

LETTER--To Monsieur de Moliere, Valet de Chambre du Roi

In a reverent tone, the author initiates a letter to Monsieur de Moliere, expressing immense admiration for Moliere's transformational impact on French comedy, paralleling his achievements with those of Louis XIV for France. Moliere is commended for not only elevating the genre of comedy but also fostering a cultural exchange that saw the English stage significantly influenced by French wit, particularly during times when English playwrights infused their works with a coarser humor unlike the refined taste of French drama.

As the letter unfolds, it delves into comparisons between past and present theatrical practices, observing a continuous tradition of borrowing from French plays, a homage to the lasting legacy of Moliere. The author laments the modern English stage's continued tactical inspirations from French creativity, underscoring it as a testament to Moliere's enduring influence.

Moliere's unparalleled craftsmanship in character creation is highlighted, with mentions of his most memorable characters like Alceste, Don Juan, and others that showcase his ability to blend humor with philosophical depth, ahead of societal norms. Moliere's skepticism towards religion, manifested in his portrayal of credulity and satire of dogmatic beliefs, is reflected upon, positioning him as a figure who found solace and truth in human folly rather than divine prospects, a stance that distinguished him sharply from his contemporaries like Pascal.

The letter shifts to explore Moliere's personal struggles and the empathy evident in his comedies towards those who endure life's cruelties, rather than siding outright with characters of young prosperity. It appreciates Moliere's nuanced approach to depicting

the human condition, where even figures of mockery retain a semblance of dignity and evoke audience sympathy.

Finally, the author reflects on the posthumous treatment of Moliere's legacy, alternating between critique and admiration for the fervor of 'Molieristes'. While recognizing the valuable preservation of Moliere's contributions, the author criticizes the excessive focus on trivial details over the essence of Moliere's works, wishing for a Moliere himself to satirize the superficial engagement with his legacy. Throughout, the letter maintains a tone of profound respect and genuine contemplation on Moliere's unparalleled contributions to comedy and culture, underlining the timeless relevance and humanity of his work.

