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EDITOR'S NOTE

## Marvell, Europe and Cultural Negotiations – Introduction

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This is the introduction to the first volume of Andrew Marvell and Europe.

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*No Man is an Iland, intire of itselfe; euery man is a peece of the Continent, a part of the maine; if a Clod bee washed away by the Sea, Europe is the lesse, as well as if a Promontorie were, as well as if a Mannor of thy friends, or of thine owne were.*

– John Donne, *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions* (1624)

In 1982 Sir Alec Douglas Home, a former British Prime Minister, contributed an editorial to *The Times* in which he took up this extract from Donne's seventeenth Meditation to justify what he considered to be the organic link between the Falkland Islands and the UK ('We Are All Falklanders Now', 13 April 1982). Home willingly omitted the reference to the continent with a view to avoiding any possible connection between the Falklands and South America. By so doing, he also skipped the reference to Europe.

The Donne quote still resonates in today's post-Brexit world. It is not absurd to posit that Britain is still a 'piece of the [European] continent', as it was in the seventeenth century. This double special issue of *Marvell Studies*, entitled *Marvell and Europe*, aims to explore Andrew Marvell's political and literary interactions with Europe. The articles follow up on an international conference hosted by the Université

de Strasbourg and the Université de Haute-Alsace (France) in June 2016 and sponsored by the Andrew Marvell Society. A full understanding of Andrew Marvell's verse and prose writings requires an appreciation of their European context. Marvell himself traveled to the European Continent repeatedly: between 1642–3 and 1647 he visited Holland, France, Italy and Spain; in 1655–6 he stayed at the Protestant Academy at Saumur, France, with Oliver Cromwell's ward, William Dutton; in 1662 to 1663 he was in Holland on state business; and between 1663 and 1665 he was part of the Earl of Carlisle's embassy to Muscovy, Sweden, and Denmark. Contemporary events, such as the three Anglo-Dutch wars of the mid-century, afforded him ample material for his satires and prose polemics, and early modern European literature more widely – such as the work of the *libertins érudits* – deeply informed his poems and prose.

The present volume contributes to the transcultural field of research which early modern criticism has recently adopted and offers multiple perspectives as well as interdisciplinary approaches. The first issue, 'Marvell, Europe and Cultural Negotiations', looks at the way cultural transfers in Europe impacted on Marvell's writings. The second issue, 'Marvell, Europe and Social Negotiations', discusses Marvell's involvement in political and social interactions on the European continent.

Nigel Smith's paper opens the first issue. It highlights the interconnectedness of diplomacy and literature. As a diplomat Marvell was put into contact with foreign literatures and cultures which he imported into his own writings. He was conversant with European comic prose which shaped his satires. Marvell's knowledge of Greek and his interest in the *Greek Anthology* percolate through his verse. His interactions with foreign cultures illustrates the primary importance of cultural transfers in early modern Europe.

Martin Dzelzainis explores the reading practices of some dissenting academies in the late seventeenth century. In his essay he shows that pornography, including Nicolas Chorier's licentious works, was in circulation among members of these institutions and he argues that this casts light upon the reception of Marvell's satires before the 1688 Revolution.

Sean McDowell studies the use of neo-Stoic rhetoric in Marvell's correspondence. He suggests that plain discourse as defined in Justus Lipsius's *Epistolica Institutio*

provides Marvell's letters with an artistic dimension of their own. Paradoxically, the deliberate choice of an unadorned style turns them into poetic pieces.

In his essay 'Andrew Marvell: Traveling Tutor' Timothy Raylor approaches a still undocumented facet of tutoring – how to educate young gentlemen on their Grand Tour. He points out that Marvell's stints of tutorship had raised hopes in him of advancing his career. His expectations were not met in the end but Marvell drew inspiration from his teaching experiences with young men for the writing of his poetry and prose.

Stephanie Coster draws upon a newly discovered letter by the Earl of Clare to Sir Edward Harley to investigate Marvell's nonconformist networks. Marvell acted as a mediator in Clare's quest for a tutor to take charge of his son's education and accompany him on his tour of Europe. The letter is revealing of Marvell's activity as a tutor after the Restoration and of his connections with the nonconformist sphere.

All these essays make it clear that, despite political and religious conflicts, the circulation of ideas and transnational exchanges between the British Isles and the European continent were key features of the education of the British gentry and nobility. Reading Marvell in a European context helps to form a clearer idea of how much a source of attraction and suspicion was the European Other in Britain in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

## Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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