

Vergil, Philodemus, and the Augustans



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The Epicurean teacher and poet Philodemus of Gadara (c. 110-c. 40/35 BC) exercised significant literary and philosophical influence on Roman writers of the Augustan Age, most notably the poets Vergil and Horace. Yet a modern appreciation for Philodemus' place in Roman intellectual history has had to wait on the decipherment of the charred remains of Philodemus' library, which was buried in Herculaneum by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD. As improved texts and translations of Philodemus' writings have become available since the 1970s, scholars have taken a keen interest in his relations with leading Latin poets.

The essays in this book, derived from papers presented at the First International Symposium on Philodemus, Vergil, and the Augustans held in 2000, offer a new baseline for understanding the effect of Philodemus and Epicureanism on both the thought and poetic practices of Vergil, Horace, and other Augustan writers. Sixteen leading scholars trace his influence on Vergil's early writings, the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics*, and on the *Aeneid*, as well as on the writings of Horace and others. The volume editors also provide a substantial introduction to Philodemus' philosophical ideas for all classicists seeking a fuller understanding of this pivotal figure.

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