Writing the English Republic
POETRY, RHETORIC AND POLITICS, 1627–1660

The English republic of the mid-seventeenth century is traditionally viewed as an aberration in political and literary history. In this magisterial history of republican political culture, David Norbrook argues that the English republican imagination had deep roots in humanist literary culture, and that the ‘triumph of Augustanism’ after 1660 marked a sharp reaction against powerful anti-Augustan trends. Key texts by Marvell and Milton, including *Paradise Lost*, are set in the context of previously neglected writings by Edmund Waller, George Wither, Thomas May and many others, showing how writers re-imagined English political and literary culture without kingship. The book draws on extensive archival research, bringing to light exciting and neglected manuscript and printed sources. Offering a bold new narrative of the whole period, and a timely reminder that England has a republican as well as royalist heritage, *Writing the English Republic* will be of compelling interest to historians as well as literary scholars.

David Norbrook’s publications include *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* (1984) and *The Penguin Book of Renaissance Verse* (1992), as well as numerous articles and reviews in literary and historical journals. He has held a British Academy Research Readership and visiting fellowships in the United States, and has made a lecture tour of Australia supported by the British Council. Fellow and Tutor in English at Magdalen College, Oxford since 1978, he was appointed in 1998 to a Professorship at the University of Maryland, College Park.
Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric, and Politics, 1627–1660
David Norbrook

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Material has been incorporated from the following articles, in some of which fuller documentation of some points may be found, and to whose publishers I am grateful for permissions:


This book attempts to show the importance of setting individual writers in
a larger process of agency, and can claim no exception for itself. When it was begun, republicanism was wholly outside the mainstream of British politics. Writing the book has been stimulated by a process of change which has seen the re-emergence of constitutional reform as a significant agenda, and Henry Marten's being honoured not only by a plaque in Oxford but by giving his name to a musical group. This book could not have been undertaken without the magnificent contributions of J. G. A. Pocock, Quentin Skinner and Blair Worden to the history of republicanism, and without Christopher Hill's reminders of a world larger than that of republicanism. I am of course much indebted to a large quantity of literary criticism, full acknowledgement of which would have swollen the book to monstrous proportions. I have tried to point readers towards a good selection of the most significant recent work, while also paying tribute to earlier work in a field which has not always seen linear progress.

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Writing the English Republic is dedicated to two friends and colleagues whom it has been one of the great good fortunes of my life to know. They have been spared any direct involvement in the book, but their sustaining friendship over many years helped to make it possible.
Note on references and abbreviations

The aim of the references is to make it as easy as possible to understand texts in their historical moment. Where practicable, citations follow the original spelling, though the forms of transliteration vary slightly in drawing on such a range of texts and editions. Except in some cases where there is a modern edition providing contextual material, I have given identifying numbers: British Library pressmarks (those beginning with  or ) for books included in George Thomason’s collection from the years 1641–61 (though I have not always used the Thomason copy), and STC (numerical) and Wing (alphanumerical) numbers for non-Thomason books up to 1640 and 1641 respectively. All three collections are available on microfilm.

Place of publication is London where not otherwise indicated. Dates are given Old Style, save that the year is taken to begin on 1 January. Quotations in Greek have been transliterated.

BL British Library
CJ The Journals of the House of Commons
CSPD Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series
HMC Historical Manuscripts Commission Reports
HP Sheffield University Library, Hartlib Papers. With the exception of CL, above, I have used the reproductions prepared by the Hartlib Papers Project, The Hartlib Papers on CD-ROM (Ann Arbor and Godstone, 1995), with occasional silent omissions of repeated words.
Hutchinson Lucy Hutchinson, Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson, ed. James Sutherland (Oxford, 1973)
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May Lucan’s Pharsalia, second edition, trans. Thomas May (1631; STC 16888)
ML Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, Marten-Loder Papers
MQ Milton Quarterly
OED Oxford English Dictionary
PRO SP Public Record Office, State Papers
TSP A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, ed. Thomas Birch, 7 vols. (1742)
WMW Miscellaneous Works of George Wither, 6 vols. (Manchester, 1872–78; rptd New York, 1967); Page references are to individual works within each volume.
WP The Poems of Edmund Waller, ed. G. Thorn Drury (London and New York, 1893; references are to the two-volume reprint, 1905)