

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### Neville, Alexander. *The Histories of Alexander Neville (1544–1614): A New Translation of Kett's Rebellion and The City of Norwich*. Ed. Ingrid Walton, Clive Wilkins-Jones, and Philip Wilson.

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Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (1469–1533): Faith, Antiquity, and the Witch Hunt

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any and all references to music at René's court rather than as a unified presentation of its musical life. There are also some editorial oversights, including typos and occasional errors or inconsistencies in the handling of translated passages. Readers should also be advised that French poetry and lyrics are not translated (except, inexplicably, on 163–64), so proficiency in French is a must. This book nonetheless makes a very compelling case for the importance of René's court as a musical centre and assembles an extraordinarily rich documentary base upon which to further explore its cultural riches.

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**Neville, Alexander.**

***The Histories of Alexander Neville (1544–1614): A New Translation of Kett's Rebellion and The City of Norwich*, ed. Ingrid Walton, Clive Wilkins-Jones, and Philip Wilson.**

Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2019. Pp. liv, 399 + 4 figs. ISBN 978-1-78327-332-4 (hardcover) US\$120.

The Neo-Latin histories of the sixteenth-century English humanist Alexander Neville receive a thoughtful and long-overdue treatment in this elegant, accessible volume. The book provides both a clear, lightly annotated transcription of the Latin texts and a stylish, articulate translation. For some of the texts, this is the first translation to appear in print. *The Histories of Alexander Neville* serves as a master class in combining literary, historical, and bibliographic insights to create a beautifully-informed edition that will become the new scholarly standard for Neville's histories and significantly advance our understanding of sixteenth-century culture.

Alexander Neville studied at Cambridge and the Inns of Court before advancing as a client first of Archbishop Matthew Parker and then of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, then serving as an MP late in Elizabeth's reign. His account of Kett's Rebellion, an event that roiled the kingdom in 1549, was published in 1575 as *De furoribus Norfolciensium Ketto duce*. It was the first printed account of that uprising and appeared with Neville's history of Norwich, *Norvicus*, as well as a brief civic chronicle including major officeholders for the

period from 1400 to 1574, *Nomina Praetorum*. Neville's account of the rebellion was held in such esteem that the Privy Council recommended a reprint as a classroom text, but Richard Woods's English translation of 1615 effectively eclipsed the Latin original as a historical source for later generations. The often-overlooked 1576 rebuttal made by Neville in response to some criticisms, *Ad Walliae proceres apologia* (A reply to the Welsh nobility), completes this volume, making for an extraordinarily accessible treatment of Neville's historical achievement.

Ingrid Walton, Clive Wilkins-Jones, and Philip Wilson make a clear case in their introductory essays that Neville's histories deserve further study as impressive undertakings in Tudor historiography and literature. Walton opens the introduction by detailing Neville's life with particular attention to Parker's role in the text's origins. Wilkins-Jones tackles Neville's historical achievement, judging him to have failed in his Ciceronian aims to be truthful and objective even as his Neo-Latin skills produced an elegant rhetorical result. Wilson and Walton join forces to discuss the question of translation, both in theory and in the choices that the collaborators made in this edition. The concerns that arise in re-translating *De furoribus*, as opposed to translating the long-neglected *Norvicus*, emphasize the challenges of rendering Renaissance Latin into modern English. With their introductory discussions, Walton, Wilkins-Jones, and Wilson show readers how Neville navigated the Neo-Latin and courtly cultures of Elizabethan England in his compositions as well as his career.

Most of the volume comprises facing-page presentations of Neville's four historical works, beginning with *De furoribus*. Pagination of the original print edition is helpfully indicated and footnotes seamlessly detail Neville's context, identify relevant literary allusions, or direct readers to related histories. The translations are masterful, suggesting something of Neville's much-admired rhetoric, especially in the first and last parts—while also underlining his difficulties, as when his civic history of Norwich struggles to celebrate the city's past while not valorizing religious practices which were now condemned as Romanist falsehoods. The one exception to the facing-page model comes with the *Nomina Praetorum*, where the editors presented Latin and English on following full-page spreads, the better to preserve the original version's layout with annual listings of officers on the left-hand side matched with corresponding chronicle details on the right.

Both as a model of Neo-Latin style and an exemplar of early modern historical practice, Neville's writings are well worth revisiting. What Walton, Wilkins-Jones, and Wilson have achieved in their collaboration—more than simply a transcription and translation—is remarkable. Students of Renaissance Latin would find this a valuable text on which to hone their own language skills or as an entry point to the higher levels of Neo-Latin rhetorical achievement. Literary scholars and historians of Tudor England can draw on this to better understand Neville's place in the intellectual firmament of his time. This book also invites consideration of the act and impact of translation, contemporary and historical, particularly visible in subtle conversation with the Latin original and Woods's Jacobean version.

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**Niayesh, Ladan, ed.**

***Three Romances of Eastern Conquest: Robert Greene, The Comical History of Alphonsus, Thomas Kyd, The Tragedy of Soliman and Perseda, and Thomas Heywood, The Four Prentices of London.***

The Revels Plays Companion Library. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018. Pp. 312. ISBN 978-0-7190-7857-6 (hardcover) £80.

In the Introduction to *Three Romances of Eastern Conquest*, Ladan Niayesh makes a strong case for the study of the romance: a kind of imaginary writing that straddles both fiction and drama and that was crucial to the imaginative representations and constructions of the East in the early modern period. The three plays, Niayesh argues, find “their place and significance within the extended family of their early modern stage romances of conquest over a Muslim East” (4). Every critical edition is a selection, and thematically-clustered editions of individual plays are no exception. The three plays, by three once-influential playwrights, are no doubt representative of the “eastern conquest” theme and the early modern theatre's interest in the topic. They were written and staged at the pinnacle of England's burgeoning engagement with the Eastern Mediterranean and the lands and mercantile territories beyond, and of the growing anxiety over the Ottoman conquest of the Christian lands