

**The Daedalus of History and Myth:
The Meaning of Creation in Literature from Homer to Joyce**

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Part I: Introduction and Overview

It wouldn't be difficult to imagine that everyone aware of Greek mythology is at least familiar with the story of Icarus, the winged boy who fell to his death upon flying too close to the sun. Almost everyone knows about the dark, twisting paths of the Labyrinth and the terrible half-man, half-bull Minotaur imprisoned deep within its elusive center. They may even know about the Greek hero named Theseus who traversed the Labyrinth with the aid of a thread and slew the Minotaur. But few people have any conception of the man who quietly resides behind all of these stories, and without whom, they would have no foundation on which to stand; the Labyrinth would never have been built, the Minotaur never created, Icarus would have never been born, and nor would Icarus have ever taken his fatal flight.

His name is Daedalus, and he encompasses many talents: architect, engineer, inventor, metalsmith, sculptor, and father. But he is also a symbol and a metaphor. As history has progressed, Daedalus himself has become a figure from which a succession of artists and writers have drawn inspiration for the structuring of their own works. His larger myth cycle however, with all of its attendant characters, can also be understood as a vehicle carrying the secrets behind the creative act itself, revealing the benefits of inspiration rooted in observation of the natural world, demonstrating the need for destruction, sacrifice, and major shifts in perspective, and depicting the dangers of invention falling into corrupted hands. Daedalus' particular story, and the larger myth cycle in which he revolves, has been told and retold by various authors throughout classical and modern times to suit many different purposes and according to their respective cultural beliefs. This study will explore the works of these authors and their purposes, either artistic or political. It will also show that Daedalus himself also comes to represent an unbroken chain in the larger *translatio*

studii, the transference of knowledge/skill/*techne* from one culture to another. Tracing specific textual references from the ancient world will show that Daedalus preserves an older, more established body of knowledge that originally came to the Mediterranean from Egypt and the East, through the ancient Minoan culture on Crete to Greece during their ascent to power and influence, from Greece to Rome, and beyond Rome's decline to the rest of Western culture. This study will then conclude by showing how Daedalus as a literary figure and the Daedalus myth cycle as a whole has continued to influence literature even today, creating a vital thematic thread from Homer down to the 21st century.

At this point however, in order to accomplish this, it is important to first provide a composite formation of the Daedalus myth cycle. A brief re-telling of the basic elements of the cycle will establish both the mythological context in which the story exists and the conceptual foundation at the base of this inquiry's assertions. The story most people are popularly familiar with is that of the Roman poet, Ovid, his works being continually influential on Western writers since the time of ancient Rome. Older sources written in Greek vary widely in their depiction and often disagree on specific details, if giving much information at all about Daedalus himself, but it is possible to construct an overall narrative of his story without regard to language, place, or chronology.

According to Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, the earliest chapter in Daedalus' story begins in archaic age Athens, before the various tribes of Hellenes were incorporated into the city-state Athens eventually came to be, when he appears as a fully grown adult. No tales remain that speak of his childhood or upbringing, although it seems the Athenians of the classical age later incorporated him into their genealogies as a way of claiming him and his story for their own.

At this point in Daedalus' life, his nephew, alternatively known as either Talus/Talos or Perdix (partridge), shows great promise as an inventor. According to legend, Perdix invented the compass, and having been inspired from a fish's backbone, also created the first saw. Daedalus is overcome with envy and one day tosses Perdix from the top of the acropolis, killing him. For the murder and for blaspheming the sacred acropolis, Daedalus is banished from Athens and becomes an exile (Ovid, *Met.* 8, 236-259). This part of his story is problematic for any study of Daedalus that seeks to laud his talents and inspirational qualities, and yet is a necessary part of his story. This scar on his character works to make Daedalus distinctly human; he is unlike the gods because his skills and sphere of influence have limits. Even though he is able to create art and artifice in a godlike, superior way, he is never considered a demigod like Hercules. Therefore Daedalus' level of skill, while superior, is portrayed as potentially attainable by other humans.

At this point, there are no surviving stories about where he went after his exile or for how long, who he met, or what specifically he may have learned, but his story eventually continues in Crete when he is a mature man with a teenage son of his own named Icarus. Apollodorus continues the story in his *Library*, telling the most complete version of the Daedalus myth cycle from the ancient world. He reveals how Daedalus' skill and abilities are widely known by Minos, Pasiphae, and the ruling elite on Crete, a much more highly advanced civilization than archaic Athens. Pasiphae one day enlists Daedalus to build her an artificial cow body into which she desires to crawl so she might copulate with a special bull Minos once failed to sacrifice according to the god Poseidon's wishes, and for which Pasiphae was driven mad with an unnatural lust by the god in order to revenge Minos' failure. Daedalus' artificial cow works perfectly and from this union, Pasiphae gives birth to the half-

man, half-bull Minotaur. Minos is appalled and conscripts Daedalus, presumably for his role in bringing him to life, to build the famous Labyrinth in order to forever imprison the Minotaur from the light of day. This Daedalus does so skillfully, so that once it is finished, he himself scarcely can remember the way out of its convoluted corridors. Eventually he and Icarus are both imprisoned in the Labyrinth as well, either as a punishment, or to protect the Labyrinth's secrets (Apollodorus, *Library*, III, xv, 8).

In the meantime, Minos' son happens to be accidentally killed while in Attica and in order to appease Minos' wrath, the Athenians agree to yearly offer seven young men and seven maidens as a sacrifice to the Minotaur. One particular year, the Athenian king's long-lost son appears and becomes part of the sacrificial lot. Theseus boasts he will kill the Minotaur and return safely to Athens with the rest of the youths, thereby freeing his people from the oppression of the obligation to Minos (Apollodorus, *Epitome*, I, 6-9).

One of Minos' daughters, Ariadne, falls in love with Theseus and decides to help him, asking Daedalus for help. He tells her to give Theseus a ball of thread so he might be able to tie one end to the starting point, wind through the Labyrinth to kill the Minotaur, and then retrace his path along the thread to safely find his way out again. While Theseus is accomplishing this hero's task, Daedalus is putting the finishing touches on two sets of artificial wings he has created, one for him and one for his son, to fly far away from the Labyrinth and the tyranny of Minos. He warns Icarus not to fly too low or the spray from the sea will weigh down his wings, and not to fly too high or the sun's heat will melt the wax holding the feathered wings together. Daedalus and Icarus launch themselves upon the air, but Icarus disobeys his father and flies too high, sure enough melting his wings and swiftly

plummeting to his death in the sea hundreds of feet below and causing great despair in his father (Apollodorus, *Epitome*, I, 11-13).

While some sources differ on where Daedalus actually flew, the next time Daedalus resurfaces he is in Sicily. This chapter of the story has Daedalus working as a kind of tutor for King Cocalus' daughters, and inventing nothing more exciting than complicated dolls for children. One day Minos and his entourage appear during their Mediterranean-wide search for Daedalus who he blames for everything. Minos challenges everyone to attempt running a thread through the twists of a conch shell, knowing that Daedalus would not be able to resist such a challenge, and thereby hoping to draw him out of hiding. Daedalus accomplishes this by drilling a hole in one end and putting a drop of honey there while tying the thread to an ant that he lets walk through the shell, enticed and driven toward the sweet reward at the other side. Minos knows Daedalus is being sheltered by Cocalus, but before Cocalus gives him up, Cocalus' daughters and Daedalus conspire against Minos, boiling him alive while he takes a bath (Apollodorus, *Epitome*, I, 13-16).

The final chapter of Daedalus' overall story has him moving to the Mediterranean island of Sardinia where he eventually fades away into obscurity and death, childless and alone (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 10.17). Not only does he cease inventing and crafting things, but he no longer has any role in directly influencing the larger story of the Athenian rise to cultural prominence. It is as if he was only remembered at all because he happened to overlap with the story of how Theseus became king and founded what would become classical Athens. And yet, references to the man and his creations abound throughout a variety of ancient sources, preserving the evidence of Daedalus and his story as a vitally important part of the cultural sphere of the ancient Greek and Roman mind, a

powerful symbol of creative skill and craft utilized by a series of ancient authors, and the key to understanding how the Greeks themselves received the *translatio studii* from earlier civilizations. Daedalus' fading away into the background may also reflect the role of a creative person finally stepping away from his or her creations once having finished them. Daedalus' story is finished, and so as the author of his own life choices, he fades away in order to allow the fantastic story a life of its own.

Part II: Ancient Sources: Who is Daedalus?

In contrast to the composite of the myth here constructed, references in ancient Greek and Latin sources provide versions of how the character of Daedalus and his story have been constructed over time, where and how the details of the overall story differ, how widespread he was in the everyday imagination, and just how important he was as a symbolic figure and organizing principle for other creative people in the ancient Greco-Roman world.

In the historical literature, the oldest, direct reference made about Daedalus is as a person of great creative skill, or *techne*, in Book 18 of Homer's *Iliad*. While many scholars disagree about the actual date of composition of the *Iliad*, it is possible to date it within a range of "the late eighth or early seventh century B.C." (Fagles, 5), but it may have been orally transmitted for centuries prior to having been written down. Either way, it is easily the oldest work of what we designate as Western literature.

Book 18 contains the story of Hephaestus crafting the magnificent shield of Achilles, an apt place for the poet Homer to place a reference to the father of all human craftsmen, Daedalus. Homer mentions Daedalus, or Daidalos, as a proper name only once in the entire epic. It appears within a very detailed description of the concentric rings being carved into

the shield, where one of the rings contains imagery of youth dancing on the "circle Daedalus once laid out on Cnossos' spacious fields for Ariadne the girl with lustrous hair" (Homer, *Iliad*, trans. by Fagles, 690-692). Rather than "circle," other translators supply "dancing floor" (Lattimore). The word in Greek is "coron," which is a noun referring to a place where the "coroi," the dancing choruses, perform. This early reference not only presents Daedalus as some kind of skillful maker connected to creative expression (dancing), but firmly establishes his presence in Crete at an unspecified time prior to the writing down of Homer's epic. There is no mention of a "labyrinth" or any other part of the Daedalus cycle, although the reference to Ariadne is a definite link to the overall setting and characters of the myth. As will be seen, Herodotus supplies a possible dating of Daedalus' time in Crete by cross-referencing the date of the Trojan War.

The word "daidala" with its obvious relationship to Daidalos/Daedalus, often appears in the epic in an adjectival sense to describe many well-wrought objects. In fact, in the beginning of the very next Book of the *Iliad*, "daidala" is used twice to describe the Hephaestus-made armor as its splendor first shocks the Myrmidon ranks (Homer, *Iliad*, 19, 13-19). Though it is unclear whether Daedalus was so named because of his skill to make "daidala," or the adjective arose due to a man named Daedalus' craftsmanship and skill, still the close linguistic relationship suggests a sense of the character of Daedalus at this point in his mythological origins. "Daidala" can be used to describe both man-made objects and those crafted by gods like Hephaestus, suggesting Daedalus himself has an almost god-like level of quality to his work.

The word "Daidalos," as applied to the mythological figure, is a *hapax legomenon*, and the casual way Homer uses it suggests that his audiences would have already been

familiar with his name or at least the "coron" itself. By placing an image of Daedalus' dancing circle and the youths dancing on it on the shield of Achilles, Homer is also in effect utilizing the legend of Daedalus and his *techne* as part of the physical object that will eventually protect Achilles in battle. The cultural legacy of his skills, along with other images and depictions of a more pastoral Greek way of life, is potent enough to carry into battle and keep Achilles safe. Would the shield have been effective enough to protect Achilles however, if the "coron" didn't once actually exist on Crete? Using the Greek text of the *Iliad*, Alfred Burns shows us that there might be physical evidence on Crete that some structure associated with Daedalus was once very real:

The association in the poem of Daedalus' name with the dancing place might reflect some historic truth. The word *da-da-re-jo-de* on a Knossos tablet has been interpreted as meaning "Daidaleionde," toward or into the "Daidaleion," and K. Kerényi conjectures that it may refer to the *choros* [coron] that Daedalus is supposed to have built for Ariadne.

(Burns, 3)

Not only does Homer make reference to the "Daidaleion" on Crete, establishing the roots of the Daedalus myth cycle in Crete, but through weaving it into his story of the shield, he offers a kind of historical dating of the myth as happening prior to the events of the Trojan War. And yet while the Cretan word reveals little about the shape of this structure, the *Iliad* itself does.

The concentric circles of Hephaestus' shield suggest that it has labyrinthine aspects, and which may also suggest the "coron" of Daedalus, or "daidaleion," was itself circular in shape, if it indeed existed. Kathryn J. Gutzwiller, while quoting the Scholiast of Homer, writes that the "dancing place" was "circular, just like the entrance and exit of the labyrinth. Daedalus devised the choreography of the dance and taught it to them" (Gutzwiller, 34). She goes on to speculate that the dance to commemorate Ariadne was performed so regularly

when the *Iliad* was composed, that they would have been obvious additions to the everyday life protecting Achilles in battle. Not only is Daedalus a builder and engineer, but the Scholiast says he was an artistic choreographer as well! At the very earliest mention of the Daedalus myth cycle, the act of artistic expression with dance is linked to the *techne* to build structures; both are creative acts, making something lasting from nothing. As we shall see, authors begin to use the content of the Daedalus myth cycle as an inspiring organizational principle for their own artistic expression in words. And in fact, Homer himself may be doing just that, since the *Iliad* is as well crafted and awe-inspiring as Hephaestus says the shield itself is (18, 466-67). Seth Schein writes that as a work of literature, the *Iliad*:

...evokes admiration from us, those humans who hear or read it. Both the poem and the shield are transformative of human experience into sublime art that, in the words of one formula, is a “wonder to behold.” As J.T. Sheppard said, the tragically significant “pattern” of the shield is, in brief compass, “the pattern of the *Iliad*.”

(Schein, 142)

This suggests that Homer understood the necessity for *techne* in both exquisite metal-smithing and the act of writing or orally performing this poem. By infusing them with these “patterns,” both the poem and shield become “daidala” meant to fascinate and amaze us with their craftsmanship.

As the poem is a kind of commandeering of written *techne* for use in describing the events of war, the placement of the Daedalus-made celebratory dance of youths and maidens on a shield used for war suggests a kind of militarization of Daedalus' creative talents. *Techne* that once was utilized for pastoral celebrations of dance is now commandeered by the need to produce weapons and tools of war. Metalsmithing is co-opted for making swords, armor, and shields rather than more domestic artifacts. This is a kind of *translatio studii*

across vastly different applications of knowledge and *techne*, rather than across cultures or time periods.

Pindar's poetry further demonstrates the idea that Daedalus' skills were tied to military applications early on. In the early 5th century B.C.E., Pindar writes in the *Nemean* that "with the sword of Daedalus, the son of Pelias sowed the seeds of death for Peleus from an ambush" (Pindar, *Nemean*, 59-60). This quote suggests that Daedalus was a metal smith of ability, making deadly, well-crafted weapons as well. If indeed it was not a sword owned and used by Daedalus himself, it is the first reference to an actual weapon attributed to his making. Thus, the two oldest citations of his name have Daedalus fully implicated in the act of making tools for military action. This reading of the militarization of Daedalus' *techne* helps to understand Daedalus' possible motivation for destroying his wings without giving the knowledge of their creation to the world. With the destruction they wrought for his son, it would be easy for him to foresee horrible consequences from their potential for militaristic use. After the experiences of enabling Pasiphae's birth of the Minotaur, building the Labyrinth to house it, and his disastrous flight, seeing the destruction his creations bring into the world, it is no surprise the myth cycle has Daedalus making nothing but wooden dolls for children. In the mythographic tradition, by the end of Daedalus' lifetime, he has learned a powerful lesson: that creation is the partner to destruction, and inseparable from it.

Revealing a cultural shift toward more domestic arts in Classical Athens less than a century later however, the tone and theme of the references shift toward presenting Daedalus less militaristically; arts become divorced from war. Daedalus is only mentioned by Herodotus in passing within his larger historical account of the fate of the Cretan civilization Minos was said to rule, and Athenian playwrights depict him mainly as a sculptor and

amazing artisan able to imbue his carved creations with life and movement. Herodotus alludes to one of the last chapters of the Daedalus myth cycle when he writes, "For Minos (it is said), having gone to Sicania, which is now called Sicily, in search for Daedalus, there perished by a violent death" (Herodotus, VII, 170). Minos' "violent death" by boiling bath water, and Daedalus' role in it are not here specifically described, but the use of the impersonal Greek, "Legetai" or "it is said," implies Herodotus was citing an already popular and widely spoken story unnecessary to re-tell for his wider historical purposes. Interestingly, Herodotus does go on to speak of what befell the Cretan civilization after Minos' death:

Crete being thus left desolate (so the Praesians say), it was peopled by Greeks in especial among other men; and in the third generation after Minos befel the Trojan business, wherein the Cretans bore themselves as bravely as any in the cause of Menelaus.
(Herodotus, VII, 171)

Of course the actual date and historical extent of the Trojan War is in dispute, but most scholars agree it occurred within the range of the 12th or 11th centuries B.C.E. This would suggest the core events of the Daedalus cycle, counting back approximately three generations¹ from the War, happened around 1200 or 1100 B.C.E. If this is true, Herodotus is referring to a story already a part of the popular imagination for 700 or 800 years.

Classical period Athenian playwrights from the 5th century B.C.E. also spoke of Daedalus, but most references revolve solely around his abilities as a sculptor. According to Walter Miller in his doctoral thesis, *Daedalus and Thespis*, both Aristophanes and Sophocles wrote entire plays about the man named Daedalus, but a mere 20 fragments are all that remain of both works. There is a fragment recording that the comic poet Plato once used one of Daedalus' wooden statues of Hermes as a character that could miraculously walk and talk (Miller, 342). Euripides has a fragment that preserves what he understood about Daedalus'

statues: "all Daedalus' statues seem to move and to see; so clever was that man" (Miller, 342). This points to a possible elucidation of the ancient Greek conception of what a great artist or sculptor may have been; a great artist is one who can give art a life of its own; the work of art, whether a dramatic piece of literature, a sculpture, or the Labyrinth itself with the life force of the Minotaur inside of it is what remains, existing independently, and the artist responsible for it has faded away -- much like Daedalus receding into obscurity at the end of his myth in order to allow the myth a life of its own.

Euripides' *Hecuba* also contains a fragment that alludes to this same ability of Daedalus' works to be animate; it is a kind of impassioned prayer by someone pleading to change someone's mind:

Oh that, by the art of Daedalus or of some god, I had in my arms and hands and hair and in the movement of my feet a voice, that these might all together cling to thy knees weeping and urging pleas of every kind

(*Hecuba* fragment, Miller, 342)

Here, Euripides is referring to a figure known for his great skill in creation and level of craftsmanship while also giving a kind of deference to the man that can be shown through his choice of language. By writing "Daedalus or some god," Euripides conceptually links Daedalus and his skills with divinity, suggesting Daedalus may be at least semi-divine. As a successful playwright, Euripides presumably would have wanted to emulate this "Daedalian" level of craftsmanship in his writing by crafting his own work to a high degree. In Ancient Greek, the main verb in this fragment that captures the sense of the movement or "voice" which the speaker receives by the *techne* of Daedalus is "Basei." This is a kaleidoscopic word with five possible meanings: "walk," "step," "go," "talk" or "speak," and "foot-step." The first two definitions are from two different verbs that decline alike in the 3rd Person, singular, aorist forms. This word was most likely chosen by Euripides on purpose to

highlight more subtle layers of meaning, since he would certainly have been familiar with the other three homonyms as well. One word thereby serves to cover a wide range of "life-like" qualities with which Daedalus was able to imbue his sculptures; the sculptures had a life of their own as if they could walk and talk. This reveals Euripides understood the myth of Daedalus as reflective of having skill in creation itself, of imbuing stone with a life-force; it may have been a tongue-in-cheek writerly trick for the enjoyment of his fellow playwrights, or he was in effect attempting to associate himself with the same class of artist as Daedalus.

Miller concludes his discussion of the various fragments by saying that these stories of sculpture walking and talking on their own refer to the artistic leap made from the stiff, Egyptian-inspired "coana" that stood straight, with their legs together and arms pinned to their sides, to the more life-like, dynamic sculptural poses of twisted torsos and outstretched arms of later, more complicated and dynamic statues. The *translatio studii* here is that of a body of knowledge and skills about sculpture specifically, originally learned from the Egyptians, expanded upon by Daedalus' ingenuityⁱⁱ in Crete, and transferred to the Greeks through him.

In general, each of the Athenian playwrights seem to refer to some historical Daedalus, perhaps a more recent contemporary Greek sculptor only named after the more ancient Daedalus of Minos' Crete. This idea is corroborated hundreds of years later by Pausanias (2nd century C.E.) when he describes how men used to call wooden statues "daidala":

It seems to me that they gave them this name even before Daedalus, the son of Palamon, was born in Athens; I suspect that he received this surname later on from these daidala and was not given the name at birth.

(Pollitt, 5)

This Athenian son of Palamon may have received his name from “daidala,” but where did “daidala” come from? Is it possible they were so named after the more ancient Daedalus of Cretan fame who embodied the skill implied by the adjective? The fact that we don't remember this later man's birth name, yet record his existence by the name for the objects created through his creative/inventive force, implies that this ability to create was considered more important to society than the man. Theseus is remembered by name, not as "Killer of Minotaurs" or "Raper of Amazons." Theseus the doer, destroyer is remembered by his birth name, and Daedalus the sculptor, creator, is only remembered by his ability to create and not his birth name at all. This essentializing characterization is similar to how Aristotle was known for centuries during the Middle Ages. Even though we also remember his name, during the period when his works were being rediscovered and translated by the West and beginning to have a deep cultural impact, he was known simply as "The Philosopher," a man so influential he was regarded only by his chief occupation.

Another writer of Classical Athens who referred to Daedalus extensively in his works was Plato (428-348 B.C.E.). Here again, Daedalus appears primarily as a sculptor, but he begins to take on subtler, more varied shades of personality. He is mentioned in *Laws* and the *Republic*, and Plato has Socrates speak about him in *Euthyphro* and *Alcibiades I*. In what might have been another way for the Greeks to either claim Daedalus and the legacy of his *techne* as their own, in Plato's *Alcibiades I*, Socrates reveals that his own story of himself, his own genealogy, is through Daedalus' line. Socrates says he's descended from Daedalus and further links Daedalus to a direct descent from Hephaestus, son of Zeus and god of all high craft and metalsmithing (Plato, *Alcibiades I*, 121a). Since Plato here effectively gives both Socrates and Daedalus divine blood, it suggests what high esteem he may have held for both

men. It also bestows the role of metalsmith upon Daedalus as well as that of sculptor and architect of "coroi."

It is in the *Euthyphro*, however, that Plato most clearly reveals the importance of Daedalus to 5th century Athens. In this work, he is both overt ancestor of Socrates and transforms into a cultural and artistic figure whose myth cycle Plato uses as thematic and structural inspiration; in this study, he is the first author to do so. Dale B. Billingsley, in his article, "Myth and Dialogue in Plato's *Euthyphro*," recognizes the reference to Daedalus in the dialogue as thematically important, and sees significance in the dialogue based on the larger myth cycle, calling Socrates' and Euthyphro's discussion "a dialectical labyrinth in which Euthyphro has lost himself (Billingsley, 19). He goes a step further to suggest that even though Plato's readers would most likely have been familiar with Book 18 of the *Iliad* where it mentions "handmaids [...] all cast in gold but a match for living breathing girls" (Fagles, 481) (Homer, *Iliad*, 18.415-420) who are moving statues owned by Hephaestus in his smithy and able to walk and think on their own, the fact that Plato uses a reference to Daedalus' moving statues instead of Hephaestus' shows that Daedalus and his myth cycle were more significant to Plato's literary intentions in this work (Billingsley, 18).

The story of the *Euthyphro* takes place on the steps outside the courthouse where both Socrates and a man named Euthyphro have pending court cases -- Socrates is awaiting the trial to defend his life as recorded in *The Apology*, and Euthyphro is about to prosecute his own father for the accidental murder of a family servant, a deed he presumes to be impious and going against the desires of the gods. The discussion that ensues between them is an attempt to define the true meaning of piety, and begins when Socrates questions Euthyphro's righteous certainty that he is indeed pious for prosecuting his own father.

At its root then, the *Euthyphro* addresses the roles of sons and fathers and of right, pious action concerning them, thereby loosely recalling shades of the Daedalus myth cycle, especially the relationship between Daedalus and his son Icarus, and between Theseus and his father Aegeus. Not only is Daedalus remembered as the murderer of his nephew Talos, another major chapter in his story is his role in constructing the artificial cow in which Pasiphae laid in order to have intercourse with Poseidon's special bull. Not only was Minos acting impiously against Poseidon's wishes for him to sacrifice the bull in the first place, but Pasiphae having sex with a sacred animal is usually viewed as incredibly impious and horrific, directly resulting in the awful and unnatural birth of the Minotaur. Daedalus' invention was the means to that impiety, and therefore his character's impiety must have been understood by Plato to be a proper thematic basis on which to build his Socratic dialogue about the nature of piety itself.

While not an explicit reference to Daedalus by name, early on in Socrates' introductory conversation with Euthyphro, Plato creates an important link between his dialogue, Euthyphro's suit against his father, and the Daedalus myth cycle. When Socrates first asks Euthyphro who he is at the courthouse to prosecute, Euthyphro replies that it is someone that to prosecute, would be considered madness. Socrates asks why, "Are you prosecuting someone who flies?" (West, 44). The Greek has, "*petomenon tina diwkei*" (Plato, *Euthyphro*, 4a2) or literally, "do you pursue someone flying?" Tredennick translates *petomenon* as "nimble" (Tredennick, 21) and Reeve uses the phrase, "Is your prosecution a wild goose chase?" (Reeve, 6). Both translators seem to miss the point of this reference. Euthyphro is talking about prosecuting his own father, who no longer can fly because he's an old man; his father is akin to Daedalus who can't be prosecuted for his impious actions in

Athens and on Crete because, according to the myth, he actually flies away. It would be crazy to attempt pursuit of someone who can fly. Plato specifically uses the participial form of the verb *petomai*, meaning "to fly" rather than choosing the word which means "to run away" or "to flee." They have similar shades of meaning and could have worked perfectly well for his purposes, but his word choice here suggests an intentional choice to craft a deeper link to Daedalus and his flight from Crete. Plato is creating a connection between the character of Euthyphro and the mythical Icarus, who if he could, might like to take his father Daedalus to court for providing the means of his untimely death.

The overall structure of this early dialogue of Plato also supports a reading of his intention to use the Daedalus myth cycle, and the figure of Daedalus himself as skillful creator, as an artistic inspiration for his artifice. The fact that Socrates has the time and/or the presence of mind to engage his friend in an argument just prior to defending his own life seems somewhat implausible in reality and contributes to the sense of a contrived, deliberately structured work -- as if Plato's attempt to build a narrative was pinned to his understanding of Daedalus' role as architect of the Labyrinth and of himself as an author who was just beginning to practice the skill of structuring literature. It seems he may have even valued the structure over coming to any definite philosophical truth, since Plato's argument gets absolutely nowhere if followed through its various twists and turns to its logical conclusion. Socrates and Euthyphro end their discussion with no new information and on the exact same logical point with which they began, as if they were entering and exiting the Labyrinth in the same place.

Plato's specific references to Daedalus in the *Euthyphro* evoke parallelisms with the figure of a sculptor from the play fragments. Appearing towards the end of the conversation,

when Euthyphro becomes a bit flustered and confused with the circular argumentation of Socrates, Plato uses a metaphor to describe its nature. It "somehow keeps on shifting its position and refuses to stay where we laid it down" (Tredennick, 33). Socrates then seizes on this to say that Euthyphro's statements are like the handiwork of Daedalus, who, according to the notes of another translation, and as we have seen from the play fragments as well, "was reputed to have constructed statues that could move about by themselves" (West, 55). Interestingly, translations have different interpretations of Socrates' words here. Some have him say specifically, "my ancestor Daedalus" (Tredennick), while another writes, "our ancestor Daedalus" (West). The word for Daedalus here is in the genitive case and grammatically agrees with the words for "by you" (referring to the statements made by Euthyphro), "του προγονου" or "ancestor," and "ημετερου," which most definitely means, "our" (Plato, *Euthyphro*, 11b9-11c1). Not only is Socrates using his cultural knowledge of Daedalus as a metaphor for the slippery statements, but he is also linking himself and Euthyphro together as descendants of their fellow ancestor, as part of the same family. Since he is a kind of "son" of Daedalus, this also further connects the young Euthyphro with the figure of Icarus in the myth cycle.

The second specific reference to Daedalus gives the impression that Daedalus did exist as an important cultural figure to the classical Athenians. Euthyphro responds to this first comment about the slippery arguments by calling Socrates "ο ΔαίδαλοV," or "the Daedalus," blaming him for making the conversation difficult and slippery. Here, translations agree by including the article "the" within the translation. Articles for proper names are often included in the original Greek but not often translated. Perhaps these different authors chose to include the article here because the Greek of Plato doesn't use the

article anywhere else before Daedalus' name. This implies that Plato might be thinking of Daedalus not just as a historical or mythological person, but as some kind of specific function, spirit, or force that breathes life into things that normally don't have it - like statues. It is as if "the Daedalus" is a trope or a set of actions or skills that anyone might acquire with the right training.

A few lines later, Socrates jokes that his genius is greater than that of Daedalus because he was only able to make his own works move, whereas Socrates can make the works/statements of others move as well. But, he says, despite all this happening unintentionally, he would rather that their statements stay put than have all the wealth of Tantalus *and* the "sofia," or "wisdom" of Daedalus (West). Not only does this strong statement by Socrates effectively show his deep desire to arrive at some kind of solid, immovable truth, but it also implies a great cultural weight that the classical Greeks put on the wisdom of Daedalus. Beyond *techne*, this implies an acknowledgement of the wide knowledge of Daedalus, and a character deeper than someone who is just a sculptor. Would a mere sculptor, no matter how gifted, be referred to as "wise" if he didn't have many other skills or wealth of knowledge as well?

Since the conversation moves on and returns to the subject of piety, Plato seems to only have used the Daedalus interlude to make a point about Socrates' style of argument. As a writer considering his contemporary readers, he wouldn't have picked an obscure reference to be his metaphor if he wished to be understood. Socratic philosophical discourse, in this case the search for a true definition of the pious, Plato here likens to threading a labyrinth of twists and turns; readers may search for that truth themselves by following the thread of the

argument. In this case, the truth becomes akin to the Minotaur hiding at the center that can only be found by winding through misdirection and falsehood.

At the very end of the dialogue, Euthyphro's hasty exit from the scene also works to make connections to the Daedalus myth cycle. Just at the moment when Socrates seems to have Euthyphro pinned down to giving a concrete answer as to the meaning of piety, Euthyphro says, "Some other time, Socrates. You see, I'm in a hurry to get somewhere, and it's time for me to be off" (Reeve, 25), and then presumably he leaves. Just like Daedalus and Icarus flying away from the Labyrinth Daedalus constructed and was eventually imprisoned within, Euthyphro flies away from the heart of this argument rather than face it. Since he is on his way to prosecute his father for what he believes to be an impious murder, Euthyphro here is more like Icarus who, if given the opportunity, might have also prosecuted his father for his own impious actions. Skillfully using the Daedalus myth cycle throughout this work may be Plato's way of applying that cultural reference to let his readers know the outcome of Euthyphro's suit -- like Icarus crashing into the sea for challenging the heavens, Euthyphro's overconfidence and hubris presumably crashes and burns in court. Unfortunately, the central question of Plato's *Euthyphro*, what is the nature of piety, is left unanswered at the end.

Here, there is no Theseus who comes to slay the Minotaur. Plato, emulating Daedalus, has constructed a labyrinth of a dialogue with a still living beast of a question locked deep inside.

In Book 3 of his *Laws*, Plato makes assertions about Daedalus within a discussion about the "origin of constitutions" that contribute to this sense of Athenian "claiming" of Daedalus as their own. Plato has a Cretan man named Clinias speaking to an Athenian about the great deluge that wiped out cities on the coast and left only simple, uneducated men of the hills to carry on. Not only were all "contrivances" for "villainies forgotten or lost over

time, but also all "implements," all the "important arts or inventions they may have had -- whether concerned with politics or other sciences" (Plato, *Laws*, 3.677b). Also, the Athenian later mentions all the mines for iron and bronze production were wiped out too, as well as all knowledge of transportation. The old tools that wore out could not be replaced until people re-learned the art of metalsmithing itself.

Clinias is skeptical that all the arts and contrivances could have escaped the notice of humanity for countless tens of thousands of years. He says suddenly, "one or two thousand years ago some of them were revealed to Daedalus [...] all dating, so to say, from yesterday or the day before?" (Plato, *Laws*, 3.677d). It is almost as if Clinias here is skeptical that in a moment of insight, a "new" idea could just come from nowhere. By using the words "katafanh gegonen" or "were revealed to," which can also be translated as "became clear or apparent to," Plato both implies that the Greeks may have traced their origins back to an earlier time when all of the knowledge, arts, and contrivances were already known, and that Daedalus indeed re-discovered once lost knowledge on his own merits. Daedalus and his myth cycle thus become a source of pride for Plato and the Greeks because they can have the sense that they as a culture invented their particular arts and contrivances on their own. But it is also a way to acknowledge Daedalus acting as a mythical-historical bridge between Crete (where things were revealed to him) and classical Athenian culture which received that older knowledge once lost in the deluge. Daedalus is then presented as one of the inheritors of that older knowledge, a figure of *translatio studii* who carries knowledge forward and allows the Greeks to imagine themselves as being part of the continuum of the arts and contrivances of civilization as a whole. By using the myth of Daedalus in Crete, the Greeks found a way to tell their own story about themselves.

In Book 7 of the *Republic*, Plato describes the means for how that story might have been told, what it might have been founded upon, and just how that *translatio studii* may have occurred. The quote in question says we must:

"use the blazonry of the heavens as patterns to aid in the study of those realities, just as one would do who chanced upon diagrams drawn with special care and elaboration by Daedalus or some other craftsman or painter."

(Plato, *Republic*, Book 7.529d)

This reference creates an analogy between star-geometry and knowledge of the movements of the heavens with the body of knowledge of Daedalus, and asserts that both are powerful tools for finding the truth about reality. Instead of limiting Daedalus to a craftsman and painter, it also suggests the actual existence of some form of diagrams or plans for the construction of things other people would be able to chance upon and interpret -- perhaps that of a labyrinth -- as important as the diagrams of the movements of the heavens themselves. In the context of the larger discussion in the *Republic*, these diagrams become then the patterns for reason and thought and the right means, as opposed to using merely one's sense of sight for example, of apprehending the truth about reality. It shows that Plato had a great respect for these diagrams as receptacles of reason, thought, and truth and refers to the physical means of transporting such knowledge across seas and presumably from one civilization to the next -- a *translatio studii* of which Daedalus himself is the driving force.

While so far, the earlier references only mention Daedalus briefly in passing or delineate some part of his skills, Xenophon (430-354 B.C.E.) is the first to make a wider allusion to the Daedalus myth cycle as a whole. In Book 4, chapter 2 of *Memorabilia*, Socrates is speaking about the folly of overreaching pride in one's wisdom. He uses the cycle of tales as a kind of logical proof of the misery of those his companion, Euthydemus, considers wise. Euthydemus considers wisdom "indisputably a good thing," but Socrates

asks him if he doesn't remember how Daedalus' wisdom caused him to be a slave to Minos, robbed of his country and liberty, how he couldn't save his son from death, and how he was "carried off to the barbarians and again lived as a slave there." (Xenophon, *Memorabilia*. 4.2.33) Here Xenophon grants Daedalus the possession of "thn sofian," or "wisdom," beyond just a body of knowledge or collection of skills. It suggests a level of learning or understanding about the world possibly attained as a direct result of knowing skills, possessing *techne*, being able to make or use diagrams, or being able to create "moving" statues. Xenophon treats the wisdom of Daedalus as a kind of possession he has that others in power, such as Minos and Cocalus would like to possess themselves, but in order to do so, must try to possess and control Daedalus himself. This reference is the first instance of understanding the story of Daedalus' life as a kind value judgment or a treatise on the dangers of being wise -- men of lesser skill, knowledge, and wisdom, but with greater power, will attempt to manipulate that wisdom for their own ends. Often, those ends involve militaristic endeavors, and the wisdom of Daedalus becomes abused in their pursuit.

Whether Xenophon is referring to another version of the tale that's now lost, or is considering Daedalus' time in Sicily with Cocalus' daughters a period of slavery is unclear, but the description of being a slave to the barbarians is unique in the literature on Daedalus. It is also evidence that the classical Athenians didn't only think of him as the exquisitely talented, historical sculptor as he is depicted in Plato's *Euthyphro* and the play fragments, but were familiar with the whole of the Daedalus myth cycle from the Talos murder to the flight from the labyrinth to his time in Sicily. While it doesn't make clear whether the mythical, archaic Daedalus of Crete and the Labyrinth and the famous sculptor ancestor of Socrates were thought of as the same person, it does suggest a widely disseminated tale. Euthydemus'

answer to Socrates, "That is the story of course" (Xenophon, *Memorabilia*. 4.2.33), is spoken as if he already knows the story very well. Combined with Socrates using the story as a plausible logical proof, this supports again the myth's wide dispersion and acceptance in classical age Athens.

A generation after Xenophon, the philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.) refers to the statues of Daedalus in his *Politics* as a metaphor for helping to discuss the usefulness of various tools, both living and inanimate. He writes, "if every tool could perform its own work when ordered, or by seeing what to do in advance, like the statues of Daedalus in the story" (Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.1253B.35). Here again the statues of the sculptor named Daedalus have life in them, but this translation hides some of the nuance Aristotle intended in his language. The word translated as "tool" is "organwn," also translated as "instrument." A more literal and somewhat awkward translation of what proper tools can do preserves Aristotle's sense of the original:

h proaisqanomenon apotelein to autou ergon <kai> wsper ta Daidalou fasin...
(Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.1253B.35)

"or by perceiving beforehand what will bring the work itself to an end, just as the works/deeds/things of Daedalus, they say" (author's translation). Aristotle writes "works/deeds/things" in a general way by using the phrase, "ta Daidalou." This "ta" is the plural neuter nominative article, and refers to any number of possible "works" (ergon) made by Daedalus (here given in the genitive case to show possession), whether sculptures or not.

Whether "seeing what to do in advance," or "perceiving beforehand what will bring the work itself to an end," the statues of Daedalus not only walk and talk, but also have a prescient consciousness that allows them to complete tasks on their own. They become their own tools, their own instruments of their own creation, and live a life detached from their

master creator. This quote also suggests there was once a specific story telling of these magical statues. Perhaps Aristotle is referring to the subject of one of the lost plays of Sophocles of which only a fragment remains that dramatizes this almost Sorcerer's Apprentice-like tale about Daedalus' creations coming to life on their own.

Whatever this "story" Aristotle might happen to be referring to, it isn't until the work of Apollodorus (180-120 B.C.E.) that there is recorded anything close to the full myth of Daedalus' life. Even though he only mentions Daedalus within his larger tale of Theseus' origins, love of Ariadne, and destruction of the Minotaur, there are important instances in the Greek where Apollodorus gives us information about the character of Daedalus himself by how he is *unlike* Theseus' character. Here can be found the detailed description of Daedalus building the impostor cow for Pasiphae, the first direct mention of the Labyrinth itself and its attribution to Daedalus being the architect (Apollodorus, *Library*, III.xv.8), Daedalus' role in suggesting to Ariadne how she could help Theseus in his quest to kill the Minotaur (Apollodorus, *Epitome*, I.7), and the murder of Talus/Talos and Daedalus' subsequent trial and exile (Apollodorus, *Library*, III.xv.9).

But there is one line of description, vastly different from the way Theseus the hero is presented, that reveals how the legend of Daedalus might have grown and developed because of his inherent qualities as an artist. Theseus is never described as having any particular qualities, but rather his character becomes clear only through a categorical listing of his deeds. Theseus is a man known by what he has done, not *who* he is. The description of Daedalus however, reads in translation, "for he was an excellent architect and the first inventor of images" (Apollodorus, *Library*, III.xv.8). This is also a statement describing what deeds he has done, but it also contains a value judgment buried within Apollodorus' use

of the word "aristoV," which is an adjective in the superlative degree in Greek meaning "the best." It suggests that there is a quality to his character that doesn't have to be discerned from deeds, and therefore makes Daedalus a different kind of man, set in opposition to Theseus.

The original word used for "architect," "ἀρχιτέκτων," is illuminating for the figure of Daedalus as well. Defined variously according to usage as, "chief-artificer, master-builder, director of works, architect, engineer, and generally: a constructor, author" (Lexicon, Liddell and Scott, 122), it entails a very wide range of possible skills, abilities, and occupations of Daedalus. The last definition of "author" has further implications later in history as Daedalus transforms into a figure for other authors to emulate. Looking at this word's roots, literally "arcitektn" would mean: a person with superiority in bringing things into the world, superiority in begetting. Daedalus becomes a versatile creator, someone able to give birth to his creations, and he just happens to be the best at it. Understanding this, Frazer poetically says of Daedalus in the notes to his translation of Apollodorus:

Through the clouds of fable which gathered around his life and adventures we may dimly discern the figure of a vagabond artist as versatile as Leonardo da Vinci and as unscrupulous as Benvenuto Cellini.

(Apollodorus, *Library*, trans. Frazer, 120, n.2)ⁱⁱⁱ

What a contrast then to the destructive deeds of Theseus the doer/destroyer who creates nothing with his skills or knowledge. Daedalus imagines and creates from nothing, Theseus can only act upon what is before him; he can only enter the Labyrinth and kill the Minotaur. And yet, Theseus too participates in the theme of creation itself in the Daedalus myth cycle. By killing the Minotaur and ending the tyranny of Minos and his oppression of archaic Athens, as their new king, he is able to create the foundation of what would become Athens in the classical age.

Apollodorus relates many details about Theseus' journey from his birthplace of Troezen in the Peloponnese to Athens and on to Crete and the Labyrinth, but one episode in particular is useful in contrasting Daedalus and Theseus as men. On his way to Athens, Theseus kills a kind of highway robber named Periphetes. Periphetes was a direct son of Hephaestus by a woman named Anticla and carried an iron club that Theseus stole and carried after killing the man. First of all, this can be read symbolically as Theseus killing someone in his own family line, also descended from Hephaestus the craftsman god, and in a way a denial of his "creative" or "artisanal" heritage. Daedalus embraces his craftsman nature fully. Secondly, whereas Daedalus the metalsmith could have made his own iron club, Theseus does not have the skills, and therefore can only kill and steal it. This is a bit of foreshadowing of how Theseus later acts in Crete when he encounters a more advanced, highly skilled civilization -- he can only kill and destroy it, and never takes the time to learn from it. As his opposite in many ways, presumably Daedalus is a man who *does* learn skills from others or can invent from nothing.

Along with relating for us the entire myth cycle of the Labyrinth, Theseus and Daedalus, Apollodorus is also the first and oldest author we have who writes of the famous flight of Daedalus and Icarus away from Crete. He tells us that Daedalus is responsible for having helped Theseus escape and is thus himself imprisoned within the Labyrinth, "along with his son Icarus who had been borne to Daedalus by Naucraste, a female slave of Minos" (Apollodorus, *Epitome*, I.12). What circumstances might be surrounding this tryst with one of Minos' slaves or whether this was considered an acceptable act on Daedalus' part can only be speculated, but this does tell us something about Daedalus' only son -- who can be viewed

as another of his amazing creations -- being a living hereditary bridge between two or more cultures: Greek, Cretan, and wherever Naucratis originally lived before becoming a slave^{iv}.

As a carrier of Daedalus' knowledge, skill, *techne*, Icarus himself then comes to represent a possible link between them all in time, a living *translatio studii*, making his untimely death all the more sorrowful. Perhaps, any diagrams mentioned by Plato in the *Republic* may be all the Greeks had left once Minos' Crete vanished from the Mediterranean. The myth cycle's major theme of the father-son relationship suggests a functional generational mechanism for carrying knowledge forward through an unbroken lineage, a dynastic chain of *techne*. Any potential dynasty for Daedalus' *techne* ends disastrously with Icarus' destruction. If this myth cycle preserves an actual cultural memory of a break in the transference of *techne* between ancient Crete and Greece^v, it begs the question of what happened to all the knowledge after Daedalus died. Did only the diagrams as mentioned by Plato remain, with few if any who could interpret them? It wasn't until hundreds of years later that Theseus' Athens and the Greeks rose in prominence as a culture. If Icarus had lived to spread and teach his father's knowledge, and in turn passed it on through his own sons^{vi} in a dynasty of his own, might the Greeks have risen sooner? The *translatio studii*, in this scenario, would be the inherited *techne* between father and son.

The details of the flight of Daedalus and Icarus itself, as Apollodorus uses them, further illuminates the true character of Daedalus in antiquity, and may even hint at the plausibility of the generally unorthodox assertion that the flight may have actually occurred, and succeeded. If a human being did actually discover flight millennia ago, and the knowledge to do so was somehow lost, it might go a long way toward explaining why his story and his renowned reputation as a gifted creator were so widely perpetuated for so many

centuries. The received image of this flight is usually that of two men with feathered wings somehow strapped to their chests and arms, flapping the wings like birds to escape. This is an implausible scenario, and entirely fictional.

Apollodorus however, in his quasi-historical account of the Greek world, leaves the possibility open that Daedalus constructed some kind of a craft with a metal structure, similar to a modern-day hang glider, in order to escape. If an ancient Daedalus existed to give his name to "daidala," had the accumulated knowledge of the ancient world at his fingertips, and was as smart and as crafty as he was said to be, might he not have realized that human musculature is too weak to flap wings effectively? Might he conceivably, as a sculptor and keen observer of natural forms in motion, have made a study of birds' wings, and like Leonardo da Vinci (Capra, 186), hit upon the idea of a "fixed wing" himself? This is supported by Apollodorus' use of the word, "kollhV" to describe what held the wings together. Frazer and many others normally translate this word as "glue," but according to Liddell and Scott, this word in its verbal form can also mean, "to cement," or refer to the process of joining two metals together -- welding. This is a skill definitely within the purview of Daedalus, a direct descendent of Hephaestus. Interestingly also, nowhere in his work does Apollodorus use the word for "feathers" to describe the wings in question.

The warnings of Daedalus not to fly too close to the sun or too low to the sea also corroborate a literal reading of the flight in a hang glider-style craft. Flying too close to the sun, especially if the operator was climbing upward swiftly, would cause a "stall" and the craft would lose its buoyancy on the air and plummet. Flying too low, the operator would not be able to catch the hot updrafts hang gliders require to ride in order to stay aloft.

Finally, Apollodorus' writings contain a much more detailed synopsis of the chapter of Daedalus' life in Sicily with King Cocalus, a series of events Herodotus also corroborates. Having brought a spiral shell and proclaiming that the person who could thread the shell would receive a large reward, Minos arrived at Camicus in Sicily, hoping to draw Daedalus out of hiding. And of course, Daedalus was able to thread the shell by drilling a hole at one end, placing a drop of honey there, and letting an ant with a thread tied to it walk through the shell to reach the honey. That he would put himself in harm's way to accomplish this suggests a quality to Daedalus' character where he might often feel compelled to use his inventive mind to solve problems or overcome obstacles. Given such a set of superhuman skills, how could Daedalus *not* create or invent objects to solve different problems?

This compulsion to invent, create, and solve problems is part of an overall theme which seems to follow Daedalus throughout his mythographic life, throughout the Greek and Roman texts that refer to his life and legend. Whereas Theseus creates through the act of destruction, despite his ability to create, Daedalus' creations and/or creative drive often bring about disaster or destruction for others. His artificial cow brought forth the Minotaur and shame for Pasiphae, his Labyrinth became a prison and the means of death for many Athenian youth, and his wings brought disaster for Icarus. This myth cycle about the act of creation itself is working here to make a point: that creation cannot exist *without* destruction, that invention for invention's sake is not enough, that there are always consequences or sacrifices to be made, or painful boundaries to be crossed in the creative act. Creation and destruction are two sides of the same coin; to create a beautiful, well-wrought sculpture from a block of stone, one must destroy all the other possibilities inherent in the stone. Would any

successful artist or author hesitate to agree about how often personal relationships become strained when lost in a project or how much time is required to produce a quality work of art?

Being less concerned with the finer points of the meaning of creation or shades of character, Diodorus Siculus (1st century B.C.E.), writing in Sicily a hundred years after Apollodorus, pays more attention to history and culture in his work. He suggests that both the idea of the Labyrinth itself and his set of skills as a sculptor had their origins in Egypt.

As recorded by Pollitt, Diodorus Siculus writes:

"They say that Daedalus copied the maze-like plan of the labyrinth (In Egypt) which remains up to the present day and was built as some say, either by Mendes, or, as others say, by King Marros, many years prior to the time of King Minos. It is also a fact that the *rhythmos*^{vii} of the ancient statues of Egypt is the same as that of the statues made by Daedalus among the Greeks." (Pollitt, 7) (Diodorus, I.97.1-6).

Not unlike the phrase used in Xenophon, this "they say," implies that Diodorus is referring to an often spoken, well-known, cultural tradition of the story of Daedalus, very much actively present in his day -- the first century B.C.E. However, it also places the author himself distant from the responsibility of citing the story directly, which may suggest an anxiety about presenting a mythological spoken tradition as verifiable truth^{viii} within a larger historical context.

Not only does this quote specifically suggest Daedalus himself learned his art of sculpture from the Egyptians, but reveals that Diodorus himself was aware of a second and originary labyrinth also designed and built in Egypt. In a way, this information works to undermine Greek Daedalus' originality of invention but keeps the reputation of his skills to learn and use what he learned from elsewhere intact. It gives deference to an older, more advanced Egyptian culture through which Daedalus and the culture of Minoan Crete received their own body of knowledge and skills in a more ancient *translatio studii*, and supports the

theme of *translatio studii* itself as an important meaning carried by the Daedalus myth cycle as a whole.

Diodorus Siculus' works and Apollodorus' *Library*, which some scholars believe, due to a specific dateable reference in the work, wasn't written until the first century B.C.E., are only part of a wealth of literary references to Daedalus from the first century. Some of the most well-known Roman authors also wrote prodigiously about him, suggesting a wide reception of Daedalus and the *translatio studii* associated with him. This could be due to the general availability of works containing his story, some socio-cultural developments in the Roman world or other reasons beyond the scope of this work, but it remains true that Daedalus begins to take shape as a figure of deep meaning both in the shape and structure of literature and for the authors themselves. It is also this period, more than any other before or since, which solidifies Daedalus' identity and the understanding of his myth cycle in the Western imagination.

One of these Roman authors was the young poet, Catullus (84-54 B.C.E.), who never made reference to Daedalus by name but seems to have used the myth cycle itself as a kind of inspiration for the structure of his "Poem 64," just as Plato did for the *Euthyphro*. In the very center of his poem about the marriage of Peleus and Thetis, the parents of Achilles, Catullus has Ariadne lamenting her fate and cursing Theseus on Naxos, having been abandoned there by him. Aside from being a wonderfully rich addition to this portion of the larger myth cycle, this poem is instructive in showing how Catullus may have identified himself as an author with Daedalus. According to Charles Martin in his book, *Catullus*, this poem can be divided into eight thematically separate parts of unequal lengths which exhibit a mirroring structure -- the first to the eighth, second to the seventh, third, to the sixth, and

fourth to fifth, all connected in the "center" by a five line "bridge" where Jove judges Ariadne's lament to be sincere and her curses operable (Martin, 157). In a sense, the poem purposely begins and ends in the same place when Catullus invokes the age of heroes in a nostalgic tone, pining for the time when gods walked openly among mortals. Structurally, this is similar to a Labyrinth in that one must enter and exit at the same place.

Ariadne's lament itself is written out on the page, but within the logic of the poem, it is part of a larger description of the stories from the age of heroes skillfully depicted upon the coverlet draping the marriage bed of Peleus and Thetis. This act of telling another story by describing a well-crafted object of art is an *ekphrasis*^{ix}, and is evidence that Catullus is also alluding to his understanding of Daedalus as master craftsman and inventor of the labyrinth. If the labyrinth is a model here for his poem's structure, Daedalus then becomes a model for him as an author, an "arcitektwn" as well.

Other scholars also support the contention that Catullus was purposely invoking the imagery of the Labyrinth in "Poem 64." In "Catullus 64: Structure and Meaning," John Warden acknowledges both a mirrored reading, which he calls a "framed story," and a labyrinthine, circular, chiasmic reading of the poem, which he refers to as "ring composition." He also offers a third interpretation where he discusses the opposing natures of heroism depicted in the poem (Warden, 397-98) -- reflecting shades of the inherent differences between the more traditionally heroic Theseus, and the artistic/creative heroism of Daedalus. In her article, "Threads in the Labyrinth: Competing Views and Voices in Catullus 64," Julia Haig Gaiser is more explicit about the connection between the structure of this poem and the trope of the Labyrinth. She calls it, "a poem of twists and turns, blind

alleys, and internal and external contradictions, Catullus' masterpiece is both a web and a labyrinth" (Gaiser, 580).

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil (70-19 B.C.E.) not only presents Daedalus as a talented inventor, sculptor, and builder and draws inspiration from the larger myth cycle to structure his work as a whole, but he also uses a Daedalus reference to acknowledge and comment upon yet another *translatio studii*, passed on from the Greeks to the Romans. In another example of *ekphrasis*, Virgil shows us an emotionally broken, post-flight Daedalus in the context of Aeneas and his Trojan men's arrival to the Sybil at Cumae. On their way to meet with the Sybil, Aeneas and the men see the golden doors of the temple of Apollo, upon which Daedalus had carved images of his story after alighting on the acropolis of Cumae -- but upon which he couldn't carve the image of his son's death. Virgil addresses Icarus directly:

In that high sculpture you, too, would have had
Your great part, Icarus, had grief allowed.
Twice your father had tried to shape your fall
In gold, but twice his hands dropped.

(Virgil, *Aeneid*, 6.47-50, translated by Fitzgerald)

Virgil then tells the basics of Daedalus' story but only through his description of his act of carving the doors. The carving seems to tell its own story as both inscribed by Daedalus and written by Virgil. This implies that for Virgil, the story "carved in gold" for posterity in his tightly crafted version of Roman origins was central to Roman identity, even if placed in opposition to his version of Rome's primogenitive genealogies through Aeneas' family. Aeneas is the founder of Rome and Roman identity, but the technical skills and knowledge for their rise, Virgil is acknowledging, had to come from somewhere -- the Greeks. Virgil also makes specific mention of how Daedalus tried twice to carve the image

of his son falling into the sea, but twice failed miserably in grief. This suggests that to Virgil, the tragedy of Icarus had particular meaning.

The story of Daedalus and Icarus is in sharp contrast to that of Aeneas and his son Ascanias and allows Virgil to comfortably draw distinctions between the failure of Greek culture and the dominance of the Roman, while still acknowledging the cultural debt to Greece. Through Ascanias, Aeneas is able to found not only a future glorious city, but also begins a patriarchal genealogical line of rule. Daedalus however, despite his creativity and ingenuity, loses Icarus, his most precious creation, and his genealogical line ends with his son's plummet into the sea. Daedalus' line is blighted, Aeneas' is blessed, and indeed Aeneas himself is about to hear about his glorious future via the Sybil and his journey to the underworld.

Because Virgil places this Daedalus reference as a precursor to Aeneas hearing the prophecies of the Sybil, his journey into the underworld, and the first steps of his founding of Rome, Virgil establishes a continuity back through what he considers the failed culture of the Greeks to the failed culture of the ancient Minoans and beyond. This also works to show the glory of Aeneas' future success, the glory and superiority of the Roman Republic and Empire, and for Virgil, becomes a contrast to Daedalus' blighted line and by extension, the historical and cultural continuity of the Greeks via the Trojans/Romans. For Virgil, the events of the *Aeneid* had already occurred; he was simply retelling the history in an artistic, skillfully crafted format. By depicting Daedalus, and by extension the wealth of his knowledge, as a broken man who lost his only son to the audacity of his inventions, he embodies a figure of historical and cultural failure. Despite his skills, his true legacy -- the

continuation of the patriarchal line through Icarus -- was broken during the flight from Crete as well, and stands in contrast to Aeneas who sees his great lineage laid out before him.

Virgil is the only author who places Daedalus' landing specifically at a location considered to be so vitally important to Rome's own birth as a culture. Cumae, the place where the prophecy of Rome begins, is also the place where Greece and her artistic and technical knowledge is transferred to the Romans. This is Virgil claiming Daedalus' *techne* for Rome's own, and suggesting that Rome, in the time of his writing, is the inheritor of that body of knowledge and skills, the receiver of the *translatio studii* and a sense of cultural supremacy. Even though the Greeks triumphed in Troy, they eventually failed as the dominant culture, and Aeneas and his Trojan refugees would finally surpass them by succeeding in the conquest of Italy and establishing their own patriarchal, political, and military dynasty which would rise to become the prominence that was Rome in the first century B.C.E. Aeneas himself then becomes a successful Daedalus figure as the original architect and builder of the entire Roman heritage.

This is why, when the priestess of the Sybil comes to fetch Aeneas and his men, she chastises their dallying at Daedalus' golden doors: "This is no time to gape at spectacles," (*Aeneid*, 6.58-9) she says, telling them they had better focus on procuring sacrifices for their encounter with the Sybil instead. This allows Virgil to show Aeneas in a positive light in contrast to Daedalus and the Greeks, as a man who can turn away from the mistakes of the past and move forward to create his own future. In *The Idea of the Labyrinth from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages*, Penelope Reed Doob, considers Aeneas and his labors in the *Aeneid* a literary reflection of Theseus, Daedalus, and even Hercules as well (Doob, 229).

For her, Aeneas can embody all three Greek men, incorporating them, and then move beyond them.

Virgil also may have crafted the overall structure of the *Aeneid* to reflect an understanding of the labyrinth and also to draw connections between his present incarnation of Rome and the distant past. Doob calls it a "dark continuity of human nature and pattern," where humanity is doomed to walk the convoluted, twisting paths of fate without knowing why or to where they're walking. But there is order one can count on. She writes:

The *Aeneid* shows the failure of Daedalus and the irrationality and limited control of the gods; in that context, perhaps the only truly rational order is that imposed by an artist or poet who creates labyrinths of symmetry where reality offers only labyrinths of chaos.
(Doob, 247)

This quote supports the reading of how Daedalus and his myth cycle evolved into a kind of organizing principle for the structuring of literature, as one creative artist emulates another. By creating a piece of literature, any author is deliberately trying to impose some kind of order upon the chaos and uncertainty that is human life and the twists and turns of the Labyrinth. Doob believes the structure crafted by Virgil is very much dependent upon the myth cycle of Daedalus and the Labyrinth, intended to be a comment upon and interpretation of the older myth. This thereby links his book with the literary tradition in Plato's *Euthyphro* and Catullus' "Poem 64." According to Doob, the entire epic poem itself is literally and metaphorically built upon the theme of labyrinths:

Throughout their erratic voyage the Trojans confront typically labyrinthine dangers: circuitous paths that near a goal only to turn away or reveal the goal as false; enforced delay and hesitation among uncertain choices; unreliable guides in the form of ambiguous visions and prophecies, or uncertain helmsmen plagued by darkness; perils represented or announced by monsters as double in form as the Minotaur.
(Doob, 230)

But the poem not only thematically depends upon the labyrinth, Doob also links the form itself to it. In her discussion of the *Aeneid*, she also, more plainly states that the labyrinth's "architectural significance as order containing chaos provided a model for poetry and the Roman art of government" (Doob, 248). In this way, Virgil takes on the role of a Daedalus himself, crafting for us an epic poem of order structured like a labyrinth that we as readers have no choice but to tread like Theseus, entering at page one and following each twisted turn in the story as it unfolds before us. As the author/creator, he is the only one with a lofty and aloof enough perspective on the work to know where the story is heading. And like Daedalus flying away from his creation, the author/creator of a written work can leave themselves out of it and disappear from its pages, allowing the creation to have a life standing on its own.

Another Roman writer who cites the Daedalus myth cycle in the 1st century B.C.E. was Ovid (43-17/18 B.C.E.), although he seemed to identify with the figure more personally as a fellow creator, rather than attempting to structure some kind of labyrinthine epic poem in deference to him. In the *Metamorphosis*, Ovid first introduces Daedalus at the tail end of the story of Nisus and Scylla in which Minos is a major player. He mentions the labyrinth as having been built by Daedalus, introduces the Minotaur, and brings up the Athenian tribute of youths, Theseus and Ariadne with her thread, and the abandonment of Ariadne, all within the tale of Minos and Scylla. When Ovid does shift the focus to Daedalus and Icarus specifically, it is to focus on the moments of the doomed flight itself. Interestingly, Ovid says that when he began work on the wings, Daedalus "turned his thinking to the unknown arts, changing the laws of nature" (Humphries, 187) (Ovid, *Metamorphosis*, 8.189-90). On the one hand, this seems to suggest a judgment of Daedalus by Ovid upon the "unnatural" act

of a human being flying, a corruption of nature. Since Daedalus a man known usually for working with and within nature's laws, such as inventing human tools based on observations of animal anatomy, perhaps Ovid is suggesting Daedalus' flight was doomed from the beginning. Humanity confined to the ground was once a natural law that no one but Daedalus could have conceived of transgressing. In the modern world, we break this law every day with airplanes, but we are still however, working within the laws of gravity, fluid air dynamics, and time and space. The laws themselves haven't changed or been broken, they've only been understood and manipulated -- as Daedalus is reputed to have done. On the other hand, this line also suggests that Daedalus himself was perhaps more powerful than a mere man in some way, a being capable of changing and manipulating the laws of nature, and Ovid is still complimenting him. It becomes a way for Roman Ovid to retain the sense of awe before Greek Daedalus' skills and learning, while at the same time generally towing the Roman line disparaging the Greeks for their politics and military. Alternatively, Ovid may also be passing judgment on the audacity and hubris of the Greeks, which lead to their downfall as a civilization.

Because Ovid's *Metamorphosis* is a work filled with tales of other transgressions and transformations, Ovid seems to tell the story of the flight and Icarus' fall simply in order to tell the transformation and transgression embedded in the "origin story" of Daedalus in Athens. This is the only part of the myth where a transformation or metamorphosis takes place at all. It is the story of Talus (sometimes referred to as Perdix) being turned into a partridge after being pushed from the acropolis^x. Ovid introduces this first part of Daedalus' story at the end of his version of the tale, perhaps for dramatic effect. A partridge appears during the burial of Icarus, observes Daedalus' despair, and expresses a clucking approval for

the whole state of affairs. Structurally, this is Ovid showing Daedalus receiving a kind of punishment or paying retribution for being a murderous Athenian. For Ovid, it seems that transgression of natural boundaries, whether through murdering one's own family member, or hubristically taking to the air, must be punished -- the punishment becoming the means of Daedalus' own transformation from a famed inventor and sculptor into a broken man who never invents again. This doesn't suggest however, that Ovid attaches any specific moral judgment to Daedalus' actions, only that transgressions must be punished.

But the most interesting references to Daedalus Ovid makes are in fact in another work -- the *Tristia*, which was written while Ovid was in exile from Rome. Here he seems much more sympathetic toward Daedalus, perhaps because they were both exiles at this point, as he uses him in an allegorical way within a letter written to a friend back home (Ovid, *Tristia*, III.4a). He advises his friend not to get wrapped up in the affairs of powerful men, presumably speaking from experience, because he can get burned by their lightning and become a political exile himself. Ovid then asks rhetorically:

"Why was it Daedalus flapped his wings in safety
While Icarus' name marked the boundless sea?
Because -- both had wings not their own -- the father
Flew low, the son soared high so foolishly.
He who lies low, lives well, believe me; one should
Remain within the limits of one's lot."

(Melville, 49)(Ovid, *Tristia*, III.4a.21-26)

Ovid's interpretation of this story fits within a larger object lesson to his friend. He uses Daedalus and Icarus as examples to convince his friend to accept his humble "lot," even though Daedalus most decidedly did not "remain within the limits of" his own lot at all. He remained within the limits of his creations, the wings. It was Daedalus' "lot" that allowed for

the ability to fashion wings out of nothing in the first place. One wonders what he might have invented if he *had* lived outside the limits of his own lot.

This quote is also interesting because it reveals why the sea was named after Icarus. In the modern world, it would seem to be logical to name bodies of water, or ships, or streets, after people who are remembered for their strengths, their good qualities, or a positive effect they had on the world. But to the ancient mind, it seems, naming the sea after Icarus was a warning to others not to be like him. If one has a sea named after them, it's much harder to forget their story. Ovid latches on to this reading of Icarus as the irresponsible youth who doesn't listen to his patriarch, who doesn't stay within his lot, and then gets burned in the process.

Immediately following this quotation, Ovid then makes two references to other tales where fathers lose their sons through failure to stay within their assigned lots. He cites Homer's *Iliad* when he mentions Eumedes' son Dolon and his love for Achilles' horses, and the story of Phaethon crashing the chariot of the sun, the other mythological tale where an impetuous son in flight is destroyed by the sun (*Tristia*, III.4a.27-30). Since Ovid is referring specifically to his own exile from political, patriarchal Rome, presumably due to not staying within his own political lot, this suggests that to him, the Daedalus myth cycle has a great deal to do with political and genealogical dynasties, just as it did for Virgil. In exile, Ovid no longer has the ability to influence the culture of Rome in any direct way, and was thereby cut off from his own political and cultural legacy -- another blighted line, as if Ovid's works themselves were little Icaruses crashing into the sea of Roman forgetfulness.

Ovid later uses Daedalus again as a symbol of his own desire to fly away from his exile on the shores of the Black Sea. The lines read: "I pray to have those pinions now for

flying/On which Perseus and Daedalus have flown" (Melville, 57)(Ovid, *Tristia*, III.8.5-6). Clearly, Ovid would fly back to Rome if he could. It's probably only because both men of myth, Perseus and Daedalus, flew at one point at all that Ovid links the two conceptually, but it's intriguing to note that Perseus flew on an animal gifted to him from the gods, and Daedalus flew on wings of his own devising, and not given by the gods. Despite his impotence in doing so, it seems that Ovid is lamenting his inability to take matters into his own hands and devise his own way back to Rome.

Aside from Virgil and Ovid's epic poetry, there is an entirely different kind of Roman author who wrote about Daedalus in the 1st century C.E. In his *Natural History*, Pliny the Elder (23 B.C.E.-79 C.E.) discusses a wide array of topics, but in Book 36, chapter 19, he turns his attention to penning what he knows about the construction of labyrinths and specifically links Daedalus with them. Pliny also confirms the idea of *translatio studii* being related to Daedalus receiving a body of architectural knowledge for the Greeks from Egypt and through the Cretan civilization. Writing as if he's reporting actual historical events, Pliny asserts that there was most definitely an original labyrinth constructed in Egypt, "three thousand six hundred years ago, they say, by King Petesuchis or Tithoes" (Pliny, *Natural History*, 36.19). This is almost two millennia prior to the most likely time period for a historical Daedalus to have constructed the Cretan labyrinth, when the Minoan civilization is said to be at its height. Referring again to the Egyptian labyrinth, Pliny continues with a fascinating passage here quoted in detail:

That Daedalus took this for the model of the Labyrinth which he constructed in Crete, there can be no doubt; though he only reproduced the hundredth part of it, that portion, namely, which encloses circuitous passages, windings, and inextricable galleries which lead to and fro. We must not, comparing this last to what we see delineated on our mosaic pavements, or to the mazes formed in the fields for the amusement of children, suppose it to be a narrow promenade along which we may walk for many miles together; but we must picture to

ourselves a building filled with numerous doors, and galleries which continually mislead the visitor, bringing him back, after all his wanderings, to the spot from which he first set out. This Labyrinth is the second, that of Egypt being the first. There is a third in the Isle of Lemnos, and a fourth in Italy.

(Pliny, *Natural History*, 36.19)

While this quote does define a cultural transmission of knowledge from Egypt to Crete through the figure of Daedalus, it also makes him seem much less important to the overall building of labyrinths. If the famed Cretan Labyrinth is truly only a "hundredth" of the size and/or majesty of a larger complex in Egypt, and Daedalus was only modeling from its design, what must the original have been like? Rather than the high mythological figure the Greeks claimed him to be, with his famous "moving" statues, his advanced skills as a blacksmith, his "diagrams drawn with special care and elaboration" as stated in the *Republic* (Plato, *Republic*, Book 7.529d), and even his invention of flight, in Pliny's Roman estimation, Daedalus is merely a moderately skilled architect, and nowhere near semi-divine status. It is interesting however, that Pliny makes certain to draw a distinction between the scope of the original Cretan Labyrinth and the various artistic motifs it inspired among Roman society -- mosaics and mazes for children's play. Even a "hundredth" portion of the Egyptian labyrinth is still impressive apparently. And even though he mentions three other labyrinths besides the Cretan version, for some reason he links those various cultural motifs in his society to their roots in the Cretan Labyrinth specifically. Rather than diminish Daedalus' reputation, this in fact increases it; for the maze was important enough to have inspired the continuation of its memory in mosaics and children's games in Rome over a millennium later.

When Pliny describes the existence of four separate, distinct labyrinths built across the Mediterranean he is showing that they all may have had a similar cultural or symbolic function. Daedalus has already been shown to have both symbolic connections to

Hephaestus as far as his blacksmithing skills and to have been incorporated into Attic genealogy as an actual ancestor of his. The volcanic island of Lemnos, site of the third labyrinth mentioned by Pliny, has long been associated with the worship of Hephaestus and factors greatly into that god's origin myth. While Pliny is silent on the subject, this association of Daedalus' labyrinth with the worship of Hephaestus on his sacred island, suggests that it is plausible that labyrinths have had some kind of ritual function surrounding the acts of human creation through the forging of metals or other means. In fact, according to Walter Burkert, there was once a band of craftsmen on Lemnos called the Kabeiroi. While referring to a play by Aeschylus called *Kabeiroi*, he writes, "these Kabeiroi, grandchildren of Hephaistos, reflect some masked club, originally a guild of smiths, probably, who play a leading role at the purification ceremony" (Burkert, *Savage Energies*, 72). If the labyrinth rumored to be in Lemnos was indeed related to some kind of ceremony where a band of metalsmiths played a major role, the fact that there was a fourth labyrinth in Italy would go far in explaining the cultural transmission of metalworking skills, the *translatio studii*, from other parts of the Mediterranean to the early days of Rome. Supporting this, Burkert also states in his book *Greek Religion*, that "the inhabitants of Lemnos were called Tyrsenoi by the Greeks and thus identified with the Etruscans" (Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 281). Virgil may have been referring to this transmission of metalsmithing cult activity and knowledge in the *Aeneid*; after all, the doors of Apollo's temple at Cumae were made of wrought gold, and when Daedalus landed there, the Etruscans would have been likely candidates to receive his *techne*.

A Greek by birth, another author from the ancient world that cites Daedalus is Plutarch (46-120 C.E.), who wrote of him in his treatise on Theseus in his *Parallel Lives of*

the Greeks and Romans in the first century C.E. Plutarch's project on the whole is a curious one. Not only was he trying to arbitrarily link and juxtapose Greek and Roman stories of heroes together, but he often and repeatedly, at least in his Theseus segment, acknowledges that some of his sources do not agree, and unabashedly gives differing versions of the story credited to other authors. In the section where he discusses Daedalus at all, he cites Cleidemus' version of the story, basically repeating him. Plutarch only picks up the story where Daedalus escapes from Crete, and there is no mention of his skills as an architect, sculptor, inventor, engineer, or any of his back story. He mentions the Labyrinth along the way, but says nothing of who built it or why, and there is no reference to Icarus at all. His focus remains solely on Theseus. Plutarch calls Cleidemus' version a "peculiar and ambitious account" (Plutarch, *Lives, Theseus*, xix.4), which suggests Plutarch himself may not have put much stock in Cleidemus' reports for whatever reason -- and yet he included it in his own tale as his preferred version.

According to Cleidemus' version, Daedalus escaped from Crete in a merchant vessel and was pursued by Minos, but Minos was blown off course and ended up in Sicily where he ended his life.^{xi} Daedalus himself *sailed* (no flight is mentioned at all) to Athens where Theseus, who refused to hand him over when Minos' son, Deucalion demanded him, dutifully protected him. Plutarch, by way of Cleidemus, then has Theseus sailing back to Crete (post minotaur/labyrinth) with Daedalus as his guide, vanquishing Deucalion, and then establishing a lasting peace between Athens and Crete. Plutarch does mention that Theseus declines to offer up Daedalus because he "was his kinsman and cousin, being the son of Merope, the daughter of Erechtheus" (Plutarch, *Lives, Theseus*, xix.5), but it was possibly also because Theseus wanted to make use of Daedalus' skills. Thus, in Plutarch's vision,

Daedalus, like a palladium, functions as a kind of Greek possession and a powerful boon to whomever possesses him, as if Theseus *needed* to use him as a tool to help found his dynasty at Athens and shake off the yoke of Crete. In the act of claiming that Daedalus' flight terminated in Italy, Virgil also claims him and his *techne* as a kind of palladium for Rome.

Plutarch is the first author, aside from this Cleidemus, who states that Daedalus' flight took him to Athens. Perhaps he chose Cleidemus' version of the tale because of some cultural pride or bias of his own. Writing and working in Rome, Plutarch would presumably have been familiar with Virgil's *Aeneid* and the Roman claiming of Daedalus for their own. By landing Daedalus back in Athens *after* Virgil had landed him squarely in Italy, conceivably he may have been engaging in some kind of cultural struggle and attempting to place the cultural and scientific legacy of the Greeks back where, to him, it rightfully belonged. Either way, Daedalus in Plutarch's story still disguises a kind of transmission of cultural or scientific knowledge between Crete and Athens that had the power to end one civilization and begin another.^{xii}

The fact that Daedalus isn't mentioned much at all in Plutarch's tale is interesting in and of itself. Plutarch seems to have had many sources from which to draw when it came to the story of Theseus and could pick and choose what he wanted to include. Either he decided Daedalus wasn't an important enough part of the portion of his tale dealing with Crete to include him, or alternatively, he perhaps thought it redundant to include due to the fact that Daedalus' role in building the labyrinth was so well known to his contemporaries that it wasn't worth including to risk redundancy. More likely, he intended to write solely about Theseus, and with that as his main perspective, Daedalus recedes into the background as a minor character, a possession, a body of knowledge.

While Plutarch includes interesting bits of information about the lives and characters of Theseus, Minos, and Ariadne, as far as Daedalus is concerned, there isn't much new information offered. Plutarch himself, following his discussion of the vanquishing of Crete, writes, "There are many other stories about these matters, and also about Ariadne, but they do not agree at all" (Plutarch, *Lives, Theseus*, xx.1). The fact that Plutarch himself acknowledges all the discrepancies in these tales, which to him were ancient as well, suggests the slippery nature of Daedalus himself, and again proves how this particular tale, as a representative myth, was repeatedly used for different ends, either political or social, suiting different authors' needs -- a convention from the time of Plato's *Euthyphro*, through Virgil and Ovid, and beyond as we shall see.

Interestingly, Plutarch does offer a lucid reading of the role of literature in the way a character can be constructed for the sake of political or cultural ends. In discussing how Minos used to be revered and then came to be misrepresented and slandered in the classical age of Athens, Plutarch writes:

And verily it seems to be a grievous thing for a man to be at enmity with a city which has a language and a literature. For Minos was always abused and reviled in the Attic theatres, and it did not avail him either that Hesiod called him "most royal," or that Homer [in the *Odyssey*] styled him "a confidant of Zeus," but the tragic poets prevailed, and from platform and stage showered obloquy down upon him, as a man of cruelty and violence.

(Plutarch's *Lives, Theseus*, xvi.3)

While Plutarch singles out the classical Athenian who reformed the reputation of Minos from a royal, Zeus-favored lawgiver to a cruel tyrant to suit their purposes, the Athenian and Latin writers did something similar to Daedalus, using and crafting his character, whatever it may originally have been, into all of these various, conflicting versions.

There is one final ancient author who, incidentally, has the most to say about Daedalus as both a historical and mythological figure of almost god-like, creative skill -- Pausanias (2nd century C.E.). Writing much later than other authors, Pausanias mentions Daedalus or his creations with great frequency in his exhaustive survey of Greek art and culture, *Description of Greece*. For Pausanias, there seems to be some conflation of a historical Daedalus as skilled sculptor and the mythological Daedalus of Minos' Crete, since he takes every opportunity to disparage the plausibility of the myth with more realistic readings of what may have happened.

For example, in Book 9, chapter 11, Pausanias discusses the story of the "flight" from Crete. He relates the story as if Daedalus was:

fleeing from Crete in small vessels which he had made for himself and his son Icarus, he devised for the ships sails, an invention as yet unknown to the men of those times, so as to take advantage of a favorable wind and out sail the oared fleet of Minos.

(Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 9.11.4)

It seems as if Pausanias is trying to make the myth fit into a more plausible framework, not believing that a man could fly at all; the image of a man flying through the air could only be a metaphor for something else. Certainly, if Daedalus did invent sails, it would go a long way toward explaining the durability and reach of his fame. It would conceivably be just as important and enticing to the imagination as a man with actual wings. Pausanias still has Icarus die as a result of this invention, "as he was a clumsy helmsman" (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 9.11.5) but apparently that disaster didn't stop Daedalus from spreading *this* particular invention around the Mediterranean. Pausanias' non-mythological reading of the flight, however, is false. Within the Daedalus myth cycle, there is the final chapter of Theseus' journey where he forgets to raise the white sail for his father to see as the symbol of his son's success. Even the archaic Athenians had sail technology

prior to Theseus even traveling to Crete. How could Daedalus have invented them for his "flight" after Theseus was already using them?

Another interesting invention Pausanias credits Daedalus with is mentioned early on in the work. In Book 1, chapter 27, Pausanias describes some of the votive offerings of "the ancient ones" dedicated to Hermes in the temple of Athena Polias (Athena of the city). There is a famous breastplate, Persian spoils of war, and "a folding chair made by Daedalus" (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.27.1). The Greek has two words for this invention: *difroV okladiaV*. *DifroV* means, "the chariot board on which two could stand, the driver and the combatant" or "the war-chariot itself" (Liddell and Scott, 206). And *okladiaV* means "folding-chair or camp stool" (Liddell and Scott, 550). The phrase *difroV okladiaV* is often translated as "folding chair," but these two words together suggest that Daedalus actually invented a kind of folding chariot board or a collapsible kind of chariot itself,^{xiii} which would conceivably make for ease and swiftness of transport of the war machine, a fitting offering to Hermes no doubt.

Overall though, Pausanias also links the murder in Athens -- journey to Crete -- flight to Sicily narrative and its significance to a *translatio studii*. In Book 1, chapter 21, he mentions that the tomb of "Calos" (also known as Talos or Talus, the nephew of Daedalus), is located between the theatre and the acropolis in Athens, and then he retells this first chapter of the Daedalus myth cycle, emphasizing its general acceptance within Athenian lore and attempting to give physical evidence of its root in historical reality (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.21.4). And in Book 7, chapter 4, he again mentions this same narrative line, even though he names the city of Cocalus in Sicily as "Inycus." There is no mention of wings or of flight here at all, but he does say that the renown of Daedalus after his

arrival, "spread all over Sicily, and even over the greater part of Italy" (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 7.4.5-7). Along with Pliny's assertions about the various labyrinths and the Hephaestus cult of *Kabeiroi*, this also seems to suggest the transference of knowledge from the Greek-speaking world to those early civilizations living in what would later become the Roman Empire. This is supported by the fact that one of the earliest occurrences of any visual reference to the story of Daedalus and Icarus is from an Etruscan gold "bulla," or amulet, dated from c. 470 B.C.E. (Oxford Classical Dictionary, 425-426). This is proof that the story and its significance, and most likely the body of knowledge Daedalus represents as well, was widely traveled and well-known throughout the Mediterranean. In Book 8, chapter 53, Pausanias even credits Daedalus himself with being the impetus for and source of the *translatio studii* when he writes, "the residence of Daedalus with Minos at Cnossos secured for the Cretans a reputation for the making of wooden images^{xiv} also, which lasted for a long period" (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 8.53.8). Pausanias is giving one man and his body of knowledge, whether it was accumulated in Greece, Egypt, or elsewhere, full credit for teaching an entire civilization how to effectively sculpt daidala. These cumulative references project Daedalus as the single historical source for three separate civilizations' artistic skills -- Crete, Greece, and Rome -- and a living link between them. He becomes an important man indeed, and worthy of remembering on his own.

In order to contribute to that remembrance, in Book 9, chapter 40, Pausanias lists the works of Daedalus he knows that are still in existence in his time. He claims two can be found in Boeotia, two in Crete, and there is a small wooden image of Aphrodite which Ariadne took with her to Delos, apparently still in Delos in Pausanias' time (Pausanias,

Description of Greece, 9.40.3-4). Whether his claim is true or not, or can be upheld as proof of a long-standing tradition, here at least five works are attributed to the hand of a historical Daedalus almost 1700 years after their creation, suggesting they were important as "cultural capital" and preserved despite many cultural and political changes in the Mediterranean. This attribution seems a significant detail indeed, and a testament to the legendary stature of the man who made the sculptures, and to the cultural transference of his skills and knowledge despite all the political changes.

But it is in the chapter right before this, chapter 39, where Pausanias makes his most compelling reference to Daedalus and the cultural significance attributed to his creative works. After briefly introducing the ceremony of the oracle of Trophonios, where supplicants "descended" into some kind of hole to receive their messages, Pausanias mentions that an image made by Daedalus of Trophonios was shown by the priests only to those people who were descending to the oracle. He also adds that he himself was once a participant in this ceremony, thereby making him a primary witness and source. The supplicants, after having seen the statue made by Daedalus, "worshipped it, and prayed" (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 9.39.7-14), and only then descended to the oracle. The image of Trophonios was the first thing they saw after having drunk from the twin fountains of Forgetfulness to make one forget everything until that moment, and of Memory to make one remember all that comes after. This places the statue/image made by Daedalus in a position of high prominence. It was the first thing supplicants saw and were supposed to remember on their journey to the oracle, and the last thing they saw before descending into the hole. Therefore the image had considerable importance to the functioning of the oracle itself, as if it were an image necessary to hold onto in one's mind during the ceremony. The

fact that the supplicants actually "worshipped it" implies too, that the image was a stand-in, deserving equal reverence as that shown to divinity itself. This suggests that the skills of the carver, Daedalus, were believed to have the power to capture and hold divinity or divine energy within a static, solid object on earth. The sculpture then becomes a conduit for making "present" divine power. Interestingly, the Greek word most often used to describe this divine power, or force of divine energy operating within the souls of men is: daimwn or daimonion (Liddell and Scott, 171-172). Euthyphro refers to this often misunderstood concept when he mentions Socrates' own inner daimwn in Plato's *Euthyphro* and gives it as a possible reason for Socrates' indictment (Plato, *Euthyphro*, 3b.5). While linguistic connections can often be dubious, the Greek spelling of Daedalus is "Daidalos," which has a similar root in "dai." Because of this, perhaps Daedalus, or Daidalos, originally meant something like, "one who makes or crafts divinity." And daidala too, with the same root, seems to refer to works that are crafted so well that they can capture and hold divinity. If this is indeed the case, and as Pausanias' story of the oracle of Trophonios suggests, it goes a long way in explaining Daedalus' durability throughout the Mediterranean. Over time though, it seems his fame as a creator of divine or semi-divine sculpted works used in ritual practice faded. He was to be transformed into a symbolic figure for creative literati themselves to emulate as they constructed their highly structured written works.

PART III : Daedalus in the Renaissance: Politics and Morals

After the fall of Rome and the collapse of its institutions in favor of new ones that would emerge in the Middle Ages, the Daedalus myth cycle goes through significant changes. Christian writers such as Jerome, Gregory, and Augustine begin to seize on the

Labyrinth as a trope for talking about creation itself, the inability of human reason to penetrate God's mysteries, the many twists and turns of the wages of sin, and the inescapable mental mistakes woven by pagan philosophers around themselves. Labyrinths appear built into the floors of Christian structures such as the well-known example at Chartres Cathedral. The uses to which the Labyrinth were put in this period are as fascinating as any part of this discussion, but unfortunately are beyond the scope of this study. Interestingly though, Daedalus himself, as the original architect of the Labyrinth, disappears almost entirely from these Christian readings of the myth. As Penelope Reed Doob describes it in her book, "God himself is the only true Daedalus, father of architects, and his labyrinthine handiwork is the cosmos" (Doob, 67). Even though Daedalus as an important legendary figure fades in this period, the fact that the Judeo-Christian concept of God incorporates facets of his role reflects a continuation of the metaphorical Daedalus as semi-divine artificer and creator. Daedalus built something so fascinating, so difficult for others to fully understand, so "amazing," that his character could only be grasped by attributing a certain divinity to him. This act of theomorphism goes a great distance toward explaining Daedalus' resiliency in consciousness and as a literary figure.

It isn't until the early Renaissance, in the midst of the rediscovery of ancient Greco-Roman traditions and knowledge, in the midst of another major *translatio studii* from that world into a well-developed Christian consciousness, when Daedalus himself and the Daedalus myth cycle as a whole appear again as a means for authors to structure written works and grasp the act of artistic creation itself.

One of the foundational works of the late Medieval and early Renaissance period, and indeed of all Western literature exhibits much in common with the labyrinth aspect of the

Daedalus myth cycle. Like the Labyrinth, the *Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri (1265-1321 C.E.) is a meticulously well-crafted work of literature. Following Christianized traditions, Dante intertwines Christian faith and imagery with pagan mythological source imagery to produce a visceral, hybrid creation of his own. Penelope Reed Doob acknowledges the connection between *Inferno* and the Labyrinth of Daedalus when she describes Dante the pilgrim's progress through hell:

Thus progress is not direct, regular, and consistent, but instead emulates hesitant movement within a maze. Circuitous, disordered, disorienting, arduous, dark, full of hybrid monsters, hell is labyrinthine even to one with a guide and the promise of escape.

(Doob, 288)

Two characters from the Daedalus myth cycle appear explicitly within the various levels of hell. Minos becomes the figure who sits in judgment over souls as they first arrive in hell, sending them to their correct form of eternal damnation based on the nature of their sins. Dante seems to fall in line with the Athenian tragic poets' disparagement of Minos, since he depicts him as "horrible," as a "sin-connoisseur," "like a bull," and with a "tail" (Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 5.4-9). Minos sits at the threshold of hell proper, between limbo and the first level of the damned, and in this sense sits at the entrance to the Labyrinth. He shouts at Virgil and Dante the pilgrim, warning them not to trust anyone and not to be "fooled by the broad and easy gate" (Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 5.20). And yet Virgil, an author whom Dante the poet greatly admires, and the only character in *Inferno* that is completely familiar with labyrinthine hell, responds that it is God's will that Dante make this journey, thereby saving Dante the pilgrim from Minos' wrath. Dante the poet can also be interpreted as a kind of judging Minos himself. As the author of *Inferno*, it is only Dante who sits in judgment over the various true-to-life people from his world, creates *figura* of them, and consigns them to the various levels of a hell of his own devising.

Since Dante the poet was deeply familiar with Virgil's *Aeneid*, he would also have been aware of Virgil's design of its labyrinthine structure. In this way, Virgil, as the knowledgeable architect and author (a [citetwn](#)) who knows the way through hell because he already wrote of it, becomes both a Daedalian figure familiar with all its twists and turns, and a kind of Ariadne's thread which guides Dante the pilgrim safely through. Virgil's *Aeneid* itself, as a work of literature, also takes on the quality of Ariadne's thread for Dante the poet, forming a "bridge" of literature and knowledge between the ancient world and Dante's time -- another *translatio studii*. Dante's *Divine Comedy* itself has this quality; Dante is not unlike Ariadne, and his work of literature is a thread which can lead others through the maze of sin who, without it, may be led astray through the "broad and easy gate" and end up in hell themselves. As a pilgrim walking through the labyrinth of the afterlife, Dante himself is following the paths that will lead him to the center -- much as a penitent pilgrim might walk the labyrinth in the floor of Chartres Cathedral while seeking God.

The Minotaur appears in Canto Twelve as the awful guardian to the seventh circle of hell, the final destination of the wrathful and violent. For Dante the poet, he is the guardian of the wrathful precisely because of his hybrid nature, being a man whose nature is half beast and thereby more easily swayed by destructive animal passions. To solidify this, Dante the poet also places the Centaurs, also half man, half beast creatures in this level of hell. Seeing Virgil and Dante before him, the Minotaur becomes angry, so Virgil neutralizes his threat by saying, "Perhaps you think you have the duke of Athens here, the one who slew you in the world above? Clear away, beast!" (Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 12.16-21). Without naming Theseus directly, Dante the poet makes another clear reference to the Daedalus myth cycle. Here, Dante the pilgrim is mistaken for Theseus who is traversing the labyrinth of hell.

Interestingly, Dante the poet makes specific reference to both Daedalus and Icarus only once in his entire work, making each of them a *hapax legomenon* just as in Homer's *Iliad*. Perhaps since hubris and failure in the face of the gods as an overarching theme distinguishes Dante the poet from his precursors, his reference to Icarus only comes when Dante the pilgrim is empathizing with the fear he must have felt while falling. While on the back of Geryon, flying down to the deeper levels of hell, Dante the pilgrim admits:

I don't think Phaethon felt greater fright/[...]
Nor Icarus when he felt the melting wax
unfeathering himself about the loins,
his father crying, "You're going the wrong way!"

(Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 17.106-111)

In order to express his fear that at this point in his journey he might indeed fall to his death, Dante uses the Daedalus myth cycle. If not for his guide and companion Virgil, who, like Daedalus instructing Icarus how to fly, telling him how to hold on to Geryon and fly, Dante the pilgrim may very well have been lost here -- in the world of *Inferno*. It is perhaps his weakest and most helpless moment, and it is a dark moment of doubt. But this is also Dante confronting his own fear of failure as a poet. Geryon is a figure of the imagination and of fraud, and Dante would have been aware that he was crafting a work of fiction about matters of the afterlife that no human can know. The entire poem, like Geryon, has a pleasant and likeable face, but in the harsh judgments of Dante the poet, also like Geryon, has a sharp sting in its tail. In a way, this is Dante reflecting on the idea of “*folle volo*”, or “false flights” like Icarus’ and Phaethon’s, versus “true flights” supported by God. In the process of writing the *Divine Comedy*, it seems he must have wondered whether the poem itself would be perceived, either by his readers or in the judgment of God, as a “true flight,” or as being filled with falsehoods and fraud. For Dante the poet in the act of writing, this is

an unanswerable question, central to the future life of the entire work. It may have seemed to him a monster, like the Minotaur residing at the heart of his project, that must be vanquished in order to continue and succeed. Interestingly, Dante the poet places the darkest hour of fear and doubt for Dante the pilgrim in Canto Seventeen, right in the numerical center of the thirty-four total Cantos of *Inferno*,^{xv} implicitly making reference to the Labyrinth in his use of structure.

The reference to Daedalus comes in Canto Twenty-nine, when Dante the pilgrim and Virgil are in the tenth ditch of Malbolge, the realm of the falsifiers. An Italian by the name of Griffolino who was condemned to this portion of hell for his work with alchemy, tells Dante the pilgrim the story of his death. He once told Albert of Sienna, "speaking in jest/I can rise up into the air and fly" (Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 29.112-114), and the man believed him. But when he could not deliver on his promise, "I did not make him Daedalus!" (Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 29.116), Albert had him burned at the stake. To Christian Dante the poet, alchemists were people whose practices and false promises threatened the perfection of God's creation. Even though Dante the poet is on the one hand giving deference to the Daedalus myth cycle throughout his work in various ways, on the other hand, he considers the ability of a man to fly a "*folle volo*" in and of itself and accuses Daedalus of being a falsifier of God's creation. Like Ovid, Dante judges Daedalus for turning "his thinking to the unknown arts, changing the laws of nature" (Ovid, *Met.* 8.187-188). Dante the poet is condemning Daedalus as a kind of misguided alchemist as well, one who works with "unknown arts," and changes "the laws of nature" as understood by Christian theology. In keeping with his general distinction between human knowledge gained for its own sake, and knowledge that leads one closer to God, Dante considers the knowledge of Daedalus to be the former.

Interestingly, Dante the poet never seems to feel any inner conflict over working with his own literary alchemical materials, writing down an invention of the afterlife that is necessarily as "unknown" to him as anyone else. For all he knows, by writing down his own personal vision of hell, he is also attempting to change "the laws of nature" himself by making the unknown known. And yet ironically, his vision, his invented fabrication, was accepted as enough of a truth that it influenced others' conceptions of the Christian afterlife for generations to come. Indeed, one might ask whether Dante should be linked with Daedalus and placed in his own realm of the falsifiers upon his death?

The *Divine Comedy*, indebted to the entire legacy of Greco-Roman culture available in the Thirteenth Century, has also made use of the Daedalus myth cycle as a whole, both thematically and figuratively. On this subject, Doob concludes succinctly:

The story and cast of the Cretan myth [...] may well have served Dante as suggestive analogues to the psychodrama of damnation, conversion, and salvation that constitutes his subject. Even the poet himself, as pilgrim or as author, plays virtually every role in the legend at some point.

(Doob, 305)

In the sixteenth century, William Shakespeare uses the version of the Daedalus myth cycle available to him in the Ovidian materials to understand the radical historical changes happening that brought Richard III to power. While some may consider the overall structure of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its four youths and troupe of actors who get lost in a spirit-haunted wood and emerge from it changed at the end of the play, to be labyrinthine (especially since Theseus himself is present as a main character)^{xvi} it is his *Henry VI, part III* where we find the most compelling uses of the Daedalus myth cycle. It is also the only play in all of Shakespeare's corpus that mentions Daedalus by name.

In Act V, Scene 6, when Richard of Gloucester arrives at the Tower of London where Henry VI has been imprisoned, the Daedalus myth cycle provides key insights into the nature of the political turmoil in which these men are embroiled, and key differences in their personalities. First of all, Henry VI is much like Daedalus at the point of his imprisonment in the Labyrinth -- he has spent the entire play attempting to craft his own dynasty's continuation, constructing a labyrinth of intrigue and suspicion to which he is now confined. Knowing that Richard murdered his son, Henry VI compares the boy to a bird caught with lime and killed. When a later speech of his also mentions several different birds we can recognize that Shakespeare is alluding to the "flight" portion of the Daedalus myth cycle. Apparently understanding the allusion, in response Richard says, "Why, what a peevish fool was that of Crete,/That taught his son the office of a fowl!/An yet, for all his wings, the fool was drown'd"(Shakespeare, *Henry VI, part III*, V.6.3012-3015). If Icarus is considered to be the continuation of the body of knowledge known by Daedalus, and his death and drowning the premature end to that legacy of knowledge, when Richard kills Henry VI's son and heir to the throne he effectively ends Henry VI's legacy as well. Continuing the analogy, Henry VI agrees, apparently using the Daedalus myth cycle to describe how a father feels when he loses his son. He replies venomously:

I, Daedalus; my poor boy, Icarus;
Thy father, Minos, that denied our course;
The sun that sear'd the wings of my sweet boy
Thy brother Edward, and thyself the sea
Whose envious gulf did swallow up his life.
Ah, kill me with thy weapon, not with words!
My breast can better brook thy dagger's point
Than can my ears that tragic history.

(Shakespeare, *Henry VI, part III*, V.6.3016-3023)

In making Henry VI's loss analogous to Daedalus' loss of his son, Shakespeare draws parallels between English history and the mythico-history of Greece and Crete. By using the myth, he is able to reveal and comment upon the emotional content of the scene and Henry VI's loss. For Henry VI, Daedalus' story is a way to make sense of his own pain, unfortunately applicable to his own story; for Henry VI to hear the tale reflecting his own living story is more painful than a dagger point. It is as if Shakespeare is having Richard of Gloucester use the myth as a weapon itself first, as if words themselves can kill.

Shakespeare himself is also writing a "history" of these characters and tragic events of England in the form of a well-crafted piece of literature, much like Herodotus and Plutarch. The Daedalus myth cycle allows him to draw sharp dramatic distinctions between his characters of Richard and Henry VI. Interestingly, when Richard of Gloucester first comes upon Henry VI in this scene, Henry VI is reading a book to pass the time in prison. Henry VI may be using the written work as a kind of escape from his prison, as a "flight" of the imagination that takes him far away from the reality of his situation. Not only has he "built" a labyrinth of political intrigue that ensnared him, but Henry VI is depicted as a contemplative, thoughtful man, akin to Daedalus, and opposed to Richard, the man of action.

If Henry VI considers himself akin to Daedalus and his son to Icarus, as a man of action, Richard of Gloucester can only be seen a Theseus-like figure. By the end of the play, not only is he the one that ends one ruling dynasty and founds another like Theseus ending Minos' Crete and founding Athens, he is also the one character that successfully threads this labyrinth of suspicion, shifting allegiances, and intrigue. Henry VI also refers to Richard as, "thyself the sea" (Shakespeare, *Henry VI, part III*, V.6.3019), further connecting him with Theseus. In the Daedalus myth cycle, Theseus is a descendent of Poseidon and is protected

by Amphitrite, goddess of the sea. In Act III, Scene 2, in the longest soliloquy in all of Shakespeare's canon, Shakespeare implicitly links Gloucester's character with that of Theseus' role in the Daedalus myth cycle. Gloucester reveals to the audience his secret plans to assume the throne to the audience thus:

And yet I know not how to get the crown,
For many lives stand between me and home:
And I, --like one lost in a thorny wood,
That rends the thorns and is rent with the thorns,
Seeking a way and straying from the way;
Not knowing how to find the open air,
But toiling desperately to find it out, --
Torment myself to catch the English crown:
And from that torment I will free myself,
Or hew myself out with a bloody axe.

(Shakespeare, *Henry VI, part III*, III.2.1661-1670)

Sounding eerily similar to Theseus, Richard of Gloucester's language itself suggests ties to the Labyrinth and the Daedalus myth cycle. The lines, "That rends the thorns and is rent with thorns,/seeking a way and straying from the way" (Shakespeare, *Henry VI, part III*, III.2.1664-65) have built into them a kind of logical doubling back. Richard is both rending and being rent, "seeking" the way and "straying" from it, like Theseus doubling back upon the many paths of the Labyrinth. He wants to find the "open air" but is "lost" within the labyrinthine wood of intrigue. He also torments himself and will free himself from the torment in another chiasmic, doubling back structure. Interestingly, the imagery also recalls the opening scene and very first lines of Dante's *Inferno*. Richard of Gloucester's "thorny wood" sounds a lot like Dante's "dark wilderness" (Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 1.2) in which he finds himself lost and despairing. In *Henry VI, Part III*, Shakespeare's Richard must work his way through his own tormented path through the labyrinthine hell of political intrigue to secure the crown for himself. And like the destructive force of Theseus, Richard

will cut his way out of his troubles with a bloody axe, killing whoever stands in his way. This moment where Richard of Gloucester experiences the monster of self-doubt, eventually resolving himself to end that doubt and embrace direct action, is also similar to Dante the poet's dark and doubtful ride on Geryon in the numerical center of his journey through hell. Structurally, his speech appears in the center of Act III, in the very center of the play -- again like Theseus slaying the Minotaur at the center of the Labyrinth.

In his article, "Developmental Structure in Shakespeare's Early Histories: The Perspective of 3 Henry VI," Larry S. Champion acknowledges this play's complexity of various interwoven plot lines and complications, and correctly notices the "extensive mythological metaphor" (Champion, 231) of the Daedalus myth cycle, but misses or neglects its significance to the play's meaning and structure. He writes, "it is a highly sophisticated dramatic design for the early 1590's [...] and the Henry VI plays reveal the playwright's 'steady advance in technical mastery'" (Champion, 237). Nowhere does Champion consider the Labyrinth of Daedalus as an organizing principle for the play, but obviously, Shakespeare's level of artistic, authoritative *techne* is duly noted. Perhaps Shakespeare thought of himself as a Daedalus of drama.

Part IV: Daedalus in Modern Sources: More Politics and Artistic Identity

While Shakespeare's *Henry VI, part III* uses the legendary Daedalus myth cycle to elucidate and frame recent historical events, at the tail end of the Industrial Revolution and the dawn of the 20th Century, almost three thousand years after the events of the Daedalus myth cycle were thought to have taken place, Daedalus and his myth again become an organizing principle for political turmoil depicted in literature.

In 1887, only sixteen years prior to the Wright brothers' successful sustained human flight at Kittyhawk, Tom Greer's book, *The Modern Daedalus*, published in Ireland, records the struggle of the Irish people against England's colonial oppression. The Daedalus myth cycle seems to have reappeared in the imagination and in literature at a time when humanity was inventing and restructuring their civilization at an unprecedented pace. Building upon the scientific advances from the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution can be seen as a new kind of *translatio studii* in which great bodies of knowledge and skills were being disseminated among many different nations and cultures, transformed into material goods and physical productivity. Set in this time period, Greer portrays Ireland as archaic Athens under the dominant sway of England, which plays the part of Minos' Crete.

A Modern Daedalus is an early work in the genre of science fiction that tells the story of an inventor named Tom O'Halloran who, like Leonardo da Vinci and so many others before him, was obsessed with observing the flight of birds in order to find a way to create human flight. O'Halloran succeeds but, trapped in a labyrinth of oppression and legislation brought about by the British occupation of Ireland, his wings become an invention highly coveted by both sides in the military struggle. His set of workable wings eventually help free O'Halloran from prison in London, and are put into mass production to equip and train a winged brigade of Irish rebels who are then able to prevail over a superior British army and navy by dropping bombs on them from the sky. O'Halloran praises the success of his invention, and yet recoils at how his peaceful intentions were corrupted to sow destruction and death. While the novel has no character who is a direct parallel to the Icarus figure in Greer's story, and the Daedalian inventor does experience the destruction and loss which can

be born from the act of creation, Greer presents the Daedalus myth cycle and the episode of the famous flight in particular, as one of the first “science fiction” stories known to the West -- a story about a man who, by necessity, invents a technology never before seen, and never to be seen until 1903, a tale about the boundaries that can be crossed through use of the imagination. In a sense, Greer's book also functioned as a way for the Irish, using their imaginations, to escape, to fly away from the struggles of the very real British occupation in his time, thereby making Daedaluses out of each of his Irish readers.

Whether he was one of the readers of Greer's book or not is unknown, but two decades later, another Irish writer, James Joyce (1882-1941 C.E.), also adapted the Daedalus myth cycle and used it as the principal organizing force behind the main character and events of two of his major works, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*. Daedalus and his myth dramatically entered Joyce's world following Sir Arthur Evans' re-discovery and excavation of the palaces of Knossos in 1900. As well as being influenced by the passionate fall of Icarus in the "Fourth Dithyramb" of Italian poet Gabriele D'Annunzio in his *Halcyon* published that same year, Joyce could not have been unaware of Evans' findings. The April, 1900 issue of *The Fortnightly Review* contained both an overview of Evans' archaeological work on Crete and the publication of Joyce's play review entitled, "Ibsen's New Drama" (Cope, 48). Joyce would almost surely have received a copy of the magazine to read. Knossos' uncovering, and Schliemann's Troy and Mycenae before it, played inspirational roles in Joyce's development as a symbolic writer. According to Jackson Cope: if history was what lay behind myth, then the latter was not sacrosanct, and the former offered as free a stuff for moderns as for ancients. All history, by implication, became the piling upon which poetry could construct its piers.

(Cope, 52)

What Cope means is that while Daedalus and his myth cycle have frequently been a symbol, a figure for the creation of art and literature dealing with personal or political labyrinths of all kinds, to Joyce, if Knossos itself had been a real place, Daedalus must have seemed suddenly to have the potential of being a real, once-living artist, architect, and inventor, not a dry and dead, false "myth" used by various reiterators and institutions to suit their own moral or political interpretations. Joyce could use Daedalus as a symbol in any way he wished, regardless of Ovid's, Virgil's, Dante's or any other author's interpretations of the myth. Joyce could build his own labyrinth of meaning.

Working within the literary environment of Ireland at the turn of the century, Joyce seems to have taken many of his cues from the master craftsman of Greek myth to speak about the role and identity of the artist and author in culture. Not only is the main character, Stephen Daedalus, named after him, but Daedalus is used as a literary symbol for transcendence itself, one who can teach everyday people how to transcend their own political, social, or cultural situations through art and literature themselves. As Marguerite Harkness tells us, "the literary debate [...] itself raised questions about how fully Irish poverty and nationalism formed a character and how such a character might 'transcend' his culture" (Harkness, 6). Joyce himself, in the *Portrait*, calls the nationality, language and religion of the Irish, "nets" which hold a human's soul back from freedom and flight. "These are cultural nets, nets perpetuated by environment, while Stephen's escape, in his view, will occur through art, a timeless, placeless, magical gift" (Harkness, 6).

And in the world of Stephen Daedalus' Dublin in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, art does become the means of escape. Rather than listen to his actual father or the patriarchs of the Church, Stephen in a sense adopts Daedalus as his true father, thereby

making himself akin to Icarus as well. In Joyce's words, Stephen responds to what he sees as his true destiny, "Yes! Yes! Yes! He would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, as the great artificer whose name he bore, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable" (Joyce, 170). This "imperishable," "living thing" is not unlike the unsinkable myth of Daedalus itself, referring to how it has had a tendency to resurface at important periods of human cultural growth and ingenuity -- classical Athens, the height of Roman power, the Renaissance, and now the Industrial Revolution and the dawn of actual flight. Stephen's soul, by embracing the power of artistic creation in his life, finds the means to fly above the patriarchal trappings of his culture and, like the Daedalus myth cycle where one civilization falls, allowing another to rise, Stephen will create a new life for himself out of the ashes of his past. In fact, in the story, Stephen Daedalus does escape by "flying" from the "nets" of Ireland in order to freely write and create in Paris.

The structure of *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* also reflects Joyce's understanding of the Daedalus myth cycle and the Labyrinth. In order to make the connection obvious, Joyce places the very same quote from Ovid's *Metamorphosis* which Ovid used to condemn Daedalus, "and he turned his mind to the unknown arts," as an epigraph to the entire work. There are also five chapters to the work and each of them follows a pattern, suggestive of entering and exiting the Labyrinth in the same place, again and again. In each chapter, Stephen begins the narrative deflated and despairing of his situation, but by chapter's end, he has worked his way toward a feeling of liberation, finally culminating in his escape to Paris. According to Harkness:

The images seem to suggest that Stephen is repetitively following a curve that peaks at the end of each chapter only to be plunged back into the mire of 'realistic' Dublin [...] the repetitions suggest similar conflicts in each chapter, but each chapter brings Stephen closer to

an accurate perception of his destiny [...]. In this logical shaping of the novel, Stephen achieves his liberation, having moved up the spiral to art and exile.

(Harkness, 102)

At the very end of the novel, Joyce gives readers another way to understand his work in relation to the Daedalus myth cycle. The final segment is presented in the form of a succession of journal entries by Stephen Daedalus himself, which we eventually learn becomes the source material for the final product of the autobiographical book called *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* we just finished reading. Two dates, "Dublin, 1904. Trieste 1914." (Joyce, 213), are given at the very end, suggesting a ten year span of time it took to write the book, and referring readers back to the very beginning in Dublin, creating a closed literary circuit, forcing us as readers to be like Theseus entering and exiting the Labyrinth in the same place.

Throughout the novel, Stephen has had more in common with Icarus, being the son of his father, a son of the Church, and of Ireland itself, and Joyce makes us question whether, as Icarus, Stephen will also crash and burn on his journey toward liberation by art. But he has also struggled to become his own Daedalus, father of his own artistic creations. As John Paul Riquelme mentions, "When the character's [Stephen's] role as a son is over after the final page, his fatherly role as teller is born phoenix-like to return home on the first page. Character transforms himself into artist as the son becomes his own father" (Riquelme, 104), thereby finally embracing his namesake. The question of whether Icarus-like Stephen will succeed in his endeavor becomes moot, since the book called *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is that success, an actual object published and read by others -- and in that way, the book we have transcends even the limitations of Joyce's labyrinthine, fictional world of Stephen Daedalus to be "imperishable" in the real world. This all reflects Joyce's faith in the

power of literature and the act of writing it. By the act of writing, and of using a powerful symbolic figure like Daedalus, an author can transcend his situation -- which is shown to work for both Stephen as a character and for Joyce as an author launching his career with this first major success.

Joyce would later return to the theme of Daedalus and the Labyrinth in *Ulysses* as well. Stephen Daedalus reappears as the main character and his journeys continue.

Admittedly, this is a gargantuan, difficult, and impenetrable work in many ways, but thereby it resembles the difficult windings of a labyrinth. Andrew J. Shipe writes, discussing the frustration many readers have with this work:

we may wish for an easy way out, a scheme or a skeleton key, a Daedalus to fashion wings, by which we can bypass the walls of actual reading [...] Thus reading the book is like entering the labyrinth, and so is navigating the book's intricate schema.

(Shipe, 205)

Shipe goes on to discuss those "intricate schema," especially in the tenth chapter entitled "Wandering Rocks," in which there are nineteen vignettes set in and around Dublin which contain references to other sections of the book as a whole. But it is Joyce himself who gives us the most compelling evidence for his love affair with the Daedalus myth cycle. In a letter from 1921, while speaking about the enormity of the task of creating *Ulysses*, Joyce acknowledges the difficulty of the Daedalus myth cycle, "the legend," and that "the nature of the legend chosen would be enough to upset anyone's mental balance. I want to finish the book [...] After that I want a good long rest in which to forget *Ulysses* completely" (Shipe, 209). It seems as if Joyce, perhaps by depending so much on the Daedalus myth cycle as inspiration, ended up imprisoning himself as an author within the difficulties of his own creation. He was well aware of his own personal connection to the old artificer, and seemed to celebrate it, despite the trouble it caused him. Joyce, writing about *Ulysses* again:

"I've put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of insuring one's immortality" (Shipe, 211). Not only was Joyce aware of the "imperishable" nature of Daedalus and his myth, especially because of its "unearthing" and corroboration in reality by Evans' work, but he was reaching for a kind of immortality himself. He wanted to create a work of literature so complex and daunting in its artistry and craftsmanship, that he, as Daedalian author, would also have a similar renown and be as "imperishable" as Daedalus himself. While it's only been less than a century, due to the sheer amount of critical writing by "professors" on his work and its meaning, it seems Joyce may have clearly understood the role of Daedalus as a master craftsman who must necessarily recede from his creations in order to give them a life of their own.

Part V: Conclusion: The Daedalus Myth Cycle as Creative Process

As this author has found during the research and writing of this project, the more one digs into the Daedalus myth cycle, the deeper the meanings go, and the more potential interpretations reveal themselves; there are so many in fact, that the overall effect is of entering a labyrinth of layers of meaning so cunningly devised, that it seems impossible to find one's path out to any academic clarity. And yet, there are threads of meaning to Daedalus and his myth cycle that can reveal the deeper significance of the story.

We have seen Daedalus in many incarnations throughout this study. He has been an architect of a "coroi□" or dancing place, in Homer's *Iliad*, a metalsmith forging weapons, a murderer of one of his own family, a highly regarded sculptor able to breathe life and divinity into stone, the designer and builder of the Labyrinth on Crete, the fabulous inventor

of human flight, an emotionally broken old man punished for his mistakes in Virgil and Ovid, and a figure of an exceptional craftsman inspiring authors as a trope for the crafting of literature through the centuries into the present day.

Taken as a single figure, Daedalus is interesting all by himself, but it would be pointless and next to impossible to speak of Daedalus and the myth cycle and their meaning without also discussing the how other characters and the Labyrinth itself all contribute to it. Taken as a whole, the Daedalus myth cycle has been such a potent organizing principle for creative works of literature because I believe it is a myth that reveals the secrets behind the act of human creation itself. All the major characters, in relationship to each other, can be understood as ways of understanding the creative process of the artist or craftsman.

Let us imagine a hypothetical artist or author and follow his or her creative process through, using the imagery from the Daedalus myth cycle to explain the various steps along the way. Any work of art or literature begins with a central question, some nagging issue that needs to be addressed or understood, which "lives" at the heart of the process and within the final product. For Dante, this might have been: How can I attain salvation? For Plato in the *Euthyphro*: What is the nature of piety? For Shakespeare: What happened in England's recent history? The author then engages his or her material in an attempt to answer this question, whether or not they are aware of where the question originated, and the work can be judged on its ability to succeed at doing so. For the author, this nagging question is like the Minotaur residing at the center of the labyrinth that is the object of the pursuit, the reason for the work's creation.

This interpretation is supported by the meaning of the Minotaur's name in Greek: "Asterion" (Apollodorus, Library, III.1.3). "Asterion" or Asterion is a proper named built

from the root "*asthr*," and meaning "the starry one" or "like a star, glittering" (Liddell and Scott, 125). According to Jungian psychologist Peter Tatham in his book, *The Making of Maleness: Men, Women, and the Flight of Daedalus*, Asterion is like the light of the stars shining through from behind the darkness of the night sky; he is "the promise of what will come out of, and indeed can only come because of, that self-same darkness" (Tatham, 108). Like any question asked, Asterion represents a plethora of possible answers, like a vast field of tiny points of light. In this way he is unpredictable, difficult to control, dynamic. He is often understood to be a hybrid monster, born of both human and animal parents, Pasiphae and Poseidon's special bull. The word "monster" however, comes from the Latin word, *monstrare*, meaning "to show or to display." Tatham describes this as a clear vessel containing something else. Like a deep, central question containing a full volume of answers, Asterion is "a revelation of the sacred, as well as something that must be enclosed: some marvelous fresh insight that it might be better to contain, protecting it from danger until it can take its true place in the world" (Tatham, 113). For the creative person then, the labyrinth becomes the means of containing the plethora of answers while still keeping the question safely locked away. Paraphrasing Kerényi, Tatham writes that the labyrinth's name in the Cretan language is *da-pu-ri-to-jo*, meaning, "a way to the light" (Tatham, 114). In order to seek the answers, the light of revelation promised by a question answered, one must traverse the labyrinth and find out what the central question even is. Readers of a novel then, or observers and critics of a painting or sculpture, or the audience of a stage play or film, all become like Theseus searching to discover the monster of a central question and then "slay" it through their own personal answers and interpretations born from the artist's central question.

So, once an artist or author has that central question they are asking, why doesn't it remain just a question; what drives them to even work to answer it, like Daedalus, building their own labyrinth of creative product around it? This is the meaning of Icarus' role in the Daedalus myth cycle. As the physical offspring of Daedalus, he can be considered an integral part of the artist or author himself. Daedalus is the man of skill and knowledge in the myth cycle; he is learned enough to know how to make objects, just as artists and authors train for years to learn the tools of their respective crafts -- the fundamentals of technique. But these tools, skills, and knowledge by themselves are useless without an energy or drive behind them, without an impetus that causes the artist to pick up their tools to create in the first place. Icarus, the young boy, is that energy; he can be seen as the insatiable curiosity dying to know the answers to questions, despite the potential consequences involved in getting them. For the artist or author, Icarus is the force that keeps them working. As mentioned earlier, the poet Gabriele D'Annunzio gives us a version of Icarus to support this role of Icarus. In his "Fourth Dithyramb," D'Annunzio presents a doddering old fool of a Daedalus who only invents the wings because of Icarus' pleading and prodding. It is Icarus who goes out to slay a great eagle in order to provide his father with the feathers for the wings in the first place. And when they are in the midst of flight, since it had been his intention all along to part ways with his father and soar free on his own, Icarus exults in his flight. In his spectacular fall to the sea and untimely death, he finds the true meaning of his life -- to be burned up; finally he is satisfied (D'Annunzio, 170-186). D'Annunzio here is making a statement about the artist or author who needs this desire to soar high and fast in order to fuel the act of creation or invention. If Daedalus represents the tools of the creative person, Icarus is the spark, the force driving the creation, the means which are "used up" by

the time the creative work is completed. This interpretation is supported by the Daedalus myth cycle itself as well. Once Daedalus loses his son Icarus, with the exception of Virgil having him craft the golden doors of Apollo's temple at Cumae, Daedalus no longer invents or creates anything new or valued, despite having a plethora of skills and knowledge.

Without the Icarus force there to prod him, Daedalus loses his ability to create.

The flight itself is another important motif within the Daedalus myth cycle that provides an insight into both the creative process of an artist or author and the experience of a reader or viewer of visual art. Often in the act of creating a work of art, it is possible for the artist or author to become lost in the various courses of their own creation, the various ways they could continue, thereby losing the "thread" of what they originally wished to say or do. This stage in the creative process is recorded in the Daedalus myth cycle when Minos imprisons both Daedalus and Icarus in the Labyrinth. But, through the skills of Daedalus and the impetus/energy of Icarus they are able to create wings for themselves and escape. For artists and authors, this is a bit of advice embedded within the myth cycle itself; it carries the meaning of the need for an artist or author to take a step back from their work as a whole and do their best to see it from a different, loftier perspective. When lost within a labyrinth of creation, it is impossible to see around the next bend in the imagination, but seen from above, all the various paths leading to the central question can be seen and traced clearly. Looking from above, the artist and author can then re-engage their work with the ease and pleasure of a child tracing a path through a maze with a pencil. For a reader or viewer who traverses a labyrinth, and works to answer its central question, often a new perspective on life is gained; or if they are looking for an escape or a diversion for a few hours, their individual imaginations are enabled to "take flight" from the labyrinths of their own lives.

There are also other interpretations of the Daedalus myth cycle where the symbol of the labyrinth reflects aspects of creation found within the human body itself. The intestines can be considered labyrinths of digestion where the continuation of life, where the created human body, receives its nutrients from food. In order to kill the Minotaur of hunger, humans eat and the food enters the dark meandering passageways of the body like Theseus entering the Labyrinth. The food exits the intestinal labyrinth as fecal matter that may look and smell horrible, but yet contains the energy and ability to fertilize the earth and grow new plants to eat -- just as Theseus sailing back to Greece to raise up a new culture of Greeks from the waste of Crete.

The female reproductive system, to men at least, can also be a kind of mysterious labyrinth, and therefore also connects this myth to the concept of creation. During coitus, the male member enters the female and sperm is ejaculated to find its way to fertilize the egg deep within the labyrinth. Nine months later the fetus, who can be considered a new, transformed version of the father and mother, exits from the same place the sperm originally entered. The fetus is like Theseus the hero reborn, connected physically by the umbilical cord to the mother and back to the Theseus/sperm that originally entered the womb. The umbilical cord is like Ariadne's thread that connects entering Theseus and exiting Theseus and leads the way out of the dark labyrinth back to life and the light of day.

On a conceptual level rather than the physical, the Daedalus myth cycle can also provide insight about how myth can be understood as its own crafted human object that continues to evolve and endlessly re-create itself. According to Hans Blumenberg in his book, *Work On Myth*, myths are “institutions” of the mind that undergo a process of proving themselves over time (Blumenberg, xxi). Referring to myth in general, Blumenberg writes

that humanity, “*has learned to subject his artifacts and instruments instead of himself, to the process of adaptation...*It is to these, rather than to their producer, that the ‘survival of the fittest’ applies” (Blumenberg, xxi-xxii). If the Daedalus myth cycle is understood as a kind of variable mental tool for understanding something about the fundamental human experience of creation, it is possible to see how it has become an organizing principle for literature. Authors use this tool to address and transcend their own political, social, and cultural worlds -- just as Daedalus constructed artifices and inventions in order to adapt to his environment, transform his situations, and fly above confusion and chaos. It is as if the Daedalus myth cycle is endlessly creating itself with each new perspective brought to it. Indeed, Blumenberg calls this process the “Darwinism of words” (Blumenberg, xx) and explains that the myths as we have received them are really the end result of a combined process of storytellers and audiences picking and choosing the elements that have the most importance or relevance to human life. This process explains the durability of certain parts of the Daedalus myth cycle over others. For example, the commonly received Daedalus myth includes the details of the flight away from Crete on wings, and *not* the notion that Daedalus and Icarus “flew” away from Crete in simple ships with sails. In Blumenberg’s view, this suggests that the mythological image of human flight was worth preserving for humanity, potentially because it symbolically refers to a flight of the creative imagination. In fact, since it has endured for over three millennia, this suggests the Daedalus myth cycle as a whole preserves some truth about human existence worth remembering -- the secrets behind the functioning of the human creative process.

Since the Daedalus myth cycle focuses on relating the meaning of creation itself, whether material objects of art, human life, or the invention of stories, it can be seen as an

originary myth about the "artist," or the "creator" at the root of every human invention. It doesn't matter whether a living man by the name of Daedalus ever existed or an actual flight on invented wings ever truly happened. Like the myth of Narcissus being considered "true" because the story expresses a truth about human life, the Daedalus myth cycle is also "true" because it encompasses the truth of the human artist's life. With each generation, there will invariably be those who choose to enter into the labyrinth of meaning of Daedalus and his story, attempting to unravel it for themselves, and adding their own, new, interpretive twist to the winding pathways within, thereby participating in the "Darwinism of words."

This study, as a creative work itself, is now a part of the larger labyrinth of literature dealing with the Daedalus myth cycle. It is not unlike a labyrinth of references, time periods, and literary uses of myth. As readers, you have been like Theseus working his way through, looking to slay the Minotaur of a question: Who is Daedalus? This author has tried to be like Daedalus, flying above the twisted paths of history and classical references to gain perspective over the entire scope of the Daedalus myth cycle and its meaning in order to craft a useful academic understanding. This author has attempted to use Daedalus himself as the "Ariadne's thread" connecting all the different versions of the story through time. My original inspiration and drive for researching this topic was like an insatiable Icarus, craving satisfaction, and now that the object of that creative process has been finished, it is a drive and a passion completely burned up and destroyed, but never forgotten.

NOTES

- ⁱ This could be 20 or 30 year long generations, or anywhere from 60-100 years prior to the events of the Trojan War.
- ⁱⁱ Michael Ayrton, a 20th century artist, writer, and sculptor, believed Daedalus to have been responsible for inventing the “lost-wax” method of bronze sculpture casting, a complex process used continuously since its invention. See Ayrton, “The Unwearying Bronze,” pg. 274-278, for a good description of the process.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Incidentally, in this same note, Frazer discusses Daedalus’ Attic genealogy, without speculating on when he may have been incorporated into it. He writes that different authors disagree over his parentage, but that he is of the Erechtheid line, and fathered by Metion or Eupalamus. By any reckoning, this makes Daedalus a cousin to Theseus through Erechtheus’ line as well. Erechtheus himself is the great grandson to Hephaestus, which makes Theseus, Daedalus, and apparently Socrates too, all direct descendants of the craftsman god.
- ^{iv} There is a record of Naucratis once being the name of an ancient place in northern Egypt, thereby suggesting a dim link to the vast stores of Egyptian knowledge possibly accessible in Minos’ time. If Naucratis didn’t have the knowledge herself, her presence in the story at least suggests a complex cultural and economic (slave-based?) connection between Crete and Egypt in general.
- ^v Depending on the actual date of the volcanic explosion of Thera (circa 1600 B.C.E.), it is possible this or some other catastrophic natural event could be the cause behind the decline of Minos’ Crete in history, and the cultural frame of reference shifting to Theseus and the founding and rise of Athens. The Daedalus myth cycle thereby becomes a vehicle for recording a physical event and “changing of the guard,” so to speak, of cultural dominance.
- ^{vi} But not daughters, unfortunately.
- ^{vii} “*rhythmos*,” (ρυθμoς) meaning variously, measured motion, time, proportion or symmetry, arrangement or order, the state or condition of the soul, temperament, disposition.
- ^{viii} Whether King Mendes or Marros actually existed is up for debate, but there is evidence of an archaeological site in the Nile delta named Mendes. This place, archaeologically speaking, has foundations revealing the longest uninterrupted stratification for all the Nile delta, and possibly for all of Egypt. This suggests it was an important enough site to be continuously inhabited for some reason. The city dates to the Narqada II period of roughly 3500-3200 B.C., which is also, ironically, the period to show the first evidences of metalworking in the area. Perhaps the city got its name from a once powerful king, and perhaps it was once a place of learning where Daedalus, recently exiled from Athens, traveled in order to understand sculpture, metalworking, architecture, and engineering.
- ^{ix} Not unlike the tradition of *ekphrasis* used by Homer when he places the Daedalus reference within the description of the Shield of Achilles, and later used, as will be shown, by Virgil in the *Aeneid*. The marriage bed and coverlet in Catullus may or may not have fallen under the heading of “daidala” as well.
- ^x Daedalus was exiled from Athens not solely for the murder of Talus/Talos/Perdix, but also for defaming the sacred acropolis in the process.

^{xi} See also, Herodotus, VII.170

^{xii} As far as the survival of cultural legacy from one civilization to the next is concerned, in naming Minos' son Deucalion, Cleidemus connects the story to the Greek myth of the great flood which destroyed the world except for Deucalion and his wife; Deucalion was the Greek equivalent to the biblical Noah. This supports the idea that Theseus is some kind of agent bringing about a revolution, a change of the ages. Deucalion can be seen as the lone survivor of an earlier age, the dominant Minoan culture, and Theseus as the harbinger of the new Greek age, he who destroys that survivor and supplants him -- with Daedalus' help of course.

^{xiii} Homer uses *difroV* to refer to the whole vehicle.

^{xiv} Elsewhere described as daidala in Pausanias

^{xv} Even more interestingly, in Canto 17 at the very middle of *Paradiso*, Dante the poet also places Dante the pilgrim's darkest hour of his time in Paradise. This is the moment when he hears Cacciaguida's prophecy about Dante's inevitable and necessary exile from Florence, an event that most likely caused one of the darkest hours of Dante the poet's life and made him doubt his faith in God.

^{xvi} Bottom's magical transformation into a hybrid creature, half man, half donkey, deep within the forest is also reminiscent of the hybrid Minotaur.

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