

R.'s book is a wide-ranging analysis of several complex issues. It is engagingly written, and the author is clearly on top of the material. One of the many commendable features of the book is its outward-looking narrative. Instead of focusing on a European narrative alone, the author has contextualised these developments with reference to other parts of the world. This makes it a successful book and a good read. The consistently high-quality production of the book is in line with the standards expected from Cambridge University Press.

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MATTHEW DAY, *ENGLISH HUMANISM AND THE RECEPTION OF VIRGIL c. 1400–1550*.
 Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023. Pp. xii + 223. ISBN 9780192871138. £65.00.

The goal of Matthew Day's study is to evaluate the impact of Renaissance humanism on Virgil's reception in England during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Noting that studies regarding Virgil's English reception have been divided into either medieval or Renaissance periods – that is, either up to Chaucer or the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages – D. aims to explore both the continuities and changes from 1400 to 1550 as a bridge between the two eras. He accomplishes this through studies of Virgilian exegesis and early translations of Virgil in England. Ultimately, D. concludes that 'exegesis and translation of Virgil were shaped by the medieval inheritance, and developments were often gradual and piecemeal' (3). While some changes in exegesis and translation are perceptible due to humanism, continuity better represents the movement between the medieval and Renaissance periods.

In the first half of the study (chs 1–3), D. examines twenty-five manuscripts and forty-eight printed editions of Virgil of English provenance. While recognising areas of humanist innovation such as palaeography and decoration, he argues that methods of reading Virgil did not fundamentally change. Reception studies must have a foundation in reading practices left in books, and by analysing readers' annotations he determines that readers' glossing was not significantly altered over the period in question. Typical annotations in the manuscripts and printed editions were interlinear glossing of vocabulary and grammar, moral and rhetorical interests (*sententiae* and figures, respectively) and textual corrections. D. declares, 'Since Late Antiquity, the practices of Virgilian exegesis had been structured by the pedagogic disciplinary framework of grammar and rhetoric, and this well-established framework continued to structure the humanist study of Virgil' (9). He notes that two major humanist Virgilian commentaries of Cristoforo Landino (1487) and Jodocus Badius Ascensius (1501), which were printed in continental editions and present in England for pedagogic uses, both demonstrate this grammatical and rhetorical focus. This is not to say that there were no other features of reading Virgil present, as moral and epideictic aspects were evident, but D. maintains that these were not a point of focus for English readers.

Similarly, D. asserts in the second half of the study (chs 4–6) that Latin-to-English translations of Virgil also demonstrate continuities in the practices of translation for this period. Through an examination of William Caxton's *Eneydos* (1490), Gavin Douglas' *Eneados* (1513) and the Earl of Surrey's translations of *Aeneid* II and IV (c. 1543), D. posits that there is not a simple progression from medieval to humanist translations, but rather noteworthy continuities among them, especially from the influence of Virgilian commentaries and glossing, alongside gradual changes. Moreover, he claims that it would be incorrect to characterise the medieval period as one of adaptation and the Renaissance as the dawn of translation. For example, Caxton's significantly amplified and ornate work is translated from the French *Livre des Eneydes*, but most English scholars understate the French work's close dependence on the Latin text, as roughly one half of it is a direct translation from *Aeneid* IV. Close translations, then, were not introduced by humanism and Caxton's work ought not to be simply considered an adaptation. Also of interest is the author's challenging of the conventional wisdom regarding Surrey's blank verse translation as an example of humanist practice, for D. remarks that his formal experiments in translation were not

adopted by most of his contemporaries. Furthermore, his translation engaged in amplification of the Virgilian text, though to a more moderate degree, just as both Caxton and Douglas did.

D.'s final assessment is that humanism further promoted the reading of Virgil and cemented his canonical status. His opera gradually became more central to English educational curricula at all levels. Yet humanism did not significantly influence poetic exegesis of Virgil in this period. Humanist methods of philological and textual scholarship only gradually influenced Virgilian reception and certainly did not revolutionise reading practices. In fact, it was not until the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries that humanist dictionaries and grammars slowly came into use alongside older medieval texts. In the realm of translation, humanism also increased the number of translations of Virgil, but earlier translation techniques such as employment of loan words, use of extra material from Virgilian glosses and amplification continued into the sixteenth century in a more restrained manner. Having demonstrated such continuities, D. effectively argues that the periodisation of 'medieval' and 'Renaissance' reception of Virgil in England is undoubtedly too rigid. By bridging the gap between historical periods via close analysis of reading and translation practices, D. makes a compelling argument. The study challenges some accepted ideas about English humanism and should foster further scholarly discussion in both reception studies and translation studies.

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JUSTINE McCONNELL, *DEREK WALCOTT AND THE CREATION OF A CLASSICAL CARIBBEAN* (Classical receptions in twentieth-century writing). London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023. Pp. viii + 193, illus. ISBN 9781474291521 (hbk), £75.00; 9781350343146 (pbk); 9781474291538 (eBook); 9781474291545 (ePDF).

This compact monograph addresses the crucial role of the Greco-Roman literary tradition in shaping the aesthetic programme of the Caribbean poet and Nobel laureate, Derek Walcott. An Introduction that outlines the thematic scope of the work is followed by three short chapters whose titles reflect its 'theoretical underpinnings' under the rubrics (1) Time, (2) Syncretism and (3) Re-creation. Walcott's seminal notion of a 'simultaneous' temporality that collapses past and present linear historical moments is explained fully in the first chapter; the understanding of Walcott's poetics as embodying a 'transcultural' vision is the main focus of the second, while the third attempts to demonstrate the originality of Walcott's creative project in terms of his idea of an Adamic 're-naming' of components of the poetic landscape of the Caribbean. The discussion displays considerable overlap among the core arguments of each chapter, since the fundamental concept of 'syncretism' arguably constitutes the leitmotif of the study as a whole.

The vexed issue that dominates the book's purview is the degree of originality to be attributed to Walcott's bold appropriation and re-moulding of elements derived from the Greco-Roman literary canon. Central to the book's approach to the controversy is the attention it pays to Walcott's own published descriptions of his aesthetic programme in his highly acclaimed prose essays, such as 'What the Twilight says: an Overture', and 'The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry'. McConnell evinces a thorough familiarity with the rapidly growing international critical literature pertaining to her theme. Especially commendable is her inclusion of contributions made to the debate by anglophone Caribbean critics such as Edward Baugh, Thomas Figueroa, Michael Dash and Edward Kamau Brathwaite. The judgements put forward by these and other leading Caribbean critics are taken into account alongside those articulated by English and American scholars such as Lorna Hardwick, Carol Dougherty and Joseph Farrell. The depth of McC.'s archival research related to the topic of Walcott's self-presentation of his syncretising aesthetic is perhaps best illustrated by her acute comments on the working draft of the script that Walcott made for a projected film based on the interlaced narratives structuring *Omeros*. Although the film never saw the light of day, the poet's notebook, which contains drawings as well as text, has been preserved in a Rare Books collection at the University of Toronto, and McC. draws on the pioneering work