

OVERVIEW OF THE TUTORIAL:



AN INTRODUCTION TO VERGIL'S *AENEID*

© R. A. LaFleur, Franklin Professor of Classics, Emeritus, University of Georgia

[rev. 12/29/2017]

This independent tutorial will introduce you to the poetry of one of the most admired and most influential of all European writers and arguably the greatest Roman poet, Publius Vergilius Maro, "Vergil." The material you will cover includes the following:

careful reading and translation of extensive selections of Vergil's *Aeneid* in Latin

reading of the entire *Aeneid* in English translation

an overview of the life and works of Vergil, and the subject, historical context, and style of the *Aeneid*

an introduction to Latin metrics and scansion of the dactylic hexameter

a close examination of the literary devices and style of epic poetry

Your principal objectives in this tutorial should be to acquire the ability 1) to read, comprehend, and translate Vergil's poetry with some facility, 2) to scan dactylic hexameter, and 3) to understand and appreciate the literary and poetical qualities of Vergil's *Aeneid*. By the end of our work together, you should have become increasingly aware of Vergil's artistry and of the myriad factors that make translation an exacting art. Another objective is to gain some knowledge both of Vergil's career and times, and of the mythological, legendary, and historical background to the *Aeneid*.

Required Materials:

Richard A. LaFleur and Alexander G. McKay. *A Song of War: Readings from Vergil's Aeneid*. Glenview, IL: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2013. http://www.amazon.com/LATIN-READERS-SONG-WAR-READINGS/dp/0133205207/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1397683896&sr=1-2&keywords=a+song+of+war+readings+from+vergil%27s+aeneid

Robert Fagles, trans. *The Aeneid*. New York, NY: Penguin. 2008. <http://www.amazon.com/Aeneid-Penguin-Classics-Deluxe/dp/0143105132>

Recommended Materials:

Paul Comeau and Richard A. LaFleur. *Workbook for Wheelock's Latin*. 3rd ed., revised. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2016 (be sure your copy says "A Companion to the 7th Edition of WHEELOCK'S LATIN" on the front cover and title page, as that's the 2016 edition). http://www.amazon.com/Workbook-Wheelocks-Latin-Paul-Comeau/dp/0060956429/ref=pd_bxgy_b_img_y

Richard A. LaFleur. *Latin for the 21st Century: From Concept to Classroom*. Glenview IL: Scott Foresman-Addison Wesley, 1997. Used copies at http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/0673576086/ref=dp_olp_used?ie=UTF8&condition=used

Frederic M. Wheelock and Richard A. LaFleur. *Wheelock's Latin*. 7th ed., revised. New York NY: HarperCollins, 2011. http://www.amazon.com/Wheelocks-Latin-7th/dp/0061997226/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1397684156&sr=1-1&keywords=wheelock%27s+latin

About the Textbooks

A Song of War: Readings from Vergil's Aeneid is designed to introduce intermediate and advanced Latin students to Vergil's monumental epic poem, the *Aeneid*. The selections include all those on the Advanced Placement (AP*) syllabus, as well as Book Two in its entirety, which is preferred reading in both high-school and college classes generally; the text has been used with equal success both in secondary schools and in intermediate and advanced college courses.

The book's general introduction provides an overview of Vergil's life and works, a brief discussion of the subject, historical context, and style of the *Aeneid*, and a glossary of figures of speech and other poetic and rhetorical devices, including most of those listed on the AP syllabus and with examples drawn from selections in the text. While the text's notes, together with this glossary, should provide sufficient assistance with most difficulties of grammar, diction, and word order, a brief summary of stylistic features peculiar to Vergil is provided in the introduction as an overview. Also included is a discussion of meter and expressive reading: you are likely to have had at least some previous experience with Latin poetry, but if you have not been introduced to scansion or might benefit from a very basic review, this brief primer should prove useful. Finally, the separate book introductions summarize the individual readings, comment on major interpretive issues, and together provide an overview of the entire epic, which you will be reading in the excellent modern translation by Robert Fagles.

The Latin text itself, which includes macrons and is set in a highly legible font, has been newly edited, with attention to punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing, as well as to manuscript variants indicated in the principal editions. Latin words likely to be unfamiliar are glossed in the facing notes, with an asterisk marking those that occur more than once and which you should therefore commit to memory; all words in the text (except those that appear only

once and are glossed) are listed in the end Vocabulary, which is followed by several frequency lists for the text's vocabulary that you will certainly find useful for reviewing. The facing notes provide, in addition, assistance with peculiarities of grammar and word order, as well as comments on figures of speech, meter, sound effects, and other poetic devices; attention is drawn to grammatical terms, figures of speech, and the like, by printing them in the notes in SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS LIKE THESE; you should, at their first occurrence, look up and learn the definitions of such terms that may not already be familiar to you. A few remarks on textual problems have also been included in the notes, as a further stimulus to analysis and interpretation and to increase your awareness that the text of Vergil comes to us via numerous manuscripts with an array of variant readings.

Also accompanying the text are discussion questions on theme, structure, figurative language, metrical effects, and other topics with which AP and other intermediate and advanced students are expected to be familiar. Together with the notes, which they are designed to complement, the discussion questions are intended to assist you with, and provoke your thinking about, matters of both style and interpretation; while problematic constructions and stylistic devices are usually explained at least at their first occurrence, you will discover that, as you proceed through the text, fewer explanations are provided and more questions are posed. Finally, the book's numerous illustrations and literary excerpts are also meant to stimulate discussion of the text and its influences, and the four maps, custom-designed to include virtually all the toponyms mentioned in the text, will assist you with the narrative's many important geographical references.

It is my sincere hope that the text, *A Song of War*, and my tutorial guide will serve you well. Fagles' translation of the *Aeneid*, available in hardcopy, audio-book, and for Kindle, is quite modern and one of the very best available. If you need basic grammar review, I recommend *Wheelock's Latin* and the exercises in Comeau and LaFleur's *Workbook for Wheelock's Latin*. A useful reference for current or prospective Latin teachers is *Latin for the 21st Century: From Concept to Classroom*, which includes some very general but still helpful discussion of the Latin Advanced Placement course, updated on my *Song of War* website); new or prospective teachers should also ask me about my tutorial "Methods and Materials for Teaching Latin, on <http://rlafleur.myweb.uga.edu/TeachingMethods/index.htm>.

Preparing Assignments

Each of the twelve lessons in this tutorial contains both a reading and a written assignment. The reading assignment includes readings from the *Aeneid* in both Latin and English, as well as discussion material in the textbooks and/or this courseguide. Note the excellent glossary provided at the end of the Fagles translation; whenever a name or other proper noun turns up in the poem that is unfamiliar to you, it will be defined in that glossary.

Only a portion of your work for each lesson will actually be typed and emailed to me (directly in the body of your email or, if you prefer, as an attached WORD document). This work will generally consist of 1) your translation of a portion of the Latin assigned to be read, 2) your scansion of selected lines from those translated, and 3) short answer and discussion questions. Obviously you should avoid use of published or online translations, answer keys, teacher's guides, or any such resources, whatever the source. Whatever questions you may have that do not seem to be answered in either the textbooks or my tutorial guide should be emailed along with your written work. After reading your assignment, I will email it back to you with thorough feedback, including corrections, if any, follow-up discussion, etc.

The initial assignment has a listening-oral reading component: once you have emailed me that first assignment and I have returned it to you with my detailed comments, we will schedule an appointment for an hour-long telephone meeting (or an in-person meeting if you are in, or visiting, the Athens GA area), which will serve two purposes (a) to let us get better acquainted and (b) for me to provide you some assistance with expressive oral reading of Vergil's text, and, if necessary, with scansion. Additional, optional telephone meetings can be arranged for any of the subsequent lessons, should you wish, at my usual hourly rate.

Scheduling is pretty much up to you, except that I **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** doing **SOME** reading from the *Aeneid*, in Latin, *every single day*, even if only 10-15 minutes. And be aware that you must be prepared to invest the large amount of quality time that this tutorial will require for success; you should expect to spend 10-12 hours per lesson, including time for thoughtful reading and translation of all the assigned passages, as well as answering discussion questions. If you were taking this course in a university classroom, typically you'd be in class 3 hours/week for 15 weeks = 45 hours, and typically students need 2 hours of study/preparation time outside of class for each hour in, which means another 90 hours, for a total of ca. 135 hours. Decide how many weeks you'll spend in the tutorial and do the math: if you want to finish in 12 weeks (the fastest allowable schedule, given the limit I set of one lesson per week), for example, expect to spend up to 12 hours per week on the work. (*And I should add that if it appears a student is not making adequate progress, I reserve the unrestricted right to terminate the tutorial, refunding payment for any assignments not completed.*)

Websites

A wealth of information on Vergil is available online, of course. Some specific sites will be referenced in the individual lessons and are also linked on my Tutorials website.

Optional Examinations

Detailed information about the *optional* midterm and final examinations is provided in the course guide, immediately following Lessons 7 and 12. These two exams are comprehensive in nature and designed with the assumption that all the requirements of each lesson have been satisfied, not merely the written work.

