

The Georgics



Virgil (70-19 B.C.) needs no formal introduction, as he has long been considered Ancient Rome's greatest poet and is globally renowned for *The Aeneid*, one of the most famous epic poems in history. Virgil's other greatest works are considered to be the *Eclogues* (or *Bucolics*), and the *Georgics*, although several minor poems collected in the *Appendix Vergiliana* are also attributed to him. Similar to Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid* was considered Rome's national epic and legend, and it was immediately popular within the empire. It is said Virgil recited parts of it to Caesar Augustus, and it is believed the epic poem was unfinished when Virgil died in 19 B.C. The works of Virgil also had a dramatic effect on other Latin poetry. The *Eclogues*, *Georgics*, and above all the *Aeneid* became standard texts in school curricula with which all educated Romans were familiar. In the millennium following Virgil, poets often cited his work. For example, Ovid parodies the opening lines of the *Aeneid* in Book 14 of the *Metamorphoses*, and Lucan's epic, the *Bellum Civile*, has been considered an anti-Virgilian epic, disposing with the divine mechanism, treating historical events, and diverging drastically from Virgilian epic practice. Even Gregory of Tours, who admired Virgil, quotes Rome's poet, and Virgil famously guides Dante through Hell in the Italian's great work.

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