

Introduction

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In the latter part of the seventeenth century, one does not have far to seek for authors who shifted or reversed their political and religious affiliations – and apparently beliefs – as the circumstances shifted or reversed around them. Edmund Waller, Abraham Cowley, Thomas Hobbes, and Marchamont Nedham all made their peace with Parliament, and eventually the Cromwellian Protectorate, after the defeat of the Royalist cause in the late 1640s, only to revert their allegiance to the Stuarts when Charles II returned in 1660. John Dryden, that most ‘notorious’ of opportunists, trumpeted the Restoration of the Stuarts less than eighteen months after lamenting the passing of Cromwell, and later, in 1685–86, very publicly changed his religion following the Catholic James II’s rise to the throne. Even John Milton, arch-defender of the Good Old Cause, did not scruple to have his early poems released by the main publisher of Royalist verse, Humphrey Moseley; more problematically, a mere five years after his principled and powerful attack on prepublication licensing in *Areopagitica* (1644), Milton himself took up the post of government licenser for Parliament. These volte-faces tend simultaneously to trouble us as ethical readers of the past, insofar as we idealise the constancy of our authors, and to enliven us as critics, since we are invited by these reversals to explain them in ways that disarm charges of duplicity or self-interest. Indeed, we can determine much about consensus attitudes towards particular authors by how readily we, as a community of scholars, accept or reject these expiations of what, on the surface, looks to be political calculation. Hobbes’s return to England in 1651 upon the publication of *Leviathan* has at times been regarded as a personal enactment of the political theories espoused in his treatise; we tend to object strenuously to any charges of opportunism or ideological backsliding on Milton’s part, seeing it as uncharacteristic of his rigorous sense of political and religious principle; as for Dryden, well ...¹

Since at least the 1980s, there has been a steady stream of excellent work on the politics of literature and the literature of politics in seventeenth-century England: our knowledge of the interplay between literary text and political context has been immeasurably improved by a number of seminal studies, including several by contributors to this volume. Many of these studies have carefully and insightfully explained the reversals that marked various authors' careers in the mid- to late century. However, for all of this previous work's sensitivity to the variety of ideological beliefs and the complexity of party affiliations throughout the century, the general tendency has been to view the discursive field of seventeenth-century England in binary terms: republican and Royalist, Whig and Tory, Anglican and dissenter. To their credit, the various monographs on the literatures of royalism, of republicanism, of nonconformity or dissent, have broadened our sense of the depth of political engagement in the imaginative writing of the period while also filling in our understanding of the distinct rhetorics and idioms that these sides deployed as they entered the fray. And yet, as the field of study moves forward and new research obliges us continuously to refine our ideas concerning the politics of individual writers or of particular historical moments, we have begun to move beyond viewing political engagement as purely or even primarily antagonistic. In describing many writers and their positions (and indeed some ideologies) during these years, more recent studies might be characterised as thinking in terms such as labile, uncertain, ambivalent, performative, provisional, or, as Matthew Augustine has framed it, contingent.² It is increasingly clear, for example, that the term Royalist does not adequately describe Hobbes's *Leviathan* and its advocacy for a complete submission to the sovereign as it was released into the London print market in 1651 amidst the controversy over the Oath of Engagement. Similarly, our adherence to these binaries tends to inhibit our ability to identify and characterise some of the sudden and surprising alliances that arose amidst the chaotic and ever-changing circumstances of these years (such as the brief but meaningful detente between some factions of the Levellers and Royalists around 1648–50).

This is not to deny the explanatory power of broad ideological terms wholesale; rather, it is to admit that the use of these categories often does not exhaust and can even occlude a text's possible meanings. Much work in the history of reading in fact now emphasises the ideological diversity of a text's readers and thus of its potentialities.³ Beyond this growing awareness of readers creating meanings against the assumed political grain, and of texts and authors operating in politically complex and multifaceted ways, trends in literary criticism, such as ecocriticism, affect studies, and network theory, have similarly sought to develop readings of seventeenth-century texts that complicate but do not abandon the general focus on

polemic and politics in these writings. These approaches have presented us with authors more complexly, haphazardly, and at times personally motivated, authors whose ideological sympathies seem more fluid or labile than broad categories such as Royalist or republican allow. Behind this rethinking of the contexts in and through which we read seventeenth-century literature, we might arguably find two assumptions, assumptions not necessarily co-extant and yet not mutually exclusive either: first, that we should recognise that a variety of pressures, including psychological, formal, social, environmental, and geographic pressures, worked on authors alongside the political and the polemical as they wrote; second, that literary texts maintain a distinct relationship with their historical moments, and that, because of their aesthetic ambitions, these texts ask us to look beyond the purely ideological for their meanings even as they seek to heighten or obscure this ideology.

We might see then, in more recent criticism on the seventeenth century, a continued effort to refine and redefine the relationship between text and context. This criticism has often provided a more detailed, even pointillist, picture of the environment or back-history into which a text is released; or else it has opened up novel contexts (social networks, communities of readers, built environments) in which to understand how literature means. Many of the essays in this collection contribute to this further refinement of context, while others seek to redefine how we conceive of our relationship to the past. It is thus that much of the thinking in this volume crystallises around the figure of Andrew Marvell, since no author seems more amenable to such novel approaches. It has become a commonplace of Marvell studies to emphasise the poet's inscrutability, the protean nature of his political stances, the strange and irresolvable turns of thought in his lyrics. The extent to which this inscrutability is praised as a sign of the quality of his writing is a clear indication of the status of indeterminacy in the critical climate at the dawn of the twenty-first century.⁴ As far as Marvell's politics are concerned, ever since John M. Wallace's pioneering monograph *Destiny His Choice* (1968) and his attempt to identify Marvell as a conflicted loyalist to monarchic rule, various studies have sought to make sense of his movements between Royalist nostalgia and strident republicanism, open-throated liberalism and moderate toleration.⁵ The most successful of these decipherings have usefully sought to recover Marvell's shifting political opinions by tracing the writer's immediate social networks or political relationships at a given moment, thus characterising his loyalties as highly situational and contingent.⁶ His lyric poems have similarly resisted attempts to locate a cohesive poetics or cast of thought in them, especially when viewed alongside his more overtly political writing. What's more, their many impenetrable metaphors, images, and allusions

both invite and deflect interpretation. These poems, and indeed, almost all of Marvell's writings, seem particularly genial to novel critical approaches, approaches that might open up new meanings by attending to alternative sexualities, to reading practices, to early modern ecologies, to incremental affects. I do not want to suggest that these new approaches might 'solve' the numerous riddles within Marvell's works; rather, they can help to fill in what many of us intuit as the gaps in our understanding of these enigmatic texts, that vague feeling of insufficiency that comes with almost any attempt at reading Marvell.⁷

We have titled this collection *Texts and Readers in the Age of Marvell* in part with an eye toward the centrality of Marvell to our contemporary critical moment. Work on Marvell has seen a resurgence in the new millennium, driven by landmark scholarly editions of both his poetry and his prose.⁸ And while Marvell studies might seem to revivify every seventeen years like a cicada, as Donald Friedman has wryly noted, this latest re-emergence does seem more sustainable and lasting, with scholarship influenced by the expanding fields of ecocriticism, affect studies or the history of the emotions, New Formalism and network theory, turning its attention to a writer whose imagination seems distinctly open to the questions posed by these approaches.⁹ A number of essays in this volume take up these strains of criticism to read Marvell and his contemporaries in contextually novel ways. More generally, the variety of approaches offered in this collection is representative of both the evolving diversification of critical methodologies in our field as well as the varied tactics that Marvell's poetry consistently demands of us.

However, our title also invites readers to entertain the prospect of placing Marvell at the centre of the literary landscape during the years 1638–1700, not in an old-fashioned effort to reshape the literary canon, but rather as a spur to considering how such placement would shift our perceptions of seventeenth-century literary culture. What happens to our sense of this culture when we take Marvell's writings as representative of the discursive spirit of the age? Although it would be foolish to suggest that Marvell could displace Milton as the century's most prominent or recognised writer, a literary historical period that takes Marvell as representative rather than his friend and contemporary surely looks far different from the one we know. Rather than a period marked by strident ideological certainties and literature's unwavering commitment to partisan, oppositional causes, an Age of Marvell foregrounds the uncertainties and complexities with which writers were faced as the remarkable events of these years moved swiftly around them. It also acknowledges the distinct place that texts with aesthetic preoccupations can hold amidst times of upheaval. An acknowledgement of these uncertainties does not preclude us from

identifying sincere commitment in seventeenth-century writers (such as Marvell's staunch defence of religious toleration throughout the 1660s and 1670s) but rather allows us to admit the often localised and at times inconsistent nature of such commitments. The complexities that reside within many of Marvell's writings remind us that historical individuals do not react unequivocally and evenly to a turbulent reality (or indeed any reality), that distinct, even antithetical, emotions might coexist and serve to motivate someone as he or she acts and reacts to the rush of events. In the essays that follow, several contributors emphasise the variety of motivations, from generic distaste to personal frustration, that lie behind early modern authors' ideological stances and formal choices, while others offer finer-grained and more multi-sided contextualisations of familiar texts and cruxes, providing new insights into the ways in which these texts interact with each other and with their historical moment.

The essays in this collection by no means represent a uniform critical movement. However, they all aim to develop or respond to the innovations, discoveries, and provocations of one of the most assiduous and creative readers of Marvell, and indeed of seventeenth-century literary culture more broadly, Steven Zwicker. All of the pieces that follow are influenced by Zwicker's invigorating and career-long attention to refining and redefining the precise historical circumstances out of and into which seventeenth-century literature has been produced.¹⁰ His work on John Dryden and Andrew Marvell, among others, consistently reveals a remarkable sensitivity to the variety of ideological registers in play at a given moment, to the specific ways in which authors activated and manipulated these registers for polemical purposes.¹¹ A number of essays here, and especially those by Joad Raymond, Michael McKeon, Randy Robertson, Timothy Raylor, and Matthew Augustine, demonstrate a similar sensitivity to the discursive field at particular moments in seventeenth-century literary culture, providing novel insights into the ways in which texts both familiar and unfamiliar entered the cultural fray.

In addition to the precision and brilliance of his historicist work, Zwicker has also demonstrated a persistent willingness to push at the boundaries of what historicist scholarship entails, seeking out new ways to sophisticate his and our understanding of authors and readers, texts and politics. Over the course of his career, Zwicker has wonderfully modelled and advocated interdisciplinary approaches to the study of literature, working collaboratively with a number of prominent historians, most extensively Kevin Sharpe and Derek Hirst, to sharpen the practices of reading early modern literature within its original discursive matrix.¹² More recently, he has also steadily advanced our knowledge of the history of reading, doing much to test and extend the methodologies of this once

fledgling field.¹³ He has also, with Derek Hirst, turned his attention to the affective life of Marvell, placing the psyche at the centre of a more speculative historicist endeavour, while also exploring the limits of the historical record by investigating the uses to which we can put gossip, rumour, and lampoon.¹⁴ Fittingly enough, Hirst's essay in the present volume merges close attention to literary traces with deep archival research in reassessing the evidence of early modern child abuse. More broadly, a number of the essays here, particularly Anne Cotterill's ecocritical approach to Dryden's *King Arthur*, and Nigel Smith's transcultural reading of Andrew Marvell's poetry, offer entirely new frameworks within which to read the literature of the past, answering the implicit, and at times explicit, call from Zwicker to be willing always to reassess and redefine what we mean by context. Michael Schoenfeldt and Christopher D'Addario's contributions similarly supplement and interrogate Zwicker's varied reflections on the relationship between the aesthetic and the historical, while Joad Raymond illustrates how Marvell's *Horatian Ode* can be seen as a distillation and heightening of contemporary pamphlet culture. Finally, Kathleen Lynch's essay on the notebooks of Nehemiah Wallington demonstrates, as Zwicker's work in this area has as well, how the study of reading practices can broaden our understanding of early modern imaginative activity, and thus of aesthetic production and of literary genre. In the end, and in response to Zwicker's work, *Texts and Readers in the Age of Marvell* takes a variety of approaches in its redrawing of the literary landscape of seventeenth-century England, yet through this variety there runs a persistent desire to re-engage with the past by expanding and re-energising our ideas about literary figures and texts and how they encountered and operated in the world.

We have divided the collection into three sections in order to foreground the similar sets of questions that animate each group of essays. The essays in the first section, entitled 'Rethinking texts and readers', ask us to consider novel ways in which readers, both early modern and contemporary, have conceived of texts and their position in the public world of print consumption and critical practice. This section begins with two essays that invite us to ponder anew the relationship between literary texts and their historical moments. In 'Impractical criticism: close reading and the contingencies of history', Michael Schoenfeldt makes a compelling case for a reinvigorated interdisciplinarity that combines attention to aesthetics – and indeed aesthetic pleasure – with contextualisation of the religious, political, or social pressures under which texts are produced, pointing out 'just how completely formal analysis is tied by tacit but secure stitches to historical scholarship'. Ideally, we should model our studies triangularly, with an eye equally on the writer's life, the imagination, and the work. Schoenfeldt's call for a return to an appreciation for the literariness of imaginative writing

comes out of a sense, echoed by other critics, that among the legacies of New Historicism is a blindness to the variety of experiences that literature provides, usefully noting New Historicism's relative lack of interest in questions of spirituality, of gender, of poetry, and not least of pleasure. Taking his cue from the rise of New Formalist methodologies, Schoenfeldt makes a case for the importance of the impractical in our reading of literary texts, the importance of developing a critical vocabulary that accounts for the pleasures and pains that the texts we study produce, and of allowing ourselves to be transported by these texts even as we carefully situate them (and their pleasures) in history.

Both Schoenfeldt and the next author in our collection, Joad Raymond, draw on the writings of Zwicker's long-time colleague, the novelist William Gass, to help them formulate the relationship between text and context. While Schoenfeldt conjures up Gass's representation of the 'cultural envelopes' in which poems come as akin to 'manners at a banquet', Raymond's epigraph, from Gass's *The Tunnel* (1995), suggests that poems exist as commonwealths of the 'lost and little things' of historical memory. Raymond's essay, "'Small portals": Marvell's *Horatian Ode*, print culture, and literary history', looks to delineate the precise nature of the traffic between public language – the language of pamphlets and newsbooks – and the literary. Through an intensive and highly contextualised reading of Marvell's most enigmatic of political poems, Raymond identifies in *An Horatian Ode* a commitment to recording and aestheticising the messy and quotidian particulars (Gass's 'lost and little things') of Cromwell's rise and the king's execution. According to Raymond, by including a wealth of precise language from contemporary newsbooks, Marvell polishes these events into something literary even as he reveals his deep commitment to the historical moment. The poem's power comes not from its ability to rise above the messiness of contemporary events, but rather from its immersion in their details, its immersion in the public pamphlets and polemics in which the London print market was awash around 1650. With this meticulous and fine-grained picture of Marvell's poem and its relationship to the public print world, Raymond's essay provides a novel and compelling way for us to conceptualise how literary texts processed and aestheticised the ephemera of history.

Michael McKeon's essay, 'Marvell discovers the public sphere', is likewise concerned with Marvell's lasting awareness of and fascination with the writing and reading public. Through an examination of Marvell's Restoration response to his print nemesis Samuel Parker in *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* (1672–73), and the specific ways in which this response also presented itself as a rewriting of the Duke of Buckingham's well-known play, McKeon outlines the massive shift in writers' perceptions

of themselves and their audiences that the growing consciousness of an open, public sphere entailed. As McKeon points out, Marvell seems to have intuited this transformation early, and in his Restoration prose we can see an author attempting to negotiate and take advantage of the changing boundary between public author and private life, the 'virtuality' of seemingly personal print exchanges. Throughout his essay, McKeon asks us to dwell upon the public sphere as a lived experience, a novel fact of seventeenth-century existence that Marvell sought to represent through his adaptation of familiar forms. His essay thus presents to us a writer seeking literary modes in which to identify and understand a latent, not fully actualised, experience.

McKeon's focus on the virtuality of the public sphere reminds us of the sharply different ways in which readers had begun to interact with printed materials in the second half of the seventeenth century. The final essay in this section, Kathleen Lynch's 'Extraordinarily ordinary: Nehemiah Wallington's experimental method', provides us with a detailed study of one of these innovative readers, the Puritan artisan Nehemiah Wallington, who kept over fifty manuscript books' worth of notes on his habits of reading. Identifying in Wallington's notebooks a clear record of 'historically situated reading practices', practices rooted in the scriptural literacy of a lay Puritan as well as his daily meditative writing, Lynch associates Wallington's spiritual note-taking with the record-keeping of Baconian experimentalism. Wallington, she details, saw his notebooks and their summaries of, references to, and commentaries on his books as the recording of spiritual experience itself, a resource for his own meditations and self-examination. In the process, Lynch's essay contributes to our history of early modern reading by challenging familiar assumptions about lay literacy, while asking important questions, questions we do not have full answers to at this time, concerning the intellectual habits that such readers took into the study as well as the relationship of these habits to the development of nascent genres such as the spiritual autobiography and the personal diary.

Many of the questions pertaining to historical experience raised by our first set of essays are developed and expanded by the next four essays in the section 'Rethinking context'. Each of these essays addresses the potential pitfalls and opportunities of different forms of contextualisation, in the process offering provisional solutions to the difficult problem of locating emergent or ephemeral experiences in early modern texts. In 'A sense of place: historicism, whither wilt?', Christopher D'Addario considers broadly historicism's new methodologies and frontiers, suggesting there is much to be gained (and perhaps lost) from our growing attention to the more elusive, yet no less decisive, affective and sensory experiences of early

modern Englishmen and -women. D'Addario ruminates on the possibility of a critical study that takes up place as its organisational principle and thus takes up the non-sequential ways in which texts circulate, expand, and reappear against or across chronological boundaries, in the process raising important questions about our literary historical practices of periodisation. In the end, D'Addario's essay invites us to accept and even revel in the speculative nature of the historicist endeavour, to embrace the partiality of our recovery of the past as a marvellous and formative experience in and of itself.

In what is perhaps the most urgent essay in the collection, Derek Hirst faces head-on the difficulty of recovering the past as he attempts to outline seventeenth-century accounts and perceptions of child abuse in his essay 'Understanding experience: subjectivity, sex, and suffering in early modern England'. The problems of identifying and recounting the experience of abuse is a pressing contemporary issue, as Hirst notes, and his essay avoids a too-easy presentism by surveying the archive of such abuse as well as the perceptual apparatus according to which the very category of 'child abuse' became visible. Hirst's essay carefully links the language of a series of texts, including a number of Marvell's writings, to identify a shared vocabulary in which a pressing concern with the disciplinary excesses of the schoolroom is recorded. Hirst notes that these texts increasingly presented to readers a vivid imagining of the details of such debilitating practices. In the process of recovering this shared vocabulary, Hirst raises important questions over the limits of experiential language and whether a culture must identify and name an experience before it can be fully felt.

Just as Hirst's essay deals with child abuse as it emerged into the collective consciousness of the print world of seventeenth-century England, so Randy Robertson's 'Debating censorship: liberty and press control in the 1640s' traces the debates surrounding censorship in the print pamphlets of the 1640s as public awareness of the realities of state control of the press became prevalent. In the first part of his essay, Robertson applies the methods of Franco Moretti's 'distant reading' in support of his contention that Parliament's 1643 ordinance, on the whole, successfully restricted the London press's output when it came into effect that June. In the context of this increased control of the press, Robertson then traces the battles waged in print and in courtroom trials (accounts of which were, of course, then printed) over the liberties, or lack thereof, enjoyed by authors and publishers during this tumultuous decade. Whereas traditional accounts of the English press in the 1640s emphasise the sudden and continued freedoms supposedly enjoyed with the outbreak of hostilities between king and Parliament, Robertson sees in this decade at once a series of victories by the state in its attempts to reign in an unruly print market, as well as

a growing chorus of public complaints and challenges to the systems of censorship so long silently accepted.

With the final essay in this section, Anne Cotterill's "Armed winter, and inverted day": the politics of cold in Dryden and Purcell's *King Arthur*, we move to the final decade of the century and to a time similarly riven by political upheaval and governmental change. However, rather than looking to the open debates in the press over state policies for Dryden's politics at this moment, Cotterill instead details the precise ways in which this author aestheticises and politicises accounts of extreme weather during the 1680s and 1690s in his opera. Drawing on work in ecocriticism, Cotterill traces the complex series of 'humoral, religious, political, and other cultural associations' that coloured these representations of the Little Ice Age. In particular, contemporary reports on the winter of 1683–84 and its Frost Fair on the Thames linked this cold weather with demonic inversion and fantastical, sinful release. As Cotterill shows, Dryden deftly redeploys these associations in his famous Frost Scene, where he connects coldness to the fallen, overly martial world of Williamite England, the warmth of the Stuarts only a distant memory. Cotterill's essay can stand as a model for its nuanced integration of the environmental and political contexts that inflect a particular literary work.

The last section of the volume, 'Rethinking literary histories', takes up issues of literary relations between prominent authors of the century, either locating new echoes and thus new meanings in important texts, or else asking us to revise familiar narratives of rivalries and pressures. In what is part of his ongoing effort to redraw the lines of influence that lie behind English vernacular poetry, Nigel Smith in 'The European Marvell' asks us to envision the writer as part of an international network of poets who were aware of and wrote in response to each other. So, while Marvell's well-known picture in *Last Instructions to a Painter* (1667) of the Dutch admiral Michiel de Ruyter's triumphant raid up the Medway, with its bizarre mixture of the pastoral and the erotic, should certainly be seen as aligned with domestic critiques of the now emasculated English administration, Smith illustrates how Marvell's depiction also stands in relation to Dutch representations of de Ruyter's victory, which emphasised the martial heroism of the Dutch as well as the negative consequences of the English monarchy's economic policies. In the latter half of his essay, Smith places Marvell alongside the ingenious and unorthodox Spanish poet Luis de Góngora, noting the appeal Góngora's opacity and difficulty might have had with the enigmatic Englishman. On the whole, Smith's essay calls on us to reconceive the relationship between English poets and their European vernacular counterparts in the seventeenth century, to move beyond a model of influence rooted in ideals of classical

imitation to one that incorporates the realities of immediate contact, direct dialogue, and ideological conflict.

In 'Waller, Tasso, and Marvell's *Last Instructions to a Painter*', Timothy Raylor's careful tracing of the web of echoes evoked in Marvell's lament over the Scotsman Archibald Douglas's death also leads him, through Edmund Waller, to Europe and to the poetry of Torquato Tasso. According to Raylor, Marvell purposefully takes up Waller's appropriation of Tasso in order to critique his contemporary's mismanaging of the generic boundaries between romance and epic, symbolic, for Marvell, of the inappropriate conflation of personal passion with state affairs that he finds not only in Waller's panegyrics but in the monarchy's policies and in Restoration culture as a whole. Marvell's poem, with its satiric echoes of a Restoration mode that he also found personally distasteful, thus persistently reminds its readers of the connections between generic confusion, moral depravity, and political corruption. The king was not only an immoral ruler, he also did not understand literary genre. In the process of detailing Marvell's critical appropriation and rewriting of Waller's foray into the romantic epic mode, Raylor illustrates the extent to which, for seventeenth-century authors, arguments over genre could simultaneously be political and personal.

Alex Garganigo's essay in turn investigates Marvell's management of literary echoes, but this time with a focus on the resonances of a single line in his elegy upon Oliver Cromwell and its reference to Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1*. In 'Marvell's personal elegy? Rewriting Shakespeare in *A Poem upon the Death of O. C.*', Garganigo explores the significance of Marvell's registering Cromwell's death through an allusion to Prince Hal's remark upon realising that Falstaff lives: 'I saw him dead'. This line from Marvell's elegy has traditionally been understood as the poem's most personal, and Garganigo's emphasis on its indebtedness to Shakespeare's play challenges our assumptions about the nature of personal expression, allowing us to see how literary echoes and imitations can actually increase and complicate the emotions of a poetic moment. For Marvell, as Garganigo reveals, the allusion to Prince Hal allows him to layer immediate grief and love for the Protector with a frustration over the Cromwell family's failings and his own failure to advance his fortunes under the Cromwells.

One of the most famous literary borrowings of the Restoration was, of course, John Dryden's brazen reworking of John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667) into the often bathetic poetic opera *The State of Innocence* (1673–74). Matthew Augustine's 'How John Dryden read his Milton: *The State of Innocence* reconsidered' shifts our notions of just what Dryden thought he was doing when he went to 'tag' John Milton's blank

verse, positioning the essay as part of the ongoing re-evaluation of the relationship between these two central figures of Restoration literary culture. Augustine shows how Dryden – rather than assuming an essentially antagonistic stance towards his great poetic rival – brilliantly aligns his own heroic drama, and thus poetic art, with Milton’s high style, yoking attacks on his dramas to all cynical and unsophisticated attacks on grand literary ambition. Through a careful tracing of the patterns of Dryden’s rewriting, Augustine also identifies a concerted effort to transform Milton’s argument in favour of libertarian free will into an ambivalent acceptance of libertine pleasures, Milton’s grand epic becoming a ‘titillating Restoration opera’. With a keen eye for the precise moment in which Dryden’s revision appears in the mid-1670s, Augustine associates this transformation with a more general turn away from heroic Augustanism and towards libertine satire, and in the process encourages us to think through the complex ways in which different cultural forms, here epic and drama, lampoon and satire, interacted at particular historical moments.

Throughout his career, Steven Zwicker has remained sceptical of received truths, continuing to seek out new methodologies and new contexts for understanding seventeenth-century English literature, refreshing the world we know but also opening out into ‘Far other worlds, and other seas’.¹⁵ The essays in this collection arise from our authors’ own pursuit of novel answers to historically inflected problems of reading and interpretation, of more innovative or more scrupulous ways to bridge the gap between the present and the past. In doing so, they add significantly to the stories we tell about the literature and history of this most fascinating, this most enduringly urgent of centuries.

Notes

Unless otherwise noted, Marvell’s works are cited from the following editions throughout this volume: *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith (Harlow: Longman, rev. edn., 2007); *The Prose Works of Andrew Marvell*, ed. A. Patterson, M. Dzelzainis, N. von Maltzahn, and N. H. Keeble, 2 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

- 1 On Hobbes, see Q. Skinner, ‘Conquest and consent: Thomas Hobbes and the engagement controversy’, in G. E. Aylmer (ed.), *The Interregnum: The Quest for Settlement, 1646–1660* (London: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 79–98. The view of Milton as a writer ‘in permanent dialogue with the plebeian radical thinkers of the English Revolution’ is set forth most influentially by Christopher Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution* (London: Faber & Faber, 1977). On Milton’s role as parliamentary licenser, see A. Blum, ‘The author’s authority: *Areopagitica* and the labour of licensing’, in M. W. Ferguson and M. Nyquist (eds), *Re-membering Milton: Essays on the Texts and Traditions* (New York: Methuen, 1987), pp. 74–96; S. Dobranski, *Milton, Authorship, and the Book Trade*

- (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 125–53; S. Baron, 'Licensing readers, licensing authorities in seventeenth-century England', in J. Andersen and E. Sauer (eds), *Books and Readers in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), pp. 217–42.
- 2 See M. C. Augustine, *Aesthetics of Contingency: Writing, Politics, and Culture in England, 1639–1689* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).
 - 3 For instance, it was long assumed that the romances that flooded the print market in the late 1640s and 1650s catered to a partisan audience, as modern readers assiduously detected hidden Royalist ideology in the genre's allegories and allusions. Steven Zwicker's work on these books' reception now suggests that they served a more complex affective purpose for readers on both sides of the political divide; see S. N. Zwicker, 'Royalist romance?', in T. Keymer (ed.), *The Oxford History of the Novel in English*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
 - 4 So, in his biography, Nigel Smith places Marvell alongside John Donne, John Dryden and Ben Jonson in terms of poetic quality, noting that 'much of that quality has to do with indecipherability, with irresolvable ambiguities, with seeing things all ways at once and yet never really revealing what the hidden author thinks'; *Andrew Marvell: The Chameleon* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 3.
 - 5 See, among others, J. M. Wallace, *Destiny His Choice: The Loyalty of Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1968); A. Patterson, *Marvell and the Civic Crown* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), rev. as *Marvell: The Writer in Public Life* (Harlow: Longman, 2000); W. Chernaik, *The Poet's Time: Politics and Religion in the Work of Andrew Marvell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); W. Chernaik and M. Dzelzainis (eds), *Marvell and Liberty* (New York: Palgrave, 1999); D. Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); B. Worden, *Literature and Politics in Cromwellian England: John Milton, Andrew Marvell, Marchamont Nedham* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Smith, *The Chameleon*. For a revisionist assessment of this tradition, see M. C. Augustine, 'The chameleon or the sponge?: Marvell, Milton, and the politics of literary history', *SP*, 111:1 (2014), pp. 132–62.
 - 6 From narrowest to widest contextualising view, see D. Hirst and S. N. Zwicker, 'High summer at Nun Appleton, 1651: Andrew Marvell and Lord Fairfax's occasions', *HJ*, 36:2 (1993), 247–69; N. McDowell, *Poetry and Allegiance in the English Civil Wars: Marvell and the Cause of Wit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Worden, *Literature and Politics*.
 - 7 Rosalie Colie began her brilliant study of Marvell, "*My Echoing Song*": *Andrew Marvell's Poetry of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), with the confession that she was moved to write the book because 'Marvell's work was and remains too hard for me; it has never been easy for me to read any poetry, and Marvell's poems have always seemed to me among the most difficult and elusive I know', p. vii. Cf. Hirst and Zwicker, *Andrew Marvell, Orphan of the Hurricane* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 1: 'With Marvell it is the very elusiveness and the strangeness of his story that compel attention.'
 - 8 See above under 'Notes': Marvell, The Poems, and Marvell, The Prose Works.
 - 9 D. M. Friedman, 'Marvell sempervirens', *MP*, 113:1 (2015), pp. 135–50, at 135. For approaches to Marvell that move away from the strictly contextual-historicist, see D. K. McColley, *Poetry and Ecology in the Age of Milton and Marvell* (Aldershot: Ashgate,

- 2007); J. Faust, *Andrew Marvell's Liminal Lyrics: The Space Between* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2012); Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*.
- 10 As an epitome of this approach, see Zwicker, 'The day that George Thomason collected his copy of the *Poems of Mr. John Milton, both English and Latin, Compos'd at Several Times*', *RES*, 64:264 (2013), 231–45.
- 11 See, for example, this insight into the array of discourses deployed against Dryden by his Restoration enemies: 'Evelyn was not much of an ironist, nor indeed much of a polemicist or gossip, but the significance of this conjuncture – of playwriting, conversion, and prostitution – was not lost on him. These modes of instability and venality were widely understood to be overlapping, nearly interchangeable sites – and throughout the whole of the age.' Zwicker, 'Why are they saying these terrible things about John Dryden? The uses of gossip and scandal', *Essays in Criticism*, 64:2 (2014), p. 162. See also S. N. Zwicker, *Politics and Language in Dryden's Poetry: The Art of Disguise* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); *Lines of Authority: Politics and English Literary Culture, 1649–1689* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993); and with Hirst, *Orphan of the Hurricane*.
- 12 See Sharpe and Zwicker (eds), *Politics of Discourse: The Literature and History of Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987); *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998); and *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). While Zwicker's collaborations with Hirst on Andrew Marvell have been noted above, their 'High summer at Nun Appleton, 1651' deserves special mention as an example of interdisciplinary collaboration at its finest.
- 13 See Sharpe and Zwicker's introduction to *Reading, Society and Politics*, 'Discovering the Renaissance reader', pp. 1–40, as well as Zwicker's own contribution to that volume, 'The constitution of opinion and the pacification of reading', pp. 295–316; see also Zwicker, 'Reading the margins: politics and the habits of appropriation', in *Refiguring Revolutions*, pp. 101–15; 'The reader revealed', in S. A. Baron, E. Walsh, and S. Scola (eds), *The Reader Revealed* (Washington, DC: Folger Shakespeare Library, 2001), pp. 11–17; "'What every literate man once knew": tracing readers in early modern England', in R. Myers, M. Harris, and G. Mandelbrote (eds), *Owners, Annotators, and the Signs of Reading* (London: British Library, 2005), pp. 75–90; 'Habits of reading and early modern English literary culture', in J. Mueller and D. Loewenstein (eds), *The Cambridge History of Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 170–98; 'The day that George Thomason collected his copy of the *Poems of Mr. John Milton*'.
- 14 See Hirst and Zwicker, *Orphan of the Hurricane*; also Zwicker, 'Considering the ancients', in Sharpe and Zwicker (eds), *Writing Lives: Biography and Textuality, Identity and Representation in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); 'Why are they saying these terrible things about John Dryden?'; and 'Lord Rochester: a life in gossip', in Augustine and Zwicker (eds), *Lord Rochester in the Restoration World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 79–98.
- 15 See the poem 'The Garden', in Marvell, *The Poems*, p. 157.