

Aeneid 4.522-583: notes

- 522: Ceremony over; as MacLennan observes, only here in the *Aeneid*, do we receive no sign as to how the prayers were received.
- 522ff.: sleep for everyone (note Aeneas) except Dido. Cf. Apollonius Rhodius 3.744ff (mapping Dido onto Medea): effect?
- 523 *quierant*: contracted form of *quieverant*.
- 525 *tacet*: singular because of close subject *ager*, even though *pecudes* and *volucres* are also subjects.
- 526 *late liquidos*: take together.
- 527 *somno positae*: “laid down in sleep” (MacLennan).
- 529 *infelix animi*: “heartbroken” (MacLennan); Dido *infelix* elsewhere e.g. 4.596 (referring to herself); 6.456.
- 530 *solvitur in somnos*: “relax into sleep” (MacLennan).
- 532 *fluctuat*: subject is *amor*.
- 533 *sic adeo insistit*: “in this way she persists” (MacLennan).
- 534-52: Dido’s speech: cf. speeches of other abandoned heroines weighing their options (Ariadne, Medea...)
- 534 *en*: “see!”; MacLennan comments “a barely translatable expression of shocked indignation”.
- 534 *quid ago?*: not deliberative subjunctive as we might expect from the grammar books; *petam* and (535) *experiar* are deliberative subjunctives.
- 534: Dido has previously had to contend with the suitors: see the beginning of Book 4. She asks if she should find out only to be “laughed at” (*inrisa*).
- 535 *supplex*: Dido has been suppliant to Aeneas but this is too far.
- 536 *quos ego sim .. dedignata*: “although I have scorned them” (MacLennan; subjunctive in relative clause).
- 537 *ultima Teucrum / iussa*: “every last order of the Trojans”; *Teucrum* is genitive plu.
- 538 *auxilio iuvat ante levatos*: “it pleases [*iuvat* = impersonal verb] them [sc. *eos*] that they have been relieved with assistance before” (MacLennan).
- 539 *et bene apud memores veteris stat gratia facti*: “and the favour of a former kindness remains with those who remember it well” (MacLennan); sarcastic as Dido doesn’t feel they are showing gratitude.
- 540 *me ... fac velle*: “just imagine that I do want to”
- 541 *invisam*: “the woman they hate” (MacLennan); Dido’s interpretation of the Trojans’ happy departure.
- 541 *perdita*: “ruined” (MacLennan); vocative.
- 542 *Laomedontae ... periuria*: Laomedon was the king of Troy who refused to honour his promises to pay for the construction of the city walls.
- 543 *sola fuga*: ablative.
- 543 *nautas... ovariantis*: rejoicing because leaving? As if taking Dido as captive spoil?
- 544 *Tyriis ... stipata*: “pressed around by the Tyrians” (MacLennan).
- 545 *inferar*: “shall I join the company” (MacLennan).
- 546 *agam*: sc. *eos*. Dido is still think of her responsibilities as ruler.
- 547 *quin morere ut merita es*: “why not die [imp. *morere*] as [*ut*] you have deserved” (MacLennan).
- 547 *ferroque averte dolorem*: “use the sword to take the pain away” (MacLennan).
- 548-52: addresses/blames Anna (fairly?) for causing her to enter relationship with Aeneas; recalls language at start.
- 549 *obiciis hosti*: sc. *me*; “you threw me to the enemy” (MacLennan).
- 550 *non licuit*: impersonal verb.
- 550 *thalami expertem*: “having no part in marriage” (MacLennan).
- 553 *fides*: i.e. loyalty.
- 553 *Tantos ... rumpebat ... questus*: Dido brings “such great complaints bursting out”.
- 555: contrast Aeneas’ ability to sleep with Dido’s insomnia.

556-7: Mercury (or avatar or Aeneas' guilty conscience...) appears again; MacLennan suggests the vagueness adds to sense that it is a malicious visitation. Appropriate for Mercury's actions to lead to suicide of Dido given his psychopompic function: so Fratanuono 'Lethaeum ad fluvium: Mercury in the *Aeneid*' in *Pallas* 99: 2015).

556-7 *se .../ .... obtulit*: "presented itself"

558: accusatives of respect.

558f. *coloremque / et*: the *et* elides with the *que* (so 558 is a hypermetric line)

560 *nate dea*: Aeneas was born of Venus (and Anchises); way of getting Aeneas to remember his importance.

560 *ducere*: "prolong" (MacLennan).

563 *illa*: "that woman" (MacLennan): derogatory.

563 *dolos*: deceit/fraud again: here of Carthagian.

564: suggestion that suicidal Dido has nothing to loose.

564 *variosque irarum concitat aestus*: "she is summoning up the shifting flood-tides of her anger" (MacLennan).

565-6: Lovatt sees as in epic register: "*Quis nesciat* itself signals a reference to poetic tradition, and the description of the Trojans as *genus Aeneadum* signals not just her awareness of Aeneas, but also high epic style, reinforced by the repetition of *que* in 566, a Virgilian imitation of the Homeric repeated *te*. The metaphor in *incendia belli* equally marks these lines as self-consciously poetic. There is a metaphor too in the next line (*obtunsa pectora*, 'our hearts are not so blunt')" (Lovatt in *Dictynna* 10 (2013) 'The eloquence of Dido: exploring speech and gender in Virgil's *Aeneid*')

565 *non fugis*: "are you not fleeing away?" (MacLennan who says equivalent to a command)

565 *dum potestas*: sc. *est* "while getting away fast is still a possibility" (MacLennan).

566 *trabibus*: i.e. ships (part for whole).

566-7: apparent threat of Dido firing the Trojan ships: she wishes to do this when hears of dept (593-4) but would she? Note 5.4 *conlucent flammæ*: of pyre...

569 *rumpe moras*: motif of delay; possible play with *roma/amor*? Cf. Reed ('*Mora* in the *Aeneid*').

569-70 *varium ... femina*: sc. *est*. "A woman is always an inconsistent and unreliable thing" (MacLennan). How true is this of Dido? How far is instability a feature of her throughout? She has not kept her *fides* to Sychaeus. What about Mercury's agenda?

571ff: note emphasis on speed. The *mora* is over.

571 *umbris*: "apparition" (MacLennan).

571 *sociosque fatigat*: "wearies his men" (MacLennan).

574 *citi*: adjective for adverb: "swiftly".

575-6 *festinare .../ ... instimulat*: "urges [us] to hurry" (MacLennan).

576 *sancte deorum*: "o blessed (one) among the gods" (MacLennan).

577 *quisquis es*: common in prayer to leave open how to style the deity.

577 *iterum*: see previous appearance of Mercury.

578 *adsis o*: o usually prior.

578 *sidera... feras*: "may you offer favourable constellations" (MacLennan) (as when different constellations are there, the weather is different).

579 *ensem*: swords gain importance in *Aeneid* 4. Here Aeneas uses a sword to leave.

581 *habet*: "possesses" (MacLennan).

581 *rapiuntque ruuntque*: "they haul and hustle" (West, quoted by MacLennan).

582 *deseruere*: i.e. *deseruerunt*.

582 "the sea is invisible beneath the ships" (MacLennan).

583 *adnixa*: "making a mighty effort" (MacLennan).