

Eulogy for the Republic:
Virgil's Anti-Augustan Longing for the Roman Republic in the *Aeneid*

By:

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*And here is the man promised to you,
Augustus Caesar, born of the gods,
Who will establish again a Golden Age
In the fields of Latium. –Virgil¹*

¹ Virgil, the *Aeneid*, trans. Stanley Lombardo (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2005), Book VI, 936-942.

Upon first reading Virgil's *Aeneid* it can be easy for a reader to conclude based on the praise surrounding Augustus anytime he is mentioned directly in the text, that the epic is a strongly pro-Augustan work; a work designed to honor Augustus and his accomplishments in building the Empire. However, while at first glance this may appear to be the case, a second, closer reading may reveal Virgil's far more critical viewpoints of both Augustus and his Empire's replacement of the Roman Republic. A masterpiece that has survived the ravages of time, the *Aeneid* tells the story of Aeneas and his flight from the sacking of Troy with his family and a small group of survivors, mostly soldiers, women, and children, as they seek to resettle in Italy. An epic story that harkens back to Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's work gave the Romans an origin story of Homeric caliber that helped to establish what it meant to be a Roman citizen. However, Virgil's work is not one that purely glorifies Augustus as one might expect. Rather it is filled with what may be read as Virgil's reflections on the decisions of the Caesars and the world they created anew. While overall the *Aeneid* is a work that praises the divine origins and outcomes of the Roman people, it also serves as a critique of Julius and Augustus Caesar's Roman Empire and panegyricizes the Roman Republic that Virgil sorely missed.

In order to understand the meaning of the *Aeneid*, one must first understand the context in which it was written, and why Augustus felt it necessary in the first place. Years of civil war, particularly the fighting between Octavian, who would soon become Augustus, and Mark Antony, had left Rome divided, chaotic, and uncertain of its future. In order to ease these concerns, Augustus implemented social reforms through propaganda, promoted many wealthy Romans to the Patrician class, and worked to

establish peace and order in the city while widely expanding his personal power.²

Octavian defeated Mark Antony in 31 BCE at the Battle of Actium, which made him the sole power player in Roman politics.³ As with most authoritarian leaders, Augustus employed propaganda to support his initiatives and to impose cohesiveness on Roman society. The *Aeneid* was simply another tool used by Augustus for these purposes.

Classicist William T. Avery goes as far as to argue that Augustus “regarded the epic as perhaps the most effective instrument of propaganda for his regime” because of the work’s importance in Roman society and the ways in which Virgil’s writing was meant to enhance Augustus’ image, stature, and power in Rome.⁴ Avery’s argument is not to be understated and finds support from sources, both ancient and modern, which indicate that Augustus himself ordered Virgil to write this epic with a clear agenda in mind.

Tradition has it that Augustus gave two tasks to Virgil in creating this epic. Augustus ordered Virgil to create a work imitating the legendary tales of Homer while also praising Augustus with particular focus on his lineage and the accomplishments of his ancestors. One can see clearly how Virgil succeeded in the first by analyzing the structure of the epic. The *Aeneid* is divided into twelve books and the first six are widely seen as mimicking *The Odyssey* while the second six reflect *The Iliad*.⁵ The first half of the story focuses on Aeneas’ journey to a new home, which in time is determined to be Italy, to found Lavinium and establish a new family line the descendants of which would one day found Rome. Just as Odysseus faced the wrath of Poseidon, Aeneas faces the wrath of Juno who attempts to stop him every step of the way, thus making the journey

² Werner Eck, *The Age of Augustus*, trans. Deborah Lucas (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 44-45.

³ David Shotter, *The Fall of the Roman Republic* (London: Routledge, 2005), 95.

⁴ William T. Avery. “Augustus and the *Aeneid*,” *The Classical Journal* 52, no. 5 (1957): 227.

⁵ Gian Biagio Conte, *Latin Literature A History*, trans. Joseph B. Solodow (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 276-277.

far longer than anticipated. Once the Trojans complete their odyssey from Troy to Latium, they engage in warfare with local tribes in order to win the right to build their new city.⁶ Through the use of similar imagery and language, Virgil makes clear that this story is the Roman equivalent of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but he does not just copy the stories; he puts a twist on them that makes his work uniquely Roman. Gian Biagio Conte notes that Virgil inverts the stories so that Odyssean equivalent precedes the Iliadic equivalent. Conte finds a distinction in that the first half is not about a journey back home but rather a quest to find new lands for a future empire, and the war fought in Italy in the *Aeneid* is not one meant to destroy but rather to give rise to a new civilization. He observes that this distinction shows a clear influence from the Homeric works, but a departure from them as well.⁷ Conte's observation of this structural reversal of the Homeric works shows Virgil's desire to take influence from the great epics of Greece while also changing key features so that he could create a propagandist work for Augustus in the form of a truly Roman epic.

Augustus wanted an epic that could connect his claim to power to divine rule and to the very foundation of Rome itself in order to suggest that Fate intended all along for Augustus to rule the Empire and bring it to its fullest sense of glory. In Aeneas, Virgil found a hero who was known well enough to be recognized by the Roman people, but also obscure enough to mold into the type of hero Augustus desired. Conte notes that no one before Virgil had suggested that Aeneas founded Lavinium, the city that preceded Alba Longa and Rome, but his story fit into what was the more widely believed narrative that the area that would become Rome had been initially settled by some group of Trojan

⁶ Conte, *Latin Literature A History*, 280.

⁷ Conte, *Latin Literature A History*, 276-277.

refugees. Aeneas was a very noble person who embodied values that were important to the Roman people, so he was an excellent fit for the Roman epic hero. In eventually referring to Aeneas' son as Iulus, Virgil establishes the important connection to the Julian clan and thus to Julius and Augustus Caesar themselves.⁸ In doing this, Virgil made Augustus divine in the eyes of the Romans and prepared them for the praise that would come throughout the piece; however, in concert with this praise, Virgil was able to slip in significant commentary including his actual thoughts about Augustus' actions and the rise of the Empire.

Since the publication of the *Aeneid*, readers and scholars alike have interpreted the piece as political propaganda. There is certainly evidence to suggest this is a reasonable conclusion such as promises of Augustus' glory, praise for his bravery and accomplishments, and an overarching theme of positivity throughout the epic. In fact, questioning Virgil's political motivations and deeper meaning behind his words appears to be a very recent trend. Today there is fierce debate over what Virgil intended to convey in writing the piece and whether his writing embraces Augustus or rejects him; however, as recently as the late 1950s and early 1960s, classicists made widely accepted arguments that this piece was nothing more than planned political propaganda. Avery argues in his 1957 article that "Vergil's close relationship to Augustus and his admiration and perhaps even personal fondness for him" led the poet to obey Augustus' commands in writing the epic which his patron Augustus regarded as "a cultural element essential to the popularity of his regime."⁹ A few years after Avery's writing, in 1964 Brooks Otis wrote in his highly respected *Virgil, a Study in Civilised Poetry*, that "It seems quite plain

⁸ Conte, *Latin Literature A History*, 277-279.

⁹ Avery, "Augustus and the *Aeneid*," 225.

that Vergil himself was a convinced Augustan. He was clearly inspired by this theme: he believed in his ‘ideology.’ He really saw Augustus as the type of man who could bring peace.”¹⁰ While Avery and Otis were a leading experts of their time, within a few years other scholars finally began to question this conclusion of Virgil as pro-Augustan, versions of which had been accepted for centuries without hesitation. This included T.J. Haarhoff who simply found that the works of Virgil are more than just propaganda and that “Vergil himself shows in his poems the weak side of Augustus’ regime.”¹¹ Haarhoff’s conclusion may not be seen as radical today, but it was likely a new thought during his time. This early instance of conflict on the issue of Virgilian propaganda foreshadows the revolution that was about to occur in which classicists would begin to question the *Aeneid*’s political implications throughout the text.

In order to understand this conflict between experts on the issue, one needs to first understand why classicists like Avery and Otis would find the piece to be propagandistic. This idea of pro-Augustan language appears most vividly in the three instances in the *Aeneid* in which Virgil explicitly refers to Augustus Caesar by name. Augustus appears by name in the *Aeneid* on three separate occasions: Jupiter’s promise in Book I, in Anchises’ revelation in Book VI, and in the description of Aeneas’ shield in Book VIII.¹² Each of these three events conveys to the reader messages of Augustus’ ability and honor, which would suggest to an observer that Virgil meant these statements to be compliments of the Emperor, an understanding that is quite reasonable.

Augustus appears by name in Book I as part of Jupiter’s story of what will happen to the Trojan refugees upon their arrival in Italy. He foresees glory beyond imagination

¹⁰ Brooks Otis, *Virgil, a Study in in Civilised Poetry* (Norma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 389.

¹¹ T.J. Haarhoff, “The Element of Propaganda in Vergil,” *Acta Classica* 11, (1968): 127.

¹² Sabine Grebe, “Augustus’ Divine Authority & Vergil’s *Aeneid*,” *Vergilius* 50, (2004): 47.

for their descendants and tells the story of Aeneas founding Lavinium, his son Ascanius founding Alba Longa, their descendant Romulus founding Rome, and eventually a Trojan Caesar founding the eternal Rome that Virgil's contemporaries called home. Virgil makes a clear genealogical connection between Augustus and these other founders of Rome when he writes:

From this resplendent line shall be born
Trojan Caesar, who will extend his Empire
To the Ocean and his glory to the stars,
A Julian in the lineage of Great Ilus.¹³

Jupiter's speech makes clear connections between Augustus and the Olympians in a way that ensures Augustus be seen as a leader with a divine right to rule. Sabine Grebe writes that Virgil "links Augustus with the divine sphere" and in doing so "presents an Augustus closely connected with the gods."¹⁴ By connecting Augustus to the line of Venus, Virgil is not only connecting Augustus to the Goddess, but also to her son Aeneas, and his descendants Ascanius, Romulus, and Julius Caesar. Grebe notes the importance of the connection between Augustus and the absolute rulers of Rome when she argues,

Augustus is said to stand in one line with Aeneas, Ascanius, and Romulus, each of whom had founded a city: Aeneas founded Lavinium, Ascanius Alba Longa, Romulus Rome, and Augustus re-founded Rome through the establishment of peace, law and order after Rome had been dominated for a century, by war, chaos, and disorder. Each of the mythic figures ruled alone as king.¹⁵

Grebe's point that Augustus is being compared to figures who ruled alone as kings is well taken and shows Virgil's efforts to connect the *Princeps* to imagery of absolute power and divine, mythical rule. Augustus had significant power in Rome and with the death of Mark Antony had no real rival for power over the Empire, so Virgil making this link

¹³ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book I, 343-346.

¹⁴ Grebe, "Augustus' Divine Authority & Vergil's *Aeneid*," 48.

¹⁵ Grebe, "Augustus' Divine Authority & Vergil's *Aeneid*," 48.

reminds the reader of Augustus' glory and ability to rule. Upon seeing this portion of text, a reader could certainly see the element of propaganda designed to impress upon readers that Augustus was the right man to rule the Empire and these images of glory and power were symbolic of the sensation of accomplishment he brought to Rome.

Augustus Caesar does not appear by name again until Book VI during Anchises' revelation about the future of Rome and the future of Aeneas' family line. As previously stated, Anchises goes through a detailed story of Aeneas' descendants through each period of Rome from the founding, to the Monarchy, to the Republic, to the Empire. He speaks at length about the successes of Aeneas' descendants and the civilizations they will found, but places special importance upon one individual: Augustus Caesar.

Anchises establishes that Augustus is the ultimate and promised heir to a long line of Roman power and success:

Here is the man promised to you,
Augustus Caesar, born of the gods,
Who will establish again a Golden Age
In the fields of Latium.¹⁶

It is possible that this passage is the most pro-Augustan statement in the *Aeneid*, and it is perfectly reasonable for readers to accept this statement as propaganda. Grebe explains that this section has been seen historically as Virgil stating his belief that Augustus could return Rome to a state of glory that had not existed for a very long time.¹⁷ This could indicate that Virgil may have had faith in Augustus and his plans and would allow experts like Avery or Otis to reach their pro-propaganda conclusions.

Augustus' name appears for the final time in Book VIII when Virgil describes Aeneas' highly detailed shield. Virgil writes that the shield depicts the history of Rome

¹⁶ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VI, 939-942.

¹⁷ Grebe, "Augustus' Divine Authority & Vergil's *Aeneid*," 41.

leading up to Augustus with the Battle of Actium and Augustus's Triple Triumph featured prominently at the center of the shield:¹⁸

Leading Italy into battle,
With the Senate, the People, the city's Penates,
And all the great gods, stood Caesar Augustus
On his ship's high stern, a double flame
Licking his temples, and above his head
Shone his father's star.¹⁹

Readers could quickly conclude upon reading the *Aeneid* for the first time that this shield is designed to honor Augustus' rise to power and particularly his military ability. The placement of these scenes at the center of the shield may convey a note that these images are important not only to Aeneas but to all of Roman history, a history at the center of which sits Augustus. The placement of this message with the images of the *Princeps* continues the trend that when Augustus is mentioned explicitly he is praised quite clearly. All three of these scenes provide most of the information about Augustus available in the *Aeneid* and to base an opinion off of only these scenes and how they appear upon an initial reading would likely lead a reasonable person to accept that the *Aeneid* is pro-Augustan propaganda. The potential issue with the findings of experts like Avery and Otis does not lie in the conclusions themselves, but rather the ways in which they went about reaching the conclusions and the evidence they considered.

Over the decades following Avery and Otis' findings, experts seeking to determine if the epic was more than propaganda began to look for subtle hints of what Virgil really thought of the Augustan regime that may not have been apparent in reading the *Aeneid* initially. In order to do this, they relied heavily on a deeper reading of the text and looking for messaging that is not explicitly stated and thus may not have been

¹⁸ Grebe, "Augustus' Divine Authority & Vergil's *Aeneid*," 50-51.

¹⁹ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VIII, 774-778.

recognized by those purely analyzing the text like Avery, Otis, and their predecessors. This effort has led to a fundamentally new understanding of the work and its political messages. It has allowed classicists like A.M. Bowie to look beyond the death of Priam in the *Aeneid* to find political connections to the reign of Augustus, while simultaneously enabling James Morwood to find that Carthage as depicted in the *Aeneid* represents far more than Rome's great enemy city. Researchers like R.J. Tarrant have deeply explored the two Gates of Sleep in Book VI of the *Aeneid* and have found a variety of potential hidden meanings that experts once did not see. All of these researchers focused on very different aspects of the piece, as have the many others who have pursued the hidden meaning behind the words of Virgil, but they are bonded by one shared characteristic: they all agree that there is more to the *Aeneid* than one might see upon a first reading.²⁰

More recent research may indicate that one can see in the three passages where he mentions Augustus directly Virgil following a pattern. He heaps praise upon Augustus, but then follows that praise with more subtle criticisms that the reader may or may not notice upon first glance. He is highly effective in writing, hence his being chosen by Augustus, but he is equally clever in being able to insert his own opinion into the epic in order to undercut the compliments given to the *Princeps* and to eulogize the lost Roman Republic. In returning to the three explicit mentions of Augustus by name and analyzing *beyond* the text, one sees how these new researchers have reached different conclusions in which the epic is still overall propagandistic, but in a way that Virgil is able to place his true opinions of the Emperor in many different situations.

²⁰ A.M. Bowie, "The Death of Priam: Allegory and History in the *Aeneid*," *The Classical Quarterly* 40, No. 2 (1990).; James Morwood, "Aeneas, Augustus, and the Theme of the City," *Greece and Rome* 38, No. 2 (1991).; R.J. Tarrant, "Aeneas and the Gates of Sleep," *Classical Philology* 77, No. 1 (1982).

By looking for connections to the Republic and messages about Virgil's true thoughts on Augustus' reign in Jupiter's promise to Venus, an entirely different conclusion can be reached. Instead of seeing this first mention of Augustus as purely propagandistic, Grebe argues that while this section on the surface seems complimentary, it is what Virgil *declines* to mention that shows the reader his true intention. Grebe notes a disconnect between Augustus' practices and the practices of Republican Rome that is highlighted in Jupiter's listing of the future successes of Aeneas' family line. She writes, "Here Vergil selects only kings. Vergil omits the famous Romans of the republican period." By declining to include the leaders of the Roman Republic, Virgil is intentionally showing the reader that Augustus is not one of them and *should* be thought of as a king.²¹ While on a first reading this section of the text links Augustus to figures of power and glory, something he would have desired, a closer reading reveals that the absence of republican figures actually reminds the reader of the absence of the Roman Republic and its ideals. Overall the section is indeed complimentary, considering the fact that Virgil could only insert a certain level of criticism, however textual analysis shows that this criticism does indeed exist.

This new level of analysis can be seen again in research conducted on Anchises' revelation and the parade of heroes in Book VI where Augustus appears once again. Just as she did in Book I, Grebe finds issue with *who* is mentioned in the speech in that there is a key difference between the speech of Anchises and Jupiter's earlier prediction, namely that Anchises *includes* the leaders of Republican Rome in his vision. This inclusion of Republican icons such as Fabius Maximus before the mentioning of the

²¹ Grebe, "Augustus' Divine Authority & Vergil's *Aeneid*," 48.

Caesars creates a blatant contrast between the two.²² The absence of the republican heroes in Jupiter's speech and their presence in Anchises' suggests that their inclusion was an intentional decision. Augustus likely would not have wanted too much focus placed on the benefits of the Roman Republic, so Virgil would not have been able to mention these figures too freely. By placing them in only certain areas in which Augustus is mentioned, Virgil is able to maintain a tone of praise while creating a contrast that reminds the reader of the Republic.

By mentioning republican figures that would have been household names, Virgil is comparing them to Augustus and although the comparison initially appears positive in the text, the reader could easily come away from reading the epic with the belief that the promises of Augustus were not as firm as believed and that perhaps the Republic was a better time after all. James O'Hara goes as far as to declare that this is a representation of Virgil's own desires for the Empire in writing,

The idea that the future is generally less bright than is predicted is quintessentially Vergilian in this prophecy as in others, Vergil presents both the hope that things will be better under Augustus, and his deep fear and worry that this is only an illusion.²³

O'Hara's argument that Virgil is simultaneously sending two messages is a strong one. As is apparent throughout the text, Virgil wanted what was best for Rome, but he believed that to be the Republic. His inclusion of figures from the Republic serves many purposes to his readers, but in the end there is one overarching theme that pulls all of it together, that Virgil feared for his nation and felt that his idealized version of it was lost to the ages.

²² Grebe, "Augustus' Divine Authority & Vergil's *Aeneid*," 50-51.

²³ James O'Hara, *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy in Vergil's Aeneid* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 164.

This subtle criticism continues in the third and final appearance of Augustus on Aeneas' shield. While Avery, Otis, and their contemporaries may find the shield to propagandize the military might of Augustus, it is possible that Virgil highlights these military conquests for a different reason. The placement of the Triple Triumph, including the Battle of Actium, directly in the center of the shield may suggest that Virgil's intention is to remind the reader that Augustus was not a chosen leader, but rather seized control of Rome and won power through conquest and bloodshed. While this would not have necessarily been seen as completely negative in Ancient Rome, it is in direct contrast with the republican style of government, and Virgil may have simply sought to remind his readers of that fact.

This is seen further in Virgil's stating that Augustus had the people and the Senate on his side as he marched into battle. Whether or not this is true does not matter all that much. What matters instead is that Virgil's inclusion of the people and the Senate assisting Augustus shows that the people and the Senate are necessary for a leader to be successful. By highlighting this need, Virgil reminds the people that Augustus has everything he needs to rule while under the Republic he would require their consent to govern in some capacity.

The shield reminds readers further of Augustus' treatment against his enemies and propaganda he used to destroy them. David Quint argues that Virgil's depiction of Mark Antony, a fellow Roman, as an "other" figure, accomplishes Augustus' request that Virgil glorify him, by casting him as the true paragon of what it means to be Roman thus creating a contrast between himself and the defeated "foreign" Antony; thus he argues that this passage seeks to accomplish a form of glorifying propaganda while inadvertently

insulting Augustus. The passage shows Augustus as holding all of the key Roman virtues but, Quint believes that the text “points precisely to the function of the imperial ideology to which the *Aeneid* resorts: its capacity to project a foreign “otherness” upon the vanquished enemies of Augustus and of a Rome identified exclusively with her new master.” Quint argues that Augustus sought to use the *Aeneid* to discourage opposition because he would simply cast his opponents as un-Roman and thus unfit to rule like Augustus a good Roman. This simply furthered his goal of linking himself with the identity of Rome, that he was the center of the state.²⁴ Quint offers that this point of Virgil discussing an Augustus-focused Rome was an unintended criticism, but he may miss Virgil’s true intention in casting this as inadvertent. The evidence suggests that Virgil does not unintentionally suggest this criticism, but rather that he embraces it because it creates a starker contrast between Augustus and leaders of the Roman Republic who defeated their political enemies through elections rather than propaganda. In doing this, Virgil reminds the reader that Augustus acts alone and as he sees fit, rather than taking actions that necessarily benefit Rome and if one turns against him, Rome will turn on him.

In each of these three passages, one can see a clear pattern in which Virgil praises Augustus but inserts connections and allusions that hint at what he really may have felt about the Empire. Those looking to the text alone for answers, like Avery and Otis, could not be expected to find these connections which explains their findings that Virgil wrote the *Aeneid* solely as propaganda, however the work of new experts approaching the text differently and looking beyond it have found an entirely new school of thought on the epic which has raised many questions about Virgil’s true intentions. This pattern that

²⁴ David Quint, “Epic and Empire,” *Comparative Literature* 41, no. 1 (1989): 3.

Virgil takes in criticisms of the Emperor is embraced by these more recent experts creating both a conflict in the field and a new understanding of an ancient masterpiece.

But this recently identified pattern does not only exist in passages in which Augustus is explicitly referenced. The *Aeneid* contains many indirect references to the Caesars and Virgil takes advantage of these opportunities to comment upon the Empire's rise at the expense of the Republic just as he does with his direct references.

This lamentation for the Republic appears vividly throughout Aeneas' stay in Carthage as early as in Book I. It is important to note that Virgil chose to begin his epic with the hero arriving at the great city of Carthage in Northern Africa. Carthage serves as a safe haven for the weary Trojan refugees,²⁵ which tells the reader that this city is philanthropic and prosperous because of its good government and laws. Throughout Book I, Queen Dido of Carthage is depicted as a strong, capable leader who despite great obstacles has created a city that recalls Rome during the height of its republican period. Francis Cairns observes, however, that soon after meeting Aeneas, Dido, whom Virgil describes from the start as a good queen, becomes infected with love by Cupid as part of Venus' plan for her son and falls madly in love with the Trojan leader. He argues that "Dido's deterioration proceeds rapidly" and her qualities as a good queen utterly disappear to the point that "she openly acknowledges that she has harmed her people by her actions and damaged her reputation." Note, while his assessment of Dido's decline is fair, Cairns goes on to explain his belief that this destruction was meant to be viewed as a necessary step for Aeneas in becoming a good king himself;²⁶ Cairns' argument, however, might not consider all of the additional layered messaging of the epic. Instead

²⁵ Conte, *Latin Literature A History*, 279.

²⁶ Francis Cairns, *Virgil's Augustan Epic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 43; 52.

of offering this as a necessary step for Aeneas to take, Virgil may be using Dido as a symbol, through his connection to Aeneas, of Augustus', destruction of good leadership and institutions from the Republican era. After Aeneas sees Dido, the Queen, and thus her city, is set on a path of ruin, which she will be unable to avoid. Virgil begins this theme from the start of Aeneas' interaction with Dido, but this theme of Aeneas', and subsequently Augustus', destruction of ideal government, does not only appear with the Queen. Instead one can also find it clearly in the commentary in which Virgil describes Aeneas viewing Carthage for the first time.

Just as the hero was impressed upon meeting Dido, when Aeneas first lays his eyes upon Carthage, he is stunned.

Looking down, Aeneas was amazed
 At the sheer size of the place – once a few hovels –
 The city gates, the bustle of the paved streets.
 The Tyrians were hard at work, building walls,
 Fortifying the citadels, rolling boulders by hand,
 Marking out sites for houses and trenches.
 As Aeneas watched they made laws, chose officials,
 Installed a Senate.²⁷

James Morwood declares this to be a highly important section of text because it is an idealized version of a type of republican utopia. He writes,

To some extent the city here described the city of Hannibal, which was governed by a senate and had artificial harbors. But the overall picture is un-Carthaginian. The promise of high civilization in the city which Aeneas sees and the establishment there of the rule of law in fact sounds decidedly Roman.²⁸

Morwood's analysis of this passage reveals that Virgil was not simply describing Carthage, but a city of far more significant grandeur: Rome. Just as Morwood finds this passage to be decidedly un-Carthaginian, one can build on that to find that this passage is

²⁷ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book I, 517-524.

²⁸ Morwood, "Aeneas, Augustus, and the Theme of the City," 212-213.

also decidedly *un-Augustan*. This focus on the Senate and the people playing a role in government is not indicative of the behaviors of the Roman Empire, rather it recalls imagery of the Roman Republic in which these practices were cornerstones of Roman government.

Aeneas is viewing a city much like the Roman Republic Virgil would have known, but the key here lies in the description of the Carthaginian government and rule of law. Virgil writes that, “They made laws, chose officials, and installed a Senate.”²⁹ This is crucial because Virgil is praising republican practices as a gold standard. He does not mention the importance of a leader or their cult of personality, nor does he mention a single decision maker. Instead he refers to groups making laws, people choosing who would govern them, and electing those individuals to a Senate, which would have the authority to govern.³⁰ This creates a contrast with Augustan Rome, in which there was only one true decision maker and a Senate that was largely decorative and ceremonial. As David Shotter shows, Augustus knew the weaknesses of republican government and used them to fill positions, such as the role of Tribune and the Consulships, which he did not hold himself with people who were fiercely loyal to him and his goals, effectively holding the offices for himself and depriving them of independence and decision making powers.³¹ This passage reminds the Roman people of that fact by describing an ideal city in which people have a voice and a means of influence. This is a clear attack on Augustus’ consolidation of power and a loud cry for the Republican age in Rome where power was in the hands of more than just the Emperor or *Princeps*.

²⁹ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book I, 523-524.

³⁰ Morwood, “Aeneas, Augustus, and the Theme of the City,” 212-213.

³¹ Shotter, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, 98.

Virgil actually takes this a step further when he has Aeneas envy the fortunes of Carthage, thereby lamenting those who did not have such institutions and privileges, including the Roman people.³² As Aeneas looks upon the growing city he declares, “Lucky are those whose walls are rising.”³³ Virgil is showing that the people of Carthage are genuinely happy with their system, which suggests that their good governance is for the good of the many and that their system represents progress. When Virgil was asked to write this epic, he was told to praise Augustus, which would certainly require him not to praise as “lucky” the institutions that were so different from the ones used in the Empire. Through filling positions with friends, family, and allies subservient to him, Augustus held absolute power in Rome at this point and any reminder of the importance of republican institutions, most importantly the Senate and elected officials, one of which Augustus was not, serves as a commentary on their absences in the Roman Empire.³⁴ Virgil has thus made clear his preference for the Republic early on in his epic, and, by linking Carthage to the Roman Republic, he reminds the reader of the city’s complete obliteration, and thus connects Carthage to the destruction of the Roman Republic and its replacement by a system of false institutions controlled by one man.

By Book II, Virgil begins to add on to his dissatisfaction of the Republic’s fall by inserting his disapproval of the actions of the Caesars with which he disagrees. This is apparent in the scene describing the death of King Priam, which invokes images of the controversial death of Pompey. Virgil describes in detail how Priam dons his armor, preparing to fight for his city to the very end. The reader learns of his wife’s screams for him as he is quickly defeated and forcibly dragged across the floor of his palace through

³² Morwood, “Aeneas, Augustus, and the Theme of the City,” 213.

³³ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book I, 536.

³⁴ Shotter, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, 97-98.

his son's blood to an altar. Virgil builds up the images of Priam in the minds of the reader as a man of great importance and honor and follows it with his killer Neoptolemus bringing a blade to the king's neck and taunting the fallen leader.³⁵

The sovereign of Asia, he lies now
A huge trunk on upon the shore, head severed
From his neck, a corpse without a name.³⁶

What is important to note here is not necessarily the idea of killing of a king, but rather the method of killing used, particularly Priam's *decapitation* and reference to his body lying on a shore. To a modern reader this might not mean much; however, as A.M. Bowie notes, to a Roman, Virgil makes a clear reference to the controversial assassination of Pompey, a key figure in Asia during the Roman Republic and Julius Caesar's key rival in the Civil War.³⁷ This is yet another opportunity of which Virgil takes advantage to insert a subtle critique that may not be obviously apparent upon a first reading.

After Caesar's army defeated Pompey in 48 BCE, he fled to Egypt looking for refuge, but his former ally King Ptolemy wanted to please Caesar and assassinated Pompey as soon as he stepped onto the shore where he was decapitated.³⁸ While Caesar did not order the assassination of Pompey, his death was still a direct result of the Civil War fought between the two of them. As Bowie argues, this connection between Priam and Pompey is made clear by the use of particular language. Bowie writes that the description of a headless body on a shore invokes images of Pompey, as does the reference to domain over Asia, where Pompey had his most successful conquests and

³⁵ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book II, 641-647.

³⁶ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book II, 650-652.

³⁷ Bowie, "The Death of Priam: Allegory and History in the *Aeneid*," 474.

³⁸ Shotter, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, 78.

made a name for himself in the Republic.³⁹ Pompey had been a respected statesman so his death would have been controversial in any situation, but a violent assassination such as his garnered significant attention. The Civil Wars in which the Caesars fought were bloody, violent, destructive affairs and they shook the Romans. In connecting the death of Priam to the death of Pompey, Virgil sought to remind the readers of those uncertain and dangerous times. The assassination of Pompey occurred only twenty years before Augustus became Emperor; so many members of Virgil's audience remembered his death well and would easily recognize Virgil's comparison. By reminding the readers of those turbulent times, Virgil sends a message that the Caesars had caused pain to Rome in the same way the Greeks caused pain to Troy, which connects those images to the contemporary political situation under Augustus.

The connection of Pompey to Priam is, furthermore, Virgil's indication that he is indeed lamenting for the loss of the Republic. Priam was a great leader of the mythical past, so by tying Pompey to such a leader, Virgil is clearly indicating his support for the deceased general. W.F. Jackson Knight argues that this connection serves also as a reminder of Priam's courage and the subsequent cowardice of his murderers. Priam prepares to fight his attackers, knowing his death is imminent and "denounces Neoptolemus with royal courage, concerned more for the horror of the deed to be done than for his own imminent suffering."⁴⁰ Knight's assessment of this next level of connection is certainly compelling. Virgil intended to show the reader the bravery of the Trojan King as he prepared to fight, more concerned with the destruction of his people than his own death. Knight's analysis can be connected to Pompey as well to show him

³⁹ Bowie, "The Death of Priam: Allegory and History in the *Aeneid*," 476.

⁴⁰ W.F. Jackson Knight, *Virgil: Epic and Anthropology* (London: George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1967), 68-69.

as a courageous commander who was more concerned for the future of Rome than for himself. In doing this, Virgil shows that he is on the side of Priam, and thus Pompey, and that the killing of such fearless leaders is wrong for the people and that those who commit such acts, including the Caesars, care only for power instead of the public welfare.

However, one must not only read Priam's death as a connection to individuals, but also must observe the connection to styles of overall governance. In analyzing the historical context of the war between Julius Caesar and Pompey, as invoked by the imagery of King Priam's death in the epic, it is clear that the war was one between two futures in which either Republican Rome remained or the Empire would rise. Bowie describes in detail the accomplishments of Pompey as a leader in the Roman Republic and contextualizes him as a republican figure whose slaughter is invoked by the death of Priam.⁴¹ Building on Bowie's findings, in looking at the death of Pompey, bolstered by the despair over Priam's death, one need not think of Pompey as just a person, but can also imagine him as a personification of the Republic itself. In this scenario, through Priam, Virgil describes Pompey as a leader of the Roman Republic brought down violently by a Caesar, just as the Caesars themselves destroyed the Republic. By reminding the reader of the violent, dishonorable death that Pompey suffered as a result of the aggression of Julius Caesar, Virgil is invoking as well the imagery of the violent fall of the Republic at the hands of the Caesars. Regardless of the praise that Virgil heaps upon Julius and Augustus Caesar in the *Aeneid*, connections such as these reveal Virgil's true thoughts that the Republic was a better time for Rome and that the Caesars were not all they presented themselves to be.

⁴¹ Bowie, "The Death of Priam: Allegory and History in the *Aeneid*," 475.

Virgil continues this depiction of Augustan Rome by portraying the Empire as a false republic in Book VI, in what is perhaps the most puzzling of Virgil's comments on Augustus: the Gate of False Dreams. In one of the most mysterious passages in all of the *Aeneid*, the hero, after having entered the underworld and spoken with the dead, is offered two paths that will enable him to return to the mortal world.

There are two gates of sleep. One, they say
Is horn, and offers easy exit for true shades.
The other is finished with glimmering ivory,
But through it the spirits send false dreams
To the world above.⁴²

Scholars are deeply divided on the meaning behind Virgil's description of the two gates, but largely agree with R.G. Austin that, "the matter remains a Virgilian enigma."⁴³

Nicholas Horsfall agrees with Austin, but argues that those who seek a deeper meaning behind this passage are pursuing answers that are not there. Instead he believes that the reality is clear, that because Aeneas cannot leave through the Gate of Horn, as he is not a true shade, he has no choice but to leave through the Gate of Ivory. Thus Horsfall sees nothing more than a decision that Aeneas has to make with no additional meaning.⁴⁴ This approach may overlook some of the more nuanced statements of Virgil that readers can only see upon a later and deeper reading. As a result of that missing evidence, the suggestion that there is no meaning behind the gates could potentially fall apart.

Based on Virgil's other writings, it seems unlikely that a passage at the end of Book VI, with a lot of focus placed on it, would have no meaning beyond what the text says. Instead, scholars like R.J. Tarrant take an entirely different approach than Horsfall that understands "Virgil, though often elusive, does not seem to have indulged in

⁴² Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VI, 1064-1068.

⁴³ R.J. Tarrant, "Aeneas and the Gates of Sleep," 51.

⁴⁴ Nicholas Horsfall, *A Companion to the Study of Virgil* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001), 146-147.

gratuitous mystification.”⁴⁵ Tarrant instead finds that Aeneas’ exit through the Gate of False Dreams suggests the “limitations imposed by mortality on all individual striving and expectation.”⁴⁶ Tarrant’s approach acknowledges that there is more to Virgil’s writing than what may be apparent on the surface. However, his opinion does not go quite far enough in explaining what limitations Virgil was attempting to highlight by placing such importance on the presentation of these gates.

If one incorporates the context of Book VI into Tarrant’s argument, it becomes possible that Virgil intentionally leaves this passage vague because it is the most significant negative comment he makes on the Empire, that the Gate of False Dreams and Aeneas’ departure through it means that the Empire is a series of false dreams and illusions caused by Augustus’ limitations. This passage appears just after Anchises reveals the glories of Augustus, meaning that the next action after Aeneas hears this is for him to depart through the Ivory Gate. Virgil may use this gate to establish that Augustus’ behaving as though the institutions of the Republic, most importantly the Senate, still mattered was nothing more than a ruse designed to convince people that the Republic had not died with Augustus’ rise to power and that his plan had severe weaknesses. Virgil is declaring that Rome at the time of the *Aeneid*’s writing was living in a false dream and that the magnificent glories of the Empire prophesized throughout Book VI were simply illusions destined to never come true because the limits in the mortal world would never allow them to be realized.

⁴⁵ R.J. Tarrant, “Aeneas and the Gates of Sleep,” 51.

⁴⁶ R.J. Tarrant, “Aeneas and the Gates of Sleep,” 53.

In order to understand why Virgil would take this position, one must review the prophecies promised during Aeneas' trip to the underworld. In Homeric fashion,⁴⁷ Aeneas enters the underworld, or Dis, in pursuit of answers about how he should proceed in his journey by getting advice from the shade of his recently deceased father Anchises. After wandering through Dis and seeing many divisions of the dead, Aeneas finds his father.

Anchises, deep in a green valley, was reviewing
As a proud father the souls of his descendants
Yet to be born into the light, contemplating
Their destinies, their great deeds to come.⁴⁸

Anchises, the father of Aeneas, would be a distant, but direct, ancestor of Augustus, meaning that Anchises is looking with joy upon a future, which includes Augustus and his accomplishments. Overwhelmed by this joy, Anchises gives his son advice, the importance of which is fully realized in Book XII, and predictions including a reminder to not:

Rend your country's body with strife.
And you, child of Olympus, should show
Clemency first. Cast down your weapons,
My own flesh and blood...⁴⁹

After giving this warning, one that Aeneas will eventually ignore in a climactic unfolding of events, Anchises finishes his predictions of Augustus' glory and the future of the Roman Empire. In reading thus far, it is clear that the *Aeneid* remains at this point primarily complimentary but, by starting out with a strong, positive element Virgil gives himself space to criticize Augustus and question the extent of his accomplishments a few lines later. While Anchises' role in Book VI starts out on a positive note for Augustus, a

⁴⁷ See *The Odyssey* Book 11

⁴⁸ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VI, 805-808.

⁴⁹ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VI, 992-995.

tone that his prophecies strengthen, their combination with the ivory gate undermines the entire scene and gives the reader a sense of negativity for Augustan Rome.

This theme of uncertainty about Augustan Rome continues as warfare dominates the second half of the *Aeneid*. The second six books of the epic mimic Homer's *Iliad* in that they depict a war between two civilizations centered on who has the right to marry a woman. When Aeneas arrives in Italy, he wishes to form a pact with King Latinus and unite their two peoples by marrying the King's daughter Lavinia. However, chaos ensues when Turnus, a warrior to whom Lavinia was already betrothed, learns of this plan and seeks to stop Aeneas in what quickly becomes a full-scale war.⁵⁰ Hans Smolenaars finds that these parallels to Homer can be extended to Aeneas' final battle with Turnus for Lavinia's hand in marriage. He notes that Lavinia represents Helen, Aeneas represents Achilles, and Turnus represents Hector so that the end battle of Virgil's epic is highly similar to the ultimate battle in Homer's *Iliad*.⁵¹ By relying on such parallels, Virgil worked to make his Roman epic of the same caliber as the Homeric epics, thereby following Augustus' command to create a Roman epic that would strengthen the new Roman identity under the Empire.

While Virgil finds many opportunities in the text to glorify the war between Aeneas and Turnus, there are highly significant issues that make this war dishonorable and link that dishonor to Augustus himself. The origins of the war alone are questionable since the Trojans are the aggressors who enter into a territory and end Turnus' engagement to Lavinia. While this is depicted as the Trojans following through on a divine mission, it still creates a dislike for the situation and allows Turnus to become a

⁵⁰ Conte, *Latin Literature A History*, 279-281.

⁵¹ Hans Smolenaars, "Hector's Death and Augustan Politics," in *Hidden Futures*, ed. Jan Maarten Bremer (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994), 26-27.

somewhat pitiable figure. W.A. Camps observes that Turnus is unwilling to engage in battle with the Trojans upon their arrival and is pleased to avoid such engagement until the interference of Juno. He notes that it is the interference of the Goddess that drives him into a state of ungoverned violence, while the Trojans respond in kind under the guise of a divine mission. Camps accurately assesses the situation and shows how readers could have been inclined to view Turnus as a victim of the gods rather than as an aggressor.⁵² On the other hand, in this situation the Trojans can be seen as a disruptive force that has upset the status quo with violence in the same fashion that the Caesars upset the Republic's status quo with military conquest and consolidation of power. This forces the reader to think of Augustus because he did not achieve power through traditional means such as marriage or election, but rather he took it for himself and up-ended the political structure of Rome just as Aeneas sought to do. This is also a rather ironic element since the Trojan refugees were victims of similar aggression by the Greeks and yet by Book XII they are seeking to do the exact same thing to the Latins: simply put, this is not an ideal start to the foundation process of Rome.

Near the close of the epic the battle wanes in Book XII and the war comes down to a duel between Aeneas and Turnus. Just as this duel is about to begin, Jupiter finally convinces his wife Juno to allow the Trojans to found their city, and she reluctantly ceases interfering and supporting Turnus, whose anger now subsides, which reminds the readers that at this point the Gods are all on the side of Rome.⁵³ Camps additionally argues at this point that Turnus comes “to the realization that he is responsible for the defeat and death of those who have followed him. He tells Aeneas at the end that he

⁵² W.A. Camps, *Virgil's Aeneid*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 38.

⁵³ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book XII, 1100-1157.

deserved to die if Aeneas chooses to kill him.”⁵⁴ This shows that Turnus is a more humble figure than Aeneas in that he takes accountability for actions he was not actually responsible for while he was under the control of Juno. Such humility and placing his fate in the hands of Aeneas confirms Virgil’s intention of making Turnus a pitiable character. Aeneas, despite the support of the gods, still manages to act with dishonor when given this opportunity to kill Turnus. Virgil writes in Book VI that Anchises suggests that Aeneas “show clemency first. Cast down your weapons.”⁵⁵ Aeneas has the opportunity to heed his father’s warning by sparing Turnus life when given the chance. As Aeneas has Turnus pinned to the ground ready to deliver a final blow, Turnus begs for his life to be spared.

I will not ask anything for myself,
 But if a parent’s grief can still touch you,
 Remember your own father, Anchises,
 And take pity on Daunus’ old age,
 I beg you.⁵⁶

Turnus provides a reminder of Anchises’ words and begs his enemy to spare his life in an act of clemency toward his people. Thus this request becomes a combination of honor, clemency, and filial piety to obey the lessons of one’s elders. Despite this, Aeneas ignores the pleas and kills Turnus.

Aeneas ignores all that is honorable and kills his enemy begging to be spared. This is not to suggest that killing in battle is dishonorable, but rather that a confluence of factors clearly indicates that Aeneas should not kill Turnus, and that it is the wrong decision, but he chooses to make it anyway. In having Aeneas do this, despite having no well-known myth or story requiring him to do so, Virgil starts off the founding of Rome

⁵⁴ Camps, *Virgil’s Aeneid*, 39.

⁵⁵ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book VI, 994.

⁵⁶ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book XII, 1130-1134; 1154-1157.

on a negative and violent note. This harkens back to the imagery of the founding of the Roman Empire with the Battle of Actium. Augustus, then still Octavian, and Antony engaged in violent wars for years and upended Roman society. When Augustus finally won with the suicide of Mark Antony, he gained power, but he did so through bloodshed and dishonor. By displaying Aeneas' founding of Rome in this fashion, Virgil reminds the reader of the way in which Augustus founded the Roman Empire and the negative connotations attached to it. There are countless parallels between Augustus and Aeneas throughout the *Aeneid*, so by laying that foundation of connection through positive comments early on, Virgil causes the reader to make the connection when Aeneas acts in bad faith as well, thereby undercutting Augustus.

Virgil takes this one step further by ending an overall positive epic on a very negative note. The very last thing the *Aeneid* depicts is the death of Turnus. The message that a Roman reader is left with at the end of the *Aeneid* is one of Aeneas' violence and rage:

Saying this and seething with rage, Aeneas
Buried his sword in Turnus' chest. The mans' limbs
Went limp and cold, and with a moan
His soul fled resentfully down to the shades.⁵⁷

The last image of Aeneas is one filled with rage and violence in killing a weakened enemy. The last thing Virgil wrote was a death scene for a pitiable character. The impact here is strong since Virgil did not rehabilitate the image of Aeneas, but rather he found it appropriate to leave the reader with a negative view of him, and consequently a negative view of Augustus himself and his own actions.

⁵⁷ Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book XII, 1154-1157.

Over the course of the writing of the *Aeneid*, Virgil takes many opportunities to criticize Augustus in ways in which only educated Romans could potentially notice. The poet was keenly aware of his role in Roman society and the importance his work played in the education of the Roman elite. Yasmin Syed has found that Virgil's work was so impactful that it was taught in school's during his lifetime, that the educated would have had his works memorized, that his lines have been found in graffiti in Pompeii, and that generations later politicians and orators would use the works of Virgil in crafting their own arguments and speeches. Syed writes that Virgil's *Aeneid* was so pervasive that the "conceptions of Roman identity were tied to Vergil's epic."⁵⁸ Virgil understood the size of his voice in Rome and used it to great advantage. This knowledge enabled him to strike the right tone in his criticisms so that they would be obscure enough to be acceptable, but noticeable enough to have an impact with those who held enough agency to act.

However, it would appear that Virgil was not satisfied with how he handled his task to speak his truth about Augustan Rome in his epic. Fiona Cox explains Virgil's motivation behind his famous request to burn the *Aeneid* upon his death. Some have of course argued that Virgil was just concerned that the piece was unfinished, however Cox argues "the death of Virgil pivots around Virgil's eventual realization that he has contributed to infernal confusion by presenting through the *Aeneid* a lie which he asks his readers to accept as reality, namely the glorious beauty of the empire."⁵⁹ Cox's commentary clearly indicates a belief that Virgil wrote with purpose and that there is

⁵⁸ Yasmin Syed, *Vergil's Aeneid and the Roman Self*, (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008), 13-14.

⁵⁹ Fiona Cox, "The Death of Virgil," in *The Cambridge Companion to Virgil*, ed. Charles Martindale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 328.

more to the piece than one might initially believe. Virgil's work certainly carries a positive tone toward Augustus, even in light of the many instances of criticism, and serves successfully as a piece of propaganda. It is likely that on his deathbed, Virgil realized that in the Roman Empire his work could never be honest enough to harm Augustus and that contributing praise to the Emperor in any capacity had been a grave error to the point that destroying the *Aeneid* was his only remaining choice, a choice that was of course either never made or was ignored by those asked to carry it out.

From the beginning of the *Aeneid* to the very end, Virgil maintains a tone of positivity toward Augustus on the surface, while inserting criticisms that are revealed upon a closer reading of the text. Virgil was given two tasks, to create the great Roman epic and to do so through praising Augustus. Overtime, one can see the development of a new age of questioning the work of Virgil by looking beyond just what the text says. While it was once accepted that the *Aeneid* was propaganda, experts can now disagree and debate the real meaning behind the poet's words. While overall the *Aeneid* is a work that praises the divine origins and outcomes of the Roman people and their Emperor, it also serves as a critique on Julius and Augustus Caesar's Roman Empire and panegyricizes the Roman Republic that Virgil sorely missed. From the death of Priam, to his depiction of Carthage, to the Gate of False Dreams, and in Aeneas' war with Turnus, Virgil compares the contemporary Roman political situation to other civilizations with more republican institutions and his Emperor to other leaders who embodied more closely Virgil's ideals of what a good leader ought to be. While the epic certainly served its purpose as a piece of propaganda for Augustus' use, a closer analysis than the average reader would give the piece reveals that the *Aeneid* is more than a story and more than

propaganda. It is also a eulogy for a period of Roman history lost to the ages by the time of the *Aeneid*'s publication -- a Republic that would never return and would exist only in the memories of those who missed it as Virgil did and in the minds of readers who saw it through his eyes by truly understanding the words of his work.

Annotated Bibliography

Avery, William T. "Augustus and the *Aeneid*." *The Classical Journal*, vol. 52, no. 5, Feb. 1957, pp. 225–229.

Avery explores the history of the *Aeneid* and looks at the reasoning behind Augustus's commissioning of the text and Virgil's delays in writing it and wanting it destroyed on his deathbed. He concludes that the epic was in fact one of the most important pieces of pro-Augustan propaganda and that issues with its publication were due to Virgil's health and desire to present Augustus in a truly positive way.

Bowie, A. M. "The Death of Priam: Allegory and History in the *Aeneid*." *The Classical Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 02, 1990, p. 470, doi:10.1017/s0009838800043044.

Bowie compares myths from antiquity to actual historical events. He goes to great lengths to reveal the similarities between the death of Priam as depicted in the *Aeneid* and the death of Pompey as it appears in the historical record. He then analyzes the similarities and contrasts and how they would impact the reader.

Cairns, Francis. *Virgil's Augustan Epic*. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Cairns explores the relationships that are seen throughout the *Aeneid* and their roles in the story of Aeneas. He spends a significant amount of time analyzing the role of Dido in the epic and concludes that her downfall came at the hands of Aeneas, but that this was a necessary step for Aeneas to take in his divine mission.

Camps, W. A. *An Introduction to Virgil's Aeneid*. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Camps seeks to introduce readers to the literary and linguistic devices used in the *Aeneid* and the impact the text has had on the world. He goes into detail about many portions of text throughout the epic and explains how they could have been designed to affect the audience.

Conte, Gian Biagio. *Latin Literature: a History*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999.

Conte provides a highly detailed history of Latin Literature, a large portion of which is dedicated to the *Aeneid*. In that section he offers a book-by-book summary that is clear and concise along with the entire necessary historical context to understand the origin and publication of the *Aeneid*.

Cox, Fiona. "The Death of Virgil." *The Cambridge Companion Guide to Virgil*, edited by Charles Martindale, Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 327–336.

Cox explores the reasoning behind Virgil's request to burn the *Aeneid* upon his death. Her research concludes that Virgil realized he had contributed to a system he did not believe in and thus felt the text needed to be destroyed. She analyzes why he could have reached that conclusion.

Eck, Werner. *The Age of Augustus*. Translated by Deborah Lucas, Blackwell, 2003.

Eck's book covers the entire life of Augustus Caesar in great detail. He outlines the military and political conquests of the Emperor from his youth into his old age and provides a clear narrative of his life.

Grebe, Sabine. "Augustus' Divine Authority and Virgil's *Aeneid*." *Vergilius*, vol. 50, 2004, pp. 35–62. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/41587284.

Grebe writes about the importance of "auctoritas" and "potestas" in Virgil's depiction of Augustus and Aeneas in the *Aeneid*. She also explains very specifically the significance of each of Augustus' three direct appearances in the *Aeneid* and the importance of his indirect references as well.

Haarhoff, T.J. "The Element of Propaganda in Vergil." *Acta Classica*, vol. 11, 1968, pp. 125-138. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24591204>.

Haarhoff responds to the claims of Brooks Otis and finds that there is slightly more to The *Aeneid* than initially appears upon a first reading. He concludes that Virgil found ways to present the dark side of the Augustan regime in his writings and begins the trend of deeply analyzing the text of the epic for criticism of the Emperor.

Horsfall, Nicholas. *A Companion to the Study of Virgil*. Brill, 2001.

Horsfall goes through each book of the *Aeneid* to investigate the word choice and meaning behind the verses Virgil wrote. While he finds that there is a deeper meaning to portions of the *Aeneid*, sometimes he determines that there is nothing more to the *Aeneid* than what one sees on a first reading.

Knight, W.F. Jackson. *Vergil: Epic and Anthropology*. Edited by John D. Christie, George Allen & Unwin LTD, 1967.

Knight delves into the meaning behind the death of Priam and his depiction in the *Aeneid*. He concludes that the way in which the king is depicted conveys more than just the story of Priam's death and that it actually creates a contrast between the courage of Priam and the cowardice of his attackers.

Maro, Publius Vergilius. *Aeneid*. Translated by Stanley Lombardo, Hackett, 2005.

This is of course Virgil's *Aeneid* itself. Endlessly useful for textual analysis, Lombardo's translation is highly respected and used throughout the field of classics and is helpful in providing a firm foundation for one's understanding of the text and its meaning.

Morwood, James. "Aeneas, Augustus, and the Theme of the City." *Greece and Rome*, vol. 38, no. 02, 1991, pp. 212–223., doi:10.1017/s0017383500023603.

Morwood investigates the meaning behind Virgil's depiction of cities and civilizations in the *Aeneid*. He particularly focuses on Virgil's description of Carthage, Troy, and the villages in Italy and how they compare to then-modern Rome in order to understand potential comparisons and allegories.

O'Hara, James J. *Death and the Optimistic Prophecy in Vergil's Aeneid*. Princeton University Press, 2014.

O'Hara analyzes every mention of prophecy and speaking with the dead throughout the *Aeneid*. He explores how Virgil used these prophecies to speak about various topics and two send more than one message at one time including a potential underlying political motivation.

Otis, Brooks. *Virgil, a Study in Civilised Poetry*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1964.

Brooks contends that the *Aeneid* is simply a story without a political message beyond the previously accepted idea that the piece is a work of propaganda. Brooks firmly identifies Virgil's work as pro-Augustan and Virgil as a follower of the Emperor. Brooks represents the widely accepted school of thought about the text that has only recently been questioned.

Quint, David. "Epic and Empire." *Comparative Literature*, vol. 41, no. 1, 1989, pp. 1, doi:10.2307/1770677.

Quint investigates the depiction of Augustus on the shield of Aeneas in Book VIII of the *Aeneid* in order to determine what Virgil meant to say about the Empire in his writing. He determines that Virgil presented Augustus as an Emperor who smeared his political opponents by casting them as bad Romans and casting himself as the ideal Roman.

Shotter, David. *The Fall of the Roman Republic*. Routledge, 2005.

Shotter provides a written history of the decline and fall of the Roman Republic. Beginning with the Gracchus brothers and ending with the Battle of Actium and its aftermath, Shotter provides a narrative for how the Republic collapsed and transformed into the Empire.

Smolenaars, Hans, "Hector's Death and Augustan Politics." *Hidden Futures*, edited by Jan Maarten Bremer, Amsterdam University Press, 1994, pp. 124–149.

Smolenaars looks into the death of Turnus in Book XII of the *Aeneid* and researches the events leading up to it and the literary devices used to present his death. He concludes that the death represents more than what the text says and that each person involved represents other figures in antiquity.

Syed, Yasmin. *Vergil's "Aeneid" and the Roman Self: Subject and Nation in Literary Discourse*. The University of Michigan Press, 2008.

Syed explores the way the Romans viewed Virgil and incorporated his works into their own lives even while Virgil was still alive. She then applies her research of these connections to Virgil and applies them to how Virgil would have conducted himself in his writing knowing the impact of his words on the people of Rome.

Tarrant, R. J. "Aeneas and the Gates of Sleep." *Classical Philology*, vol. 77, no. 1, 1982, pp. 51–55. doi:10.1086/366677.

Tarrant questions the long-standing views of the Gates of Sleep and how other experts have long interpreted them. He dismisses the arguments that the gates simply represent the time of day or Aeneas having no real choice. He concludes that the Gates of Sleep are in fact highly important and are a commentary on the inability o