; *hauf* – half; *hinnyan* – neighing; *landbrist* – crash of waves on the shore; *leal* – loyal; *lippers* – little waves; *lowed* – flamed; *lowes* – flames; *luift* – sky; *mear* – mare; *nune* – noon; *onheidan* – unheeding; *orsplendant* (Smith's invention) – shining like gold; *outraxed* – outstretched; *ower-rin* – overflowing; *raired* – roared; *reivan* – robbing; *scelartrie* – infamy; *schere-black* – pure black; *sheenan* – shining; *Siller* – silver; *simoon* – desert wind (recte *simoom*); *spase* – open sea; *spindrift* – blown spray; *tashed* – stained; *traitorie* – treachery; *unpent* – unconfined.

24 *Under the Eildon Tree* first published 1948; quoted from *Collected Poems by Sydney Goodsir Smith*, London (John Calder) 1975, pp.174-6.