THE MINOTAUR WITHIN: FIRE, THE LABYRINTH, AND STRATEGIES OF CONTAINMENT IN *AENEID* 5 AND 6

PAUL ALLEN MILLER

GEORGE LAKOFF in a recent book on cognitive linguistics records that in the traditional dialect of one of the major aboriginal languages of Australia, all nouns are divided into four categories, which must be preceded by one of four identifying particles. The second category, as it happens, consists primarily of women, fire, and dangerous things, which in turn provides the title for Lakoff's book.[1] While only the most intoxicated diffusionist fantasy would claim any sort of genealogical filiation between the aboriginal tongue and the erotic realms evoked in Vergil's *Aeneid,* it is nonetheless striking how similar the latter's basic categories are to the former's. For Vergil clearly in the characters of Dido, Amata, Camilla, and Penthesilea (not to mention Hera, Dira, and Allecto) depicts women as dangerous.[2]

At the same time, as a number of scholars have noted, fire is a recurrent motif throughout the *Aeneid* and is associated with the dangers of uncontrolled passion of either an erotic or a heroic nature. Both sorts of passion are, in turn, associated with women and sexuality, as when Coroebus, "insano Cassandrae *incensus* amore" (2.343–45 and 424–26), charges to his death, or Turnus sees Lavinia blush at Aeneas' name and "illum turbat amor figitque in virgine. / *ardet* in arma" (12.70–71).[3] Indeed, fire symbolism in the *Aeneid* is deeply ambivalent. Always connected with passion and its dangers, it is cited in Book 6 as the fundamental energy that maintains the world (6.730–34). Some measure of passion is of course necessary if heroic deeds

1. *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind* (Chicago, 1987), 92–99.

2. Paul Allen Miller, "Sive Deae Seu Sint Dirae Obscenaeque Volucres," *Arethusa* 22 (1989): 49–61; S. Georgia Nugent, "Vergil's 'Voice of the Women' in *Aeneid* V," *Arethusa* 25 (1992): 289; W. R. Johnson, *Darkness Visible: A Study of Vergil's "Aeneid"* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976), 144; and M. Owen Lee, *Fathers and Sons in Virgil's "Aeneid"* (Albany, 1979), 114. See also Barbara Pavlock's discussion of Apollonius' portrayal of women in the *Argonautica* as "utterly passionate and irrational," *Eros, Imitation, and the Epic Tradition* (Ithaca, 1990), 47 and 65.

3. Other examples include 1.491 (Penthesilea), 1.660 (Dido), 1.718 (Dido), 2.314–16 (Aeneas), 4.66–68 (Dido), and 12.238 (Juturna). See also Miller, "Sive Deae," 73–77; Brooks Otis, *Vergil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford, 1963), 71; William S. Anderson, *The Art of the "Aeneid"* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1969), 54; G. S. West, "Vergil's Helpful Sisters: Anna and Juturna in the *Aeneid,*" *Vergilius* 25 (1979): 10–14; Johnson, *Darkness Visible,* 56–57; Sarah B. Spence, *Rhetorics of Reason and Desire: Vergil, Augustine and the Troubadours* (Ithaca, 1988), 32. The *locus classicus* for discussions of fire imagery in the *Aeneid* is Bernard Knox's, "The Serpent and the Flame: The Imagery of the Second Book of the *Aeneid,*" in *Virgil: A Collection of Critical Essays,* ed. Steele Commager (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966), 124–42.

are to be done and if the generations are to reproduce, but passion quickly escapes rational control.[4]

Fire, like passion, is both necessary and dangerous. Some of its essential ambiguity is captured in a story related by Pliny the Elder (*HN* 36.204) according to which Servius Tullius "was begotten by a flaming phallus that appeared out of the royal hearth tended at the time by his mother."[5] Fire in this story represents both passion's potentially frightful power and its possible positive effects—political, as well as generational, continuity. Yet as the fire imagery in Book 2's description of the capture of Troy represents, the flames of passion are often destructive too. In a similar fashion, Mikhail Bakhtin observes of fire in the symbolism of carnival that it "simultaneously destroys and renews the world."[6]

In Roman culture, fire is associated with the cult of Vesta, the very symbol of the continuity of the household and the state. At first sight, the vestal cult might seem to represent the antithesis of passion, due to its defining characteristic of ritual virginity. But, as Robin N. Mitchell has recently shown, virginity is an ambiguous quality in Roman culture at large, and in the *Aeneid* it is generally associated with violence and death, two phenomena in which passion burns brightly.[7] Moreover the fires of Vesta are themselves ambivalent. The same virgins who were buried alive if they broke their vow of chastity were also charged with the cult of the phallic god Fascinus, tutelary deity of children and triumphing generals.[8] They thus represent an ideal of sexual passion properly contained within the hearth, as symbolic evocation of the *domus,* while affirming passion's essential imagistic and ritual link with both the continuity of the generations and heroic violence and passion. In this light, we might contrast the ritual hearthfire Aeneas rekindles the morning after his vision of Anchises in Book 5 with the uncontrolled flames of the burning of the ships by the Trojan women earlier in the same book (5.605–74):

> haec memorans cinerem et sopitos suscitat *ignis,*
> Pergameumque Larem et canae penetralia *Vestae*
> farre pio et plena supplex veneratur acerra.
>   [5.743–45]

4. On the "subtle yet vital link between . . . eros and war" in the *Aeneid,* see Douglas Blow, "Epic Performance on Trial: Virgil's *Aeneid* and the Power of Eros in Song," *Arethusa* 27 (1994): 228, 242–43; and Michael C. J. Putnam, "Possessiveness, Sexuality and Heroism in the *Aeneid,*" *Vergilius* 31 (1985): 16–17. Although outside the scope of this essay, the night-raid of Nisus and Euryalus presents a similar conjoining of erotic and heroic passion. It is interesting to note in this context that the death of Euryalus is portrayed using the same terms as those for the deflowering of a virgin. See his "Vergil on Killing Virgins," in *Homo Viator: Classical Essays for John Bramble,* ed. Michael Whitby, Philip Hardie, and Mary Whitby (Bristol, 1987), 185–98.

5. Gregory Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past* (Baltimore, 1990), p. 125, n. 47. Pavlock, *Eros,* 69–71, notes Vergil's concentration on the dangers of blind passion and Dido's combination of the heroic and the erotic.

6. *Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics,* ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis, 1984), 126.

7. Robin N. Mitchell, "The Violence of Virginity in the *Aeneid,*" *Arethusa* 24 (1991): 219–28.

8. Miller, "Sive Deae," 76 and Pliny *HN* 28.7. On fertility and chastity as complementary rather than opposed, see Claude Calame, *Les choeurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque,* vol. 1 (Rome, 1977), 288. For an excellent discussion of the Vestal cult, its fires, and associated ambiguities, see Mary Beard, "The Sexual Status of Vestal Virgins," *JRS* 70 (1980): 12–27, esp. 24–25.

The implied difference between these flames is that between the ritually contained fires of hearth and cult and the savage or unbounded flames of the Trojan women's passionate fury. Yet the diction of line 744's *penetralia Vestae* also hearkens back to the very fires the Trojan women despoiled in order to burn the ships (*focis penetralibus*, 660), and thus recalls the dual potential of those flames.

The ambiguous nature of the Vestal fires is nicely captured in two couplets from Propertius' etiological elegy on the Tarpeian Rock and its eponym, Tarpeia, the Vestal virgin. In the elegist's version of the tale, Tarpeia betrayed Rome for love of the Sabine, Tatius. Here the fires of the vestal hearth, the symbol of Rome's continuity with its Trojan progenitors, are at one with the flames of desire (4.4.69–72):

> nam Vesta, Iliacae felix tutela favillae,
> culpam alit et plures condit in ossa faces.
> illa ruit, qualis celerem prope Thermodonta
> Strymonis abscisso pectus aperta sinu.

The references in the second couplet are particularly significant. The river Thermodon ("the hot river") is traditionally connected with the Amazons, as Camps notes, while the river Strymon is associated with both the Amazons and Bacchantes.[9] Both of these figures represent women raging beyond masculine control, and each recalls characters in the *Aeneid*. Thus Dido (4.300–303)[10] and Amata (7.385–405) are compared to mad Bacchantes in their fury, and Camilla and Penthesilea appear as Amazons who ultimately self-destruct. Women, then, are potentially dangerous precisely to the extent that they represent a source of passion that escapes rational (i.e., masculine) control.[11] Virgins and Amazons, because they exist outside the domesticating structures of patriarchal marriage, and women such as Dido and Amata, who live uncontrolled by men, are identified with the dual potential of passion to be both dangerous and necessary. On this view, women and the sexuality they represent, like the hearth fire itself, are indispensable to the future of the family and the state, but also like fire they become destructive the moment they escape their space of containment. As Pentheus in the *Bacchae* found out too late, the loving wife or mother who keeps the homefires burning, once she goes beyond the city walls, can become a raging Bacchante capable of devouring her own son.[12]

Most importantly for our purposes, though, women, fire, and danger come together with unexpected force in a scene in Book 5 of the *Aeneid*,

9. W. A. Camps, *Propertius Elegies: Book IV* (Cambridge, 1965), 93.

10. For the resemblance between this as well as other passages from Elegy 4.4 and the depiction of Dido in the *Aeneid*, see Charles Platter, "*Officium* in Catullus and Propertius: A Foucauldian Reading," *CP* 90 (1995): 222–24.

11. See Mary Lefkowitz, *Heroines and Hysterics* (New York, 1981), 18; and Lesley Dean-Jones in "Politics of Pleasure: Female Sexual Appetite in the Hippocratic Corpus," *Helios* 19 (1992): 81.

12. Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, "Tragedy and the Politics of Containment," in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (Oxford, 1992), 36–52.

the burning of the ships by the Trojan women (5.605–74).[13] This scene, I will argue, is particularly significant because it forms a connection between the recurrent fire imagery, already discussed, and a second recurrent motif in the poem, the labyrinth. This paper seeks to explain the relationship between these two sets of images, as revealed by the burning of the ships and its immediate context. It argues that the labyrinth's purpose is to serve as a sort of firebreak, an image of the attempt to domesticate the chaotic powers associated with passion and the feminine.

Before beginning, however, a word or two on methodology is in order. In this study, fire, the labyrinth, and other images are examined as a series of metonyms whose meanings unfold across a syntax of repeated motifs. By metonyms, I mean a set of terms that can be substituted for one another in a series, but are not necessarily identical to one another. Thus every instance of the imagery of fire in the *Aeneid* need not be identical with that of every other, in terms of either its denotation or connotation, for the totality of those images to constitute an intelligible series of possible substitutions.[14] Moreover, as terms that follow one another in a series of associated meanings, these metonyms together make up a system and so can be seen to exhibit a metaphoric, as well as metonymic, relation to one another. As Roland Barthes notes:

> . . . any metaphoric series is a syntagmatized paradigm, and any metonymy a syntagm which is frozen and absorbed in a system; in metaphor, selection becomes continuity, and in metonymy, contiguity becomes a field to select from. It therefore seems that it is always on the frontiers of the two planes that creation has a chance to occur.[15]

Thus, in this paper, we shall examine how a series of fire images intersects and develops a complex set of relations with a series of labyrinth images. Together they articulate a meaningful whole whose distribution across the text articulates a sequence of elements whose full meaning is also predicated upon their ability to be "taken up by the reader and grouped with analogous items in paradigm classes. . . . "[16] Such paradigms, as we shall see, are not always strictly rational, in the sense of operating by an Aristotelian logic of binary oppositions, but often display the more fluid logic of the psycho-(pre)linguistic realm Lacan terms the imaginary.[17]

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13. Nugent, "Vergil's 'Voice of the Women,' " 259, notes that this scene has often been ignored or left to one side in critical accounts of Book 5. While the burning of the ships is part of the traditional story on which Vergil bases the *Aeneid*, it normally takes place at the mouth of the Tiber. Vergil's moving it to Sicily thus signals the importance he attached to having it occur at this point in the poem. See J. W. Mackail, *The Aeneid* (Oxford, 1930), 165.

14. For a good example of the use of this concept of metonymy in the reading of Latin poetry, see Micaela Janan, *"When the Lamp is Shattered": Desire and Narrative in Catullus* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1994), 117–18.

15. *Elements of Semiology*, trans. Annette Lavers and Colin Smith (New York, 1967), 88.

16. Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature* (Ithaca, 1975), 203–4. See also Emile Benveniste, "The Levels of Linguistic Analysis," in *Problems in General Linguistics*, trans. M. E. Meeks, Miami Linguistics series 8, vol. 1 (Coral Gables, FL, 1971), 101–11; Roland Barthes, "Introduction to the Structuralist Analysis of Narrative," in *A Barthes Reader*, trans. Steven Heath, ed. Susan Sontag (New York, 1982), 251–60.

17. Janan, *"When the Lamp is Shattered,"* 18–31. See also notes 32 and 34 below.

I

In Books 5 and 6 of the *Aeneid,* there are two explicit evocations of the lab-
yrinth in Crete, one immediately before the burning of the ships and the other
shortly after, at the beginning of Book 6. As Bonnie Catto has noted, "the
passages are linked by shared vocabulary (*caecis* 5.589, *caeca* 6.30; *dolum*
5.590, *dolos* 6.29; *vestigia* 5.592, 6.30) and particularly by the unusual
phrases *inremeabilis error* (5.591) and *inextricabilis error* (6.27)." R. G.
Austin has also pointed out that both passages find a common source in Ca-
tullus 64.114–15, "ne labyrintheis e flexibus egredientem / tecti frustraretur
inobservabilis error."[18] These verbal echoes, their thematic similarity, and
the common derivation of these two passages from a line in Catullus, direct
the reader's attention to the passages' possible interrelation, and so to their
potential for structuring our reading of the lines that intervene.

The first description of the labyrinth comes in the form of a simile used
to convey the intricate maneuvers of the *lusus Troiae* (5.588–91), the sec-
ond at the beginning of Book 6 when Vergil describes a relief carved by
Daedalus on the gates of the temple of Apollo and Diana Trivia at Cumae.
This relief tells the story of Daedalus' construction of the labyrinth to house
the Minotaur and of his subsequent escape from Crete to Italy (6.14–33).
In each of these cases, as we shall see, the image of the labyrinth is accom-
panied by either a direct or implicit evocation of the dangers of unlawful
and uncontrolled desire. Between these two depictions of the labyrinth, we
find, first, the scene of the Trojan women burning the ships; then the de-
cision to leave the women on Sicily, which is ratified by Aeneas' vision of
the ghost of Anchises announcing the descent to the underworld (5.728–
37); and finally we read of the voyage to the Italian mainland in which the
wanderings of the Trojans come to an end, and the beginning of their lives
as Romans is sealed by the death of Palinurus (5.826–71). Thus the two im-
ages of the labyrinth, in addition to evoking the dangers of feminine desire,
can be seen to frame both the burning of the ships and the abandonment of
the Trojan women as the final acts of shedding the Trojan past before Book
6's otherworldly vision of the Roman future.

In the first evocation of the labyrinth, the destructive potential of unlaw-
ful desire is implied by the fact that Ascanius is riding a horse given to
him by Dido (5.570–72).[19] The detail is striking precisely because there is
no dramatic need for Vergil to include it. The identity of Ascanius' mount
is completely unrelated both to the significance of the game itself and to
its function as an *aition* for the continued performance of the ritual in
Vergil's own day.[20] Consequently, we should assume that Vergil deemed

18. Bonnie Catto, "The Labyrinth on the Cumaean Gates and Aeneas' Escape from Troy," *Vergilius* 34
(1988): 72; R. G. Austin, *Aeneidos Liber Sextus* (Oxford, 1977), 44, emphasis mine.

19. Penelope Reed Doob, *The Idea of the Labyrinth: From Classical Antiquity through the Middle
Ages* (Ithaca, 1990), 30. Doob argues that Ascanius' riding of Dido's mount connotes his triumph over pas-
sion. This, of course, points to both the danger passion implies and the necessary effort to contain it, repre-
sented by the *lusus Troiae,* which Ascanius leads.

20. See Spence, *Rhetorics,* 31, on Vergil's tendency to highlight portions of the story not necessary to
the poem's narrative progression in order to give voice to forces that ultimately will be silenced.

this information important for reasons other than those strictly related to the plot. If we look deeper, this seemingly casual detail appears to be part of a larger pattern in the poem.

Gift-giving in the *Aeneid* is generally freighted with a significance that exceeds the literal nature of the object in question. The origin of the gift often reveals important information about either the fate of the receivers or the denouement of the action with which the giving of the gift is associated. Not infrequently these gifts are associated with Dido or Helen so that dangerous women are associated with dangerous things. Thus Ascanius offers a bowl received from Dido to Nisus and Euryalus immediately prior to their ill-omened night-raid, while Pallas' dead body is wrapped in a cloak of Dido's making. In each case, the recipients meet untimely ends as a result of being carried away by improper, or at least imprudent, passions. The tragic end that befalls them is analogous to that suffered by Dido herself, the maker or previous owner of the gifts they receive. We see the same device at the end of Book 1, when Aeneas gives Dido a cloak that once belonged to Helen, thus suggesting to the reader that the Carthaginian queen has the same destructive potential as the ill-fated bride of Menelaus.[21]

Within the *Aeneid,* the provenance of Ascanius' mount is a clear sign that something bad will follow, in this case the burning of the ships by the Trojan women. It was only at the beginning of Book 5 that the flames of Dido's funeral pyre were spotted in the distance by Aeneas (5.1–7), so that the memory of the ill-fated affair is still fresh in the readers' minds. The passion of Dido, which nearly derailed the destiny of Rome, is reintroduced by Vergil's inclusion of this detail about the nature of Ascanius' horse. Through this device, he draws the reader's attention to yet another situation that likewise threatens to prevent the Trojans from reaching Italy. Nor is it unimportant that the action of burning the ships comes to an end when Ascanius leaves the *lusus Troiae,* rides Dido's horse to the ships, pulls off his helmet, and shouts furiously that the women are burning their own ships not those of the Greeks (5.667–73). The implication of this recollection of the Trojan war is that the women are laboring under the same set of destructive passions as those that culminated in the fiery destruction of Troy, and later nearly derailed Aeneas' mission in Carthage.[22]

More specifically, Ascanius' admonition indicates that the Trojan women are behaving according to an outmoded paradigm whose destructive force has already been proven in Troy's fall. Just as Aeneas at the sack of Troy, when possessed by a mad heroic passion, longs to engage in a futile fight against the victorious Greeks, which would sacrifice the destiny of the nation on the altar of his desire for revenge, so too the Trojan women prefer their "miserum . . . amorem / praesentis terrae" to the "fatis . . . vocantia regna" (5.655–56). Struck by the vision of Iris ascending to heaven on the

21. R. D. Williams, *Aeneidos Liber Quintus* (Oxford, 1960), 151; Daniel Gillis, *Eros and Death in the "Aeneid"* (Rome, 1983), 63; Viktor Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil,* trans. Gerda Seligson (Ann Arbor, 1962), 149; Putnam, "Possessiveness," 11–13; Blow, "Epic Performance," p. 236, n. 27. Pavlock, *Eros,* 96, notes a similar instance of dangerous gifts in the *Argonautica.*

22. Harry C. Rutledge, "The Opening of *Aeneid* 6," *CJ* 67 (1971): 112.

rainbow and driven by *furor,* the Trojan women not only steal fire from the
hearths they should be tending while the men watch the funeral games of
Anchises, they also despoil the altars of the gods themselves (5.659–63):

> Tum vero attonitae monstris actaeque *furore*
> conclamant, *rapiuntque focis penetralibus ignem;*
> *pars spoilant aras;* frondem ac virgulta facesque
> coniciunt. *furit* immissis Volcanus habenis
> transtra per et remos et pictas abiete puppis.

Vulcan's fiery furor and the passion that drives the women to commit these
acts of sacrilege are here portrayed as one.

By the same token, Vergil's diction in describing the hero's earlier mad
rush to arms as Troy was burning is similarly revealing. Vain heroic long-
ing is here portrayed in terms of the suicidal flames of passion (2.314–17):

> arma *amens* capio; nec sat rationis in armis,
> sed glomerare manum bello et concurrere in arcem
> cum sociis *ardent* animi; *furor* iraque mentem
> praecipitat, pulchrumque mori succurrit in armis.

Nor is it accidental that Aeneas' desire to meet death in arms is echoed by
the Trojan women in the act of burning the ships, "o miserae, quas non
manus . . . Achaica bello / traxerit ad letum patriae sub moenibus . . . "
(5.624–25).

In each of these cases, passion unmediated by the controlling forms of
society is potentially self-destructive, and it is to this atavistic amalgam of
heroic and erotic passion that Ascanius makes reference when he evokes
the memory of the Trojan war while addressing the women. The Homeric
paradigm that allows Achilles or Paris to put personal desire ahead of the
welfare of the social whole is precisely what Aeneas and his followers
hope to be rid of when they leave the Trojan women behind, as they left
Dido before.[23] Moreover, Dido's desire, imagistically recalled by Ascanius
riding her horse, and pictured in terms of the flames of passion, is similarly
self-destructive.[24] It not only threatens to prevent the Trojans from fulfill-
ing their destiny by reaching Italy, it is also dangerous to Carthage itself,
causing work on the city to grind to a halt (4.82–89) and leading to Dido's
final curse of eternal enmity between Romans and Carthaginians (4.621–
29), and hence to the destruction of Carthage in the Punic wars.

To sum up our reading of the first image of the labyrinth, we see that the
flames of Dido's funeral pyre open Book 5 and are answered by those of the
Trojan women burning the ships. Ascanius' performance on Dido's horse
in the labyrinthine movements of the *lusus Troiae* provides the material,
syntagmatic link between the burning ships and Dido's bloodstained mar-
riage bed, allowing the reader to meditate on what these images have in

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23. See Nugent's claim that Aeneas' abandonment of Dido is analogous to his leaving the Trojan women
behind, "Vergil's 'Voice of the Women,' " 275.

24. Dido in Book 4.300–303 is described in terms that combine fire imagery with Bacchic *furor*, "tot-
amque *incensa* per urbem / *bacchatur*, qualis commotis excita sacris / Thyias, ubi audito stimulant trieterica
Baccho / orgia, nocturnusque vocat clamore Cithaeron." See Otis, *Vergil*, 76.

common.[25] Thus the seemingly insignificant detail that Ascanius' horse was a gift from Dido is a marker signifying, according to the logic of gift-giving manifested throughout the poem, that a crisis is shortly to ensue, the origin of which will be found in that same uncontrolled passion that brought the *magna regina* herself to an untimely end.

In the second image of the labyrinth, the carving by Daedalus on the gates of the temple at Cumae, the link between the architectural figure and the dangers of unlawful desire is much more direct. The labyrinth, Vergil reminds us, was constructed by Daedalus to house the Minotaur, the product of Pasiphae's bestial lust (6.24–30). Its purpose is to contain the monstrous product of unlawful passion, *Veneris monumenta nefandae*.[26] More than one critic has noted the similarity between the situations of Dido, destroyed by lawless desire, and Pasiphae and her animal passion. Thus the ambiguous phrase *magnum reginae . . . amorem*, although explicitly used of Pasiphae at the beginning of Book 6 applies equally well to the queen of Carthage.[27]

The two evocations of the Cretan labyrinth occur in their respective places for a specific reason: together they bracket the unlawful and irrational action of the Trojan women burning their own ships. Hence, these images of the labyrinth, just as the original structure designed by Daedalus, serve to contain the product of unlawful desires, embodied by the Minotaur in the first instance and by the hysterical action of the Trojan women in the second. The images of the labyrinth that frame the Trojan women's burning of the ships and its aftermath can be said to represent a masculine strategy of containment directed against a feared and dangerous desire that is symbolically represented as feminine,[28] but that, as Aeneas' liaison with Dido demonstrates, exists within us all.[29] The sexually charged terms used to depict the Trojan women demonstrate their affiliation to this larger ideological and imagistic evocation of dangerous passion. They are not simply the Trojan women, but rather they are named the Trojan "mothers" (*matres*) seven different times (5.621, 646, 654, 715, 750, 767, 793). In this fashion, the poem precisely denotes their sexual function within the traditional Roman family. At the same time, like the Rutulian mothers of Book 7, the Trojan women overthrow the decisions made by their male leaders, in a momentary

25. The medieval commentator Bernard Silvestris noted the connections between Dido's pyre, the burning of the ships, and the flame of lust. See Joan M. Ferrante, *Woman as Image in Medieval Literature: From the Twelfth Century to Dante* (New York, 1975), 158. On the connection between the fires of Troy in Book 2 and Dido's funeral pyre, see Spence, *Rhetorics,* 32. See also Nugent, "Vergil's 'Voice of the Women,' " 282; and M. C. J. Putnam, *The Poetry of the Aeneid* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 90, who argues for the unity of the flame imagery used to describe Dido's pyre and the burning of the ships with that later used to depict Turnus' rage.

26. Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 31, 35, and 233; Page duBois, *History, Rhetorical Description, and the Epic* (Cambridge, 1982), 38.

27. William Fitzgerald, "Aeneas, Daedalus, and the Labyrinth," *Arethusa* 17 (1984): 56; Rutledge, "Opening of *Aeneid* 6," 111–12; duBois, *History,* 38 and 44; Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* p. 230, n. 8; and Pöschl, *Art of Vergil,* 150. On *crudelis amor* being used of both Dido and the Minotaur, see Spence, *Rhetorics,* 40.

28. On the *Aeneid*'s valorization of reason over passion, see Spence, *Rhetorics,* 25–26. On ideology as a strategy of containment, Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (Ithaca, 1981), 52–54.

29. Thus Brooks Otis observed, "Vergil's essential insight, out of which seemingly the whole *Aeneid* grows, was the perception that this hero would have to struggle not only against *furor* and passion but against the same elements within himself . . . " (*Vergil,* 219).

negation of their conjugal roles, and retreat to the woods (5.677–78, 7.392–
403), thus recalling the danger evoked by Euripides' *Bacchae* of women
ranging beyond the control of masculine culture.[30]

The issue of a female sexuality, ideally contained by its reproductive
function within patriarchal marriage, but metaphorically run amok in the
burning of the ships, is further foregrounded by the character of Pyrgo,
whom Vergil identifies in her sole appearance in ancient literature as "Pri-
ami natorum regia nutrix" (5.645). It is she who first recognizes that it is
not a mortal who is urging on the Trojan mothers, but a goddess (5.646–48):

> non Beroe vobis, *non* haec Rhoeteïa, *matres,*
> est Dorycli *coniunx;* divini signa decoris
> *ardentis*que notate oculos.

The diction of the passage associates motherhood, the negation of conjugal
status, and metaphorical fire. The erotic connotations implicit in the scene
of the Trojan women burning the ships are, then, not exhausted by its par-
ticipation in the poem's larger imagistic matrix of fire, passion, sexuality,
and women, including its link with the flames of Dido's pyre through the
device of Ascanius' horse. The passage is also saturated with the vocabulary
of women's traditional sexual roles. These roles, in turn, revolve around
women's reproductive capacities and organs as mothers and nurses, which
in ancient medical literature are seen as the sites of madness and hysteria.[31]
The Trojan mothers are, thus, an image of the ever present danger of lawless
desire lurking within the very heart of the community, and the consequent
need to contain it.

II

Nonetheless, simply to observe this bracketing gesture of the women's burn-
ing of the ships by these images of the labyrinth is not enough. The more
important question is: how are we to understand this framing? How can our
reading of this strategy of containment be formalized in a way that renders
intelligible the issues implied by it both for the poem and the world that pro-
duced it? One answer can be found in the analytical categories of the French
pyschoanalyst Jacques Lacan. From a Lacanian perspective, the feminine in
the *Aeneid* is associated with that aggressive and ultimately narcissistic de-
sire that Lacan identifies as the mirror stage of development, and whose pri-
mary field of expression is "the imaginary" before it is covered over,
although never entirely repressed, by the socially sanctioned realm of law
and language he calls the symbolic.[32] The "imaginary" and the "symbolic"
are terms used by Lacan to describe stages in the formation of the individual
human subject. In his terminology, the "imaginary" represents that initial

30. J. W. Zarker, "Vergil's Trojan and Italian *Matres*," *Vergilius* 24 (1978): 19.

31. Lefkowitz, *Heroines and Hysterics*, 13–17, 24; Emile Littré, ed., *Oeuvres complètes d'Hippocrate*
(1853; Amsterdam, 1962) 14–30, 466–70, 468–71; Dean-Jones, "Politics of Pleasure," 73–81; Thomas
Laqueur, *Making Sex* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990), 108; Michel Foucault, *Le souci de soi,* vol. 3 of *Histoire
de la sexualité* (Paris, 1984), 137.

32. Jacques Lacan, "Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je," in *Ecrits I* (Paris, 1966),
88–97; and Anika Lemaire, *Jacques Lacan,* trans. David Macey (London, 1977), 60–61 and 177–78.

coming to consciousness of the child that occurs before its wishes and desires are controlled and mediated by the social world around it. In male dominated societies, such as those of the ancient Mediterranean world, the imaginary is normally identified with woman as the quintessential other.[33] The "symbolic" on the other hand represents that implicit (male) law of society that both governs the child and forms it into a responsible social being. The "symbolic" consists of those political, cultural, and linguistic structures that make us part of a functioning, human community. It does not, however, simply repress or do away with the "imaginary" but rather works to redirect it. There is, then, a constant tension both within the individual psyche and within language itself between these two fundamental moments of human consciousness.[34]

From this point of view, the labyrinth would be analogous to the symbolic itself, the social realm of language and ideology whose role is to subsume and contain the monsters of the imaginary. The labyrinth as the symbolic functions as a mechanism of repression, which makes a controlled, socially sanctioned desire possible. At the beginning of Book 6 of the *Aeneid,* the labyrinth is depicted as a rational structure built to contain the Minotaur, a monstrous offspring "created from the blending of female and animal passion."[35] It simultaneously holds within itself that which it is dangerous to let out, and keeps out those who would try to probe too deeply within and fall prey to monsters better left undisturbed. In Penelope Reed Doob's words, it represents "order containing chaos."[36] The conscious symbolic force of the labyrinthine *lusus Troiae,* then, as a ritual of manhood and purification that readies adolescent boys for the serious work of defending their city, is undergirded by a deeper, pre-rational evocation of the necessity of containing desire. The labyrinth serves as an "abstract defensive entanglement" whose function is to protect the community from violent forces both within and without.[37]

The association of labyrinths, defensive strategies, and the "game of Troy," articulated both by Vergil's simile comparing the *lusus Troiae* with the Cretan labyrinth, and by his use of the paired images of the labyrinth to bracket the burning of the ships, has ramifications that stretch beyond the confines of the *Aeneid* to include large swaths of European cultural history both before and after the period of the poem's composition. Thus Vergil is not operating in a cultural vacuum when he makes use of the image of the labyrinth in his poem, but rather he is appropriating forms of signification

33. On the identification of the masculine with the symbolic and the feminine with the imaginary, see Julia Kristeva, "About Chinese Women," in *The Kristeva Reader,* trans. Seán Hand, ed. Toril Moi (New York, 1986), 141 and 151; and Jean-Joseph Goux, *Symbolic Economies: After Marx and Freud,* trans. Jennifer Curtis Gage (Ithaca, 1990), 222–23.

34. Fredric Jameson, "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan," in *The Ideologies of Theory,* vol. 1 (Minneapolis, 1988), 75–115.

35. Spence, *Rhetorics,* 40.

36. *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 247–48.

37. Fitzgerald, "Aeneas, Daedalus, and the Labyrinth," 59–60; W. F. Jackson Knight, *Vergil: Epic and Anthropology,* ed. John Christie (London, 1967), 204 and 207; Raymond J. Clark, *Catabasis: Vergil and the Wisdom Tradition* (Amsterdam, 1979), 136–37; Nugent, "Vergil's 'Voice of the Women,'" 266; and Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* p. 27, n. 15.

Tragliatella *oinochoe*: horsemen, maze, *Truia*, and copulating couples

that lay ready to hand. To make this point clearer, the second section of this paper will adopt a more determinedly comparative perspective, concentrating on discursive practices in the ancient Mediterranean that may help to elucidate the significance of the *lusus Troiae,* particularly as it is portrayed in the *Aeneid.*

While it is not possible to go through all the evidence for the tradition of the labyrinth and its related rituals here,[38] the earliest association of the *lusus Troiae,* as a mounted maze-like ride, with the labyrinth and sexual passion is found on a seventh-century B.C.E. Etruscan *oinochoe* from Tragliatella, which as the figure above shows, clearly features two horseback riders, the drawing of a maze, the word *TRUIA,* and two copulating couples.[39] *Truia* has often been interpreted as an early Etruscan form of *Troia,* although an alternative meaning of "dancing floor" or "arena" has also been advanced. Each definition works equally well with regard to the ceremonial associations of the actions pictured on the cup with the *lusus Troiae.* In any case, as Doob in conjunction with numerous others notes, "the design clearly establishes a connection between rituals on horseback and labyrinths, so Virgil was presumably not creating his simile from thin air."[40] By the same token, the link between the *lusus Troiae* and the problem of sexual passion—already implicit in Ascanius' horse, the game's association with the burning of the ships, and the comparison of it to the Cretan labyrinth— is further contextualized by the suggestive juxtaposition of the copulating couples with the horsemen and the maze on the Etruscan pitcher, leading

38. Pliny records that the forming of mazes, such as those in the *lusus Troiae,* in fields was a common children's entertainment in the Roman world. For more, see W. H. Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths* (1922; Detroit, 1969), 92, 98, 156, and 162; Walter Leaf, ed., *The Iliad,* vol. 2 (1901–2; Amsterdam, 1971), 610; John L. Heller, "A Labyrinth from Pylos," *AJA* 65 (1961): 58; idem, "Labyrinth or Troy Town," *CJ* 42 (1946): 126–27; Clark, *Catabasis,* 135–36; Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 115–16. On Vergil's acquaintance with Pliny's sources on the labyrinth, see Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* p. 20, n. 5; and Clark, *Catabasis,* 149.

39. The drawing is reproduced from Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 28 (drawing by Robert Ovellette after G. Mariani).

40. *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 27–28; Giulio Quirino Giglioli, "L'Oinochoe di Tragliatella," *Studi Etruschi* 3 (1929): 121–27; Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths,* 157–58; Leaf, *Iliad,* 610; Clark, *Catabasis,* p. 135, n. 43; Heller, "Labyrinth from Pylos," 57–58, and 61; idem, "Labyrinth or Troy Town," 129 and 132–33; Knight, *Epic and Anthropology,* 202; and Robert W. Cruttwell, *Virgil's Mind at Work* (1947; New York, 1969) 92–93.

Doob to pose the question, "are mazes linked with lust this early?" For, as her book convincingly demonstrates, the labyrinth's association with sexuality, and in particular with deviance or excess, constitutes an important part of the later tradition.[41] Moreover, she also concludes that the *lusus Troiae* in its comparison with the labyrinth "shows Ascanius' . . . mastery both of the passionate *furor* that undid Dido and of the labyrinth."[42] In this light, it is only natural that it is Ascanius, on Dido's horse, who first arrives on the scene and stops the women from firing the last of the ships.

Further evidence for this proposed reading of Vergil's depiction of the *lusus Troiae* as a strategy of containment can be found by placing this evocation of the labyrinth in its larger ritual context. We can begin by comparing the narrative of the founding of the *lusus Troiae* in Book 5 and the parallel description of Daedalus' relief in Book 6 to the story recounted by Plutarch, Callimachus, and others of Theseus' establishing the "Crane Dance" on Delos. There are numerous parallels between these two passages in the *Aeneid* and the descriptions of Theseus' founding of the dance, and these parallels have an added importance, as we shall see, because the Crane Dance itself is alluded to by Vergil in his description of Aeneas before the hunting expedition with Dido.

The parallels are as follows. Both Delos and the temple at Cumae where Daedalus carved his relief were sacred to Apollo and Diana/Artemis. In addition, Plutarch tells us explicitly that the Crane Dance was founded on Delos to celebrate the hero's successful escape from Crete, and that its movements were an imitation of the structure of the labyrinth itself. The currency of this story is confirmed by the presence of a similar account in Callimachus' "Hymn to Delos."[43] By the same token, the Crane Dance was still practiced in Plutarch's day, and both his and Callimachus' explanations were meant to provide an etiological account for a ritual practice whose origin and function were no longer clear. This, of course, is precisely the conscious symbolic function of the *lusus Troiae* in Book 5, whose movements also imitate those of the labyrinth. The resemblance in form between the two rituals has been noted by a number of other authors. W. H. Matthews, for example, observes the formal correspondences between the "Game of Troy" and the "Crane Dance" in his *Mazes and Labyrinths,* while at the same time relating both to a more general tendency throughout the European tradition to associate "the figure of the labyrinth . . . with the idea of a ceremonial game or dance," while Doob notes, "the happy mood of the well choreographed [*lusus Troiae*] ritual recalls the thankful dance on Delos

41. Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* p. 27 n. 16, 31, 34–35, 37, 107, 150, 158–60, 167–71, 180, 183, 189, 234.

42. Ibid., 235–36.

43. Calame, *Choeurs,* 1:108–11; Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, *Dédale* (Paris, 1975), 146; Plut. *Thes.* 21. See also the commentary in the edition of Carmine Ampolo and Mario Manfredini, *Le Vite di Teseo e di Romolo* (Milan, 1988), 227–28. Callim. *Del.* 306–15, see also Pollux 4.101; Heller, "Labyrinth from Pylos," 58; Giglioli, "L'Oinochoe di Tragliatella," 128; Lillian B. Lawler, *The Dance in Ancient Greece* (Middleton, Conn., 1964), 57; James Miller, *The Measures of Wisdom: The Cosmic Dance in Classical and Christian Antiquity* (Toronto, 1986), p. 550, n. 6.

celebrating escape from the Cretan maze—a dance that is mentioned fleet-ingly in Carthage."[44]

Likewise in the *Iliad,* there is a mixed chorus on Achilles' shield that is described as analogous to that which Daedalus established for Ariadne at Cnossos. The scholiasts tell us that this chorus is the same as that constituted by Theseus on his emergence from the labyrinth to celebrate his success. This dance of Ariadne on Crete, if not the same as the one on Delos, is at least closely connected to it in both form and poetic significance.[45] More-over, the dance depicted on the shield of Achilles has itself been identified with the maze figure depicted on the Tragliatella cup.[46] Daedalus, then, not only built the labyrinth that contained the product of Pasiphae's lust, but also established the dance that Theseus performed to celebrate his triumph over the Minotaur. He is therefore a figure intimately connected not only with mazes, but also with ritual maze dances and the containment of unlawful passion. In this light, his appearance at the start of Book 6 begins to appear less arbitrary, although it, like the women burning the ships and the mention of Dido's horse, in no way advances the narrative or aids in the plot's un-folding.[47] Rather Daedalus' appearance functions so as to tie the *lusus Troiae,* the labyrinth in Crete, the burning of the ships, and Pasiphae's lust more closely together, while simultaneously denoting the analogical signifi-cance of the Crane Dance for understanding the game of Troy.[48]

At the same time, as in the case of Vergil's description of the *lusus Troiae,* there is also an explicitly erotic subtext to Theseus' dance on Delos, since it commemorates his offering to Apollo a statue of Aphrodite given to him by Ariadne. In addition to the obvious sexual connotations of the hero's ro-mance with the Cretan princess, Ariadne was herself widely worshipped as a fertility goddess, and so associated with the cult of Aphrodite.[49] By the same token, Claude Calame has shown that one of the functions of the Crane Dance as it was practiced on Delos was to serve as an initiation rite that officially recognized the sexual maturity of the young men and women of the community, guiding their progression from youthful chastity to lawful

44. Matthews, *Mazes and Labyrinths,* 159–60; Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 236. See also Leaf, *Iliad,* 610; Clark, *Catabasis,* 136–37; Heller, "Labyrinth from Pylos," 61; and Frontisi-Ducroux, *Dédale,* 146–47.

45. *Iliad* 18.590–92; Harmut Erbse, ed., *Scholia Graeca in Homeri "Iliadem",* vol. 4 (Berlin, 1975), 565–66; Philippe Borgeaud, "The Open Entrance of the Closed Palace of the King: The Greek Labyrinth in Context," *History of Religions* 14 (1974): 21; Calame, *Choeurs,* 1:112–13; Frontisi-Ducroux, *Dédale,* 145; Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 18; Miller, *Measures of Wisdom,* 27 and 351–52; and Clark, *Catabasis,* 138.

46. Heller, "Labyrinth or Troy Town," 21.

47. Fitzgerald, "Aeneas, Daedalus, and the Labyrinth," 52; Mackail, *Aeneid,* 208; Eduard Norden, *P. Vergilius Maro "Aeneis" Buch VI* (Darmstadt, 1957), 120–23; W. F. Jackson Knight, "Vergil and the Maze," *CR* 43 (1929): 212; D. E. Eicholz, "Symbol and Contrast in the *Aeneid,*" *G&R* 15 (1968): 109. For parallels between Aeneas and Daedalus, see Anderson, *Art,* 55–56; Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 32 and 234; Fitzgerald, "Aeneas, Daedalus, and the Labyrinth," 52.

48. Leaf draws the connection between the scholia on the shield of Achilles, Theseus' Crane Dance, the *lusus Troiae,* and the Tragliatella cup, arguing that they all refer to a single ritual complex. Unsurprisingly for the turn of the century, he avoids any reference to sexuality (*Iliad,* 610).

49. Lillian B. Lawler, "The Geranos Dance—A New Interpretation," *TAPA* 72 (1946): 199; K. F. Johansen, *Thésée et la danse à Délos* (Copenhagen, 1945), 6–10; Leaf, *"Iliad,"* 314; Calame, *Choeurs,* 1:225–28; and Clark, *Catabasis,* 128–29.

sexual desire exercised within that ultimate strategy of containment, the pa-
triarchal marriage. Much the same function was served in Athens by the *Os-
chophoria,* which was dedicated to Ariadne and Dionysus.[50] It too was said
to have been instituted by Theseus to celebrate his safe return from the lab-
yrinth. Similarly, Pausanias (2.31.1) records a Peloponnesian tradition that
Theseus on his return from Crete stopped at Troezen and there inaugurated
the cult of Artemis Soteira, a goddess of initiations who can be identified
both with Ariadne, in that she is pictured as helping Theseus overcome the
labyrinth, and with the more explicitly sexual Ariadne-Aphrodite of Cyprus.
Likewise the rites of Artemis played a significant role in the initiation of
young women into adulthood, and so into eligibility for marriage. Thus the
whole story of the labyrinth and its dance is, throughout much of the ancient
world, associated with the proper containment of sexual energy, from the
initial design of the structure to imprison the product of Pasiphae's bestial
lust, to Theseus' flight with Ariadne, to his establishment of the Crane Dance
on Delos.[51] This association of the labyrinth dance with sexual desire, then,
is completely appropriate for the *lusus Troiae,* which, as we have already
shown, is associated with sexual passion through Dido's horse, the imagery
of fire, and the description of the labyrinth itself at the beginning of Book
6.[52]

Finally, one of the most striking uses of the same flame imagery that links
the madness of the Trojan women to the wider image-complex of fire is one
that also ties that madness, flame, and sexual passion to Crete, and so by
metonymy to the labyrinth: the comparison of Dido in Book 4 to a wounded
deer in the Cretan forest. This passage, in turn, provides yet another link
between Dido, Daedalus, and Pasiphae's lust (4.68–71):[53]

> *uritur* infelix Dido totaque vagatur
> urbe *furens* qualis coniecta cerva sagitta,
> quam procul incautam nemora inter *Cresia* fixit
> pastor agens telis. . . .

The simile on its own terms is puzzling. Austin argues that the adjective
Cresia, "Cretan," "in itself has no special significance," and Williams notes
only the connection of archery with Crete. Nonetheless, the reference to
Crete is completely appropriate from the perspective of the two descriptions
of the labyrinth found in Books 5 and 6, and the burning of the ships that
comes between them.[54] For, through this evocation of the Cretan forest,
Dido, Pasiphae, the imagery of fire, the labyrinth, and lust can all be seen

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50. These were preceded by the *Pyanepsia,* which were dedicated to Apollo, hence reaffirming the kin-
ship between these rites and those practiced on Delos. On the relation between the *Pyanepsia,* the *Os-
chophoria,* and the *Theseia,* see E. D. Francis, *Image and Idea in Fifth Century Greece: Art and Literature
after the Persian Wars,* ed. Michael Vickers (London, 1990), 51–52.

51. Calame, *Choeurs,* 1:182, 228–32, and 299; Borgeaud, "Open Entrance," 5 and 18–19, especially
n. 45. On the social function of initiation rites generally, see Lefkowitz, *Heroines,* 19.

52. Cruttwell, *Virgil's Mind,* 89.

53. Otis, *Vergil,* 71.

54. Austin, *Aeneidos Liber Quartus* (1955; Oxford, 1982), 45; R. D. Williams, *The "Aeneid" of Vergil:
Books 1–6* (New York, 1972), 340. See also Johnson, *Darkness Visible,* 81.

to stand in relations of metonymic substitution to one another, that is as a series of non-identical but contiguous and related terms distributed across the narrative of Books 4, 5, and 6.

Moreover, when Aeneas prepares to leave on the fateful hunt with Dido just seventy lines later, he is explicitly compared to Apollo returning to De-los after the winter and establishing choral dances around the altars. These dances are specifically said to have included participants from Crete. Thus immediately after Dido's comparison to a wounded deer in the Cretan forest and just before the actual consummation of their love in the cave, Aeneas is pictured in terms that clearly recall the Crane Dance, which, as we have shown, has its own mythological associations with the labyrinth and its own ritual ties to sexuality and rites of initiation (4.143–46):

> qualis ubi hibernam Lyciam Xanthique fluenta
> deserit ac *Delum* maternam invisit Apollo
> instauratque *choros*, mixtique altaria circum
> *Cretes*que Dryopesque fremunt picti Agathyrsi.

As Doob sums up her reading of these two passages:

> [In these lines] divine craft and Aeneas' graces transform the noble Dido into a type of Pasiphae, blindly craving an impossible love as she wanders furiously through a newly disordered city. There too Aeneas, glorious as Apollo (or Theseus?) at the labyrinth dance on Delos (4.143–46) wanders pathless wilds . . . before consummating the affair with Dido in a convenient cave.[55]

Book 4, then, anticipates the fires, passions, and labyrinths evoked in Books 5 and 6. Similarly, more than one scholar has noticed the parallels between Aeneas' escape from Carthage and Theseus' from the labyrinth, as well as the less gratifying comparison of Aeneas' abandonment of Dido with Thes-eus' desertion of Ariadne, as described in poems such as Catullus 64. This last incident, of course, will find still a further echo in the decision to leave the Trojan women behind after the burning of the ships, while Catullus 64, it will be recalled, is an important source for the shared diction of Vergil's two descriptions of the labyrinth, both the simile describing the *lusus Troiae* and Daedalus' frieze.[56]

III

> *Shut out of his system's space, she is the repressed that*
> *ensures the system's functioning.*[57]

In the *Aeneid*, then, an extraordinarily subtle web of images and associa-tions not only ties together women, fire, and dangerous things, but also

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55. *Idea of the Labyrinth*, 234.

56. Anderson, *Art*, 56; duBois, *History*, 38; Spence, *Rhetorics*, 40; Doob, *Idea of the Labyrinth*, 229, 234, 237–39, and 251–52; Pavlock, *Eros*, 79–81, draws attention to the parallels between Vergil's depiction of Dido and Catullus' depiction of Ariadne in poem 64.

57. Hélène Cixous, "Sorties: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways Out/Forays," in *Newly Born Woman*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis, 1986), 67.

associates this complex with the labyrinthine structures of patriarchal society that are meant to contain them. The rituals and dances that enact
these defensive gestures function as part of the discursive structures of
the symbolic, which serve to channel and contain the destructive and narcissistic desires of the potentially monstrous imaginary, generally identified with women as the quintessential other in patriarchal culture. Yet
this identification is ultimately only a projection onto the other of that
which most frightens the patriarchs in themselves. Just as Aeneas himself
can fall prey to *furor* in the final lines of the poem when he slays Turnus,[58] or in Book 2 when he rushes madly into the flames of Troy to offer
futile resistance to the victorious Greeks, so all must struggle to contain
the Minotaur within. As Doob observes, "What Theseus battles in the
maze is the Minotaur, the man-beast, and in the successive labyrinths of
the *Aeneid* the monster within can never be slain once and for all. All humanity is double, hybrid; all are potentially minotaurs."[59] The women
who burn the ships in Book 5 are a figuration of just that potential monstrosity that always lurks beneath the surface, and the two evocations of
the labyrinth bracketing them represent those patriarchal strategies of
containment that try to shut out the other, both from within and without.

Texas Tech University

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58. See W. R. Johnson, "Dismal Decorations: Dryden's Machines in *Aeneid* 12," in *The Two Worlds of
the Poet: New Perspectives on Vergil,* ed. Robert M. Wilhelm and Howard Jones (Detroit, 1992), 436–38.
    59. *Idea of the Labyrinth,* 250.