

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-17018-6 — The Cambridge Companion to Virgil
Edited by Charles Martindale, Fiachra Mac Góráin
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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
VIRGIL

The poet Virgil remains the most significant and influential figure in Latin literature, and this expanded and updated Companion covers his life, work and reception from antiquity to the present. The *Aeneid*, the *Eclogues*, the *Georgics* and the *Appendix Vergiliana* are all discussed, as are art, history, politics and philosophy. Virgil's literary style is carefully explored along with poetic traditions before and since, and chapters engage with his poems and their reception from perspectives including intertextuality, narratology, gender theory, philology and historicism. Leading authors cover topics from translations and commentaries to genre, authority and characterization, providing revised and updated recommendations for further reading. This volume is an accessible introduction to Virgil and his legacy for students and teachers, while also providing wide-ranging and in-depth investigations that will appeal to scholars of classical literature and other disciplines.

Fiachra Mac Góráin is Associate Professor of Classics at University College London. He has published extensively on Virgil and his reception and is regularly invited to speak about him in various countries around the world. He has also engaged in consultancy work for the BBC.

Charles Martindale is Emeritus Professor of Latin at the University of Bristol. His work focuses on Latin poetry (including Virgil), reception studies, English/Classics relationships and aesthetics, and he has published five authored or co-authored books and twelve edited or co-edited volumes, among them the five-volume *Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature*. A special issue of *Classical Receptions Journal* was devoted to his pioneering work *Redeeming the Text* (1993).

A complete list of books in the series is at the back of this book.

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Frontispiece: Simone Martini, Frontispiece to Petrarch's Virgil Manuscript (between 1338 and 1344), Biblioteca Ambrosiana (S.P. 10, 27), Milan. Photo courtesy of the Veneranda Biblioteca Ambrosiana. (This photograph is the property of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana. All rights reserved. No reproductions allowed.)

The picture is an allegory showing Virgil seated beneath a tree composing one of his books. The figure drawing aside the muslin curtain is the fourth-century grammarian Servius, whose commentary on Virgil was an influential source for later writers and readers: he symbolically 'reveals' Virgil to posterity. The other figures personify Virgil's books: Aeneas stands beside Servius, while below them a farmer pruning a vine represents the *Georgics*, and a shepherd symbolises the *Eclogues*. The two Latin inscriptions make the meaning of the image clear: 'Italy, benevolent country, you nourish famous poets. Thus this one [Virgil] enables you to achieve Grecian genius', and 'This is Servius, who recovers the mysteries of eloquent Virgil so they are revealed to leaders, shepherds and farmers.' The miniature was painted for Petrarch between 1338 and 1344 when he recovered his prized manuscript copy of Virgil's work, which had been stolen in 1326.

See Houghton, pp. 143–4.

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THE CAMBRIDGE
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VIRGIL

SECOND EDITION

EDITED BY
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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The original *Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (1997) was significantly the first in that series devoted to a single classical author. After two decades' worth of advancements in the field it was felt to be due a renewal. The second edition follows the philosophy of the first in providing what we hope are stimulating contributions on various aspects of Virgil that together offer an overview of Virgilian studies as now constituted.

Much valuable work on Virgil has of course been published since 1997. All chapters have been revised and updated here to take account of this work, some extensively, others more lightly, but all referencing recent publications (the only exception is Chapter 15, which, at the author's request, remains as it was in 1997, though we have added to the Further Reading). Partly in response to reviewers' criticisms, and partly in line with our own view, we have commissioned nine completely new chapters, including chapters on such central topics as characterization, intertextuality, authority, the defining qualities of Virgil's poetry, and his influence on the visual arts. We have also reorganized the sections, while still starting with reception, for the reasons given in the Introduction. Some reviewers were unhappy with the stress on reception, but since 1997 the importance of classical reception studies has been widely acknowledged; and the way Virgil is read today depends in large part on the responses of earlier ages. Indeed the revised Companion helps to flesh out the story further. A somewhat perverse decision was taken in 1997 to exclude the *Appendix Vergiliana* on the grounds of spurious authorship. A number of those poems, including the *Culex*, were long taken to be genuine works of Virgil, and the collection played a significant role in establishing what 'Virgil' signified – we accordingly remedy this omission with a new chapter. We have also added a chapter on St Augustine, a close and intelligent reader of the poems who had an authority comparable to Virgil's, and influenced subsequent Christian readings, particularly in the Middle Ages and Renaissance; and one on post-classical commentary, since commentaries have always had a fundamental impact on the way Virgil's

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

works have been read. Critics of the first edition also commented on its anglophone emphasis; we have tried to mitigate this shortcoming, particularly with regard to bibliography. All the original chapters remain available through the Cambridge Companions website.

We are very grateful to the authors for their cooperation. We thank Nick Freer and Daniel Hadas for bibliographical advice; Luke Houghton and Oliver Clamp for help with the index; and Nik Nicheperovich for his work on the bibliography and technical assistance. At Cambridge University Press we thank Sarah Starkey, Sophie Taylor, and their production team, including Sarah Green and her colleagues at Newgen Publishing UK Ltd. Finally, we extend particular thanks to Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press for his help and guidance throughout.

Fiachra Mac Góráin, London
Charles Martindale, York
April, 2018

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

cui fidus Achates
it comes et paribus curis vestigia figit.

The Concise Oxford English Dictionary defines a *fidus Achates* as ‘devoted follower, henchman’; and one of the aims of this Companion is to be as helpful as possible to its readers. It is devised for anyone, whether a classicist or not, who is seeking guidance and orientation for a fuller understanding of Virgil. We have assumed that most of those who consult this volume will have read parts of Virgil’s poetry if only in translation – for those with Latin the best introduction is to read some of the texts with a good commentary, of which there are many. We certainly cannot attempt to replicate the work of the commentators here; rather we offer a series of essays on topics which can constitute useful entry-points for the devoted student of Virgil. And though we aim to help and to provide what is sometimes called ‘basic information’, we do not seek to simplify or to offer any sort of bland orthodoxy. We assume that our readers (even if not expert on the subject) are seeking intelligent and sophisticated comment, and we hope that the book will prove exciting as well as useful, and will point to the shape of Virgilian scholarship and criticism to come.

This book is very much a collaborative endeavour; and I am grateful to all the contributors for responding so positively to the various demands made upon them. Genevieve Liveley took time off from her PhD to assist me most efficiently in the editorial work; she is also responsible for the ‘List of Works Cited’ and for the ‘Dateline’. I would particularly like to thank Pauline Hire of Cambridge University Press who gave patient help and advice throughout to a sometimes recalcitrant editor. Finally I would like to express my general pleasure in the task; all those who have helped to produce this book,

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whatever their differences of view about particulars, would surely be happy to be described as devoted followers of the poet whom Dante hailed with the words *tu se' lo mio maestro e 'l mio autore*.

Charles Martindale
Bristol, October 1996