



Broken English: Dialects and the Politics of Language in Renaissance Writings

Paula Blank

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The English language in the Renaissance was in many ways a collection of competing Englishes. Paula Blank investigates the representation of alternative vernaculars - the dialects of early modern English - in both linguistic and literary works of the period. Blank argues that Renaissance authors such as Spenser, Shakespeare and Jonson helped to construct the idea of a national language, variously known as 'true' English or 'pure' English or the 'King's English', by distinguishing its dialects - and sometimes by creating those dialects themselves. Broken English reveals how the Renaissance 'invention' of dialect forged modern alliances of language and cultural authority. This book will be of interest to scholars and students of Renaissance studies and Renaissance English literature. It will also make fascinating reading for anyone with an interest in the history of English language.

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