Neo-Latin poetry in English manuscripts
1550-1700

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Lo sum templo librum est nunc mult propter aedem.

Jam post idem,inquam quae tempora aquae,
Quadam signis (navis) praebat ideo.

Dixit Deniat ad utraque flumina
Nec caput pluviae secula mundi flebat.

Quoque iniqua, nonnisi monas? magis nutret Orion,
Quis est tempus sua rapit secula sam.

Infamis delecta dum est passa viriditis.
Et mediis admodum suspicius aqua manub.

Hansae larab miseri iam evestient montes,
Mituq larae iam misipara palat.

Tum jubite, carito labunt ✓ temporis motum,
Clari tempestatis et misipara praed.
Our materials

• Private notebooks (commonplace books, miscellanies of extracts), collections of several manuscript pamphlets, collections later bound together, sometimes alongside printed materials

• Some of these notebooks and collections are primarily literary, many devoted specifically to verse

• Some composed by the owner and friends, some by notable authors (from antiquity and/or the compiler’s own day)

• ‘Scribal publication’: professional copying as a form of publication in its own right
The poems

• We do not know yet what genres of poetry we will find, but they are likely to fall under three headings:
  • epigrams
  • elegies
  • odes

• We might also find verse letters, verse satire and epyllia

• Focus is on transcribing the neo-Latin only, but classical pieces will be discussed in commentaries when they relate to the neo-Latin

• Neo-Latin will be transcribed regardless of whether it is broadly contemporary with the manuscript or earlier
Aims of the proposed project

• To understand the role and significance of neo-Latin poetry in early modern English manuscripts

• To produce a digital edition with translations and commentaries for a *representative sample* of this material (several hundred poems)

• To identify and encode links to related datasets and enable other scholars to link their texts to ours

• To produce a series of print publications alongside the digital edition that analyse and contextualise the poetry
Three main areas of analysis

• The form and function of neo-Latin poetry in English manuscripts from 1550-1700: analysis of popular genres, subjects, and engagement with classical and later Latin authors

• Relationship between neo-Latin and vernacular verse: parallels, literary significance of transcribing Latin & English versions of same poem (why so frequent?)

• The politics of occasional Latin poetry: why did poets respond to certain political events with Latin verse? What was the political and social response?
Challenges we expect (1)

• Distinguishing between the types of Latin verse found in the manuscripts:
  
  • Between extracts of classical verse and neo-Latin poetry (not so difficult)
  
  • Between contemporary neo-Latin verse and instances where the compiler has transcribed existing neo-Latin of an earlier generation (much more difficult)
Challenges we expect (2)

• Authorship & provenance:
  • Manuscript material of this period does not always record titles or authors
  • Many compilers are anonymous or uncertain
  • Individual sheets may have been bound together later, giving the impression of unity or common provenance
  • Even attributed pieces can be unreliable!
Editing interface

• Custom editor-friendly collaborative interface for encoding the texts and producing translations and commentaries (underlying XML)
  • Consider working with Islandora (open source, could allow users collaboratively to edit, validate, display and compare texts & manage triplestore), or Perseids?
  • State of OCR for Latin handwriting?
  • Automatic semantic tagging?
  • Genre, metre, addressee, historical and mythological names and places will be encoded

• Interface will be developed iteratively and will enable research during the course of encoding (sample?), and will be made available as part of the outputs of the project
Linked Data opportunities (1)

• We don’t know yet precisely what it will be appropriate/desirable to link to (as we don’t know the content of the poems), but we are planning to encode and where possible link to unique IDs, where available, for:
  
  • Names (work with SNAP? – but later names?)
  • Places (Pleiades, Pelagios for classical – what else?)

• We might also link to specific terms in Ramminger’s online Neo-Latin dictionary
• Links to images, e.g. Scriptorium? http://scriptorium.english.cam.ac.uk
• Commentaries link to external bibliographies?
Linked Data opportunities (2)

• We also want to look at relationships between (parts of the) poems and other texts:
  • Editor-friendly?
  • Perseus
  • Other online collections & resources
  • We want to define relationships:
    • SAWS-like use of the <relation> element
    • Can also use/adapt the SAWS ontology (which is also being used for annotating text reuse in Perseids) - no need to reinvent the wheel
SAWS use of `<relation>`

- Creating stable URIs for sections of text

- TEI Guidelines now using SAWS as example of `<relation>`:

```xml
<relation
    resp="http://viaf.org/viaf/44335536/
    ref="http://purl.org/saws/ontology#isVariantOf"
```

This example records a relationship, defined by the SAWS ontology, between a passage of text identified by a CTS URN, and a variant passage of text in the Perseus Digital Library, and assigns the identification of the relationship to a particular editor (all using resolvable URIs).
Use/adapt the SAWS ontology

- Discuss and agree on what definitions we need for this project
- Ontology reuse
  - CIDOC CRM (cultural heritage) + FRBR (bibliographic records) = FRBR-oo
- Refining of terms: further discussion may lead to identification of new relationships
- Any revised ontology will be published as part of the project
SAWS Relations – examples

Between Materials:
- `isRelatedTo`
- `isDerivedFrom`
- `isOwnedBy`
- `isUsedBy`

Between CompilationInstances:
- `isBySameScribeAs`
- `isSequentiallySameAs`
- `isSequentiallySimilarTo`

Between ‘Linguistic Objects’:
- `isVerbatimOf`
- `isVariantOf`
- `isVersionOf`
- `isShorterVersionOf`
- `isLongerVersionOf`
- `isCloseTranslationOf`
- `isLooseTranslationOf`
- `isCloseRenderingOf`
- `IsLooseRenderingOf`

With thanks to Anna Jordanous

http://purl.org/saws/ontology (v2.0) - http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk
What the SAWS ontology can say about people: examples

isReferencedBy
isWrittenBy
isCopiedBy
isEditedBy
isMemberOf (Institution)
isAttributedToAuthor,
isTransmittedBy
isownedBy
isusedBy

commentMadeBy
marginaliaAddedBy
decorationAddedBy
(section) isIdentifiedBy

With thanks to Anna Jordanous
Future possibilities / wishlist

- Crowdsourcing annotations? Enough interest/how to edit?
- Comparisons with neo-Latin poetry elsewhere in Europe?
- Comparisons with related genres from the same period, e.g. similarities of style or content between epigrams and inscribed poetic epitaphs?
  - Also have shared influences from classical world – defining these relationships?