Reading suggestions for Virgil’s *Aeneid*

**General reading on the Aeneid**


There is one chapter devoted to each book of the poem, but each chapter generally tackles a theme that has significance for the poem as a whole, and does so with fairly contemporary scholarship.


Philip Hardie is an exceptional scholar of Latin literature, and this is his most accessible writing on the poem. He manages to cram in a huge amount of information in a very short space.


When this volume first came out in 1997 it was refreshing as most chapters managed to be both introductory in style and yet cutting-edge in approach / content. This 2nd edition brings it bang up to date.


A readable book that gives a good sense of the style of the poem, e.g. its reliance on visuals.


This is an old but classic article that is readable, subtle, and draws out nicely how Virgil’s epic differs from Homeric epic. It focuses on the strain of sorrow and sacrifice that runs through the epic, arguing that there is nothing simplistically triumphalist about the poem.


As with Philip Hardie, Michael Putnam is a veteran scholar writing here in his most accessible vein. The book demonstrates a wealth of exemplary close analysis.

**The Augustan political and cultural world**


This is a great introduction to the historical context of the poem. It’s particularly useful on how Augustan material culture, e.g. the statue of Augustus from Prima Porta, works in tandem with Virgil’s poetry. It argues that Virgil is overall a supporter of Augustus.


Less fully convinced of Virgil’s support for Augustus, Tarrant talks of the epic’s ‘ambivalence’ and includes some reflections on the ending of the poem.


**Women / sexuality in the Aeneid (topic links up with EH’s talk and materials on the Iliad)**


I also have a short video on this topic: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsbKzt9cF8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DsbKzt9cF8)