Reviving Troy in *Aeneid* 5

The thematic and structural importance of Book 5 in the *Aeneid* has been increasingly recognized in the last half-century. Woven throughout this inconspicuous interlude of a book are numerous intratextual ties to what comes before and after in the poem (Galinsky 1968; Glazewski 1972). On the level of narrative, too, the Trojan past and the Roman future are constantly juxtaposed and, as it were, placed in a balance (Holt 1979-1980; Fratantuono & Smith 2015). The contests of the funeral games are relieving to the Trojans and the reader alike, but they relieve precisely because they displace the urgent question – "how will it all come out?" Even as the book's system of aetiologies points towards the successful fulfillment of a Roman destiny, the narrative present is fraught with hidden danger as memory threatens to seduce the Trojans from their fate.

The force of memory is richly explored throughout the epic, and Book 3 in particular depicts the alluring possibility of a new Troy, more memorial than home (Seider 2013). In this talk, I will focus on two episodes from Book 5 that once again countenance a revival of Troy. These episodes, the *lusus Troiae* (5.545-603) and the burning of the ships (604-699), are consecutive in the narrative and simultaneous in the story, yet have rarely been read together (cf. Miller 1995). The latter episode and its sequel explicitly portray the Trojan women's desire for a new Troy and the subsequent establishment of a colony with this significance (755-758). The description of the *lusus Troiae*, on the other hand, encodes the men's nostalgic desire for old Troy in their contemplation of the boys' spectacle. The episode's importance is highlighted by the expansion of the narrative into a celebrated double simile (588-595) and a major aetiological prolepsis in which Troy is indeed revived through the maintenance of this game (596-603).

When read together and in relation to the whole book, the narratives of the *lusus Troiae* and the burning of the ships reveal a concentrated attempt to answer one of Vergil's great problems: how to reconcile the contrary drives of memory and destiny in a future that honors the past. The problem is elaborated through a complex of vocabulary involving memory, recognition, and revival (e.g. *agnosco*, 576, 679; *refero*, 564, 598) and an opposing complex involving change and diversion (e.g. *muto*, 19, 604, 679, 702). The *lusus Troiae* holds the two poles in the greatest possible balance, as both past and future are on display in the boys' maneuvers. The crisis follows in the burning of the ships, leading to the final moment of *aporia* in the epic's first half: "whether to remain in Sicily's fields, forgetful of fate, or strive to reach Italy's shores" (*Siculisne resideret arvis, | oblitus fatorum, Italasne capesseret oras*, 702-703).

Bibliography

Fratantuono, L. M. & Smith, R. A. 2015. *Virgil, Aeneid 5: Text, Translation and Commentary*.
       Leiden: Brill.

Galinsky, G. K. 1968. "*Aeneid* V and the *Aeneid.*" *AJPh* 89, 2: 157-185.

Glazewski, J. 1972. "The Function of Vergil's Funeral Games." *CW* 66, 2: 85-96.

Holt, P. 1979-1980. "*Aeneid* V: Past and Future." *CJ* 75, 2: 110-121.

Miller, P. A. 1995. "The Minotaur within: Fire, the Labyrinth, and Strategies of Containment in
       Aeneid 5 and 6." *CPh* 90, 3: 225-240.

Seider, A. M. 2013. *Memory in Vergil's Aeneid*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.