

Reproducible Bodies: Literary Queenship, Agency, and Cultural Memory

Workshop organizers:

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This workshop takes up this conference's theme of "action and agency" to think about the representation and reproduction of literary queens in collaborative pieces from two of early modern England's most esteemed playwrights: William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlowe. Although Shakespeare and Marlowe's plays are arguably the most widely taught and performed, their collaborations are often neglected and therefore ripe for the picking. *The Life of King Henry VIII (or All Is True)* and *Dido, Queen of Carthage* have received the least attention historically, yet their literary depiction of queens provides a fruitful framework of how female power is consolidated and disseminated through reproductive possibilities. Might these two plays invite us to consider how various types of reproduction--sexual, material, cultural--have shaped Tudor queenship within the popular imagination?

To begin the workshop, we will provide a 15-20 minute overview of our topic, introducing the publication and performance history of each play and establishing a framework for discussion of our proposed themes. Loosely guided by our questions and the interests of workshop participants, we will focus the second part of the workshop upon examination and discussion of the various excerpts from our primary and critical sources. We will provide excerpts to workshop participants during the session, but full texts will be posted online for further reading. Though our discussion will focus upon the provided excerpts, we welcome additional comments and insights from workshop participants that may be useful to our discussion and modes of thinking about Renaissance queenship and reproductive potential.

Questions:

- How is queenship remembered and commemorated in cultural memory and material culture, specifically in early modern England?
- How might we draw connections between Dido, Catherine of Aragon, and Anne Boleyn's reproductive potential (and lack thereof) and the limited performance histories and critical popularity of *Dido, Queen of Carthage* and *Henry VIII*?
- Is agency physically and temporally related to sexuality and reproductive potential in these plays?
- Marlowe's *Dido* is modeled on Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Shakespeare and Fletcher's *Henry VIII* is modeled on Holinshed's *Chronicles*; *Dido* is grounded in myth, and *Henry VIII* in history; both plays were written and performed during and comment upon the reign of Elizabeth I; and yet, neither has been considered "popular" or has been staged or taught consistently in classrooms since they were first performed and published. How might many layers of meaning produced through reproduction of other figures and stories influence our understanding of queenship, agency, reproducibility, and the establishment of a cultural memory of the Tudors?

- How might England have used reproducible queens with reproductive potential to define or redefine itself either *against* or *as inclusive of* the female body in power?
- How do these plays contribute to the shaping of a mythology surrounding Anne Boleyn and Elizabeth I? How might mythology provide a useful framework for analyzing queenship in these plays?
- How might we engage with the politics of representation in these plays? What are the corollaries between power/queenship and coronation/death as presented in *Dido* and *Henry VIII*?
- Are there identifiable gender tensions present due to the nature of early modern theatre, where all of these queens would have likely been played by boys or young men articulating female sexuality and agency?
- Is there a relationship between national identity and queenship, and can we utilize stories of foreign queens like Dido and Catherine of Aragon to frame conversations about nationalism, conflict, and female bodies in power?

Selected Primary Texts:

- Shakespeare and Fletcher, *The Life of Henry VIII (Or All Is True)*
- Marlowe and Nashe, *Dido, Queen of Carthage*

Selected Critical Works:

- Kim H. Noling, excerpts from “Grubbing Up the Stock: Dramatizing Queens in *Henry VIII*”
- Ivo Kamps, excerpts from “Possible Pasts: Historiography and Legitimation in *Henry VIII*”
- Paola Bono, excerpts from “Rewriting the Memory of a Queen.”
- Deanna Williams, excerpts from “Dido, Queen of England.”
- Kathryn Schwarz, “The Wrong Questions: Thinking Through Virginity”
- Dymphna Callaghan, *The Impact of Feminism in the English Renaissance*.

Suggested Works:

- Kevin Sharpe, “Contesting and Appropriating Elizabeth”
- Susan Bordo, “*The Tudors*, Natalie Dormer, and ‘Our Default’ Anne Boleyn” from *History, Fiction, and The Tudors*, ed. William Robison
- Martha A. Kurtz, “Rethinking Gender and Genre in the History Play.”

PRIMARY MATERIALS

Excerpts from Shakespeare and Fletcher's, *Henry VIII or All Is True* (from Open Source Shakespeare)

ACT 2 || SCENE 3

Anne Bullen. By my troth and maidenhead,
I would not be a queen. **1230**

Old Lady. Beshrew me, I would,
And venture maidenhead for't; and so would you,
For all this spice of your hypocrisy:
You, that have so fair parts of woman on you,
Have too a woman's heart; which ever yet **1235**
Affected eminence, wealth, sovereignty;
Which, to say sooth, are blessings; and which gifts,
Saving your mincing, the capacity
Of your soft cheveril conscience would receive,
If you might please to stretch it. **1240**

Anne Bullen. Nay, good troth.

Old Lady. Yes, troth, and troth; you would not be a queen?

Anne Bullen. No, not for all the riches under heaven.
Old as I am, to queen it: but, I pray you,
What think you of a duchess? have you limbs **1245**
To bear that load of title?

Anne Bullen. No, in truth.

Old Lady. Then you are weakly made: pluck off a little;
I would not be a young count in your way, **1250**
For more than blushing comes to: if your back
Cannot vouchsafe this burthen, 'tis too weak
Ever to get a boy.

Anne Bullen. How you do talk!
I swear again, I would not be a queen **1255**
For all the world.

Old Lady. In faith, for little England
You'd venture an emballing: I myself
Would for Carnarvonshire, although there long'd
No more to the crown but that. Lo, who comes here? **1260**

[Enter Chamberlain]

Lord Chamberlain. Good morrow, ladies. What were't worth to know
The secret of your conference?

Anne Bullen. My good lord,
Not your demand; it values not your asking: **1265**
Our mistress' sorrows we were pitying.

Lord Chamberlain. It was a gentle business, and becoming
The action of good women: there is hope
All will be well.

Anne Bullen. Now, I pray God, amen! **1270**

Lord Chamberlain. You bear a gentle mind, and heavenly blessings
Follow such creatures. That you may, fair lady,
Perceive I speak sincerely, and high note's
Ta'en of your many virtues, the king's majesty
Commends his good opinion of you, and **1275**
Does purpose honour to you no less flowing
Than Marchioness of Pembroke: to which title
A thousand pound a year, annual support,
Out of his grace he adds.

Anne Bullen. I do not know **1280**

What kind of my obedience I should tender;
More than my all is nothing: nor my prayers
Are not words duly hallow'd, nor my wishes
More worth than empty vanities; yet prayers and wishes
Are all I can return. Beseech your lordship, **1285**
Vouchsafe to speak my thanks and my obedience,
As from a blushing handmaid, to his highness;
Whose health and royalty I pray for.

Lord Chamberlain. Lady,
I shall not fail to approve the fair conceit **1290**
The king hath of you.

[Aside]

I have perused her well;
Beauty and honour in her are so mingled
That they have caught the king: and who knows yet **1295**
But from this lady may proceed a gem
To lighten all this isle? I'll to the king,
And say I spoke with you.

[Exit Chamberlain]

Anne Bullen. My honour'd lord. **1300**

Old Lady. Why, this it is; see, see!
I have been begging sixteen years in court,
Am yet a courtier beggarly, nor could
Come pat betwixt too early and too late
For any suit of pounds; and you, O fate! **1305**
A very fresh-fish here—fie, fie, fie upon
This compell'd fortune!—have your mouth fill'd up
Before you open it.

Anne Bullen. This is strange to me.

Old Lady. How tastes it? is it bitter? forty pence, no. **1310**
There was a lady once, 'tis an old story,

That would not be a queen, that would she not,
For all the mud in Egypt: have you heard it?
Anne Bullen. Come, you are pleasant.
Old Lady. With your theme, I could **1315**
O'ermount the lark. The Marchioness of Pembroke!
A thousand pounds a year for pure respect!
No other obligation! By my life,
That promises me thousands: honour's train
Is longer than his foreskirt. By this time **1320**
I know your back will bear a duchess: say,
Are you not stronger than you were?
Anne Bullen. Good lady,
Make yourself mirth with your particular fancy,
And leave me out on't. Would I had no being, **1325**
If this salute my blood a jot: it faints me,
To think what follows.
The queen is comfortless, and we forgetful
In our long absence: pray, do not deliver
What here you've heard to her. **1330**
Old Lady. What do you think me?

ACT 4 || SCENE 1

Second Gentleman. Heaven bless thee!
[Looking on QUEEN ANNE]
Thou hast the sweetest face I ever look'd on.
Sir, as I have a soul, she is an angel;
Our king has all the Indies in his arms, **2465**
And more and richer, when he strains that lady:
I cannot blame his conscience.
First Gentleman. They that bear
The cloth of honour over her, are four barons
Of the Cinque-ports. **2470**
Second Gentleman. Those men are happy; and so are all are near her.
I take it, she that carries up the train
Is that old noble lady, Duchess of Norfolk.
First Gentleman. It is; and all the rest are countesses.
Second Gentleman. Their coronets say so. These are stars indeed; **2475**
And sometimes falling ones.
First Gentleman. No more of that.
[Exit procession, and then a great flourish of trumpets]
[Enter a third Gentleman]
First Gentleman. God save you, sir! where have you been broiling? **2480**
Third Gentleman. Among the crowd i' the Abbey; where a finger
Could not be wedged in more: I am stifled
With the mere rankness of their joy.

Second Gentleman. You saw
The ceremony? **2485**

Third Gentleman. That I did.

First Gentleman. How was it?

Third Gentleman. Well worth the seeing.

Second Gentleman. Good sir, speak it to us.

Third Gentleman. As well as I am able. The rich stream **2490**

Of lords and ladies, having brought the queen

To a prepared place in the choir, fell off

A distance from her; while her grace sat down

To rest awhile, some half an hour or so,

In a rich chair of state, opposing freely **2495**

The beauty of her person to the people.

Believe me, sir, she is the goodliest woman

That ever lay by man: which when the people

Had the full view of, such a noise arose

As the shrouds make at sea in a stiff tempest, **2500**

As loud, and to as many tunes: hats, cloaks—

Doublets, I think,—flew up; and had their faces

Been loose, this day they had been lost. Such joy

I never saw before. Great-bellied women,

That had not half a week to go, like rams **2505**

In the old time of war, would shake the press,

And make 'em reel before 'em. No man living

Could say 'This is my wife' there; all were woven

So strangely in one piece.

Second Gentleman. But, what follow'd? **2510**

Third Gentleman. At length her grace rose, and with modest paces

Came to the altar; where she kneel'd, and saint-like

Cast her fair eyes to heaven and pray'd devoutly.

Then rose again and bow'd her to the people:

When by the Archbishop of Canterbury **2515**

She had all the royal makings of a queen;

As holy oil, Edward Confessor's crown,

The rod, and bird of peace, and all such emblems

Laid nobly on her: which perform'd, the choir,

With all the choicest music of the kingdom, **2520**

Together sung 'Te Deum.' So she parted,

And with the same full state paced back again

To York-place, where the feast is held.

ACT 5 || SCENE 5

Archbishop Cranmer. Let me speak, sir,

For heaven now bids me; and the words I utter

Let none think flattery, for they'll find 'em truth. **3400**

This royal infant—heaven still move about her!—
Though in her cradle, yet now promises
Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,
Which time shall bring to ripeness: she shall be—
But few now living can behold that goodness— **3405**
A pattern to all princes living with her,
And all that shall succeed: Saba was never
More covetous of wisdom and fair virtue
Than this pure soul shall be: all princely graces,
That mould up such a mighty piece as this is, **3410**
With all the virtues that attend the good,
Shall still be doubled on her: truth shall nurse her,
Holy and heavenly thoughts still counsel her:
She shall be loved and fear'd: her own shall bless her;
Her foes shake like a field of beaten corn, **3415**
And hang their heads with sorrow: good grows with her:
In her days every man shall eat in safety,
Under his own vine, what he plants; and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours:
God shall be truly known; and those about her **3420**
From her shall read the perfect ways of honour,
And by those claim their greatness, not by blood.
Nor shall this peace sleep with her: but as when
The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix,
Her ashes new create another heir, **3425**
As great in admiration as herself;
So shall she leave her blessedness to one,
When heaven shall call her from this cloud of darkness,
Who from the sacred ashes of her honour
Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was, **3430**
And so stand fix'd: peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,
That were the servants to this chosen infant,
Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him:
Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
His honour and the greatness of his name **3435**
Shall be, and make new nations: he shall flourish,
And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches
To all the plains about him: our children's children
Shall see this, and bless heaven.

Henry VIII. Thou speakest wonders. **3440**

Archbishop Cranmer. She shall be, to the happiness of England,
An aged princess; many days shall see her,
And yet no day without a deed to crown it.
Would I had known no more! but she must die,
She must, the saints must have her; yet a virgin, **3445**

A most unspotted lily shall she pass
To the ground, and all the world shall mourn her.
Henry VIII. O lord archbishop,
Thou hast made me now a man! never, before
This happy child, did I get any thing: **3450**
This oracle of comfort has so pleased me,
That when I am in heaven I shall desire
To see what this child does, and praise my Maker.
I thank ye all. To you, my good lord mayor,
And your good brethren, I am much beholding; **3455**
I have received much honour by your presence,
And ye shall find me thankful. Lead the way, lords:
Ye must all see the queen, and she must thank ye,
She will be sick else. This day, no man think
Has business at his house; for all shall stay: **3460**
This little one shall make it holiday.

[Exeunt]

EPILOGUE

Chorus. 'Tis ten to one this play can never please
All that are here: some come to take their ease, **3465**
And sleep an act or two; but those, we fear,
We have frighted with our trumpets; so, 'tis clear,
They'll say 'tis naught: others, to hear the city
Abused extremely, and to cry 'That's witty!'
Which we have not done neither: that, I fear, **3470**
All the expected good we're like to hear
For this play at this time, is only in
The merciful construction of good women;
For such a one we show'd 'em: if they smile,
And say 'twill do, I know, within a while **3475**
All the best men are ours; for 'tis ill hap,
If they hold when their ladies bid 'em clap.

Excerpts from *Dido, Queene of Carthage* (from Project Gutenberg)

ACT 5 || SCENE I || 98-192

Dido. But yet *Aeneas* will not leaue his loue.

En. I am commaunded by immortal *Ioue*,

To leaue this towne and passe to *Italy*,

And therefore must of force.

Dido. These words proceed not from *Aeneas* heart.

En. Not from my heart, for I can hardly goe,

And yet I may not stay, *Dido* farewell.

Dido. Farewell: is this the mends for *Didos* loue?

Doe Troians vse to quit their Louers thus?

Fare well may *Dido*, so *Aeneas* stay,
I dye, if my *Aeneas* say farewell.

En. Then let me goe and neuer say farewell,
Let me goe, farewell, I must from hence.

Dido. These words are poyson to poore *Didos* soule,
O speake like my *Aeneas*, like my loue:

Why look'st thou toward the sea? the time hath been
When *Didos* beautie chaungd thine eyes to her;
Am I lesse faire then when thou sawest me first?

O then *Aeneas*, tis for grieffe of thee:

Say thou wilt stay in *Carthage* with my Queene,
And *Didos* beautie will returne againe:

Aeneas, say, how canst thou take thy leaue?

Wilt thou kisse *Dido*? O thy lips haue sworne

To stay with *Dido*: canst thou take her hand?

Thy Hand and mine haue plighted mutuall faith,

Therefore vnkinde *Aeneas*, must thou say,

Then let me goe, and neuer say farewell.

En. O Queene of *Carthage*, wert thou vgly blacke,

Aeneas could not choose but hold thee deare,

Yet must he not gainsay the Gods behest.

Dido. The Gods, what Gods be those that seeke my death?

Wherein haue I offended *Iupiter*,

That he should take *Aeneas* from mine armes?

O no, the Gods wey not what Louers doe,

It is *Aeneas* calles *Aeneas* hence,

And wofull *Dido* by these blubbred cheekes,

By this right hand, and by our spousall rites,

Desires *Aeneas* to remaine with her:

. . . .

Dido. Hast thou forgot how many neighbour kings

Were vp in armes, for making thee my loue?

How *Carthage* did rebell, *Iarbus* storme,

And all the world calles me a second *Helen*,

For being intangled by a strangers lookes:

So thou wouldst proue as true as *Paris* did,

Would, as faire *Troy* was, *Carthage* might be sackt,

And I be calde a second *Helena*.

Had I a sonne by thee, the grieffe were lesse,

That I might see *Aeneas* in his face:

Now if thou goest, what canst thou leaue behind,

But rather will augment then ease my woe?

En. In vaine my loue thou spendst thy fainting breath,

If words might moue me I were ouercome.

Dido. And wilt thou not be mou'd with *Didos* words?

Thy mother was no Goddess periurd man,
 Nor *Dardanus* the author of thy stocke:
 But thou art Sprung from *Scythian Caucasus*,
 And Tygers of *Hircania* gaue thee sucke:
 Ah foolish *Dido* to forbear this long!
 Wast thou not wrackt vpon this *Libian* shoare,
 And cam'st to *Dido* like a Fisherswaine?
 Repaire not I thy ships, made thee a King,
 And all thy needie followers Noblemen?
 O Serpent that came creeping from the shoare,
 And I for pitie harbord in my bosome,
 Wilt thou now slay me with thy venomd sting,
 And hisse at *Dido* for preseruing thee?
 Goe goe and spare not, seeke out *Italy*,
 I hope that that which loue forbids me doe,
 The Rockes and Sea-gulfes will performe at large,
 And thou shalt perish in the billowes waies,
 To whom poore *Dido* doth bequeath reuenge,
 I traytor, and the waues shall cast thee vp,
 Where thou and false *Achates* first set foote:
 Which if it chaunce, Ile giue ye buriall,
 And weepe vpon your lieweles carcasses,
 Though thou nor he will pitie me a whit.
 Why star'st thou in my face? if thou wilt stay,
 Leape in mine armes, mine armes are open wide:
 If not, turne from me, and Ile turne from thee;
 For though thou hast the heart to say farewell,
 I haue not power to stay thee: is he gone?
 I but heele come againe, he cannot goe,
 He loues me to too well to serue me so:
 Yet he that in my sight would not relent,
 Will, being absent, be abdurate still.
 By this is he got to the water side,
 And, see the Sailers take him by the hand,
 But he shrinkes backe, and now remembring me,
 Returnes amaine: welcome, welcome my loue:
 But wheres *Aeneas*? ah hees gone hees gone!

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ACT 5 || SCENE I || 241-328

Dido. O *Anna*, *Anna*, I will follow him.

Anna. How can ye goe when he hath all your fleete?

Dido. Ile frame me wings of waxe like *Icarus*,

And ore his ships will soare vnto the Sunne,

That they may melt and I fall in his armes:

Or els Ile make a prayer vnto the waues,
That I may swim to him like *Tritons* neece:
O *Anna*, fetch *Orions* Harpe,
That I may tice a Dolphin to the shoare,
And ride vpon his backe vnto my loue:
Looke sister, looke louely *Aeneas* ships,
See see, the billowes heaue him vp to heauen,
And now downe falles the keeles into the deepe:
O sister, sister, take away the Rockes,
Theile breake his ships, O *Proteus*, *Neptune*, *Ioue*,
Saue, saue *Aeneas*, *Didos* leefest loue!
Now is he come on shoare safe without hurt:
But see, *Achates* wils him put to sea,
And all the Sailers merrie make for ioy,
But he remembring me shrinkes backe againe:
See where he comes, welcome, welcome my loue.
Anna. Ah sister, leaue these idle fantasies,
Sweet sister cease, remember who you are.
Dido. *Dido* I am, vnlesse I be deceiu'd,
And must I raue thus for a renegate?
Must I make ships for him to saile away?
Nothing can beare me to him but a ship,
And he hath all thy fleete, what shall I doe?
But dye in furie of this ouersight?
I, I must be the murderer of my selfe:
No but I am not, yet I will be straight.
Anna be glad, now haue I found a meane
To rid me from these thoughts of Lunacie:
Not farre from hence there is a woman famoused for arts,
Daughter vnto the Nimphs *Hesperides*,
Who wild me sacrifice his ticing relliques:
Goe *Anna*, bid my seruants bring me fire.

Exit Anna.

Enter Iarbus.

Iar. How long will *Dido* mourne a strangers flight,
That hath dishonord her and *Carthage* both?
How long shall I with grieffe consume my daies,
And reape no guerdon for my truest loue?
Dido. *Iarbus*, talk not of *Aeneas*, let him goe,
Lay to thy hands and helpe me make a fire,
That shall consume all that this stranger left,
For I entend a priuate Sacrifize,
To cure my minde that melts for vnkind loue.
Iar. But afterwards will *Dido* graunt me loue?
Dido. I, I, *Iarbus*, after this is done,

None in the world shall have my loue but thou:
So, leaue me now, let none approach this place.

Exit Iarbus.

Now *Dido*, with these reliques burne thy selfe,
And make *Aeneas* famous through the world,
For periurie and slaughter of a Queene:
Here lye the Sword that in the darksome Caue
He drew, and swore by to be true to me,
Thou shalt burne first, thy crime is worse then his:
Here lye the garment which I cloath'd him in,
When first he came on shoare, perish thou to:
These letters, lines, and periurd papers all,
Shall burne to cinders in this prectious flame.
And now ye Gods that guide the starrie frame,
And order all things at your high dispose;
Graunt, though the traytors land in *Italy*,
They may be still tormented with vnrest,
And from mine ashes let a Conquerour rise,
That may reuenge this treason to a Queene,
By plowing vp his Countries with the Sword:
Betwixt this land and that be neuer league,
Littora littoribus contraria, fluctibus undas
Impresor: arma armis: pugnent ipsig nepotes:
Liue false *Aeneas*, truest *Dido* dyes,
Sic sic inuat ire sub umbras.

Enter Anna.

Anna. O helpe *Iarbus*, *Dido* in these flames
Hath burnt her selfe, aye me, vnhappie me!

Enter Iarbus running.

Iar. Cursed *Iarbus*, dye to expiate
The grieffe that tires vpon thine inward soule,
Dido I come to thee, aye me *Aeneas*.

Anna. What can my teares or cryes preuaile me now?
Dido is dead, *Iarbus* slaine, *Iarbus* my deare loue,
O sweet *Iarbus*, *Annas* sole delight,
What fatall destinie enuies me thus,
To see my sweet *Iarbus* slay himselfe?
But *Anna* now shall honor thee in death,
And mixe her bloud with thine, this shall I doe,
That Gods and men may pitie this my death,
And rue our ends senceles of life or breath;
Now sweet *Iarbus* stay, I come to thee.

SECONDARY MATERIALS

Kim Noling, "Grubbing up the Stock"

"To get Elizabeth born legitimately required a husbandry of queens even more ruthless than that advocated by perhaps the most despicable character in the play, Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester:

Gard. The fruit she [Queen Anne] goes with
I pray for heartily, that it may find Good time, and live; but for the stock, ...
I wish it grubb'd up now.
(V.i.20-23)

This gardener would at least spare the fruit, Princess Elizabeth; King Henry, however, is willing both to grub up the stock and to discard the fruit when he divorces Queen Katherine and has their marriage, which has produced Princess Mary, declared "of none effect" (IV.i.33). But far from simply supporting Henry's dynastic strategies by minimizing Katherine's theatrical power, Shakespeare allows her generous stage exposure and a commanding presence as she resists nullification at the king's pleasure. Katherine's theatrical power should not, however, be misconstrued as a sign of Shakespeare's unalloyed feminism in the play,³ for it must be weighed with a contrasting dramaturgy defining the other queens. He keeps Princess Mary undramatized to avoid arousing sympathy for the daughter cast off by Henry while pursuing his desire for a son. Moreover, Shakespeare roots the dramatized Anne just deeply enough to serve Henry's dynastic purposes, so that by play's end the fruit, Elizabeth, does for the audience supplant the stock. Yet for all her promised glory, the future Queen Elizabeth does not satisfy the patriarch's urge for a male successor, nor does her birth alleviate his anxiety about depending on the female as a means to male heirs. Therefore, through dramatic narration, Shakespeare ultimately authorizes Henry's will by making the tiny Princess Elizabeth—who after a long reign would die a "virgin, / A most unspotted lily" (V.iv.60-61)—a means of producing kings of England." (291-292)

"Shakespeare gives Katherine the theatrical wherewithal to resist Henry's desire to "turn [her] into nothing" (III.i.114); although she cannot override his political will, which legally erases one daughter and twenty years of marriage, she resists his nullification of her until her death in Act IV by remaining a regal heroine of strong individual will. Anne Bullen is, in contrast, so circumscribed by her staging that she cannot fairly compete for the audience's acceptance of her as an adequate substitute for the bold Katherine. Such dramaturgy shows Shakespeare working against Henry's immediate objective of supplanting Queen Katherine with Queen Anne; in Anne's characterization, however, Shakespeare ultimately re-affirms Henry's valuing of a queen according to her ability to produce a suitable heir.

Portraying a Catholic heroine was a ticklish job in a Protestant age, but portraying Queen Elizabeth's motherless than eighty years after Anne had been beheaded for the high treason of adultery posed even more difficult problems. Shakespeare could not entirely ignore the audience's probable awareness of Anne's rapid disgrace, but he dealt with it obliquely in various ways. To give some credibility to the fact that this professedly pure and modest Anne Bullen

could later be charged with adultery, not only does he compress history so that Anne is in Henry's favor (to some unspecified degree) before Katherine's trial, but also he initially defines her as a woman at ease in ribald conversation during a luxurious banquet. In addition, the Old Lady's bawdy conversation with Anne suggests that to become Henry's queen she may also have to become a quean, trading her body for power (II.iii.34-37). Shakespeare protects Anne by having her deny all ambition, but he lets the Old Lady challenge Anne's denial as hypocrisy. Moreover, that challenge to Anne's seeming simplicity and purity gains credibility in part because the audience knows that, her protests notwithstanding, Anne will learn to bear the burdens-Henry and his child-that queenship demands.

But the mother of Elizabeth must not be compromised overmuch. Shakespeare deals with the possible embarrassment of Anne's untimely and disgraceful end mostly by making Anne a thing of the past even before the play ends. He does so by skimping on her characterization; by rendering her as a sweet, sympathetic, but forgettable young woman; and then by gradually effacing her altogether as a dramatic character, so that she is not printed off but blotted out by her infant daughter.

As with Katherine, the extent and the nature of stage exposure allowed Anne greatly affect her characterization in itself and in relation to that of her rival queen. Although the size of a role is not the most important factor, surely the relative smallness of Anne's-58 lines as compared to Katherine's 374-limits the audience's access to her character. In the first of her three appearances (I.iv), she remains on stage throughout the scene but speaks a mere three times, and then only briefly and ambiguously; in her final appearance (IV.i), she merely proceeds wordlessly in pomp across the stage. Moreover, the concentration of most of her speeches in one scene (II.iii) restricts her self-expression to a single moment in her rise to queenship. Indeed, once Anne becomes queen, she becomes a public figure with "no comment"; although the audience has been introduced to her trepidations about the greatness to be thrust upon her, it receives no new insights into her feelings once she has married Henry, conceived his heir, and been crowned Queen of England. Her silent appearance as queen is particularly remarkable since it immediately precedes Katherine's last voluble stand as the "queen of earthly queens." Even though Anne is in the political ascendant, of the two queens it is Katherine whom the audience sees and hears last.

Anne is certainly visible in those scenes in which she is silent or nearly silent, particularly in her coronation procession; however, her visibility, unlike Katherine's, comes not from positions that she assumes according to her own will, but from positions determined-for her by other characters. Although Anne is the only woman with a specific identity at Wolsey's banquet, she makes no dramatic entrance but is one among the many ladies and gentlemen to be greeted and seated by the men who control the night's festivities. Her choice of a place next to another woman at the banquet table is quickly vetoed by the Chamberlain, who insists on seating the randy Lord Sands between the women. From this position she and the other woman are easy targets for Lord Sands's aggressive gallantry, as he wastes no time in kissing them both. And because she has no rightful place beside Henry, it is his actions that place her in a position of prominence beside him: he takes her out to dance and later returns to her side to kiss her (I.iv.94-96). Not all her dramatic interest in the scene depends on Henry's favor-indeed, she is a great deal more

interesting when engaging in vaguely ribald repartee than when abashed, as one must assume, into silence-but her distinction as a person bound to have a continuing role in this historical panorama comes from Henry's drawing her to his side as a partner; only then is the audience sure that this is Anne Bullen." (298-300)

Ivo Kamps, "Possible Pasts: Historiography and Legitimation in *Henry VIII*"

"Commentators who view the play as an aesthetic success turn to this final scene (and its historiography) to unify its various elements into a meaningful whole. Paul Dean, for instance, contends that while the "falls" of Buckingham, Katherine, and Wolsey and the "rises" of Anne Bullen and Thomas Cranmer are not unrelated, they are best understood "as a translation into dramatic terms of the undulations of the Wheel of Fortune which controls the action" (Dean 177). Dean acknowledges and then unifies the play's episodic structure by invoking the medieval *de casibus* tradition, thus explaining a Jacobean history play in terms of an essentially medieval theory of history. Frank V. Cespedes argues "that the structure of *Henry VIII* is designed to force upon its audience an awareness of two things at once: the fortunate march of English history toward the reign of Elizabeth [and James], and the 'sad,' 'woeful' story ... of individuals during Henry VIII's reign who unwittingly helped to shape, and perished in the unfolding of, this historical process" (Cespedes 415). Thus the play presents the Jacobean viewer with "a conflict between historical ends and means" (415) of an essentially "'good' historical process" (437). Matthew H. Wikander simply notes that the Buckingham, Katherine, and Wolsey episodes "befog" the "play's historiography," which really "celebrates the stability and continuity of the monarchy in a manner even more providential than that of the Tudor chronicles" (46, 47). If Cranmer constitutes the standard of historical judgment in the play, then Dean's and Cespedes's readings are compelling; but I think we ought to resist granting the Archbishop such special status. Indeed, I want to do what neither the play's detractors nor those who try to save its reputation do, which is consider the possibility that Shakespeare and Fletcher give us not a disunified play about history but a play about disunified history.' The latter alternative, rather than harking back to medieval notions of history, looks to the more "modern" world of Jacobean historiography to illuminate the play. Choosing it allows us to see that despite the christening scene's power and pathos, Cranmer's effort to produce dramatic and historical closure is an ideological move that is undercut by other historical "voices" of the play." (194-195)

"The Queen, on the other hand, has the authority of history and custom on her side. Not only does she make a convincing case for having been the perfect Queen and wife (2.4.11-42), she also unwaveringly invokes the historical events and figures that authorized her marriage to Henry.

The king your father [Henry VII] was reputed A prince most prudent, of an excellent And unmatched wit and judgment: Ferdinand My father, King of Spain, was reckon'd one The wisest prince that there had reign'd by many A year before. It is not to be question'd That they had gather'd a wise council to them Of every realm, that did debate this business, Who deem'd our marriage lawful ... (2.4.43-51)

To Katherine (or to anyone in concord with Tudor law, culture, and decorum), the case against her can only be profoundly baffling. Henry VII-patriarch and founder of the Tudor dynasty-and the King of Spain were the architects of her marriage, Rome gave it its blessing, and an international council imparted its judicial approval. Therefore, with "history" so overwhelmingly on her side, it is not surprising that Katherine rejects what is to her the most unseemly of proceedings and departs from the court prematurely and dramatically (ignoring the King's summons), refusing to submit herself while contending that she has "here / No judge indifferent, nor no more assurance / Of equal friendship and proceeding" (2.4.14-16). Katherine only barely fits the typical Renaissance category of the heroine as patient victim; she endures her fate, but she also boldly defies her King and judge, stretching the definition of the heroine to the breaking point, and remaining noble and sympathetic throughout." (203)

"More blatantly damning to Cranmer's efforts to blend Tudor ideology and providence into a unified and compelling whole may be the type or genre of his historiographical speech. Given that Henry VIII draws heavily on historical sources, sometimes simply versifying Holinshed, it may be somewhat alarming to realize that Cranmer's all-important prophecy does not have a historical source. The speech is entirely made up. There are of course many instances in the play where Shakespeare and Fletcher introduce materials for which we have no source, but Cranmer's speech deserves special attention because, by offering its Jacobean audience a summary representation of the previous eighty years, it draws attention to itself as a historiographical representation. To present a fictional speech as history is not necessarily to overstep the legitimate bounds of Renaissance historical representation, but this particular manifestation, we will see, turns out to be suspect." (209-210)

Paola Bono, "Rewriting the Memory of a Queen: Dido, Cleopatra, Elizabeth I"

"In sixteenth-century England, once again in a critical passage after a period of civil strife, the political implications of the *Aeneid* – and of Dido's story within it – took on a new relevance, both because of Britain's mythical founder Brut, supposedly a descendant of Aeneas's, and in relation to the rule of Elizabeth I. The fantastic genealogy linking classical and Celtic myths (narrated in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britannicum* and in a wealth of chronicles and poems) was well rooted in the cultural memory of Tudor times, and the story of Britain's kings – from Brut to Arthur to Cadwallar, and down to Henry VII – was part of the historical-mythical apparatus legitimating the new dynasty; in the period of colonial expansion, this quasi-identification between the English and the Romans also served to evoke a positive continuity with Rome's imperial destiny. With regard to the vexing question of a female sovereign, the analogy between Elizabeth and the Carthaginian Queen may well appear objectionable, but

there are three quite obvious reasons for associating the two women. First, both queens were otherwise known as Elisa; Dido, which means valiant woman, replaced the original name, Elisa, to commemorate her exceptional state and domestic deeds. Second, the Virgilian poeticized Dido provided two moral object lessons – to encourage the spirit of nationalism and to discourage suitors.... Third, both women were exceptions to the

prevailing role of women in being childless and powerful rulers. (Roberts-Baytop, 1974: vi)” (122)

“A woman can be fit to govern only if she is able to control her naturally passionate nature, and Elizabeth’s devotion to her royal duties is enhanced in the contrastive comparison with the Virgilian heroine, while the identification with Dido ‘dux femina facti’ (Aeneid, 1: 364), underlines the queen’s ‘manly’ courage and strength. The association is repeatedly present in the literature of the period, often introduced in passing as an obvious parallel: celebrating in Elizabetha Triumphans the three decades of her rule and the defeat of the Invincible Armada, James Aske pictures the English troops at Tilbury, ‘Through whom did passe our Queene most Dido-like’ (Aske, 1969: 25), and long after her death, the elegy In Honour of That High and Mighty Princess Elizabeth of Happy Memory (1650) pairs her with ‘Dido first Foundress of proud Carthage walls /...A great Eliza, but compar’d with ours, / How vanisheth her glory, wealth, and powers’ (Bradstreet, 1967: 197). Here the English monarch is exalted in a polemical affirmation of women’s capacity to rule, and the brief reference to Dido ignores the desperate love which caused her and her city’s ruin. But the unrestrained passion that differentiates the two queens is as topically relevant as the similarities between them, for during Elizabeth’s reign her superiority as Regina Virgo was a staple of political propaganda. Chastity signified the capacity to keep a tight rein on one’s instincts, and sharply opposed Elizabeth to her great rival Mary Stuart and more generally to all catholic queens.” (124)

“Marlowe’s *Tragedy of Dido* (ante 1586) is only marginally concerned with the political issues focused upon here, but his queen does become ‘tyrannical’ when she wants Aeneas to be honoured as her husband and as Carthage’s king; to Anna’s ‘What if the citizens repine thereat?’, she replies that criticism will be punished with death, claiming absolute power: ‘The ground is mine that gives them sustenance, / The air wherein they breathe, the water, fire, / All that they have, their lands, their goods, their lives’ (Marlowe, 1968, IV. iv. 70 and 74 – 6).

A queen’s private affairs, if and whom she marries, are of great public import, as Elizabeth knew well; brilliantly turning into a positive asset the problematic question of her unmarried condition (used with great diplomatic skill in international relations), she wore her ‘chastity’ as the distinctive feature which set her aside from other women. In the long years of her reign, the queen’s representations would more and more clearly revolve around this trait, in a complex net of figurations rooted in classical mythology (Yates, 1975; Strong, 1987; Pomeroy, 1989; King, 1990). The Virgin Queen is Gloriana, Astraea, Cynthia, Belphebe . . . These are common themes in the literature, iconography and political pamphleteering of the Elizabethan period; ‘chastity’ and ‘patience’ allow the Protestant queen to transcend her womanly nature and to govern justly and wisely, unlike other ‘incontinent’ queens, be they her contemporaries or historical-mythical figures such as Dido and Cleopatra.” (124-125)

“Dido and Cleopatra serve a political purpose in the Elizabethan period as they did in the Augustan age, powerfully woven into the texture of the collective imaginary. But in their re-signification, the opposition between West and East becomes even more clearly aligned with that between the political and the personal – and of course, between man and woman, as the

discourse of heterosexual love is constructed at the same time as part of the discourse of power and opposed to it.” (126)

Deanna Williams, “Dido, Queen of England”

“For centuries, Virgil's Aeneid provided a model for Britain's self-fashioning as a "second Troy," founded by Brutus. However, *Dido, Queene of Carthage* illustrates the kinds of revisions that were necessary when centuries of Virgilian exemplarity confronted the reality of female sovereignty in Elizabeth. As the play reworks its Virgilian source, it highlights both the problem and the potential of using Dido as a counterpart to Elizabeth. For Dido was a highly contested figure, her salubrious pre-Virgilian reputation compromised by her self-annihilating passion in the Aeneid. To a certain extent, Dido's potent blend of avowed chastity and charged sexuality made her a perfect choice for Elizabeth. Yet her unstable reputation--is she a canny seductress or a hapless victim? African or European? Occidental or Oriental?--reinforced as much as assuaged anxieties about having a female sovereign. Paradoxically, Elizabeth was the marker for England's national identity, while her identification with Dido constructed her as the quintessential Other: exotic and eroticized, because different, and dangerous, because female.

By showing Dido as, at once, colonizer and colonized, predator and victim, eastern and western, *Dido, Queene of Carthage* reveals the intensely labile roles that Queen Elizabeth I chose and was expected to perform. At a time when Elizabeth was beginning to focus her energies on expansion, supporting Sir Walter Raleigh's expeditions to Virginia, and the travels of John Newbery and Ralph Fitch to India, it celebrates a ruler known for her chastity and her empire. Yet the play also dramatizes the loss of sovereignty that Elizabeth (and England) avoided by resolving the question of marriage, characteristically, by refusing to resolve it at all. And after Marlowe and Nashe were finished with it, the Aeneid was never the same. As *Dido, Queene of Carthage* transforms Virgil, it undermines the stability of racial and geographical hierarchies and categories, demonstrating the flexibility of the interpenetrating discourses of gender and colonialism in the early modern period.” (32)

“As the author of Latin speeches, the patron and audience of Latin plays, and an avid participant in Latin conversations, Elizabeth would have been familiar with the ongoing learned debate about Dido. The challenge of interpreting visual and dramatic representations of her story would have also appealed to her superb humanist education. However, the language of Virgilian allegory and exemplarity had fallen out of fashion by the time Marlowe was rediscovered in the nineteenth century, which celebrated him more as an outsider and a rebel than for his Latin erudition. This explains, in part, why *Dido, Queene of Carthage* has been relegated to the margins of the Marlovian canon. The play's status as juvenilia (it was probably written while Marlowe was at Cambridge) and as the product of some kind of collaboration with Nashe (the quarto title page states that it was written "by Christopher Marlowe" and, in small italics, "Thomas Nash. Gent"), along with its association with the undervalued genre of translation, have contributed to its marginalization. . . .

Like the Siena Sieve portrait, *Dido, Queene of Carthage* reworks its Virgilian source material, and the Dido tradition that precedes it, into a negative example of the ruinous effects of love and

the desire for marriage upon an otherwise competent (and glamorous) queen. According to the play, Dido's troubles begin when she becomes the unwitting victim of a spell that compels her to replace her string of adoring suitors with a husband. The masterful (and masculine) sangfroid she maintains with her minions topples into a kind of intense, desperate (and feminine) desire that seeks marriage, and procreative sexuality, as the ultimate goal. Marlowe and Nashe's treatment of the seduction of the queen of Carthage and her abandonment by a feckless suitor calls attention to the extent to which Dido's desire to marry Aeneas opens herself and her country up for exploitation by a foreigner. *Dido, Queene of Carthage* thus transforms Virgil's apologia for masculine prerogative into praise for a queen who, by avoiding marriage, preserved the liberty and prosperity of her people." (42-43)

Kathryn Schwarz, "The Wrong Question: Thinking Through Virginité"

"The question posed by feminist critics is not simply whether women appear in historical narratives, but how their appearances and disappearances reveal the ideological investments of historicist projects...[This question] at once focuses and begins to unravel the larger opposition between female subjects who define themselves and female objects who find themselves defined, between women who speak and women who are spoken." (20-21)

"We often find ourselves back at the relationship between subversion and containment, at that early and powerful proposition according to which threats to authority are appropriated and turned to authority's ends, and at the equally early resistance to this as a closed system. That first, naive question, "Was Elizabeth really a virgin?" might in this sense be rewritten as, "Was she contained by patriarchal impositions, or did she subvert them?" This, too, is perhaps a wrong question, not least because feminist historicism...like, I would suggest, any number of apparently more conventional feminine accts-changes the ways in which particular structures and practices mean. Rather than weighing the alternative of capture and escape, we might instead see what happens if we take containment at its word, asking what is being contained and what it means to contain it and how it enacts that containment in a recognizable way, questions that return to the peculiar inscrutability of willed enactment from within." (22)

Dympna Callaghan, Intro to *The Impact of Feminism in English Renaissance Studies*

"While the revisionist perspective, then, offers some useful correctives of the feminist critique of patriarchy, it is not a substitute for it. We thus need information from both these approaches if we are to arrive at a properly comprehensive view of women's relation to cultural representation in the period . . . Feminist scholarship thus far, then, presents us with two divergent perspectives, which nonetheless have the potential to add up to a valuably complex, nuanced picture of women's simultaneous participation in *and* exclusion from early modern culture. Women's status in early modern England is, paradoxically, that of *excluded participants*." (7)