

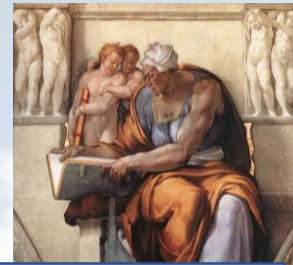
1. Where are we?

Aeneas arrives at **Cuma**, where the **Sibyl** lives (*Aen.* VI 1-19 and 33-76).

Cuma was the **oldest Greek colony in the West**, founded in 730 B.C.

The **Cuman Sibyl** was a young virgin with the gift of prophecy.

The legend: Apollo, after falling in love with the Sibyl, accepted her request to live as many years as the grains of sand her hand could enclose, but she forgot to request eternal youth.



The Sibyl lived into a cavernous passage, with short side passages, that Amedeo Maiuri identified as **the Sibyl's cave** after discovering it in 1932.



The Sibyl used to write her prophecies on palm leaves and scatter them in the wind. The oracles were collected into the famous **Sibylline Books**.

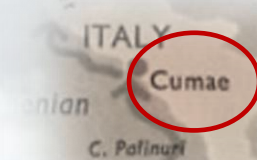


2. Ekphrasis of Apollo's Temple: Daedalus arrived in Cuma just like Aeneas and the Chalcidians, the historic Greek founders of the city (*Aen.* VI 20-34)

Daedalus' bas-reliefs are devoted to events happened in Athens with **Cretan exploits:** scenes from dark and legendary mythical past (*Aen.* VI 14: *ut fama est*) with murder and punishment as preparation for the following topic in Underworld.

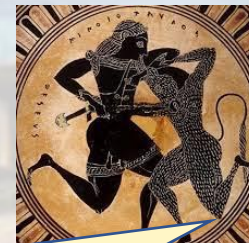
- The **killing of Androgeos**.
- The **sacrifice of Athenian youth** in expiation for Minos.
- The **story of Ariadne and Daedalus' help with Minotaur**.

Aeneas' stop in Cuma



Sometimes **artists are unable to create:** Daedalus failed to monumentalize the mortal fall of his son.

Aeneas' landfall at Cumae would have reminded the audience of Augustus' naval success in Actium, and the temple itself recalled the construction of **the Temple of Apollo Palatinus**.



Virgil's ekphrasis provides a **deeper understanding** of the Temple of Apollo Palatinus and offers a better means to reconstruct the ruins of Augustus' most intimate architectural offered to his patron deity.



Francesca Chiodo (University of Siena)
Dimitra Rosidou (University of Thessaloniki)
Margaret Sizeland (Trinity College of Dublin)

This fits with the Augustan narrative of unifying Italy under a single Roman cultural identity after the internal strife of Triumviral Civil Wars.



3. Lands Unknown: in order to contrast barbaric Italy with the Roman culture Aeneas' descendants will create there, Virgil emphasizes **Cuma's "shadowy" nature** as a "dark and rugged" place fit only for "wild beasts" (*Aen.* VI 237-8).

Aeneas and his men take it upon themselves to alter the Italian landscape, not only materially by "cleaving the trunks of ash and splintering oaks" (*Aen.* 181-2) but also culturally by renaming geographic features for Trojan heroes. **They feel a right to do this because it claims the land for their Roman descendants**, whom the narrative insists have a more valuable culture than the native Italic people and an obligation to impose it on any people they conquer.

Cuma had become a **civitas sine suffragio** in the First Samnite War, it was romanised to the point of making Latin its official language in 180BCE and sided with Octavian in the Civil Wars against Sextus Pompeius.

