ESSAY

Transvernacular Poetry and Government: Andrew Marvell in Early Modern Europe

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Marvell’s experiences as traveling tutor, diplomat and political agent add a dimension of real international encounter in his poetry and prose that stands in addition to the literary citation or quotation of non-English books, and makes his verse distinctive among his contemporaries. This essay maps some of the literary landscape and the politics of literature in the places he visited in Europe, Russia and Scandinavia, and not least the monarchical absolutism experienced by some writers in these places. While some of this encounter and literary knowledge is reflected in his writing, other parts are not. The dominant pattern is that the north European encounter is in general not met by northern literary influence in Marvell’s writing: features of citation, quotation, allusion and echo are largely to southern European sources: mostly French and Italian, but also Spanish. Marvell’s interest in the longer history of lyric is set in the context of the Thirty Years War that seriously inhibited access to valuable ancient manuscripts. The question of the possible influence of some of Marvell’s writings, especially his poetry, in seventeenth-century Europe is discussed. It is to be hoped that the geography of poetry begun here will help illuminate the European dimensions of Marvell’s writings as more concrete details of his activities and his writings in Europe as well as in England are discovered.

Keywords: diplomacy; patronage; politics; poetic form; Europe; poetic allusion
The misunderstanding of Marvell’s comparison of Charles II and the Czar by the Russian court officials is an incident well known to Marvell specialists. It involved the invocation of Ovid, whom the English were surprised to find improperly known, as they understood Latin, in Moscow. Yet perhaps more revealing is Guy Miège’s marginal and summary comment on this unhappy diplomatic mess:

And indeed there being no literature amongst them, they have no occasion to leare the Original Languages, so that few of them do understand Latin. True it is that in the Court some have the curiosity to learn it, as this Golozof who is spoken of before. Which gave my Lord occasion to write sometimes in Latin.1

In other words, the Earl of Carlisle’s embassy considered themselves good Europeans and humanists: literature (i.e., the learning of antiquity) was the medium through which international relations should happen. Miège noted further consequences of the negligence of such cultivation in Muscovite culture. This was sexual decadence:

But Vice having (as Plutarch observes) many baits and allurements, by the motion and representation of which, it gives the Passions several encroachments to entangle themselves: So may I say of Drunkenness, that it hath its attraction, and draws men into Lasciviousness and Excess. Amongst the rest of the World, the Moscovites do furnish us with experiments of this kind, both the Women and the Men giving themselves over to Ebriety, there

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1 Guy Miège, A relation of three embassies from His Sacred Majestie Charles II to the Great Duke of Muscovie, the King of Sweden, and the King of Denmark. Performed by the Right Hoë the Earle of Carlisle in the years 1663 & 1664 (London, 1669), 217.
is a concomitant addiction to Wantonness. True it is, the Czar permits not any publick Brothels, but the Drunkenness and Idleness wherewith this Country is excessively delighted, is the occasion of so great irregularity, that Sodumie it self is no stranger to it.

Quaeritur Aegysthus quare sit factus adulter,
In promptu causa est desidiosus erat.

Ovid.

Upon this score the Insolencies they commit in their ordinary Quarrels are insupportable. Upon all occasions they make no scruple of upbraiding one another with Incest, Sodumie, and such crimes, as the very thought of them ought to be horrid and abominable.2

The memory of the Moscow embassy stuck in Marvell’s mind, so that in 1673 ecclesiastical supremacy was symbolized for him in the Easter ceremony where the Czar leads the Patriarch’s donkey.3 The invocation of logic in the dispute about free will between John Howe and Thomas Danson in 1678 evoked traumatic memories of the difficulty to be had with logic as a method in Moscow in 1664, conjunct with an invocation of the Samoyards, the Siberian cannibals encountered in Russia.4

Poetry, especially poetry in Latin, was a means of praise, a potential gift and hence a tool in diplomacy. It was decidedly unhelpful that the Muscovites were of the Orthodox or Eastern Church and did not know west European Latin: in 1664 and in this delicate context, international relations frayed. In these circumstances, the liberality of humane letters is indeed fatal under the gaze of absolutist or tyrannical power. Marvell noted thirteen years later in 1677 that a Polish poem of the 1630s had been seen as a cause of a war declaration by the Czar.5 By 1672 Louis XIV was in

2 Miège, A relation, 47.
4 Miège, A relation, 83–85, mentioned in Marvell, Remarks upon a late disingenuous discourse (1678), PW, 2: 458.
Marvell’s view behaving like a Czar to the Dutch, declaring war because ‘such is our pleasure’. This was a style ‘that nothing but some vain French Romance can parallel or justify the Expression’. Elsewhere Marvell occasionally reaches further afield to the Indies, east and west, and east Asia to find examples of extravagant despotism, and of course in this he is by no means unusual in his time and place. This all seems a long way from the trifling translation quibbles, the ‘Inadequation of Languages’, that Francis Turner, Marvell’s butt in Mr. Smirke (1676), thought was no obstacle to what should be a union of western and eastern Christians. Yet the zone of crossing languages in any place was in fact intensely sensitive. Marvell noted the issue when recording a barbed joke in the year of his death: ‘So he that apologiz’d for using a Forein tongue, was told that no man had prohibited him his Native Language in his own Country.’

Nationhood known through literature and literary difference was made evident by travel. David Wallace’s highly ambitious and remarkable edited collection of essays record literary journeys in medieval Europe and Europe’s edges. It is a map of the border crossings and encounters that define literary careers and that make translations come into being: ‘sequences of places linked by trade, travel, topography, language, pilgrimage, alliance, disease, and artistic exchange [...] Literary cultures helped speed recovery from this unprecedented “ground zero” experience [of the

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6 Marvell, An account, 2: 263.
7 E.g., ‘This indeed of our Author’s is Great: and yet it reacheth not a strain of his fellow Pendets in the History of the Mogol: where he tells Dancehment Kan, That when you he put his foot in the Stirrup, and when he march’d upon Horseback in the front of the Cavalry, the Earth trembled under his feet, the eight Elephants that hold it on their heads not being able to support it. But enough of this Trash’, The Rehearsal Transpro’d, PW, 1: 109; ‘Or, would he (with all Reverence be it spoken) exchange his Kingdom of England for that of Macassar? where the great Arcanum of Government is the cultivating of a Garden of venemous Plants, and preparing thence a Poyson, in which the Prince dips a Dart, that where it does but draw blood, rots the person immediately to pieces; and his Office is with that to be the Executioner of his Subject’, PW, 1: 109; ‘It would look too big for a company of beggarly Fanaticks, to be waited upon in as much Majesty as Obeshankanogh the King of Virginia, that had two Squires of the Body in constant attendance, to lift up his Eye-lids as oft as he conceiv’d any man worthy to be look’d upon’, Marvell, Mr. Smirke, or, The divine in mode, PW, 2: 102–3; ‘This is prity, and most softly said, as if it were by the Great Mogul lying upon a silken-bed, and leaning upon Cushions,’ Marvell, Remarks upon a Late Daisingenuous Discourse, PW, 2: 440.
8 Marvell, Remarks, PW, 2: 418.
bubonic plague of 1348, the ‘Black Death’ providing solace, distraction, and new ideals to live by.\textsuperscript{9} International knowing is shared across languages, in that very mutable space where the semantic specificities of different languages meet.

As might befit someone who traveled across Europe in at least two major journeys lasting more than a year, and several shorter stays in France or the Netherlands (at least three), Marvell’s poetry itself contains implied journeys. You can glimpse the European scenes, places and interests in the verse, even when the subject matter is of a resolutely insular nature. Often there is an alliance of genre and subject matter: ‘The Gallery’ is like Marino’s ‘La Galeria’, but it also contains informed, sustained reference to continental paintings: furthermore the poem documents the translatio of the Gonzaga family’s paintings from Mantua to London. ‘Little T. C.’, we now know, represents the Low Countries fashion of painting people within a border made of flowers.\textsuperscript{10} This feature is also in the satires. By then the English collecting of portraits was distinctive in the European art scene. In \textit{Last Instructions} the portraits of English figures reveal their shortcomings, while the Dutch profitably enter literary space that should be English, the pastoral, even inventing a new genre, the nautical pastoral.\textsuperscript{11}

The landmarks of the Carlisle embassy’s journey (in which mission Marvell was secretary) began in 1663 even before the ships had left the mouth of the Thames, and they were always framed in Marvell’s mind by the sense of English insularity: famously in \textit{Upon Appleton House} ‘that dear and happy isle, /[…]/ Thou Paradise of four seas, /[…]/ But, to exclude the world, did guard/With wat’ry if not flaming sword’, but also in respect of church history, as he later put it in \textit{Mr. Smirke}: ‘we in England, that are another world, that are under an imperial crown, that are none of them, [...] but have a distinct Catholick Faith within our four Seas.’\textsuperscript{12} Moreover, the

\textsuperscript{12} Marvell, \textit{Mr. Smirke}, \textit{PW}, 2: 107–8. The relationship between home and displacement in Marvell’s verse is now explored in A. D. Cousins, \textit{Andrew Marvell: Loss and Aspiration, Home and Homeland in Miscellaneous Poems 1681} (London and New York: Routledge, 2016).
business of overcoming that divide challenged Marvell. Doing the work of diplomacy felt awkward and a strain to him: one can feel his acute sense of embarrassment at the acting involved in the very moment of official international communication:

It was thought notwithstanding by most men that his looks might have past any where but with a man of Sir Josephs delicacy. For neither indeed had Master Harrington ever the same opportunities that others of practicing the Hocus Pocus of the Face, of Playing the French Scaramuccie or of living abroad to learn how to make the Plenipotentiary Grimass for his Majesties service.  

While Marvell was much respected by the States General’s envoy in Westminster in 1659, perhaps he was happier doing diplomacy at one remove, instanced in his writing of the panegyric to Queen Kristina, while remaining in Eton. It is no surprise to find, as Nicholas von Maltzahn reports in another essay in this collection, that other English diplomats in Stockholm tried to separate Marvell from Carlisle so that, in their view, more effective diplomacy could take place.

As for those journeys, we know something of the literary landscape that the Carlisle embassy encountered, and the circumstances that lay behind it. It is important to understand the social context of the literary landscape that Marvell encountered since his poetry is so closely related to or a part of diplomacy and of international relations.

While in Denmark in late October and November 1664, Marvell would have been aware of one particular resident of the castle in Copenhagen, although not as an author but an extravagant and politically contentious figure. Leonora Christina, Countess Ulfeldt, born Countess Leonora Christina Christiansdatter til Slesvig og Holsten (1621–98), was the morganatic daughter of King Christian IV of Denmark.

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13 An Account, PW, 2: 308.
When, already an exile, and while Ulfeldt was accused of treason by the Danish crown (her husband, Corfitz, Count Ulfeldt had conspired, sometimes with Swedish help – even to the extent of planning an aristocratic republic – against the Danish crown, since 1660 fashioned under Frederick III as an absolute monarchy) Leonora Christina visited the court of Charles II seeking repayment of a loan made by her husband to the King when he himself was in exile. After some courtesy Charles had her arrested as she was leaving England, and sent her to Frederick III in Denmark in August 1663, just fourteen months before the Carlisle embassy’s arrival. He had been given a command to do so by the King in a letter. She had been accused, in all probability falsely, of attempting to poison Frederick. Sounds familiar? Sounds like an old play?

Leonora was not executed but she was interrogated, and refusing to capitulate was compelled to watch Ulfeldt burned in effigy. He fled through Europe and, under a false name, died in a boat on the Rhine in February 1664. Between 1663 and 1685 she was incarcerated without charge or trial in the Blue Tower in Copenhagen’s Castle. She endured sparse, deeply humiliating and insanitary conditions, but adjusted to her circumstances, enough to write about what she could see from her cell, the other prisoners and their attendants, and the pest life within it.

During her imprisonment and for the twelve years she lived afterwards, she composed her *Jammers Minde* (‘Memory of Sorrow’), intended for her children, and published in print only in 1869, now regarded as a classic, and widely taught; considered as both history and literature in Danish schools. Events earlier in her life

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15 See Michel Rousseau de la Valette, *The life of Count Ulfeld, great master of Denmark, and of the Countess Eleonora his wife done out of French* (London: s.n. 1695).


were recounted in French in her *Lettre à Otto Sperling*, completed in 1673, but also not published until much later, this time in 1958. She also assembled a collection of portraits of female exemplarity: *Healtinners Pryd* (Heroines’ Adornment: 1683). These figures were un-liberated Isabella Thwaiteses, and the State of Denmark (in the reigns of Frederick III and Christian V) looked like Shakespeare’s Elsinore as run by King Claudius and a guilt-free Queen Gertrude. As in *Hamlet*, the King of England was all too obliging.

At the same time there were literary figures in diplomatic and courtly contexts who tried to project their reputations and influence in other nations through diplomatic channels. One obviously notable figure in the Swedish court, which was visited from 8 September until mid-October 1664 by the Carlisle embassy, after Muscovy and before Denmark, was the civil servant, linguist and poet Georg Stiernhielm, who would eventually be elected a member of the Royal Society in 1669 despite the objections of several of its members. Stiernhielm argued that Gothic, which he thought was the same as Old Norse, was the original language. Thus he was an exponent of Goticism, the idea that the Nordic countries were the cradle of mankind, and Stiernhielm also promoted Swedish exceptionalism. In other words, Scandinavian letters was undergoing the kind of revival, with corresponding ideological apparatus, that French and English had undergone in the previous century. Stiernhielm studied in Germany and his ideas resemble some of the arguments for German linguistic purity made at this time.

Stiernhielm was the first poet to use classical quantitative meter in Swedish. He was adapting metrical practice applied to German by Martin Opitz, but such a Swedish verse practice had already been suggested in theory by Andreas Arvidi in

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1651. Stiernhielm’s collected works *Musæ Suethizantes* (1668) is regarded as the first important Swedish book of poetry, but his very considerable list of publications argues for a more extensive and earlier recognition of his accomplishment. Urban Hjärne (1641–1724), Cartesian and Paracelsan, adapted Dutch models in order to present in 1665 the first Swedish-language neoclassical tragedy, *Rosimunda* (1665), involving transformation of historical tragedy into a critique of queenship and the role of women in the governance of the state, themes developed after the abdication of Queen Kristina in 1654, and in plain contradiction of Marvell’s praise of Kristina.

Stiernhielm was a language idealist, and he tried in *Hercules* (1658) to prove that words and things were equated. The construction of the edition was intended to have a big impact, and it did. ‘One of Stiernhielm’s students, Bengt Skytte, believed that linguistic difference was the root of all wars and conflicts in the world.’ This linguistic idealism was part and parcel of a reform outlook that drew the attention of the Hartlib Circle in London, with whose members Marvell’s connections are well known. Nonetheless, we can only imagine that Marvell would have been skeptical of this extreme approach, but would have known exactly its dimensions: ‘the root *Mo* (Mu) means aging and darkness, thus “Döden molmar i mull, allt hwad här glimmar och gläntsar” (Line 67; “Death drags to dust, all that glitters and glistens”). The vowel “i”, since it falls in the middle of the vowel series, represents the meridian, a high point for the sun as well as the vowel series. “I” represents something penetrating, especially after “p”, so the word “pil” (arrow), the attribute of Astrild, is the perfect

example of a word clearly mirroring the thing to which it refers. The “i” in the word’s center becomes the point of the arrow. This is Miltonic to some degree, and indeed shares a convincingly ‘gothic’ character with Theodore Haak’s translation of Paradise Lost, so we might expect Marvell to have understood its intentions, and to have appreciated its goals within the confines of epic genre. Moreover Stiernhielm’s embedded emblems fit well with the emblematic elements in Marvell’s verse. What Marvell would have thought of a man who resisted the strong French influence in educated and courtly Swedish culture is another matter. Like some German-speaking contemporaries, Stiernhielm wished to rid Swedish of foreign influences and words; Marvell incorporates them and in doing so expands considerably his poetic capability.

Back in Copenhagen, writing vernacular poetry that expressed a nation or a country could be regarded as subversive, especially if it emanated in the language and culture of a subordinate state, such as Norway (Sweden having freed itself from Danish influence in the previous century at enormous cost of life and in an extraordinarily complicated way). Petter Dass (1647–1707), Lutheran priest, wrote hymns and landscape poetry in Norwegian. His father was a Scottish merchant, Peter Dundas. Nordland’s Trompet is a topographical poem praising the landscape and people of northern Norway, and it is in Norwegian, written between the 1660s and 1690s, but only published first in print in 1739, since printed Norwegian was forbidden in seventeenth-century Denmark. Today we would regard its portraits of Laplanders as racist; we would have more patience with the very detailed accounts of fish and fishing, which resonates with some passages of ‘Upon Appleton House’.

Yet there are but glimpses of the Baltic or east European world in Marvell’s own writings. The embassy did not visit Poland but it is notable that in the Short Historical Essay Marvell found a resonant example in Polish political consensus: ‘or suppose it were, yet ’twere necessary, as in the Polish constitution, that nothing should be obligatory as long as there is one Dissenter, where no Temporal Interests, but every man’s Eternity and Salvation are concerned.’

There’s nothing about culture or letters in Marvell’s 1659 translation of the Swedish envoy Johann Frederick von Friessendorff’s ‘Justice of the Swedish Cause’. None of the Scandinavian poetic features Marvell may have encountered in the Baltic courts feature in Marvell’s famous verse, and very little of it indeed is reflected in his prose. The panegyric of Queen Kristina was written nearly a decade before Marvell visited the Baltic, and necessarily uses books to assemble its view of Sweden. Marvell arrived in the Office of Foreign Tongues after the death of Georg Rudolf Weckherlin, secretary to the Commonwealth, who was also the second most innovative German-language poet of the era. References to Paracelsus, Sebastian Munster and ‘Till Eulenspiegel’ in the prose do not add up to much by way of reference to German language culture either. In the world of Greek and Latin scholarship, and with the help of Samuel Parker, Marvell certainly knew about the eminence of north European scholarship in Lipsius, the Scaligers, Vossius and Grotius (and by implication Isaac Casaubon, who should have been mentioned but was not). Yet in the poetry and in the realm of literary reference in the prose, the medium in which the ecclesiastical or political topics of the prose lie, the literary world is distinctly and unsurprisingly southern European. ‘Flecknoe, An English Priest at Rome’ contains a history of Rome, including other parts of the Roman Catholic world like France, while Italian literary

29 Marvell, A short historical essay touching general councils, creeds, and impositions in matters of religion, PW, 2: 146; first published in Mr. Smirke (1676).
30 Marvell, PW, 1: Appendix A.
models and cultural references are deeply important for the poetry and the prose: the Duke of Mantua’s collection of paintings in ‘The Gallery’, as we have seen, the myriad reference to Guarini’s plays, especially the wildly popular Il Pastor Fido, as in ‘The Nymph Complaining’ and The Rehearsal Transpos’d. I have argued at length elsewhere that the brief allusions to Gongora reveal a much larger attraction to the highly experimental poet with a controversial reputation.\textsuperscript{34} The Rehearsal Transpos’d is underwritten by a confident knowledge of European comic prose, both Rabelais and Cervantes; by Montaigne and Campanella understood as sources of wit; and by an invocation of Aretino, whose predominant works had become international classics by 1620. Marvell was stimulated by the elements of fantasy therein and projected the principles backwards or sideways into his reading of church and state history, even to the point of toilet humor fixation.\textsuperscript{35} Take for instance the reference to a levitating Spanish abbess of the sixteenth century, or the bell of Vililla (Spain) that rang by itself, warning of heresy, or the Bohemian court magician who could swallow people whole and regurgitate them, all gleaned from a book by the Netherlandish Jesuit of Spanish descent and education Martin del Rio (1551–1608).\textsuperscript{36} Another category would be the love of extraordinary gossip, especially about high-ranking Italian clerics, in the works of Gregorio Leti, where hearsay is venerated as the most truthful witness to history.\textsuperscript{37} Many of these allusions, sources, and echoes mount up to justify T. S. Eliot’s claim that Marvell’s verse was consistent with a longstanding European outlook on poetry and embodied many features from this continental, transnational world, in which neo-Latin literature played a central role, and was its


\textsuperscript{36} Marvell, \textit{The Rehearsal Transpos’d}, \textit{PW}, 1: 76, n. 217.

lingua franca, and behind which sat very evidently the authority of the literature of classical antiquity:

The seventeenth century sometimes seems for more than a moment to gather up and to digest into its art all the experience of the human mind which (from the same point of view) the later centuries seem to have been partly engaged in repudiating. But Donne would have been an individual at any time and place; Marvell’s best verse is the product of European, that is to say Latin, culture.38

This line was pursued by J. B. Leishman, and it is notable how many of the lyrics in Latin, Italian, and French he regarded as sources for Marvell’s lyrics could readily be found in compendious anthologies published in Frankfurt and designed to appeal to a broad, international readership.39 Marvell sounds like a regular European literary observer of events when he makes this theatrum mundi statement in An Account of the Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government: ‘It is now come to the fourth Act, and the next Scene that opens may be Rome or Paris, yet men sit by, like idle Spectators, and still give money towards their own Tragedy.’40

Marvell particularly remembered works published in his youth that affected an Italian or Spanish literary identity. Nathaniel (Nathaneel) Whiting’s Le hore de recreatione: or, The Pleasing History of Albino and Bellama together with its accompanying ars poetica entitled Il Insonio Insonnadado (first edition 1637), ‘or a sleeping-waking dreame, vindicating the divine breath of poesie from the tongue-lashes

39 J. B. Leishman, The Art of Marvell’s Poetry (London: Hutchinson, 1966, 2nd ed., 1968); Janus de Gruter, ed., Delitia cc. italorum poetarum, huius superiorisque avi illustrium, 2 vols. (Frankfurt, 1608); idem., Delitia C. poetarum gallorum, huius superiorisque avi illustrium, 3 vols. (Frankfurt, 1609); idem., Delitia poetarum germanorum huius superiorisque avi illustrium, 6 vols. (Frankfurt, 1612); idem., Delitia c. poetarum belgicorum, huius superiorisque avi illustrium (Frankfurt, 1614). There followed Philipp Johann Pareus et al., Delitia poetarum Hungaricorum (Frankfurt, 1619), and Delitia poetarum Scotorum (Amsterdam, 1637), compiled by Arthur Johnston. For Johnston (c. 1579–1641), Scottish Latin poet, poetry editor, physician and international Protestant academic at Heidelberg and Sedan as well as Aberdeen, see ODNB.
40 PW, 2: 375.
of some cynical poet-quippers, and stoicall philo-profers’, lewdly ridicules Roman Catholic convent practices in a ridiculous romance that confuses British and Spanish identity, offered in the manner of a Tassonian Italian narrative poem. James Sambrook describes the poem as ‘farcical, ribald, anti-Roman Catholic burlesque romance, employing a far-fetched, archaic, would-be “metaphysical,” and obscure vocabulary.’ Marvell was to use the poem as a structural as well as verbal source of ‘Upon Appleton House’; this despite Whiting’s relative coarseness. Whiting was an undergraduate and then masters student at Queen’s College in Cambridge nearly four years ahead of Marvell; they overlapped for two years. We have no evidence they knew each other, but perhaps it was hard for Marvell to miss such a mischievous publication, especially when it was so current during that purportedly unhappy time when his father allegedly retrieved him from a wasted youth and possibly Catholic future, down and out in London bookshops. Like Marvell up to a point Whiting was from an eastern English Puritan background (in Northamptonshire) and would continue to be a Puritan divine and grammar school teacher, eventually being ejected from his living at Aldwincle, Northants, in 1662, continuing as the nonconformist minister of a gathered church, and being licensed to preach under the terms of the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672, the terms of which we now know Marvell helped to frame.

Marvell was also taken by another text with Spanish pretensions published at this time. This was the Bishop of Hereford, antiquarian and historian Francis Godwin’s The man in the moone or A discourse of a voyage thither by Domingo Gonsales The speedy messenger (1638). Perhaps Godwin was the origin for the 1950s cartoon mouse ‘Speedy Gonzalez’. Marvell, like many others, was particularly taken by the manner in which the moon was reached: Gonsales was wafted through the ether and through outer space by a flock of bridled ‘ganzas’: geese with one foot shaped

41 ODNB.
like an eagle’s claw. Marvell made two allusions to the ganzas: one in each of the two parts of *The Rehearsal Transpros’d*, which were then obscured by a printer’s error.\(^4^4\) The Spanish element allowed Godwin to exaggerate and to signal fantasy, after Don Quixote, and in this instance it has been argued that the text, which was certainly popular, also exercised an influence in Europe, not least on Cyrano de Bergerac’s even more influential and posthumously published *Histoire Comique par Monsieur de Cyrano Bergerac, Contenant les Estats & Empires de la Lune* (1657). Marvell seems to love these texts of fantasy or irreverence, precisely because they stood for a kind of silly, non-professional indulgence, and they did so in part by embodying a continental literary identity, howsoever shallow. They represent self-enclosed ludic zones, quite apart from the world of political engagement, and equivalent to those more celebrated places of disengaged play and reverie in Marvell’s poetry.

Also at the heart of Marvell’s lyric verse is a concern to situate an aspect of the history of poetry that was both vital to European letters and that was still being recovered from hitherto lost but potentially recoverable ancient manuscripts. These were the thousands of epigrams in the Greek Anthology. The first print publication of the collection was the edition of Janus Lascaris published in Florence in 1494. Successive editions recovered more texts, and gave the platform for a great many Latin translations and imitations in the sixteenth century, especially in Italy and France, as documented in the extensive studies of James Hutton.\(^4^5\) It is the notorious fifth book, the collection of amatory and erotic verse that interests Marvell. Stella Revard made the point that Marvell was attracted by the fluidity and flexibility of Greek, as opposed to Latin, and he would not have been the first English poet to take that view.\(^4^6\) I have implicitly made the argument in headnote and footnote


commentary, and with Revard, that the very center and fulcrum of ‘To his Coy Mistress’ is an epigram of Asclepiades from the anthology:

εἰς τινα παρθένον μή πειθομένην
Φείδῃ παρθενίης. καὶ τί πλέον; οὐ γάρ ἐς Ἀιδήν
ἐλθοῦσ᾽ εὐρήσεις τὸν φιλέοντα, κόρη.
ἐν ζωοίσι τὰ τερπνὰ τὰ Κύπριδος· ἐν δ᾽ Ἀχέροντι
ὀστέα καὶ σποδιή, παρθένε, κεισόμεθα.

On a virgin who resists persuasion

You refuse to part with your virginity. What is the use? When you go to Hades, girl, you will not find one to love you. The joys of Cypris are in the land of the living, but in Acheron, dear virgin, we will lie as bones and ash.

The poem moves to this point of erotic revelation where sex and death are combined in the most pointed of ways, not without humor. They have moved here through a series of rehearsals of well-known parts of love elegy tradition, where clichés in Latin love elegy are revealed through allusion, but where cliché is avoided in the poem’s life by exquisite execution. Marvell takes his reader back to a common ground, before moving to the poem’s amazing revelation by way of his own appropriation of Ovid, and the most well-known English translation of Ovid. The epigram provides some pointed irony and reversal of the more customary position that a dead young woman’s groom is the god Hades.47 Marvell would have been attracted by the surprise built into the Greek vocabulary: ‘Given the opposition of ἐν δ᾽ Ἀχέροντι to ἐν ζωοίσι in 3, a reader may initially expect ὀστέα καὶ σποδιή to be syntactically parallel to τὰ τερπνά, with a third-person copulative verb explicit or supplied, rather than in opposition to the first-person subject. The result is that special emphasis falls on the unexpected κεισόμεθα.’48 There is also witty verbal circularity: ‘the final two

48 Asclepiades, Epigrams, 11.
words reverse the first two of the poem (which announce the girl’s rejection of lying together), with the penultimate word picking up the second one in [line] 1 in ring composition. In other words, the poem anticipates many of Marvell’s poetry’s best features.

Similarly, both ‘Little T. C.’ and ‘Young Love’ are subtended by V.124, attributed to Philodemus:

eis Λυσιδίκην παρθένον
Ωὔπω σοι καλύκων γυμνόν θέρος, οὐδὲ μελαίνει βότρυς ὁ παρθενίως πρωτοβολών χάριτας, ἄλλ’ ἡδη θοὰ τόξα νέοι θήγουσιν Ἐρωτες, Λυσιδίκη, καὶ πῦρ τύφεται ἐγκρύφιον. φεύγωμεν, δυσέρωτες, ἕως βέλος οὐκ ἐπὶ νευρῇ· μάντις ἐγὼ μεγάλης αὐτίκα πυρκαϊῆς.

On the virgin Lysidice

Your summer crop is not yet bare of its husks, nor has the grape darkened and brought forth its first virgin charms, but already the young Loves sharpen their swift arrows, Lysidice, and a hidden fire is smoldering. Let us flee, we unlucky lovers, before the arrow is on the string; I prophesy a sudden great conflagration.

Marvell would have read Asclepiades’s epigram in the Planudean manuscript version edited by Henri Estienne and published in 1566. The text is no different in the Palatine manuscript, discovered by Claude Saumaise in Heidelberg in 1607. But the history of that discovery is important for understanding the broader significance of what Marvell was doing with Greek epigrams and when he was doing it. Not least is the fact that despite the Palatine manuscript adding several new poems to the known corpus of Greek verse, ‘Saumaise failed to publish the edition; and in later

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49 Asclepiades, Epigrams, 12.
years, when he was even more experienced, he was unable to consult the manuscript again. [...] When the city fell in 1623, Maximilian of Bavaria offered the manuscript (which had by then returned from Paris) to Pope Gregory XV, who sent for it to be collected. It was divided into two parts, which were kept separately in the Vatican Library, far from the eyes of Saumaise, who never got another opportunity to check his youthful and, as we shall see, unreliable transcriptions.\(^50\)

Heidelberg had become by 1600 a center of learning and of radical political Calvinism and was connected both with the United Provinces and with the Huguenots in France, to the extent of military aid for the Dutch Protestants and the Huguenots from the Palatinate, while Dutch and Huguenot refugees lived in the Palatinate. As a place of learning and a printing center Heidelberg was attractive to international Protestant scholars: ‘Jerome Commelin (1550–97) had produced several editions based on manuscripts from the Palatine Library, for example, an edition of Virgil, which relied on one of the most important extant codices.’\(^51\)

Among these Heidelberg scholars was André Rivet, whom Marvell would use as an ironically false *nom de plume* in *Mr. Smirke*. Saumaise sent some transcriptions of the Palatine manuscript to Scaliger on 1 March, who found the poems ‘mouth-watering’. Despite his scholarly excitement Saumaise also had his eyes on the international and inter-confessional or contra-confessional dimensions: ‘As to the edition of those epigrams and especially of the pederastic poetry of Strato of Sardis, please give me your advice. Those Furies will instantly rise and “their breath will fall upon my youth like the influence of some baleful star”. I mean the Jesuits.’\(^52\)

Soon the idea of producing expediently an edition of the Palatine manuscript was in doubt: ‘it must have dawned on Scaliger that the project might fail altogether. Saumaise’s transcriptions simply contained too many mistakes.’\(^53\) Marvell would

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have been disappointed by Saumaise’s self-censoring mind: ‘Lack of understanding, therefore, appears not to have been the main reason for his omissions. He seems to have excluded those poems he deemed unworthy of publication from a moral point of view. That the compiler of the Palatine Anthology also had some edifying program in mind is suggested by his addition of the Christian epigrams, which, from a literary point of view, were of little value.’ Marvell makes use of Greek Christian epigrams in, for instance, ‘On a Drop of Dew’, but I think he was particularly interested in the frank aesthetic power of the erotic epigrams, beyond the boundaries that Saumaise applied. Dirk van Miert summarizes the situation:

Planudes was a monk; and most monks, as Scaliger was keen to point out, were ignorant. None the less, Scaliger and Saumaise, like Planudes, inhabited a cultural universe in which there was no place for the dissemination of pederastic poetry. Saumaise’s remark that the Jesuits would be furious if these poems were to be printed is merely a rhetorical sneer at the enemies of both Scaliger and himself – a psychological strategy to strengthen the bond between them. Saumaise was certainly not implying that he, as a Calvinist, would have had no qualms about publishing material deeply offensive to contemporary moral sensibilities.55

Scaliger’s position however was different, driven by a pursuit of impartial historical assessment: ‘this position also explains his interest in other sexually explicit texts such as the Priapeia and Petronius’s Satyricon.’56 As a practicing poet, Marvell was in a different position again, and one might want to compare him here with both Herrick and Rochester. He certainly acknowledges the frankness of the epigrams in the Greek Anthology, as appears evident in his use of one of them in ‘To his Coy Mistress’, but also adapts the epigram tradition so that it is at once erotic and

55 Van Miert, 257.
56 Van Miert, 258.
powerfully aesthetic. Scaliger, that preeminent collator of literary theory, would have been very pleased.

There is a special love of French words throughout Marvell’s prose: ‘Opiniastyre’, opiniated; *Carriere*, to make free with, to take liberty; *coupe*, coupée, a dance step. Giulio Pertile has shown how very profoundly Théophile de Viau and Antoine Girard, Sieur de Saint-Amant are present in ‘Upon Appleton House’. This should not surprise us: French and English cultures were closely tied together, with French poetry published in London, and French poets constantly present in the Caroline court. It was in a sense a continuation of that long association of the Middle Ages, when French was the dominant literature of a shared trans-vernacular culture. Viau and Saint-Amant (1594–1661) visited England and wrote poetry about it. Saint-Amant understands the Golden Age boasted as the Caroline achievement perfectly well, even as his rhymes capture beautifully the English idyll:

Ce plaisant Fleuve que je voy  
Se couler si bien après soy  
Fent-il les Champs de l’Angleterre?  
Pressay-je ce terroir aux herbages espais,  
Qui voit toute l’Europe en guerre  
Cependant qu’il jouit d’une eternelle pais?  
Ouy, c’est ce Pais bein-heareux  
Qu’avec des regards amooureux

Le reste du Monde contemple;
C’est cette Isle famneuse où tant d’Avanturiers,
Et tant de Beautez sansa exemple
Joignirent autresfois les Mythes aux Lauriers.

In its two manuscript witnesses, the poem is entitled ‘Ode Royale’, signaling its knowing connection with the medieval genre of ‘chant royal’, designed for praising monarchs and other high dignitaries, and made especially famous by Marot. The fragrant paradise is located specifically with references to Holland House in Kensington, the home of the Queen’s favorite the Earl of Holland: ‘Quand sous cét Arbre heureux, où mes pas s’adressoient,/Touché d’une douceur estrange,/Je vy paroistre en rond des Vierges qui dançoient.’ Far more remarkable is the satire ‘L’Albion’ (1644), signed from London on 12 February. Saint Amant’s contempt for the Puritans is clear, not least the separatists, but he does not spare one great satirist of the Puritans, Ben Jonson, ‘un Poëte insipide’, lampooned for his arrogance, and his ambitious self-comparisons to Virgil, Horace, Seneca and Euripides. It is one thing to condemn English poets in general as poetasters (‘Rimailleurs’), and indeed two stanzas later to name better French poets, most of them members of the Academie Française, among whom the most eminent is Corneille (famously in reality not an Academician), but it is the tone of Saint-Amant’s outrage that is most striking: ‘Bon dieu, quelle impertinance!/Qui la pourrait supporter?’ In this context, it is not surprising for Marvell to compare Bishop Bramhall to Henri IV, with his love poetry competitions and anti-Catholic satire:

one night after supper he gave a Subject (which recreation did well enough in those times, but were now insipid) upon which, like Boyes at Westminster, they should make a French Verse extempore. The Subject was, *Un Accident sinistre*. Straight answers, I know not whether ‘twas Bassompierre or Aubignè:

*Un sinistre Accident & un Accident sinistre;*
*De veoir un Pere Capuchin chevaucher un Ministre.*

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61 See Roberts, ‘Saint-Amant and the Caroline Monarchs’.
Agrippa d’Aubigne was the aristocratic Huguenot leader and poet, author of the Huguenot Jeremiad, *Le Tragiques* (1616); Bassompierre was the courtier and soldier on whose behalf Saint-Amant had originally come to the English court to seek Henrietta Maria’s intervening help.

Marvell’s echoing of the poets Théophile de Viau and Saint-Amant in ‘Upon Appleton House’ thus reflects the presence of these poets in England as much as it reflects the reading tastes of Marvell and his patron Lord Fairfax. Nicholas McDowell argues that the presence of Rabelaisian allusion in Marvell’s writing probably reflects conversations during the poet’s visits to France in the 1640s and certainly the 1650s, as well as in Restoration coffeehouses, as opposed to a detailed textual knowledge of *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel*. This is because Marvell’s references to Rabelais are very inaccurate, even as he set about to reverse stereotypical representations of Puritans as Rabelaisian or Cervantean buffoons by attaching the embarrassing label to bishops and other Anglican clergymen. The French presence in Marvell’s poetry has as much to do with the movement of people as it has to do with texts.

What I am trying to suggest is a new approach to how we think of poets who wrote primarily in one vernacular but who, for various reasons, were immersed in other ones. This is not to discount the enormous import of classical literature for each European vernacular literature, but to acknowledge that the influence of humanism has blinded us to the significance of literary vernacular interaction. We are also too ready to consign inter-vernacular interaction to the subject of translation, and this is not surprising where we have such important bodies of translations (such as of de Rojas, Thomas More, Rabelais, Montaigne and Cervantes). Sir Richard Fanshawe was the ambassador to the court of the Spanish King, and we can see the impact of Spanish as well as Latin verse in his poetry, in addition to his translations of Góngora, Camoens, Argensola and Mendoza.

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Marvell makes a particularly good case study in this area. It may be that further research will reveal his impact on continental men of letters, and indeed non-English British ones.\footnote{See with regard to Marvell’s ‘An Horatian Ode’ and Irish language poetry on the English republic David Norbrook, ‘Bards and Republicans: Marvell’s “Horatian Ode” and the Wars of the Three Kingdoms’, in James M. Dutcher and Anne Lake Prescott (eds.), Renaissance Historicisms: Essays in Honor of Arthur F. Kinney (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 291–312.} I raise the matter of Scandinavian literature precisely in the hope that we will find much more of value here. Who, beyond Queen Kristina and her protégé Jean Scheffer who copied it, heard or read his Latin encomium for her in the form of the verse letter to Nathaniel Ingelo? The newly discovered manuscript of what we should now call ‘Grammatomantis’ suggests that Marvell sent his poem back to his nephew William Popple in Bordeaux; Popple it was who had shown a Marvell letter to the graphologist and astrologer Joseph de Maniban.\footnote{Nicholas von Maltzahn and Rory Tanner, ‘Marvell’s “Maniban” in Manuscript’, RES, 63 (2012): 764–78.} In his Latin poem on Maniban, Marvell repeatedly appears to agree with Maniban before marking, in each couplet, a sharp contrast. Who read this version or perhaps another version copied from it in southwest France: did Popple show it to others? There is also some evidence that the recently acquired Princeton MS, which contains new Latin and English texts of ‘Bludius et Corona’ together with hostile parodies also in Latin and English, was the possession of an English resident in Italy.\footnote{Special Collections, Firestone Library, Princeton University, RTC01 (no. 224): ‘Restoration verse miscellany, c. 1670s’.} Were there copies of these epigrams circulating on the continent? It was Marvell himself who, many years earlier, portrayed himself as well as Richard Flecknoe, as an English poet abroad.\footnote{‘Flecknoe, an English Priest at Rome’, The Poems of Andrew Marvell, ed. Nigel Smith (Harlow: Longman, 2003), 166–74.} It is here at least that he registers his own impact abroad in Rome, even as he is ‘martyred’ by the dismal verse of Flecknoe, performed both by the disagreeable voice of that poet and incompetently by the nameless young man at dinner.

**Competing Interests**

The author has no competing interests to declare.
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