Introduction

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This is an exciting time for the study of neo-Latin literature, especially in the Anglophone world, in which awareness of this immense, and immensely varied, corpus of writing has been less well developed than elsewhere in Europe. A series of new publications, of which this is just one, promise to open up the field, broadening our awareness of the sheer volume of literature produced in the period between *c.* 1400 and *c.* 1700, and exploring a variety of critical and theoretical approaches. This is the first reference work dedicated specifically to neo-Latin literary genres, which builds on the sketches offered by IJsewijn and Sacré's still indispensable outline.[1] Specially commissioned essays from scholars around the world combine a survey of a given genre with discussion of representative examples, demonstrating in each case the difficulties and rewards of close and careful reading of these texts *as Latin*, and intended to pique interest and suggest avenues for interpretation and research. In combination with the recently published *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World* and the *Oxford Handbook to Neo-Latin*, scholars and students venturing into this most challenging, enticing and rewarding of literary landscapes will find themselves better equipped to make sense of what they find than ever before.[2]

[1] The first section of the second volume of IJsewijn's *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies*, prepared in collaboration with Dirk Sacré, has brief discussions of a wide range of genres (IJsewijn and Sacré 1998: 1–376). This volume in no way claims or aims to displace that work, the enormous range and concision of which remain indispensable. The scope of the *Companions*, however, meant that the treatments of individual genres were of necessity brief, with little space for comment or analysis beyond the telling example. Moreover, IJsewijn's volumes assume a high level of Latinity – quotations are not translated – and fifteen years of increasing scholarly activity in the field mean that the extremely useful brief bibliographies attached to each section have become dated.

[2] The shape of this volume, its focus on literary concerns and its arrangement by genre was chosen in part in consultation with two friends and colleagues, Sarah Knight and Stefan Tilg (both themselves contributors to this book), whose complementary and more general work, the *Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin*, was recently published by Oxford University Press (Knight and Tilg 2015). The compendious *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World* (Ford, Bloemendal and Fantazzi) was

Neo-Latin literature – that is, Latin writing in a broadly classical style and in a range of both classical and post-classical forms and genres – was a central part of the cultural landscape of Renaissance and early modern Europe at least until 1700, and in many places well beyond that date: Ludvig Holberg's engaging, widely read and profoundly influential Latin novel, *Nicolai Klimii iter subterraneum* ('Niels Klim's Underground Travels'), for instance, was published only in 1741.[3] Both the reading and writing of Latin was an essential element of advanced education,[4] and literary writing in Latin was held in high regard not only across Europe but also beyond its borders.[5] Authors seeking an international reputation naturally wrote in Latin – successful works published in the vernacular were rapidly translated into Latin just as works today are translated into English – and Latin publications linked literary cultures across Europe and encouraged interaction between them.[6] Moreover, a wide range of Latin literary forms – from epigram to historiography – were crucial to the establishment and maintenance of both formal and informal patronage and favour, and were also a common medium for social, political and religious comment.

Despite this, neo-Latin literature has remained neglected by scholarship, and (with very rare exceptions such as Thomas More's *Utopia*) unknown to the general reader: there are still relatively few reliable texts and translations, even of key works, and where critical assessments have been made the relevant scholarly literature is found in a very wide range of European languages, and often only in hard-to-access monographs and periodicals. As a result, any student or scholar who is not already both an expert Latinist and an experienced reader of Renaissance vernacular literature in the relevant region or regions may find the field bafflingly obscure.

published in 2014. Online resources have also transformed the field and continue to do so: see for instance Sutton's *Philological Museum* of neo-Latin texts and bibiliography (http://www.philological.bham.ac.uk); Ramminger's *Neulateinische Wortliste* (http://www.neulatein.de) and the Leuven Neo-Latin Bibliography (http://mill.arts.kuleuven.be/sph/links.htm). Neo-Latin scholarship is also appearing in online publications with increasing frequency: recent examples include Fredericksen 2014, Moul 2014 and Moul 2015a.

[3] This novel is discussed by Stefan Tilg in Chapter 19. See also Jones 1980, Peters 1986, Galson 2013 and Skovgaard-Petersen 2013.

[4] See Chapter 3 in this volume, by Sarah Knight.

[5] See IJsewijn 1990: 284–328 on neo-Latin writings in America, Africa, Asia and Australia. More recently, important publications include Laird 2006 and Haskell and Ruys 2010. Knight and Tilg 2015 includes chapters on Spanish America and Brazil, North America and Asia.

[6] A series of telling statistics on the ongoing importance of Latin publications are gathered throughout Waquet 2001, for instance 80–99 on Latin scholarship. On translations into Latin, see Grant 1954 and Burke 2007a. The international dimension of neo-Latin literature has been partly obscured by the tendency of individual scholars and research projects to focus on a particular geographical area.

This is a great loss, and not only to literary scholars. Latin language and literature was the single most significant constituent of secondary education for *all* Renaissance and early modern writers and thinkers, from Petrarca (Petrarch) and Shakespeare to Francis Bacon or Gottfried Leibniz, and early modern science as much as literature is caught up imaginatively with Latin literary texts.[7] When Abraham Cowley set out, in 1660, a proposal for a college of natural philosophy, dedicated to the study of 'things as well as words', the preliminary training that he imagines for the boys in the attached school is still one founded in Latin literature, albeit with an unusual focus upon those authors who treat 'of some parts of Nature'.[8] As Keith Sidwell notes in the final chapter of this volume, Neo-Latin Studies have in recent years seen an increased interest in writing in forms and genres – such as technical or scientific material – beyond those traditionally considered literary. Such material is beyond the scope of this book; but the centrality of Latin literary texts to Renaissance and early modern education, and the resulting pronounced literary qualities and stylistic self-consciousness of all kinds of writing, means that some appreciation of neo-Latin literary forms and expectations is of great value even for those whose primary interest is in intellectual history or the development of scientific writing.

The format of this volume is designed with such a wide range of potential readers in mind, and all Latin – even individual words and phrases – is translated throughout. Translation is easy to criticize, but hard to do well: thoughtful translations, sensitive to style and tone, are perhaps the single most effective tool available to us to disseminate neo-Latin literary material. But translation alone is not enough: the generic expectations and allusive associations created by, for instance, a sixteenth-century university play, a seventeenth-century ode, or Renaissance historiography in a Tacitean style are distinct from those of their vernacular equivalents, even where a 'vernacular equivalent' might reasonably be supposed to exist, and they are also different from the purely 'classical' tradition – often excluding even late antique works – in which modern classicists have usually been trained. A few English poets in the 1590s did, for instance, write recognizably classical 'love elegies' in English, and those experiments

[7] On the role of Latinity within Renaissance and early modern education see Baldwin 1944, Bushnell 1996, Ong 1959, Grendler 1989, Witt 2000, Black 2001, Mack 2014. As Hans Helander puts it, 'Up to the eighteenth century educated people learnt *nearly everything they knew* by means of literature written in Latin' (Helander 2004: 13).

[8] Cowley 1661: 46. For further discussion see Chapter 11.

are fascinating and in several cases markedly successful.[9] But to read such work without any regard for the vast hinterland of *neo-Latin* love elegy is to distort it almost beyond the boundaries of comprehensibility. The perception and comprehension of genre is a product of readers' own experience and expectation: many neo-Latin genres have almost disappeared from readability as a result.

This poses a particular problem for classical reception studies, a now fashionable and productive field. It is tempting for the well-trained classicist to seize upon, for instance, Latin love elegies by Massimi, Landino, Secundus or Campion in order to point out a host of parallels with the erotic elegies of Catullus, Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid.[10] The patterns of modern undergraduate classical programmes – in which Catullus, Propertius and Ovid in particular are prominent components – and the relative paucity of classically informed criticism of such neo-Latin material by scholars of vernacular literature make this procedure hard to resist.[11] And of course such a method is not without value: these poems *are* indebted to Catullus and the Augustan poets. Thomas Campion's first elegy, for instance, piles up a series of allusions to Propertius 3.1 and 4.1 and Ovid, *Amores* 2.1 and 3.1 – a pointed choice of passages all derived from the first poems in their respective books.[12] But if we read Campion's poem without any awareness of the neo-Latin genre of love elegy – a much larger and more varied set of texts than the classical Latin genre – we risk missing much of its force: Campion claims to be the first *British* bard to write love elegy, in a statement that is indebted to multiple statements of Roman poetic originality but which also engages directly with the wealth of neo-Latin elegy already in existence by the 1590s by authors from Italy, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

The same is very often true of vernacular poetry: it has often been observed that the charming lyrics which appeared first in Act 3, scene 7 of

[9] The best known examples are elegies by Ben Jonson and John Donne, and Christopher Marlowe's translations of Ovid's first book of *Amores*. The link between British Latin and vernacular elegy in this period is discussed in Moul 2013.

[10] I have been guilty of this myself, although Moul 2013 makes an attempt to discuss British love elegies in English and Latin alongside one another, and to suggest some links between neo-Latin texts. I have tried to develop this approach in Moul 2015d.

[11] There has however been a wealth of excellent recent work on neo-Latin love elegy. Pieper 2008, focused on Landino's *Xenia* but offering a superb overview of the genre as a whole, is particularly sensible on the possibilities and limitations of applying scholarship on classical Latin love elegy to the neo-Latin genre. See also Parker 2012, Braden 2010 and Houghton 2013 as well as Chapter 6 in this volume.

[12] Some of these correspondences, and Milton's inheritance of them in his own Latin elegy, are discussed briefly in Moul 2013: 310–12. For Campion's Latin verse see Vivian 1909.

Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (3.7.165–83 and 236–9) and were then revised and reprinted as poems 5 and 6 in Jonson's 1616 collection *The Forest* are artful patchwork translations of Catullus 5 and 7.[13] But they are much more profoundly 'Catullan' in the neo-Latin sense: there are countless brief Latin lyrics, from Pontano onwards, which number kisses or lament the death of pert and eroticized birds.[14] The theme is not in fact less but much *more* hackneyed than it appears to the modern reader who earnestly notes the parallel with Catullus. Volpone's deployment of poetry in that scene is far from sincere – in fact, when his attempt at literary seduction fails, he attempts to rape Celia instead.[15] The lyrics are meant to sound beautiful, but also unoriginal almost to the point of pastiche.

An appreciation of vernacular and neo-Latin literary traditions in addition to classical literature is equally important in the appreciation of early modern prose, whether Latin or vernacular. The extract from Erasmus' *Laus Stultitiae* ('Praise of Folly') discussed by Terence Tunberg in Chapter 14, for instance, combines sayings from Erasmus' own *Adagia* with an extended paraphrase of Horace, *Satires* 1.3: a typical blend of ancient and more modern sources, and of prose and poetry.[16] The work is addressed to Thomas More, and like More's own prose is marked by the liberal use of oral features – fables, mottoes and sayings – as well as a combination of scriptural and classical authorities. Early modern printing conventions, such as the use of italics or marginal notes to mark quotation or paraphrase, often contribute to the reader's appreciation of a work's constituent elements. Neo-Latin prose, especially the great wealth of 'occasional' material – such as speeches, dedications and letters – has, however, suffered even more seriously than poetry from scholarly neglect. For this reason this book includes an essay on neo-Latin prose style (Chapter 14) in addition to the chapters on fiction, satire, historiography, epistolary writing, oratory and declamation, and dialogue.

The decision to arrange this book by genre, rather than any of the other possible organizational schemes, each of which has its own advantages, was a pragmatic one: early modern critics show a consistent interest in generic distinctions and definitions, and readers who find themselves confronted by a significant piece of neo-Latin writing for the first time will probably be able to assign it at least provisionally to a generic category, but are still

[13] Herford and Simpson 1925–52: xi: 37–8. [14] See Gaisser 1993 and Chapter 7 in this volume.
[15] The very explicit eroticism of many of the neo-Latin Catullan poems in this tradition (much more so than Catullus himself) probably helps to suggest the true terms of Volpone's interest.
[16] See Chapter 14, 239–41.

fairly likely to be faced with a text or author for whom little or no scholarly commentary is available. Each chapter is intended to help such a reader gain a sense of the critical questions and concerns most likely to be relevant to their text.

Such an organization naturally has drawbacks as well as advantages: there is only limited space for considerations of wider historical and cultural practice, and many types of Latin writing (such as manuals of literary style and technique, or scientific material) have been omitted.[17] This arrangement also risks concealing the great generic diversity and flexibility that a single Latin writing career might encompass.[18] More seriously, the generic categories developed to describe classical texts – and often a rather narrow canonical definition even of those – are not always accurate descriptors of what one actually finds in neo-Latin writings. A good example is the distinction between epigram, elegy and lyric poetry. In the discussion of classical Latin poetry, these forms are fairly well demarcated: classicists will think of Martial for epigrams, Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid for elegy (that is, largely though not exclusively 'love elegy') and Horace for lyric. A second thought produces some complications: Catullus' short poems overlap all of these boundaries; and what about Statius' *Silvae* or (for the truly broad-minded classicist) the poetry of Prudentius?[19] But when we turn to neo-Latin the divisions are even harder to maintain: a large proportion of neo-Latin epigrams are written in elegiac couplets, and one also often finds poems in lyric metres or even longer hexameter pieces included in 'epigram' collections; elegiac couplets are also used – for instance by Thomas Campion – for Latin versions of English poems we would undoubtedly describe as 'lyric'. The term *silva* is frequently used as a title (and a formal category) for miscellaneous collections, whether of prose or verse.[20] Moveover, many neo-Latin poets experimented with metrical mixing *within* individual poems of a kind that is not found in any classical text: both Abraham

[17] The *Oxford Handbook of Neo-Latin* (Knight and Tilg 2015*)* covers neo-Latin writing as a whole, with less emphasis on specifically literary matters but including substantial sections on 'Cultural Contexts' and 'Countries and Regions' as well as 'Language and Genre'. The *Brill Encyclopaedia* (Ford, Bloemendal and Fantazzi 2014) offers a host of entries on many of these extra-literary modes, and is particularly strong in its survey of Latin intellectual culture as a whole.

[18] To get a sense of this, readers may consult the index (with many neo-Latin authors cited in multiple chapters).

[19] These examples are not chosen at random. All three were particularly influential texts upon neo-Latin poets and, in the case of Statius and Prudentius, to a much greater degree than is suggested by their current relatively marginal status in classics curricula.

[20] On Renaissance and early modern *Silvae*, see Galand and Laigneau-Fontaine 2013.

Cowley and Peter du Moulin, for instance, used a background 'narrative' metre to set off inset lyrics.[21] As work develops, neo-Latin literary criticism will, I hope, begin to develop categories and distinctions of its own, among which serious thought about how neo-Latin verse collections typically work *as* collections (rather than individual poems) is a particular desideratum.

The quantity of neo-Latin literary material is enormous, and yet its acknowledged 'canon' of most significant authors (insofar as there is one at all) remains strikingly small and uncertainly fixed, especially if we range beyond Italian Latin verse written before 1550.[22] Such uncertainty is both a challenge and an opportunity: obscurity is less of an obstacle to study when everything is relatively obscure. Contributors to this volume were given no constraints on the authors and texts they wished to discuss under their generic heading: as a result the range of citations is accordingly broad and, I hope, suggestive for future work in a great variety of directions.

Reading Neo-Latin Literature: Occasion and Intertext

Two characteristic features of neo-Latin literature present particular problems for its modern interpretation, literary appreciation and overall 'readability': the typically close relationship to social and political occasions, and the complex interconnections with both classical and contemporary literature, as well as the Christian tradition.

Modern readers tend to doubt the 'literary' credentials of prose or poetry produced for a specific occasion – such as a wedding, coronation, or school or university celebration – or as part of a particular social relationship, such as a request for patronage. (Although certain occasions or relationships, such as bereavement or courtship, are typically considered to be more 'personal' and therefore more amenable to 'authentic'

[21] Cowley 1668 (Books 3 and 4 of the *Plantarum Libri Sex* use elegiac couplets as the 'narrative' metre). In Peter du Moulin's *Ecclesiae Gemitus*, narrative hexameter verses describe the plight of the English Church, personified as a nymph, whose own song is an inset lyric in Alcaic stanzas (Moulin 1649: 39–40). The work was published anonymously in 1649, though later post-Restoration editions of du Moulin's verse acknowledge his authorship.

[22] Within that bracket, a kind of 'canon' emerges by comparing the choices made by successive editors of verse anthologies and series of edited texts; for the great majority of prose genres and for most later Latin verse we do not even have that starting point. It would be interesting however to compile a list of the authors and works most often included in early modern anthologies and text collections, such as the many *Delitiae* or François Oudin's *Didascalia* (Oudin 1749), and *Selecta poemata Italorum* (1684; second edition edited by Alexander Pope, 1740).

literary production.) This creates problems for the appreciation of neo-Latin literature, a great deal of which is 'occasional' to a greater or lesser extent: whether composed directly in response to or celebration of a particular person or occasion (such as George Buchanan's *Epithalamium* on the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to the French Dauphin), or less straightforwardly public material which is nevertheless framed and presented in a highly formal and often political fashion – for instance by its dedication to a patron or monarch.[23] From a large collection of epigrams, for instance, we might extract only one or two on the most apparently 'sincere' and heartfelt themes – such as the death of a child – for careful appreciation. To become sensitive and effective readers of neo-Latin literature, we need to be prepared to appreciate the artistic qualities and pleasures of formal writing, especially the literature of public relationships, and of highly stylized genres and their variations; and in addition, we should be aware that even writings of the most formal or even official kind may demonstrate stylistic verve, metaphorical power and emotive force.

George Herbert's series of letters as University Orator on the rather unpromising subject of the proposed draining of the fens offer an example of a typically 'occasional' piece of formal neo-Latin prose. The third of these four letters, addressed to Sir Robert Naunton, a former orator and at this time the secretary of state, begins abruptly:

> Quanta hilaritate aspicit Alma Mater filios suos iam emancipatos, conseruantes sibi Illos Fontes, à quibus ipsi olim hauserunt? Quis enim sicca vbera et mammas arentes tam nobilis parentis aequo animo ferre posset? neque sanè dubitamus vlli, si prae defectu aquae, commeatûsque inopiâ, desererentur collegia, pulcherrimaéque Musarum domus tanquam viduae effoetae, aut ligna exucca & marcida, alumnis suis orbarentur, quin communes Reipublicae lachrymae alterum nobis Fluuium effunderent.[24]
>
> With what joy does my Alma Mater ['Nurturing Mother'] look upon her sons, newly freed as they are, and preserving for their use those fountains from which they themselves once drew water? For who could bear with equanimity the dry breasts and parched teats of so noble a parent? Indeed none of us have any doubt that if a shortage of water and a lack of supply led to the colleges becoming abandoned, and those most beautiful dwellings of the Muses become like exhausted widows, or, the timber withered and rotten, like women deprived of their own nurslings – then certainly the combined tears of the Republic would pour forth a second river for us.

[23] For a brief consideration of occasionality in Renaissance vernacular literature, see Moul 2010: 211–17.
[24] *Epistolae* VI in Hutchinson 1941: 461–2, the third of four letters (IV–VII) on the same topic.

This extraordinary passage is intensely personified: the university is described, conventionally enough, as Herbert's *alma mater* (literally, a 'nurturing mother'), but Herbert presses the implications of this metaphor to remarkable lengths: the river Cam – whose flow is threatened by the planned and now cancelled draining – becomes his mother's breasts, parched and dry of milk if the draining goes ahead; the college buildings are the 'dwellings of the Muses', complete with the fountains of poetic inspiration, but when Herbert imagines them desolate and abandoned he compares them to *viduae* – that is, women who have lost their husbands. These widows are *effoetae*, 'exhausted' or 'depleted' – though the literal meaning is 'exhausted by childbearing' – and they are also described as women deprived of their *alumni*, nurslings, foster-children or pupils. The very timber of the buildings would be *exucca,* 'withered', or 'parched', a word which metaphorically relates back to the 'dry' and 'parched' breasts of the dried-up maternal river. In a single paragraph, Herbert and his fellow scholars and students are implicitly compared to nursling infants, foster-children and husbands; the University (and her river) their mother, wife and Muse.[25]

Traces of these resonant metaphors are found in Herbert's English poems (the Church is described as a mother in two poems from *The Temple*, 'Lent' and 'The British Church'), but they are much more marked features of his unjustly neglected Latin poetry. The insistent imagery of flowing liquid – water, milk, blood and even ink – dominates Herbert's four collections of Latin verse, particularly the poems of devotion (*Passio Discerpta,* 'The Passion in Pieces'), poetic inspiration (for instance the first and last poems of *Musae Responsoriae,* 'The Muses' Response') and the extraordinary collection composed in the immediate aftermath of the death of his mother (*Memoriae matris sacrum,* 'A Sacred Gift in Memory of my Mother').[26] This formal letter, composed and sent in an official capacity and rooted in a set of essentially conventional tropes and associations, is nevertheless both stylistically striking and emotionally powerful. Moreover, the consistency of imagery between this official note and the whole corpus of Herbert's Latin verse demonstrates the literary significance of

[25] The passage also suggests the personification of Jerusalem as a widowed and despised woman at Lamentations 1.1.

[26] See Drury and Moul 2015 for text, translation and brief commentary on Herbert's complete Latin verse.

Latinity: Herbert's Latin works – speeches, lyrics, epigrams and thank-you notes alike – share distinctive patterns of imagery and association that do not appear in the English material. His Latin style and *persona* are distinct from his literary character in English, and draw upon separate sources: classical literature of course, but also continental Latinity.

Yasmin Haskell's essay on neo-Latin literature and its classical ghosts (Chapter 1) tackles the question of classical intertextuality, and Tom Deneire, in Chapter 2, considers the complex relationship between neo-Latin and vernacular writing. I would like to conclude this introduction with a taste of how surprising, original and moving neo-Latin literature can be, not only despite but even because of its close relationship with classical texts.

Pontano's first eclogue, like Herbert's remarkable letter of thanks, begins abruptly and unexpectedly:

MACRON

Et grauida es, Lepidina, et onus graue languida defers,
Obbam lactis et haec fumanti farta canistro;
Hac, agedum, uiridi paulum requiesce sub umbra,
Declinat sol dum rapidus desaeuit et aestus.

LEPIDINA

En lactis tibi sinum atque haec simul oscula trado;
Vmbra mihi haec ueteres (memor es) iam suscitat ignes;
O coniunx mihi care Macron, redde altera, Macron.[27]

MACRON

You are heavy with child, Lepidina, and heavy too is the
burden you slowly bear,
A pail of milk and a richly scented basket packed with food;
Come now, rest for a while in the green shade,
Until the swift sun is lower in the sky and the heat less raging.

LEPIDINA

Look, I'll pass you a bowl of milk along with these kisses;
For this shade is reviving my old passions (do you remember?);
O Macron, my dear husband, kiss me in return, Macron.

Macron and Lepidina are newly married: this tender prologue recounts their first encounter and courtship, and is itself a frame for a mythological

[27] Text from Pontano 2011: 'Lepidina', lines 1–7.