

CRETE IN THE *AENEID*: RECURRING TRAUMA AND ALTERNATIVE FATE¹

The island of Crete and its inhabitants appear in the *Aeneid* with a frequency that encourages an investigation of the significance of Cretan themes within the poem as a whole. The most overtly Cretan episode, the Trojans' short-lived settlement on the island in the third book of the *Aeneid*, is generally regarded by critics as just one in a series of failed attempts made by Aeneas to refound Troy outside of Italy before he accepts that Rome's destiny requires him to come to Latium. However, there are contained within this section hints of themes of much wider importance for the poem as a whole. When read in conjunction with other sections which betray Cretan influence, it not only achieves a significance on the level of linked imagery within the plot, but also, mediated through the figure of the Labyrinth, comes to represent a narratological possibility: the attractions and dangers of digression and repetition, and the potential for both confusion and solution within the maze. Moreover, it even hints at the potential for departure from a linear journey at the narrated level: it whispers of the existence of an alternative fate.

After their flight from their burning city, the Trojans come first to Thrace, but scared off by the ghostly warnings of Polydorus, they set sail once more and come to Delos. There they are given oracular advice by Apollo:

Dardanidae duri, quae uos a stirpe parentum
prima tulit tellus, eadem uos ubere laeto
accipiet reduces. antiquam exquirite matrem.
hic domus Aeneae cunctis dominabitur oris
et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis.

(*Aeneid* 3.94–8)

Tough Dardans, the same land which first bore you from the stock of your ancestors will welcome you in her happy bosom when you return. Seek out your ancient mother. Here the house of Aeneas will be master over every shore, and the sons of his sons, and those born from them.²

Anchorises happily takes *antiquam exquirite matrem* (3.96) to mean that they should settle in their ancient motherland Crete, the birthplace of one of their forefathers, Teucer. Full of premature hope that their wanderings may quickly come to an end in a fairly familiar land, he gives a picture of the island which outlines the correspondences between Troy and Crete, and shows this to be a worthy place to restart their lives:

‘audite, o proceres,’ ait ‘et spes discite uestras.
Creta Iouis magni medio iacet insula ponto,
mons Idaeus ubi et gentis cunabula nostrae.
centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima regna,
maximus unde pater, si rite audita recordor,
Teucus Rhoeteas primum est aduectus in oras,
optauitque locum regno. nondum Ilium et arces
Pergameae steterant; habitabant uallibus imis.

¹ Thanks to Judith Armstrong, Stephen Heyworth, Oliver Lyne, and the anonymous referee for *CQ* for helpful suggestions at various stages of production.

² Translations are my own and do not aim at elegance, only clarity.

hinc mater cultrix Cybeli Corybantiaque aera
 Idaeumque nemus, hinc fida silentia sacris,
 et iuncti currum dominae subiere leones.
 ergo agite et diuum ducunt qua iussa sequamur:
 placemus uentos et Gnosia regna petamus.
 nec longo distant cursu: modo Iuppiter adsit,
 tertia lux classem Cretaeis sistet in oris.'

(*Aeneid* 3.103–17)

'Listen, chieftains,' he said, 'and learn what you can hope for. Great Jupiter's island Crete lies in the middle of the sea, where stand Mount Ida and the cradle of our race. There are a hundred great cities, a most fertile kingdom, whence, if I remember the story I heard correctly, great father Teucer first sailed to Rhoetean shores and chose a site for his kingdom. Ilium and Pergamum's towers were not yet built; they lived in the valley bottoms. From here came the Mother, inhabitant of Cybele, the Corybants' cymbals, Ida's grove; from here began the faithful silence of the rites, and yoked lions submitted to the mistress' chariot. So come, and let us follow where the gods' commands lead: let us appease the winds and make for the kingdom of Cnossus. It is not far away – if only Jupiter is with us, the third day from now will set the fleet on Cretan shores.'

This is Crete of a hundred cities,³ fertile land and cradle of the gods, a positive, if slightly mysterious, picture of an island ripe with possibilities for settlement. The Trojans are often criticized⁴ for failing to pick up the heavy hint as to the correct interpretation of the omen offered by Apollo in his opening words, *Dardanidae duri* (3.94): the ancestor they need to trace is not Teucer, but Dardanus, who came from Italy. Yet it is hard at the same time not to find Anchises' wrong interpretation very persuasive.⁵ The links with Mount Ida, Cybele, and Jupiter are, of course, broadly significant,⁶ but also recall more immediately the importance of all three of these names in the flight from Troy. The omen of Iulus' burning hair (2.681–4) is confirmed by Jupiter, who sends a thunderclap followed by a shooting star which flies over the roof to bury itself in the woods on Mount Ida, marking out the first route of escape (2.691–8). Cybele, who is associated with Cretan Rhea, takes Aeneas' lost wife Creusa among the number of her attendants (2.798).⁷

The links between Crete and Jupiter are worth exploring further. The Cretan claim to have been the cradle of Zeus does not always go undisputed (cf. Callimachus, *Hymn to Zeus* 4–9),⁸ but it is quite widely accepted, and referred to by Vergil himself in

³ An epithet which goes back to Homer, *Κρήτην ἐκατόμπολιν* (*Il.* 2.649).

⁴ Anchises gets particularly short shrift from D. Quint, 'Painful memories: *Aeneid* 3 and the problem of the past', *CJ* 78 (1982–3), 30–8 and *Epic and Empire* (Princeton, 1993): '... only a wilful Trojan interpreter would not instruct his countrymen to head for the birthplace of Dardanus. Anchises' glaring mistake calls attention to itself' (p. 57).

⁵ I would even argue that it is possibly *more* persuasive, more coherent than the true meaning offered by the Penates at 154–71, where the only correspondence given between Troy and Hesperia is that both were home to Dardanus. However, it is only fair to point out too that at 110, Anchises' speech echoes *Iliad* 20.216–17, which describes *Dardanus'* founding of Troy (as noted by Williams ad loc.).

⁶ Cf., for example, the prayer to (among others) Idaean Jupiter and the Phrygian Mother at 7.139, after the omen of eating the tables has been fulfilled.

⁷ This reminiscence, though, brings up the problem of Aeneas' apparent indifference to the predictions offered by Creusa when her ghost appears to him. I do not know how to reconcile this: it seems too blasé to say, as many do, that this is an inconsistency Vergil would have ironed out had he lived longer, but too flippant (perhaps?) to argue that Aeneas never took much notice of Creusa anyway. That Hesperia and Tiber are meaningless names to him, easily forgotten or ignored (as suggested by C. Saunders, *Vergil's Primitive Italy* [New York, 1930], 196) is possible, if not entirely satisfying.

⁸ On the links between Callimachus and Vergil here, cf. S. J. Heyworth, 'Deceitful Crete: *Aeneid*

Georgics 4, where the special relationship of Jupiter to the bees is explained by their part in guarding him as an infant on Crete:

Nunc age, naturas apibus quas Iuppiter ipse
addidit expediam, pro qua mercede canoros
Curetum sonitus crepitantiaque aera secutae
Dictaeo caeli regem pauere sub antro.

(*Georgics* 4.149–52)

Come now, and I will explain the nature of the bees which Jupiter himself gave, for which reward they followed the sing-song sounds of the Curetes and their clashing cymbals, and fed the king of heaven in the Dictaeon cave.

The bees directly reappear in the *Aeneid* in the form of similes, first when Aeneas enviously watches the fervid activity as Carthage is built (1.430–6), then to describe the flitting crowds of souls at 6.707–9, and, lastly, in a disturbing reversal of the construction of Carthage, as Aeneas marches on Latinus' city at 12.587–92.⁹ In this section of *Aeneid* 3, there seems to be a hint of the presence of the bees, which links more closely back to Jupiter. Paschalis¹⁰ points out that the word *cunabula* is used in Vergil only here (*Aen.* 3.105) and at *Georgics* 4.65, which he says refers to the infant Jupiter. In fact, the cradle in the *Georgics* is of the bees, but the close links between the bees and the god are obvious. If it is possible to see through this a reminiscence of the society of the bees, then, as in the simile in Book 1, it also reflects the Trojan desire for the return to order, to that kind of structured civic life represented by the bees in the *Georgics*.¹¹ As it turns out, though, the fate of Aeneas and his people echoes that of the bees even more closely than they would like, and a pestilence hits them not long after they have established Pergamea, just as disease attacks the bees at *Georgics* 4.251ff.¹²

The mood of relief and optimism that dominates Anchises' speech spreads out into the narrative too; with sacrifices duly made to Neptune, Apollo, and the winds (3.118–20), the journey from Delos to Crete is swift and joyful. The ships fly past the islands of the Cyclades, as the crew cry out *Cretam proauosque petamus!* (129), and with great eagerness they set about building a new city with a familiar name, Pergamea. Echoes of Apollo's prophecy abound, both in Anchises' speech and in the subsequent narrative: *uberrima regna* (105) picks up *ubere laeto* (95), the *mater* of *mater cultrix Cybeli* (111) echoes (though with a different sense) *matrem* (96), and *antiquam* (96) is picked up at 131 by *antiquis Curetum . . . oris*. These correspondences may not add up

3.84 and the hymns of Callimachus', *CQ* 43 (1993), 255–7. I am not sure that the distinction he wants to make between birthplace and cradle (that is, the place where Zeus spent his infancy, but was not born) is necessarily strong enough to stand here. Still, his ingenious theory that the Trojans in Italy have more to do with Arcadians (Evander and his people) than with those inhabiting the birthplace of Dardanus, Corythus, because in Callimachus the birthplace of Zeus is decided to be Arcadia, is attractively Hellenistic.

⁹ Cf. S. E. Hinds, 'Generalising about Ovid', *Ramus* 16 (1987), 4–31.

¹⁰ M. Paschalis, *Virgil's Aeneid: Semantic Relations and Proper Names* (Oxford, 1997), 120–4.

¹¹ And if this is the case, it is perhaps worth noting that the bees in the *Georgics* are marked out from all the other beasts, since they alone have a concept of home and fatherland: *et patriam solae et certos nouere penatis* (4.155); at this point, the Trojans are not even sure about where their ancestral land is.

¹² If the Trojans' career does to an extent follow that of the bees, *which* plague is this? The one to be cured, or the one that wipes them out after the death of Eurydice, needing Aristaeus' sacrifice to bring them back? The echoes of Orpheus' journey to the underworld in Aeneas' race back into Troy to find his lost Creusa would perhaps imply the latter, but insistence on a direct correspondence would inevitably be rather forced.

to the fulfilment of the oracle, but nevertheless serve to mark how Crete so very nearly fits the bill.

And yet not long after they have started building their new city, plague sweeps through Pergamea, killing many of the Trojans. Before they had even reached Crete, however, a hint of this disaster, to which the Trojans were at the time understandably oblivious, can be found in the report that reached them that the Greek leader Idomeneus (well known to them from the war) had been driven out of Crete,¹³ leaving the island free from the enemy.¹⁴ The reason for Idomeneus' expulsion from Crete is given by Servius: like so many of the Greeks, on his way home from Troy, he was caught in a storm and vowed to sacrifice the first thing he saw on his return if he was saved. The first living thing turned out to be his son, whom he duly sacrificed, presumably out of some confused sense of pious duty.¹⁵ As a result, a plague came to the land and he was driven out, heading off (as Diomedes did, and as Aeneas will) to the west, where he founded a state in the land of the Sallentini in Calabria (cf. 3.400–1; cf. also Diomedes at 11.264–5). It is ironic, not to say suspicious, that the pious Trojans should find themselves suffering a fate similar to that of a Greek aggressor.¹⁶

It is possible, then, to trace different precursors to Aeneas' Cretan plague: the plague which drove Idomeneus away, the plague which harasses the animal world in *Georgics* 3 and the bees of *Georgics* 4, and also, through reminiscence of Lucretius 6.1090ff., the plague in Athens.¹⁷ Despite these parallels, though, the actual cause of this Cretan plague remains obscure. The Lucretian echoes might imply that it is simply one of the trials nature visits on living creatures, but one feels a suspicion too that it might come from some divine force.¹⁸ Line 142, *uictum seges aegra negabat* recalls *Georgics* 1.149, *uictum Dodona negaret*, which describes the onset of the Iron Age, when life becomes harder because Jupiter so willed it: *pater ipse colendi / haud facilem esse uiam uoluit* (*Geor.* 1.121–2). This echo gives retrospectively a hopeless ring to Anchises' hopeful, *modo Iuppiter adsit* (3.116), and is picked up again by the Penates at 171, *Dictaea negat tibi Iuppiter arua*. This is hardly an explanation, though, but a hint at a supposedly rational cause of sufferings for which there seems no reason. What have the Trojans done to deserve this curse? They have not, unlike Idomeneus, performed a sacrifice that mocks piety with its unthinking barbarity. And why should Jupiter, who supposedly

¹³ 'Fama uolat pulsum regnis cecidisse paternis / Idomeneia ducem, desertaque litora Cretae, / hoste uacare domum sedesque astare relictas' (3.121–3); it is unclear whether or not the rumour stretched to give the reason for Idomeneus' flight from Crete.

¹⁴ Distrust of the Greeks need not at this stage be residual, unnecessary suspicion on the part of the Trojans: the Greeks are still the enemy, as is made clear by Helenus' instructions not to linger on the east coast of Italy (3.396–402), though contrast the good Greek Evander, and the thoroughly exhausted Diomedes (11.252–93), and for that matter Achaemenides at 3.590ff.

¹⁵ The immediate parallel for this story would be found in Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigenia. The theme of a father's sacrifice and loss of his son is an important one in the *Aeneid*, however, ranging from Laocoön's death along with his children to Evander's loss of Pallas and, most importantly for the present situation, Brutus' order for the execution of his sons mentioned at 6.817–23.

¹⁶ Though not an unfamiliar trope; Aeneas is in so many ways a latter-day Odysseus and Achilles—why should he not be an Idomeneus too?

¹⁷ Behind *corrupto caeli tractu* (3.138) lurks the Lucretian discussion of the origin of plague in sky or earth: 'atque ea uis omnis morborum pestilientia / aut extrinsecus ut nubes nebulaeque superne / per caelum ueniunt, aut ipsa saepe coorta / de terra surgunt' (Lucr. 6.1097–1101).

¹⁸ One might contrast the calm scientific conviction of an explanation (*nunc ratio quae sit morbis . . . expeditur*, Lucr. 6.1090–3) with the apparent absence of a reason for the Cretan plague, and Anchises' impulse to return to the oracle of Apollo on Delos to ask advice, but also *ueniamque precari* (3.144): does he fear this might be the god's punishment?

supports the Trojan cause, wish so fiercely to deny these people a place in the land that seems so unequivocally his (*Creta Iouis magni*, 104)?¹⁹ The other divine candidate for sending a plague would most naturally be Apollo. It is, after all, the disease he visits on the Achaeans which opens the *Iliad*, but again the problem of motivation rears its head. The Trojans have not taken a Chryseis, or slighted the god's authority in any other way, unless misinterpretation of his omen could qualify as a sin.

At any rate, once the Trojans have been beset by this strange plague, the divine machinery swings back into action, and the Penates appear to Aeneas in a dream to set him straight on the interpretation of Apollo's oracle, pointing out that Dardanus was the Trojan forefather referred to, and that Italy is their ancient mother. When Aeneas tells Anchises of his dream,²⁰ the message is equally clear to the old man. Interestingly, the way in which his former confusion is described seems particularly fitted to its Cretan setting: *agnouit prolem ambiguum geminosque parentis, / seque nouo ueterum deceptum errore locorum* (3.180–1). The language here recalls the confusions of the Labyrinth, the strangely mixed-up Minotaur, a proleptic echo of the opening of Book 6, *mixtum genus prolesque biformis* (25) and the *inextricabilis error* (27). In Anchises' speech we also find something of an excuse for his earlier failure of interpretation: Cassandra used to talk about Italy, but who would listen to Cassandra, the priestess of Apollo cursed by the same god never to be believed? Once again, even as Anchises admits the error of his interpretation, he emphasizes the ambiguity of Trojan descent. In his question, *sed quis ad Hesperiae uenturos litora Teucros / crederet?* (186–7), he provides a neat counterpart for Apollo's *Dardanidae duri* (94): the Trojans may be sons of Italian Dardanus, but they can just as legitimately be called the descendants of Cretan Teucer.²¹

Such hints point to an important question with wide-reaching ramifications for the presentation of fate in the *Aeneid*: could settlement on Crete have been a real alternative to the move to Italy? It is often said or implied²² that Aeneas' wanderings and failed settlements reveal him as unable to move on from Troy, these settlements being wrong because they are backward-looking, but what is Apollo's injunction *antiquam exquirite matrem* (3.96) if not at least in some sense backward-looking? The founding of the new city in Italy is represented both to Aeneas and to the reader as a founding

¹⁹ Heyworth (n. 8) comments that behind *Dictaea negat tibi Iuppiter arua* lies the Callimachean god's denial that he himself is, strictly speaking, Cretan. A more practical reason, that the Trojans cannot stay in Crete if they are to found Rome obviously has its force, and this is the spin the Penates put on it, but it does not explain why a plague is necessary to make that point. The encounter with Polydorus' remains (3.19ff) is a horrific, frightening, and very persuasive way to make it clear to Aeneas that he must not settle in Thrace, but at least it does not involve killing off large numbers of his followers (cf. *paucisque relictis*, 190). Contrast Sicily, where Aeneas himself is not allowed to settle, but can leave behind some of those not burdened by the same fate.

²⁰ 173ff., *nec sopor illud erat* . . . Great emphasis is placed on the clarity here, and I would interpret the use of the epithet *Delius* (the Delian, but also implying *δηλος*, clear) of Apollo at 162 not as a reproach to the Trojans for failing to understand his prophecy in the first place (so Paschalis [n. 10], 120–4) but as a reflection of the usual obscurity of predictions.

²¹ Some statistics: *Dardanidae* and words related to Dardanus are used 74 times in the *Aeneid*, whilst *Teucro* and words related to Teucer are used 127 times. Dardanus words outnumber Teucer ones only in Book 3 (by 6 to 5) and Book 4 (by 8 to 5), and in Book 6 they have an equal 7 appearances each. I can detect precious little discrimination between the two in the poem as a whole: Aeneas and his followers are called (and call themselves) *Teucro* and *Dardanidae* in contexts neutral, positive, and negative, by narrator, gods, and men alike.

²² For example, Quint (n. 4, 1982–3); P. V. Cova, *Il Libro Terzo dell' Eneide* (Milan, 1994); G. S. West, 'Andromache and Dido', *AJP* 104 (1983), 257–67; R. E. Grimm, 'Aeneas and Andromache in *Aeneid* 3', *AJP* 88 (1967), 151–62.

of a new Troy: even Jupiter, whose words are (supposedly) fate, implies as much in his speech to Venus in Book 1, through his reassurance of his daughter's very Trojan concerns, his mention of Ilium (though fallen) at 268, the terming of the settlers as *gente . . . Hectorea* (273), and the naming of Mars' daughter as Ilia (274) rather than Rhea Silvia. Aeneas and his people never stop being Trojan, and it is only with the 'reconciliation' of Juno in Book 12 and its reformulation of the fates that the name of Troy is consigned to obscurity, at least as far as Rome is concerned.²³

In the Trojans' visit to Crete, we see the same hope and desperate eagerness to found a city as is displayed by Aeneas in his enthusiasm for Carthage (1.437, 4.260–4), another of his attempted settlements outside of Italy:

ergo audius muros optatae molior urbis
Pergameamque uoco, et laetam cognomine gentem
hortor amare focos arcemque attollere tectis.
Iamque fere sicco subducta litore puppes;
conubiis aruisque nouis operata iuuentus:
iura domosque dabam:²⁴ subito cum . . .

(*Aeneid* 3.132–7)

So, eager, I start building the walls of the city I longed for, and call it Pergamea, and I urge the people happy with the name to love their hearths and raise a citadel with their roofs. And now the ships were just dragged up on the dry shore, and the young men were busy with wives and new fields; I was giving out new laws and homes, when suddenly . . .

It is remarkable that in this foundation epic none of the cities which Aeneas has a real hand in constructing is Italian: the closest he gets is Acesta (Segesta) in Sicily, where some of the tired Trojans less harried by fate and desire for honour (*animos nil magnae laudis egentis*, 5.751) are left behind. In contrast to the Trojan encampment in Italy, which within the span of the poem never becomes more than an encampment,²⁵ on Crete Aeneas is able, at least for a while, to enjoy building a real city. In these first days, and in the wake of the convincing interpretation by Anchises of Apollo's oracle, the Trojan settlement on Crete seems neither overly backward-looking nor even a deviation from destiny, but rather a fulfilment both of Aeneas' hopes and of his superstitions.

In *Epic and Empire*, Quint offers an analysis of the difference between fate and fortune in the *Aeneid*, broadly aligning heroic individuality and agency with fortune, which is contingent luck or lack of it, whilst fate is the fixed, impersonal, collective future of a victorious race like the Romans.²⁶ His association of fortune with epic's 'losers' and fate with its 'winners' is astute, and to a great extent persuasive, but some hints remain to prevent me from accepting this formulation in a wholesale or too simplistic way. For a start, he quotes Turnus' despairing *quo deus et quo dura uocat Fortuna sequamur* (12.677) as evidence that this great 'loser' of the epic sees his life as shaped by Fortune. Yet the same Turnus in more positive frame of mind can urge on his troops against Aeneas, the *fato profugus*, with the words, *sunt et mea contra / fata mihi* (9.136–7). Quint is right, I think, that fate turns out to be the history of the winning side, but he does not emphasize strongly enough the important point that for

²³ The *Aeneid* itself, of course, emerging as a canonical account of Rome's origins, ensures that Juno's wish for the name of Troy to be forgotten is never fulfilled.

²⁴ Importantly, cf. Dido at 1.507, *iura dabat legesque uiris*.

²⁵ Note that in Book 7, Aeneas sends a deputation to meet Latinus, while he himself gets on with the business of laying out the camp boundaries: 7.157–9. It may be a cruel irony as well as a poeticism, therefore, that the Trojan fortifications are called an *urbs* at 9.473.

²⁶ Quint (n. 4, 1993), 92–5.

those in the present, the question of who will be the winner is still an open one: the difference between fate and fortune can only be perceived with hindsight. I would like to take this point even further, and argue that since fate is constructed *post euentum*, it can be far more delicate and vulnerable than the optimistic prophecies of the *Aeneid* would have us believe. And this is the reason why the gods who want Rome to be founded are so concerned to get Aeneas out of Troy, out of Crete, out of Carthage—if he had stayed he could really have put a spanner in the karmic works. Although fate is often termed as fixed and immovable, it is sometimes implied that it is possible to make a choice between glorious fate and a quieter life: so Aeneas' debate, *Siculisne resideret aruis / oblitus fatorum, Italasne capesseret oras* (5.702–3). At times we seem to be told that the individual is expendable,²⁷ but if too many were to make the choice to ignore what they are told their fate is, and to remain steadfastly individual, then it stands to reason that things would get rather awkward. Fate is only fixed, therefore, if enough people can be persuaded to believe it is fixed, and not to choose individual fortune instead. The sojourns in places like Crete and Carthage serve to highlight the paradox that the rise of Rome, divinely ordained and immovably destined from the earliest times, so often verged on perilous contingency.

Rome is haunted by many ghosts of the many twins which the city cannot quite forget, yet needs to stifle in order to ensure her own singular supremacy. Hardie discusses the way in which this conflict is embodied in epic heroes and Roman men: 'The epic power struggle constantly throws up doubles; the Latin epic greatly extends this innate tendency of the genre, because of the dualities that structure political power and its dissolution in Rome.'²⁸ Rome was founded by twins, only one of whom survived; Republican Rome was ruled by twin consuls in a relationship not always harmonious, until the eventual emergence of Augustus as effective monarch. This obsession with the double and its (often violent) resolution to the single can also be extended to perceptions of place. For Rome to rise as the single, unified power over the conquered world, it must defeat its rivals, and forget its twins, like Carthage, like Troy, whilst at the same time remembering these others, these mirror images by which it is itself defined. Although the most obvious counterparts of Rome are those just mentioned, Troy and Carthage,²⁹ there are others, such as Nomentum, Gabii, and Fidenae, which serve as monument and warning, once great towns which crumble to nothing,³⁰ and, more importantly, Veii, the place which very nearly became the new Rome itself after the Gauls' invasion.³¹ It seems to me that Crete is presented in the *Aeneid* as another of these partial twins of Rome: note the emphasis in Anchises' speech on the correspondences between Troy and Crete, and the *prolem ambiguum geminosque parentis*

²⁷ Cf. Venus' speech at 10.46–62, where she agrees (with what degree of seriousness and what of irony it is hard to determine) to sacrifice Aeneas to the stormy waves. Quint (n. 4, 1993), 84–6 discusses this passage in some detail. He also mentions the choice of Achilles (*Il.* 9.412–16), an important precursor to Aeneas' choice, and a text recalled in the decision of many of the Trojans to stay behind on Sicily: cf. *Aen.* 5.751 (quoted above) with *Il.* 9.415, ὤλετό μοι κλέος ἔσθλόν.

²⁸ P. Hardie, *The Epic Successors of Virgil* (Cambridge, 1993), 10.

²⁹ On Carthage as a rival to Rome for the seat of world empire, cf. Juno's ambitions at *Aen.* 1.17–18: *hoc regnum dea gentibus esse, / si qua fata sinant, iam tum tenditque fouetque*. Cf. P. Hardie, *Virgil's Aeneid: Cosmos and Imperium*, (Oxford, 1986), 272–3.

³⁰ These are mentioned at *Aeneid* 6.773–6 as some of the towns which will be founded: a future to impress, except that by Vergil's time they had decayed. Cf. D. Feeney, 'History and revelation in Vergil's underworld', *PCPS* 32 (1986), 1–24, at 7–8.

³¹ For a discussion of the significance of Veii as potential alternative Rome, cf. C. Edwards, *Writing Rome* (Cambridge, 1996), 45–52.

(180). As with Troy, and mediated through its relationship with Troy, the relationship between Crete and Rome is a complicated, shifting one.

Several critics have pointed out the link between the teleology of destiny and history, and the narrative teleology of epic.³² The epic moves steadily towards its end, to a meaningful conclusion, just as history moves towards a great goal like the founding and supremacy of Rome. At the same time, though, the move forward is often made by a circuitous route, via inverted chronologies and repetitions in the narrative, and via setbacks and *déjà vu* in history. Hardie and Kennedy both follow Quint's formulation of two types of repetition to be found in the *Aeneid*, the self-destructive regression of Books 1–6 which represents the Trojans as unable to escape from their past incarnation as 'losers', and the redemptive repetition of Books 7–12 where the Trojan War is replayed in such a way as to allow the defeated Trojans to emerge as victors. Although this is an attractive idea, and one that seems to work for much of the poem, it rests on too neat a dichotomy of the first and second halves of the poem, and on what often seems to me to be too positive a reading of the Iliadic sections. I do not wish to imply that Quint ruthlessly presses his interpretation on an unwilling text, but rather to highlight some complications of the kind he himself acknowledges but chooses not to focus upon. How are we to react to the digressions and complications which seem to threaten Aeneas' mission, and thus the integrity of the narrative (or vice versa)? It is easier when those delays can be blamed upon or seen as embodied by a figure who falls into the role of the enemy. In this vein, Quint says, 'Epic's losers, the enemies of empire whom epic ideology assimilates with the East, woman, nature, irrationality, and chaos, consequently also embody a potential, indeed inevitable, collapse of narrative.'³³ Perhaps, though, it is not so much a question of the collapse of narrative as the emergence of a strong competing narrative which might eclipse that of the epic's dominating story line. While the overall narrative may belong to the victors, the losers have their own narratives which can be woven into the main story, to the point where it can be hard to distinguish which has the upper hand, the directed, forward-looking narrative of the winners, or the impassioned asides of the losers. Moreover, there are several occasions in the *Aeneid*—in particular the failed settlements of Book 3—when the 'winner' Aeneas is sorely tempted to adopt the narrative line of a 'loser'; what can be represented from one angle as an unfortunate tendency (thankfully overcome) to be stuck in the past, could be seen from another as an attempt to switch stories, to take a different, but equally valid turn away from the dominant narrative. This not only threatens a collapse of the teleological narrative, but moots the creation of another.³⁴ The potential that Crete displays within the plot as an alternative return to Trojan roots, an understudy for Italy, is reflected on a broader level by the reappearance of Crete and Cretan themes throughout the poem. And it is not pure coincidence, I would argue, that one of the most powerful symbols of digression, deviation, and confusion within the *Aeneid* is a Cretan one: the Labyrinth.

³² Quint (n. 4, 1993); Hardie (n. 28), 14–18; D. F. Kennedy, 'Virgilian epic' in C. Martindale (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Vergil* (Cambridge, 1997), 145–54.

³³ Quint (n. 4, 1993), 45.

³⁴ Crete is not necessarily the most fully developed example of such threat and possibility, but it is paradigmatic, and thus enhances the Carthaginian narrative, as I will discuss below. Just as Carthage is more clearly depicted as Rome's twin than Crete is, so Carthage poses a greater threat to the Roman narrative than Crete does. Provocative as ever, Ovid certainly would argue that everyone's favourite bit of the *Aeneid* is Book 4: 'et tamen ille tuae felix Aeneidos auctor / contulit in Tyrios arma uirumque toros, / nec legitur pars ulla magis de corpore toto / quam non legitimo foedere iunctus amor' (*Tristia* 2.533–6).

In contrast to the largely positive picture of the island offered in Anchises' speech and the settlement before the plague, as the Trojans *leave* the island, hints of Crete's darker side emerge: no sooner are they out of sight of land than the clouds descend, leaving them wandering blindly in the fog for three days. Labyrinthine imagery abounds: *caecis erramus in undis* (200), *nec meminisse uiae . . . Palinurus* (202), *caeca caligine* (203). This is not the first time such language appears,³⁵ but it acquires special significance in the Cretan context. The force of these lines describing blind wandering is both retrospective and prospective; the deviation from the proper course, set for Italy, confirms the idea that Crete, itself a byword for deviation, was a wrong turning, but shows also that the confusion and misdirection are far from over. Although they are out of Crete, the Trojans have not escaped from its associations and are not out of the Labyrinth. Accordingly, much of the rest of the book is tangled with obscurities, secrets, back-tracking, and monsters. The substance of such digressions within the narrative is echoed on the level of literary reference by Vergil's own digressions from his model; in a book so recognizably, ostentatiously Odyssean, it is remarkable that comparatively little of the material contained actually finds its source, even indirectly, in Homer.³⁶ Moreover, Vergil even parts with the tradition on Aeneas' wanderings, adding the grim new story of Polydorus and the bleeding sticks to the traditional stop in Thrace and (most significantly) inserting the visit to Crete which seems not to exist at all in other versions of the legend.³⁷ Perhaps it is also worth remembering that the love affair of Dido and Aeneas seems to be one of Vergil's inventions too: one of the most memorable episodes of the whole poem is a digression, a diversion. It is fitting, therefore, to find traces of Crete in Carthage, that other land of deviation, Rome's twin, and threat to her foundation.

The most direct evidence of Cretan influence at Carthage is to be found in the simile of Dido as a wounded deer at 4.68–73.

qualis coniecta cerua sagitta,
quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit
pastor agens telis liquitque uolatile ferrum
nescius: illa fuga siluas saltusque peragrat
Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo.

(*Aeneid* 4.69–73)

Like a doe struck by an arrow, wandering far, incautious among the Cretan groves, whom a shepherd hunting has pierced with his weapon and left the flying steel in her without realizing; she runs through woods and Dictaeon glades in her flight; the deadly shaft sticks in her side.

These lines have deservedly received a great deal of attention, providing as they do such insight into the queen's state of mind, asking interesting questions about Aeneas' part in the proceedings, and so on, but I want to concentrate here on the specific significance of the location of the simile in Crete: *nemora inter Cresia*, 70;

³⁵ It frequently occurs in descriptions of doomed and falling Troy (e.g. 2.48, 244–5, 384, 412) and especially the loss of Creusa at 2.736–40. Cf. P. R. Doob, *The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages* (Ithaca and London, 1990), 232–3.

³⁶ The first 'Odyssean' encounter, with the Harpies, though containing reminiscences of the killing of the Cattle of the Sun, is not largely based on Homer at all, but on Apollonius, *Argonautica* 2.178ff. Aeneas' experiences of Scylla and Charybdis and the Cyclops are very different from Odysseus', explicitly placed after the other hero's triumphs, and Circe's predictions are placed in Helenus' mouth to give a very different atmosphere.

³⁷ There are many discussions on Vergil's assumed divergences from tradition in Book 3. For example, R. B. Lloyd, 'Aeneid 3 and the Aeneas legend', *AJP* 78 (1957), 133–51 and P. V. Cova (n. 22).

saltusque . . . Dictaeos, 72–3. As Williams often points out in his commentary on the *Aeneid*, Vergil is fond of adding colour to his similes by giving them geographic locations. I think it would be safe to say, also, that the place names thus used by Vergil are rarely (if ever?) devoid of significance,³⁸ even if their reference is only narrowly Callimachean, pointing back to an earlier source, an action, a variation. In similes that make use of place names, Vergil tends to refer to more than one place, giving options, alternatives, expanding the field of reference;³⁹ this deer, though, remains fixedly on Crete.

Morgan⁴⁰ makes the initially attractive suggestion that we are intended to make a link with the herb *dictamnus*,⁴¹ or dittany, which famously grows on Crete, and which can draw poisoned and barbed arrows from a wound.⁴² The argument is strengthened somewhat by the fact that at *Aeneid* 12.411ff., when Aeneas has been wounded, Venus fetches some dittany from Cretan Ida to heal him. However, I wonder how much of this we can justifiably read back into the simile in *Aeneid* 4. Indeed, if there is much correspondence to be seen it is a correspondence of contrast. The deer Dido, unlike the wild goats at 12.414–15 (*non illa feris incognita capris / gramina, cum tergo uolucres haesere sagittae*), is not looking for any herbs to cure her wound; rather, she wanders through the woods and hills in pain and bound to die. If we are meant to think of dittany at all at this point, it must surely be with a sense of the tragic irony that this particular deer does not even know how to find the cure which grows all around her.⁴³ Duclos⁴⁴ points out the other links with Crete in Vergil's account of Dido and Aeneas' love affair: the simile comparing Dido to Diana (*Aen.* 1.498–504) clearly links up with that comparing Aeneas to Apollo (*Aen.* 4.143–50), and the Cretans, presumably because of their association with archery, are mentioned in the list of the god's devotees: *Cretesque Dryopesque fremunt pictique Agathyrsi* (146). She also argues that Vergil mentions Crete because it is the home of Ariadne, and this picks up the influence of Catullus 64 on the fourth book of the *Aeneid*.

It is true that, in the context of this book of the *Aeneid*, any mention of Crete might tempt a reader to think of Ariadne, and the echo of Catullus 64.250, *multiplices animo uoluebat saucia curas*, in the very opening line, *At regina graui iamdudum saucia cura*, fits neatly with the depiction of the Carthaginian queen as a wounded animal only sixty lines later. Ariadne is not the only famous Cretan woman, though, and I am tempted to see at this point a different, and stranger, link between Dido and Pasiphae.⁴⁵ Dido wandering love-sick around her city is transported via the simile to

³⁸ See, for example, W. Clausen, *Virgil's Aeneid and the Traditions of Hellenistic Poetry* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1987), 18–24 for an analysis of the Dido as Diana simile at *Aen.* 1.498–504.

³⁹ Cf., for example, the Diana simile, *qualis in Eurotae ripis aut per iuga Cynthi* (1.498).

⁴⁰ G. Morgan, 'Dido the wounded deer', *Vergilius* 40 (1994), 67–8.

⁴¹ Not a new connection to make, but one which already appears in Servius.

⁴² He cites Cicero, *N.D.* 2.126: . . . *capras autem in Creta feras cum essent confixae uenenatis sagittis, herbam quaerere quae dictamnus uocaretur, quam cum gustauissent sagittas excidere dicunt e corpore*. Cf. also Aristotle, *H.A.* 612a4; Theophrastus, *H.P.* 9.16.1; Pliny, *N.H.* 25.92. It is usually thought to be goats, not deer, who know about *dictamnus* (as at *Aen.* 12.414–15), but Pliny (*N.H.* 8.97) says it was a deer who discovered the healing properties. C. Connors, 'Seeing cypresses in Virgil', *CJ* 88 (1992), 1–17, considers this to be Vergil's influence.

⁴³ Paschalis (n. 10), 151 reaches a similar conclusion.

⁴⁴ G. Duclos, 'Nemora inter Cresia', *CJ* 66 (1970–1), 193–5.

⁴⁵ Pace H. C. Rutledge 'The opening of *Aeneid* 6', *CJ* 67 (1971–2), 110–15, who says of Pasiphae in Book 6, 'we should not want to go so far as to equate Dido and Pasiphae—that would be too gross' (112). For the identification supported in Book 6, cf. B. Otis, *Virgil* (Oxford,

the hills of Crete, and becomes like the Pasiphae of *Eclogue* 6,⁴⁶ who also wanders maddened by love in the Cretan countryside: *a, uirgo infelix, tu nunc in montibus erras!* (*Ecl.* 6.52). The witty but not unsympathetic observation that Pasiphae would have been happier if cattle had never existed (*fortunatam, si numquam armenta fuissent*, 45) is later echoed more heart-rendingly by Dido's epitaph on herself, *felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum / numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae* (*Aen.* 4.657–8).⁴⁷ Again, the epithet used twice of Pasiphae within six lines, *infelix*, is frequently applied to Dido.⁴⁸ The origin of *infelix* in the *Eclogues* is, of course, Calvus' *Io: a uirgo infelix, herbis pascere amaris* (fr. 9 Büchner), and, via an unfortunate Cretan, Dido is linked back to Argive Io,⁴⁹ a famous victim of Juno's spite who appears later on Turnus' shield (*Aen.* 7.789–92). Pasiphae follows Dido to the Underworld, too, where she appears among the women who committed suicide for love (*Aen.* 6.447) as a variation on the Homeric model for this scene in *Odyssey* 11 (*Od.* 11.321–5).

The links between Dido and Ariadne are more numerous and more clearly defined. In the bare bones of their stories the two women resemble each other closely: hopeful young royals who offer help to a foreign hero in need, who fall in love with him, and are subsequently abandoned. In the details, too, the correspondence between Cretan and Carthaginian heroine is clearly drawn. The similarities between Dido's speeches of grief and anger when she discovers that Aeneas is to leave her and Catullus' deserted Ariadne's soliloquy have long been noted.⁵⁰ She immediately seizes on the Catullan catchwords, *perfidus* (4.305, 421; cf. *Cat.* 64.132, 133, 174) and *crudelis* (4.308, 311, 661; cf. *Cat.* 64.136), and calls to mind the marriage she feels has already been undertaken (*per conubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos, / si bene quid de te merui . . .*, 4.316–17)⁵¹ much as Ariadne reproaches the absent Theseus with his promise to marry her which he has now forgotten (*at non haec quondam blanda promissa dedisti / uoce mihi, non haec miserae sperare iuebas, / sed conubia laeta, sed optatos hymenaeos . . .*, 64.139–41). Further incensed by Aeneas' speech of legalistic self-justification, Dido launches into another angry diatribe, calling Aeneas' parentage into doubt (*nec tibi diua parens . . .*, 4.365–7) in a manner directly recalling Ariadne's *quaenam te genuit sola sub rupe leaena . . .* (64.154–7). The curse she speaks to Aeneas' face at 4.381–7 and expands at 4.600–29 has one of its models in Ariadne's prayer for vengeance at 64.192–201,⁵² her anger directed towards Ascanius (since Anchises is already dead) as

1964), 71; V. Pöschl, *The Art of Vergil: Image and Symbol in the Aeneid*, trans. G. Seligson (Ann Arbor, 1962), 150; W. Fitzgerald, 'Aeneas, Daedalus and the Labyrinth', *Arethusa* 17 (1984), 51–65; P. A. Miller, 'The Minotaur within: fire, the Labyrinth and strategies of containment in *Aeneid* 5 and 6', *CP* 90 (1995), 225–40.

⁴⁶ Clausen (n. 38), 44 notes a link between the *Aeneid* and *Eclogues* here via *Dictaeos* (*Ecl.* 6.55–6, *Aen.* 4.73), but does not expand on the implications.

⁴⁷ Lines which find their origins in Catullus 64.171–2 *utinam ne tempore primo / Cnosia Cecropiae tetigissent litora puppes*. The circle of reference stretches once more to Ariadne.

⁴⁸ *Aeneid* 4.450 (*infelix Dido*), 529 (*infelix Phoenix*); 5.3 (*infelix Elissa*); 6.456 (*infelix Dido*). She is, of course, not the only figure in the *Aeneid* to be dubbed *infelix*, but the epithet does seem to attach itself to her as of right, a little like *pius Aeneas*.

⁴⁹ Who, it could be noted, is Cretan Minos' great-great-grandmother.

⁵⁰ Cf. A. S. Pease, *P. Vergili Maronis Liber Quartus* (Cambridge, MA, 1935), 11–29 on the sources for Dido; the other commentaries also note similarities with Catullus 64.

⁵¹ Line 317 also perhaps recalling another Catullan poem which bitterly reflects on a lover's ingratitude: *desine de quoquam quiquam bene uelle mereri / aut aliquem fieri posse putare pium* (Catullus 73.1–2).

⁵² Another strong mythical/literary influence, of course, being Medea, a figure who lurks behind Ariadne too.

Ariadne's curse works towards Aegeus' death. In her epitaph on herself, like Ariadne, she wishes that Aeneas' ships had never come to Carthage: *felix, heu nimium felix, si litora tantum / numquam Dardaniae tetigissent nostra carinae* (4.657–8); cf. Ariadne's *Iuppiter omnipotens, utinam ne tempore prim / Cnosia Cecropiae tetigissent litora puppes* (64.171–2).⁵³ Earlier, in yet another reminiscence of Catullus, of whose implications Dido is at this stage ironically unaware, the queen speaks to Anna of Aeneas, exclaiming, *quis nouus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes, / quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!* (4.10–11): words which echo the end of Ariadne's *utinam ne . . .* section, *nec malus hic celans dulci crudelia forma / consilia in nostris requiesset sedibus hospes!* (64.175–6).⁵⁴

That Dido in anger and reproach should want to present Aeneas as another faithless Theseus is perhaps not very surprising, though no less effective for all that, but it is interesting to note that Dido is not the only one to present herself as an Ariadne: the narrator conspires in this and as such assists in the consequential (uncomfortable, unfavourable) identification of the hero with the forgetful Athenian womanizer.⁵⁵ From the first line of Book 4, *At regina graui iamdudum saucia cura*, Dido recalls Ariadne, *multiplices animo uoluebat saucia curas* (64.250, mentioned above), and it is perhaps possible even to see an echo of the motif of falling in love at first sight when Dido first sees Aeneas: cf. *obstupuit primo aspectu Sidonia Dido* (1.613) and Catullus 64.86–7 *hunc simul ac cupido conspexit lumine uirgo / regia*.⁵⁶ Listening to Aeneas retelling the fall of Troy at her request, she hangs on his every word (*pendetque iterum narrantis ab ore*, 4.79) as Ariadne, distraught, can think of nothing but Theseus: *toto ex te pectore, Theseu, / toto animo, tota pendebat perdita mente* (64.69–70). Before Dido speaks to Aeneas, she is compared to a raving Bacchant (4.300–3), which could easily call to mind Catullus' description of Ariadne before she speaks, *saxea ut effigies Bacchantis* (64.61).⁵⁷ At 4.474, Dido *concepit furias*, much as Ariadne *concepit . . . flammam* at Catullus 64.92.⁵⁸ Dido, unable to sleep, finds that her passion only doubles: *ingeminant curae rursusque resurgens / saeuit amor magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu* (4.531–2), as Ariadne looking out from the beach *magnis curarum fluctuat undis* (64.62).

As if aware of the growing weight of the accusation against him both spoken by Dido and exacerbated by the narrator's implied identification of Dido and Ariadne, in his speech Aeneas emphatically (understandably) wants *not* to be seen as a Theseus,

⁵³ These lines also, famously, recall the opening lines of both Euripides' and Accius' *Medea*; and Apollonius, *Argonautica* 3.774–7 and 4.32–3 express a similar idea.

⁵⁴ Dido recalls Ariadne again later on in this speech, when she speaks of her flight from Tyre with her *sparsos fraterna caede penatis* (4.21); cf. Cat. 64.181 *respersum iuuenem fraterna caede secuta*. In Dido's case, of course, the slaughter is *by* rather than *of* her brother.

⁵⁵ To use intentionally judgemental language. For examples of Theseus' many love affairs, cf. Hesiod, *Eoiae* fr. 76; Diodorus Siculus 4.63; Plutarch, *Theseus* 8 and 29; Apollodorus, *Epitome* 1.17. Phaedra makes an eloquent complaint on this subject at Seneca, *Phaedra* 91–8.

⁵⁶ Clausen (n. 38), 20 remarks on the reminiscence of Cat. 64.89, *quales Eurotae progignunt flumina myrtus*, sparked by the opening of the Diana simile at 1.498, *qualis in Eurotae ripis*. His comment, though, that this recalls Ariadne falling in love with Theseus is very slightly wide of the mark. In Catullus, the line describes the virginal bed and state of innocence which Ariadne leaves when she falls for Theseus; Dido here is still in her quasi-virginal state, and though poised to leave it, she has not yet seen Aeneas.

⁵⁷ These lines also bring to mind Euripides, *Medea* 446–7 and Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* 4.350–4; the Dionysiac imagery reappears at 4.469–70 where Dido is compared to the maddened Pentheus.

⁵⁸ For further discussion of this parallel, cf. R. O. A. M. Lyne, *Words and the Poet* (Oxford, 1989), 24–8.

and places a primary emphasis on how he will remember Dido: *nec me meminisse pigebit Elissae / dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus* (4.335–6). A contrast is invited with Theseus' infamous forgetfulness which is emphasized by Catullus' repetition of *immemor* and related words both within Ariadne's speech and outside it in the narrative.⁵⁹ For the more principled and tortured Aeneas, an accusation of forgetfulness, particularly of forgetfulness of duties and obligations owed, would be unbearable. When he first meets Dido, moved by her generosity and his own need, he charmingly asserts that he will always remember the good she has done for him:

in freta dum fluuii current, dum montibus umbrae
lustrabunt conuexa, polus dum sidera pascet,
semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt,
quae me cumque uocant terrae. (*Aeneid* 1.607–10)

Whilst rivers run to the straits, while shadows traverse the mountain hollows, while the sky lets the stars graze, your honour, name and praise will always remain, whatever lands call me.

Although the flirtatious flattery of Book 1 is absent from his reply in Book 4, to an extent his position remains the same: wilfully, hopelessly unaware of the magnitude of the change their relationship has undergone in the time intervening, he wishes to be able to remain the thankful, but detached *hospes*, not the neglectful, ungrateful lover.

In Aeneas' other tale of lost love, though, perhaps it is possible to uncover a hero a little more like the *immemor* Theseus. Lyne makes the astute observation that Dido could or should have found a warning about Aeneas' capacity to forget personal ties in his account of the loss of Creusa: 'Aeneas . . . shows in the story of Troy that he can forget *everything*—duty to fate and family—in the grip of great passion'.⁶⁰ Although Aeneas never directly says that he *forgot* about his wife, that surely is the implication behind his admission, *nec prius amissam respexi animumue reflexi / quam tumulum antiquae Cereris sedemque sacratam / uenimus* (2.741–3). Moreover, inviting us as he does to remember that archetypal tragically devoted lover, Orpheus,⁶¹ perhaps unwittingly he reawakens the memory of the earlier use of that taboo word, *immemor*, as Orpheus looks back and loses Eurydice: *immemor heu! uictusque animi respexit* (*Georgics* 4.491).⁶²

These details add much to the depth of the characters of Dido and Aeneas, but also have a significance on the level of narration: memory, forgetfulness, repetition all have their broader implications for the whole poem. Aeneas' ability to forget his fate and his

⁵⁹ *immemor at iuuenis* . . . (58–9); *immemori* . . . *pectore* (123); *immemor* (135); *dicta nihil meminere, nihil periuria curant* (147); *oblito* . . . *pectore* (208); *memori* . . . *corde* (231); *nec ulla obliteret aetas* (232); *prius constanti mente* (238); *mente immemori* (248). The concern with remembrance is also important for Catullus as poet and narrator, cf. *uos ego saepe mero, uos carmine compellabo* (24); *commemorem* (117); *perfidiae quod post nulla arguet aetas* (322).

⁶⁰ R. O. A. M. Lyne, *Further Voices in Vergil's Aeneid* (Oxford, 1987), 186.

⁶¹ Cf. *Aen.* 2.776 and *Geor.* 4.494–5; *Aen.* 2.789 and *Geor.* 4.497; *Aen.* 2.790–4 and *Geor.* 4.499–502. Another, more negative, reminiscence can be seen in *pone sequens* (*Geor.* 4.487) and *pone subit coniunx* (*Aen.* 2.725): Eurydice follows behind because that is Proserpina's condition, Creusa because that is Aeneas'.

⁶² Cf. A. J. Boyle, 'The meaning of the *Aeneid*: a critical inquiry, Part II: *Homo immemor*: Book 6 and its thematic ramifications', *Ramus* 1 (1972), 113–51, for a discussion of the importance of forgetfulness for the move towards imperialism, shown to Aeneas in the Underworld, where the souls have to become *immemores* (750) before they return to the upper world. Aeneas, he maintains, later adopts this strategy: 'Books 7–12 testify to the success of this induced amnesia' (129). I would argue that Aeneas shows a capacity to forget long before Book 6.

inability to forget Troy hint once again at the possibility for other narrative strands to be forged, other fates to be followed. There emerges a sense of an alternative, the 'other place', which fixes in the imagination and impedes linear development of plot, or straight movement of lives; established in the account of the failed settlement on Crete in Book 3, this idea is developed still more fully with Carthage in Book 4.

As an extra hint as to the similarities to be found between Crete and Carthage, the Trojans are enveloped by very similar bad weather as they leave both lands. As the Trojans leave Carthage at the opening of Book 5, after looking back at the walls glowing with light from Dido's funeral pyre,⁶³ they are caught up in almost the same dark rainstorm which enveloped them leaving Crete:

ut pelagus tenuere rates nec iam amplius ulla
occurrit tellus, maria undique et undique caelum,
olli caeruleus supra caput astitit imber
noctem hiememque ferens et inhorruit unda tenebris. (*Aeneid* 5.8–11)

As the ships made the deep sea, and no more did any land come to meet them, sea on all sides, on all sides sky, a dark blue rain cloud stood over his head, bringing dark and storm, and the water bristled with shadows.

Compare:

postquam altum tenuere rates nec iam amplius ullae
apparent terrae, caelum undique et undique pontus,
tum mihi caeruleus supra caput astitit imber
noctem hiememque ferens, et inhorruit unda tenebris. (*Aeneid* 3.192–5)⁶⁴

After the ships made the deep sea and no more did any lands appear, sky on all sides, on all sides sea, then a dark blue rain cloud stood over my head, bringing dark and storm, and the water bristled with shadows.

The image evoked is of darkness and confusion. The undifferentiated sea on all sides, the uniformity of sky prevent the Trojans from gaining any sense of certainty about where they are. This may well be an experience common to those sailing in unfamiliar waters, but the descriptions also have symbolic importance: the Trojans are both literally and metaphorically (morally and narratologically) all at sea. It seems particularly appropriate that they should be afflicted by confusion of this kind on leaving Crete and (Cretan) Carthage, given the importance in the *Aeneid* of that Cretan symbol of misdirection, the Labyrinth.

The Labyrinth itself appears directly in the poem not when the Trojans are on Crete, but when we might have thought that they would have left all that behind, when they have reached Sicily, and again when they come to Italy. In Book 5, as a pleasing finale to Anchises' funeral games, the Trojan boys, led by Ascanius, weave out an intricate pattern in their mock battle:

ut quondam Creta fertur Labyrinthus in alta
parietibus textum caecis iter ancipitemque
mille uis habuisse dolum, qua signa sequendi
frangeret indeprensus et inremeabilis error:

⁶³ For the Trojans the reason for the fire (though they could make a good guess) lies hidden: *causa latet* (5.5).

⁶⁴ M. C. J. Putnam, *The Poetry of the Aeneid* (Ithaca, repr. 1988), 70 observes the similarity between these passages, but does not mention Crete.

haud alio Teucrum⁶⁵ nati uestigia cursu
impediunt texuntque fugas et proelia ludo. (*Aeneid* 5.588–93)

Just as once in high Crete it is said the Labyrinth held a passage built with blind walls, and an ambiguous work of craft with a thousand paths, where the undetected irreticable maze would wreck the marks of the way: just like this the sons of the Teucrians entangle their tracks in their course, and weave retreats and battles in their game.

The link between Crete and Troy already made in Book 3 is here reasserted, and explicitly extended to Rome too: this ritual known as the *Lusus Troiae* is still played out in Vergil's own times (5.600–3).⁶⁶ The Labyrinth functions both as a symbol of intricate artistry and as something more obscure, even sinister, a darkness in which it is all too easy to get lost. On a first reading, though, considerations of the negative side of the Cretan image must take second place to the positive picture of the Trojan boys led by Ascanius in this display which knits together future and past. As Doob puts it, '... despite the latent seaminess ... in Book 5 Virgil presents a labyrinth quite literally reformed: a complex artistic process and product, a conversion of the ancient Cretan prison to a playful, solemn, and forward-looking Roman ritual, very much a labyrinth *in bono*'.⁶⁷ Aeneas' son here plays Theseus, the successful maze-walker, who achieves the impossible and escapes from the inescapable Labyrinth. Compare Catullus' description of the emergence of the victorious hero:

inde pedem sospes multa cum laude reflexit
errabunda regens tenui uestigia filo,
ne labyrinthis e flexibus egredientem
tecti frustraretur inobservabilis error. (Catullus 64.112–15)

Safe from there, and with great glory, he turned back his steps, guiding his wandering tracks with a fine thread, lest an untraceable wrong-turn of the building should trick him as he made his way from the labyrinthine twists.

However, the reminiscence of Catullus points subtly to an unusual anonymity in Ascanius' labyrinth: the setting is, simply, Crete, not, more specifically, Cnossus, and no direct mention is actually made either of Theseus who escaped from the maze, or of the Minotaur who lurked within it, or of Daedalus who built it.⁶⁸ Often an omission serves to highlight absence rather than to disguise it. And if we can see these dim mythical figures as present under erasure, Ascanius' innocently showy dance could be overshadowed by the memory of the dark Cretan past. It might be significant, too, that the Trojan boys are never shown to escape from the maze: unlike Theseus' *uestigia* in Catullus which, though wandering, are put on the right track by following the thread, the Trojans' *uestigia* are the tracks and course of confusion, not solution. At any rate, we do not have to wait too long for the Labyrinth to reappear, this time endowed with its full complement of mythical characters: creator, monster, and victims. Arriving at Cumae in Italy at the start of Book 6, Aeneas comes to consult the

⁶⁵ Perhaps the use of *Teucrum* here is more than conventional, reminding the reader once again of the Trojans' ancestral link to Crete through Teucer.

⁶⁶ Note, too, the labyrinthine nature of Troy seen in Book 2. Cf. Doob (n. 35), 230–4.

⁶⁷ Doob (n. 35), 40

⁶⁸ Contrast the reference to the Labyrinth as dance-floor in the ecphrasis on Achilles' shield, which locates it specifically in Cnossus, and states it was built by Daedalus for Ariadne: ἐν δὲ χορὸν ποίκιλλε περικλυτὸς ἀμφιγυῆις, / τῷ ἔκλον οἶόν ποτ' ἐνὶ Κνωσῷ εὐρείῃ / Δαίδαλος ἥσκησεν καλλιπλοκάμῳ Ἀριάδνῃ (*Il.* 18.590–2).

Sibyl and sees the temple of Apollo, built by Daedalus, who carved the story of his Cretan adventure onto the doors of the building.

hic crudelis amor tauri suppostaque furto
 Pasiphae mixtumque genus prolesque biformis
 Minotaurus inest, Veneris monumenta nefandae;
 hic labor ille domus et inextricabilis error;
 magnum reginae sed enim miseratus amorem
 Daedalus ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resoluit,
 caeca regens filo uestigia. (Aeneid 6.24–30)

Here is the cruel love of a bull, and Pasiphae secretly mated, and her mixed-breed, two-formed offspring, the Minotaur, the monuments of unspeakable Love; here is that work, the house and inescapable maze/mistake; but even so, taking pity on the great love of the queen Daedalus himself loosened the tricks and confusions of the building, guiding blind footsteps with a thread.

Interpretation of this ecphrasis is notoriously problematic.⁶⁹ The temple of Apollo is the first significant monument viewed by Aeneas on his arrival in Italy, the description paves the way to the second half of the *Aeneid*, yet what does it mean? The other major ecphraseis in the poem—the temple of Juno in Carthage and the shield of Aeneas—carry immediate meanings that do not lack complexity, but are nevertheless more easily accessible.

One element I wish to highlight here is the way in which the Labyrinth can be seen as a model for narrative digression as well as spatial confusion. Arguably this sort of misdirection is an element present from the earliest reference in classical literature (the labyrinth in the *Iliad* [cf. n. 35 above] appears as a simile within an ecphrasis), but it is taken to greater extremes in Catullus 64. Directly after his description of Theseus emerging from the maze (quoted above), the Catullan narrator asks, *sed quid ego a primo digressus carmine plura / commemorem . . . ?* (Catullus 64.115–17). In case we might be tempted to see the Labyrinth purely as mythical object, the poet sets a self-conscious reflection on his own composition immediately after the account of the perils of slipping imperceptibly into obscurity. Like Theseus, Catullus has courted danger with his daring foray into this twisting, multi-layered style of composition, but has found his way out safely. Or has he? The temptations and complications of his art are implied to be too much to resist: though the poet wonders why he has deviated from the path of his first song,⁷⁰ rather than return to the straight and narrow, he continues to wander for a while in the realm of the spoken unspoken, telling the story of how Ariadne left home only to be deserted by Theseus. The double status of the maze both as place in the narrative and narratological figure inevitably, ingeniously adds to the complications of the poem, and the implicit, partial parallel between the poet and the hero may set even the successful, victorious Theseus within a wider

⁶⁹ Or, rather, it is such an open image that it attracts radically different interpretations. Cf., for example, A. Barchiesi, 'Virgilian narrative: ecphrasis' in Martindale (n. 32), 271–81; Boyle (n. 62); S. Casali, 'Aeneas and the doors of the Temple to Apollo', *CJ* 91 (1995–6), 1–9; Doob (n. 35) 30–3, 227–53; Miller (n. 45); M. Paschalis, 'The unifying theme of Daedalus' sculptures on the Temple of Apollo Cumanus (*Aen.* 6.20–33)', *Vergilius* 32 (1986), 33–41; M. C. J. Putnam, 'Daedalus, Virgil and the end of art', ch. 4 of his *Virgil's Aeneid: Interpretation and Influence* (Chapel Hill and London, 1995), 73–99; Rutledge (n. 45); S. Skulsky, 'The Sibyl's rage and the Marpessan Rock', *AJP* 108 (1987), 56–80; J. W. Zarker, 'Aeneas and Theseus in *Aeneid* 6', *CJ* 62 (1967), 220–6.

⁷⁰ Another complication, of course, is the ambiguity about *which* is Catullus' *primum carmen* here: the picture of Ariadne on the beach or the wedding of Peleus and Thetis?

Labyrinth of poetic echoes and moral repercussions from which he cannot escape, and has no thread to guide him out.

The ecphrasis in *Aeneid* 6 is a similarly complex and self-conscious narrative, which sets the story of Daedalus within the framework of the distant, impersonal *ut fama est* (6.14; cf. 5.588, *fertur*), much as Catullus places great emphasis on the status of his narrative as a story with other existences, a reported tradition.⁷¹ Yet at the same time, as Putnam points out, the apostrophes to Apollo (6.18) and Icarus (30–1) betray a greater sense of engagement on the part of the poet, whereby he is at least to some extent identified with Daedalus, creating a 'triply fictive world of poet imagining artist crafting himself in art'.⁷² Thus the poet/narrator is simultaneously present within the creation, within the labyrinth, and emphatically external to it. The narrative digression, the compulsive wandering of Catullus 64 is present here too, but even moves further, into narrative paralysis. Having solved the riddle of the maze, setting the thread to be followed as Catullus' Theseus did, Daedalus attempts, but fails, to illustrate the flight and fall of Icarus: *tu quoque magnam / partem opere in tanto, sineret dolor, Icare, haberes* (6.30–1). Whilst Catullus emerges from one Labyrinth into another, telling stories he claims not to be telling, Vergil's Daedalus is unable to tell a story he wants to tell; the artist leaves the Labyrinth only to run straight into a wall of grief that threatens an end to digression and to his art.⁷³ Within the narrative itself, Aeneas and his companions are stopped from participation and interpretation by the arrival of Achates⁷⁴ and the Sibyl with her terse reprimand, *non hoc ista sibi tempus spectacula poscit* (6.37). And yet Aeneas' reading, we are told, was not yet complete: *quin protinus omnia / perlegerent oculis, ni iam praemissus Achates / adforet* (6.33–5). Not only is the spectator within the text denied the vision of Icarus which Daedalus was unable to carve, but he does not even see every panel of the temple doors. Where, we might wonder, did he get to?⁷⁵

The Sibyl's interruption of Aeneas' perusal of the temple sculptures seems to mark her out as an adherent of the linear school of history. It appears as an injunction not to wallow in a circular past and stories hard to interpret, but rather to pay attention to the clear unfolding glory of the future. Aeneas' future, being the narrator and reader's past, can be seen as a natural progression, the steady, straight, and unstoppable advance of Rome.⁷⁶ Yet the prophecy she utters contains a strange mixture of certainty about the future and of the inevitability of repetition. War in Latium is presented as a second *Iliad*, Turnus as an *alius* . . . *Achilles* (6.89) and Lavinia, unlikely as it may seem, as a second Helen (93–4). The only real difference at this point between the Trojan War

⁷¹ Cf. *dicuntur* (64.2), *fertur* (19), *perhibent* (76), *commemorem* (117), *perhibent* (124), *ferunt* (212).

⁷² Putnam (n. 69), 77.

⁷³ The link between the unfinished work of Daedalus and the unfinished *Aeneid* is made by Putnam (n. 69), 86ff. In the end, though, the *Aeneid* is completed: 'This carefully, brilliantly flawed wholeness is perhaps [Vergil's] passionate way of saying that art's feigned orderings do not, cannot, claim to control the uncontrollable' (91).

⁷⁴ Might it be significant that Achates, who admired the sculptures on Juno's temple in Carthage together with Aeneas is here separated from him, connected with the move towards the future, rather than remembering and puzzling over the past?

⁷⁵ Casali (n. 69) approaches this question from a different angle, arguing that the description of what *is* depicted on the doors is itself incomplete: perhaps the story of Theseus' desertion of Ariadne was there to remind Aeneas of Dido. The clear allusions to Catullus 64 invite the telling of this part of the story, which is left out.

⁷⁶ Kennedy (n. 32), following Quint, characterizes the opposing forms of narrative (the circular and the direct) as 'romance' and 'epic' respectively.

and the Trojans' war in Latium is the prediction that help will come from the Greeks (96–7, meaning Evander's Arcadians). Quint regards the replay of the Trojan war in the second half of the *Aeneid* as therapeutic replay, where the Trojan losers are enabled, broadly speaking, to take on the role of Greek victors.⁷⁷ At this stage, though, the reversal of roles is not yet apparent, and the prophecy seems to offer hollow comfort, conjuring once again the memory of defeat at Troy. Moreover, after the Sibyl has uttered her prophecy, the narrator brings out the symbolic similarity between the Labyrinth and the baffling nature of predictions for the future: *talibus ex adyto dictis Cumaea sibylla / horrendas canit ambages antroque remugit / obscura uera inuoluens* (98–100).⁷⁸

On top of all these hints of confusion and repetition, it must be remarked that the Underworld is itself remarkably like a maze,⁷⁹ from where it is hard (if not impossible without divine favour) to retrace one's steps and escape: *sed reuocare gradum superasque euadere ad auras, / hoc opus, hic labor est* (128–9). Compare the description of the Labyrinth earlier: *hic labor ille domus et inextricabilis error* (27).⁸⁰ These labyrinthine overtones cast a shadow over the visit to the underworld, and even cast doubt on how directly one can accept the 'truths' there discovered.⁸¹

But with the labyrinth also comes the idea of the puzzle that can be solved, and a way to be found out of the darkness: *Daedalus ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resoluit* (29). Crete can set things in order, as well as confuse them, and in line with this, two Cretans preside over sectors of the underworld. Minos (6.431–3) is in charge of assigning the shades of the dead to their allotted place, his urn standing in an echo of that to draw lots for Athenians due to be fed to the Minotaur (6.22).⁸² His brother Rhadamanthys rules over the damned, dealing out just punishments and (significantly) uncovering the lies and deceit that sinners complacently thought hidden away while they were alive:

Gnosius haec Rhadamanthus habet durissima regna
castigatque auditque dolos subigitque fateri
quae quis apud superos furto laetatus inani
distulit in seram commissa piacula mortem. (*Aeneid* 6.566–9)

Cnosian Rhadamanthys has this, a most harsh kingdom, and he punishes and hears of deceits and forces the confession of a man who, rejoicing in his pointless hidden crime whilst in the upper world, put off restitution for his deed until death finally came.

A grim kind of revelation this may be, but revelation none the less, and strangely appropriate as the reverse side of the stereotypical lying Cretan.⁸³

⁷⁷ Quint (n. 4, 1993).

⁷⁸ Note also that Apollo, the Delian, god of clear prophecy, is behind the confusingly familiar-sounding words of the Sibyl (6.77–80, 100–101), using his priestess with disturbing violence.

⁷⁹ As remarked, for example, by Doob (n. 35), 239–40.

⁸⁰ Doob (n. 34), 31 notes the pun on *labor* and labyrinth in the *Aeneid*.

⁸¹ The subject of dark undertones in the underworld has received much discussion from various angles. For example, R. A. Brooks, 'Discolor aura: reflections on the golden bough', *AJP* 74 (1953), 260–80; Feeney (n. 30).

⁸² Minos and Rhadamanthys were long associated with justice in the underworld (e.g. Homer, *Od.* 11.568–71; Pindar, *Olympian* 2.75; Plato, *Gorgias* 524; [Plato], *Minos*). It might be worth noting that it was a source of pride for the Romans that even the Cretans, with their own venerable system of justice, decided to adopt Roman law after the occupation (Strabo 10.4.22).

⁸³ The accusation of deceitfulness was probably made most famous by the paradox set out by Epimenides the Cretan, who said Cretans always lie, but arguably it was an accusation that had attached to the name of Crete since Homer. Although it is clearly possible to read too much

The last mention of Crete in the *Aeneid* that I will discuss here⁸⁴ shares this (potentially) redemptive aspect, though is itself not without darker undertones: the cure found for Aeneas' stubborn wound in Book 12. Struck by an arrow from an unknown assailant whilst attempting to preserve the truce between Trojans and Rutulians, Aeneas is compelled to withdraw behind lines while the battle rages on unchecked. The arrowhead is buried deep inside his thigh, and Aeneas urges that they should cut it out of its hiding place, *ense secent lato vulnus telique latebram / rescindant penitus* (12.389–90). The doctor Iapyx Iasides⁸⁵ tries in vain to draw it out, and his patron Apollo offers no assistance, so Venus in indignation gathers dittany from Cretan Ida which she uses to cure her son:

Hic Venus indigno nati concussa dolore
dictamnum genetrix Cretaea carpit ab Ida,
puberibus caulem foliis et flore comantem
purpureo; non illa feris incognita capris
gramina, cum tergo uolucres haesere sagittae.
hoc Venus obscuro faciem circumdata nimbo
detulit, hoc fustum labris splendentibus amnem
inficit occulte medicans, spargitque salubris
ambrosiae sucos et odoriferam panaceam. (*Aeneid* 12.411–19)

Hereupon, struck by her son's undeserved pain, his mother Venus gathered dittany from Cretan Ida, a stalk with downy leaves and crowned with a purple flower; it is a herb well known to wild goats when arrows have lodged in their backs. Venus, her face shrouded in a dim cloud, brought this herb and with it made an infusion in water poured from a shining basin, doctoring in secret, and she scattered in drops of health-bringing ambrosia and fragrant panacea.

It is a fitting symmetry that the island so famous for its archers should also provide a famous cure for arrow wounds. Yet why is a doctor given his art as a love-gift by Apollo (12.391–7) unable to heal Aeneas himself, unlike his Iliadic counterpart Machaon (*Il.* 4.210ff)? And why is there such emphasis on concealment: the hidden assailant, the hidden arrowhead, the hidden goddess with her hidden cure? Even in the hope and cure it provides, Crete, it seems, cannot help but be indirect, obscure.⁸⁶

significance into it, it seems equally possible that there is a pointed joke in Odysseus' decision to test the waters on his return to Ithaca by pretending to be a Cretan. Cf. A. Haft, 'Odysseus, Idomeneus and Meriones: the Cretan lies of *Odyssey* 13–19', *CJ* 79 (1983–4), 289–306. In the Homeric Hymn to Ceres, the goddess uses a 'Cretan lie' to disguise herself among mankind (*Hom. Hymn* 2.119–44). In Vergil's more sinister version of this sort of deception, the story of Sinon (*Aen.* 2.57–198), all the Greeks, and especially (with a certain amount of irony as well as a great deal of justification) Ulysses, are tarred with the 'Cretan' brush: *accipe nunc Danaum insidias et crimine ab uno / disce omnis* (2.65–6).

⁸⁴ The very last reference to Crete comes at 12.858, as the fury Megaera speeds like a Parthian or Cydonian poison arrow. The sinister side of the island comes to mind once again.

⁸⁵ His name, like that of Iasius of Crete, is connected with *ἰάσθαι*, to heal (cf. Paschalis [n. 10], 120–4 and 388 on Iapyx). The healer is not very successful, though.

⁸⁶ A similar cloud often seems to hover over gifts with Cretan connections. A Cretan slave woman is given to Sergestus, whose ship is broken in the race (5.281–4), Ascanius gives the doomed Euryalus a Cretan sword (9.303–5), and part of Chloereus' equipment which fatally attracts Camilla is a Lycian bow with Cretan arrows (11.772–3). It has been noted (M. C. J. Putnam, 'Possessiveness, sexuality, and heroism in the *Aeneid*', *Vergilius* 31 [1985], 1–21) that objects connected with Dido are brought out at moments of emotional intensity (Ascanius' horse at 5.570–3, a bowl for Nisus at 9.266, the cloak used to cover dead Pallas at 11.72–5). Perhaps a similar sense of doom can be connected with Cretan things; moreover, the two are combined in Ascanius' labyrinthine ride on Dido's horse (5.570–91), casting shadows over Aeneas' moment of paternal pride.

Crete has a symbolic function in the *Aeneid* as a reminder of the temptations and inevitability of regression, repetition, and diversion from the linear course of history. It is a place of ancient divinity and the home of one of Troy's founders, but also a cradle of deceit and monstrous passions. It is riddled with plague, but provides cures for wounds. It confounds a simple, teleological reading of the poem, and at times seems to threaten an endless wandering in spatial, moral, and narratological labyrinths, yet it could also be seen to offer a real alternative. For those prepared to accept uncertainty, Crete offers a course different from that offered by the seemingly fixed and certain fates of Rome. It is a more complex, difficult, and ambiguous course but perhaps ultimately a more human one.

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