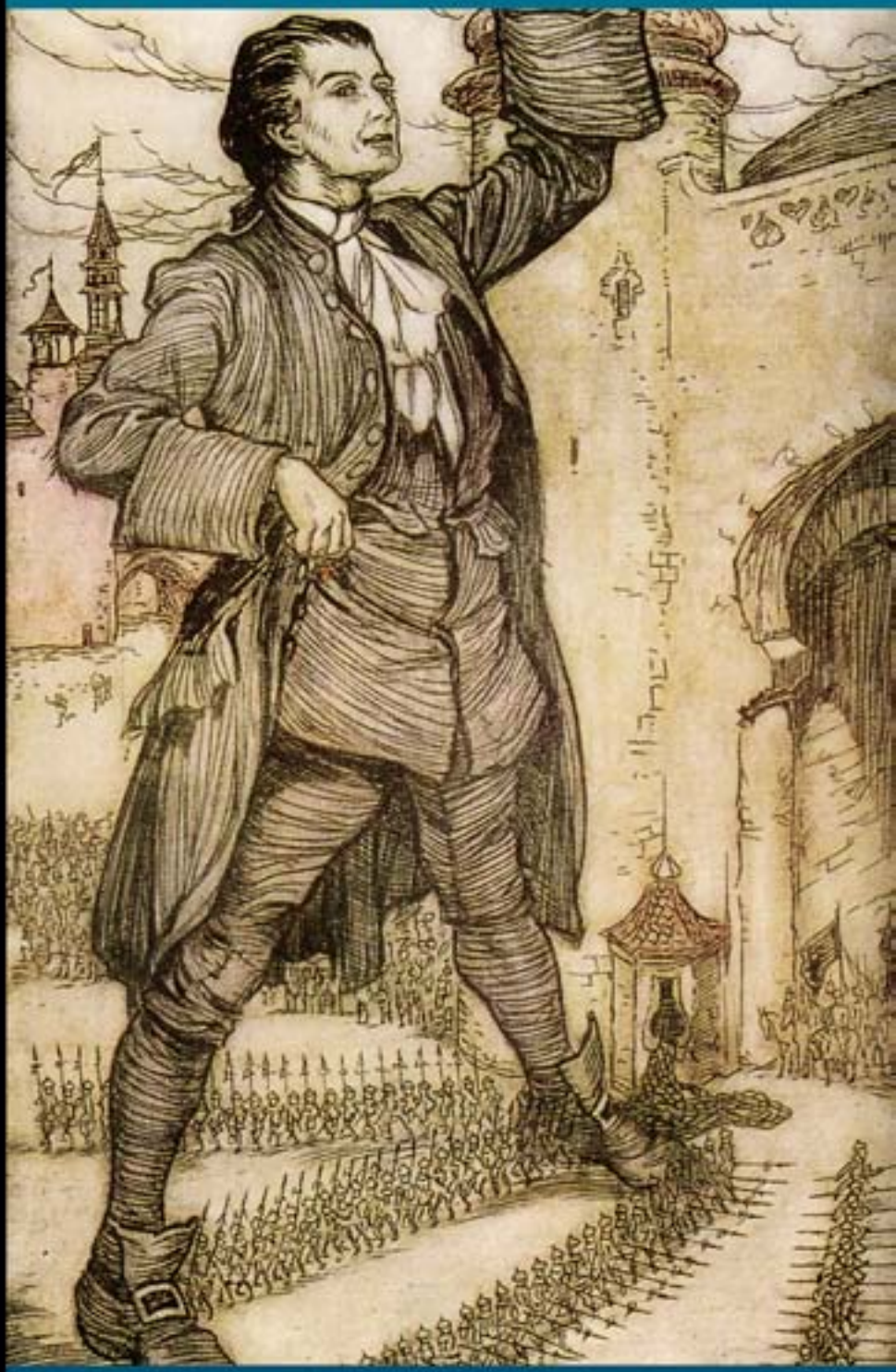
Bloom's Modern Critical

# INTERPRETATIONS

Edited and with an Introduction by HAROLD BLOOM

## Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels

NEW EDITION



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*Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations*

# Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*
## *New Edition*

*Edited and with an introduction by*
Harold Bloom
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Yale University

BLOOM'S LITERARY CRITICISM
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HAROLD BLOOM

# *Introduction*

## JONATHAN SWIFT'S *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*

The terrible greatness of Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* has much to do with our sense of its excess, with its force being so exuberantly beyond its form (or its calculated formlessness). *Gulliver's Travels,* the later and lesser work, has survived for the common reader, whereas Swift's early masterpiece has not. Like its descendant, Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus, A Tale of a Tub* demands too much of the reader, but it more than rewards those demands, and it now seems unclear whether *Sartor Resartus* does or not. Gulliver's first two voyages are loved by children (of all ages), while the third and fourth voyages, being more clearly by the Swift who wrote *A Tale of a Tub,* now make their appeal only to those who would benefit most from an immersion in the Tub.

Gulliver himself is both the strength and the weakness of the book, and his character is particularly ambiguous in the great fourth voyage, to the country of the rational Houyhnhnms and the bestial Yahoos, who are and are not, respectively, horses and humans. The inability to resist a societal perspectivism is at once Gulliver's true weakness, and his curious strength as an observer. Swift's barely concealed apprehension that the self is an abyss, that the ego is a fiction masking our fundamental nothingness, is exemplified by Gulliver, but on a level of commonplaceness far more bathetic than anything reductive in the Tale-teller. Poor Gulliver is a good enough man, but almost devoid of imagination. One way of describing him might be to name him the least Nietzschean character ever to appear in any narrative. Though a ceaseless traveler, Gulliver lacks any desire to be elsewhere, or to be different. His pride is blind, and all too easily magnifies to pomposity, or declines to a self-

contempt that is more truly a contempt for all other humans. If the Tale-teller is a Swiftian parody of one side of Swift, the anti-Cartesian, anti-Hobbesian, then Gulliver is a Swiftian parody of the great ironist's own misanthropy.

The reader of "A Voyage to Lilliput" is unlikely to forget the fatuity of Gulliver at the close of chapter 6:

> I am here obliged to vindicate the Reputation of an excellent Lady, who was an innocent Sufferer upon my Account. The Treasurer took a Fancy to be jealous of his Wife, from the Malice of some evil Tongues, who informed him that her Grace had taken a violent Affection for my Person; and the Court-Scandal ran for some Time that she once came privately to my Lodging. This I solemnly declare to be a most infamous Falshood, without any Grounds, farther than that her Grace was pleased to treat me with all innocent Marks of Freedom and Friendship. I own she came often to my House, but always publickly . . . I should not have dwelt so long upon this Particular, if it had been a Point wherein the Reputation of a great Lady is so nearly concerned, to say nothing of my own; although I had the Honour to be a *Nardac*, which the Treasurer himself is not; for all the World knows he is only a *Clumglum*, a Title inferior by one Degree, as that of a Marquess is to a Duke in *England*; yet I allow he preceded me in right of his Post.

The great *Nardac* has so fallen into the societal perspective of Lilliput, that he sublimely forgets he is twelve times the size of the *Clumglum*'s virtuous wife, who therefore would have been quite safe with him were they naked and alone. Escaping back to England, Gulliver has learned nothing and sets forth on "A Voyage to Brobdingnag," land of the giants, where he learns less than nothing:

> The Learning of this People is very defective; consisting only in Morality, History, Poetry and Mathematicks; wherein they must be allowed to excel. But, the last of these is wholly applied to what may be useful in Life; to the Improvement of Agriculture and all mechanical Arts; so that among us it would be little esteemed. And as to Ideas, Entities, Abstractions and Transcendentals, I could never drive the least Conception into their Heads.
>
> No Law of that Country must exceed in Words the Number of Letters in their Alphabet; which consists only of two and

> twenty. But indeed, few of them extend even to that Length. They are expressed in the most plain and simple Terms, wherein those People are not Mercurial enough to discover above one Interpretation. And, to write a Comment upon any Law, is a capital Crime. As to the Decision of civil Causes, or Proceedings against Criminals, their Precedents are so few, that they have little Reason to boast of any extraordinary Skill in either.

Effective as this is, it seems too weak an irony for Swift, and we are pleased when the dull Gulliver abandons Brobdingnag behind him. The Third Voyage, more properly Swiftian, takes us first to Laputa, the floating island, at once a parody of a Platonic academy yet also a kind of science fiction punishment machine, always ready to crush earthlings who might assert liberty:

> If any Town should engage in Rebellion or Mutiny, fall into violent Factions, or refuse to pay the usual Tribute; the King hath two Methods of reducing them to Obedience. The first and the mildest Course is by keeping the Island hovering over such a Town, and the Lands about it; whereby he can deprive them of the Benefit of the Sun and the Rain, and consequently afflict the Inhabitants with Dearth and Diseases. And if the Crime deserve it, they are at the same time pelted from above with great Stones, against which they have no Defence, but by creeping into Cellars or Caves, while the Roofs of their Houses are beaten to Pieces. But if they still continue obstinate, or offer to raise Insurrections; he proceeds to the last Remedy, by letting the Island drop directly upon their Heads, which makes a universal Destruction both of Houses and Men. However, this is an Extremity to which the Prince is seldom driven, neither indeed is he willing to put it in Execution; nor dare his Ministers advise him to an Action, which as it would render them odious to the People, so it would be a great Damage to their own Estates that lie all below; for the Island is the King's Demesn.

The maddening lack of affect on Gulliver's part begins to tell upon us here; the stolid narrator is absurdly inadequate to the grim force of his own recital, grimmer for us now even than it could have been for the prophetic Swift. Gulliver inexorably and blandly goes on to Lagado, where he observes the grand Academy of Projectors, Swift's famous spoof of the British Royal Society, but here the ironies go curiously flat, and I suspect we are left with the irony of irony, which wearies because by repetition it seems to become compulsive. Yet it may be that here, as subsequently with the immortal but

senile and noxious Struldbruggs, the irony of irony is highly deliberate, in order to prepare Gulliver, and the battered reader, for the great shock of reversal that lies just ahead in the Country of the Houyhnhnms, which is also the land of the Yahoos, "a strange Sort of Animal."

Critical reactions to Gulliver's fourth voyage have an astonishing range, from Thackeray calling its moral "horrible, shameful, unmanly, blasphemous" to T. S. Eliot regarding it as a grand triumph for the human spirit. Eliot's judgment seems to me as odd as Thackeray's, and presumably both writers believed that the Yahoos were intended as a just representation of the natural man, with Thackeray humanistically disagreeing, and the neo-Christian Eliot all too happy to concur. If that were the proper reading of Swift, we would have to conclude that the great satirist had drowned in his own misanthropy, and had suffered the terrible irony, after just evading the becoming one with his Tale-teller, of joining himself to the uneducable Gulliver. Fit retribution perhaps, but it is unwise to underestimate the deep cunning of Swift.

Martin Price accurately reminds us that Swift's attitudes do not depend solely upon Christian morals, but stem also from a traditional secular wisdom. Peace and decency are wholly compatible with Christian teaching, but are secular virtues as well. Whatever the Yahoos represent, they are *not* a vision of secular humanity devoid of divine grace, since they offend the classical view of man quite as profoundly as they seem to suit an ascetic horror of our supposedly natural condition.

Clearly, it is the virtues of the Houyhnhnms, and not the squalors of the Yahoos, that constitute a burden for critics and for common readers. I myself agree with Price, when he remarks of the Houyhnhnms: "They are rational horses, neither ideal men nor a satire upon others' ideals for man." Certainly they cannot represent a human rational ideal, since none of us would wish to lack all impulse, or any imagination whatsoever. Nor do they seem a plausible satire upon the Deistic vision, a satire worthier of Blake than of Swift, and in any case contradicted by everything that truly is admirable about these cognitively advanced horses. A rational horse is a kind of oxymoron, and Swift's irony is therefore more difficult than ever to interpret:

> My Master heard me with great Appearances of Uneasiness in his Countenance; because *Doubting* or *not believing*, are so little known in this Country, that the Inhabitants cannot tell how to behave themselves under such Circumstances. And I remember in frequent Discourses with my Master concerning the Nature of Manhood, in other Parts of the World; having Occasion to talk of *Lying*, and *false Representation*, it was with much Difficulty that he comprehended what I meant; although he had otherwise a most acute Judgment. For he argued thus; That the Use of Speech was

> to make us understand one another, and to receive Information of Facts; now if any one *said the Thing which was not*, these Ends were defeated; because I cannot properly be said to understand him; and I am so far from receiving information, that he leaves me worse than in Ignorance; for I am led to believe a Thing *Black* when it is *White*, and *Short* when it is *Long*. And these were all the Notions he had concerning the Faculty of *Lying*, so perfectly well understood, and so universally practised among human Creatures.

Are we altogether to admire Gulliver's Master here, when that noble Houyhnhnm not only does not know how to react to the human propensity to say *the thing which was not,* but lacks even the minimal imagination that might allow him to apprehend the human need for fictions, a "sickness not ignoble," as Keats observed in *The Fall of Hyperion?* Since the noble Houyhnhnm finds the notion "that the Yahoos were the only governing Animals" in Gulliver's country "altogether past his Conception," are we again to admire him for an inability that would make it impossible for us to read *Gulliver's Travels* (or *King Lear,* for that matter)? The virtues of Swift's rational horses would not take us very far, if we imported them into our condition, but can that really be one of Swift's meanings? And what are we to do with Swiftian ironies that are too overt already, and become aesthetically intolerable if we take up the stance of the sublimely rational Houyhnhnm?

> My Master likewise mentioned another Quality, which his Servants had discovered in several *Yahoos*, and to him was wholly unaccountable. He said, a Fancy would sometimes take a *Yahoo*, to retire into a Corner, to lie down and howl, and groan, and spurn away all that came near him, although he were young and fat, and wanted neither Food nor Water; nor did the Servants imagine what could possibly, ail him. And the only Remedy they found was to set him to hard Work, after which he would infallibly come to himself. To this I was silent out of Partiality to my own Kind; yet here I could plainly discover the true Seeds of *Spleen*, which only seizeth on the *Lazy*, the *Luxurious*, and the *Rich;* who, if they were forced to undergo the *same Regimen*, I would undertake for the Cure.
>
> His Honour had farther observed, that a Female-*Yahoo* would often stand behind a Bank or a Bush, to gaze on the young Males passing by, and then appear, and hide, using many antick Gestures and Grimaces; at which time it was observed, that she had a most *offensive Smell;* and when any of the Males advanced, would slowly

> retire, looking often back, and with a counterfeit Shew of Fear, run off into some convenient Place where she knew the Male would follow her.

Swift rather dubiously seems to want it every which way at once, so that the Yahoos both are and are not representations of ourselves, and the Houyhnhnms are and are not wholly admirable or ideal. Or is it the nature of irony itself, which must weary us, or finally make us long for a true sublime, even if it should turn out to be grotesque? Fearfully strong writer that he was, Swift as ironist resembles Kafka far more than say Orwell, among modern authors. We do not know precisely how to read "In the Penal Colony" or *The Trial,* and we certainly do not know exactly how to interpret Gulliver's fourth voyage. What most merits' interpretation in Kafka is the extraordinary perversity of imagination with which he so deliberately makes himself uninterpretable. Is Swift a similar problem for the reader? What is the proper response to the dismaying conclusion of *Gulliver's Travels?*

> Having thus answered the *only* Objection that can be raised against me as a Traveller; I here take a final Leave of my Courteous Readers, and return to enjoy my own Speculations in my little Garden at *Redriff*; to apply those excellent Lessons of Virtue which I learned among the *Houyhnhnms*; to instruct the *Yahoos* of my own Family as far as I shall find them docible Animals; to behold my Figure often in a Glass, and thus if possible habituate my self by Time to tolerate the Sight of a human Creature: To lament the Brutality of *Houyhnhnms* in my own Country, but always treat their Persons with Respect, for the Sake of my noble Master, his Family, his Friends, and the whole *Houyhnhnm* Race, whom these of ours have the Honour to resemble in all their Lineaments, however their Intellectuals came to degenerate.
>
> I began last Week to permit my Wife to sit at Dinner with me, at the Farthest End of a long Table; and to answer (but with the utmost Brevity) the few Questions I ask her. Yet the Smell of a *Yahoo* continuing very offensive, I always keep my Nose well stopt with Rue, Lavender, or Tobacco-Leaves. And although it be hard for a Man late in Life to remove old Habits; I am not altogether out of Hopes in some Time to suffer a Neighbour *Yahoo* in my Company, without the Apprehensions I am yet under of his Teeth or his Claws.

Who are those "Courteous Readers" of whom Gulliver takes his final leave here? We pity the poor fellow, but we do not so much pity Mrs. Gulliver as wonder how she can tolerate the insufferable wretch. Yet the final paragraphs have a continued power that justifies their fame, even as we continue to see Gulliver as deranged:

> My Reconcilement to the *Yahoo*-kind in general might not be so difficult, if they would be content with those Vices and Follies only which Nature hath entitled them to. I am not in the least provoked at the Sight of a Lawyer, a Pick-pocket, a Colonel, a Fool, a Lord, a Gamster, a Politician, a Whoremunger, a Physician, an Evidence, a Suborner, an Attorney, a Traytor, or the like: This is all according to the due Course of Things: But, when I behold a Lump of Deformity, and Diseases both in Body and Mind, smitten with *Pride*, it immediately breaks all the Measures of my Patience; neither shall I be ever able to comprehend how such an Animal and such a Vice could tally together. The wise and virtuous *Houyhnhnms,* who abound in all Excellencies that can adorn a rational Creature, have no Name for this Vice in their Language, whereby they describe the detestable Qualities of their *Yahoos;* among which they were not able to distinguish this of Pride, for want of thoroughly understanding Human Nature, as it sheweth it self in other Countries, where that Animal presides. But I, who had more Experience, could plainly observe some Rudiments of it among the wild *Yahoos*.
>
> But the *Houyhnhnms*, who live under the Government of Reason, are no more proud of the good Qualities they possess, than I should be for not wanting a Leg or an Arm, which no Man in his Wits would boast of, although he must be miserable without them. I dwell the longer upon this Subject from the Desire I have to make the Society of an *English Yahoo* by any Means not insupportable; and therefore I here intreat those who have any Tincture of this absurd Vice, that they will not presume to appear in my Sight.

What takes precedence here, the palpable hit at the obscenity of false human pride, or the madness of Gulliver, who thinks he is a Yahoo, longs to be a Houyhnhnm, and could not bear to be convinced that he is neither? As in *A Tale of a Tub,* Swift audaciously plays at the farthest limits of irony, limits that make satire impossible, because no norm exists to which we might hope to return.

SEAN MOORE

# *Satiric Norms, Swift's Financial Satires and the Bank of Ireland Controversy of 1720–1721*

From the autumn of 1720 to late 1722, the problem of rescuing the South Sea Company and its shareholders with some form of government bail-out affected financial affairs in Ireland. The bursting of the Mississippi and South Sea Bubbles in 1720 had, in effect, proven that in the era of the English Financial Revolution, all property and securities were essentially 'fictive'. This problem required the invention of another fiction that Swift and his Scriblerus Club friends, Alexander Pope and John Gay, would construct in satire throughout the following decade: a heuristic division between the 'bad' securities of the Bubble and the 'good' securities that would redeem Bubble stocks.[1] This division, rhetorical as well as psychological, would provide the conviction that the British Isles were not indeed bankrupt by restoring confidence that the market had indeed bottomed out. The consequent dependence of the market upon fiction moves economic history into the realm of literary criticism, specifically with regard to a reflection upon Swift's financial satires of 1720–1721, works which illustrate the Irish ramifications of the failure of the Bubble companies.

These satires were mainly directed at a project to establish a Bank of Ireland and a national Irish paper currency—a currency that was to be backed by its subscribers' silver and gold deposits, as well as by their mortgages of land. The satires create a reading experience of a normative value—that of those

*Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá Chultúr,* Volume 17 (2002): pp. 26–56. 

traditional securities like ancient land titles and sterling coinage that provided an economic foundation to the eighteenth-century 'Country' ideology—by targeting new, implicitly inferior securities like the South Sea Company stock and subscriptions for the Bank of Ireland stock. Because Swift, Pope, and Gay publicly wrote against such paper credit while privately investing in the Bank of England and the Company, however, the motive of this satire was, seemingly, to prevent the formation of a national Irish financial institution that could rival the Bank of England at a time when the value of the latter institution's 'paper' stocks and notes was to be used to bail out the Company. If the effect of financial satire is to reify some securities as normative through the ridicule of others as chimeras, then Swift's satires on the Bank of Ireland helped establish Bank of England stock and notes as mainstays in the aftermath of the Bubble's bursting.

Moreover, because these satires refuse to allow Ireland to modernise economically into a finance culture like that of contemporary Britain and the American colonies, they paradoxically invest Ireland and the satirist with a normative, reified value. This colonial-nationalist or patriotic endowment is accomplished via a form of what James Boyd White has termed 'constitutive rhetoric'—a rhetoric that marks the beginning of a modern Irish literature.[2] Swift's financial satires of 1720–1721 can be said to launch this literature because the pamphlet war over the question of whether the Irish parliament should approve a royal charter for the Bank of Ireland—the debate in which these satires are situated—enacts the formation of an Irish public sphere, itself distinctly modern inasmuch as it constitutes the idea of nation in the rhetoric of political economy. In this sense, a theory of the transformation in constitutional ideas about Ireland's relationship with Great Britain in the 1720s, focusing on the Declaratory Act passed at the beginning of the decade, must also begin with a study of the corpus of the Bank controversy. These satires initiate the work of sublimating a national Irish political economic unconscious that the *Drapier's Letters, A Modest Proposal,* and to some extent, *Gulliver's Travels,* further develop in that decade.

## I

The analysis of Swift's reification of securities into 'normative' entities in these satires requires a New Historicist development of the idea of the 'satiric norm' or 'satiric antithesis', a New Critical concept that suggests that the negative vice or folly targeted in Juvenalian or Horatian satire, respectively, is counterbalanced by a positive meditation on a specific or implicit virtue. Mary Clare Randolph first proposed this idea in 1942, suggesting that classical formal verse satire—an ideal form largely invented for the purposes of critical reflection and rarely to be found in literature—followed a 'bipartite' structure in which 'Part A' attacked 'some

specific virtue or folly' and was followed by 'Part B,' in which 'its opposing virtue was recommended.'[3] Basing her arguments primarily on John Dryden's critical essay *A Discourse on the Original and Progress of Satire* (1692–1693), she insists that during the Augustan period, there was an Aristotelian unity of design to the ideal of satire that balanced the exegesis of the satirised object by extolling such a virtue:

> A further point, included in this neo-Aristotelian rule for unity of design within a satire, is that a satirist must offer one single positive precept of moral virtue to balance his attack on the one particular vice. 'He is,' says Dryden, 'chiefly to inculcate one virtue and insist on that.' If he has subdivided the chief vice into component parts, then he must offer corresponding minor precepts of moral virtue which will be logical subdivisions of the major precept. Thus, for every vice, major and minor, there must be a precisely corresponding precept of virtue.[4]

Though this structuralist conception lends itself well to an interpretation of the 'virtue' politics and 'Country' ideology of Swift and his Scriblerian Club peers, it cannot explain the norm-defying Menippean satires such as *A Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels*. For this problem, however, Randolph allows that the 'norm' is often not in the text, but only implied: 'Some of the satires very obviously present difficult problems; and occasionally Dryden has to admit outright that Part B, the precept to virtue, is only implied or that the needful transition is blurred or missing altogether.'[5] The 'norm,' in this case, is context and/or reader dependent.

The historicist 'Chicago critic' Edward Rosenheim developed Randolph's concept, forwarding, a reader-based theory for how the 'norm' is supplied in satire:

> The 'moment' of satiric recognition, which provided the genesis for my discussion of satire, is a moment of simultaneous awareness; we sense that the satiric act or statement is not precisely what it purports to be: it is up to us to supply its 'true' meaning from knowledge tacitly shared by the satirist and ourselves.[6]

Norman Knox, Maurice Johnson and Northrop Frye, in a symposium on satiric norms, concurred with Rosenheim on the reader's supplementary role in developing standards via this mode. Frye, in particular, was adamant in insisting on a solely reader-based action in shaping norms, stating that 'It is the reader who is responsible for "putting in" the moral norm, not the satirist.'[7]

New Historicist theorists of satire, working in a postmodern paradigm, have been reluctant to grant satire what these New Critics considered its purely 'moral' and 'virtuous' norm, preferring to see in the context of the satiric norm ideological biases affected by problems that were rather more pecuniary in character. Rose Zimbardo, in an article about semiosis in Restoration satire, complains that

> Three hundred years of conditioning in Lockean positivist thinking have so blinded us that we cannot see beyond the eighteenth-century binary model for satire, which determines that in order to be satire a text must direct us toward a positive norm, must contain or, at least indirectly, uphold a clear *moral* 'satiric antithesis.'[8]

Yet John Zomchick has attempted to redeem the semiotic study of the satiric norm from Zimbardo's form of critique by suggesting that rather than upholding a previously established norm, satire invents new ideologies. He argues that Augustan satire's negativity towards its targets is productive of an 'other', a ridiculed subject that dialectically forms the 'self' and its normative ideology: 'negativity can be enlisted in the service of ideological construction . . . satire's effects can be read as formative rather than reformative or destructive, though both reformation and destruction may advance its formative ends.'[9] Zomchick's argument is not positivist in outlook; he argues that the absence created by Augustan satire's negativity is backward-looking and anti-modern:

> This productive absence of satire, the golden age that serves as an unimpeachable standard of value, is a bit of a scandal for those committed to the modern side in the famous debate between classical and contemporary culture because perfection is always receding like the waters that surround the bound Tantalus. The ideological imperatives associated with an expanding commercial nation demand not a longing backward glance but rather a re-reflection of that backward glance so that it encompasses the present, making presence itself out of satire's productive absence.[10]

'Country' rhetoric's nostalgia—in Swift, its discourse of the 'Constitution in Church and State,' conviction regarding the 'intrinsic' value of land and sterling coinage, and corresponding 'virtue' politics—is a manifestation of this "backwards glance," but should not be taken to govern Augustan satire's effects. By targeting modernising institutions, the negativity of Scriblerian satire, in particular, rather invents the normative subjectivity of an oppositional ideology, yet it does so by leaving its opposing space open,

absent. 'Satire's effects lie elsewhere than in its targets,' Zomchick reminds us. 'By annihilating, it seeks to create a certain kind of subjectivity (through negation). And yet this project fails because satire itself fails to create a viable space for the subject to occupy.'[11] That very failure is the condition of the modern and the Lacanian 'lack' that is constitutive of the modern subject. It is generative of a reading process towards nostalgia for presence—'The process,' even Zimbardo is willing to admit, 'forces us to create the "artifactuality of the real,"' or to invent 'land,' 'gold,' 'silver,' 'virtue' and other objects as sources of putatively 'intrinsic' and 'innate' value.[12] 'Country' rhetoric's nostalgia, in this formulation, is not a reformative project for the recovery of the fullness of a lost presence that 'actually existed' so much as the formative invention of a presence whose fullness can only be contemplated from a simultaneously invented position of loss and absence.

## II

A New Historicist assessment of that 'Country', bullionist monetary ideology in the satirical norms of Swift's Irish financial satires of 1720–1721 must therefore begin with an exploration of how such a 'bipartite' colonial satirical scheme could take shape in the hybrid governmental, monetary and cultural circumstances of Ireland in the 1720s. Swift's rather naïve attempt to oversimplify Ireland's economic problems into such a 'bipartite' scheme is manifest in *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture, in Cloaths and Furniture of Houses, &c. Utterly Rejecting and Renouncing Every Thing Wearable that Comes from England;* a pamphlet that encouraged a boycott of British and other foreign commodities in order to encourage Irish industry and reverse Ireland's trade deficit and corollary export of cash. This pamphlet was published in the spring of 1720 sometime after John Irwin authored *To the Nobility, Gentry and Commonality of this Kingdom of Ireland*—the pamphlet that first proposed the Bank of Ireland project.[13]

The idea of a boycott to secure Ireland's monetary supply was not new, nor was it a unique recommendation for a colony within the British Atlantic world in Swift's period. Richard Lawrence, writing in *The Interest of Ireland in its Trade and Wealth Stated* (1682), responded to the central issue of imports exceeding exports by recommending sumptuary laws against foreign textiles and referred to 'A general Subscription proposed against wearing foreign Manufactures' that had been inserted into the minutes of a privy council meeting that took place on 26 May 1664.[14] Across the Atlantic, a year prior to the publication of Swift's piece, the anonymous Massachusetts pamphlet, *The Present Melancholy Circumstances of the Province Consider'd, and Methods for Redress Humbly Proposed, in a Letter from one in the Country to One in Boston* (1718–1719), complained about the loss of silver coin from Massachusetts due to the colony's consumption of British and foreign goods. It advocated a

boycott of British imports, the encouragement of domestic industry and popular consumption of Massachusetts-produced commodities. The anonymous author shares with Swift a bullionist scepticism about paper credit—a belief that only silver and gold constitute 'real' money—and is dismissive of paper money practices current in Massachusetts.[15] Given the similarity of these two essays, it is important to characterise Swift's pamphlet as a primarily a monetary tract inasmuch as its recommendations are meant to resolve the outflow of precious metal currency from a colony due to the unfavourable balance of trade under British mercantilist policy.

*A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* makes no clear separation between its economic remedies and political polemic, so the putative 'universalism' of its title should be understood as a manifestation of the restricted ideological fusion—the catachrestic appropriation and synthesis of seemingly opposite signifieds and disciplinary fields into new significations without clear referents—that tends to occur in patriotic anti-imperial argumentation.[16] Swift's remedy for Ireland's loss of specie is at first to recommend an Irish parliamentary sumptuary law, then to propose an extra-parliamentary boycott that amounts to a form of economic patriotism: 'Upon the whole, and to crown all the rest, let a firm Resolution be taken, by *Male* and *Female,* never to appear with one single *Shred* that comes from *England; and let all the People say, AMEN*.'[17] His yet more subversive comment along these lines is to suggest that English appointees to Irish offices should not take those offices (which would keep them from drawing Irish government pay out of the country), a comment appropriate to his more general indictment of how absenteeism drains gold and silver specie out of Ireland.[18]

Swift then cites Ovid's fable of Arachne and Pallas to allegorise the economic relationship of Ireland to England, suggesting that England (the goddess Pallas), a competing weaver, has struck down Ireland (Arachne) and has passed an unjust sentence on Ireland/Arachne in turning her into a spider:

> I confess, that from a Boy, I always pitied poor *Arachne,* and could never heartily love the Goddess, on Account of so *cruel and unjust a Sentence;* which, however, is *fully executed* upon *Us* by *England,* with further Additions of *Rigor* and *Severity*. For the greatest Part *of our Bowels and Vitals* is extracted, without allowing us the Liberty of *spinning* and *weaving* them.[19]

Swift is suggesting that, in the case of Ireland, as opposed to Arachne, the Wool Act of 1699 actually prevented spinning and weaving of wool—the 'bowels' of Ireland's portable wealth or commodities. The political and economic are thus unified in this allegory, which appeals to a readership's unconscious understanding of the social impact in Ireland of economic

legislation made at Westminster—an awareness all the more sublime because of the recent reprints of William Molyneux's *Case of Ireland . . . Stated* circulating in the Irish public sphere.[20]

The potential future economic legislation from the British parliament was disturbing in the spring of 1720, as the Declaratory Act was either under consideration or had just been passed at the time *A Proposal* was written. Swift asks, in lines in keeping with Molyneux's rhetoric of legalistic constitutional claims for Irish parliamentary autonomy, if the second clause of the Act—which states that the British parliament has the right to legislate for Ireland without the Irish parliament's consent—is valid under church law or natural law:

> I would be glad to learn among the Divines, whether a Law *to bind Men without their own Consent,* be obligatory *in foro Conscientiae;* because, I find *Scripture, Sanderson* and *Suarez,* are wholly silent in the Matter. The Oracle of *Reason,* the great *Law of Nature,* and general Opinion of *Civilians,* wherever they treat of *limitted Governments,* are, indeed, decisive enough.[21]

Swift had written to his friend Charles Ford in London on 4 April 1720, when both the Declaratory Act and the South Sea Act had been passed by the British parliament and were awaiting the king's signature, that he was concerned whether the Irish should be 'slaves':

> I cannot understand the South-Sea Mystery, perhaps the Frolick may go round, and every Nation (except this which is no Nation) have it's Missisippi. I believe my self not guilty of too much veneration for the Irish H. of Lds, but I differ from you in Politicks, the Question is whether People ought to be Slaves or no . . . I do assure you I never saw so universall a Discontent as there is among the highest most virulent and antichurch Whigs against that Bill and every Author or Abetter of it without Exception. They say publickly that having been the most loyall submissive complying Subjects that ever Prince had, no Subjects were ever so ill treated. They tell many aggravating Circumstances relating to the manner of rejecting their Addresses &c. I who am to the last degree ignorant, was some time at a Loss how the Commons at this Juncture when the H. of Lds are not very gracious with them, and at all times think not very well of their Jurisdiction, should agree to extend it. But it is easy to see why the Ministry presst it, and as easy to guess what methods a Ministry uses to succced.[22]

This letter, in guessing that the Stanhope-Sunderland Ministry was currying favour with both the British House of Lords by establishing it as the court of last resort in the first clause of the Declaratory bill and the British House of Commons by getting the Lords to agree to extend the Commons' jurisdiction to Ireland in the second clause, supports David Hayton's view of internal British politics motivating the Act.[23] Yet the effect of the polemical tone of Swift's treatment of the Act in *A Proposal*—targeted at an Irish audience—is to construct the Act as a deliberate British conspiracy against Irish rights to representative government, or rather the right to have Irish representatives consent to laws passed in Britain affecting Ireland.

This gap between the Swift who knows something of the British courtly and parliamentary machinations behind the Act and the Swift who exploits the Act in Irish patriotic pamphleteering—an exploitation carried over into the later *Drapier's Letters*—attenuates the trust of the critic in the motivations for his published Irish works. This exploitation of the Act is rather serving of his monetary argument in *A Proposal*—Swift is quite aware of the drain on Ireland's cash due to the usual trade deficit, absenteeism and new investment in the South Sea and Mississippi Companies, and his bullionist remedy is to discipline and invent an Irish economic community that could somehow be self-reliant and autonomous, an argument that itself is a 'bipartite' nationalist economic fantasy.

Swift's rhetorical disciplining of an 'Irish' economic body-politic cannot be separated from his corollary indictment of the Bank of Ireland project, however, because he closes *A Proposal* with a reflection upon the latter. The last paragraph of the pamphlet derides the bank idea, especially for its proposals for circulating 'altogether imaginary' money, or paper currency:

> I CANNOT forbear saying one Word upon a *Thing* they call a *Bank,* which, I hear, is projecting in this Town. I never Saw the *Proposals,* nor understand any one Particular of their Scheme: What I wish for, at present, is only a sufficient Provision of *Hemp,* and *Caps,* and *Bells,* to distribute according to the several Degrees of *Honesty* and *Prudence* in *some Persons*. I *hear* only of a monstrous Sum already named; and, if OTHERS do not soon hear of it too, and *hear* it with a *Vengeance,* then am I a Gentleman of less Sagacity than my self, and very few besides, take me to be. And the Jest will be still the better, if it be true, as judicious Persons have assured me, that one Half of this Money will be *real,* and the other Half altogether imaginary. The Matter will be likewise much mended, if the Merchants continue to carry off our Gold, and our Goldsmiths to melt down our heavy Silver.[24]

By suggesting that the bank scheme is a species of jest and foolery, Swift constructs it as a kind of circus side-show full of clowns and illusion. He continues this strategy of establishing paper credit as a chimera in later pamphlets about the Bank. By insisting on a firm division between 'real' and 'imaginary' money in the context of this pamphlet, he is not only constructing a 'bipartite' heuristic that lends a putative materiality to sterling, but is linking the Irish national interest with a bullionist belief in gold and silver currency and suggesting that paper money is as beyond the national borders as the British parliament. This link taps into an economic unconscious that takes sterling coin to be a sublimated 'real' for which there is no nominal or conscious necessity for explanation.

Slavoj Zizek, in *The Sublime Object of Ideology,* has explained this kind of monetary unconsciousness as the effect of a 'practical solipsism' in which subjects misrecognise money's commodity status and instead grant it intrinsic properties. An extension of Marx's concept of commodity fetishism, Zizek's theory suggests that the everyday use of currency constitutes a passive act of fetishism that has the ideological effect of binding currency-using subjects into communities of production; exchange, interpretation, value and, ultimately, law:

> During the act of exchange individuals proceed as 'practical solipsists', they misrecognise the socio-synthetic function of exchange: that is the level of the 'real abstraction' as the form of socialisation of private production through the medium of the market: 'What the commodity owners do in an exchange relation is practical solipsism—irrespective of what they think and say about it'. Such a misrecognition is the *sine qua non* of the effectuation of an act of exchange—if the participants were to take note of the dimension of 'real abstraction', the 'effective' act of exchange itself would no longer be possible.[25]

This fetishistic misrecognition of the social dimension of the medium of exchange during the act of exchange is precisely the psychological mechanism that was dominating Great Britain's and Ireland's bullion-based monetary system (and the bullionist ideology accompanying it). Sterling coin was fetishised and taken for granted as that sublime object of value and its social status—that of a commodity of contingent value—was repressed during sublimation. This monetary-based sublimation, for Zizek, is probably the most important factor affecting the dissemination of ideologies inasmuch as it is constitutive of a blindness: "'ideological" is a social reality whose very existence implies the non-knowledge of its participants as to its essence—that is, the social effectivity, the very reproduction of which implies that the individuals "do not know what they are doing'" when they

perform the commodity exchange and its abstraction.[26] The exchange of money requires a false consciousness that is the very formal expression of being itself in order to have the consistency of 'reality' and that consistency can only be understood as the achievement of ideology. To the extent to which the use of the bullion medium of exchange reached all quarters of the Irish population through rent payments that had to be paid in sterling, it can be argued that coin shaped certain fundamental ideologies—what was taken to be 'real', unconsciously-understood value: the 'coin of the realm' and the laws and institutions of that realm. Inasmuch as Ireland's precarious constitutional semi-autonomy was premised on its parliament's control of Irish money bills and revenue measures in general, as Charles Ivar McGrath has suggested, the question of the availability of the mainly British-minted coin and control over its supply was shaping constitutional attitudes and identity in the country.[27]

*A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacturers* thus establishes Swift's bullionist norm for Irish monetary policy and was to colour his anti-mercantilist attitudes towards Irish economic problems in the areas of the trade deficit (balance of trade), absenteeism and poverty in general, at least through to the publication of *A Modest Proposal* in 1729. The theme of absent circulating coin and its effects on identity was to find its corollary in more explicit satires of the Bank of Ireland episode, in which the implicit satirical norm of bullionism—the quite often missing positive 'satirical antithesis' to the ridiculed paper credit project—effected an absence generative of readers' nostalgia for presence. The creation of an imagined 'artifactuality of the real', most especially at this particular moment after the Declaratory Act and the bursting of the South Sea Bubble, took the form of a blending of the norms of sterling coin, land and a newly-imagined Irish constitutional identity.

## III

These norms manifest themselves more strongly within the text of those of Swift's satires written after the South Sea Bubble burst in September 1720. 'The Run Upon the Bankers' first appeared in a Dublin broadside in or around October 1720 and was addressing how Irish investors in the South Seas scrambled to redeem their Irish banknotes for specie as their stocks sank and they lost confidence in all paper monetary instruments.[28] Its first stanza suggests that the South Sea Company's directors were corrupt and attempting to take investors' hard currency in exchange for paper stock certificates, in order to buy landed estates for themselves: 'The bold Encroachers on the Deep, / Gain by Degrees huge Tracts of Land, / 'Till Neptune with a Gen'ral Sweep / Turns all again to barren Strand.'[29] The sea comes to stand as the metonym for the Company, while the beach transforms into a market rushing to a bottom of uncertain depths—a market process that

seeks closure through paper credit's sublimation into a 'real' property that would provide an absolute market-floor. The contrast between the rhyming 'land' and 'strand' juxtaposes the putative permanence, fertility, and 'reality' of the former with the liminality, barrenness, and contingency of the seaside latter, which can revert to ocean-bottom at any time.

In the second stanza, this ocean sublime—the 'Seas'—is said to be 'represented' by the 'capricious pranks' of the South Seas investors.[30] The poem here is satirising the lack of actual commodities backing South Sea stock certificates by indicating that the sea is like an unconscious that stock certificates 'represent'—effectively suggesting that irrational and 'capricious' desire, rather than what 'Country' ideology would consider a secured, disinterested and 'virtuous' material personality, governs the South Sea Company. This unconsciously-bred desire, represented by the inflated stock, breaks 'the bankers and the banks,' who cannot possibly answer the call to redeem their banknotes for specie during the panic. The note-holding public was demanding payment immediately, but the bankers were withholding payment lest they lose both their business and personal wealth: 'We want our Money on the Nail; / The Banker's ruin'd if he pays.'[31] Stanzas six and seven unleash Swift's full critique of paper currency, focussing on the banknotes of Irish private bankers: 'Riches, the Wisest Monarch sings, / Make Pinions for themselves to fly, / They fly like Bats, on Parchment Wings, / And Geese their silver Plumes supply.'[32] The idea that 'parchment wings' (paper) and the 'plumes' of 'geese' (quills) can create wealth, here expressed in the Icarus allegory, is offensive to Swift's public bullionist viewpoint, and the run on the banks supports his satiric norm of hard currency.

'The Bubble' poem was written by Swift in early December 1720, sent to his friend Charles Ford on 15 December 1720 and published in London in the first week of January 1721.[33] Aimed at a broader British audience, it should be understood as a revision of 'The Run Upon the Bankers' that focuses more strongly on the South Sea Company itself. It revives the 'circus' rhetoric of *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* to describe paper credit schemes, suggesting that the South Sea Bubble was another conjurer's magic trick in a carnival side-show, distracting the eye from what is 'real.' The poem begins with a description of how the directors of the South Sea Company have inverted logic and reason through a trick performed before investors, which has convinced them that their subscription in the Company has been converted into a much higher value: 'Ye wise Philosophers explain / What Magick makes our Money rise / When dropt into the Southern Main, / Or do these Juglers cheat our Eyes?'[34] This inversion of common sense that the South Sea Company seems to inflict on its subscribers leads to them imagining a 'fantastick Scene' of 'a Lord's Estate' and 'A Coach and Six' (lines 30, 18, 20)—once again underscoring Swift's public sentiments about the corrupt

'moneyed interest' displacing the virtuous 'landed interest.' These lines help establish through the satiric norm of the 'landed' a nostalgia for a time before the South Sea trauma when their ancient rights were not threatened by the ridiculed *nouveaux riches*.

Swift once again resorts to the Icarus myth to explain how many young landed heirs became caught up in the South Sea Bubble, suggesting that 'On *Paper* Wings he takes his Flight / With *Wax* the *Father* bound them fast' in stanza twelve. The paper is the stock certificates, while the wax is the heir's inheritance in terms of specie and land, as Swift writes in stanza fourteen: 'His *Wings* are his *Paternall Rent,* / He melts his Wax at ev'ry Flame, / His Credit sunk, his Money spent, / *In* Southern *Seas he leaves his Name*.'[35] The wax, which in the myth of Icarus is what the father Daedalus gives to the son to bind the paper wings together, melts as the son travels too close to the site of desire, and that which gives very substance to his name—his inheritance and 'wax' seal to his letters—is lost in the South Sea scandal. Here, the 'Country' satiric norms of land and virtue are explicitly supplied in the text by Swift, dialectically pitted against the scapegoat: vicious paper credit. The nostalgia for the presence of the 'paternal rent' is formulated in these lines as a fall from graceful completeness because of the sin of investment in the South Sea Company; yet we should consider Swift's literary invention of this completeness as the constitutively failed formation of that very presence rather than as its historical recovery. The market-oriented modernity to which Swift is reacting is 'after' any such retroactively-posited fall and it is only from within that hybrid and unstable modernity that such 'Country' notions of an imagined graceful age of proprietors of ancient land titles can occur to consciousness.

The poem's desire for accountability enacts a search for closure—an end to the sublime excess of disappointed desire associated with the South Sea fiasco—that only the text's creation of 'real' presences at the bottom of the affair (the satirically targeted bodies of the Company directors throughout the poem) can provide. Indeed, the poem's frequent and repetitious references to such words as 'deep' and 'depth' (lines 42, 110, 149, 175, 207), 'drown'd' (lines 60, 147, 192, 216), and 'sink' (lines 91, 136, 195, 210), all establish an unconscious undercurrent to British culture that is suddenly and traumatically being made conscious. Swift seems quite aware that paper credit has helped 'form a modern national sublime for Britain, and the 'South Sea' is the perfectly convenient metaphor that encapsulates the connotations of that being and identity that lies 'deep' beneath the 'surface' of the conscious and nominal representation. 'The Bubble' poem is thus instrumental in constructing a British 'Country' ideology of the 'real' shaped from the practical engagement with the new forms of money presented by the English Financial Revolution and its central trauma, the South Sea Bubble crisis. As Pat Rogers notes, it 'was

one of the most frequently reprinted of all Swift's poems' and it should be understood as an important document in the shaping of the English memory of the event.[36]

## IV

The great mass of Swift's financial satires in these years, however, were written during the controversy over chartering the Bank of Ireland that took shape during the Irish parliamentary session of 1721, between the initial narrow defeat of the Bank bill on a procedural vote on 14 October and its resounding defeat on 9 December. Swift's role in the pamphlet war is uncertain, as all of the pamphlets attributed to him in this affair are anonymous. Critics have been able to identify him as the author of some of the works by noting that he authorised two of the bank papers to be reprinted in compilations of his writings during his lifetime and that another of the papers, *Subscribers to the Bank Plac'd According to Their Order and Quality with Notes and Queries,* was attributed to him in the postscript of *A Letter to Henry Maxwell, Esq* of November 1721. Because *Subscribers* came from the press of John Harding, critics have speculated that other Harding prints may have been by Swift as well. It is indeed arguable that those satirical pieces printed by Harding that lambaste the Bank and refer to the *Subscribers to the Bank* pamphlet came from Swift's hand, for he took a bullionist stance against the Bank and was, at least publicly, uttering a 'Country' rhetoric on the question. Though the *Subscribers* pamphlet, which purports to be a listing of the social class of the subscribers to the Bank, is probably his most important contribution to the Bank controversy while the charter was before parliament, his poem *The Bank Thrown Down, To an Excellent New Tune,* written after the charter for the Bank was voted down in December, was his most lasting contribution on this issue.

*The Wonderful Wonder of Wonders* (1720) and *The Wonder of All the Wonders, That Ever the World Wondered at* (1721) are the only two pamphlets from the controversy that we can have full confidence that Swift wrote.[37] Both pamphlets satirise what Daniel Defoe called 'air money,' his term for paper credit. Sandra Sherman, in describing the ambivalence of Defoe's term, has suggested that 'air money' is 'never realised in a payoff or blown up in a Bubble' but hovers 'in epistemological limbo, neither obvious Lie nor verified Truth'—a claim that supports her case that Augustan-era paper credit is a spectacle that requires spectators or readers to reify it.[38] The *Wonders* pamphlets satirise this ambivalent status of paper credit, its 'airy' qualities and pretensions towards literal transparency. *The Wonderful Wonder of Wonders* opens by describing a 'Person lately arrived at this City' (the personification of the Bank of Ireland and its paper credit) whose character is 'very inconsistent, improbable, and unnatural'—much like Swift's view of paper credit and the stock market in

general.[39] Much like paper credit, he is immaterial. The writer says: 'I cannot directly say, I have ever *seen* him' and adds that he 'was never seen *before,* by any Mortal'.[40] An indication that he might be a banker is in the line: 'He has the Reputation to be a *close, griping, squeezing* Fellow; and that when his Bags are *full,* he is often *needy;* yet, when the Fit takes him, as fast as he gets, he *lets it fly*.[41] The Banker's allegorised transparency is further satirised in the suggestion that he is 'an *Atomick* Philosopher, strongly maintaining a *Void* in Nature, which he seems to have fairly proved by many *Experiments*'—a phrase that both points to the immateriality of paper credit from the bullionist perspective and to the fetishisation that cult of immateriality is generating.[42] This conceit about transparency is taken further in *The Wonder of All the Wonders, That Ever the World Wondered at,* which describes the circus theatrics of one 'John Emanuel Schoits' who also is 'newly arrived at this City'.[43] While the text makes no overt references to the Bank, it does satirise impossible circus tricks in a manner that reifies ordinary experience, describing several audience members—apparently made of air because their monetary 'substance' is paper credit—being run through with swords and nails by Schoits and not being injured. These 'Persons of Quality' and 'Ladies' do not bleed when their bodies are struck by Schoits, and are shown to have become as immaterial as paper credit by becoming part of the illusionist's trick.

The *Wonders* pamphlets do not propose alternatives to paper credit, but rather are an example of where the 'satiric norms' of land, precious metal coin and general 'Country' values are only implied by the author, or potentially 'put in' by the reader. *Subscribers to the Bank Plac'd According to Their Order and Quality with Notes and Queries,* on the other hand, is more suggestive of these values in pointing to how few of the subscribers to the Bank of Ireland belong to Ireland's 'landed interest.' Printed by John Harding, this pamphlet was probably issued sometime after the Bank of Ireland commissioners published a new list of subscribers at the end of October.[44] *Subscribers* suggests that only seven of 147 of Ireland's nobility (temporal lords and bishops) are subscribers and that only two of 300 members of the gentry (baronets and knights) are on the list.[45] Further, Swift says that only eight of the subscribers are clergy and that two of them are Frenchmen—a xenophobic epithet that satirises the failed French Mississippi Bubble that had burst shortly after the South Sea Bubble.

This epithet comes to govern the pamphlet, constructing a 'satiric norm' for Ireland by satirising paper credit in its French, Mississippi Company form, even as it specifically recommends the 'landed interest' as the normative alternative. Swift's *A Letter to the King at Arms. From a Reputed Esquire, One of the Subscribers to the Bank,* which is in the form of a letter dated 18 November 1721, continues to uphold the 'landed interest' by satirising those social climbers who hope to use the Bank's paper credit to bribe parliament and gain noble titles from the king at arms. The fictional author of the letter

is parodied inasmuch as he takes issue with the previous pamphlet's insinuation that he and other subscribers to the Bank might not be real knights.[46] This 'Reputed Esquire' writes that he is upset with this insinuation and that he seeks from the king at arms a proper coat of arms (at the cheapest price) to certify his authenticity.'[47]

*Swearers Bank or, Parliamentary Security for a New Bank* has been attributed to Swift, but it is not considered likely to be his work because its printer is Thomas Hume and most evidence indicates that Swift was working exclusively with John Harding in this period.[48] The anti-Catholicism of this satire links it with the other anti-Bank pamphlets in this controversy, as the anonymous satirist is quick to connect the subscriber's faith in the Bank's paper credit with the Catholic faith, tapping into Anglican anxieties that the Bank would bring in a Catholic 'moneyed interest' that would threaten the normative Protestant 'landed interest'.[49] *Swearer's Bank*'s satirical proposal is to extend to the whole of Ireland's population a parliamentary injunction against its Members uttering swears, the punishment for which will be a fine through which the Bank, since it does not have anything that the satirist considers 'real' securities, will be capitalised. It says that 'It's very well known, that by an Act of Parliament to prevent profane Swearing, the Person so offending on oath made before a Magistrate forfeits a Shilling which may be levied with little Difficulty'.[50] The satirist estimates that '20 or 25000 1. maybe yearly collected' for the Bank's assets from this fine![51] In short, it satirises fiat money—currency, like curses, is only made valuable by an act of parliament.

*A Letter from a Lady in Town to her Friend in the Country, Concerning the Bank, Or, the List of the Subscribers Farther Explain'd,* dated 1 December 1721, is considered Swift's work because it comes (once again) from Harding's press and in many ways illustrates the previous pamphlet. It constructs the 'Country' satiric norm of landed wealth and the virtue of its possessors by denigrating the pamphlets in favour of establishing the Bank of Ireland. It does so while introducing noble, reasonable voices as their antithesis, placing the norm within the text via a didactic narrative directed at members of Ireland's 'landed interest' who were considering investing in the Bank. It tells the story from a 'Country' position, in the form of a first-person letter from a noblewoman who arrives in Dublin from the country to place a subscription of £2,000 in the Bank on behalf of her lady friend in the country. A noble relative she meets in Dublin persuades her against this investment by rehearsing the anti-Bank rhetoric that the project does not have sufficient security, that should it get such security it would create a 'moneyed interest' that would overwhelm the 'landed interest.' and that this 'moneyed interest' would be Catholic and put gold and silver in papist hands and worthless paper credit in those of Protestants.[52] The relative also dismisses the work of Henry Maxwell, a principal propagandist for the Bank, saying that his 'Intentions were better

than his Abilities' and 'That from poring upon *Dav'enant, Petty, Child,* and other *Reasoners* from *Political Arithmetic* he hath drawn Conclusions by no Means Calculated for the Circumstances and Condition of *Ireland*'.[53] In addition, he says that the lord lieutenant (Grafton) had not 'interested himself in Favour of the BANK' and 'had behaved himself with the utmost Candor and Indifferency, which appeared throughout the whole Transaction betwixt His GRACE and the *Negotiators*.'[54] This final argument underlines the 'Country' ideal of disinterest as the norm against which the 'interested' Bank of Ireland projectors seem to be working. It also publicly relieves Grafton of any public opinion that he had interested himself in favour of the Bank, letting him feel free to come over fully to the anti-Bank side at a crucial moment in early December 1721, when it looked as though the vote to charter the Bank would indeed fail.

The discourse central to the invention of the satiric norm in this pamphlet is that of gender, for by linking the potential loss of landed wealth through investment in the Bank with the loss of female reputation, Swift inscribes the theme of absence as the condition of the modernity of paper credit projects. The figure of the female body allegorises this absence and in that capacity stands as a threat to the masculine presence that 'Country' ideology nostalgically invents in the image of the landed estate. Swift reminds readers of masculine anxiety about such a double absence—that of the loss of landed wealth and that of the female body also associated with such loss—by ventriloquising the heroine of the story writing about another lady who has been cheated by the Bank and who is trying to recover her subscription (her cash deposit as well as her bond and judgement for her land). Word of this subscription, apparently, has reached the cheated lady's suitor and has caused him to call off their engagement. We are told that

> she resolved to petition the LORD CHANCELLOR for Relief, and confessed freely to me, that a Proposal was made her of a very Advantagious MATCH, which was brought almost to a Conclusion, but broke off when the GENTLEMAN came to know that her Fortune was in the BANK, alledging, that he could not Depend upon it, because that her *Bond* and *Judgement* was Lodged in the BANK, and that any PART or the whole thereof was lyable to the Demands of the DIRECTORS.[55]

Female reputation is slandered by association with bad credit in a metonymy that connects the typical feminine characterisation of the culture of paper credit as insubstantial, unreliable and absent with the female body itself, creating an absence where the full presence of lands not under bonds or judgements should be. The 'redeemable' aspect of femininity in the 'landed

interest's' marriage market—the substantial wealth in lands that a woman might bring to a marriage—is thus troublingly absent, constructing the heroine's friend as doubly absent because of her corporeal femininity and 'feminine' connection with the Bank. Here, masculine anxiety concerning absence seems as much a part of the construction of the 'Country' satiric norm as generalised anxiety about the modernity of the market culture of paper credit.

Swift's satirical contributions to the Bank controversy closes with *The Bank Thrown Down, To an Excellent New Tune,* an eleven stanza poem, which was printed by Harding in December 1721. It documents the progress of the Bank of Ireland scheme, and ridicules its proposals as being those of a 'mountebank.' Its a/a/a/b/b rhyme scheme sets up a series of contrasts that highlight the distance between the satirised object—paper credit—and the normative sterling coin, land and landed 'esquire.'

Stanzas three and four satirise the Bank's paper credit, and such schemes in general, by considering paper money as weightless, unreal and associated with the South Sea debacle:

> This BANK is to make us a New Paper Mill
> This Paper they say, by the Help of a Quill,
> The whole Nations Pocket with Money will fill,
> But we doubt that our purses will quickly grown lank,
> If nothing but Paper comes out of this BANK.
>
> 'Tis happy to see the whole Kingdom in *Rags,*
> For *Rags* will make *Paper,* and Pa-ba-ba-brags,
> This Paper wilt soon nuke us richer than *Crags,*
>
> From a bo-bo-bo-Boy he pursues his old Hank,
> And now he runs mad for a ba-ba-ba-Bank.[56]

Stanza three sceptically contrasts a full, 'lank' purse loaded with specie with the paper of the other half of its rhyming couplet, the 'Bank,' and stanza four satirises British Postmaster-General Craggy, who was considered a corrupt figure who had taken bribes of stock during the South Sea affair in order to pass the South Sea Act which had started the speculative Bubble in the first place. By associating the 'Rags' of paper credit with its rhyming partner 'Crags,' Swift links the Bank of Ireland project and the South Sea scheme and even suggests that Craggs may be behind the Bank's projectors. He further indicates that both are products of the same corrupt 'moneyed men' he consistently attacks.

Stanzas ten and eleven close the poem with the suggestion that the 'landed interest' has triumphed over the paper monster apparatus of the 'moneyed interest' by voting the Bank down, securing a normative ideology through the satire of the putatively sly Bank projectors. Stanza ten denigrates lawyers, who are portrayed as pawns of the 'moneyed interest' inasmuch as they—and their associated fees per page of solicitation—are required to recover money and property in chancery court lost in such paper credit financial schemes as the Bank and the South Sea:

> In a *Chancery* Bill your Attorney engages,
> For so many Six-pences, so many *Pages,*
> But Six-pence a *Letter* is monstrous high Wages:
> Those that dropt in the *South-Sea* discover'd this Plank,
> By which they might Swimmingly *land* on a BANK.[57]

By associating attorneys with 'pages' and 'letter' in this stanza, Swift is able to show them to be part of an unreal world of paper manipulation—a world of unreliable, imaginary and sly paper credit transactions. Swift's 'squire' of stanza eleven—a representative of the landed interest—is able to see through these manipulations:

> But the *Squire* he was cunning and found what they meant,
> That a Pack of sly Knaves should get fifty per Cent,
> While his Tenant in *Paper* must pay him his Rent:
> So for the *Quack-Bills* he knows whom to thank,
> For those we but *Quacks,* who mount on a BANK.[58]

The squire not only sees that the national bankers were going to be the ones profiting most from the Bank, but more to the point, he would be getting his rents from his tenants in paper: a principal pecuniary motivation to oppose the Bank. The poem, rather perfectly for Swift's satirical purposes, ends with the normative rejection of the bankers as 'mountebanks' for their promotion of the 'quack-bills' of paper-credit.

## V

Although this literary evidence goes a long way towards supporting Michael Ryder's revisionist suggestion that in the writing against the Bank, 'there is a fusion in opposition rhetoric between the 'Country' party concerns shared with English writers and the more narrowly Irish tradition of legislative independence associated with Molyneux', the seemingly naïve 'bipartite' construction of a nonnative 'Country' ideology in these satires may have been masking more complex financial manoeuvres.[59] Indeed, Swift's reification

of the securities of land and sterling in these writings may be taken as self-interested if we examine it from a 'New Economic' historicist perspective. Colin Nicholson's research into the fact that Swift privately held both South Sea stock and Bank of England stock at the time of the South Sea Bubble may demonstrate that personal finances may have been leveraging his public position against the Bank of Ireland, its stock subscription and its plan for an Irish national paper currency. Nicholson asserts that 'in real life Swift acted the part of a "moneyed" man, making loans on mortgages, investing in South Sea stock, and owning outright no land to speak of.'[60] He preferred to convert stock investments into land for the Church of Ireland:

> Swift, who had been harvesting the interest on his holdings in the South Sea Company from as early as 1714, is attracted to the idea of investment in property, since he could then 'borrow money on the land and pay it by degrees or pay the interest as I please'. He was a careful investor who kept an equally careful eye on political developments and was throughout his life a competent manager of sometimes complicated livings, as his correspondence and his account books show. Shrewd enough to increase his private holdings from £500 in 1700 to £7,500 in 1736, by the time of his death in 1745 Swift's investments amounted to nearly £11,000 . . . He purchases land to add to his Laracor glebe, negotiates detailed rents and payments, invests income to increase the value of church property, seeking to double its value, and generally plans the improved succession of holdings he did not personally own.[61]

Nicholson also says that, in 1711, Swift 'was urging Stella to buy Bank of England stock and resolves to buy in himself to the value of three hundred pounds.'[62] Through his connections to Francis Stratford, a director of the South Sea Company, and John Barber, who both printed Swift's *Examiner* and served as official printer to the Company, Swift further bought £500 worth of South Sea stock.[63] He also managed £1,000 in South Sea stock for three friends, which he ended up losing and getting into a lawsuit to recover.[64] In a letter he composed to Stella between 15 and 20 October 1720 (little more than a month after the Bubble burst), he writes: 'I am glad you did not sell your Annuityes unless somebody were to manage and transfer them while Stocks were high.'[65] It is clear, then, that despite his public representations against paper credit and the 'moneyed interest,' Swift and people close to him were heavily involved in the investment culture of the various companies and, in practice, recognised paper wealth as perfectly legitimate.

Given this evidence of Swift's investments in paper credit schemes, these satires should be taken as manipulations of public perceptions of value rather

than a reflection of his practical attitudes towards paper credit in general. The South Sea Company had obviously been proven to the public to be insolvent by the time of Swifts publications, and the Irish private bankers along with it (according to *The Run Upon the Bankers*). Swift's satirical technique is to present the Company directors, the Irish private bankers and the 'moneyed men' behind the Bank of Ireland project as sacrificial scapegoats in a performance that leads to a sublimating ritual of reading. This ritual purports to be 'restorative' of community norms of value, but is rather inventive of these norms in its reaction to the modernity of market fluctuation.

## VI

This scenario of the 'moneyed interest' Swift (as opposed to the tradition that regards him as a purist of the 'landed interest'), who manipulates market values through financial satire, may be given more credibility if we consider how Irish contemporaries were contemplating Walpole's plans to bail out the South Sea Company and its investors, many of whom were Irish. A letter of 18 October 1720, from William Conolly, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, to the duke of Grafton, lord lieutenant of Ireland describes some of this Irish investment and the effects on Ireland of the bursting of the Bubble: 'The bad effect of the South Sea has reached this kingdom to a great degree, insomuch that numbers are ruined by it . . . We have no manner of trade and the kingdom is quite drained of money . . . where all this will end I cannot tell.'[66] A letter from Archbishop William King to Francis Annesley of 24 December 1720 provides more anecdotal evidence of this loss:

> It is hardly credible what sums of money have been sent out of the kingdom and drowned in [the South Sea Company]. Men mortgaged their estates, gave bonds and judgments and carried their ready money there, and if we believe some, in money and debts and contracts Ireland is engaged a full million, which I believe is near double the current cash of the kingdom.[67]

Irvin Ehrenpreis cites an article from the *London Mercury* of 29 April 1721 that connects the South Sea crisis with monetary conditions in Ireland by explaining the extreme scarcity of specie in the country as a consequence of Irish investment in the Bubble. According to it, the gentlemen of Ireland

> went late into the stocks, bought dear, extracted all the foreign gold out of Ireland, which was the best part of their current-coin, to make those purchases, so that money is become extreme

> scarce, the want of which makes the country people backward to bring their corn to market, in hopes the times will mend; whereby provisions are near as dear again as hath been known in that city for many years.[68]

The shortage of a medium of exchange occasioned by Irish investment in the South Sea stocks and related bubble companies exacerbated the usual drain on Irish specie caused by absentee landlordism and the trade deficit. The constriction on commerce and development that was to follow in the next decade, and for the next half century, can largely be traced to this short supply of money, demonstrating that monetary problems, and monetary policy, are central to an understanding of cultural developments in the Irish eighteenth century. The bank scheme of 1720–1721, initiated before the South Sea Bubble burst and debated while the British state was attempting to financially reconstruct itself from the crisis, cannot be understood without reference to the huge loss of Irish money—and mortgaged land—in those stocks.

If we examine the events of the autumn of 1720, and the measures Britain was taking to alleviate the financial situation, a complex picture emerges. Robert Walpole, who eventually became first lord of the Treasury (effectively prime minister) initially formulated the bail out in the so-called 'Bank Contract,' the first part of which was a new subscription in South Sea stocks, this time floated by the Bank of England, in which investors would buy up South Sea shares with Bank of England notes. This required the second part of the contract, which was a transfer of over £3,000,000 in annuity payments in the form of Exchequer bills from the Bank to the South Sea Company and a return of about £900,000 in South Sea stock to the Bank at the above market value price of £400 per £100 Bank of England notes. As P. G. M. Dickson suggests, 'It was obviously hoped that the news of this would support the market price and the market in general.' There was a shortfall in fulfilling the full amount of the subscription as of 15 October and the governor of the Bank of England on 9 November said he did not want to complete the Bank Contract further without statutory authority. The contract was still on the table, however, until 22 February 1721/1722, and holders of South Sea stock had reason to expect some sort of Bank of England bail out or exchange for the paper they held.[69]

The significance of the 'Bank Contract' was not lost on Irish commentators. Archbishop King, for example, was worried that the South Sea Company and its allies in the British parliament who were investors in the Company would try some sort of scheme to reimburse themselves out of the public funds, such as through taxes or British national debt-creating Exchequer bills. Writing to John Stearne, the bishop of Clogher, on 4 October 1720, he says: 'We are in great dread of the next session of Parlement in England in which

the South Sea is to answer for all, that it is feared they will reprise themselves out of the Public. Tis feard otherwise that a great many will hang or drown themselves on the miscarriage of that fund.'[70] On the specifics of the 'Bank Contract', he writes to Richard Gorge that

> I can't imagine what should tempt the bank to take stock at £400 for an hundred, if justice be done to the annuitants and they put in status quo, which is the least the Parlement can do for them. In my opinion the stock must be very near Parre, and if the Parlement will pay them half in paper and in I hope bills current, they will have half the Interest and in a few years pay the principle with the half which in my judgement woud be much [MS illegible] and securer for them than the South Sea bonds as well as a great advantage to the Publick.[71]

The conversion of Treasury annuities into South Sea stock had been a major obstacle in trying to transfer the management of the funded national debt to the South Sea Company in the winter of 1719–1720 and the spring of 1720, and now converting those annuities back was presenting some difficulty, especially at the price of £400. Indeed, the printer John Harding's *Dublin Impartial Newsletter* of 29 October 1720 warns about holders of annuities being forced to take payment in South Sea stock at the artificially high £400, when that stock's value on the open market was only £200. King is quite aware of the complexities of these arrangements, but seems to show little concern for others besides annuitants who possess South Sea stock. He seems more absorbed with restoring an order in which the 'moneyed interest' and stock-jobbing in general is put in its proper place beneath an order dominated by 'disinterested' landed gentlemen and churchmen.

Walpole came up with another idea for a bail out of the South Sea stock in October or November of 1720, known as the 'Ingraftment' scheme. P. G. M. Dickson describes it as follows:

> The first Money Subscription would be completed, but no further calls would be made on the others. Subscribers should instead be credited with stock valued at 400 for as much cash as they had paid in. Second, the surplus stock in the company's hands should be distributed among the proprietors by way of bonus. Third, £18m of the South Sea Company's swollen capital of over £37m was to be cancelled by exchanging it for £9m Bank stock and £9m East India stock. The capitals of these two companies were each to increase by £9m, on which the state would pay interest. The South Sea proprietor would cease to hold part of his South Sea stock,

> but would acquire an equivalent amount of Bank and East India stock, and, it was hoped, a more than equivalent share of these companies' profits. At the same time, the reduction in the South Sea Company's capital would better its market price.

The important part of this 'Ingraftment' scheme for the purposes of the Bank of Ireland project is that South Sea investors would be expecting to exchange some of their South Sea stock for Bank of England stock, which, as in any resolution under the 'Bank Contract', gave them a vested interest in eliminating competitors to the Bank of England such as a Bank of Ireland. As with the 'Bank Contract', the 'Ingraftment' scheme was on the table for discussion until February 1721/1722. Even after the dismissal of these two proposals in that month, a 'Bank Treaty' was eventually agreed to in June 1722 that involved the Bank of England buying out part of the South Sea Company.[72]

Archbishop King was also aware of the 'Ingraftment' scheme. In a letter to Robert Viscount Molesworth, at that time a Member of the British House of Commons, King says,

> I observe the minds and Tongues of your House do [MS illegible] one way, when they voted by ballot, the court could not get one member of the Commons [MS illegible] according to their [MS illegible] not fearring their [MS illegible] but when the joining the East India company and the Bank to the South Sea came to the vote that the most vicious thing that cou'd be is [MS illegible] England, it was carryed by a great majority, because the voters were known and would not venture their persons and place.[73]

The 'Ingraftment' scheme was also made known to the Irish public in *Whalley's Newsletter,* which reported on 1 April 1721, within a packet of London news dated 25 March, that King George I had given the royal assent to the 'Ingraftment' bill:

> On Thursday His Majesty went to the House of Peers and gave the Royal Assent to the following Bills, viz. For enabling the S. Sea Company to Engraft Part of their Capital Stock and Fund into the Stock and Fund of the Bank of England; and another Part thereof into the Stock and Fund of the East-India Company; and for giving further Time for payments to be made by the South Sea Company to the Use of the Publick.[74]

The Bank of England was thus clearly playing the regulatory function similar to an underwriter or deposit insurance company in the British and Irish public mind because of these developments, at least for the period for which the Bank of Ireland project was under consideration. The 'Bank Contract' and the 'Ingraftment' scheme were two principal mechanisms through which the Bank of England and its notes were becoming the nominal expressions for sublime objects of ideology in this period of financial chaos and rebuilding. In a world in which some paper, namely South Sea stock certificates, had lost legitimacy and value, the Bank of England's paper maintained a putative 'realness' or intrinsic value even within paper credit's nominal forms of value. The 'Bank Contract' and 'Ingraftment' scheme helped to construct a heuristic division in which the Bank's notes would represent a material redeemability of South Sea paper and the fact that they were tantalisingly withheld from South Sea investors for so long during this period could only have enhanced their reified status.

Irish South Sea stockholders would have been awaiting this hoped for payoff, and because they would have lost so much money in the South Sea disaster, would have had some anxiety about creating a national Irish banking institution, the stock and notes of which might diminish the value of those of the Bank of England. Both Irish and British South Sea investors waiting for Bank of England stock conversions would seem to have had a stake in blocking the establishment of the Bank of Ireland and, for that matter, would have been joined in that sentiment by those investors who already owned Bank of England stock, the value of which would be threatened by a competing banking institution. Neither of these factors receive attention when we choose to examine the Bank controversy of 1720–1721 as a simple competition between an entrenched Irish 'Country' interest and a commercial 'moneyed' interest or as a matter of strictly legal and political argumentation about the Bank's potential constitutional effects.

Further evidence that the Bank of Ireland was considered a threat to the bail out of the South Sea Company is a 9 October 1721 letter from John Stearne to William King, which suggests that the buoyancy of Bank of England stock was a concern in the establishment of the new Irish bank. Stearne says the managers of the Bank of England might oppose the bill in the British privy council if they are convinced that their Irish depositors will draw their money out and deposit it in the Bank of Ireland instead, and that disseminating news of the prospect of such opposition may generate earlier opposition in the Irish parliament:

> I believe (by what I hear) the gentlemen who are so warmly concerned in ye present pernicious project must cool a little before they will listen to reason & therefore I do not know but the best

> method of baffling their design will be to suggest to those who are principally concernd in managing ye bank of England that ye establishing a bank here maybe an encouragmt to all of ye country that have money lodged there to draw it out. This may engage them to oppose ye bill at ye council board in England or at least to have it clogd so as to make it less palatable and lyable to such weighty objections as may make even those that are so hasty in framing it now to joyn heavily in throwing it out.[75]

Philip O'Regan has suggested that this letter also tried 'to convince the numerous English subscribers (to the Bank of Ireland scheme) that because of the dire economic condition of Ireland they would certainly lose their deposits if the bank went ahead.'[76] Whether either strategy was adopted or not is not as important as this documentation showing that such an anxiety for the fate of Bank of England stock vis-à-vis the Bank of Ireland scheme may have been present in possessors of that stock and in South Sea stockholders who stood to gain by any 'Bank Contract' or 'Ingraftment' scheme stock conversions. In this scenario, acceptance of the Bank of England paper would require the sacrifice of an emergent rival colonial financial institution that threatened the capital holdings and value of the imperial Bank. Documenting any direct influence the Bank of England or its stockholders and interested parties had in defeating the Bank of Ireland bill is difficult but, in the overall scheme of stock value in the British Isles, it is clear that the Irish bank presented a possible rival to the England's national bank. Moreover, it shows that in any competition between the public credit of Britain and Ireland, there was a general lack of confidence—even among the leaders of Ireland's 'Protestant Interest'—in Ireland as a going concern.

## VII

This historicist view of the larger stakes of the Bank of Ireland controversy of the autumn of 1721, within which most of Swift's satires on these matters were written, maybe given a more local political value if we examine the influence that smaller, private, commercial bankers in Ireland exercised in the Irish parliament's consideration of the national bank charter. Two acts, one 'An Act for the Better Securing the Payment of Bankers Notes' (8 George I. c. 14 (Ir.)) and the other 'An Act for Reducing the Interest of Money to Seven per cent' (8 George I. c.13 (Ir.)), which regulated private bankers' liability for their banknotes and legal rates of interest, respectively, may perhaps be taken as compromises that the private bankers struck with parliament that year to avoid competition with a potential national bank. Indeed, a letter from Lady Molesworth to her son John of 17 May 1720, when the Bank of Ireland project was first proposed, suggests that such a legislative compromise on the usurious

practices of private bankers could have been achieved only through the threat of competition from a national financial institution:

> I believe most of our money of this kingdom is gone over to the South Sea stock, for I never saw it so hard to get in my life . . . They talk here of erecting a bank here, which mightily alarmes our bankers. 'Twill make them more reasonable in their dealings with us, and for that reason they set themselves to oppose it all they can.[77]

Lady Molesworth not only documents the usurious rates of interest and unsecured paper money practices of the private banks, but also their interest in preventing a rival national institution from setting up shop in Ireland. At the very least, she is hoping that the threat of the Bank of Ireland will place the Irish public in a position to negotiate with the private Irish bankers for better rates of interest and security for their banknotes.

Another document suggests that this negotiation took place by Irish bankers bribing and 'distressing' Members of Parliament when the bill to charter the Bank of Ireland was before the Irish parliament in the autumn of 1721. Hercules Rowley's *An Answer to a Book, Intitle'd, Reasons Offer'd for Erecting a Bank in Ireland* (23 November 1721), an argument against the Bank, contains a complicated disavowal of such bribery. In a discussion of how one obtains power in or over parliament, Rowley says,

> Power in any Country, Senate, or Parliament may be obtained three ways, by *Money, Affection,* or by having Persons *under Distress*. First, by Money; you may say the present *Bankers* might have used this Method (if effectual,) but it does not appear they ever have; I grant it; and the Reason is, they being but few in Number, any considerable Sum appears large, and they are unwilling to part with it, to promote the Trade of Banking, not knowing how long they may live, and their Children seldom following the Business.[78]

Though Rowley is repudiating any implication that private Irish bankers have been bribing MPs, the necessity for him to do so suggests that there was a rumour circulating that they did influence members to vote against the Bank of Ireland on the 14 October 1721 procedural motion. He also deprecates a rumour that what he calls 'distress'—the indebtedness to Irish private bankers on the part of MPs—played a role in the debate over the bank and the resulting vote:

> I have heard it mightily complain'd of, that many Persons in the late famous Debate, were influenced by being in the Banker's Books;

> and if a few private persons have been able to do such mighty Things, as some say; if they have been able for several sessions to prevent the passing of a Bill, to make their Estates liable to their Notes [i.e. 8 George I. c. 14], when every one saw how absolutely necessary it was; What may not a Publick. Bank do![79]

This suggestion that perhaps private bankers had been lobbying previous and current parliaments, and its anxiety that a public bank would worsen such lobbying, further suggests that the existing private financial services industry should be regarded as a central factor in Ireland's failure to establish a national bank in 1720–1721.

More documentary evidence about the culture of private banking and its influence in the debate over the founding of the national bank is contained in the satirical pro-Bank of Ireland pamphlet, the anonymous *A Letter to Henry Maxwell, Esq.,* which masks itself as a critique of the Bank project from the position of 'Country' ideology, yet points to private bankers as being the principal opponents of the bank. It parodies the form of an attack upon the Bank of Ireland from the perspective of the private bankers, achieving in satire the expression of public outrage at the high rates of interest these bankers charge on loans:

> Secondly hath it not been well known for this many Years, how many Persons have not only liv'd in this Kingdom handsomly and plentifully, but gain'd to themselves and Families very great Fortunes and Estates, and that not by keeping of Peoples Money in Safety for nothing, but by lending it out at such Interest and Premiums as their own Profit, the pinching necessities of the Borrowers prompted them to, which great Exactions I fancy the right owners of such Money could not have found in their Hearts to have done, at least without a Checque of Conscience, and is it not as plain as A B C? That the setting up a National Bank upon a good and solid Foundation, that will let any one have Money that hath Security to give at five *per* Cent, that this must rob the Kingdom of all those useful People call'd Bankers.[80]

The anonymous author offers a further criticism of the private bankers by saying that borrowers should be grateful: 'what though they pay Twenty, Thirty and Forty per Cent for it, sure no Man in his Sences will say that half a Loaf is not better than no Bread.'[81] This satirical soft sell of the national Bank of Ireland represents existing private bankers as a principal enemy to the bank, providing evidence that 'Country' ideology and its constitutional rhetoric against the Bank of Ireland may have been only a cover for monopolistic

private lending practices. In support, the anonymous pro-Bank pamphlet, *Remarks on Mr Maxwell's and Mr Rowley's Letters: Setting Forth the Advantages of a Bank and Lumbards in Ireland,* reasons that lending competition is indeed the reason for opposition: 'If the Question be fairly stated between a National Bank and private Bankers, it will appear, that the latter attempt more towards this sort of Monopoly than the former possibly can.'[82]

These pamphlets' sentiments were also available in cheaper print, such as the broadside *A Dialogue Between Mr Freeport, a Merchant, and Tom Handy, a Trades-man, Concerning the Bank,* which attempts to convert readers to a pro-Bank of Ireland position by showing Tom acquiring the knowledge that private bankers are usurers. The commercialist Freeport explains that Mr Gripewell, a banker, obtains high interest rates not only through loans, but through transaction fees such as discounting and exchanging merchant's bills. Gripewell hates the Bank of Ireland project because it will cut into his profits: 'Mr *Gripewell* has Reason to dislike this *Bank,* which will prevent the Extravagant Profits that he and other Money Lenders make of their ready Money; So we ought not to Admire at their raising a Clamour against the *Bank*.'[83]

## VIII

The central political reason for the bank's failure to obtain a charter, however, may have been the Irish parliament's fear that concentrating Ireland's wealth in a national bank would provide the government with the ability to bypass parliament on revenue measures—measures that were granting the Anglo-Irish their only means of securing a measure of sovereignty vis-à-vis the lord lieutenant, the Irish privy council, and the British parliament. As McGrath has suggested, money bills, and the corollary necessity for regular meetings of the Irish parliament to secure the government's two-year supply, were the basis for the eighteenth-century Irish constitution, and the proposed large capital of £500,000 for the Bank certainly presented the opportunity for extra-parliamentary government financing either through borrowing or seizure.[84] Anglo-Irish anxiety about such a possibility was all the more understandable in the immediate post-Declaratory Act context.

*Objections Against the General Bank in Ireland,* by the anonymous 'Patriophilus Misolestes'—an anomalous republican pamphlet—considers these more strictly political questions. It suggests that most governments that have national banks, such as Holland, Venice, and Genoa, are republics, which unlike Ireland are 'states who have the supreme Power in their Hands.'[85] A bank would never work in Ireland because it is governed by a monarchy, a state of government 'when Men, too much bent upon their own Gain, will make no scruple to spoil their Neighbours and trip up their Heels.'[86] Because of this state of self-interest, laws regulating banking are lax, leading to the likelihood of such attempts to defraud the public: 'whereas the Lenity of our Laws or the too

much Remisness in their Execution, give too great Encouragement to attempts of that kind, whereof you have a late instance on the other side of the Channel [i.e. the South Sea Bubble].'[87] The writer's central fear is that the proposed Bank of Ireland's capital security might be appropriated by the government under pretence of a loan: '[M]ay not Four or Five hundred thousand pounds in one Chest, move the Desire, and incite the inclinations of our Masters beyond . . . May not our Bank be Call'd upon to Lend this Money, if they Refuse, they will be thought Undutiful, if they give it, they will injure their trust.'[88] Rowley echoes this fear of government appropriation, arguing that Ireland's status as a 'dependant kingdom' jeopardises the security of the Bank's capital, and therefore any Irish parliamentary claims to sovereignty.[89]

The larger importance of the Bank of Ireland controversy, however, lies in the manner in which it launched a decade of political-economic writing obsessed with the financial ramifications of Ireland's constitutional status vis-à-vis Britain. As L. M. Cullen suggested in a review of L. W. Hanson's bibliography of eighteenth-century Irish economic writing, the 1720s mark a surge in this writing: 'Printed sources begin to become plentiful only from the early 1720s. The emergence of a corpus of writing is due mainly to the controversies of that decade and the nascent economic nationalism and constitutional resentment that they fed on and in turn fed.'[90] Indeed, he argues that economic crisis caused this surge in printed sources—a surge offset 'by the silence of better years.'[91] Though the constitutional argumentation of the corpus of these prints in the 1720s harks back to the prior arguments concerning trade by Molyneux and others, the discussion of the problems of finance and monetary policy launched by the Bank controversy were constituting the imagined nation of Ireland anew, forming a distinctly Irish public sphere concerned with the money-fetish.

The question of whether this sphere was modern and democratic in the manner valorised by Jürgen Habermas in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* is most problematic, however, as the anti-modernisation agenda of writers like Swift tends to suggest that what was at issue was the invention of new forms of Anglo-Irish feudalism.[92] Yet the very birth of a discourse on the monetary issue, regardless of the anti-modernity of some its participants, laid the groundwork for a modern Anglo-Irish literature to be forged out of the disciplinary rhetoric of political economy in works such as the *Drapier's Letters*.

## Notes

1. For a discourse on 'bad' versus 'good' securities in the South Sea Bubble era, see a pamphlet from the Bank of Ireland controversy: Hercules Rowley, *An Answer to a Book, Intitl'd Reasons Offer'd for Erecting a Bank in Ireland. In a Letter to Henry Maxwell, Esq* (Dublin, 1721), pp.9–16.

2. James Boyd White, *Heracles' Bow: Essays on the Rhetoric and Poetics of Law* (Madison, 1985), pp.37–38.

3. Mary Clare Randolph, 'The Structural Design of the Formal Verse Satire', *Philological Quarterly,* 21 (1942), p.369. For a more thorough discussion of the 'satiric norm' in Swift's writing, see Leland Peterson, *The Satiric Norm of Jonathan Swift, Ph.D.* (University of Minnesota, 1962). Randolph's 'bipartite' schematic of the satiric norm is problematised by Claude Rawson's exploration of anticolonialism in works like *Gulliver's Travels,* for which he forwards a 'tripartite' model of ethnic alterity in colonial satire that destabilises critical claims for the existence of an intended, implied, or read normativity. See Claude Rawson, *God, Gulliver and Genocide: Barbarism and the European Imagination. 1492–1945* (Oxford, 2001), p.45; for an exegesis of Rawson's position, see Srinivas Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688–1804* (Durham, 1999), pp.138–139.

4. Randolph, 'The Structural Design of the Formal Verse Satire', p.382. She quotes John Dryden, *The Works of John Dryden,* Sir Walter Scott and George Saintsbury (eds.) (18 vols., Edinburgh, 1882–1893), xiii, pp.110–111.

5. Randolph, 'The Structural Design of the Formal Verse Satire', p.382.

6. Edward W. Rosenheim, Jr, *Swift and the Satirist's Art* (Chicago, 1963), pp.179–180.

7. 'Norms, Moral or Other' in 'Satire: A Symposium', *Satire Newsletter* (1964), pp.9, 15, 10–11, 9.

8. Rose Zimbardo, 'The Semiotics of Restoration Satire' in James Gill (ed.), *Cutting Edges: Postmodern Critical Essays on Eighteenth-Century Satire* (Knoxville, 1995), p.23.

9. John Zomchick, 'Satire and the Bourgeois Subject in Frances Burney's *Evelina*' in James Gill, *Cutting Edges,* p.348.

10. Ibid., p.350.

11. Ibid., p.350.

12. Zimbardo, 'Semiotics of Restoration Satire', p.40.

13. John Irwin, *To the Nobility, Gentry and Commonality of this Kingdom of Ireland* (Dublin, 1720). The only known extant copy of this pamphlet is in the National Library of Ireland: MS 2256.

14. Richard Lawrence, *The Interest of Ireland in its Trade and Wealth Stated* (Dublin, 1682), preface p.4. For reference to the Lawrence antecedent to Swift see Robert Mahony, 'Protestant Dependence and Consumption in Swift's Irish Writings' in Séan Connolly (ed.), *Political Ideas in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, 2000), p.83.

15. Anon., *The Present Melancholy Circumstances of the Province Consider'd, and Methods for Redress Humbly Proposed, in a Letter from one in the Country to One in Boston* in *Colonial Currency Reprints 1682–1751,* Joseph Dorfman (ed.) (4 vols., New York, 1964), i, pp.353, 353–354, 358, 361.

16. Gayatri Spivak defines the rhetorical process of 'catachresis' as the merging into of signifiers into a concept without a proper signified: 'A concept-metaphor without an adequate referent is a catachresis.' Gayatri Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York, 1993), p.60.

17. Jonathan Swift, *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift,* Herbert Davis (ed.) (14 vols., Oxford, 1939–1968), ix, p.16. Hereafter all references to Swift's prose works will be from this collection, abbreviated as *D,* and cited by volume and page number.

18. *D,* ix, p.17.

19. *D,* ix, p.18.

20. According to the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), there were two reprints of the *Case of Ireland . . . Stated* in these years. A Dublin edition, by an unknown printer (1719) and a London edition printed for W. Boreham (1720).

21. *D,* ix, p.19.

22. Jonathan Swift, *Correspondence,* Harold Williams (ed.) (5 vols., Oxford, 1963), ii, pp.342–343. Hereafter cited as *Correspondence*.

23. David Hayton, 'The Stanhope/Sunderland Ministry and the Repudiation of Irish Parliamentary Independence', *English Historical Review,* 113 (1998), pp. 610–636.

24. *D,* ix, pp.21–22.

25. Slavoj Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London, 1989), p.20, citing Alfred Sohn-Rethel, *Intellectual and Manual Labour: A Critique of Epistemology* (London, 1978), p.42.

26. Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology,* pp.20–21.

27. Charles Ivar McGrath, *The Making of the Eighteenth-Century Irish Constitution: Government, Parliament and the Revenue, 1692–1714* (Dublin, 2000), p.22.

28. Harold Williams' headnote to his reprint of the poem notes that there is no extant Dublin broadside for the poem and says that Stella gave the date of publication as 1720: 'No copy of a Dublin broadside edition of this piece has been traced, although it is probable that the Cork broadside was printed from a Dublin issue. Faulkner introduces the poem with the enigmatic note: "This poem was printed some Years ago, and it should seem by the late Failure of two Bankers to be somewhat prophetick, it was therefore thought fit to be reprinted."' Harold Williams (ed.), *The Poems of Jonathan Swift* (3 vols., Oxford, 1937), i, p.238; see also Pat Rogers (ed.), *Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems* (New Haven, 1983), p.703. Both Williams and Rogers, in explaining the possible dating of the poem to October 1720, refer to a letter Swift wrote to Stella between 15 and 20 October 1720, which refers to the effects of the South Sea crash both in England and in Ireland: 'Those are his very words, and you see he talks in the Style of a rich Man, which he says he yet is, though terribly pulled down by the Fall of Stocks. I am glad you did not sell your Annuityes unless somebody were to manage and transfer them while Stocks were high . . . Conversation is full of nothing but South-sea, and the Ruin of the Kingdom, and scarcity of money.' *Correspondence,* ii, pp.360–361.

29. Jonathan Swift, *Poetical Works,* Herbert Davis (ed.) (London, 1967), p.192.

30. Ibid., p.192.

31. Ibid., p.193.

32. Ibid., p.193.

33. The letter from Swift to Ford says: 'I here send you the Thing I promised, as correct as I can [ma]ke it, and it cost me Pains enough, whether it be good or no.' *Correspondence,* ii, pp.364–365. Harold Williams' footnote to this letter says: 'This letter is written at the end of Swift's original manuscript of his poem on "The Bubble."' (Williams, *Poems,* pp.248–259). Swift directed Ford to send the manuscript to the printer without revealing the authorship of the poem. As the original survives with other Ford letters and manuscripts it is clear that he sent the printer a transcript, and that the poem was printed (by Roberts) in seven or eight days.' Ibid., ii, p.365n1. Williams, in the headnote to 'The Bubble' says that 'The London postmark shows

that Ford did not receive it before the 26th of December. It was, however, advertised in *The Daily Courant* and *The Post-Boy* as published on 3 January 1720–1721. Three weeks later it was advertised in *The Evening Post,* 24–26 January, with the quotation of two stanzas, the 48th and the last.' Williams, *Poems,* p.248.

34. Swift, *Poetical Works,* p.198.

35. Ibid., p.199.

36. Rogers, *Poems,* p.695.

37. *D,* ix, pp.xvii–xviii.

38. Sandra Sherman, *Finance and Fictionality in the Early Eighteenth Century: Accounting for Defoe* (Cambridge, 1996), pp.46–47.

39. *D,* ix, p.281.

40. Ibid., p.281.

41. Ibid., pp.281–282.

42. Ibid., p.283.

43. Ibid., p.285.

44. According to Michael Ryder, a new list of subscribers was published sometime before 28 October 1721, after the Bank supporters had managed to get the chancellor to seal a commission for taking subscriptions: 'They seem to have met with some difficulties, in so far as they lost a number of the more influential subscribers, but they were still in a position to publish a new list of subscribers by, at the latest, 28 October.' Michael Ryder, 'The Bank of Ireland, 1721: Land, Credit and Dependency', *The Historical Journal,* 25 (1982), pp.565–566. He supports this with a note: 'Nicolson to Wake, 28 October and 21 November 1721, B.L. Add. MS 6116, ff. 116 and 117v. For the enclosed printed list see Wake MSS xiii, f.298.'

45. *D,* ix, p.288–289.

46. Though this is an anonymous piece, it is generally authenticated as Swift's by the fact that it was printed by John Harding.

47. *D,* ix, p.291.

48. For more on the authorship of this pamphlet, see ibid., p.xix.

49. Ibid., pp.294, 297.

50. Ibid., p.291.

51. Ibid., pp.295–296.

52. Ibid., p.302.

53. Ibid., p.303.

54. Ibid., pp.303–304.

55. Ibid., p.305.

56. Swift, *Poetical Works,* p.221.

57. Ibid., p.222.

58. Ibid., p.222.

59. Ryder; 'The Bank of Ireland, 1721', p.581.

60. Colin Nicholson, *Writing and the Rise of Finance: Capital Satires of the Early Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge. 1994), p.70.

61. Ibid., pp.70, 52; Nicholson cites *Correspondence,* ii, p.31; Thomson and Thomson, *The Account Books of Jonathan Swift,* (London, 1984), p.cxxvi and *Correspondence,* ii, pp.218, 255.

62. Nicholson, *Writing and the Rise of Finance,* p.52. He supports this by citing Jonathan Swift, *Journal to Stella,* Harold Williams (ed.) (2 vols., Oxford. 1948), i, p.74.

63. Nicholson, *Writing and the Rise of Finance,* p.54; Nicholson supports this with *Journal to Stella,* i, pp.351, 463, 502.

64. Nicholson, *Writing and the Rise of Finance,* p.54. Nicholson cites *Correspondence,* ii, pp.74, 94, 114; iii, pp.333–334.

65. *Correspondence,* ii, p.360.

66. Cited in Philip O'Regan, *Archbishop William King of Dublin (1650–1729) and the Constitution in Church and State* (Dublin, 2000), p.291. O'Regan cites this letter as William Conolly to the duke of Grafton, 18 October 1720, Castletown T/2825/A/15, and supports it with another correspondence between Alan Brodrick to Thomas Brodrick, 12 April 1721, Midleton MS 5/15.

67. Irvin Ehrenpreis, *Swift, The Man, His Works, and the Age* (3 vols., Cambridge, 1983), iii, p.155.

68. Ehrenpreis, *Swift,* iii, p.155. He finds this passage in Francis E. Ball, *Swift's Verse: An Essay* (London, 1929), pp.175–6n43.

69. P. G. M. Dickson. *The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit 1688–1756* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp.164–167.

70. William King to John Stearne, 4 October 1720, T.C.D. MS 8191 f.132.

71. William King to Richard Gorge, 12 October 1720, T.C.D. MS 8191 f.139.

72. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England,* pp.170, 166–167, 178–180.

73. William King to Robert Molesworth, 11 February 1720/1721, T.C.D. MS 8191 f.194.

74. *Whalley's Newletter: Containing An Impartial Historical Account Of the Freshest of Foreign and Domestick News,* 1 April 1721.

75. John Stearne to William King, 9 October 1721, T.C.D. MSS 1995-2008 f.1990.

76. O'Regan, *Archbishop William King,* p.297.

77. Lady Molesworth to John Molesworth, 17 May 1720, *Historical Manuscripts Commission,* Various Collections, viii, Clements MSS, p.287.

78. Hercules Rowley, *An Answer to a Book Intitl'd, Reasons Offer'd for Erecting a Bank in Ireland. In a Letter to Henry Maxwell, Esq.* (Dublin, 1721), pp.29–30.

79. Ibid., pp.32–33.

80. Anon., *A Letter to Henry Maxwell, Esq; Plainly Shewing the Great Danger that the Kingdom has Escaped, and the Great Inconveniencies, that Must of Necessity have Happen'd, if a Bank had been Establish'd in this Kingdom* (Dublin, 1721), p.8.

81. Ibid., p.9.

82. Anon., *Remarks on Mr Maxwell's and Mr Rowley's Letters: Setting Forth the Advantages of a Bank and Lumbards in Ireland* (Dublin, 1721), p.12.

83. *A Dialogue Between Mr Freeport, a Merchant, and Tom Handy, a Trades-Man, Concerning the Bank.* (Dublin: 1721), r.

84. McGrath, *The Making of the Eighteenth-Century Irish Constitution,* p.22.

85. [Patriophilus Misolestes]. *Objections Against the General bank in Ireland as It Stands Now Circumstantiated, Whether it Do's or Do's not Receive a Parliamentary Sanction, in Answer to a Letter sent from a Gentleman in the City to his Friend in the Country* (Dublin, 1721), p.2.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid., pp.2–3.

88. Ibid., p.3.

89. Rowley, *An Answer to a Book,* pp.4–6.

90. L. M. Cullen, 'The Value of Contemporary Printed Sources for Irish Economic History in the Eighteenth Century', *Irish Historical Studies,* 54 (1964), p.150.

91. Ibid., p.153.

92. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989).

IRVIN EHRENPREIS

# *How to Write* Gulliver's Travels

The easiest way to write *Gulliver's Travels* is to have or to acquire Swift's personality and then to scribble away. Not many of you are in a position to do so. If you nevertheless feel like composing the book, get hold of the following ingredients: first, a devotion to the Anglicanism of the seventeenth century; second, a mastery of comic irony and a zeal to use it for satiric purposes; third, an admiration for the culture of Athens and Rome; fourth, an intimacy with the leaders of your country's politics; and last, an ambition to write as clearly but as subtly as you can but with all possible energy. If you do not get the five of these, the first two may suffice: Anglicanism as under Charles I, and comic irony turned to satire. I cannot supply you with the ingredients, but I can teach you to recognize them; and then you may be able to find the things yourselves. You may even be able to get Swift's personality while you are training yourselves—but I shall deal with that later.

You can learn your principles of comic irony from *A Tale of a Tub* or from *An Argument against Abolishing Christianity*. The trick is to remove your reader's attention from what you mean to defend, and to keep him busy laughing at the alternatives to that. So you either leave out your values—what you wish to defend—or else you mention them casually, ironically, and with no emphasis. But you try to divide what you dislike, and make two sides out of it; then you compare one wrong side with the other wrong side, so that

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they both look absurd. In *A Tale of a Tub* Swift means to defend his ideal: the landed country gentleman who loves the Church of England, who knows and enjoys Latin and Greek learning, who takes seriously his duties as a landlord and as the citizen of a constitutional monarchy, and whose ordinary life conforms to the standards of Christian morality. Part of Swift's job therefore is to attack the alternatives to the Church of England.

For this piece of the whole project, Swift uses the story of the three brothers. He wastes little space in praising Martin, the brother who stands for Anglicanism; but he sets Peter, or the Roman Catholic Church off against Jack, the Puritan. In this business, Swift switches between treating Jack as the opposite of Peter and treating him as the equivalent of Peter. What Swift says, by these oscillations, is that Jack, or Puritanism hates Peter, or the Church of Rome; and that Peter hates Jack; but that for Martin one is no better than the other. One of Swift's usual ways of attacking ironically is to praise. But he praises for ridiculous reasons, or he praises through the mouth of a foolish or wicked spokesman. So he pretends that he likes the use of images and relics in the Roman Catholic Church, but his way of stating his approval is as follows:

> *LORD Peter* was also held the Original Author of *Puppets* and *Raree-Shows;* the great Usefulness whereof being so generally known, I shall not enlarge farther upon this Particular.[1]

The tone and the metaphors reveal his detestation of images (or puppets) and relics (or raree shows).

To explain how Swift turns Peter and Jack into interchangeable persons, I shall remind you that Swift symbolizes the intricacies of Roman Catholic ritual by giving Peter a coat dripping with embroideries and decorations; he symbolizes the nakedness of Puritan ritual by giving Jack a coat which he has tattered by tearing off every ornament. Then Swift says:

> As it is the Nature of Rags, to bear a kind of mock Resemblance to Finery; there being a sort of fluttering Appearance in both, which is not to be distinguished at a Distance, in the Dark, or by short-sighted Eyes: So . . . it fared with *Jack* and his Tatters, that they offered to the first View a ridiculous Flanting, which assisting the Resemblance in Person and Air, thwarted all his Projects of Separation, and left so near a Similitude between [him and Peter], as frequently deceived the very Disciples and Followers of both.[2]

But *A Tale of a Tub* is not *Gulliver,* because Swift never directly reveals his values in the *Tale;* you must gather them by indirection, as Americans today decipher Foster Dulles' foreign policy.[3]

In *Gulliver,* though Swift seems casual, if not anti-climactic, he does let you know what he is up to. In his *Argument against Abolishing Christianity* too, he places his values where you might expect to find them—near the beginning. By the Test Act, a law of Charles II's reign, no man could hold an office under the Crown or be a Member of Parliament unless once a year he received communion in the Established Church. Many dissenters fulfilled this requirement but normally went to meeting houses. Their practice was called Occasional Conformity. The High Churchmen wished to end Occasional Conformity, and regularly introduced a bill prohibiting all Crown officers from attending chapels. But the Nonconformists wished to repeal the original Test Act itself, and regularly brought in legislation for that end. Swift's Anglicanism was as orthodox as Lenin's communism. He was brought for a while to tolerate Occasional Conformity, but he never trusted the dissenters, whose threat to the Established Church he thought as menacing as independent television seems to the BBC.

In *An Argument against Abolishing Christianity,* Swift divides the enemies of his Church into the Occasional Conformists and the non-Christians: that is, the dissenters on one side and the deists and atheists on the other. As in *A Tale of a Tub,* his method is comic irony. For Swift, true Christianity was Anglicanism; and throughout the *Argument* he means the Church of England when he says "real Christianity." So he means dissenters or Occasional Conformists when he says "nominal Christianity." As a menace to the Established Church, the dissenters are narrowly seconded by the deists, who believed that reason without Christianity was enough to keep men religious and good. Swift refused to distinguish between them and perfect atheists or freethinkers. So by those who would like to destroy nominal Christianity he means deists, freethinkers, and atheists.

Now for an Anglican like Swift, not only were deists no better than atheists, but dissenters were no better than Roman Catholics. In the centre of his irony, therefore, Swift ridicules dissenters and freethinkers by traits which are absurd or frivolous but which he can pretend they share, even though these two parties thought of themselves as polar opposites. He also keeps suggesting that other opposites are equivalent. He crosses the deists and the Roman Catholics with both the dissenters and the freethinkers. Those who prefer Rome to England, those who prefer Geneva to England, those who prefer God and their own reason to all three, and those who prefer reason or intelligence alone, are thus merely equivalent, interchangeable poisons for the British body ecclesiastic. Swift is like the boy from Bangor, who was asked where he would rather live, in Glasgow or in Dublin. "In Bangor," he said. "But if you couldn't live in Bangor, then where would you *like* to live?" "Then I'd *like* to live in Bangor."

The ironical attack here works like the method of *A Tale of a Tub,* but backwards. Swift does not compliment the nominal Christians (that is, those who practise occasional conformity to keep themselves in an office of profit). Instead, he first answers objections to nominal Christianity and then shows the advantages of retaining it. That is, he answers objections to the Test Act. He answers those who would not discontinue Occasional Conformity as he would, by obliging all Crown officers to abstain from dissenting worship; but those who would discontinue Occasional Conformity by opening offices to all men indifferently, with no regard to their religion. So the objections which he gives are those which a deist or an atheist might raise; and he makes these objections frivolous ones, or else he makes them seem ridiculous by jumbling together the language of dissenters, atheists, deists, and Roman Catholics. Similarly, the answers to the frivolous objections are phrased as absurdly as the objections themselves. They sound irrelevant and quibbling; yet they are stuffed with innuendoes and insinuations against the enemies of the Church:

> It is urged . . . that there are . . . above ten Thousand Parsons; whose Revenues added to those of my Lords the Bishops, would suffice to maintain, at least, two Hundred young Gentlemen of Wit and Pleasure, and Free-thinking; Enemies to Priest-craft, narrow Principles, Pedantry, and Prejudices: who might be an Ornament to the Court and Town . . . But then, on the other Side, several Things deserve to be considered likewise: As, First, Whether it may not be thought necessary, that in certain Tracts of Country, like what we call Parishes, there should be *one* Man at least, of Abilities to read and write. Then, it seems a wrong Computation, that the Revenues of the Church throughout this Island, would be large enough to maintain two Hundred young Gentlemen, or even Half that Number, after the present refined Way of Living; that is, to allow each of them such a Rent, as, in the modern Form of Speech, would make them *easy*. But still, there is in this Project a greater Mischief behind . . . For, pray, what would become of the Race of Men in the next Age, if we had nothing to trust to, besides the scrophulous consumptive Productions furnished by our Men of Wit and Pleasure; when having squandered away their Vigour, Health, and Estates; they are forced, by some disagreeable Marriage, to piece up their broken Fortunes, and entail Rottenness and Politeness on their Posterity? Now, here are ten Thousand Persons reduced by the wise Regulations of *Henry* the Eighth, to the Necessity of a low Diet, and moderate Exercise, who are the only great Restorers of

> our Breed; without which, the Nation would, in an Age or two, become but one great Hospital.[4]

In the second part of the *Argument,* Swift turns around and broadens his comic irony. He pretends not to answer objections to nominal Christianity but to present its advantages, those conveniences which would be lost if it were abolished. But what he chooses to present as conveniences, are the elements of the Church of England; and he gives these elements (the priesthood, the theology, the establishment) absurd attractions: for instance, if parsons were abolished, great wits would lose an easy object for their laughter.

There is more in the *Argument against Abolishing Christianity* than a defence of the Sacramental Test and an attack on Occasional Conformity. Swift is saying that those who try to repeal the Test Act would like as well to disestablish the Church and finally to destroy Christianity. The impulse against the Test Act is the impulse to do away with all religion. So he casually and sarcastically says, in his second paragraph, the opposite of what he believes—that Christianity is a danger to mankind:

> I hope, no Reader imagines me so weak to stand up in the Defence of *real* Christianity; such as used in primitive Times . . . to have an Influence upon Mens Belief and Actions: To offer at the Restoring of that, would indeed be a wild Project; it would be to dig up Foundations; to destroy at one Blow *all* the Wit, and *half* the Learning of the Kingdom . . . in short, to turn our Courts, Exchanges and Shops into Desarts.[5]

I hope you do not feel that Swift is baffling you like the children who say in the words of R. S. Thomas:

> And though you probe and pry
> With analytic eye,
> And eavesdrop all our talk
> With an amused look,
> You cannot find the centre
> Where we dance, where we play.[6]

Yet the centre where Swift dances and plays may be easier to find in *Gulliver's Travels*.

Here too Swift treats the enemies of his own ideal as if they were interchangeable, and he offers you his values so casually that you may miss them unless you start from the conviction that one must combine energy with subtlety to write *Gulliver*. Swift began to write this book about twenty-five years

after he wrote *A Tale of a Tub.* By 1720 the enemy had changed. In 1695 Swift thought the first threat to the Church of England came from the dissenters and the next from the Roman Catholics. By 1720 he had decided that the Roman Catholics were too weak to be considerable; and he gave the deists second place. In politics Swift correctly aligned the deists and the dissenters against the Tories, the High Church party, and the country gentlemen. He considered anti-Anglicans to be heirs of the republicanism as well as the nonconformity of the Puritans. Swift claimed that the Hanoverian new Whigs, the freethinkers, the deists, dissenters, and republicans all stood together against his Church and its supporters. So Nancy Milford today damns the non-U speaker not only for saying "serviette," but for pouring his milk in first and for wearing brown tweeds at the opera.[7]

I must now teach you more nearly what Swift meant by Anglican morality. He could not believe that intelligence alone was enough to keep a man religious, or that religion without rewards and punishments could keep a man well-behaved. Neither would he believe that the authority of the church and the revelation of Holy Scripture, both together, made a fair guide to morality except with the use of intelligence as well. So he followed Hooker's orthodoxy. To the authority of the true church and the revelation of Scripture the good Christian must add his own reason or intelligence. As Hooker says:

> Unto the word of God . . . we do not add reason as a supplement of any maime or defect therin, but as a necessary instrument, without which we could not reape by the scriptures perfection, that fruite and benefit which it yeeldeth . . . Whosoever doth serve honor and obey God, whosoever believeth in him, that man would no more do this then innocents and infants doe, but for the light of naturall reason that shineth in him . . . No man commeth unto God . . . which doth not first believe him both to be, and to be a rewarder of them, who in such sorte seeke unto him.[8]

The Puritans broke away from these teachings; and they insisted that fallen man had no power to help himself: he depended on God's grace, and he must take the Bible as the unique and perfect word of God. In looking for salvation, man is hardly different from an ape. He is utterly depraved; there is no good in him. He can only live in fear and can only hope for grace. The deist breaks away in the other direction. William Wollaston, one of Swift's supreme detestations, says:

> *To act according to right reason, and to act according to truth are in effect the same thing . . . To be governed by reason is the general law*

> *imposed by the Author of nature upon them, whose uppermost faculty is reason.*[9]

Such optimism appealed to Swift no more than to Dryden, who apostrophized the deists with:

> Dar'st thou, poor Worm, offend *Infinity?*[10]

It was Swift's misfortune that by the late seventeenth century his brand of Anglicanism had to give way. A more fashionable theology came in, partly because, for political and economic reasons, such groups as the Whig statesmen, the Presbyterians, and other dissenters, the trading classes and the bankers found it expedient to stick together. The only apology for their coherence would have to include religious toleration, and toleration had no logic among those many Anglicans who kept up their claim to representing the true, primitive Church.

In morality the change had got under way earlier. The new fashion, which lasted roughly until twenty-five years ago, meant an end to the need for theological compulsions and threats. Writers like Shaftesbury, not antipathetic to deism, made much of what they called natural goodness. They insisted that good conduct which was the outcome of threats could not be real virtue. Only benevolence voluntary and unforced belonged to the category of the admirable. But there is no way to make such a motion possible unless one grants to mankind a power of goodness which is innate and natural. Then wickedness must itself fall into the class of acquired traits. If men are born good, and we find them everywhere enchained by evil, somebody must have taught them to wear those chains. This doctrine is often called sentimentalism. In recent literature it bloomed with the Romantics; bore over-ripe fruit with the Victorians; sickened under the blasts of T. E. Hulme[11] and the modernist movement after the First War; withered during the Slump; and died after the Second War, smothered by Europe's experience of fascism, by existentialism, and by the new Protestant theology of Karl Barth[12] and others.

Swift despised sentimentalism; he felt that viciousness breeds naturally from the carnal seeds in man's flesh at birth, and that the united thrust of intelligence and of revealed theology is barely competent to cut down the nettles of sin. In his experience he found no support for the theory that the threat of hellfire was not requisite to keep mankind on the hither side of wickedness. Swift thought it fanatically absurd to pretend that the life of pure reason could stand as a moral ideal for the human species. But neither of course did he suppose that the subhuman portrait of utter depravity belonged in the place of the sentimental theory. Reason leads to revelation; intelligence

supports faith; the passions are neither to be obeyed nor to he damned up, but to be channelled. We are neither apes nor centaurs.

In *Gulliver's Travels* we find plenty of satire and parody flung at political or literary monsters.[13] But the book holds together as a moral unity alone. The symbols shift their inclination within pages or paragraphs. Nothing but the underpinning of morality is consistent. Once again Swift hints at his values in casual ironic ways. Gulliver is from the first chapter neither his spokesman nor an embodiment of his ideal. While the Lilliputians are walking across his prostrate body, Gulliver says:

> I was often tempted . . . to seize Forty or Fifty of the first that came in my Reach, and dash them against the Ground.[14]

This is not the impulse of a decent human being, let alone a Christian priest; and the reader had better be careful of trusting in such a narrator's moral judgements.

Throughout the First Voyage, in fact, there is no person to stand for Swift's morality. But one can sometimes (*not* always) guess at his approving or disapproving a principle by the use of a double rule. Usually Gulliver reports his observations without encouraging the reader to accept or to reject them; and usually he writes in an unemphatic and dispassionate tone. But if Gulliver picks some idea out for particular comment, and also shows some doubt that what he is about to say will be acceptable to the reader, you may suspect that Swift's private beliefs will be forthcoming. The degree or intensity of the belief may be exaggerated, but the direction will be reliable.

If Swift feels that the education of English women is disgracefully inferior to that of English men, Gulliver will report that Lilliputian girls are educated like the boys. But Gulliver introduces his account by saying that the Lilliputians' "Notions relating to the Duties of Parents and Children differ extremely from ours."[15] From the pattern of such judgements throughout the book, you unconsciously establish Swift's own morality and check it against the events and persons of the narrative. You can never be sure whether a detached remark is serious or ironic except by referring it to the pattern; and you can only make out the pattern by half-consciously piecing the separate instances together as you read along.

The process is simpler than I have made it sound. All of you have had sarcastic teachers and lecturers who would communicate their private opinions by such a method—never telling you outright that they frowned on one idea or smiled on another, but becoming emphatically ironical when they mentioned a darling generalization of their own which the modern age rejects. All of you have had the experience of meeting a witty person and being doubtful, until you knew him well, whether many of his sayings were sober

or joking; yet long acquaintance lets you recognize the pattern of his values, and then you immediately see his ironies. Swift helps you by making many of his points more than once. For example, in the Voyage to the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver reports again the aborigines' belief that it was "monstrous . . . to give the Females a different Kind of Education from the Males, except in some Articles of Domestick Management."[16]

A clear-cut instance of what I mean is a paragraph about informers in Lilliput. "If the person accused make his Innocence plainly to appear upon his Tryal [says Gulliver], the Accuser is immediately put to an ignominious Death." Swift may not have wanted all perjured informers to be executed, but he did loathe their tribe. Gulliver introduces this paragraph, however, by saying:

> There are some Laws and Customs in this Empire very peculiar; and if they were not so directly contrary to those of my own dear Country, I should be tempted to say a little in their Justification.[17]

In Brobdingnag we meet at last some persons who are wholly good: Glumdalclitch, the girl who takes care of Gulliver, and also the King of Brobdingnag himself. While Glumdalclitch never delivers herself of opinions on politics or on human nature, the King does so freely; and what he says is, sometimes with great exaggeration, what Swift thinks. In the Third Voyage, Gulliver finds Lord Munodi of Balnibarbi, another wholly good individual, whose moral judgement is unexceptionable. There is no such mouthpiece for Swift in the last Voyage, though there is a figure like Glumdalclitch. But then you have your pattern. The ironies, the repetitions, the deeds of some characters, and the remarks of others weave a design to which you can refer the moral overtones of Houyhnhnmland.

Here least of all is Gulliver equivalent to Swift. He first mistakes the centaur-like Houyhnhnms for horses and the ape-like Yahoos for unknown beasts. Later he takes the Houyhnhnms as models for him and mankind to copy, and the Yahoos as degenerate men for him to repudiate. It would be even more absurd in this Voyage than in the earlier Voyages to go along with Gulliver's opinions. By now you have your moral underpinning, and by now you have found how unreliable Gulliver is. A better beginning is to ask what the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos stand for. You will easily interpret the Houyhnhnms if you ask yourselves where in Graeco-Roman mythology one finds intelligent, horse-like beings, creatures of great wisdom who have equine bodies. The answer is of course centaurs.

I know that centaurs commonly symbolize violence and passion; and I do not guarantee that Swift saw the thing exactly as I put it. But I cannot believe that a man as deeply read in ancient literature as Swift was, and as fond of it, would not have associated his Houyhnhnms with Chiron, who was

incomparably the most famous of all centaurs. Chiron was the son of Kronos by a daughter of Ocean. He aided Peleus (father of Achilles), and he trained Aristaeus. He taught Aesculapius the art of healing. Homer says that Chiron was the most righteous of the centaurs; other writers say he surpassed even men in justice. He brought up the young Achilles, training him to be strong and brave, teaching him medicine and music.

A centaur is a fine symbol of pagan wisdom; and the Houyhnhnms do embody the moral gifts of pre-Christian sages like Socrates and Cato, whom Swift admired. The four intellectual or natural virtues were available to them: prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. But the three Christian virtues were not: faith, hope, and charity. Immortality, brotherly love, rewards and punishments, God—these are never mentioned by the Houyhnhnms. But rational benevolence is constantly in their mouths. "*Reason* alone," says Gulliver's Houyhnhnm master, "is sufficient to govern a *Rational* Creature."[18] The grand maxim of the Houyhnhnms, says Gulliver, "is, to cultivate *Reason,* and to be wholly governed by it . . . Friendship and *Benevolence* are the two principal Virtues among the *Houyhnhnms;* and these not confined to particular Objects, but universal to the whole Race."[19]

These comments on the Houyhnhnms are a parody of the maxims spouted by such fountainheads of deism as the Earl of Shaftesbury, who says:

> To deserve the name of good or virtuous, a creature must have all his inclinations and affections, his dispositions of mind and temper, suitable, and agreeing with the good of his kind . . . This affection of a creature towards the good of the species or common nature is . . . proper and natural to him.[20]

The Houyhnhnms symbolize, in fact, the deist conception of human nature; Shaftesbury, for example, is at pains to show that religion is not requisite to morality, and that man may be good without being Christian.[21]

If Swift is performing his usual tricks, you may expect the Houyhnhnm to be balanced by what looks like his opposite but is really no more acceptable than he himself. In the "Yahoo" (a name constructed by reversing the sounds of *human* without the nasals),[22] it is quite easy to see this opposite. The ape, in antiquity, was commonly used for ridicule and satire. Among the Greeks, apes were associated with ugliness, deceit, cowardice, and flattery.[23] Several of Swift's favourite authors (Aristophanes, Plato, Plutarch, Lucian) use the ape for such allusions.[24] Homer describes one of his most evil characters—the deformed, chattering, malicious Thersites—as an ape.[25] Aristotle remarks that while an ape looks more like a man than a horse does, the ape is ugly and the horse beautiful.[26] In Roman literature too the ape stands for the ridiculous and evil, for ugliness, ineptitude, ill fortune, and evil portents.[27] Suetonius,

whose work Swift knew well, relates that Nero was terrified by a dream in which the haunches of his favourite horse changed into those of an ape.[28] Marcus Aurelius, describing an irrational person, said that he was an ape but if he recovered his reason he would seem a god.[29]

For Christian symbolism the ape is a traditional emblem of vice, especially lust. In popular Christian literature of the middle ages, you will find apes described as fearful in low places but arrogant in high; they are vicious and hateful in old age; wicked priests are called apes. In this tradition the devil sometimes takes the form of an ape.[30]

Apart from their association with apes, the Yahoos are tokens of sin. Like the unclean animals of the Book of Leviticus—those whose carcasses pollute those who touch them, the Yahoos walk upon their hands. With certain exceptions, their food is that forbidden in Leviticus: asses' flesh, a dead cow, corrupted animals and other carrion, cats, dogs, weasels, and a kind of wild rat. In chapter 11 of Leviticus you will find asses' flesh, dead carcasses, cats and dogs, weasels, and rodents, all prohibited as food.[31] The Yahoos represent utter depravity, human nature according to Calvinist or dissenting theology, the ape-man who has no way to salvation except the unmerited grace of God.

In repudiating the Yahoo for the Houyhnhnm, Gulliver does not speak for Swift. Only a deist or atheist should be taken in by this gesture. Godwin, for example, was infatuated with the Houyhnhnms, and praised them in language that must have given Swift's ghost many chuckles: he calls them a description of "men, in their highest improvement,"[32] and finds in Swift's exposition of their government "a more profound insight into the true principles of political justice, than [in] any preceding or contemporary author."[33] To appreciate the implications of such a eulogy, one must imagine the bonfire of contempt in which Swift would have consumed Godwin's book, *Political Justice.* At this stage of our analysis, I think you will not need a demonstration to see that the deist Godwin or Shaftesbury's conception of human nature lies as far from Swift's as the Yahoo does.

You may look about for Swift's alternative to these two false visions; and you will find it in a last echo of the wisdom and charity of Glumdalclitch and the King of Brobdingnag and Lord Munodi. A figure steps in as casually and ironically as the values in the *Argument against Abolishing Christianity*. It is properly rejected by Gulliver, and it occurs at a significant point, just before the end of the book, even as in the *Argument* Swift states his values soon after the beginning. The figure is Gulliver's rescuer, the Portuguese sea captain, Don Pedro de Mendez, whom even the furious Gulliver describes as courteous and generous. The captain shows as much intelligence or reason as anyone in the *Travels,* but adds to this the charity of a good Christian. He nurses Gulliver, shelters him, gives him money, and sends him back to his family.

You may never before have heard that compared with Glumdalclitch, the King of Brobdingnag, Lord Munodi, and Captain de Mendez, the Houyhnhnms are no more attractive than the Yahoos. But Swift himself wrote a poem which clearly applies this principle. It is named "The Yahoo's Overthrow." The Yahoo in question was an Irish Whig who marched in the van of an attack on the Test Act in Ireland. He was a dissenter himself and a Member of Parliament. In the poem, Swift ridicules the dissenters' claim to be brother Christians and Protestants with the Anglicans. His method is as usual to treat the dissenters and the deists as equivalent. So in one stanza Swift clubs three categories together. The first class is of deists: Hobbes, Tindal, Woolston, Collins, and Toland. The second class is of leaders in some late and extremely evangelical dissenting sects: Naylor, Muggleton, and Bradley. The last is the Yahoo politician himself.

> Hobbes, Tindal, and Woolston, and Collins, and Nayler,
> And Muggleton, Toland, and Bradley the taylor,
> Are Christians alike; and it may be averr'd,
> He's a Christian as good as the rest of the herd.
> *Knock him down, down, down, knock him down*. (II. 26–30)[34]

Unluckily, the age was against Swift. I think that every scholar writing on the problem has said that *Gulliver's Travels* aroused no dislike when it first came out in 1726. This statement is false. There were enough hostile comments to prove that the book was misunderstood from the day it appeared. Here is one of the more violent condemnations:

> His Satyr is so be daub'd and clogg'd with *filthy,* and *loathsom* Images, that it cannot but be *fastidious* and *fulsom,* to Persons of a *delicate Taste,* and *Nice Breeding.*[35]

Another critic, picking apart the Fourth Voyage, says it

> is so monstrously absurd and unjust, that 'tis with the utmost Pain a generous Mind must indure the Recital; a Man grows sick at the shocking Things inserted there; his Gorge rises; he is not able to conceal his Resentment; and closes the Book with Detestation and Disappointment.[36]

Swift's morality had already gone out of date.

You may wonder why, if I am correct, it has taken so long to get at the obvious truth about this book. Often scholars are like those English reporters in Piccadilly Circus last January, when the army of jumping spectators got in

their way and kept them from seeing that two Welshmen had pushed past the police, had swung over the barbed wire, and were standing at last on Eros.[37] But I hope I shall not sound as bathetic as my tall female compatriot, who left her less muscular American husband on the fringe of the crowd, rammed herself through the tumble, and at last got her head around and high enough to bellow back, "It *is,* Hector . . . I was right . . . it *is* a ball game!" Yet an army of unscholarly readers have read, without flinching, the same *Gulliver's Travels* that has made so many critics regurgitate their continental breakfasts.

The one reason which I shall expound is not the only reason for Swift's long career of misunderstanding. Yet it may be the most important for those of you who wish to write such a book. However you may read *Gulliver,* you will always find it discussed as a piece of fiction, and you will generally find Swift praised for his verisimilitude. You come to the work with your own expectations; you read it for what it is. But you analyse it in terms which Aristotle applied to epic and which we all use for narrative: plot, character, scene, etc. Now a character in fiction is an imitation of our memory of a person. The time-sequence against which a plot moves must be a consistent scheme to mark the changes in a character. Scene in a fiction, where verisimilitude matters, acts as a coherent geography on which we can map out the movements of the characters. Probability in such a story is more important than truth.

Judged by these standards, what becomes of *Gulliver?* There is a universal resentment against the improbability of the Houyhnhnms' manual operations in the Fourth Voyage, for one thing. And what would happen if you took the geography of *Gulliver* seriously? In the Third Voyage, you would find that Luggnagg was both 150 miles from Balnibarbi and also seventeen degrees of latitude from Balnibarbi.[38] Since one measurement is about eight times the other, there would seem to be an inconsistency here. Coming home from Lilliput, Gulliver boards a ship off the east coast of Australia, which then sails southeast to England without crossing the South Pole.[39] As Gulliver describes Brobdingnag, it must have an area of about 24,000,000 square miles, three times the size of North America; yet Swift jams it into a location where it would have to cover or border on sections of Europe.[40]

You may wish to let the geography go, and suppose that Swift did not bother with it. But before you forgive him, look at the chronology. Within a single sentence, Swift says that en route to Brobdingnag violent winds began April 19, blew for twenty days, and stopped on May 2 (that is, thirteen days after April 19).[41] He arrives in Lilliput during November, 1699, and leaves it for Blefuscu in August, 1701, twenty-one months later; yet he says that he stayed in Lilliput for nine months.[42]

You may swallow the chronology, but you will still have to deal with the central character. By his own account, Gulliver began to write his travels five years after returning from Houyhnhnmland, when he has long been stripped

of all pride or vanity, and lives an utter misanthrope who cannot bear the company of Englishmen. Yet he boasts of the title of nobility granted him by the Lilliputian emperor.[43] In another place, he writes. "I have always born that laudable Partiality to my own Country, which *Dionysius Halicarnassensis* with so much Justice recommends to an Historian."[44] Elsewhere, he calls the King of Brobdingnag's aversion to the use of gunpowder a "strange Effect of *narrow Principles . . . a nice unnecessary Scruple*."[45] On one page he calls English judges "venerable Sages;"[46] on another he describes them as "picked out from the most dextrous Lawyers who are grown old or lazy: And [have] been byassed all their Lives against Truth and Equity."[47] Gulliver has not got a consistent set of motivations or values.

You need not drag yourselves any further along this muddy path. I can put the alternatives simply. Either *Gulliver's Travels* is a colossal failure, or the categories of fiction are the wrong categories to use in analysing it. If you place it in the tradition of *Humphrey Clinker* and *Tom Jones,* you must, for example, speak of the evolution of Gulliver's character. You must take him as either hero or villain. His choice at the end of the narrative will then have to be the same as or the opposite of the author's choice. So you find yourselves confronting the Houyhnhnms as Swift's moral ideal for mankind. Fielding continually offers his readers characters who stand for such alternatives.

This is a grotesque situation. Swift never meant to write a novel, but his book is always criticized as if it were a novel. His defenders try to minimize the inconsistencies. His enemies busy themselves attacking the Houyhnhnms. Surely no one reads *Gulliver's Travels* through as the work of a straight-faced sea captain. Whether you believe the author's name to be Gulliver, Swift, or anonymous, you know that he must be an intensely ironical person who changes his tone to catch you by surprise, and who mimics, one after the other, attitudes which he detests.

This is no novel, but a vast parable in the form of a travel book. To carp at the inconsistencies would be like blaming the parable of the prodigal son for lacking verisimilitude. Swift's purpose would be foiled completely if his book were taken seriously, if his hoax were successful, if the narrative were consistent. For the ironies to succeed, the fiction must fail; and if you force the fiction, the ironies will collapse. You do not make believe this book is by a pretended author who happens to be laughably naive and fallacious. You enjoy it as the work of a perhaps unknown author comically acting naive and fallacious.

Swift's unity or coherence comes from what he believed in, not what he attacked. If you catch his—not Gulliver's—tone and are aware of his values, you can tell easily when he is serious and when he is posing. Then the alterations of attitude are not lapses in technique. So when you write this book, do not worry about plot or motivation. Let realism take care of itself. Keep

your mind off Hollywood; search your own integrity; be comic, be ironic, be intense, be honest.

## Notes

1. *A Tale of a Tub,* eds. A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1958), p. 109. Ehrenpreis used the first edition, which may be an indication that the lecture was held before March 1958, when he acquired the second edition, now preserved at the Center.

2. *A Tale of a Tub,* eds. Guthkelch and Smith, p. 200. (I. E.)

3. John Foster Dulles was Foreign Minister under President Eisenhower from 1953 until his death on 24 May 1959: this date constitutes the *terminus ante quem* for Ehrenpreis's lecture.

4. *Prose Works,* II, 30–31. Ehrenpreis used the text of the Temple Scott edition [III, 10–11] which is now at the Center.

5. *Prose Works,* II, 27.—See also Ehrenpreis's later, more complex interpretations of *An Argument against Abolishing Christianity,* in *Dr Swift,* pp. 280–288; and in *Literary Meaning and Augustan Values* (Charlottesville, Virginia, 1974), pp. 97–98.

6. "Children's Song," II. 6–11, *Song at the Year's Turning: Poems, 1942–1954,* introd. John Betjeman (London, 1969 [1955]), p. 97.

7. See *Noblesse Oblige,* ed. Nancy Milford (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1961 [1956]), pp. 27, 38, and 68. If Ehrenpreis refers to this book, *terminus post quem* for the lecture would be 1956. See also Mitford, *The Pursuit of Love* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1949 [1945]), p. 32.

8. Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Preface, Books I to IV,* ed. Georges Edelen (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, 1977), The Folger Library Edition of The Works of Richard Hooker, I, 227, 229 (III, 8.10–11; Ehrenpreis only gives this reference).

9. *The Religion of Nature Delineated (1724)* (New York, 1974), pp. 50–51; Ehrenpreis quotes from the 1722 edition.

10. "Religio Laici," I. 93. *The Poems of John Dryden,* ed. James Kinsley, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1958), I, 313. Ehrenpreis quotes from a different edition.

11. See *Speculations: Essays on Humanism and the Philosophy of Art,* ed. Herbert Read (London, 1949 [1924]), especially pp. 68–71. See also Michael Roberts, *T. E. Hulme* (London, 1938), and Alun R. Jones, *The Life and Opinions of T. E. Hulme* (London, 1960).

12. See *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik,* 12 vols. (Zürich, 1932–1967), especially II, i, 413–457.

13. Parts of the following interpretation return in Ehrenpreis's more detailed chapter on "Gulliver" in *The Personality of Jonathan Swift* (New York and London, 1969 [1958]), pp. 83–116. See also "Gulliver's Travels" in *Dean Swift,* pp. 442–472.

14. *Prose Works,* XI, 24 (I, i, 5).

15. *Prose Works,* XI, 60 (I, vi, 11).

16. *Prose Works,* XI, 269 (IV, viii, 14).

17. *Prose Works,* XI, 58 (I, vi, 4).

18. *Prose Works,* XI, 259 (IV, vii, 5).

19. *Prose Works,* XI, 267–268 (IV, viii, 9–10).

20. Anthony Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times,* ed. John M. Robertson, introd. Stanley Grean, 2 vols. (Indianapolis and New York, 1964 (1900]), I, 280. (I. E.)

21. See Irvin Ehrenpreis, "The Origins of *Gulliver's Travels,*" *PMLA,* 72 (1957), 889–895, and George Sherburn's objections in "Errors Concerning the Houyhnhnms," *Modern Philology,* 56 (1958), 92–97.

22. For different explanations before Ehrenpreis's lecture, see Frank Kermode, "Yahoos and Houyhnhnms," *Notes and Queries,* 195 (1950), 317–318; John Robert Moore, "The Yahoos of the African Travellers," *Notes and Queries,* 195 (1950), 182–185; Paul Odell Clark, "A *Gulliver* Dictionary," *Studies in Philology,* 50 (1953), 619–624. Later on, Ehrenpreis's derivation of the name was corroborated by Burton R. Pollin, "The Human Element in Houyhnhnm and Yahoo," *Names,* 21 (1973), 274–277. Pollin presented Ehrenpreis with a copy of his article in February 1974 (preserved at the Ehrenpreis Center).

23. See William Coffman McDermott, "The Ape in Greek Literature," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association,* 66 (1935), 165–176. (I. E.)

24. Intended footnote missing. See McDermott, "The Ape in Greek Literature," pp. 168–174.

25. Intended footnote missing. See McDermott, "The Ape in Greek Literature," pp. 168–169.

26. Intended footnote missing. See Aristotle, *Topica,* ed. and trans. E. S. Forster (Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, 1997 [1960]), p. 395 (III, ii, 117b).

27. See William Coffman McDermott, "The Ape in Roman Literature," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association,* 67 (1936), 148–167; also his *The Ape in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1938), *passim.* (I. E.)

28. See McDermott. "The Ape in Roman Literature," p. 156. (I. E.)

29. See *The Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Antoninus,* ed. A. S. L. Farquharson, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1968 [1944]), I, 57. (IV, 16; I. E.)

30. See G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1933), pp. 169, 313, 323, 394. (I. E.)

31. See Roland Mushat Frye, "Swift's Yahoo and the Christian Symbols for Sin," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 15 (1954), 216. (I. E.)

32. William Godwin, *The Enquirer: Reflections on Education, Manners and Literature, in a Series of Essays (1797)* (New York, 1965), p. 134. (I. E.)

33. *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on Morals and Happiness,* 3rd ed. (1798), 3 vols. ed. F. E. L. Priestley (Toronto, 1946), II, 209n. (I. E.)

34. *The Poems of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Harold Williams, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Oxford, 1958), III, 815–816. (I. E.)

35. Boyer's *Political State,* XXXII, 525–526. (I. E.)

36. *A Letter from a Clergyman to his Friend, with an Account of the Travels of Captain Lemuel Gulliver* (1726), ed. Martin Kallich, ARS, no. 143 (Los Angeles, 1970), p. 7. (I. E.)

37. This incident has defied all my efforts to identify it.

38. See John Robert Moore, "The Geography of *Gulliver's Travels,*" *Journal of English and Germanic Philology,* 40 (1941), 220–221. (I. E.)

39. See Moore, "The Geography of *Gulliver's Travels,*" p. 222. (I. E.)

40. See Moore, "The Geography of *Gulliver's Travels,*" pp. 217–219. (I. E.)

41. See *Prose Works,* XI, 83 (II. i, 1). (I. E.)

42. See *Prose Works,* XI, 20–21 (I, i, 4–5); 73 (I, vii, 23); 63 (I, vi, 19).
43. See *Prose Works,* XI, 53; 55 (I, v, 3; 9); 65–66 (I, vi, 22); 73 (I, vii, 22).
44. *Prose Works,* XI, 133 (II, vii, 1).
45. *Prose Works,* XI, 135 (II, vii 5).
46. *Prose Works,* XI, 128 (II, vi, 9).
47. *Prose Works,* XI, 249 (IV, v, 13).

ALAIN BONY

# *Mutiny on the* Adventure: *A Possible Source of* Gulliver's Travels

Lemuel Gulliver, by far the most catastrophic sailor on literary record—and probably in the books of Lloyd's, too—tells the story of his last four sea journeys, as a ship's surgeon and then as a captain. Before this final, disastrous part of his life as a seaman, he already had quite a long career behind him. He had decided to put an end to his life at sea after one last voyage which, "not proving very fortunate" (I, i, 4),[1] persuaded him to change his seagoing ways and practise his trade as a surgeon on shore. Apparently, Gulliver had never met with any serious accident, and he had always come back home safely. When he decides to go to sea again, out of boredom and through lack of success as a physician, he encounters disaster upon disaster, in striking contrast with the previous part of his career (which as a result only deserves a summary mention in his autobiographical account). The voyage on the *Antelope* with Captain William Prichard comes to an abrupt end when a storm throws the ship on a rock of the island of Lilliput in the South Pacific, in the vicinity of what was later to be identified as Australia, still an almost completely uncharted area at the time. The second journey, on board the *Adventure* with Captain John Nicholas runs into an even worse storm, though it does not destroy the ship. For Gulliver, however, the journey has to end there on another unknown shore, all his fellow sailors taking to their heels and to their oars at the sight of the giants, leaving

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him to meet a probable death at their hands. The Brobdingnagians finally catch a terrified Gulliver, but they save his life as an amusing and profitable *splacknuck*. Then, after a long and apparently successful voyage which takes him eastward all the way to Japan on the ironically named *Hopewell,* captained by William Robinson, Gulliver and his fellow sailors encounter a far more distressing fate. This time, they are not the victims of natural elements but of the depraved nature of other men, pirates, among whom a Dutch renegade proves to be more cruel than his Japanese confederates. Gulliver foolishly attempts to upbraid him as a fellow Christian, upon which he is separated from the rest of the crew and left alone drifting "in a small Canoe" (III, i, 7), until he finds the island which he later identifies for us as Balnibarbi. The fourth and final voyage meets with the worst outcome of all. Gulliver is a captain now, for the first (and last) time in his life. He runs into a storm, which separates his ship, again called the *Adventure* (not a very hopeful coincidence), "a stout Merchant-man of 350 Tuns" (IV, i, 1), from that of another captain he knew well, Captain Pocock. While Pocock's "obstinacy" leads his ship to her ruin, foundering in a storm, Gulliver loses many men on account of tropical fevers, or "Calentures," and he replaces them with new recruits "out of *Barbadoes* and the *Leeward Islands*" (IV, i, 2). These were notorious haunts of gallows-birds and desperate men with whom Gulliver is foolish enough to entrust his destiny and the fate of his ship. This ingenuousness and incredible lack of flair in such a seasoned sailor proves to have the same consequence as Pocock's obstinacy. The crew eventually seize the ship to try their luck as pirates. They chain Gulliver in his cabin and then maroon him on another unknown shore somewhere in the South Sea. This ultimate disaster is the most damaging to Gulliver's pride, and to his reputation as a sailor: no misadventure is more humiliating for a captain than a mutiny, especially for a supposedly experienced mariner who is in command of a ship for the first time in a long career, which should have taught him to select his men with better care.

The point of this short note is not to promote further reflections on Gulliver's gullibility and complete incapacity to learn from his errors and misfortunes, but to suggest that in the telling of Gulliver's ultimate nautical disaster, Swift may have taken a few significant hints from a mutiny which was very much a subject of public debate at the end of the preceding century. It had been the occasion of a popular broadsheet when the case of the mutineers was tried at the Old Bailey in 1700. As far as I am aware, this little-known text has never been mentioned in reference to *Gulliver's Travels.* Indeed, it offers no new light on the well-worn topic known as "the meaning of Book Four,"[2] but it may provide some insight into the working of Swift's creative imagination. Swift's taste for travel accounts is well documented.[3] It is probable that he had come across the folio sheet which gave an account of

the trial, and that some reminiscences of it were brought to his mind when he wrote *Gulliver's Travels* in the 1720s.

*A True Relation* is a remarkably detailed account of a mutiny and of the ensuing fate of both its victims and the mutineers. It gives a vivid rendering of the conditions of life on board merchant ships in the tropical seas after months of hazardous sailing in little-known parts of the world infested with pirates and scattered with islands inhabited by "Savages," of the kind, indeed, that Gulliver eventually meets when he takes refuge on a supposedly desert island, after he has been expelled from Houyhnhnmland (IV, xi, 5)—roughly in the same area as that evoked by the *Relation*. Whatever its bearing on *Gulliver's Travels,* it provides an interesting historical background to such well-known sea stories of the period as Defoe's *Captain Singleton* (1720), and also to later yarns such as Stevenson's immensely popular *Treasure Island,* not to mention the most famous sea story of all times, that of the mutiny on the *Bounty* (1789). It will be noticed that in both cases the captain who was marooned *(A True Relation)* or cast adrift *(The Mutiny on the Bounty)* managed to reach England after a harrowing odyssey, and could testify at a trial which immediately became a *cause célèbre.*

Of course, the common element which suggests a connection between the 1700 narrative and Book Four of *Gulliver's Travels* is the name of the ship, the *Adventure*. This probably was (and still is) a not infrequent name for a ship,[4] but the repetition of the same name for two of Gulliver's ships (Books Two and Four) is more of a problem. It is difficult to accept the commonly-voiced interpretation which suggests a mere oversight, as there are obvious similarities between the two circumstances.[5] Though Gulliver, who is a surgeon, not the captain of the first *Adventure,* is not the victim of a mutiny in Book Two, but of the terror of his fellow sailors when they see the giants, he is abandoned on the shore and left to his own devices in an analogous situation. In Book Four, the mutineers maroon him in the strict technical sense of the term, but his situation is not much different from that of Book Two. In neither of the other two voyages does Gulliver suffer such extremes of emotion on landing at an unknown island as in Books Two and Four. In Book One, his initial reaction is one of puzzlement and worry, then of amused surprise; in Book Three, he is first astonished when he finds himself under the shadow of the Flying Island, then frankly curious and interested. In Book Two, he is terrified and has to run for dear life, in Book Four he is horrified at the sight of the Yahoos. It is tempting to infer that for Swift the name *Adventure* for a ship had somehow remained associated with the particularly dramatic events he had heard of, or read about, in 1700. This hypothesis seems to be corroborated by the play on the word "Adventure" when Gulliver follows the (still unnamed) Houyhnhnms, wondering "how

this Adventure might terminate"(IV, i, 6). The 1698 precedent as well as that of Book Two suggest that it can only end in disaster.

Admittedly, this argument based on the identity of the ships' names is somewhat tenuous. However, it is confirmed by another onomastic anomaly concerning the names of the captains. The victim of the 1698 mutiny was called Gullock, Captain Thomas Gullock. The initial syllable associates *Gull*-ock and *Gull*iver as two disastrously gullible sailors—indeed, they seem to share the same misplaced good will and perhaps naivety, if one believes the portrait the *Relation* gives of Gullock in its explicit panegyric of the unfortunate captain of the *Adventure,* whose humanity and misplaced sympathy for the hard fate of his sailors make their rebellion all the more criminal. In a recent, erudite as well as entertaining, essay devoted to some onomastic puzzles in *Gulliver's Travels,* mainly the strange (and by now well-known) case of Mister or rather "Master" Bates,[6] Paul-Gabriel Boucé has suggested that "Gulliver" as a proper name could be found in various forms in English with the same root, *Gull-, Gul-* or *Gol-*. While the etymological linkage of "Gulliver" with the Middle French word *goulafre,* meaning "glutton," may leave one skeptical, it certainly suggests other variations, such as "Gullock," mentioned, Boucé says, by Joseph Wright in his *English Dialect Dictionary* (London, 1898–1905) as a verb meaning "to swallow greedily, to gulp."[7] Gulliver as a captain thus proves to be another Gullock, and his unfortunate brother in gullibility, with the same name in two different forms. The almost inescapable inference would then be that Swift named his hero after Captain Gullock, though it is impossible to claim that he did so deliberately. More probably, a name which had struck him several years before for its ironic potential suddenly emerged from the back of his mind as particularly relevant to his purpose. Thus one of the most popular names in world fiction may very well have been inspired by that of an obscure, unfortunate, but real captain who was the victim of a sensational mutiny in 1698.

The suggestion is all the more tempting, if not entirely conclusive, given that Gulliver and the *Adventure* meet another unfortunate captain off the Canary Islands, the obstinate Captain Pocock. His ship is not identified by name, precisely because it has no part to play in this onomastic conundrum. Captain Pocock is usually described by critics as modelled on the equally obstinate and dogmatic, or "cocksure," William Dampier, Gulliver's "Cousin," but a far more successful sailor by all accounts. The *-cock* of "Pocock," an otherwise entirely probable surname, echoes that of "Gullock," as if the name of Captain Gullock had found itself split into its two syllables, the first one serving as the first syllable of "Gulliver," the second one being fused into the name of "Pocock," a process which intimately associates the two captains of Book Four, *Gull*iver and Po*cock,* as mirror images. Thus, if the reader allows still another onomastic twist, and concedes that,

graphically at least, "Gullock" almost inevitably evokes "Bullock," with the minimal substitution of the initial consonant for another, Book Four of *Gulliver's Travels* may very well turn out to be, after *A Tale of a Tub,* another instance of "A COCK and a BULL" story, and, Yorick would add, "one of the best of its kind, I ever heard."[8]

Contemporary *Voyages* to the East Indies and the Malay archipelago give the necessary geographical and nautical information to situate the events of the *Relation,* in particular William Dampier's *Voyages and Descriptions, in Three Parts* (1700). Some of these travel books have detailed maps of the area referred to in the *Relation,* with most of the place-names it mentions.[9] This part of the world with its complex and dangerous network of peninsulas and islands large and small was well charted, as it was of vital importance to the safety of Dutch trade (the Dutch East India Company having the monopoly of European trade with Japan). This is one of the obvious reasons why Gulliver's newly discovered islands could not be placed too close to this familiar maritime zone. All ships had to sail through the delicate straits of the area to pass from one ocean to the other, unless they chose to negotiate the southernmost passage, off "Van Diemen's Land" (the southern part of Australia or Tasmania), which was not a complete blank on the maps but still a highly hypothetical and only tentatively chartered route. This is the route chosen by Captain Prichard's *Antelope* and by the second *Adventure,* Gulliver's own ship. The first *Adventure,* Captain Nicholas's ship, takes the Indonesian route to enter the North Pacific Ocean, where Brobdingnag is situated. The *Hopewell* follows the northern route from Fort St George (Madras) to Tonquin, through the Strait of Malacca, before the storm sends her into pirate-infested seas, between China and Japan.[10] Swift somehow associated (or confused) the nautical data which were at his disposal, the mutiny on the second *Adventure* taking place in the area sailed by the first *Adventure*—and by Gullock's *Adventure* before.

This transcript of *A True Relation* from the copy in the British Library reproduces the spelling of the original broadsheet, including occasional variations on the protagonists' names. Only a very few obvious typographical errors have been discreetly corrected.

A TRUE
RELATION
Of a most Horrid Conspiracy and Running
away with the SHIP
ADVENTURE,
Having on Board *Forty Thousand Pieces of Eight,*[1] and other Goods
to a great Value.

Together with the Cruel and Barbarous leaving and turning ashore upon the Island *Naias,*[2] in the *East-Indies,* the Captain, and three Merchants which were Passengers, and Sixteen honest and able Seamen, Eight whereof miserably perished by Hunger and Hardship, and but Four of the Remainder yet come to *England*.

*Together with some short Account of what passed at the Trial and Condemnation of those who Committed that Fact.*

THE Ship *Adventure,* of which *Thomas Gullock* was Commander and *Supra-Cargo,* bound to *Borneo* in *East-India,* broke ground from *Graves-End* on the 16*th* of *March* 1697/8. and toucht at *Brava* one of the *Cape de Verdy* Islands, and having there got plenty of Refreshment, Fowls, Hogs, Goats and green Trade,[3] proceeded on their Voyage, and in the Month of *August* fell in with the Coast of *Sumatra,* went to *Padang*[4] to get Refreshment for the Ships Company, lay there five days, bought there four Bullocks, Fowls, Fruit, green Herbs, Potato's, *&c.* which was equally divided to the Ships Company, also about a Tun and half of Rice, and half a Butt of *Arack,*[5] got one Boat-load of Water, and sail'd thence; about 20 days after, being by calms and currents driven near *Naias,* an island inhabited by a barbarous sort of People who have no Commerce with any *Europeans,* came to an Anchor, the Captain order'd the Long boat on shoar with empty Cask to fill Water, under the charge of Mr. *William Hill* his second Mate, with 24 Men well arm'd, with orders that if a Gale of Wind should spring up, or that they should see any Natives or tracks of them upon the Sand, then immediately to repair on Board without Water, being in no great want of it, but thought *that* the best use could be made of the time whilst lying at an Anchor. After the Long-boat was put off, the Captain was in great perplexity lest the Boats-crew might be destroyed by the barbarous Natives, therefore went on shoar himself in his Yaul after them, and stay'd at the watering place, being two or three hundred yards distant from the Boat, until Mr. *Hill* sent him word the Water-cask were full; the Captain then sent him orders to send the Long-boat on board with fifteen Men; *Joseph Bradish* Boatswains mate desired Mr. *Hill* to let him have the Yaul to tow the Long boat off from the shoar, which he agreed to, intending only the Security of the Boat, but they continued to tow much farther than necessary, and then cast off the Tow-rope, laying the Yauls Head to the shoar, with only two Men as appear'd in her; when the Long boat was near the Ship, two Men more rose out of the Yauls hull, and then with four Oars row'd directly to board the Ship, getting both on board together; then did *Joseph Bradish, John Lloyd, Thomas Hughs* and others, seize Mr. *Abraham Parrott* the chief Mate, telling him he was their Prisoner, and the Ship and all that was in her was their own. He asked them what the matter, and what they thought would be the end

of it? They answered he need not trouble himself about that, they were for *A short Life and a merry one*. The Conspirators being immediately arm'd, made themselves Masters of the Ship, cut her Cable, loosed her Sails, and run away with her, leaving the Captain and 14 Men upon the said Island, exposed to inexpressible Miseries and Dangers, not only from the barbarous Natives, but Tygers and other wild Beasts, *&c.* without any manner of Provisions, Moneys or Cloaths, except the worst, which they had on their backs, or any prospect or returning to their Native Country, or indeed of so much as preserving their Lives.

Soon after the Ship was under Sail, they turn'd the yaul away, and in her five Men, *viz.* Mr. *Dru Hacker, Rex Kempton, George Reyner, Jonas Grizley,* and *Francisco* an *Indian,* being such as would not joyn with them in their Villainous Design, not giving them one Bisket Cake, or any Sustenance, but refused to let them go to their own Chests to put on a Coat, Hat, or Shoes, insomuch that three were turned ashoar without Coats or Hats, and two without Shoes and being forced to travel over sharp Rocks, they, with others whose Shoes soon wore out, had their Feet torn and mangled, and bled in such a miserable manner, that they desired to lye down and dye there, rather then to have gone on, if the Captain had not over perswaded them.

The number left in this deplorable state were 16 of their fellow Seamen, with the Commander and three Merchants, who, besides the extream danger of perishing there, were rob'd of what they had aboard, frustrated of the fruits of their Voyage, and their poor Wives and Children left to starve at home. Eight have since perished by hunger and hardships, who, if they were present, would more livelily set out the horrid Cruelty of those unmerciful Men who run away with the Ship, and left them in that miserable and wretched Condition.

This distressed Company being thus left, without any thing to eat, did remain so from *Saturday* morning the 17*th* of *September* till *Thursday* evening the 22*th*.

But tho' the Barbarity of their fellow Seamen left them in such unspeakable distress, yet it pleased God wonderfully to bring about Means for the Preservation of a few of them to be witnesses of so horrid a Villany; for there happened to come two Boats to the said Island, which the Captain did hire with the Promise of 500 Pieces of Eight to pursue his Ship, and was on *Monday* the 19*th* within 4 or 5 Miles of her, but by a sudden Storm was forced ashoar, and both those Boats staved to pieces, only himself with 5 Men in the Yaul escaped that Shipwrack. But it pleased God none of them lost their Lives, but all came by Land to a Creek or Cove, whither the Captain with much toil and difficulty got in the Yaul; the Number was now by these *Atcheeners*[6] encreased to 42 Men, and no Boat or Vessel but the Yaul, which could not carry in the Sea above Eight or Ten. The *Atcheeners* seem'd most afraid of the Natives, begging the Captain to stand by them, or else the Natives would either

kill or make Slaves of him and them; for they said there was a Boat of *Atcheen* which came there the Year before, the Men of which the Natives had knocks on the head, and halled[7] the Boat up above High-water mark: this Boat was survey'd and found much rent with the Sun, but that the *Malayers* undertook to stop, and did so, with Moss, Bark, *&c.* whilst the Captain took care to get the Sail and some other things of one of the wrack'd Boats, and did Launch her that day (tho' whilst they were about it they were attack'd by 200 of the Natives, all arm'd with Swords, Targets, and Launces, who made a fierce onset, but by firing Twelve or Fourteen shot were put to flight) and with her and the Yaul got off to small Islands call'd *Maroos*, where they got some Coker Nuts, and from a Boat they met at those Islands got some Rice which had been wet with Salt-water in the same Storm when the two Boats were lost, and was heated and stank abominably, but was eaten heartily: This Boat pretended to belong to *Padang,* so that the Captain agreed with the Master for transport to *Padang,* giving the launch'd Boat to the *Acheeners* in lieu of their two Boats, which was all the Recompence he could then possibly make them. Going with this Boat toward *Sumatra* they were chased with a *Malaya* Pirate, who came up with them, but seeing them stand to their Arms bore up round, and stood away without one word. Coming near *Priaman*[8] there is a Shoal upon which the *Malayar* ran his Boat; and when the Boat was on ground, the *English-men* all leapt over Board to go to a dry Spot not far distant, but many had like to have been drowned by holes in the Rocks, which dipt them over head and ears, but others who could Swim assisted and got them safe to the dry Spot. The Captain went on shoar with the Yaul, and begg'd the Assistance of the *Dutch* Corporal, who sent a Boat with Natives, which brought the Men all off from that Spot, which not long after was overflown with the Tide, otherwise they must have been drowned; for the *Malayar,* after they jumpt out, got his Boat off, and went away without staying to expect his Freight, for what reason we know not. Two days after they went to *Padang,* where being ill treated, and labouring under great Want and Sickness, three soon died there. But it pleased God to raise them up there a Friend indeed, Mr. *Antony Gillis* a Native of *India,* who pitied their Miseries, relieved their Wants, and (under God) saved their Lives; whose inexpressible and almost inimitable Charity, extended to the Dead and Living, shrowding the one, and succouring the other, which is here mention'd to his honour, and in gratitude to him.

The remaining part of this distressed Company got their Passage to *Bencoolen,*[9] whereof one died by the way, and some remain'd there, of which three more soon died, and it is to be fear'd several of the rest which staid there are since dead, for only six of the Company proceeded to *Batavia,*[10] where, after a languishing Sickness, died one more, *viz. George Rayner,* from which place the Commander and three more got passage to *England*.

The foregoing Account is given, not only by the Commander and poor surviving Seamen, but was (long before the taking of any of the wicked Crew who run away with the Ship) written from *Padang* in a Letter to the Owners by Mr. *Robert Anby* and Mr. *Ralph Peck,* two Gentlemen, who, with some others, were to have staid at *Borneo* to have settled a Factory; which Letters, with two others from M. *Nixon* and Mr. *Parrot* at *Batavia,* may be seen at Mr. *Crowches* a Bookseller at the Corner of *Popes head-Alley* in *Cornhill*,[11] out of which, for Vindication of the Commander from the base and unjust Aspersions of his ill usage of the Seamen, the Owners have permitted the following Paragraphs to be printed with this Narrative.

> *Now, honoured Sirs, we humbly crave your leave to do our worthy Captain Justice, by acquainting you of his particular care of the Ships Company, in respect to the health both of their Souls and Bodies; we never failed of Morning and Evening Prayers in publick upon the Quarter Deck, when the Weather would permit, our Commander daily endeavouring to suppress all manner of Vice, and to encourage Virtue. As to the health of their Bodies, he was as tender as a Mother to any that were sick, daily minding the Doctor of his charge; and when he had fresh Provisions at his own Table, would ask the Doctor who was sick, and always sent them some. These that were in health he endeavoured to keep so, by refreshing twice or thrice a day in bad weather with Drams. In fine, God Almighty knows our hearts that we speak the truth; he is the most religious, sober, careful and kind Commander that we knew or heard of ever.*
>
> *Padang* the Twenty Third of *October,* 1698. Old Style.
>
> Robert Anby.
> Ralph Peck.

Mr. *Samuel Nixon* Chirurgeon, in his Letter to the Owners from *Batavia, Nov*. 27*th*. 1698. writes thus:

> *I Do declare that I never saw in any of his Majesty's Ships, or any other where I have been, better Victuals or Victualling, nor never so much care taken, nor kindness shewn, both toward Soul and Body, as was by the Commander, both to well and sick; for tho' it pleased God to bless us with so healthful a Passage, that we never had any Man lay down three days together, yet hath the Captain often circumvented me in sending Broth or other fresh Provisions to sick Men from his own Table, and hath sundry times ordered Fowls to be kill'd expresly for them only, and hath also several times in the Voyage given of his Fowls to the whole Ships Company, and never kill'd a Hogg, but a great part was given*

*them; and the same by his Parsnips, Carrots, Pumkins, &c. allowing for the sick Men Water grewel with Fruit, Sugar and Spice, such as I thought fit. Insomuch that I am ready, to give Oath, I have heard them say sundry times, that they never saw so good Victualling nor a Commander so kind and careful of his Men.*

*Also he so husbanded the Brandy allowed for them that they had Drams always when wet, and at the turning out of the Watches. And the Ships Company drank all Beer until near the Southern Tropick and to the Eastward of the Cape, and then Beer and Water to the very last, giving the Seamen sometimes strong Beer. As for Abuses I never saw any or less striking in any Ship where I have been, the whole amounting to the punishment of four or five Persons, and that for great Faults, as Thievery, &c.*

Mr. *Abraham Parrott* Chief-mate, in his Letter to the Owners, gives the same account of *Victualling and Punishment, &c.* adding, *That after the Seisure of the Ship it was freely discours'd,* William Griffeth *the Trumpeter had taken upon him to have shot the Captain.*

*And now to return,* to give some Account of the procedure of those who ran away with the Ship, taken from Three who by force were with them the whole Voyage, and gave Evidence upon Oath thereof, at their Tryst, viz. *John Westby, Robert Amsden,* and *William Saunders;* the Captain only giving Evidence that the Prisoners were aboard the Ship when it was run away withal.

After they had seised the Ship, and turned ashoar the five Persons before-mentioned, they salted about 50 Leagues to Sea from the Island, and then turn'd away in the Long Boat Mr. *Abraham Parrott* the Chief-Mate, *William Whitesides* the Boatswain, and *Richard Heath* Armourer,* to each of whom they gave a Certificate in the following words; the Original whereof was produced and sworn to in Court, *viz.*

*Septemb.* 21, 1699.

*Not willing to venture our selves near any Factory, and unwilling to keep any to breed Faction among us, have turned to Sea in the Long-Boat all such as were not willing to stay, except* John Westby *to act as Chirurgeon,* and *Robert Amsden* Carpenter, Servant, *which two perforce we keep; the others,* viz. Abraham Parrott, William Whitesides, *and* Richard Heath *we forced away, detaining likewise* William Saunders.

*Joseph Bradish. John Pierce.*
*John Lloyd. Andrew Marten.*

This being done, they began to divide the Clothes and Moneys of those whom they had so left and turn'd ashoar, and some time after divided the Pieces of Eight belonging to the Owners, weighing to each Man his Proportion by the Stillyards, which came to about Fifteen hundred Pieces of Eight a Man.

When they came near the Coast of *New-England*[12] they agreed to destroy all the Journals and Writings aboard, which they did by putting them into a Bagg, and sinking them with Shot, saying, *They should not rise up against them.*

After this, near to *Black-Island,*[13] they disperst themselves into several Sloops, taking with them their Moneys, *&c.* and were not contented with that, but fired five Guns through the Ships bottom, and sunk her in deep Water, with the Cloath, Lead, Iron, and other Commodities aboard; all which, as well as the Ship, were thereby irrecoverably lost.

Notwithstanding their Separating themselves into several distant Parts, *Divine Justice* has pursued them, and they have all been taken but one, who is suppos'd to be kill'd, and were brought to their Trial on the 21*st* of *June* last at the *Old-Baily,* where what they said for themselves, as to the Matter of Fact, was frivolous and inconsistent, but endeavoured to extenuate their Crime by charging the Commander with Severity and Ill usage, from which the Court was pleased to give the Commander an opportunity to vindicate himself, which he did *upon Oath* in the manner following, to the Satisfaction of the Court. *Viz.*

That he was sorry to see so many Men so remorseless, as to endeavour the excusing one Villany by committing another, as not content to have rob'd him of his Ship and Cargo, expos'd himself and 19 more to those inexpressible Hardships and Miseries, whereby the King lost eight of his Subjects by untimely death, and no more than three besides himself return'd to *England,* of the 20 left on shoar, but farther endeavoured to Murther his Reputation with most unjust, and base Aspersions. As for the Victualling of his Ship, he said, that on *Sundays, Tuesdays* and *Thursdays* they had every Mess a piece of good Beef and a Pudding of two pound and a half of Flower with 1/4 of Suet, besides Butter or Cheese for Breakfast. That on *Mondays* and *Fridays* they had Pork and Pease, with Breakfast as before: On *Wednesdays* and *Saturdays* Fish and Burgoo;[14] and they had Burgoo for Breakfast, with Butter and Sugar, on those days. That they had three Cans of Beer a mess every day till far beyond the *Cape of good Hope,* and after that two Cans of good Beer and Water, and when they drank Water, there was a Cask with a Scuttle or Hole cut at the Bung enough to put a Cup in and drink when they pleas'd, lash'd fast to the Main-Mast upon the Main-deck, fill'd as often as there was occasion. Also that they had 28 pound of Bread *per* Week every Mess, until *John Lloyd* desired the Captain to let him put two bags of Bread about 50 pound

each (which his Mess alone had saved out of their Allowance) into the Bread-room, which was done accordingly. That then they were at no Allowance for a Fortnight or three Weeks, but had the Bread in an open Cask in the Steerage, to eat when and what they pleas'd, until they left it greasie up and down where they eat, and then 'twas retrencht to 25 pound *per* Week every Mess, and never less by his order or knowledge. Also that they had Drams Morning and Evening when fair, and as often as the Watches was chang'd when wet, never letting them go to their Hamocks wet without a Dram, to be sure of which he did not suffer the Steward to give it them below, but constantly his own Servant at his Round house-door. Also that every Mess had on *Sundays* a Can of strong Beer; and when about the *Cape* in cold raw weather, they have often had, both Morning and Evening, Burgoo, and sometimes Fowls for the whole Ships Company, with a very particular regard to all sick Men.

The same Account *John Westby, Robert Amsden,* and *William Saunders upon Oath* confirm'd; except that Mr. *Westby* and *Amsden* said, they once heard or saw that one Mess had but Sixteen pound of Bread one Week, which the Captain said he never heard any Complaint of, for if he had, he should have as readily redrest it as he did the only Complaint was ever made him of Victuals, which was by *William Griffeth,* who brought him a piece of Pork very Small, which he order'd his Servant to take from him, and give *Griffeth* a piece from his own Table in exchange for it; the truth of which was confirmed by the Witnesses, and cannot be deny'd by the Prisoners themselves, unless they will run the hazard of going from Man's Judgment to the most tremendous and eternal Judgment of God with guilt.

As for Chastisement, he did acknowledge that *Ham Edgell* and *Wetherell* had been punished; *Edgell* because that he being a Quarter-Master, working in the *Lazaretta,* did break open a Box, and stole about a dozen pound of white Sugar; the next day the Captain demanded at once all Keys of Chests, and did find the Sugar in his Chest; which Felony he thought fit publicky to punish, especially in him, who being a Quarter-Master, might have the opportunity of the same Fact in Goods of far greater value, and that it might prove exemplary to the whole Ships Company.

*Edward Ham* purely for the welfare of those who complain against it, because that he after many cheks, and some blows, continued nasty to that degree, that upon a complaint of the copperishness of the Pease, the Captain himself when into the Cook-room, and took off the sides of the Copper a great quantity of Verdigreese, for which the Captain beat him with Japan Cane, but not to that degree as at all wound or break his Skin, as the Chirurgeon's Mate, Mr. *Westby* confirmed upon oath. And *Witherell* was beaten for striking the Boatswain of the Ship. And if Correction in such Cases be not used aboard Ships, no order can be maintain'd, but all would run into Confusion.

And these very Men themselves, sometime after Seisure of the Ship, did seise the same *Edward Ham* to the Gang-way, and severely beat him for the same Crime,

The Names of the Prisoners which were Condemned, were *Joseph Bradish, John Lloyd, Thomas Hughs, Ellmore Clarke, Edward Ham, Thomas Dean, William Griffeth, Robert Mason, Thomas Edgell, Francis Read, Cornelius Larking, Thomas Simpson, Tee Wetherell, Robert Knox, Thomas Davis, Andrew Marten, Rowland Marten, John Pierce.*

The Names of those left on shoar, Capt. *Thomas Gullock,* Mr. *Robert Anby,* Mr. *Ralph Peck,* Mr. *Drew Hacker, Edward Watts, Rex Kempton, George Reyner, Jonas Grizley, William Hill, Samuel Nixon, John Baker, John Hire, Daniel Gravier, Henry Barnet, Giles Brown, Thomas Barrow, John Templer,* one Frenchman, and one Dutchman.

Names of the Dead are *Rex Kempton, Henry Barnet, Giles Brown, Daniel Gravier, Robert Anby, Ralph Peck, Edward Watts, George Reyner.*

Printed for *Sam. Crouch,* at the Corner of *Popes-Head Ally,* in Cornhill. 1700. Price 1 Peny

## Notes

1. All quotations are from the edition of Herbert Davis, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), with an Introduction by Harold Williams, *Prose Works,* XI.

2. A theme to which I have recently added my own contribution in the final chapter of my book *Discours et vérité dans "Les Voyages de Gulliver"* (Lyon, 2002), pp. 189–238.

3. See Harold William's "Introduction," *Prose Works,* XI, xiv–xvi, on Swift's reading at Moor Park and on the contents of his library. In a letter written in July 1722, he tells Vanessa of a long period of bad weather which had forced him to stay indoors: "The use I have made of it was to read I know not how many diverting Books of History and Travells" (*Correspondence,* ed. Woolley, II, 424). On Swift's familiarity with travel literature, see Dirk Friedrich Passmann, *"Full of Improbable Lies": "Gulliver's Travels" und die Reiseliteratur vor 1726* (Frankfurt/M., Bern, New York, 1987). It is well known (though this literary joke remained unnoticed until the nineteenth century) that Gulliver's description of the storm at the beginning of Book Two was taken almost verbatim from Samuel Sturmy's *Mariner's Magazine* (1669); see E. H. Knowles, *Swift's Description of a Storm, in the Voyage to Brobdingnag* (Kenilworth, 1867).

4. See Hermann J. Real and Heinz J. Vienken, "Lemuel Gulliver's Ships Once More," *Notes and Queries,* 228 (1983), 518–519.

5. The use of the same name for two different ships also underlines many important thematic parallels and echoes between the two books.

6. "Gulliver's Master Bates Once Again," *Bulletin de la sociéte d'études anglo-américaines des XVII et XVIII siècles,* 55 (2002), 85–95.

7. "Gulliver's Master Bates Once Again," p. 9ln18.

8. The famous concluding words of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy,* IX, xxxiii.

9. William Dampier, *Voyages and Descriptions, in Three Parts* (London: James Knapton,1700); Volume II: *A Supplement of the Voyage round the World, Describing the Countreys of Tonquin, Achin, Malacca, &c. their Products, Inhabitants, Manners, Trade, Policy, &c.* (with a fine "Map of the Streights of MALACCA"). See also William Dampier, *A New Voyage round the World* (London: James Knapton, 1697, 1699), with maps borrowed from Herman Moll's well-known atlas ("A Map of the East Indies," "A Map of the World"). Swift apparently used the 1719 edition of Moll's *A New and Correct Map of the Whole World* to situate Gulliver's islands. See also Monsieur Duquesne, *A New Voyage to the East-Indies in the Years 1690 and 1691* (London, 1696 [translated from the French]), or John Seller, *Hydrographia Universalis: or, A Book of Maritime Charts . . . Usefull for Merchants and Mariners* (London: John Seller, Sold by him at the Hermitage in Wapping, 1690, 1700).

10. On the geography and chronology of *Gulliver's Travels,* see Arthur E. Case, *Four Essays on "Gulliver's Travels"* (Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1958 [1945]), pp. 50–68.

## Notes From "A True Relation"

1. A Spanish silver "dollar"' or "real."

2. Probably one of the many islands off the western coast of Sumatra ("Pulau Nias").

3. Green vegetables.

4. A place on the western coast of Sumatra.

5. Arrack, any spirituous liquor, especially distilled from fermented rice. From the Arabic.

6. The natives of "Achin" or "Atjen" country, the northernmost part of Sumatra ("Atjeh").

7. "Halled": read "hauled."

8. Pariaman, north of Padang.

9. Bengkuku, half-way between Padang and Sunda Strait, on the southern coast of Sumatra.

10. Now Djakarta on Java.

11. See Henry R. Plomer, *A Dictionary of the Printers and Booksellers Who Were at Work in England, Scotland, and Ireland from 1668 to 1725* (Oxford, 1968 (1922]), *s.v.* Crouch, Samuel (p. 89).

*[Marginal note] These 3 poor Creatures were 23 days at Sea, and had there perish'd if they had not by accident met a Dutch Ship bound to *Batavia,* who carried them thither.

12. No place in the area seems to have been called "New-England," which may be an error for "New Holland," the name given to the northern coast of the "Terra Australis Incognita."

13. Unidentified.

14. "A thick oat meal gruel or porridge used chiefly by seamen" (*OED*). Origin unknown.

MICHAEL J. FRANKLIN

# *Lemuel Self-Translated; Or, Being an Ass in Houyhnhnmland*

> A long-ear'd Beast give me, and Eggs unsound,
> Or else I will not ride one Inch of Ground.
>
> —Jonathan Swift[1]

An **as**s and an **addle**d egg provide, in the playful 'Probatur', a saddle, so necessary for the therapeutic riding which Swift advocated.[2] Indeed, Swift seemed to share the reverence of a Gio. Pietro Pugliano, or even a Walt Whitman, for 'a four-legged friend', despite his being regularly and vertiginously let down by unsatisfactory mounts.[3] The inches of ground I propose to ride in this article concern aspects of the relationship between assess and addled thinking in the cold ratiocinative pastoral that is Book IV of *Gulliver's Travels*. This intervention in the continuing debate between 'hard' and 'soft' interpretations of Gulliver's Fourth Voyage (whether four legs are indeed good, or Houyhnhnm society is characterized by austerity and lack) will attempt to explore the dangers of hippophilia, the inadequacies of Gulliverian horse sense, and the advantages of hybridity.[4]

Something is rotten in the state of Houyhnhnmland; it has a certain sulphurous niff about it. Perhaps it is simply Yahoo excrement, perhaps the mortal remains of skinned relatives, or might it be the noisome odour of decaying asses' flesh? Donkey regularly appeared on the Yahoo menu as a welcome addition to weasel and rat. It might be argued punningly that there

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is something inherently fitting about a piece of ass being proffered as the reward to the Yahoo Leader's favourite for licking 'his Master's Feet and Posteriors'.[5] Gulliver, of course, is privileged by Houyhnhnm condescension only to kiss his Master's hoof (IV. 10. 282), and had earlier refused a stinking piece of ass's flesh from the solicitously attentive Sorrel Nag, who 'threw it to the Yahoo' (IV. 2. 230).

It is somewhat striking that the Sorrel Nag appears to have no vegetarian qualms about 'handling' a lump of decomposing meat; a certain repugnance might have been expected, especially as it had been torn from the limb of an unfortunate member of a most closely related species of the horse family (Equidae). Considering that the Sorrel Nag, in his faithful affection for Gulliver, has been taken to represent a comparative paragon of imagination among his kind, such insensitivity towards a fellow equid would seem to demand some scrutiny within the context of species (mis)recognition.

In that it offers a critique of representation, it is significant that *Gulliver's Travels* contains no fewer than twenty-seven instances of the word 'species' (thirty-one, if the prefacing 'letter to his Cousin Sympson' of the 1735 Faulkner edition is included), all but five of which occur, unsurprisingly, in Book IV. This almost phylogenetic concentration upon distinguishing characteristics, sameness, and otherness is, of course, integral to the narrative, particularly as it concerns Gulliver's adjustment of his own classification from human to Yahoo. At first Gulliver, on encountering the creatures he later learns are called Yahoos, describes them as especially disagreeable 'animals', and the actual individual he strikes with the flat of his sword is termed an 'ugly Monster' (IV. 1. 224). The unnamed and—at this stage—unnameable monsters are transgressive in both their 'deformed' shape and their behaviour (defecating on his head), and arguably Gulliver's human normality is defined in opposition to their monstrosity. Visibly (or rather, apparently), these creatures, for whom he 'naturally conceived so strong an Antipathy' (ibid.), do not belong to the same species as himself; nominated as monsters, they are the creatures of a repulsive otherness.[6] In their initial encounter neither 'species' recognizes significant points of gestural similitude: 'The ugly Monster, when he saw me, distorted several ways every Feature of his Visage, and started as at an Object he had never seen before; then approaching nearer, lifted up his Fore paw, whether out of Curiosity or Mischief, I could not tell' (ibid.). But, although the misrecognition and misreading are mutual, it is civilized Gulliver who resorts to violence.[7]

It is similarly Gulliver who makes the initial (and unwelcome) move when we have the first close encounter between two genuinely different species. This time the 'manifest Tokens of Wonder' seem all on the equine side, until the human's attempt to give a condescending stroke is rebuffed. In this situation, removed from the fear and loathing of monstrous animality, Gulliver is not slow to recognize super-equine characteristics such as language, intelligent gestures,

curiosity, and empirical investigations, but anthropocentrically misinterprets them, concluding: 'they (the horses) must needs be Magicians, who had thus metamorphosed themselves upon some design' (IV. 1. 226).

Not until European and Yahoo are brought cheek by jowl at the order of the Master Horse does it become clear to Gulliver what the Houyhnhnms have already determined. True species recognition dawns with 'Horror and Astonishment' as he observes 'in this abominable Animal, a perfect human Figure' (IV. 2. 229–230). Gulliver's abhorrence and reluctance to acknowledge any kind of kinship with such repulsive 'animals' are underscored by his rejection of the sustenance he is offered: he refuses the rotten asses' meat, that key ingredient of a successful Yahoo casserole. Yet it is notable that Gulliver, at this stage, also declines the Spartan Houyhnhnm snack of a 'Whisp of Hay, and a Fetlock full of Oats'. Concern for his own survival and detestation of the likeness he had been forced to contemplate unite in a desire to return to 'my own Species', those 'sensitive Beings' who had cast him away:

> And indeed, I now apprehended, that I must absolutely starve, if I did not get to some of my own Species: For as to those Filthy *Yahoos,* although there were few greater Lovers of Mankind, at that time, than myself; yet I confess I never saw any sensitive Being so detestable on all Accounts; and the more I came near them, the more hateful they grew, while I stayed in that Country. (IV. 2. 230)

The Yahoos, it would seem, shared no such reluctance to claim kin, and their skills of species recognition are perversely, but effectively, enhanced by Gulliver himself:

> I have Reason to believe, they had some Imagination that I was of their own Species, which I often assisted myself, by stripping up my Sleeves, and shewing my naked Arms and Breast in their Sight, when my Protector was with me: At which times they would approach as near as they durst, and imitate my Actions after the Manner of Monkeys, but ever with great Signs of Hatred; as a tame *Jack Daw* with Cap and Stockings, is always persecuted by the wild ones, when he happens to be got among them. (IV. 8. 265)

The juxtaposition of 'Reason' and 'Imagination', together with the accusation of simian behaviour, would seem to work to Gulliver's intellectual advantage, but the avian analogy is all too apt; he is not merely a gull (in both active and passive senses), but a proud and split-tongued jackdaw.[8] The 'great Signs of Hatred' might well be another misreading of facial expression or gesture, or the invention of his own imagination, the transferred product

of his own horrified realization of similitude. Even more significantly, a key relativistic note is struck through the implication that Gulliver himself, secure under the protection of the Sorrel Nag, was encouraging their attentions by means of his partial striptease, after the manner of mischievous children at the zoo.

'Change places, and handy-dandy, which is' the Monkey, which is the Man? But this passage makes clear that two humanoid species are reflected in the mirror of their own mockery.[9] 'This thing of darkness' Gulliver must needs acknowledge his own, especially as, unlike Caliban, the Yahoos might have descended from European castaways. A Houyhnhnm tradition has it that the first Yahoos having been 'driven thither over the Sea' and 'forsaken by their Companions', had 'degenerat[ed] by degrees' into their present Hobbesian bestiality, 'more savage than those of their own Species in the Country from whence these two Originals came' (IV. 9. 272). The Houyhnhnms recognize that Gulliver, apart from the pallor of his skin, his lack of body hair, and his shorter nails, 'agreed in every Feature of my Body with other *Yahoos*' (IV. 7. 259–260), but fail to appreciate that tanning and the growth of hair and claws might be seen as natural adaptation to a mountainous environment, a need for excavated shelters, and a diet of roots. The horses see only an apparently irreversible process of degeneration, ignoring their own responsibility for the degradation of another species. Through a mixture of environmental, social, and political forces, the Yahoos in Houyhnhnmland have been rendered a subspecies, liminal figures, deprived of the civilizing effects of education and brutalized by enslavement—stunted both in body and in mind.[10]

Whereas cognition for Gulliver is limited by the constant reminder the Yahoos represent of potential degradation, that of the Houyhnhnms is constrained by the prejudiced blinkers of slavers who require a subjugated *Untermensch* to service their grey totalitarianism.[11] This chilling and solipsistic clear-sightedness concerning a subordinated species, and their readiness to see Gulliver as Yahoo and potential Yahoo-leader, is accompanied by a complete failure of their cognitive faculties when it comes to the horse family. Just as individual familial love is subordinated to a universal friendship and benevolence extended to the whole Houyhnhnm species, their behaviour would seem to deny any feeling whatsoever towards the wider family of the genus Equidae. As is repeatedly made clear to Gulliver, the Houyhnhnm Master has a conceited and complacent belief in the superiority of equine design over human bifurcation, yet, in what can only be seen as a grotesque failure of both imagination and reason, these horses fail to recognize the very similar shapes of the asses. If the reason given by the Master for Yahoos hating each other was 'the Odiousness of their own Shapes, which all could see in the rest, but not in themselves' (see n. 9 above), then the Houyhnhnms are tarred with the same brush. The equine beauty of their own shapes is shared by the

asses—who differ only in a certain length of ears—and all can appreciate this similitude except the horses.[12]

The fulsome embraces of the young female Yahoo at the river arouse all the horrors of miscegenation in Gulliver, but they are regarded as confirmation that he does indeed belong to the same species: 'For now I could no longer deny, that I was a real Yahoo, in every Limb and Feature, since the Females had a natural Propensity to me as one of their own Species' (IV. 8. 267). The 'natural Propensity' of the female, her desire to interbreed with a human, is seen by Gulliver (and to a great extent, is still seen by modern biology) as a standard method of determining species kinship. Such brutish passion is viewed by the Houyhnhnms, whose approach to breeding is coolly functional and eugenicist, as a 'Matter of Diversion', an amusing case study which (had they the facility with the pencil they display with the needle) might be catalogued in their anthropological notebooks. This is not to say that they viewed this attempted aquatic coupling as an example of the animal—human interbreeding which engrossed the fascinated repulsion of eighteenth-century natural historians, for to the Houyhnhnms Gulliver = Yahoo = beast. The instincts of this eleven-year-old Yahoo, however, are shown to be the product of a cognition superior to that displayed by the quasi-scientific rationality of the horses. By recognizing, and being attracted towards, her likeness, she is made to highlight Houyhnhnm blindness to their own kin: their fellow equids, the asses.

Evidently Houyhnhnms weren't too hot on taxonomy; for the most part they seem never to have noticed the asses as healthy living relatives, only as putrescent carrion. Their freedom from sexual passion, together with their caste-ridden determination 'to preserve the Race from degenerating' (IV. 8. 268–269), would naturally preclude any amorous approaches. As for intellectual interaction, one might have thought that at the very least Houyhnhnm speciesist vanity would have dictated some cognizance of the asses. But, as we have seen, the horses restrict their phylogenetic philosophizing to the evolution/degeneration of the subjected Yahoo species, showing absolutely no interest in the origins and development of their own genus, the Equidae.

Throughout the lengthy conversations between man and horse, in which Gulliver provides 'so free a Representation of my own Species' that he feels the need, if not to apologize, then to explain to the reader, the whole emphasis is placed upon 'my master's' dogmatic conclusions concerning Yahoo/human nature. There is no corresponding analysis of the genesis or evolution of the race of horses to disturb Gulliver's gullible hippophilia. And the distance between the smug species self-satisfaction of the horse and the empirical questioning of the character of humankind is apparent when, at the opening of Chapter 8, Gulliver requests permission to engage in field-work among the Yahoos, to 'make farther discoveries from my own observation'. Even while intent upon rubbing his neck in the dirt of misanthropy, Gulliver reveals the

dynamic of intellectual curiosity which the reader cannot but contrast with the static inwardness of Houyhnhnm self-obsession.

The first mention of 'the Breed of *Asses*' comes at the beginning of Chapter 9, where the deliberations of the General Assembly return to 'their old Debate, and indeed the[ir] only Debate': extermination of the Yahoo species. Amidst the cataloguing of the crimes of their slave species (a bathetic list including oat-trampling, cat-devouring, and 'privately suck(ing) the Teats of *Houyhnhnms* Cows'), an uncharacteristically dissident voice is heard, suggesting:

> That the Inhabitants taking a Fancy to use the Service of the *Yahoos,* had very imprudently neglected to cultivate the Breed of *Asses,* which were a comely Animal, easily kept, more tame and orderly, without any offensive Smell, strong enough for Labour, although they yield to the other in Agility of Body; and if their Braying be no agreeable Sound, it is far preferable to the horrible Howlings of the *Yahoos*. (IV. 9. 272)

This unidentified individual we should have been pleased to meet, especially in so far as he levels accusations of neglect, imprudence, and—horror of horrors—fancy against his fellow Houyhnhnms. However, despite his aesthetic appreciation of the 'comely' ass, the keynote of his intervention underscores a characteristically Houyhnhnm utilitarianism. On one level this suggestion seems profoundly sensible: asses are eminently useful and tractable beasts of burden. As the *Dunciad* title-page illustrates, they can eat thistles and transport tomes. But from a hippocentric perspective, the enslavement of a closely related species seems infinitely worse than their fettering of the Yahoos, almost as reprehensible as man's enslavement of a fellow *Homo sapiens*. When the Houyhnhnm Master relays to the Assembly what he has learnt from Gulliver (for it is 'no Shame to learn Wisdom from Brutes') concerning castration, similarly uncomfortable species-specific shifts of perspective are experienced: gelding horses is one thing, gelding men quite another. Although the Master understands its rationale, that of rendering Yahoos 'tractable and fitter for Use', he proposes, in a characteristically absurd piece of 'double-speak', that castration be used as a 'humane' form of extermination: it 'would in an Age put an End to the whole Species without destroying Life'. 'In the mean time,' he continues, 'the *Houyhnhnms* should be *exhorted* to cultivate the Breed of Asses, which, as they are in all respects more valuable Brutes, so they have this Advantage, to be fit for Service at Five Years old, which the others are not till Twelve' (IV. 9. 273). Both asses and Yahoos are brutes; the 'four legs good' rule of hoof must be supplemented—short ears and whinnying good; long ears and braying

bad.[13] In other words, shared genetic ancestry counts for nothing; non-Houyhnhnm equals non-human.

The repeated phrasing of the proposal 'to cultivate the Breed of Asses' is somewhat striking, reminiscent as it is of the Houyhnhnm 'grand Maxim [ . . . ] to cultivate *Reason*' (IV. 8. 267), but here the use of the term 'cultivate' would seem merely to reflect their agrarian nature, rather than suggesting any desire to foster acculturation; the asses will remain the uncivilized 'other'.[14] But while the Houyhnhnms continue to deny their genetic affiliations with their donkey cousins, Gulliver, by means of an intense and almost spiritualized process of cross-species identification, is simultaneously abandoning his own genetic and cultural inheritance, and demonstrating his asinine credentials. The 'tame *Jack Daw*' is morphing into the tame jackass.

Had the Houyhnhnms been a literate species (and, of course, a lot less insular), it would be easier to understand their reluctance to acknowledge their poor ungulate relations.[15] Occidental and Oriental traditions have played fast and loose with the donkey's reputation, saddling the ass with stupidity, burdening the beast with boorist obstinacy. Ambivalence and ambiguity have characterized the symbolic associations of the ass, a classic instance of cultural double-thinking with animals. The lowly ass has laboured as an emblem of devotion, humility, patience, and endurance, bearing on its back Isis and Mary, Ajax, Jesus, and Mahomet. The mount of Absalom and Abigail has also felt the drunken sensual weight of Bacchus and Silenus, yet the ass was also sacred to Vesta as his braying prevented Priapus from raping the nymph Lotis and the goddess herself.[16] Balaam's ass was not only gifted with speech, but with insight superior to that of his prophet rider; the ass of the Virgin was celebrated in a special medieval adaptation of the Eucharist, where the closing responses consisted of a triple bray of 'Hinham, Hinham, Hinham'; and while in Graeco-Roman culture the ass shared the horse's reputation for sexual voraciousness, Tertullian records representations of Christ with an ass's head.[17] A type of Jesus or a type of ithyphallic idiot—*Asinus portans mysteria:* but such mysteries would have little appeal to the strictly secular, strictly rational, strictly self-contained and continent Houyhnhnms.

Gulliver, however, is another matter. In his dedication to imitation he outdoes the Yahoos, but whereas they had imitated the 'self' they saw in the man, he identifies with the equine, redefining himself as 'other', a creature as incongruous as Locke's putative 'ass with reason'.[18] Knocked sideways by the repulsion of recognition (that he is Yahoo), he clings to the attraction of emulation with an intensity that is clinically hippanthropy, and certainly asinine.

The hero as ass is an archetype Swift might have borrowed from Apuleius's Latin novel *Metamorphoses; or, The Golden Ass,* or from what was possibly Apuleius's source, the Greek novel *Loukios ē onos* [*Lucius; or, The Ass*], of Pseudo-Lucian. Margaret Anne Doody has recently explored some interesting parallels between

these texts and *Gulliver's Travels.* Referring to Lucius, the hero metamorphosed into ass in both Apuleius and Pseudo-Lucian, she writes:

> Always defined against his own self-image, the man-as-ass is perpetually in a condition of inordinate psychic strain. In *Gulliver's Travels,* Swift picks up that kind of psychic stress, although he plays with variations upon the cause. It is not the hero who is transformed, but the worlds he is in [ . . . ].[19]

If the 'psychic strain' of experiencing utter disgust for one's own species is arguably less 'inordinate' than being transformed into a species of quadruped (while retaining human consciousness), Doody is certainly correct in implying that it is more than sufficient to provoke an identity crisis of severe proportions. But transformation is by no means limited to the worlds Swift's 'hero' inhabits; the strength of the cross-species attraction the isolate Gulliver experiences in Houyhnhnmland involves such a complete identification with the 'other' that it is tantamount to a self-transformation.

Although we learn that Friendship is a key topic of Houyhnhnm converse and poetry, there is little opportunity for any real mentor-protégé friendship between Gulliver and his Master, whose amity is strictly species-bound. Genuine friendship demands a parity of feeling in which each self-reflexively appreciates self in the other; this seems impossible between 'the Perfection of Nature' and 'a beast'. Encouraged to see himself as little better than a 'lump of deformity', Gulliver seems intent upon a bizarre and schizophrenic speciation, morphing himself into a horse/man. Failing to receive any reciprocated love or friendship from his 'horse of instruction', and feeling a certain lack in the hoof and mouth departments, Gulliver experiences a proto-Lacanian desire to be 'other'/Houyhnhnm, which is fittingly captured in the distorted mirror image of a lake. He misrecognizes his self in the watery image and further internalizes his 'ideal (Houyhnhnm) ego', expressing his new fantasy sense of 'self' via the exhibition of equine narcissism:

> When I happened to behold the Reflection of my own Form in a Lake or Fountain, I turned away my Face in Horror and detestation of my self; and could better endure the Sight of a common *Yahoo,* than of my own Person. By conversing with the *Houyhnhnms,* and looking upon them with Delight, I fell to imitate their Gait and Gesture, which is now grown into a Habit; and my Friends often tell me in a blunt Way, that I *trot like a Horse;* which, however, I take for a great Compliment: Neither shall I disown, that in speaking I am apt to fall into the Voice and manner of the

> *Houyhnhnms,* and hear my self ridiculed on that Account without the least Mortification. (IV. 10. 278–279)[20]

Where Lucius's metamorphosis had been purely physical, that of Gulliver is psychological; where Apuleius's 'Ass is at great pains to demonstrate the persistence of *sensus humanus* within his bestial form', Gulliver is equally determined to retain *sensus equinus* within his human form.[21] Yet such is at some distance from the practicalities of robust *horse sense*. Gulliver had earlier 'feared my Brain was disturbed by my Sufferings and Misfortunes' (IV. 2. 229), and if readers are torn between the dangerous responses of subjecting Gulliver to cod psychologizing or of mocking the afflicted, it is perhaps safer, if less charitable, to characterize his behaviour as stubbornly asinine. Misreading his own reflection, Gulliver signally fails to display the self-realization of Plutarch's allegorized mule, as described by the Abbé Charles Batteux:

> A mule happening to see his figure in a stream, was struck with admiration at the beauty and gracefulness of his shape; and tossing his mane with a high degree of pleasure and complacency, he sets out upon full gallop in imitation of the horse; but all on a sudden, calling to mind that he was but the offspring of an ass, he stopt short, divested in an instant of all his presumption and pride.[22]

Gulliver, setting out in full and self-enamoured trot, never stops 'to reflect on his original' or to consider his own idiocy. The reader finds him more stubbornly presumptuous than Plutarch's mule, and furthermore it would seem that Swift himself can be seen to have endorsed such a reaction in the naming of his 'hero'.

The scriptural name Lemuel occurs only twice in the King James Bible, in the context of Proverbs 31. 1 and 4, where King Lemuel rehearses some invaluable words of career advice 'his mother taught him', such as the maternal misogynism of 'Give not thy strength unto women' (31. 3), or the subtler slur, 'Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies' (31. 10). In its translation ('dedicated to God') the name has been understood by rabbinical tradition as a symbolic reference to Solomon in all his wisdom and all his glory. Miriam K. Starkman has demonstrated that the library of Narcissus Marsh might well have facilitated Swift's familiarity with this identification and with the Midrash narrative of Bathsheba's queen-motherly schooling of her sensualist son. Starkman appreciates the temptation of 'resolv(ing) all those evasive, inconsistent, recalcitrant Gullivers with whom Modern critics struggle into one Solomonic wise-fool, *alias* Lemuel'.[23]

Solomon's devotion to his horses was evidenced by the palatial stables he constructed, far surpassing even those of 'Naboth's Vineyard', and it is

perhaps significant that Lemuel/Solomon is instructed not only to safeguard the legal rights of the poor but to 'Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction' (31. 8). Such an injunction might seem appropriate to Book IV whether one thinks in terms of providing the gift of speech to dumb animals, of liberating all the horses of England, or of giving hippanthropic folly a voice.[24] For if Gulliver—and here we are inevitably reminded of his apprenticeship to Master Bates—heeded the warning of Proverbs: 'Give not thy strength unto women', he totally ignored the advice of Psalms, specifically that of the second penitential psalm: 'Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee' (Psalm 32. 9).[25] And the Psalmist's mention of the mule takes us from satirical onomastics to the playful paronomasia so beloved of the Scriblerians, for Gulliver was baptized Lemuel—'the mule'—and needed to travel further than Nuyt's Land to fulfil the stubborn idiocy predicted by this nomination.[26]

If Lemuel Gulliver can be considered as any long-eared quadruped it must surely be the *equus hemionus* or hemione, for what is a mule if not a half-ass?[27] The mule is the product of crossing a male or jackass with a mare, combining the sure-footed endurance of the former with the strength of the latter, and as *OED* observes: 'With no good grounds, the mule is proverbially regarded as the epitome of obstinacy'.[28] Throughout Book IV Lemuel grows increasingly mulish as his stubborn credulity endorses 'that which is not' concerning equine superiority.[29] The pride of the Houyhnhnm, the folly of the ass, and the intractability of the mule are united as he attempts to effect metamorphosis from *animal rationale* to *animal hinnabile:* whether neighing or braying he achieves only a 'hinnying sophistry' as the half-assed human attempts to cross the species boundary.[30] Lucius the Ass was described by Margaret Doody as a 'helpless (male) self transformed'; Gulliver, by contrast, can be seen as a wilful (mule) self-transformed.[31]

The potential identification of Lemuel with the mule, however, is by no means limited to aspects of obstinacy. More importantly, the mule is the quintessential cross-breed, and we can relate this to the hybrid subjectivity of Gulliver, who becomes neither this (man), nor that (horse), but the psychologically self-hybridized 'other' (Houyhnhnman). The mule, as a characteristic hybrid, is traditionally associated with an increased hybrid vigour, but the hybridity of the mule has also been considered as a variety of bastardy, connoting an inferior mongrel mingling.[32] Such 'half-assed', indeterminate and incomplete mediocrity is central to Pope's use of the mule (as the mules merge transgenetically into the 'half-form'd insects') in *An Essay on Criticism:*

> Some neither can for Wits nor Critics pass,
> As heavy mules are neither horse nor ass.

> Those half-learn'd witlings, num'rous in our isle,
> As half-form'd insects on the banks of *Nile;*
> Unfinish'd things, one knows not what to call,
> Their generation's so equivocal.
>
> (ll. 38–43)[33]

The Gulliver of Book II had been labelled by the King as both 'inhuman' and an 'impotent and groveling Insect' (II. 7. 134) for his detailed description of weapons of mass destruction, yet Brobdingnag science had pronounced him physically small but perfectly formed: the Scholars 'observed my Limbs to be perfect and finished' (II. 3. 104). A similarly callous cataloguing of modern warfare in Houyhnhnmland provokes the reaction from his Master that he is worse than Yahoo, possessing only a grotesquely distorted reason which is imaged as the reflection of 'an ill-shapen Body' (IV. 5. 248). It is this conviction of moral and physical repulsiveness—of inward and outward corruption—that impels Gulliver to violate both his own identity and the Enlightenment narrative of a shared autonomous humanity as he impotently attempts the sterile and incomplete metamorphosis of hybridity.

Gulliver's travels had involved movement across geographical borders through weird and wonderful nations which might well have created a hybrid identity, but the binaries of the miniature and the gigantic were mere perspectives of scale. In Book IV his travels question human agency and human identity; he journeys beyond the transnational to the transgenetic, beyond the postcolonial to the 'posthuman'. The comedy of the 'trolling',[34] neighing man is as rich as the smell of horse-manure he relishes, but it is possible to view the dilemma of Lemuel as a troubling anticipation of postmodern subjectivity. In Lemuel's aspiration to exalted Houyhnhnm nature and his longing for transhuman transmutation we can detect something of the biotechnological dystopias of the twenty-first century, when it is now possible for man to rearrange the molecular basis of his own genetic structure. All his anxieties are equine, but in a recent article by Teresa Heffernan, entitled 'Bovine Anxieties, Virgin Births, and the Secret of Life', we can, perhaps, glimpse Gulliver in all his hybrid postmodernity:

> In philosophy, cultural studies, gender and race studies, history, and literature, theorists of the postmodern subject, in response to the problematic history of 'founding' discourses, have challenged both the idea of progress and liberal humanist notions of a 'natural' self. Understood as local, fluid, contingent, and as contesting and rending the hierarchical binaries of nature/culture, self/other, male/female, human/nonhuman, this postmodern subject is by now a familiar alternative to the conception of the self as fixed,

> autonomous, authentic, coherent, and universal. Hybridity is a privileged concept in this new understanding of the subject because the hybrid breaks the linear reproductive binary model that produces the same, allowing 'difference' to proliferate; the hybrid also displaces emphasis on the original and challenges the traditional understanding of nature. Asking 'How can we conceive of a peopling, a propagation, a becoming that is without filiation or hereditary production? A multiplicity without the unity of an ancestor?'[35]

Might such nightmares have emerged from the mare's nest of Swift's head? Should one subject Gulliver to the postmodern world of genetic engineering and biomolecular analysis? Certainly there is much that is contingent and little that is stable in Gulliver's self-divided consciousness on his return home to Redriff (Rotherhithe). Though not 'without filiation', the very thought of his children is deeply repulsive, their presence beyond endurance: 'And when I began to consider, that by copulating with one of the *Yahoo*-Species I became a Parent of more, it struck me with the utmost Shame, Confusion and Horror' (IV. 11. 289). A wifely embrace causes an hour-long swoon, and this challenge to Mary's 'traditional understanding of nature' is nowhere better captured than in Pope's 'heroic' verse epistle of 'Mary Gulliver to Captain Lemuel Gulliver'.[36] The perversity of his self-abhorrence is epitomized in his aversion to his 'Christian seed', their 'mutual Flesh and Bone', stressed by the repeated chiming of 'they are thy own':

> Hear and relent! hark, how thy Children moan;
> Be kind at least to these, they are thy own:
> [ . . . ]
> See how they pat thee with their pretty Paws:
> Why start you? are they Snakes? or have they Claws?
> Thy Christian Seed, our mutual Flesh and Bone:
> Be kind at least to these, they are thy own.
>
> (ll. 9–10; 13–16)

We are reminded that Swift's Gulliver, never exactly an uxorious husband and remarkably slow to learn either 'the Lesson of knowing when I was well' or the words of Lemuel's mother ('Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies'), had left the heavily pregnant Mary for yet another adventure:

> I continued at home with my Wife and Children about five Months in a very happy Condition, if I could have learned the

> Lesson of knowing when I was well. I left my poor Wife big with Child, and accepted an advantageous Offer made me to be Captain of the *Adventure*. (IV. 1. 221)

The 'poor Wife', significantly silenced by Swift's text, is provided with a questioning voice by Pope. It is beyond her comprehension that her husband should neglect the 'Scene of all our former Joys', preferencing '*Litter* to the marriage Bed', and, in foregrounding Mary's physical needs within the context of what is rapidly emerging as a bad marriage-debt, Pope mischievously sexualizes the equine relationship:

> *Where sleeps my Gulliver? O tell me where?*
> The Neighbours answer, *With the Sorrel Mare.*
>
> (ll. 45–46)

By changing the sex of Gulliver's faithful Sorrel Nag, and transforming the stable relationship of Gulliver and the two stone horses, the poem reduces cross-species attraction to bestiality in the straw with an equine of inferior caste. On another level, however, the conversion of a profoundly asexual homosocial relationship based upon higher Houyhnhnm reason ('I converse well with them at least four Hours every Day' [IV. 11. 290]) into a bizarrely adulterous love-triangle (Mary/Sorrel Mare/Gulliver) of doubly criminal conversation can be seen as a human attempt on Mary's part to rationalize the very 'unreasonable' nature of this interspecial special relationship.

Mary shows herself to be an inexpert 'reader' of her husband's discourse, especially concerning his final voyage, but she empathetically relives the physical dangers he has endured and, in attempting to cure a 'Disease' which she views as the product of some 'Witchcraft', her concern is to restore his natural tastes, for chicken and asparagus rather than oats in the stable; for the physical charms of Mary rather than those of a mare. Perhaps having learnt from her husband of the Lilliput maxim 'a Wife should be always a reasonable and agreeable Companion; because she cannot always be young' (I. 6. 62), she attempts to convince him she is possessed of all three advantages. She pleads her comparative youth and human attractiveness ('*Pennell's* Wife is brown, compar'd to me; | And Mistress *Biddel* sure is Fifty three' [ll. 23–24]), stressing the fruitful joys of their union. Essentially she is trying to respond to an 'unnatural' rival: 'What mean those Visits to the *Sorrel Mare*?' (l. 30). She intuits that such a relationship is inevitably a barren one, spiritually, intellectually, and physically sterile.[37] Ultimately her organicist solution is positively Lucianic; appealing to the divine sexual shape-shifter for a partial metamorphosis which would benefit more than her vocal organs:

> Nay, wou'd kind *Jove* my Organs so dispose,
> To hymn harmonious *Houyhnhnm* thro' the Nose,
> I'd call thee *Houyhnhnm*, that high sounding Name,
> Thy Children's Noses all should twang the same.
> So might I find my loving Spouse of course
> Endu'd with all the *Virtues* of a *Horse*.
>
> (ll. 106–111)

In this conclusion Pope dissolves all the wifely frustration at having to compete with a horse into the traditional misogynism of the insatiable female.[38] In all Lemuel's mulish and self-imposed hybridity, sensuality had appeared to retreat with the female Yahoo, but it seems that at least one reader had suspected a hidden desire (on Mary's part if not on her husband's) that he might be hung like an equid.[39] Here Pope comes closer to the physical paradoxes of Pseudo-Lucian, for when, at the conclusion of *Lucius; or, The Ass,* Lucius, restored to human dignity, returns to the lady whom he had pleasured as an ass, he meets only with angry rejection:

> By heavens I didn't love *you* but the ass in you and *he* was the one I slept with, not you. I thought that, if nothing else, you would have still kept trailing about with you that mighty symbol of the ass. But you have come to me transformed from that handsome, useful creature into a monkey.[40]

According to the 'phallocentric' logic of the (unnamed) lady of this romance, the primacy and the physicality of the symbol rearrange the relative worth of man, ass, and monkey; the metamorphosis of man into equid is productive of beauty and utility. She arrives at the *anthrōpos* = anthropoid, man = Yahoo equation by a very different route, but her thinking is no less flawed than that of Lemuel the mule. The heat of undiluted physicality, like the frigidity of undiluted ratiocination, can be seen to warp the human psyche. And if Mary Gulliver (at least in Pope's appending text) shares something of this lady's bestial lustfulness, it could be argued that the onomastics of her name also suggest a distinct mulishness, though different in kind from that of her husband. Her Christian name connotes a female horse as well as the mother of Christ (mar[e]-y), whereas her maiden name, 'Burton', is all too reminiscent of 'burdon', a hinny, or mule.[41]

Turning from the unacceptable face of transgenetic yearnings, it remains to consider mule-like cross-cultural hybridity as applicable both to Swift and to genre. In his *Conjectures on Original Composition,* Edward Young, finding *Gulliver's Travels* tacking dangerously towards blasphemy, berates not Swift but the eponymous traveller with ignoring 'my first rule—*Know thyself*':

> *Lucian,* who was an Original, neglected not this rule, if we may judge by his reply to one who took some freedom with him. He was, at first, an apprentice to a statuary; and when he was reflected on as such, by being called *Prometheus,* he replied, 'I am indeed the inventor of new work, the model of which I owe to none; and, if I do not execute it well, I deserve to be torn by twelve vulturs, instead of one.'
>
> If so, *O Gulliver!* dost thou not shudder at thy brother *Lucian's* vulturs hovering o'er thee? Shudder on! they cannot shock thee more, than decency has been shock'd by thee. How have thy *Houyhnhms* thrown thy judgment from its seat, and laid thy imagination in the mire? In what ordure hast thou dipt thy pencil? What a monster hast thou made of the—*Human face divine*?[42]

However, if Gulliver is indeed guilty of breaking Young's two golden rules (the second being *'Reverence thyself'*), the distance between creature/character/persona and creator must be re-established; Swift, all too attentive to the Socratic injunction of 'Know thyself', had learnt the bias of his own mind.[43] Furthermore, he understood that Prometheus might not only be credited with inspiring new and hybrid satiric-comic forms, but could also be charged with threatening the very concept of a consistent, unified identity:

> 'Tis sung Prometheus forming Man
> Thro' all the brutal Species ran,
> Each proper Quality to find
> Adapted to a human Mind,
> A mingled Mass of Good & Bad,
> The worst & best that could be had
> ('On Poetry: A Rapsody', ll. 21–27)[44]

It is from such 'a Clay of Mixture base' that the fractured or composite subjectivity of hybridity emerges. And if Prometheus in his creation drew for human folly upon the representative ass, Lemuel the mule can be taken to represent something of the hybridity of his creator. Swift's Irish birth and his English blood, a matter of geography rather than genes, ensured the hyphenated hybridity of Anglo-Irishness. Though scarcely 'wild-Irish borne', in Jonson's terms, Swift was inevitably something of 'a Hybride'.[45] His cultural hybridity demanded a 'full intimacy with the stranger within', especially as he defines himself as 'a stranger in a strange land'.[46]

As Anglo-Irish dissident whose privilege and authority were predicated upon English hegemony, he was caught between the subaltern and the mas-

ter race; between sympathy for the colony and longing for the metropolis. Where Gulliver's crisis of identity concerned the nature of his species, that of his creator involved the ambiguities of nationality and racial genealogy. Ambiguity and ambivalence have historically characterized the contested representations of Ireland and her people, and such conflictions inevitably infected the issues both of Swift's self-representation and his claim to represent the Irish.[47] The complexities of Gulliver's postcolonialist positionings are refracted and magnified in Swift's self-divided and self-alienated identification with the Anglo-Irish gentry and the native Catholic population in which contempt for the colonizers and condescension towards the colonized can be inverted disconcertingly. Imperial intervention is productive of such cultural and personal hybridity and, in the mental and geographical '"in-between" spaces' of his Irish experience, Swift attempted to negotiate the liminal and the 'colonial non-sense'.[48]

There is no clearer depiction of Swift's apprehension of the grey and sterile bleakness of liminality than in his poem of September 1727, 'Holyhead', where he positions himself uncomfortably on a distinctly unpleasant threshold ('I'm where my enemyes would wish'), awaiting a delayed passage which will exchange 'this bleaky shore' for 'that slavish hateful shore'. It is only the danger to Stella ('Absent from whom all Clymes are curst') that draws him to Dublin where 'they'd be glad to see | A packet though it brings in we'. Were it not for her, he would rather 'go in freedom to my grave, | Than Rule yon Isle and be a Slave'.[49] Like the Drapier, a hybrid persona of hegemonic and subaltern cultures, he realizes that the metamorphosis from free man to slave requires only a six-hour crossing of the Irish sea.[50] Though subject to such metamorphosis, the tensions between the oppositional and the orthodox resulted in Swift rejecting small change for Ireland (Wood's patent) and proposing little change for Ireland (limited civil rights for Irish Catholics and dissenters). His transcultural attitude towards colonial power and his critique of the Ascendancy were riven by inconsistencies contingent upon the fact that he shared the Hibernian hybridity he excoriated as the 'Mungril Breed' of absentee landlords or those who 'fain would pass for Lords' in a land of gelded peers if not castrated Yahoos.[51] Trapped between appropriation and repression of an authentic Irish voice, hybridity is the ultimate signifier of this 'Irish Patriot' and Tory Teague. For Swift, like the mule, is a denizen of the liminal, straddling nations as the mule straddles species, beyond and yet of the Pale, belonging to both and yet to neither.

In the *verkehrte Welt* of Aesop or Albion the ass is carried over the mire; in the darkly corrupt world of *Volpone* the triumphant 'mule' mounts its rider.[52] In the 'real' world of the sixteenth century Fernand Braudel has argued 'the triumph of the mule' over the horse as a more robust pack animal, increasing the volume of land traffic at the expense of shipping.[53] Drawing upon this historical research, Franco Moretti, in charting the beginnings of the modern

European novel, sets 'Mules against ships, one could say (and against aristocratic steeds): the wonder of the open sea, with its extraordinary adventures, is replaced by slow and regular progress; daily, tiresome, often banal'.[54] This seems doubly reductive, doing little justice either to the birth-pangs of realism or to the mule's earlier role as the noble vehicle of biblical kings and romance heroines. Certainly Henry James, in acknowledging that the constraints of genre, if not of publishers, might prove beneficial, was ultimately grateful for spending 'so many years astride the silver-shoed, soberpaced, short-stepping, but oh so hugely nosing, so tenderly and yearningly and ruefully sniffing, grey mule of the "few thousand words"'.[55] Cervantes, as he wandered the byways of Andalucia on mule-back, also knew that one might, like Cesare Caporali di Perugia, journey to Parnassus on a mule.[56]

If the mule can represent the mundane and the constraining aspects of genre, it can also, by virtue of its characteristic ambivalence, symbolize the crossing of generic (as opposed to genetic) thresholds. As Swift traversed the winding mule-paths of literature in his sure-footed journey of destabilization he was hybridizing and bastardizing, breaking fruitful new grounds of narrative potential, and creating multiple meanings for multiple readerships. Hybridity of species distorts the human psyche, and cultural hybridity problematizes colonial authority, but generic hybridity can be both subversive and liberating. Hybrid identities and hybrid personae can create hybrid forms of discourse.

In realizing a new and hybrid mode of satire which adapted Menippean techniques to mingle Platonic dialogue and comedy, Lucian revealed that such Promethean invention was dangerous. Significantly for our present purposes, Lucian used the image of literary hippocentaur, stating (in Dryden's translation) 'that the Union of two contraries may as well produce a Monster as a Miracle; as a Centaur results from the Joint natures of Horse and Man'.[57] Whether imaged as hippocentaur, onocentaur (half-man, half-ass), or mule, mixed or hybrid discourses trample the pales of existent genres, creating new, composite, and unstable forms of fictions.[58] Generic rules, like horses, must be broken, and genres, like mules, must be mixed. And in his breeding of mulishly composite texts lies Swift's contribution to eighteenth-century mingling of genre.

In the playful extravagancies and 'postmodernist' excesses of Swift's imagination genres were saddled and straddled with all the cavalier brio of the satirist.[59] In some respects Swift can be compared to that Plutarch-inspired theriophilist Montaigne, who both felt at his best and thought at his best when on horseback. In the essay 'Of War Horses' he reminds us that 'We read in Xenophon a law forbidding any one who was master of a horse to travel on foot'.[60] Being master of a horse is a very different matter from the pedestrian position of being mastered by one. For whether horseback riding or hobby-

horse riding Swift was no muleteer relentlessly driving on his text 'straight forward;—for instance, from Rome all the way to Loretto, without ever once turning his head aside';[61] to make his fifty spirited deviations, or indeed, 'to ride one Inch of Ground', he needed to be firmly in the saddle.

## Notes

1. 'Probatur Aliters' [Proof by a different route], ll. 39–40, in *The Poems of Jonathan Swift,* ed. by Harold Williams, 3 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), III, 943 (henceforth *Poems*).

2. Cf. this alternative version: 'The dullest Beast and Eggs unsound, | Without it I rather would walk on the Ground' ('A Letter', ll. 25–26, in *Poems,* III, 941).

3. 'Then would he add certain praises by telling what a peerless beast the horse was, the only serviceable courtier, without flattery, the beast of most beauty, faithfulness, courage, and such more, that if I had not been a piece of a logician before I came to him, I think he would have persuaded me to have wished myself a horse' (Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie* (Menston: Scolar Press, 1968), p. 1). 'I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contain'd' (Whitman, 'Song of Myself', ll. 682–683, in *Leaves of Grass,* ed. by H. W. Blodgett and S. Bradley (London: University of London Press, 1965), p. 60). On Swift's equine problems, see 'The Holyhead Journal', in *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift,* ed. by Herbert Davis and others, 14 vols (Oxford: Blackwell, 1939–1968), v (1962), 202–203 (henceforth *Prose Works*); *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift,* ed. by Harold Williams, 5 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963–1965), II (1963), 45, 135, 152–153 (henceforth *Correspondence*). The most amusing must be: 'the Horse understanding falls very well' (*Journal to Stella,* ed. by Harold Williams, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), I, 2; cf. I, 124).

4. For the originary text see James L. Clifford, 'Gulliver's Fourth Voyage: "Hard" and "Soft" Schools of Interpretation', in *Quick Springs of Sense,* ed. by Larry S. Champion, Studies in the Eighteenth Century, 18 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1974), pp. 33–49.

5. The ass/arse paronomasia is at least as old as Shakespeare's Bottom or John Marston's *What You Will* (London: G. Eld for Thomas Thorpe, 1607), II. 1. 351–376; *Gulliver's Travels,* in *Prose Works,* XI (1941), IV. 7. 262 (references henceforth noted parenthetically in the text). Cf. 'for a Slave, who will coax his superiors, | May be proud to be licking a great man's posteriors' ('The Yahoo's Overthrow', ll. 68–69, in *Poems,* III, 817).

6. To belong to the same species is to look similar; as Michael Foucault maintains, in human classifying, 'Natural history is nothing more than the nomination of the visible' (*The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), p. 132). With Gulliver's taxonomic problems compare those of Congreve: 'I can never care for seeing things, that force me to entertain low thoughts of my Nature. [ . . . ] I could never look long upon a Monkey, without very Mortifying Reflections; thô I never heard any thing to the Contrary, why that Creature is not Originally of a Distinct *Species*' (Congreve to John Dennis, 10 July 1695, in *William Congreve: Letters and Documents,* ed. by John C. Hodges (London: Macmillan, 1964), p. 178).

7. On mistranslation of body language, A. D. Nuttall has pointed out that Gulliver 'would, but for a ludicrously-misconceived apprehension, have killed without provocation an unarmed fellow human being who had done no more than extend his hand. The other may even have been smiling' ('Gulliver among the Horses', *Yearbook of English Studies,* 18 (1988), 51–68 (p. 52)).

8. Cf. Swift's unseemly description of Mrs Sheridan: 'In chatt'ring a magpie, in pride a jackdaw' ('A Portrait from the Life', I. 2, in *Poems,* III, 955). See also n. 27 below.

9. The Houyhnhnm Master maintains that 'the *Yahoos* were known to hate one another more than they did any different Species of Animals; and the Reason usually assigned, was, the Odiousness of their own Shapes, which all could see in the rest, but not in themselves' (IV. 7. 260). This piece of equine ethnography represents seriously spavined science, as Gulliver's field observations of Yahoo communality demonstrate.

10. In a work published in the same year as *Gulliver's Travels, Mere Nature Delineated; or, A Body without a Soul* (London: T. Warner, 1726), Defoe saw the wild child Peter of Hanover as illustrating the condition of the 'untaught Man' in a 'state of mere Nature'. Attacking the ideas of Shaftesbury and the deists concerning man's natural goodness, Defoe argued that a 'Creature in human Shape, but intirely neglected and uninstructed, is ten thousands times more miserable than a Brute' (p. 63). Wild Peter was for two months domiciled with Dr Arbuthnot, and Swift is the likely (co)author of *The Most Wonderful Wonder, That Ever Appeared to the Wonder of the British Nation* (also published in 1726). Attributed on the title-page to 'the Copper-Farthing Dean', it features a conversation between Peter and the 'most monstrous She Bear' who had suckled him, employing some characteristically Swiftean cultural relativism concerning 'the beast called man' and his tyranny over the horse; see *The Life and Works of John Arbuthnot,* ed. by George A. Aitken (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1892), pp. 475–482.

11. Michael Wilding has argued that rehabilitation of the species is out of the question: 'It would not suit the Houyhnhnms if the Yahoos were civilised and educated' ('The Politics of *Gulliver's Travels',* in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century,* II: *Papers Presented at the Second David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar,* ed. by R. F. Brissenden (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), pp. 302–322 (p. 317)). One of the suggestions put to the General Assembly, however, was that: 'every Houyhnhnm kept two young Ones in a Kennel, and brought them to such a degree of Tameness, as an Animal so savage by Nature can be capable of acquiring; using them for Draught and Carriage' (IV. 9. 271).

12. Within the narrow confines of the Houyhnhnm species, they are discriminating with regard to the niceties of racial prejudice; it forms the basis of their rigid caste system: 'He made me observe, that among the *Houyhnhnms,* the *White,* the *Sorrel,* and *Iron-grey,* were not so exactly shaped as the *Bay,* the *Dapple-grey,* and the *Black;* nor born with equal Talents of the Mind, or a Capacity to improve them; and therefore continued always in the Condition of Servants, without ever aspiring to match out of their own Race, which in that Country would be reckoned monstrous and unnatural' (IV. 6. 256). Swift, by contrast, tended to use 'the idiom of racism less against particular ethnic groups than at the species as a whole' (Claude Rawson, *God, Gulliver, and Genocide: Barbarism and the European Imagination, 1492–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 238).

13. Interestingly, in medieval versions of the *Physiologus,* both the wild ass and the ape are seen as representing the Devil: see Ron Baxter, *Bestiaries and their Users in the Middle Ages* (Stroud: Sutton, 1998), p. 37.

14. Contrast Juba's desire: 'To cultivate the wild licentious Savage | With Wisdom, Discipline, and lib'ral Arts' (Joseph Addison, *Cato* (London: J. Tonson, 1713), I. 4. 34–35).

15. 'If his favourite *Houyhnhunms* could write, and *Swift* had been one of them, every horse with him would have been an ass, and he would have written a panegyrick on mankind, saddling with much reproach the present heroes of his pen' (Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition in a Letter to the Author of 'Sir Charles Grandison'* (1759) (Leeds: Scolar Press, 1966), pp. 63–64).

16. Ovid, *Fasti,* trans. by J. G. Frazer (London: Heinemann; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951), I. 391–440; VI. 319–348.

17. See E. K. Chambers, *The Medieval Stage,* 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1903), I, 280–288; II, 280–281; Henry Copley Greene, 'The Song of the Ass', *Speculum,* 6 (1931), 534–539. Sterne reminds us that St Hilarion used abstinence and flagellation 'to make his ass (meaning his body) leave off kicking' (*The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1760), VIII. 31, 129).

18. John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding,* IV. 4. 13.

19. 'Swift and Romance', in *Walking Naboth's Vineyard: New Studies of Swift,* ed. by Christopher Fox and Brenda Tooley (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), pp. 98–126 (p. 101).

20. Gulliver's realization of human animality anticipates what Freud termed the Darwinian 'biological blow to human narcissism'. In exploring the ramifications of the Ovidian myth of Narcissus for Book IV, Christopher Fox cites Thomas Willis, *Two Discourses concerning the Soul of Brutes* (1683), on zoanthropy: 'some have even "believed themselves to be Dogs or Wolves, and have imitated their ways and kind by barking or howling"'. Fox continues: 'When he first saw the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver thought they must be "Magicians" (presumably "men") who had "metamorphosed themselves" into horses. In Gulliver's subsequent attempt to make the same transformation, to neigh and trot like the horses and imitate "their ways and kind," could be we witnessing yet another "metamorphosis"—in Willis's sense of the term?' ('The Myth of Narcissus in Swift's *Travels', Eighteenth-Century Studies,* 20 (Autumn, 1986), 17–33 (p. 31 n. 30)).

21. Carl C. Schlam, *The Metamorphoses of Apuleius: On Making an Ass of Oneself* (London: Duckworth, 1992), p. 100.

22. Batteux continues: 'What fire, what vivacity in this picture of a man, born with a greatness of soul, above the meanness of his condition! as conscious of his own abilities, he dares attempt every thing; but when he comes to reflect on his original, and that mankind are ever ready to give more to birth than real merit, he finds all his courage fail him. There is not a single stroke in this fable, that does not carry the clearest meaning with it' (*A Course of the Belles Letters; or, The Principles of Literature,* trans. by John Millar, 4 vols (London: Low, 1761), I, 225–226).

23. 'Satirical Onomastics: Lemuel Gulliver and King Solomon', *Philological Quarterly,* 60 (1981), 41–52 (p. 46).

24. Cf. the hippophilia in the land of Fooliana: 'Nay I knew one of them build his horse a stable fitter for a Kings horse then his: adorning it with farre-fetched Marble, nay and enchasing the walls and pillers with Iuory, and he himselfe meane while satte warming of his heeles in a poore little, straw-thatched cottage' (John

Healey, *The Discovery of a New World* (1609?) (a translation of Joseph Hall's *Mundus alter et idem* (1605)), ed. by Huntington Brown (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1937), p. 229).

25. Gulliver's exaltation of the horse above the human has been considered as placing him in atheistical Spinozan company; see Anne Barbeau Gardiner, '"Be ye as the horse!": Swift, Spinoza, and the Society of Virtuous Atheists', *Studies in Philology,* 97 (2000), 229–253.

26. 'The Paranomasia, or Pun, where a word, like the tongue of a jackdaw, speakes twice as much by being split' (*The Art of Sinking* (1727), in *The Prose Works of Alexander Pope,* ed. by Norman Ault and Rosemary Cowler, 2 vols (Oxford: Blackwell, 1936–1986), II: *The Major Works, 1725–1744* [1986], 209).

27. 'Hellenists still debate whether the "wild she-mules" (*ἡμιόνων γένος ἀγροτεράων*) of the *Iliad* (II. 852) are domestic mules or wild equidae' (G. Devereux, 'Homer's Wild She-Mules', *Journal of Hellenic Studies,* 85 (1963), 29–32 (p. 29)). *OED,* s.v. half-ass: '*Obs* The Mule'. It is likely that ass/arse paronomasia (cf. n. 5 above) also operates here, associating the half-ass with the half-arsed. *OED* has 'half-arsed, -ass, -assed *adjs. slang* (orig. *U.S.*), ineffectual, inadequate, mediocre; stupid, inexperienced'. Some contemporary examples include: 'Thou art (without a figure) just one half of an ass, and Baldwin yonder, thy half-brother, is the rest. A gemini of asses split would make just four of you' (William Congreve, *The Way of the World* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1700), IV. 313–316); '*Lords, Parsons, Lawyers, Baronets,* and Beaus, | Fops, Coxcombs, Cits, and Knaves of ev'ry Class, | While some the better Half, some wholly Ass' (William Pattison (1706–1727), 'Effigies Authoris', ll. 47–49, in *The Poetical Works* (London: H. Curll, 1728), p. 226).

28. Cf. Swift on Mrs Sheridan: 'As rude as a bear, no mule half so crabbed; | She swills like a sow, and she breeds like a rabbit' ('A Portrait from the Life', ll. 5–6, in *Poems*, III, 955).

29. Henry Vaughan, who celebrates 'The Ass' as an emblem of lowly obedience to be imitated, characterizes man as a mule, stubborn and intransigent: 'Crosses are but curbs | To check the mule, unruly man' ('Affliction', ll. 17–18, in *The Complete Poetry of Henry Vaughan,* ed. by French Fogle (New York: New York University Press, 1965), p. 441). Cf. 'Jacob's Pillow, and Pillar', l. 30 (ibid., p. 330); 'Discipline', l. 3 (ibid., p. 416).

30. See R. S. Crane, 'The Houyhnhnms, the Yahoos, and the History of Ideas', in *Reason and Imagination: Studies in the History of Ideas 1600–1800,* ed. by A. J. Mazzeo (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 231–253. 'Take not part with the wicked young Gallant. He neygheth and hinneyeth, all is but hinnying Sophistry. I call him *Idoll* againe. Yet, I say, his *Calling,* his Profession is prophane, it is prophane, *Idoll*' (Ben Jonson, *Bartholomew Fair,* in *The Workes of Beniamin Jonson* (London: Richard Bishop, 1640), V. 5, p. 84). Neighing and braying are associated in the Old Testament with lasciviousness and folly; see e.g. Jeremiah 13. 27; Job 30. 7.

31. Doody, 'Swift and Romance', p. 101.

32. Although subject to the prohibition of Leviticus 19. 19, mules were bred (first by Anah, the wife of Esau, according to Jewish tradition) for their hybrid vigour; see *OED,* s.v. Heterosis: '*Genetics*. The tendency of cross-breeding to produce an animal or plant with a greater hardiness and capacity for growth

than either of the parents; hybrid vigour'; s.v. Bastard: '3: a. Mongrel, hybrid, of inferior breed'.

33. Pope's *Essay on Criticism 1709,* ed. by Robert M. Schmitz (St Louis, MO: Washington University Press, 1962). Cousin Dryden, similarly fascinated by the margin between man and beast, stresses the mule's mixed parentage:

> But you, who *Fathers* and traditions take,
> And garble some, and some you quite forsake,
> Pretending church authority to fix,
> And yet some grains of private spirit mix,
> Are, like a *Mule,* made up of diff'ring seed.

(*The Hind and the Panther,* II. 261–265, in *The Hind and the Panther: A Poem in Three Parts* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1687), pp. 47–48)

34. The ridiculousness of Gulliver's gait and domestic preferences obviously inspired Mrs Pilkington's apocryphal attempt to depict the author in like manner. Swift condemns her husband's folly in marrying, when a horse 'would have given him better Exercise and more pleasure than a Wife' (quoted by A. C. Elias, 'Laetitia Pilkington on Swift: How reliable is She?', in *Walking Naboth's Vineyard,* ed. by Fox and Tooley, pp. 127–142 (p. 131)).

35. *Cultural Critique,* 53 (2003), 116–133 (p. 118).

36. Alexander Pope, *Minor Poems,* ed. by Norman Ault (London and New Haven: Methuen and Yale University Press, 1954), pp. 276–279.

37. As a hybrid product of interbreeding the mule is generally sterile, but though impotent in the sense of being incapable of reproduction, it is certainly not lacking in sexual vigour.

38. In mock exasperation Swift consigns Stella's horse to her (bed)chamber or her kitchen: 'Slids, I would the horse were in your—chamber. [ . . . ] you may pickle him, and boil him, if you will?' (*Journal to Stella,* I. 58).

39. The fact that 'Mary Gulliver to Captain Lemuel Gulliver', sent to Swift in a letter of 17 February 1726/1727, was one of four (later five) poems prefixed to the text of the 1727 second edition of *Gulliver's Travels,* appeared in later copies of the third edition, and in earlier copies of the 1731 second issue means that for very many subsequent readers Pope's contribution has been textually foregrounded; see *A Bibliography of the Writings of Jonathan Swift,* ed. by Arthur H. Scouten, 2nd edn., rev. and corr. by H. Teerink (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1967), pp. 194–202. By placing 'Mary Gulliver' as the final poem of three in an appendix to the text, Faulkner's 1735 edition ensured that for many more readers the longings of Pope's Mary frequently concluded their experience of the text, providing the 'heroic', if not epic, closure denied by Swift's narrative. Boswell's threat to write—in Mrs Thrale's name—'a poetical letter to him [Johnson], *on his return from Scotland,* in the stile of Swift's humorous epistle in the character of Mary Gulliver to her husband' (*Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (London: Dilly, 1785), p. 152) would seem to indicate that both these readers thought this closure was from Swift's pen.

40. In *Lucian,* ed. and trans. by A. M. Harmon, K. Kilburn, and M. D. Macleod, 8 vols (London: Heinemann; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1913–1967), VIII (1967), 47–145 (p. 143). Cf. Juvenal, *Satires,* VI. 334.

41. *OED,* s.v. Burdon: '[a. L. *burdōn-em*.] A mule between a horse and she-ass; a hinny'.

42. Young, *Conjectures,* pp. 61–62. In his parody of libellers Swift had satirically countered the charge of atheistic misanthropy:

> For *Gulliver* divinely shews,
> That *Humankind* are all *Yahoos*.
> Both Envy then and Malice must
> Allow your hatred strictly just;
> Since you alone of all the Race
> Disclaim the *Human Name*, and Face,
> And with the *Virtues* pant to wear
> (May Heavn' Indulgent hear your Pray'r!)
> The *Proof* of your high *Origine*,
> The *Horse's Countenance Divine*.

('Panegyric on the Reverend Dean Swift', ll. 167-176, in *Poems,* II, 498)

43. Young instructs the genius seeking originality to 'dive deep into they bosom; learn the depth, extent, biass, and full fort of thy mind; contract full intimacy with the stranger within thee' (*Conjectures,* p. 53). In 'The Difficulty of Knowing One's Self', Swift counsels such introspection for moral reasons to avoid rushing into sin 'like a Horse into the Battle' (*Prose Works,* IX (1948), 349–362 (p. 354)).

44. In shaping Kings Prometheus utilizes the emblematic characteristics of 'Hogs, Assess, Wolves, Baboons, & Goats'; Swift adds a specifically hippanthropic plea: 'O! were they all but Nebuchadnazzars | What Herds of Kings would turn to Grazers' (ll. 35–36). Cancelled lines from Orrery and Scott, *Poems,* II, 659.

45. 'wild-Irish borne! Sir, and a Hybride' (Ben Jonson, *The New Inne* (London: Thomas Harper for Thomas Alchorne, 1631), II. 6. 35). Cf. 'No certaine species sure, A kinde of mule! | That's halfe an Ethnicke, halfe a Christian!' (*The Staple of Newes,* in *The Workes of Benjamim Jonson* (London: Richard Meighen, 1640), II. 4. 74–75).

46. *Correspondence,* III (1963), 341.

47. Carole Fabricant addresses the fraught question of whether 'Anglo-Irish acts of speaking as the nation silence the colonized Catholic majority (by subsuming the latter's voice into their own) or do they, on the contrary, enable the colonized to be heard by giving them a voice they would otherwise lack?' ('Speaking for the Irish Nation: The Drapier, the Bishop, and the Problems of Colonial Representation', *ELH,* 66 (1999), 337–372 (p. 338)).

48. 'These "in-between" spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood—singular or communal—that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation, in the act of defining society itself' (Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 1–2). See also Homi Bhabha, 'Articulating the Archaic: Notes on Colonial Nonsense', in *Literary Theory Today,* ed. by Peter Collier and Helga Geyer-Ryan (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp. 203–218 (p. 204).

49. *Poems,* II, 420–421.

50. 'Am I a *Free-man* in *England,* and do I become a *Slave* in six Hours, by crossing the Channel?' (*Prose Works,* X (1941), 31).

51.

> Traulus of amphibious Breed,
> Motly Fruit of Mungril Seed:

> By the *Dam* from Lordlings sprung,
> By the *Sire* exhal'd from Dung.
>
> (*Traulus,* Part II, ll. 1–4, in *Poems,* III, 799)

See also 'Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift', ll. 437–438, in *Poems,* II, 570.

52. 'thou bor'st thine ass on thy back o'er the dirt' (*King Lear,* I. 4. 158–159); 'a mule, | That neuer read Ivstinian, should get vp, | And ride an Aduocate' (Ben Jonson, *Volpone,* in *The Workes of Benjamin Jonson* (London: Stansby, 1616), v. 9. 13–14).

53. *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II,* trans. by Siân Reynolds, 2 vols (London: Collins, 1972), I, 284–285.

54. *Atlas of The European Novel* (London: Verso, 1998), p. 48. Geoffrey Winthrop-Young, in reviewing Moretti, states: 'the emergence of that grey, modest, dull, plodding, and stubborn prose species is linked to the emergence of a (hybrid) species equally grey, dull, and stubborn: the mule' ('How The Mule Got its Tale: Moretti's Darwinian Bricolage', *Diacritics,* 29.2 (1999), 18–40 (p. 29)).

55. *Literary Criticism: French Writers; Other European Writers; The Prefaces to the New York Edition* (New York: Library of America, 1984), p. 1268.

56. Caporali's *Viaggio in Parnaso* (1582) was the literary model for Cervantes's *Viaje del Parnaso,* which begins: 'Caporali made a trip to Parnassus on a mule and was well received by Apollo; he returned penniless but famous. I would like to do the same'; see Elias L. Rivers, 'Cervantes' Journey to Parnassus', *MLN,* 85 (1970), 243–248 (p. 246).

57. 'Life of Lucian', in *Works of Lucian Translated from the Greek, by Several Eminent Hands,* 4 vols (London: Briscoe, 1711), I. 47.

58. *Gulliver's Travels* itself exemplifies this dialectical energy and dynamic hybridity of genre: it has been characterized as travel literature, an illustrated work of science fiction (its maps hybridizing known and imagined worlds), Lucianic satire, *conte philosophique,* symposium, politeia, romance, picaresque, parody, spy novel, autobiography, allegorical novel, critique of the novel genre, the imaginary voyage, Utopian fiction.

59. Generic instability is, of course, further complicated by narratorial unreliability, especially as Gulliver empathizes with the mendacious Sinon rather than the reliable 'rock-like' representative of Portuguese humanity, Pedro de **Men**dez. The oxymoron 'splendide mendax', which decorates Gulliver's portrait in Faulkner's 1735 edition, came from Swift's admired Horace (*Odes,* III. II. 35). It describes the virtuous Hypermnestra, a wife in fifty whose 'price is far above rubies', and whose exemplary sacrifice Horace satirically employs in his mock-heroic courtship of Lyde. Significantly, this coy mistress is imaged as 'a three-year-old filly cavorting skittishly in the big fields' (*The Odes of Horace,* trans. by James Michie (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 175). As King David hastily remarked: 'Omnis homo mendax' (Psalm 116. 11).

60. In *The Complete Essays of Montaigne,* trans. by Donald M. Frame (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1965), pp. 209–215 (p. 210); 'on horseback, where my thoughts range most widely' ('On Some Verses of Vergil', ibid., pp. 638–685 (p. 668)).

61. 'Could a historiographer drive on his history, as a muleteer drives on his mule,—straight forward;—for instance, from Rome all the way to Loretto, without ever once turning his head aside either to the right hand or to the left,—he might

venture to foretell you to an hour when he should get to his journey's end;—but the thing is, morally speaking, impossible: For, if he is a man of the least spirit, he will have fifty deviations from a straight line to make with this or that party as he goes along, which he can no ways avoid' (Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1760), I. 14. 79–80).

GREGORY LYNALL

# *Swift's Caricatures of Newton: 'Taylor,' 'Conjurer' and 'Workman in the Mint'*

It is generally accepted that the attack on mathematicians in the 'Voyage to Laputa' is to some degree a form of revenge against Isaac Newton for his involvement in the assay of William Wood's Irish halfpence.[1] The specific circumstances of Swift's animosity have surprisingly been little studied despite their implications regarding the interpretation of Gulliver's third voyage and Swift's attitude to science in general. Newton is not the all-encompassing target but the resolution of some key passages may contribute to an understanding of the 'miscegenation' of a variety of satiric objects in this section of the *Travels*. Additionally, I wish to show that Swift's allusions to Newton are instances where the satire was constructed and operates on an occasional basis, or in the words of Edward Said, exists as a 'local performance'.[2]

In July 1722, after bribing the duchess of Kendal (the mistress of George I), Wood was granted a patent by the Crown to coin for Ireland more than one hundred thousand pounds' worth of copper money over fourteen years.[3] Alerted to this situation by Archbishop King, Lord Abercorn and Lord Midleton, Swift was worried about the intrinsic value of the coin, but his main concerns were the circumstances under which the patent was granted to a private (and non-Irish) minter and forced upon the Irish without their consent, as neither the Irish Parliament nor the Commissioners of the Revenue

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in Dublin had been consulted.[4] Interrupting the composition of *Gulliver's Travels,* Swift wrote five letters in the persona of a draper which set out the arguments against this colonial imposition to encourage an atmosphere of protest within the Irish popular imagination.

As Master of the Mint, Newton was requested by the Royal Treasury to examine the quality of Wood's coinage. Using 'specimens of this coinage which have from time to time been taken from several parcels coined and sealed up in papers and put into the Pix', Newton discovered that the coins were all of full weight but varied widely, a fact which the Privy Council Committee's Report would neglect to mention. However, Newton found the copper to be 'of about the same goodness & value' as that used in English coins, and a vast improvement on the Irish coins produced in the reigns of Charles II, James II and William III.[5] The Dublin *Postboy* (31 July 1724) consequently reported that 'Mr. Wood had in all Respects perform'd his Contract'.[6] Swift's second *Drapier's Letter* ('A Letter to Mr. Harding') was vehement in its reply: 'His Contract! With whom? Was it with the Parliament or People of *Ireland*?' (*PW,* x.16). The letter was not only a broad political protest but also examined the conditions of Newton's 'impudent and insupportable' assay. Swift was suspicious of the sampling procedure, suspecting that: '*Wood* takes Care to coin a Dozen or two Half-pence of good Metal, sends them to the *Tower* and they are approved, and these must answer all that he hath already Coined, or shall Coin for the future' (*PW,* x.17). Newton reported that the samples were taken from batches produced from 'Lady day 1723 to March 28th 1724',[7] but it was known that the coins sent to Ireland were minted in 1722, an error which was also pointed out by Sir Michael Creagh (the former Lord Mayor of Dublin) in his *Remarks upon Mr. Wood's Coyn and Proceedings* (1724):

> how Visible and Plain must it appear to all the World, That Mr. *Wood* and his Friends have Imposed upon Sir *Isaac Newton,* Mr. *Southwell,* and Mr. *Scrope,* by bringing them Specimens of said Coyn, and Tryal-Pieces so different in Value and Weight from what is daily seen in *Ireland*.[8]

Creagh's suspicions were confirmed by the assay of several parcels of Wood's coin carried out by William Maple, a Dublin chemist, for the Irish House of Commons. According to the Drapier, this 'very skilful Person' found halfpence of four kinds, three being 'considerably under Weight' (*PW,* x.31). Newton's letter presents the minutiae of the results of his assay as scientifically proven 'facts'[9] even though the test procedures are fundamentally flawed. Swift and Creagh imply that Newton is either complicit in this act of deception or has made methodological errors unworthy of his reputation. In Swift's opinion, there is another problem with the investigation. In the

third *Drapier's Letter,* he argues that comparison of Wood's coins with those produced for Ireland in the previous century is a pointless exercise, proving nothing, because at times of war, rebellion or insurrection 'the Kings of *England* were sometimes forced to pay their Armies here with mixt or base Money' (*PW,* x.33).

For Swift, it is appalling to see 'scientific' methods used to justify a scheme that evinced continued English tyranny. It is also astonishing for Swift that Newton's work at the Mint was perhaps not so 'scientific' at all, either intentionally or through gross error, particularly because the Royal Treasury used Newton's reputation as the greatest natural philosopher to assert their authority in the whole affair. For example, the Privy Council Committee's Report stated that Newton 'was Consulted in all the Steps of settling and adjusting the Terms and Conditions of the Patent' (*PW,* x.198). In the third *Drapier's Letter,* 'Some Observations upon' this Report, the Drapier recounts a story he has heard regarding a competition for the patent that took place six years previously between four men, including Wood, which Newton appeared to referee. Wood had made the worst offer, revealing it to be 'plain with what Intentions he sollicited this Patent; but not so plain how he obtained it' (*PW,* x.29).[10] Swift uses this story to suggest that Newton, who was apparently 'consulted in all the Steps' of the patent, had been dealing in an underhanded manner from the very beginning. For the Drapier, what the report said of the circumstances of sampling was no longer relevant, 'Since it is now plain, that the Biass of Favour hath been wholly on [Wood's] side' (*PW,* x.31). Even long after the Wood affair (and after Newton's death), Swift would continue to question Newton's integrity in his role as Master of the Mint. For instance, in 1729, on the occasion of James Maculla's proposal to circulate notes stamped on copper, Swift compared the weights of various coins himself. Finding the halfpenny of Charles II's reign to be 'of the finest kind', he concludes that 'it is probable, that the officers of the Mint were then more honest than they have since thought fit to be' (*PW,* xii.97).

Others were to seize upon the rumours concerning Newton's motives. For instance, an anonymous poem on Wood's halfpence, *A Letter from A Young Lady, to the Revd. D--n S----t* (1724) states that:

> The *Principles* by which Men move,
> Are private Interest, base Self-Love;
> So far their Love or hate extends
> As serves thier [*sic*] own contracted Ends.[11]

The great writer of the *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy* is presented as possessing no moral principles at all. To determine the truth of such claims is outside the scope of this article. Despite the attempts of

some critics (such as J. M. Treadwell) to suggest that *The Drapier's Letters* use many 'facts' about Wood, it is almost universally accepted that, as propaganda, the *Letters* and related pieces exploit the difficulty in judging 'fact' from 'fiction'.[12] However, it is at least known that Newton was against the manufacture of Wood's coins at Bristol, and would have preferred the Tower of London to have been used.[13] At the Tower, Treasury supervision could have been maintained, although it is much debatable whether this would have reassured those suspicious of the whole scheme.

Later in the third *Drapier's Letter,* Swift employs a new attack strategy which draws upon the implications of Newton's involvement. After discussing the '*Small Circumstantial* Charge for the Purchase of his Patent' which the Crown and Newton will receive, the Drapier wonders whether Wood has 'discovered the *Longitude,* or the *Universal Medicine*? No; but he hath found out the *Philosopher's Stone* after a new Manner, by *Debasing* of *Copper,* and resolving to force it upon us for *Gold*' (*PW,* x.35–36). To use the metaphor of alchemy in the description of minting coins seems an obvious option. However, the association of minting with scientific (or pseudo-scientific) experiment is here given further impetus considering Newton's involvement in the Wood affair. Swift argues that if Wood had made such discoveries then it would be logical for the government and the country's leading scientist (and President of the Royal Society) to reward him. In Swift's 'Prometheus: on Wood the Patentee's Irish Halfpence', the coins are ironically described as the result of 'chemic art', emphasising their poor quality (containing even 'Smith's dust') (lines 4–5).[14] In 'A Simile: on our want of silver, and the only way to remedy it', Swift uses the identification of silver with the moon in alchemical discourse to construct an allegory of the affair. Due to the shortage of small silver in Ireland, the value of gold fell in comparison, resulting in the devaluation of the guinea (which contained gold).[15] The poem argues that it is not 'Wood's copper' which is needed but for 'Our silver [to] appear again' (lines 27, 32; *CP,* p.290). However, a 'feminine magician' and 'brazen politician' (the duchess of Kendal and Robert Walpole) have hidden the silver moon with 'A parchment of prodigious size' (Wood's patent) (lines 19–21). Upon hearing the Drapier's 'counter-charm of paper' the parchment will shrivel and 'drive the conjurors to the devil' (lines 26, 29–30).[16] The 'conjurors' are perhaps not only the duchess of Kendal, Walpole and Wood, but also Newton. For in *Polite Conversation,* published in 1738 but composed over the course of at least thirty years, the narrator 'Simon Wagstaff' states that Newton 'was thought to be a Conjurer, because he knew how to draw Lines and Circles upon a Slate, which no Body could understand' (*PW,* iv.123).[17] This of course playfully draws upon the superstition that Swift mentions in 'To Dr Delany, on the Libels Writ against Him': 'For, as of old, mathematicians / Were by the vulgar thought magicians' (lines 95–96; *CP,* p.417). To

call the great natural philosopher a 'Conjurer' is an immense slur on his reputation, particularly in the time following Newton's death, when faith in Newtonianism was at its zenith.

However, Swift's most savage attacks on Newton are to be found in the 'Voyage of Laputa'. The principal allusion that has been previously noted is the episode involving a 'Taylor' who measures Gulliver for a suit of clothes. After taking Gulliver's measurements by quadrant, rule and compasses, the tailor produces clothes 'very ill made, and quite out of Shape, by happening to mistake a Figure in the Calculation' (*PW,* xi.162). Since Sir Walter Scott it has been generally accepted that this passage refers to the printer's error in Newton's calculation of the distance between the Earth and the Sun, a correction of which appeared in the *Amsterdam Gazette*.[18] However, the most significant error in the first edition of the *Principia* concerns resisted motion. Johann Bernoulli (the French mathematician and friend of Leibniz) discovered an error in the printed result in Book 2, Proposition 10, which his nephew Nikolaus publicly declared whilst visiting London in September 1712. Newton discovered that the mistake was due to a more fundamental flaw in his reasoning, and would involve extensive work, especially because the proof of the new result would need to exactly fit the space allotted in the second edition of the *Principia* which was already printed.[19] Therefore Swift, ever the punster, may be using the passage in the 'Voyage to Laputa' to partly refer to Newton's attempt to 'tailor' his proof to fit the space available. The context of Bernoulli and Leibniz may also go some way towards accounting for Gulliver's explanation that 'This Operator did his Office after a different Manner from those of his Trade in *Europe*' (*PW,* xi.162). Such an interpretation offers an alternative (or supplement) to the usual suggestion of the Newtonian/Cartesian dichotomy.[20] The Leibniz Newton controversy concerning the discovery of calculus was a more direct source of opposition between British and continental thought at this time: a dispute which readers may have brought to mind when Gulliver mentions the 'Custom of our Learned in *Europe* to steal Inventions from each other' (*PW,* xi.185). The rivalry was cemented by the confrontation of the two philosophies in the correspondence of Leibniz with the staunch Newtonian Samuel Clarke (1715). Despite the death of Leibniz in 1716, it is clear that the severe animosity had not subsided by the time of the publication of *Gulliver's Travels*.[21]

Gulliver's remark that he 'observed such Accidents very frequent, and little regarded' (*PW,* xi.162) suggests that perhaps Newton's scientific errors as a whole are ridiculed in the 'Taylor' passage, and may include the sampling flaws in the assay of Wood's halfpence. That the 'Taylor' is commanded by the king of Laputa directly may refer to (what Swift believes to be) Newton's biased role in the Wood affair, or more generally, his patronage by the Whig administration. To depict Newton in such a profession

may also reveal an element of class antagonism behind Swift's attack on the Royal Society. Thomas Sprat's *History* had made great egalitarian claims, and although the Society in reality remained a group of '*Gentlemen,* free, and unconfin'd' for many years, in ideological terms the precious realm of knowledge reserved for the gentleman-amateur began to erode, as science itself became a 'profession'.[22] For Swift, Newton's association with Wood, 'a *poor, private, obscure Mechanick*' (*PW,* x.41), would affirm his fear that knowledge was drifting away from the confines of the aristocratic elite who had previously controlled the nature of its boundaries. Arthur E. Case, J. M. Treadwell and Pat Rogers have all suggested that the satire of the 'Voyage to Laputa' is focused less on the Royal Society and the use (or abuse) of science than on mercantile schemes, often involving practical inventions.[23] In their opinion, the wild schemes of the Projectors of the Grand Academy of Lagado are not only aimed at the Royal Society but also at economic speculators, engineers and inventors, including Wood, whom Swift often refers to as a 'PROJECTOR' in *The Drapier's Letters* (*PW,* x.35). Continuing this reading, Newton's involvement with Wood's halfpence would confirm Swift's suspicion that the new science could be used to support 'projects' for individual commercial gain and the exercise of imperial power at the expense of the welfare of the people.

It is possible that Swift used the association of Newton with economic schemes merely as a rhetorical strategy. In *A Social History of Truth,* Steven Shapin has convincingly argued that late seventeenth-century scientists, such as Robert Boyle, presented themselves as gentlemen to invoke the associations of gentility with truthfulness and honour in order to increase the authority of their knowledge-claims. In contrast, the mercantile classes were frequently associated with deception.[24] In his caricatures of Newton, Swift was able to exploit (for his own, opposing, ends) the same discourse of gentility employed by the scientists themselves. In *Polite Conversation,* Swift would continue to ridicule Newton by equating him with the lower classes, describing him as an 'Instrument-Maker' who 'it seems, was knighted for making Sun-Dyals better than others of his Trade' (*PW,* iv.122–123). Newton's connection with Wood is again highlighted, using the same phrase 'obscure Mechanick', and reducing his position at the Treasury to merely 'Workman in the Mint'. Newton's complex diagrams are facetiously described as 'Lines and Circles upon a Slate, which no Body could understand'. Wagstaff also reports Newton's 'Skill': 'making Pot-hooks and Hangers, with a Pencil; which many thousand accomplished Gentlemen and Ladies can perform as well, with a Pen and Ink, upon a Piece of Paper, and in a Manner as little intelligible as those of Sir *Isaac*' (*PW,* iv.123). Swift again associates Newton with quackery: in *Predictions for the Year 1708,* Bickerstaff complains of 'common Astrologers' who use 'a few Pot-hooks for Planets to amuse the Vulgar' (*PW,* ii.149). Depicting

Newton as the 'Taylor' makes another (probably unintentional) connection between the natural philosopher and the pseudo-sciences. The attack on John Partridge in the *Bickerstaff Papers* and its related poems, such as 'An Elegy on the Supposed Death of Mr Partridge, the Almanac Maker' (*CP,* p.93–96), had made much of the astrologer's previous profession as a cobbler, confirming that class prejudice was a well-used satiric weapon in Swift's arsenal.

Gulliver's account of the Laputans goes on to observe that 'Most of them, and especially those who deal in the Astronomical Part, have great Faith in judicial Astrology, although they are ashamed to own it publickly' (*PW,* x.164). This is often read as a joke at Newton's expense but the reasons behind this have not been expounded.[25] Newton wrote extensively on alchemy in manuscript and in correspondence with Boyle. However, he lost any belief in horoscopes very early in life.[26] This raises several possibilities. Swift could have somehow known of Newton's interests in alchemy and biblical prophecy, but confuses or conflates them with astrology, or could be simply creating a rumour from scratch. For instance, Bickerstaff explains that he came to believe in astrology when: 'in the Year 1686, a Man of Quality shewed me, written in his *Album,* that the most learned Astronomer Captain *Hally,* assured him, he would never believe any thing of the Stars Influence, if there were not a great Revolution in *England* in the Year 1688' (*PW,* ii.149). Edmond Halley had no interest in astrology, and it has been suggested that Swift is merely 'perpetrating a bit of gratuitous mischief' by obliquely referring to the feud between Halley and John Flamsteed, the Astronomer Royal, which was at its height around the time the *Bickerstaff Papers* were published.[27] Swift employs the same strategy in 'The Progress of Beauty' (*c.*1719), associating Flamsteed's observations of 'Diana' with the astrology of Partridge and John Gadbury (lines 89–100; *CP,* p.194–195).

Newton's case is slightly different to that of Halley or Flamsteed, as there are at least two accounts of him discussing astrology in conversation. Firstly, it was rumoured that Newton rebuked Halley for his disbelief in astrology with the words 'Sir, I have studied these things; you have not'.[28] Secondly, John Conduitt, who succeeded Newton as Master of the Mint, wrote in a memorandum of a conversation with his predecessor, that in 1663 Newton acquired an astrological book at a local fair. Newton's urge to understand the mathematical explanations given at the beginning of the book inspired him to study mathematics seriously and he was 'soon convinced of the vanity and emptiness of the pretended science of Judicial astrology'.[29] It is possible that Swift may have known of this story through his friendship with Catherine Barton, niece of Newton and (from 1717) the wife of Conduitt. Barton was the daughter of Newton's half-sister, Hannah Smith, and lived with him in Jermyn Street from the early 1700s until his death.[30] Swift's *Correspondence* and the *Journal to Stella* record many occasions on

which he dined with Barton during his time in London in the reign of Anne. Swift in fact remarked to Stella: 'I love her better than any body here'.[31] The Tories even used this relationship to threaten the Whig Newton's position at the Tower. Bolingbroke apparently sent Swift to Barton to let Newton know that 'he held it a sin for his thoughts to be distracted by the Mint & that the Queen would settle upon him a pension'.[32] In a letter to Robert Hunter, Swift writes that Barton is a great source of gossip: 'Mrs. *Barton* is still in my good Graces; [ . . . ] the best Intelligence I get of publick Affairs is from Ladies, for the Ministers never tell me any Thing.'[33] It seems very likely that if Swift were to have known of Newton's early interest in astrology it would have been through this same source.

If it is accepted that the reference to the hypocrisy of the Laputan scientists is another attack on Newton then the rest of the paragraph can be explained in a similar fashion. That the Laputan mathematicians are 'perpetually enquiring into publick Affairs, giving their Judgments in Matters of State' could most obviously refer to Newton's assay (*PW,* xi.164). Robert P. Fitzgerald has sought to disprove that Swift has Newton in mind in this section, arguing that 'Newton did not really have a significant role in politics or political theory. It is more meaningful to read [the passage] as referring in specific to Bodin and Hobbes and in general to theoreticians of the abstract'.[34] Despite the connection between politics, astrology and the music of the spheres in the work of Jean Bodin, the clearest interpretation is surely provided by Newton's assay, a 'significant involvement in politics', which Fitzgerald overlooks. It is also now known (through reading his correspondence) that Newton was a very important advisor to the crown, especially in mining, navigational and astronomical affairs.[35] The most damning attack on Newton's political involvement is Gulliver's conclusion that 'a very common Infirmity of human Nature, inclin[es] us to be more curious and conceited in Matters where we have least Concern, and for which we are least adapted either by Study or Nature' (*PW,* xi.164). Swift dislikes Newton's use of his reputation as the great scientist to involve himself in an affair (the constitutional relationship between Britain and Ireland) about which he knows nothing. For Swift, Newton's presumption of authority reveals his pride. In his *Life of Swift,* Walter Scott states that 'the Dean's friends' believed that 'the office of flapper was suggested by the habitual absence of mind of the great philosopher' Newton.[36] The frightening consequence of this is that the Laputans, with 'one of their Eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the Zenith' (*PW,* xi.159) are responsible for the political subordination and financial exploitation of Balnibarbi/Ireland through literally 'turning a blind eye'.

It is in the context of Newton's assay, then, that Swift composes an episode involving the flying island of Laputa and Balnibarbi's second city of Lindalino to allegorise the dispute over Wood's halfpence. The island is a war

machine constructed using scientific knowledge, and its operation draws upon not only William Gilbert's *De Magnete* (1600) but also pseudo-scientific and mystical speculations on magnetism and voyages to the moon.[37] The king uses the advanced technologies of Laputa to keep control of his kingdom below. By ordering the island to be hovered above Balnibarbi he can even deprive his subjects of the sun and rain, consequently afflicting them with 'Dearth and Diseases' (*PW,* xi.171); probably a reference to England's repressive laws of trade against Ireland, principally owing to the Exportation Act (1660).[38] Most significantly, we are told that 'This Load-stone is under the Care of certain Astronomers, who from Time to Time give it such Positions as the Monarch directs' (*PW,* xi.170), a statement which undoubtedly brings to mind Newton's involvement with Wood's patent: a scientist commanded by the government to aid the continued oppression of Lindalino/Dublin. Gulliver writes that these astronomers have (*PW,* xi.171):

> observed Ninety-three different Comets, and settled their Periods with great Exactness. If this be true, [ . . . ] it is much to be wished that their Observations were made publick; whereby the Theory of Comets, which at present is very lame and defective, might be brought to the same Perfection with other Parts of Astronomy.

This could be another reference to the *Principia*. It was acknowledged that this section of the book was particularly difficult, as evinced by David Gregory's correspondence with Newton.[39] Gregory was John Arbuthnot's tutor and friend, and Swift's reference to the death of Gregory at the end of 1708 in a letter to Robert Hunter suggests that they were also acquainted.[40] Newton in fact admitted that his work on comets needed more data. For instance, his calculation that the comets of 1607 and 1682 were the same (Halley's Comet in fact) depended upon its return in 75 years. However, he also confessed that because of the many comets in existence, their gravitational pulls would affect each other, meaning that 'it is not to be expected that the same comet will return exactly in the same orbit, and with the same periodic times' (*Principia,* p.936–937). Given such problems, Newton would surely have indulged in Gulliver's fantasy of immortality in Luggnagg: 'What wonderful Discoveries should we make in Astronomy, by outliving and confirming our own Predictions; by observing the Progress and Returns of Comets' (*PW,* xi.210).

There are other details in Gulliver's narrative which possibly allude to Newton or his work. For instance, Gulliver mentions that Laputa has a diameter of 7837 yards (*PW,* xi.167). If one substitutes miles for yards, as Marjorie Nicolson and Nora Mohler suggest, then this gives a figure almost exactly like Newton's estimate of the diameter of the Earth. Also, Paul Turner has suggested that the

Laputan 'Catalogue of ten Thousand fixed Stars' (*PW,* xi.170) invites comparison with Flamsteed's catalogue of 2935 stars.[41] This allusion continues the association of the Laputan astronomers with Newton: the publication of the catalogue had instigated a feud between the Astronomer Royal and the President of the Royal Society.

In Gulliver's account of the workings of the loadstone, connections between the officer-astronomers and Newton are clearly suggested. In the Lindalino episode, such links are strengthened. The episode was not published in the first edition of the *Travels:* its omission by Benjamin Motte is understandable as Wood's patent had only been withdrawn a year before. The passage existed only in manuscript in Charles Ford's interleaved copy of the first edition, now held in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Unlike Swift's other additions and corrections in this copy, however, the Lindalino episode was not included in Faulkner's 1735 edition. In fact, it did not appear in print until the 1890s, and Harold Williams' edition of the *Travels* for the standard *Prose Writings* relegates it to the textual notes (*PW,* xi.309–310). Its potentially controversial nature cannot completely account for its omission from Faulkner's edition, as the *Drapier's Letters* themselves appeared in the fourth volume of the 1735 *Works*. F. P. Lock suggests that its continued omission was intentional on Swift's part for aesthetic reasons: 'It is really a rejected idea of Swift's [ . . . ] Whatever its precise meaning, it invites detailed allegorical interpretation in a way that most of *Gulliver's Travels* does not.'[42] Lock is particularly critical of Arthur E. Case's interpretation in which the 'four large Towers' of Lindalino acting as loadstones to pull Laputa downwards are the Grand Jury, the Irish Privy Council, and the two Houses of the Irish Parliament in Dublin. For Lock, it seems strange that such different institutions are represented identically. Moreover, Lock argues that 'if we reread the Lindalino episode with an open mind, the fact is that it contains nothing and no one that can stand for either the Drapier, Wood, the halfpence, or the duchess of Kendal through whom he obtained the patent'.[43] However, Lock appears to overlook the role played by Newton in the affair, and also the way in which *The Drapier's Letters* conflate Wood, Walpole, George I and the Privy Council as a rhetorical strategy. His conception of allegory is perhaps too restrictive for the complex symbolic matrix of satiric referents in the *Travels*.

The episode tells of the Laputans' discovery that Lindalino had devised a form of resistance against the flying island which (ironically) attracts the great loadstone of the flying island towards the city. After informing the king, 'a general Council was called, and the Officers of the Loadstone ordered to attend' (*PW,* xi.309–310). Gulliver informs us that (*PW,* xi.310):

> One of the oldest and expertest among them obtained leave to try an Experiment. He took a strong Line of an Hundred Yards, and

> the Island being raised over the Town above the attracting Power they had felt. He fastened a Piece of Adamant to the End of his Line which had in it a Mixture of Iron mineral, [ . . . ] the Officer felt it drawn so strongly downwards, that he could hardly pull it back. He then threw down several small Pieces of Adamant, and observed that they were all violently attracted by the Top of the Tower. The same Experiment was made on the other three Towers, and on the Rock with the same Effect.[44]

It can be no coincidence that in the section which arguably alludes to Wood's halfpence, an experiment takes place using a sample of material. That it is the oldest officer of the loadstone must surely allude to the elderly Newton as Master of the Mint, conducting the assay of Wood's coinage for the Privy Council. Swift depicts the assay as an experiment on attractive forces in order to reinforce the allusion to Newton. Like the assay, the officer's experiment does nothing to relieve the situation.

This passage cannot be termed 'allegorical' in its truest sense, although some critics argue that even traditional allegories are works of multivalent meaning that disrupt conventional modes of signification and shift in point of view.[45] The identification of the officer with Newton is clearly made, but there is no developed characterisation. Like the other possible references to Newton in the voyage, only specific aspects of his life or personality are drawn upon where necessary. The text resists a fully allegorical interpretation because other events in the whole affair are omitted. Gulliver in fact states a wish 'to dwell no longer on other Circumstances' (*PW,* xi.310), thereby suppressing the allegory. The impulse to supply full meaning is resisted, but the reader is left with enough clues. Whatever the 'four large Towers' of Lindalino refer to, Swift composed the adamant experiment with Newton's assay in mind. Swift emphasises the importance of Newton's role in the halfpence affair, showing how 'science' has aided colonial oppression. Even if Swift omitted the episode intentionally, the fragment offers an insight into Swift's mind during the composition of the 'Voyage to Laputa' and can explain the problems of satiric coherence which many critics have encountered in Gulliver's accounts of Laputa and Balnibarbi. Irish affairs become a central concern, but the state of the country is blamed upon both scientific and commercial projects.[46] Surely Newton's involvement in Wood's patent resolves such an issue? Perhaps more than any other passage in the voyage, the Lindalino episode demonstrates the connection between natural philosophy, politics and commercial 'projectors' like Wood. In this light, the satire on mathematics and other sciences in this book is less the result of a clash between two world-views and more a personal vendetta against the country's leading scientist.

According to Edward Said, too many claims are made for viewing Swift as a 'moralist and thinker who peddled one or another final view of human nature, whereas not enough claims are made for Swift as a kind of local activist, a columnist, a pamphleteer, a caricaturist'. There are inconsistencies in Swift's ideological values because he was primarily engaged in 'particular struggles of a very limited sort'.[47] Swift reacts to events in an immediate fashion and therefore the intentions of his 'local performances' (such as *The Drapier's Letters*) exist in the temporal sphere. Swift's most popular, or at least best-known texts, the *Tale* and *Travels,* have arguably the most general intentions. However, the 'Voyage to Laputa' was finalised in the aftermath of the Wood affair and consequently much of the spirit of *The Drapier's Letters* is continued in this book. The Lindalino episode attempts to write the history of this particular 'local performance' and its context, whilst still very much engaged in it, dealing with the implications of Newton's involvement. This may go some way toward accounting for the particularly ferocious attack on science which many have found in Book III, and for its reputation as the least successful voyage of the *Travels*. It is no coincidence that the first dissenting voice regarding the voyage came from Arbuthnot, telling Swift that 'the part of the projectors is the least Brilliant' of the *Travels*.[48] Although a member of the Royal Society, Arbuthnot was not averse to attacking the extremes of science in a similarly fervent way in his own satires. What Arbuthnot may have found to his dislike is the very open personal attack upon a man he knew very well.[49]

So, is it possible to extract Swift's attitude to Newton's natural philosophy, or to mathematics in general, from his opinion of Newton's role in Wood's patent? In a letter of September 1727, in order to dispose himself of a projector claiming to have discovered a method of measuring longitude, Swift confessed: 'I understand not Mathematicks.'[50] Can we attribute Swift's animosity towards this discipline simply to his ignorance of it? This is questionable. Swift's claim of possessing little mathematical knowledge appears to be a display of modesty, given his accurate prediction of the existence of the two moons of Mars, using Kepler's harmonic law.[51] This view is confirmed by Patrick Delany, who writes that Swift fell into the acquaintance of 'men of learning' during his time in Dublin between 1714 and 1720 and 'could so ill bear to be considered as a cypher in any *scientific* society, that he applied himself even to mathematics [ . . . ] and made some progress in them'.[52] In the *Travels,* Brobdingnagian mathematics, which is 'wholly applied to what may be useful in Life; to the Improvement of Agriculture and all mechanical Arts' (*PW,* xi.136), is in stark contrast to the Laputans' abstractions. Swift is not making a simple distinction between pure and applied mathematics, however, as the Lagadans' absurd schemes evince. Instead, he suggests that

when mathematics and other sciences are employed in practical projects, political, social, and moral choices are inevitably involved.

To resolve the issue of Swift's attitude to Newton's natural philosophy we must ultimately turn to two, often quoted episodes in the *Travels*. When Gulliver visits Glubbdubdrib, the island of necromancers, the ghost of Aristotle predicts that '*Attraction,* whereof the present Learned are such zealous Asserters' will be soon 'exploded', as his own system, and those of Gassendi and Descartes had been, because: 'new Systems of Nature were but new Fashions, which would vary in every Age; and even those who pretend to demonstrate them from Mathematical Principles, would flourish but a short Period of Time, and be out of Vogue when that was determined' (*PW,* xi. 197–198). Similarly, in Houyhnhnmland, when Gulliver explains 'our several Systems of *Natural Philosophy*', his master laughs that 'a Creature pretending to *Reason,* should value itself upon the Knowledge of other Peoples Conjectures, and in Things, where that Knowledge, if it were certain, could be of no Use'(*PW,* xi.267–268). Swift's 'fideist sceptic' convictions, demonstrated particularly in the sermon *On the Trinity,* would lead him to question any human claim of unravelling the divine secrets of the universe.[53] In Swift's opinion, the inherently flawed human mind can only form approximations of the workings of the universe: to attribute its mechanism to a single principle, like gravity, belies the complexity of God's creation.

That the new scientists may not fulfil their utilitarian claims may have been one of Swift's suspicions, as Deane Swift was perhaps the first to suggest and is perhaps confirmed by the absurd schemes of the Grand Academy of Lagado.[54] However, it is clear that Swift held Newton partly responsible for the attempt to impose Wood's coinage upon Ireland, and placed the scheme in the culture of commercialism that made use of the authority of Newtonian natural philosophy. In *The Drapier's Letters,* Swift therefore attempted to question Newton's reputation as the greatest (and impartial) scientist. Finalised in the aftermath of the Wood affair, the 'Voyage to Laputa' sustains this assault, suggesting that any interpretation of Swift's 'attack on science' must appreciate the specific political and economic motives behind it. Any attack upon Newton 'the man' would undoubtedly also fall upon Newton 'the scientist', and the scientific institutions and philosophy he represented. To unleash his full fury at Newton, Swift drew upon all the rhetorical strategies, scientific knowledge, even idle gossip, at his disposal.

## Notes

1. See Ricardo Quintana, *The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift* (London 1936), p.316, and Herbert Davis, 'Swift and the Pedants', in *Jonathan Swift: Essays on his Satire and Other Studies* (New York 1964), p.199–215 (p.206).

2. See Edward Said, 'Swift the Intellectual', in *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge, MA 1983), p.72–89. On satiric 'miscegenation', see John R. R. Christie, 'Laputa Revisited', in *Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700–1900,* ed. Christie and Sally Shuttleworth (Manchester 1989), p.45–60.

3. See Herbert Davis, 'Introduction', *The Drapier's Letters,* ed. Davis (Oxford 1935), J. A. Downie, *Jonathan Swift: Political Writer* (London 1984; repr. 1985), p.233–249, and Sabine Baltes, *The Pamphlet Controversy about Wood's Halfpence (1722–1725) and the Tradition of Irish Constitutional Nationalism* (Frankfurt-am-Main 2003), p.107–108.

4. Irvin Ehrenpreis, *Swift: The Man, his Works, and the Age,* 3 vols (London 1962–1983), iii.206.

5. 'Newton, Southwell and Scrope to the Treasury, 27 April 1724', in *The Correspondence of Isaac Newton,* ed. A. Rupert Hall and Laura Tilling, 7 vols (Cambridge 1959–1977), vol.7 (1977), p.276–277.

6. *The Prose Writings of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Herbert Davis, 14 vols (Oxford 1939–1968), x.189 (hereafter, *PW*).

7. *Correspondence of Isaac Newton,* vii.276.

8. *Remarks upon Mr. Wood's Coyn and Proceedings* (Dublin 1724), repr. in *Swiftiana IV: On the Drapier's Letters, etc. 1724* (New York 1975), p.4.

9. *Correspondence of Isaac Newton,* vii.278.

10. Herbert Davis could find no record of this particular trial, but found in the Calendar of Treasury Papers that in December 1717 Wood was offering to provide copper to the Mint (*The Drapier's Letters,* p.229).

11. *A Letter from A Young Lady, to the Revd. D--n S----t* ([Dublin] 1724), repr. in *Swiftiana IV,* p.7.

12. See. J. M. Treadwell, 'Swift, William Wood and the Factual Basis of Satire', *Journal of British Studies* 15:2 (1976), p.76–91, and Johann N. Schmidt, 'Swift's Uses of Fact and Fiction: *The Drapier's Letters*" in *Proceedings of the First Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift,* ed. Hermann J. Real and Heinz J. Vienken (München1985), p.247–256.

13. A. Goodwin, 'Wood's Halfpence', *The English Historical Review* 51.204 (1936), p.647–674 (p.653).

14. *Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems,* ed. Pat Rogers (Harmondsworth 1983), p.280 (hereafter, *CP*).

15. Rogers, in *CP,* p.751.

16. Christine Gerrard has shown how satires of Walpole's administration often identified the first minister with the figure of Merlin, drawing upon a typology of political wizardry that had originated in the previous century. See *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry, and National Myth, 1725–1742* (Oxford 1994), p.174–177.

17. On the dating of *Polite Conversation,* see *PW,* iv.xxviii.

18. See *The Works of Jonathan Swift, D.D.,* ed. Sir Walter Scott, 19 vols (Edinburgh 1814), i.331–332. Marjorie Nicolson and Nora M. Mohler have argued that this passage is also satirising the general scientific interest in determining altitude. See 'The Scientific Background of Swift's *Voyage to Laputa*', *Annals of Science* 2 (1937), p.299–334 (p.307). On Swift's ownership of a copy of the *Principia,* see Harold Williams, *Dean Swift's Library* (Cambridge 1932), p.326.

19. A. Rupert Hall, 'Newton versus Leibniz: from geometry to metaphysics', in *The Cambridge Companion to Newton,* ed. I. Bernard Cohen and George E. Smith (Cambridge 2002), p.431–454 (p.444).

20. David Renaker suggests that Laputa and the Academy of Lagado represent the French Cartesians and the Royal Society respectively ('Swift's Laputians as a Caricature of the Cartesians', *PMLA* 94.5, 1979, p.936–944). This framework is perhaps too restrictive for the complexities of Swift's satire and excludes the general view that the 'Taylor' alludes to Newton.

21. See, for instance, 'A Letter from the Rev. Dr. Samuel Clarke to Mr. Benjamin Hoadly, F.R.S. Occasion'd by the Present Controversy among Mathematicians, concerning the Proportion of Velocity and Force in Bodies in Motion', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* 35.401 (1727–1728), p.381–388 (p.382).

22. *The History of the Royal-Society of London, for the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (London 1667), p.67.

23. Arthur E. Case, 'Personal and Political satire in *Gulliver's Travels*', in *Four Essays on 'Gulliver's Travels'* (Princeton 1945; repr. Gloucester, MA 1958), p.69–96; J. M. Treadwell, 'Jonathan Swift: The Satirist as Projector', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 17 (1975), p.439–460; Pat Rogers, 'Gulliver and the Engineers', *Modern Language Review* 70 (1975), p.260–270.

24. *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago 1994), p.42, 93–94.

25. *Gulliver's Travels,* ed. Robert DeMaria, Jr (London 2001), p.285, n.22.

26. I. Bernard Cohen and George E. Smith, 'Introduction', *The Cambridge Companion to Newton,* p.1–32 (p.23).

27. N. F. Lowe, 'Why Swift Killed Partridge', *Swift Studies* 6 (1991), p.70–82.

28. Quoted in T. G. Cowling, *Isaac Newton and Astrology* (Leeds 1977), p.2.

29. King's College Library, Cambridge, Keynes MS 130.10, f.2 (31 August 1726), noted in Richard S. Westfall, *Never at Rest: A Biography of Isaac Newton* (Cambridge 1980), p.88, and Cowling, *Isaac Newton and Astrology,* p.2.

30. Westfall, *Never at Rest,* p.595.

31. Letter 19 (24 March 1710/1711), in *Journal to Stella,* ed. Harold Williams, 2 vols (Oxford 1948), i.229.

32. John Conduitt, 'Notes on Newton's Character', in King's College Library, Cambridge, Keynes MS 130.7, f.2$^{r}$, in *The Newton Project* <http://www.newtonproject.sussex.ac.uk> [accessed 5 December 2007].

33. Swift to Robert Hunter, 22 March 1708/1709, in *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Harold Williams, 5 vols (Oxford 1963–1965), i.133.

34. 'Science and Politics in Swift's Voyage to Laputa', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 87 (1988), p.213–229 (p.224).

35. Steven Shapin, 'Of Gods and Kings: Natural Philosophy and Politics in the Leibniz-Clarke Disputes', *Isis* 72.2 (1981), p.187–215 (p.190).

36. *The Works of Jonathan Swift, D.D.,* ed. Scott, i.332.

37. See Marjorie Nicolson and Nora M. Mohler, 'Swift's "Flying Island" in the *Voyage to Laputa*', *Annals of Science* 2 (1937), p.405–430; Sidney Gottlieb, 'The Emblematic background of Swift's Flying Island', *Swift Studies* 1 (1986), p.24–31; Paul J. Korshin, 'The Intellectual Context of Swift's Flying Island', *Philological Quarterly* 50 (1971), p.630–646; Robert C. Merton, 'The "Motionless" Motion of Swift's Flying Island', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 27.2 (1966), p.275–277.

38. Charles Harding Firth, 'The Political Significance of *Gulliver's Travels*', *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1919–1920), p.237–259 (p.253).

39. See I. Bernard Cohen, 'A Guide to Newton's *Principia*', in *The Principia: Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy,* 3rd edn (London 1726), trans. Cohen and Anne Whitman (Berkeley 1999), p.270.

40. Swift to Robert Hunter, 12 January 1708/1709, in *Correspondence,* ed. Williams, i.121. On Arbuthnot's friends, see David E. Shuttleton, '"A Modest Examination": John Arbuthnot and the Scottish Newtonians', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 18.1 (1995), p.47–62, and Anita Guerrini, 'The Tory Newtonians: Gregory, Pitcairn, and their Circle', *Journal of British Studies* 25.3 (1986), p.288–311.

41. Nicolson and Mohler, 'Swift's "Flying Island"', p.416–417; *Gulliver's Travels,* ed. Paul Turner (Oxford 1971; repr. 1994), p.331. The specificity of the satire in this chapter has also been demonstrated by Harold Williams, who notes that the textual emendation in Charles Ford's copy and George Faulkner's edition on the telescopes of Laputa is a topical reference to James Bradley's tubeless telescope. See *The Text of 'Gulliver's Travels'* (Cambridge 1952), p.53–55.

42. *The Politics of 'Gulliver's Travels'* (Oxford 1980), p.85.

43. *The Politics of 'Gulliver's Travels',* p.102, 101. See Case, 'Personal and Political satire in *Gulliver's Travels*', p.81–89. See also Firth, 'The Political Significance of *Gulliver's Travels*', p.256–258.

44. Arthur E. Case does not identify this 'officer of the loadstone' and merely states that the unsuccessful experiment represents the bold resistance of the Irish institutions ('Personal and Political satire in *Gulliver's Travels*', p.81–89).

45. Irvin Ehrenpreis, 'The Allegory of *Gulliver's Travels*', *Swift Studies* 4 (1989), p.13–28 (p.23), and Thomas E. Maresca, 'Personification vs. Allegory', in *Enlightening Allegory: Theory, Practice, and Contexts of Allegory in the Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* ed. Kevin L. Cope (New York 1993), p.21–39 (p.33).

46. See Harold Williams, 'Introduction', *Gulliver's Travels* (*PW,* x.xix–xx), and Herbert Davis, 'Moral Satire', in *Swift, 'Gulliver's Travels': A Casebook,* ed. Richard Gravil (Basingstoke 1974), p 120–135 (p.128).

47. Said, 'Swift as Intellectual', p.77, 83.

48. Arbuthnot to Swift, 5 November 1726, in *Correspondence,* ed. Williams, iii.179.

49. See Lester M. Beattie, *John Arbuthnot: Mathematician and Satirist* (Cambridge, MA 1935), p.7–20.

50. Swift to John Weldon, September 1727, in *Correspondence,* ed. Williams, iii.240.

51. *PW,* xi.170–171. See S. H. Gould, 'Gulliver and the Moons of Mars', *Journal of the History Ideas* 6 (1945), p.91–101; Owen Gingerich, 'The Satellites of Mars: Prediction and Discovery', *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 1 (1970), p.109–115; Colin Kiernan, 'Swift and Science', *Historical Journal* 14.4 (1971), p.709–722 (p.712); Hermann J. Real, 'Gulliver and the Moons of Mars, Once More', *East Central Intelligencer* 15.2 (2001), p.7–8.

52. Patrick Delany, *Observations upon Lord Orrery's Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift* (London 1754), p.101.

53. See J. T. Parnell, 'Swift, Sterne, and the Skeptical Tradition', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 23 (1994), p.221–242.

54. *An Essay upon the Life, Writings, and Character of Dr. Jonathan Swift* (London 1755), repr. in *Swiftiana XIV* (New York 1974), p.214.

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# Gulliver, *Gulliveriana*, *and the Problem of Swiftian Satire*

Readers have wrangled over the "meaning" of *Gulliver's Travels* since it was first published in 1726. No critical consensus has ever been reached even on some very fundamental issues of interpretation. What can be done to extricate us from what appears to be a critical impasse? Many particulars of Swift's satire seem to be pretty well understood and agreed on, such as the attack on Walpole and the parody of travel literature. What remains contested, even after almost a century of serious modern criticism, are the larger issues of the overall object of the satire and what it tells us about Swift's values and his view of the world.

As a critical experiment, I propose getting a fresh take on these issues by looking at some exemplars of "Gulliveriana." The appearance of the *Travels* was followed by a spate of imitations and continuations, in part attempts to capitalize on its popularity and in part serious appropriations of Swiftian satire. Eighteenth-century satirists used the *Travels* in a variety of ways, and modern writers continue to use Swift as a satiric model. These works are usually more derivative than dazzling, but—so I will argue—they are not without interest for our understanding of the original. Attempts to replicate Swift's techniques are especially useful in reconstructing the ways in which his *methods* have been understood by readers. What sort of satire did these respondents think they were emulating, and what do the discrepancies

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between original and attempted duplications tell us about how that original has been—or should be—understood? Reading Swift alongside his imitators can demonstrate what is fundamental to his satire—including its difficulty. Parallels between imaginative imitations and standard scholarly approaches, moreover, suggest that imitators and critics share some assumptions; studying the efforts of imitators to replicate Swift's satire can help us understand critics' problems in explaining it.

## Writing Swiftian Satire

*Gulliver's Travels* was an immediate sensation and remains a satiric exemplar. In the massive, seven-volume edition of eighteenth-century Gulliveriana, Jeanne K. Welcher and George E. Bush, Jr. acknowledge over sixty significant responses to *Gulliver's Travels* that endeavor "to reproduce something of its style, intent, and design."[1] Though Gulliver is not at the center of a literary sensation in the twentieth-and twenty-first centuries as he was in the eighteenth, Swift's voyager and other features from the *Travels* continue to appear in satiric or quasi-satiric works. Although these appropriations vary in the extent to which they use Swift's satire, comparisons between them and the *Travels* almost always demonstrate the profound oddity and difficulty of the original.

Some writers have been content to borrow only the best known features or language from the *Travels*. The *Two Lilliputian Odes* (1727), for example, are only slightly connected to the *Travels;* they "parody Lilliputian diminutiveness by using trisyllabic lines," as Welcher and Bush suggest,[2] but otherwise have no connection to Swift's technique or themes. Other examples of this sort include *The Lilliputian Widow* (1729), *The Pleasures and Felicity of Marriage, Display'd in Ten Books,* published under the *nom de plume* Lemuel Gulliver (1745), and *Dreams in Lilliput* (1790).[3] These and other works similarly exploit the popularity of all things Gulliverian, and though they are often fun and clever in their own right, most have very little to do with, or to tell us about, the original.

Such is the case, too, with those imitators who have borrowed Swift's most general objects for their own particular ends. Many of these writers allude to Swift in order to invigorate satiric attacks on those follies that Swift too undertook to expose. Writing under the pseudonym Doctor Bantley, for instance, the author of *Critical Remarks on Capt. Gulliver's Travels* (1735) uses Swift to make his own attack on pedantry in general and Richard Bentley (a prominent enemy of Swift and Pope) in particular.[4] The only known example of Italian Gulliveriana, *Lezione su d'un Vitello a due teste dell'Accademico delle Scienze colle note di Lemuel Gulliver* (1745), draws on Book III of the *Travels* to satirize human pride, especially in scientific ventures.[5] In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as one might expect, Swift has remained a useful resource for certain

types of satire. In *Out of the Silent Planet* (1938), for example, C. S. Lewis draws on the Houyhnhnms as a model for his ideal race—the "Hrossa," whose shape may be something like a giant otter but whose name means "horse" in Old Norse. In *Oryx and Crake* (2003), Margaret Atwood uses a quotation from the *Travels* as an epigraph, and alludes (usually indirectly) to that text. She manifestly shares with Swift an anxiety about human pride, about treacherous interference with nature, and about short-sighted notions of scientific progress. The casual associations with Swift allow these authors to tap into the satiric energy associated with the *Travels,* but the allusions are (by design) the extent of their borrowings.

A smaller number of imitations reflect serious efforts to replicate and deploy Swiftian satiric techniques. These imitations, including the examples which attack conspicuously different targets than those assailed in the original, can help us reconstruct the ways in which Swift's satiric *practice* has been conceived. The attempts to write continuations of the *Travels* under the name of Lemuel Gulliver are obvious texts to look at for shared strategy. Welcher and Bush point to the anonymous *Travels into Remote Nations of the World, Vol. III* (1727) as the most substantial eighteenth-century sequel; the prime twentieth-century example is Matthew Hodgart's *A New Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms, Being the Fifth Part of the Travels into Several Remote Parts of the World* (1969). In both cases, because of the nature of their projects, the writers seem to be genuinely intent on reproducing Swift's style and technique. In addition to the continuators, several imitators also apparently labor to replicate Swift's method, reproducing several key features of the original text. I will discuss these works in some detail later, but some major examples are Samuel Brunt's *A Voyage to Cacklogallinia* (1727), the anonymous *Memoirs of the Court of Lilliput* (1727), Murtagh McDermot's *A Trip to the Moon* (1728), Pierre-Francois Guyot Desfontaines's *The Travels of Mr. John Gulliver* (1731), the anonymous *Modern Gulliver's Travels, Lilliput* (1796), and, from the twentieth century, E. P. Thompson's *The Sykaos Papers* (1988) and Michael Ryan's *Gulliver* (1993). How do these writers resemble Swift in technique?

Satiric interpretation usually depends upon the explication of satiric object: how does the writer indicate that he is practicing satire, and how does he convey the meaning behind that satire? These signals seem to me a good place to start looking for similarities and differences between Swift and his imitators. The question of how we recognize the presence of satire is an important one, but it has not received much critical scrutiny. The answer, at least in part, is text-specific, especially when we are dealing with someone like Swift. Three key textual features seem to mark the *Travels* as satire: obvious irony; a combination of playful obfuscation and topicality; and the presence of alternative societies that are designed to illustrate shortcomings in the satirist's society.

The traveling protagonist is not inherently satiric, but Swift made Gulliver so, and later appearances of Gulliver necessarily signal themselves as such. The imitations most relevant to my argument are those which resemble the original in their reproduction of these features, in their overt blending of the absurd and the realistic, and in their façade of obfuscation. They are often framed by taunting prefaces and apologies, by sham disclaimers, and sometimes by fabricated, far-fetched connections to Lemuel and his text; they are presented by authorial personalities with mock-seriousness; they are, like Swift, playful. But I want to show that these authors, while seemingly adopting Swift's satiric features, produce texts that do not resemble the original, even in ways we could reasonably expect them to do so. They make use of many of the satiric components prominent in the *Travels,* but the overall effect is radically different. From a systematic survey of the way these imitators handle Swift's major satiric signals (meant to be representative rather than exhaustive), I hope to show that the resultant discrepancies help us better understand what Swift is—and is not—doing in *Gulliver's Travels*.

The features that mark *Gulliver's Travels* as satire are conspicuous, and Swift's imitators were obviously well aware of them. Without fail, these satirists adopt Swift's spirited deceptiveness: their texts are predominantly ironic, framed by Swiftian prefatory apparatus, and they mimic his fantastically fictional names and places. They present the reader with a credulous traveler to remote lands that are either telltale replicas of the corrupt society he has left behind or utopic alternatives that reveal the shortcomings of that homeland. If they manage to reproduce the features of the *Travels,* however, they almost always depart fundamentally from the original in their application of those features. To illustrate this point, I will look closely at how the imitators deal with three primary satiric features of the *Travels:* (1) the Gulliverian protagonist and his relationship to the satirist; (2) the level of topicality and obfuscation; and (3) the presence of an alternate society in juxtaposition to a recognizable real world. The broader point is to determine how confidently we can define the satires' central *arguments,* and how they compare to the original in that regard.

(1) *Gullivers.* What role do the traveling protagonists play in the imitations? Are they "like" Gulliver in their satiric functions? Lemuel's counterparts are, for the most part, static figures. They often have a narrow range of response; they are self-satisfied and good-natured; they mock their fellow man; they are rarely peevish with and never thoroughly disgusted by humanity after the fashion of Gulliver in Book 4. In Hodgart's twentieth-century continuation, *A New Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms,* Gulliver is a plot device rather than either the expostulator or the butt of the satire. A cardboard convenience, Hodgart's protagonist closely resembles the Gulliver of most eighteenth-century responses in his insipidity and general amiability. The one

major exception is the spurious 1727 continuation, *Travels III,*[6] which comes the closest to capturing the real Gulliver's eventual enmity toward humankind—though in picking up where Swift left off, the anonymous author loses the more complicated earlier stages of Gulliver's opinions of humanity. The narrative begins with Gulliver longing to return to Houyhnhnmland, but, even as the episode recalls Lemuel's reluctant homecoming at the end of Swift's *Travels,* this Gulliver's frustration with his "irksome" Yahoo family is not energized by anything like the vicious misanthropy so blatant in the original. These Gullivers often function in their respective texts as unvarying puppets, easily comprehensible mouthpieces for easily comprehensible satire.

The relationships of the Gulliverian figures to their respective satirists and readers are simplistic: we know at all times, and with certainty, how we are to take what the protagonist is saying, and how we are meant to understand the satire. In *The Travels of Mr. John Gulliver,*[7] for example, Desfontaines's adventurer is a consistent voice, disinterestedly describing a society that the author is clearly satirizing: "In our opinion, the greatest misfortune that can possibly befall us, is to be reduc'd to think we exist; a reflection, which, in some measure, destroys us. Hence it is, that we strike into a thousand different employments, in order to banish that dreadful idea" (126–127). John's innocent rationalization should not be mistaken, of course, for the authorial position: as in much of the Gulliveriana, the satirist is using wholly stable irony.

These imitators, like Swift, express their satire through irony, but the results diverge markedly from Swift's. The arguments of these texts are accessible in a way that his argument is not. Why this incongruity between the original and its attempted simulations? The discrepancy issues from the fact that the irony is different in *kind,* and the imitators' intelligibility forces us to acknowledge Swift's (presumptively) calculated unintelligibility. The irony present in these works is almost always susceptible to—and even invites—interpretation through its consistency: it is stable, in Wayne Booth's oft-cited formulation, suggesting that the writer meant his audience to "read" it, to decipher it with assurance.[8] The intent, then, is specific communication, and though successful transmission of the imitators' satires requires some work, the expectation is that (often slight) exertion on the reader's part *can* in fact enable transmission. To understand the type of irony at work in satire, in other words, is to decode that satire—meaning, essentially, that the game is up. Whatever Swift is doing in *Gulliver's Travels,* one thing is clear: the game is never up. If the attempts to reproduce Swiftian satire do not reproduce the instability of Swiftian irony, then they fail to do what they ostensibly set out to do. The point here is not to berate the imitators, but to illuminate Swift's satiric techniques by reading them alongside those of his respondents. Gulliver is a protean figure, moving "back and forth on a scale ranging from antithesis to Swift to identification."[9] This perpetual motion vis-à-vis the

satirist makes Swift impossible to locate in the satire. The difference in effect between Swift and his imitators points to a difference in *intent*—despite apparent similarities in technique, and despite the detailed borrowings from Swift's most heavily satiric features, these imitators are ultimately not trying to do what Swift is trying to do.

(2) *Degree of obfuscation and clarity of target.* Swift's unstable irony is not his only camouflage. His outlandish strategy of naming (Glumdalclitch, Balnibarbi, Glubbdubdrib, to name just a few famed Swiftian concoctions) is often utterly resistant to conclusive translation; his narrative apparatus, with its false claims to authenticity, blurs the line between fact and fiction; the frequency with which the satire is at once topical and general allows him to attack multiple targets simultaneously. Do his imitators use topicality and surface-level mystification to the same effect—or with the same effect in mind—that Swift does?

To what extent do these satires communicate a clear target or set of targets? In *Voyage to Cacklogallinia* (1727) the satire is straightforward and singly focused, a condemnation of the South Sea Bubble and all that made it possible. The satire is "far more specifically allusive and realistically detailed" than that of the *Travels*.[10] The same unambiguous coherence can be found in *Modern Gulliver's Travels* (1796).[11] When Lemuel Gulliver Junior arrives in Lilliput, he is quickly schooled in the ways of this world. A native sentinel informs him that, "if you have money enough, you can command every thing here," and when Lemuel reveals the gold in his pocket, he is warmly accepted: "'I perceive,' said he, 'you are *civilized,* and worthy to speak to *our governor*'" (14). Gulliver is later called upon to aid an insolvent government, and his plan involves picking the subjects' pockets: he calls the nobles' attention to the fact that Lilliput is "overrun with wealth," but that "the *resplendency, necessary elegance,* and ease of aristocracy, is sullied and debased by those general errors. *National poverty, debt,* and *taxes,* can only render the mass submissive; mention, therefore, your requisites, and . . . I'll administer propositions for the supplies" (40). The noblemen insist, in response, that they need money for "the troops," "the navy," "the allies," and, of course, "for *us!*" (41). The satire is consistent, and consistently lucid. This is a blunt, unsubtle, focused attack on corruption—French and British, in this case—and on the dangerous consequences of such vice (including the French Revolution). In these examples, as well as in Hodgart's continuation and Desfontaines's *The Travels of Mr. John Gulliver,* the satirist is making a central argument and also making certain that the argument is clear: he introduces no satiric decoys along the way, makes no substantial attempt to divert the reader, and, most significantly, is largely uninterested in remaining hidden in the text.

The results are anything but Swiftian. Despite extraneous mystification, the imitations convey a particular point; they make a sustained, cogent

argument that is readily communicated and easily understood. That they do so, when Swift's "argument"—if he has one—continues even now to be hotly debated, suggests a point of radical departure. The disparities between these attempted imitations of technique and their model make manifest a reality about Swift's satire with which readers must contend: *Gulliver's Travels* does not have a single target or set of targets, and neither are most of its particular targets indisputably clear. When read alongside attempted reproductions, Swift's surface-level trickery is revealed as not, in fact, operating only at the surface level. If Swift wanted to provide a tidy bottom line, communicating a focused and indubitable argument through his satire—as his imitators clearly did wish to do—he could certainly have done so. The obvious dissimilarity in satiric effect between original and imitations, in other words, attests to the scale on which Swift's mystification operates. Swift's obfuscation is no mere external feature, but seems designed profoundly to disrupt any definitive interpretation.

(3) *Remote lands.* Lemuel Gulliver is, first and foremost, a traveler. The imitators may change his name, his origins, and his destinations, but he is always a voyager, and his travels are always the occasion for satire. The "remote lands" are sometimes utopias, sometimes dystopias, sometimes mirror images of the native country, and sometimes a mixture of these elements, but presumably the contemporary reader is always being invited to make comparisons between the world (or worlds) in the satire and the world *being* satirized.

The presence of these other worlds, and the judgments the reader is invited to make when presented with them, is a signal of satiric intent in these travel narratives. In *Memoirs of the Court of Lilliput* (1727),[12] Lilliput at first represents for Gulliver an unspoiled state whose diminutive inhabitants are unsurpassed in beauty and grace. He soon recognizes, however, that all Lilliputians are not superlatively decent, and once he arrives at the court, his mood darkens. His ventures at the court reveal to Gulliver the seamy underside of Lilliput, and they also serve to expose the follies and vices of England. Representations of Lilliputian duplicity are almost always followed by ironic praise of England, where, Gulliver boasts, such behavior would be unheard of: all English subjects "receive an equal benefit of the Laws," and there "no partial Favour or private Interest can be a Privilege for Injustice" (377). The Lilliput of the *Memoirs* is handled so as to invite the reader to apply the appalling conditions to his own world. The same is true in *A Trip to the Moon* (1728),[13] published under the pseudonym Murtagh McDermot, though in this case the target is Ireland. In the lunar society, those who behave maliciously are physically transformed into beasts, and the King immediately interrogates McDermot about his human shape, assuming from those human features that either the Irish are a blameless lot or he is an anomalously moral example. McDermot counters with devastating candor, explaining that his is

a race of hypocrites, men who do vile deeds but under a "shew of humanity." Though no utopia, the moon society nevertheless makes plain the deficiencies of the homeland, and the reader is invited in this text—as in the *Memoirs*—to draw comparisons between the two societies.

The broader question here is how clearly the satirist delineates positives and negatives. In Hodgart's continuation, Houyhnhnmland is the thinly disguised Cornell University campus in 1969, and the narrative an allegorical description of a thirty-six-hour sit-in in which black militants took over the student union. Gulliver arrives at the time of what amounts to a mutiny: the "Liberal Horses" stand in for the incompetent administrators who have mishandled a delicate situation, and the "Revolting Yahoos" are, like their models, sordid and troublesome. Hodgart's modus operandi is to lambaste what he dislikes, and the positives and negatives are clearly delineated. Hodgart's continuation appeared in the same year as his study of satire, which included his reading of the *Travels*. The straightforward satire of his own *Voyage to Houyhnhnmland* is unsurprising, given that he understands Swift's satire to be largely unambiguous. He explains, for example, that the "Houyhnhnms represent virtue, the Yahoos total depravity. They are the poles of behavior that the human race is capable of attaining."[14] Hodgart's satire, like Michael Ryan's *Gulliver* (1993), is forthrightly polemical (both are clearly *intended* to be so), rather than genuinely riddling or playful or provocative of painful doubts on the part of the reader. The point of juxtaposing two worlds is not necessarily, in the imitations, to set up an ideal and its opposite, but such a maneuver almost always serves to distinguish between the virtuous and the vicious.

Swift offers no such patent demarcation. His Houyhnhnmland is neither an ideal nor the opposite of an ideal, and Gulliver's relationship to the satirist is at its most unstable in his final voyage—hence the intensity with which Book 4's meaning is still contested. The parallels between Gulliver's destinations and his homeland are often—though not uniformly—ambiguous, and the relationship between the native land and the foreign society differs from book to book within the *Travels*. The juxtaposition of worlds, then, does not necessarily generate an instantly recognizable set of virtues and vices. This is not to say that Swift does not use the worlds to *illustrate* satisfactory and/or perverse behaviors, but this representation of good and bad does not contribute to a consistent and confirmable satiric argument.

What does this survey tell us about the difference between Swift and his imitators? Swiftian imitations are noticeably more simplistic in their argument, and more one-dimensional in their effect, than the original. Attempted replications of Swift's *Travels* depart from the original not necessarily because of the writers' shoddy craftsmanship compared to a master, but because the imitators are not, despite appearances, *doing* what Swift is doing. Whether they do not recognize his objectives or simply cannot reproduce them, their

results are substantially different from Swift's. Reading Swift alongside his imitators does more than expose the weaknesses of the latter; it also highlights the inspired complexity of the original work. The textual features I have been emphasizing function in all cases to signal the presence of satire, but in the imitations they also clearly communicate how we are to interpret that satire, which is simply not true of the *Travels*. Reading the imitations as interpretive responses to the original, we can deduce how we can—and cannot—read Swift's *Travels,* and especially what we can—and cannot—expect of its satire.

## The Problem of Reading Swift

I begin by stating the obvious: a vast amount has been published on *Gulliver's Travels,* but singularly little agreement has been reached. If we are to try to avoid interminable and irresolvable controversy, then we need to ask why critical arguments remain so chaotic and unsettled. I have attempted to show, through the survey of *Gulliveriana,* that the *Travels* is a text easy to oversimplify. If it functioned as the imitations function—that is, if Swift were playfully disguising an authorially defined, clearly discernible position—then the voluminous critical corpus surrounding the text would certainly have yielded more resolution than it thus far has been able to produce. Just as we inquired about the sort of satire the imitators thought they were duplicating, so too must we ask another basic question: with what sort of satire do *critics* think they are dealing?

I asked at the outset how a writer signals the presence of satire, and how he or she then conveys the meaning behind that satire. Proponents of the hard and soft schools have argued their positions with conviction—the former contending that the Yahoos represent Swift's attitude toward humankind, and the latter insisting that Swift wants readers to reject Gulliver's extreme position.[15] Neither side, however, has been able to justify that confidence with anything like indisputable textual evidence. Impassioned assertions notwithstanding, the debate appears to have reached a stalemate. And yet this impasse has not deterred critics from seeking the long sought promised land, the fancied answers that will make sense of the *Travels*. What drives these seemingly ill-fated expeditions to find what no one has yet been able to find? The underlying (and unstated) premise is that *somewhere* an answer is to be had, that properly focused labor will produce definitive results.

My objective here is to categorize scholarly accounts based not on individual results but on broader assumptions that underlie even conflicting analyses of the *Travels*. What do Swift scholars assume about the individual features of his satire—about his irony, his targets, and his philosophy—and, ultimately, about what he is doing in the *Travels*? Such is the fecundity of the critical industry surrounding the text that any new study must necessarily be

selective. For my purposes, the point is not to survey the entire field of Swift studies, but instead to look at the root causes of the long-standing critical impasse, causes common to a great many accounts of the *Travels*. The point, in other words, is to determine what demands are generally made of Swift's satire, and how those demands have dictated the act of interpretation. To do so I will look at three types of suppositions that have shaped modern scholarship: (1) assumptions about the relationship between Gulliver and Swift, and thus about the reader's ability to decode the irony at work; (2) assumptions about clarity and certainty of target; and (3) assumptions about how assuredly we can discover Swift's position from the text itself. These categories deal, respectively, with Swift's technique, his targets, and his implicit or explicit set of values as expressed in the *Travels*.

(1) *Technique*. Any confident interpretation of the *Travels* depends upon establishing the satirist's position in relation to his persona. The mouthpiece of the satire, Gulliver also functions as unreliable narrator *par excellence*. Swift's handling of his voyager, and the thoroughly unstable irony with which he does so, are of course primary components of his satiric technique. What do scholars assume about Gulliver's satiric utility?

Critics agree that Swift uses his protagonist inconsistently—the degree to which he wants readers to endorse or reject Gulliver's opinions varies wildly. Most scholars also presume that the volatility present in the whole does not undermine our ability to know at any given moment how Gulliver is functioning. Scholars sometimes assume that we can describe him in terms of a single, specific satiric role. Hermann J. Real and Heinz J. Vienken identify Gulliver in broadly symbolic ways, suggesting that Swift's voyager—"of middling quality, neither good nor bad, both intellectually and morally 'at the disposal of others'"—serves as "the embodiment of *l'homme moyen,* the allegorical representative of mankind." The *Travels,* then, are "the memoirs of Mr. Everyman."[16] Denis Donoghue understands Gulliver's function differently, but he too identifies an underlying, uniform meaning: Gulliver "is merely the sum of his attributes," and Swift's technique is thus "to present every ostensibly spiritual quality in a material form, reducing qualities to quantities." Donoghue's Gulliver, like Real and Vienken's, is Everyman; Swift's contention, as this argument has it, is that no "man is more than the sum of a few attributes."[17] Swift may have intended his protagonist to typify humankind, but the text nowhere confirms or even encourages this reading. Swift's unstable irony, along with the drastic fluctuation in his relationship to his persona, seriously limits our interpretive powers: if we are depending on Gulliver (and the narrative treatment of Gulliver) to tell us how to take Swift's satire, we are in a bad position.

Another group of critics, though not disposed to encapsulate Gulliver within a definite, exclusive satiric purpose, nevertheless argue that he is the

connective that holds the *Travels* together. Gulliver is necessarily the *sine qua non* of *Gulliver's Travels,* the hero-reporter on whom we depend for the narrative, but his behavior in each of the four books does not lend itself to easy interpretation. What is his trajectory, and what does it tell us about Swift's satire? Ricardo Quintana has highlighted the centrality of Gulliver to Swift's argument in the *Travels:* "It is what happens to Gulliver . . . and our reactions to Gulliver's reactions which together constitute the main thrust of the satiric statement."[18] Edward Rosenheim has likewise argued that "it is Gulliver and what happens to him . . . to which alone we look for organic continuity."[19] Gulliver is indisputably crucial to the satire; but his role as narrator hardly imposes order on that satire, or clarifies what (if anything) links the "points" being made in the four voyages. After all, as J. Paul Hunter notes, Lemuel "is all over the place—sometimes a trustworthy reporter and commentator, sometimes a sophisticated ironist, sometimes an innocent or a fool or just a stick figure."[20] Whence the continuity, beyond a perpetually shifting presence?

Gulliver's procession from land to land has been variously assessed. Everett Zimmerman sees the protagonist's movement as toward "a vision that is gradually exposed not only as private but also as solipsistic."[21] Frank Boyle identifies increasing narcissism from the first to the last voyage, and J. A. Downie equates the course of the *Travels* with the process of "stripping man of his pretensions."[22] Donoghue explains the four parts in terms not of development but of repetition: Gulliver is duped—"brainwashed"—everywhere he treks, and in the narrative as a whole, Donoghue contends, Swift seems to be implying that "if you send the human mind into the world without the benefit of Revelation, religious belief, and an innate conscience, it will succumb to every force it meets."[23] Most critics agree that Gulliver is increasingly shortsighted, and that in his final excursion he declines into dour misanthropy.

The attempt to trace Gulliver's development (or descent) has unsurprisingly amplified the efforts to explain Book 4. Scholars who agree about nothing else agree that the last voyage is the satiric culmination and crux of the *Travels,* they imagine that Book 4 is to be weighted more heavily than the other parts, in terms of interpretation, and that we can somehow extrapolate Swift's position from Gulliver's attitude at the end of Book 4. Devotees of the hard school read Gulliver as an extension of Swift, and promoters of the soft school consider him the prime target. Radical interpretive discord notwithstanding, these readings issue from the same impulse, and are guided by the same assumption. Whatever happens to the traveler along the way, the last trip is the one that most defines him. In a text so riddled with obfuscation, in which little or nothing can be taken for granted, the emphasis on Book 4 seems not entirely defensible. Nevertheless, even if we were to grant the preeminence of the finale, the painstaking scrutiny of Book 4 has yielded no uncontested resolution. The hard school critics cannot find sufficient textual

evidence for their accusations to convert their opponents; the soft school critics cannot prove the distance between Swift and Gulliver. The critical dispute over this final part seems to have reached a theoretical and functional deadlock, and the state of affairs is not likely to improve unless we rethink the demands being made of Swift's satire.

What expectations for Swift's satire have produced these contradictory readings? Most scholars acknowledge that Swift's irony is unstable and his handling of Gulliver inconsistent, but that has not discouraged attempts to solve the puzzle. While we can in most episodes surmise Gulliver's position in relation to Swift, this is by no means always the case, and by the end of Book 4 we cannot determine with any certainty whatever just how far removed the satirist is from his mouthpiece. Critics usually take for granted that satirists use irony, and that this irony is meant to be decoded; critics of Swift's satire have for the most part operated under those assumptions. Cracking unstable rather than stable irony may require more exertion on the part of the reader, but the standard supposition is that we can in fact establish the type and degree of irony at work.

Such a premise is fundamentally unsound for this particular text. To try to solve the *Travels* is to assume that it offers solubility in the way that the imitations do; and to assume that Book 4 is more important than the others in determining Swift's satiric agenda, and that the irony can be confidently decoded, is perhaps to assume too much. For this reason, theories centered on Gulliver have not succeeded in illuminating the elusive center of the *Travels* or in establishing an indisputably "right" reading of Book 4. That solid interpretation of the last voyage would dictate a reliable understanding of the whole, moreover, seems a dubious proposition. The relationship between satirist and persona fluctuates throughout the text, only to conclude in utter indeterminacy, and this fluctuation acutely impairs the reader's ability to make a serious judgment call. However much critics quarrel about the meaning behind the indeterminacy, the text simply does not yield to conclusive explication. Neither in Book 4 nor in its predecessors does Swift provide the cues that would lend irrefutable credence to any single reading. Nor, for that matter, does he suggest that the search for such cues is warranted. That satirists normally use irony with the expectation of having that irony deciphered does not necessarily justify our reading Swift that way. Gulliver appears in every book; Gulliver learns things; Gulliver makes similar mistakes in each of his voyages; Gulliver feels very differently about humankind at the end of Book 4 than he has elsewhere. Nevertheless, these details tell us virtually nothing—at least nothing demonstrable—about Swift's satiric argument. Perhaps the central traveler, for all his interest to the reader, is not the key that explains the *Travels*.

(2) *Targets*. If the *Travels* is a satire, what exactly is it a satire *on*? Many critics might be prepared to agree in general that it is a Menippean satire (whatever that means) but the label does not get us very far.[24] Few critics would assert that a central, single, coherent argument exists in the *Travels,* but they reason as if they believe that one can be found. They acknowledge the difficulty of Swiftian satire and the multiplicity of Swift's targets, but that observation almost always precedes an attempt to impose order on the text—an attempt, that is, to uncover Swift's essential message in the *Travels*. To that end scholars have proposed myriad possibilities that are often individually compelling but as a whole irreconcilable.

Where have critics discovered the underlying coherence of the *Travels*? C. H. Firth put forward (1938) and Arthur Case further developed (1945) the thesis that the *Travels* is a sustained political allegory, a claim disputed by Phillip Harth (1976) and F. P. Lock (1980), and then subsequently defended by Irvin Ehrenpreis (1989).[25] Lock has asserted that "the political purpose of *Gulliver's Travels* was . . . to attack not particular Whigs or Whig policies, nor even Whiggism, but the perennial disease of which Whiggery was only a contemporary manifestation."[26] Similar in kind to the allegorical reading is the analogical reading, as sponsored, for example, by Simon Varey and Downie. The latter contends that Swift's "method is one of analogy: reasoning from parallel cases. There is no need for him to present a consistent allegory to score his political point."[27]

Other critics have been more specific in explicating a perceived central thrust of Swift's satiric argument. Charles A. Knight defines the text as "the great proto-nationalist satire on nationality."[28] Clement Hawes asserts that, "The satiric effect of *Gulliver's Travels* depends on Swift's ironizing, and, above all, reversing of the commonplaces of eighteenth-century British colonial discourse."[29] Donoghue, after aptly emphasizing the text's elusiveness, pronounces finally that, "*Gulliver's Travels* is only superficially about big men and little men: it is really *about* entrapment" (italics mine).[30] Carole Fabricant reaches a similar conclusion, suggesting that the *Travels* is "a work explicitly and pervasively concerned with the theme of confinement."[31] In Alan D. Chalmers's interpretation, the governing anxiety of Swift's work is an "acute apprehension of the future."[32] Boyle contends that, "The satiric charge is ultimately straightforward. Individual narcissism . . . inevitably leads to moments when the frustration of the narcissistic will detaches us from a sense of human sympathy."[33] However rich these rather diverse readings are, they cannot *all* constitute the exclusive center of Swift's satiric argument. My aim here is not to summarize these positions exhaustively, but to capture the spirit behind them—the compulsion to impose order on a chaotic text culminates in these and similar bold theses, the essence of which I have tried briefly to convey here. I could certainly cite more examples from the massive corpus

of Swift studies, but my point is that doing so would not make the argument more complete, only repetitive. Most students of Swift's satire operate from the same conceptual bases, and I seek here not to quarrel with these respondents over particular findings, but to suggest that the theoretical starting points behind these studies are misguided.

Extant readings helpfully sensitize us to some of what Swift does in this text, but the radical interpretive discrepancies suggest that the *Travels* is just not "doing" any one particular thing. The explications of targets enrich our understanding of the *Travels,* and I have not the faintest interest in quibbling about the extent to which the meticulous deciphering of oblique allusions has unearthed the right satiric butts. The problem with such analyses is not a set of fallacious results, but an unsatisfactory methodology, a set of problematic *assumptions.* Though often quite good particularist readings, these interpretations are severely exaggerated in claiming centrality vis-à-vis the text: they depend essentially on the assumptions and point of view of a particular kind of reader.

While we can legitimately assume that Swift had a set of targets in mind, I see no textual grounds for assuming that the work's many attacks necessarily add up to a single, focused satiric argument. Satires are presumed to have targets, and those targets are presumed to be readily identifiable. Swift scholars, reading the *Travels* as definitively satirical, naturally set out to identify its victims. Most of these critics, however, are not content to say that Swift is attacking multiple, even unconnected targets. They instead look for an organizing principle behind the scattered shots that will encompass the majority (if not the totality) of the hits. These critics generally assume that Swift's inconsistency and obfuscation is part of an attempt to encode a grand Message; they suppose, that is, that he wants to (and can) be decoded. Those features which cannot be fitted into the thesis provided are duly written off as Swiftian frivolity, as wanton amusement or as stock satiric images that are beside Swift's "point," or at least are comparatively minor concerns. Our ability to privilege any target or set of targets as primary, however, seems dubious at best, and ranking the satire's concerns seems an indefensible critical maneuver. Some critics posit a central thrust sufficiently broad to contain the sundry hits—the *Travels* is about order and chaos, reason and unreason, truth and mendacity, and so on—but at what point do such overly general explanations become meaningless? Whatever else one might say about the *Travels,* it does not seem to be blandly general (e.g., it cannot be sufficiently explained by describing it as a satire meant to demonstrate human imperfections). My point here is to suggest that the approach to Swift's satire has been too heavily dictated by the practitioner, not by the text. Extant interpretations of Swift's central thrust have their origins in specific critical agendas rather

than in obvious textual evidence, but the more serious problem is the uniform assumption that the *Travels* does have a definable "center."

I am not the first to take issue with too facile, unduly confident interpretations of the *Travels*. More than 25 years ago, in his study of Book 4, Raymond Bentman reached what seems to me to be a very sensible conclusion about the *Travels* and about the problems it creates for critics. No one seems to have taken Bentman very seriously, but, as far as I am aware, no one has convincingly answered his contention. I quote him at length here:

> *Gulliver's Travels* is an especially clear example of the error of modern criticism of satire, which says that in satire 'standards of judgment are indubitable' or that in satire the reader is 'sure what the author's attitude is or what his own is supposed to be.' And much of the criticism of *Gulliver's Travels,* which insists that a single meaning be attached to the work, or that it can be approached from a single point of view, seems to be an unwitting demonstration of the single vision which Swift denounces.[34]

Many scholars have tried to provide coherent readings in the time since Bentman made his case, but despite the apparent universal indifference to his position, I am inclined to agree with him. Bentman's conclusion is valuable not because it settles the debates about *Gulliver's Travels,* but because it highlights a standard assumption that is acutely problematic. The dogged search for a "single meaning," while natural enough for students of satire, has produced much contention but precious little resolution. We cannot identify Swift's central line of attack with confidence; can we with any more confidence identify his final judgment on humanity?

(3) *Authorial Context.* To what extent can we extrapolate Swift's values from the text of *Gulliver's Travels*? Scholars read the *Travels* not in isolation, of course, but with the aid of the entire Swift corpus: other works, correspondence, biography, and known allegiances inevitably inform interpretations of this particular text. Equipped with such comprehensive contextual apparatus, students of Swift have read the *Travels* as a position-piece, a fictional expression of its author's world-view. If scholars have concurred about some particulars of Swift's satire—Walpole as the Lilliputian treasurer Flimnap, for example—they have disagreed violently about the authorial position it conveys. Central to the critical dispute, as Hunter notes, "is the pervasive and enduring question of Swift's attitude toward human nature and human perfectibility."[35]

In the debate about Swift's view of humanity, Book 4 has, unsurprisingly, been the most ardently dissected. Hard school and soft school advocates read the finale in radically dissimilar ways, but these conflicting interpretations issue

from a shared assumption about Swift's satire: he means it to convey a judgment. Dustin Griffin, *inter alia,* assumes that the Houyhnhnms represent "an ideal that cannot be attained,"[36] but even those who believe that the Houyhnhnms perform a more complicated function nevertheless find in Book 4 (and elsewhere) a clear judgment of Good and Bad. Ehrenpreis has suggested that, "According to Swift, human nature, impartially examined, shows itself to be radically vicious,"[37] and Rosenheim has likewise claimed that, "Swift's attitude is, indeed, beyond despair—an icy compound of resignation and cynicism."[38] Claude Rawson argues that from Book 4 we can determine "not (of course) that Swift would enact the killing if he could, but that the Yahoos, like mankind in Genesis, deserve the punishment." In Swift's satire, Rawson contends, "the death-dealing curse . . . is extended to whole classes of men . . . and indeed to the human race itself."[39] Others have tempered this reading, willing to read Swift's verdict on humanity in less grim terms.[40] Explicitly or implicitly, critics in both camps have claimed that they are expounding what (as it were), "Swift says." But this is not really true, as the long-unresolved debate over Swift's meaning proves. Swift's text, whether we like the fact or not, is essentially opaque, and critics tend to find in it what they are predisposed to find. The *Travels,* Herbert Davis has argued, was "written by one who did not like the way of the world and was not unwilling to set down his testimony against it."[41] Perhaps so, but how certainly can we conclude that Swift had a serious polemic mission in mind when he wrote the *Travels,* and, if we could reasonably presume that intention, how confidently could we determine Swift's worldview from the text?

Most critics expect the *Travels* to communicate its author's beliefs, and read with the goal of disentangling those beliefs from beneath the opaque irony and obfuscation. The responsibility of the reader, in these interpretations, is tremendous. Hermann Real emphasizes this responsibility, arguing that

> Even if it is true that Swift had a penchant for 'personal anonymity [and] self-concealment' and even if it is true that 'his own point of view is never overt,' it is also true that as a satirist he never refused to teach. However, as a rule, his recommended alternative, his norms, are implicit; they are hidden and have to be inferred. In a sense, the reader's time is employed in finding them out; in a sense, the reader has to teach himself.[42]

If Swift's position is sufficiently obscure that no one has been able convincingly to settle the question, then to deem his values even "implicit" seems to misrepresent the possibilities for interpretation. Similarly committed to reader application, Ehrenpreis went so far as to contend that, "By ignoring the particular allusions" in the *Travels,* we are "turning our backs on Swift himself. He hoped we would search out his meanings, and we owe it to

him to do so."[43] Transmission of meaning can safely be said to depend upon the reader, provided we can safely assume that the author intended such transmission. Downie is correct to suggest that Swift seems to have thought that "the inferior satirist, in spelling out his moral, connives with complacency," but he argues as well that Swift "challenges the reader to interpret the signs."[44] The assumption behind these assessments, like the assumption behind the purported imitations and behind much Swift scholarship, is that the reader of the *Travels* can labor toward resolution (armed, of course, with the necessary contextual information and ample staying power). As A. E. Dyson observed in 1965, however, "The illusion that [Swift] is establishing important positives with fine, intellectual precision breaks down when we try to state what these positives are."[45] If a hard-working reader should be able to deduce Swift's meaning from the *Travels,* and if the individual efforts have generated so many incompatible readings, then we must wonder whether a single, right reading of the satirist's position is to be had.

The critics with whom I have been dealing all presume that the act of reading can produce a viable interpretation of Swift's satiric purpose in the *Travels*. Many scholars have identified this central purpose as didactic. Ronald Paulson argued in 1967 that the various episodes of the *Travels* "serve as alternatives of action that suggest the direction that the reader should or should not take,"[46] and for Martin Kallich Swift's text likewise reflects an underlying "intention to move and improve mankind."[47] Michael F. Suarez has recently contended that "the purpose of satire for Swift . . . is less the reformation of the target . . . and more about the moral education of the reader."[48] Suarez's conclusion is reasonable—but if the text is instructive, then what (morally or otherwise) is being taught? How much didactic intent can we assume when the satirist/teacher is impossible to pin down, and what are the particulars of that education? The difficulty of discerning Swift's moral position seems to be insuperable if proof is demanded.

Those who have acknowledged the inexplicability of Swift's satiric argument have generally been discontented, interpreting the incomprehensibility as evidence of the satirist's antagonism toward his readers. The critics I have been discussing assume that we can discover Swift behind his protean persona, and can determine the type of irony at work and the final judgment being passed; I want now to deal with those scholars who recognize that the reader is ultimately at a loss to comprehend the *Travels*. These critics eschew a tidy resolution and conclude—as I am concluding—that Swift does not mean to communicate a clear-cut argument. They have made this point, however, with noticeable hostility to Swift and his misanthropy, describing the interpretive problems of the *Travels* through theories of reader entrapment. Elliott has underscored "the reader's sense of impasse, of unease," and, finally, "the feeling that he is somehow catching the hostility meant for someone else."[49] The

experience of reading the *Travels,* for Elliott and for others,[50] is an uncomfortable one—never mind the apparent fun that most readers have with the *Travels,* and the fun that Swift evidently had in writing it. In his discussion of what he dubs "The Swiftian Swindle," John R. Clark asserts that, "Our frustration is the point. And ultimately we must accept our own reactions as part of the meaning of *Gullivers Travels*." But he too construes the convolution as a source of intense anxiety for the reader:

> And the reader?—he has been rocked and knocked and turned and overset so repeatedly in the satire's last pages, that I daresay he is willing to concede just about anything. And that, of course, is precisely where Swift wants to have him. Yet one thing is certain: the reader has been conned into making what has to be described as a 'bad trip': he won't want to thank Jonathan Swift for such coarse transportation. . . . That, too, is exactly where Swift aims to have him.[51]

Because Swift's text does not conform to its readers' expectations, then, those readers must inevitably feel harassed. Frederik N. Smith likewise judges that the reader "is challenged, and he is caught with no simple unambiguously correct reading of the text. He cannot come off well. And his punishment—at least Swift hopes—will be a fresh awareness that he has failed as a reader."[52] Rawson reckons this overt "aggressiveness towards the reader" to be distinctively Swiftian.[53] That Swift is pitiless in his exposure of idiot readers (and delights in their displeasure with sadistic glee) is not a new reading: in 1934 F. R. Leavis opined that Swift's irony functions "to defeat habit, to intimidate, and to demoralize."[54]

How reasonable is the standard association of the complexity of the *Travels* with a purely negative impulse on Swift's part? That Swift has no single, central, irrefutable satiric point seems clear, and is confirmed not only by the differences between him and his imitators (who *do* convey unified arguments), but also by the surfeit of conflicting explanations for the *Travels*. But to assume that this elusiveness can only be explained by the satirist's desire to embarrass or rebuke the reader is, I think, to oversimplify the range of Swift's feelings toward the objects of his satire. That he exposes human limitations need not be taken as evidence of sadism or misanthropy. The charge of aggressiveness on Swift's part is, like the argument for coherence, another way of making sense of the text's difficulty. It also points to a basic assumption shared by reader entrapment theorists and those who, like Ehrenpreis and Real, promote reader empowerment in interpretations of the *Travels*. Both groups believe that Swift's satire *should* convey a particular message and provide some sort of clarity. An exemplar of this common critical predispo-

sition is Thomas Metscher's study, which begins with a statement of what satire *does* ("Any type of satire implies (or explicitly presents) some kind of ideal norm"), and then identifies where and how Swift does that: the interpretation is governed by the critic's deeply ingrained assumptions about how the *Travels* should function.[55] Such expectations, however common in acts of interpretation, cannot necessarily be fairly applied to reading Swift: this text does not conform to our expectations of satire. The *Travels* has posed problems for scholars past and present, and the state of the field over the past fifty years has been at once richly dynamic and fundamentally static. Accounts of the *Travels* have changed over time, but despite the emergence of increasingly (or at least differently) sophisticated readings, the assumption behind these accounts has remained essentially fixed. The considerably divergent readings all reflect the assumption of solubility, but solubility in this case is a fallacy. Another century of similarly driven enterprises may well add to our understanding of particulars in the *Travels,* but is unlikely effectively to clear up the critical tangle.

Attempts to treat this text as a typical satire have left us in a muddle. The charges of Swift's spitefulness (at best) and misanthropy (at worst) issue not only from the debates about Book 4 of the *Travels,* but also from the stymied compulsion to impose coherence on an incoherent, fundamentally mystifying text. This impulse manifested itself almost instantaneously, as the publication of the *Travels* was immediately followed by the appearance of "keys." Swift's readers, including imitators and critics from his lifetime right up to the present day, have sought to make sense of this text, and have either deluded themselves into thinking they have solved the puzzle or have disparaged the satirist for being out to get them. Everyone seems to have found a way to explain the unexplainable, either by a focused thesis or by an indictment of hostility on Swift's part, an *ignis fatuus* or a ready accusation. But we with our critical keys resemble perhaps too closely the bespectacled Gulliver, somehow unable to see properly, even armed, so to speak, with the appropriate aids. The problem, of course, is not with our tools, but with our incessant desire to see what is not ours to see, or, more to the point, what is not there at all.

## Conclusion

What I have tried to show through this survey of imitative enterprises and conflicting scholarly accounts is that the *Travels* is a satire that simply does not function the way most satires seem to work. Scholars have gone at the text from a number of angles, but almost always they have done so with a set of basic presuppositions, instinctively followed rather than specially generated for this particular work. Griffin is probably right to caution against believing "that we ever discover anything 'absolute'" in Swift's satire.[56] If the

*Travels* is textually and contextually irresolvable, then critics who implicitly or explicitly look for resolution will go astray.

Real and Ian Campbell Ross have contended persuasively, and I think accurately, that, "*Pari passu,* no wielder of a hermeneutic calculus will be found to provide certain interpretive knowledge of Swift's satiric texts." To the question, What now? they suggest something like an informed critical free-for-all: readers "form a democratic community whose opinions as to the provisional meaning of these texts are . . . evaluated and accepted or not, on the basis of textual evidence, common sense, logic, coherence, sensitivity to historical and literary context, generic principles, informed comparative judgment, probability, and durability, for the better instruction of the republic of letters."[57] They are, in one sense, proposing a truce. I suspect that Real and Ross are correct to conclude of the *Travels* that "issues of interpretation are raised . . . that resist definitive resolution and are likely to continue to do so."[58] But perhaps we would do well to reconsider the assumptions that have governed attempts to solve these issues of interpretation. The point here is not to dismiss the scholarship on the *Travels,* but to find a way out of the tangle that the scholarship has become. I suggest that we broaden the interpretive possibilities for *Gulliver's Travels* to include multiplicity that is just not reducible to a tidy bottom line, and adjust our expectations—and our areas of concentration—accordingly. Scholars have tried to read for different results, but I propose that we read with different expectations.

*Gulliver's Travels* does not behave as conventional satire behaves. Satirists are expected to convey a discernible satiric agenda, and readers of satire are conditioned to look for (and either find or construct) an authorially announced and defined objective. Presented with a satiric jumble, a miscellany of numerous targets satirized in multifarious ways and with variable tone and intensity, students of satire are at a loss, being entirely unaccustomed to thinking as such a text requires them to think. That Swift would write a capricious, cluttered satire without a fixed point of attack is perhaps unsettling, but that seems nevertheless to be exactly what he has in mind with the *Travels*. A long line of scrupulous critics have sought the incontrovertible truth behind the text, and have found only partial interpretations. What can we safely presume about Swift's primary "point" in the *Travels*? In reality, we can assume very little. One conceivable explanation might be that Swift, brilliant as he is, lost control of the *Travels* and did not give the necessary clues to interpret its central satiric argument, whatever he may have intended it to be.[59] Another is that he deliberately constructed the indeterminacy, as a way of tackling fundamental questions about human reason, in which case the text is evidence of humanity's desire—and inability—to answer. A third is that he was simply having such fun attacking multiple targets that he did not much worry about consistency or resolution. Even these quite different suggestions

do not together constitute an exhaustive range of plausible speculation. That Swift has several agendas in this text is a serious possibility, as is a variable level of commitment on Swift's part to those manifold concerns. Such drastic multiplicity severely limits our ability to delineate his satiric purposes, let alone to privilege any one as the *sine qua non* of his argument.

Swift is not striving to communicate a clear-cut position; neither is he straightforwardly deprecating a defined set of targets; nor is he coldly disparaging humanity for its contemptible inadequacies. If he were doing the first or second, the dissension among Swift scholars would not have culminated in the seemingly insuperable stalemate; if he were doing the third, I suspect that the experience of reading the *Travels* would be much graver than it is, and certainly if that were all he meant to suggest by the text's indeterminacy then critics would have found little reason to carry on the two hundred plus years of dispute. How do we deal with the indeterminacy of the *Travels*? Where do we go from here, short of throwing up our hands and conceding the futility of our efforts?

My goal is not to forestall further investigation of the *Travels,* just as it is not to disparage the many impressive and useful interpretations of my predecessors; my aim is merely to encourage critics to reconsider the assumptions on which future inquiry is founded. Students of satire are predisposed to make particular demands of the *Travels,* and disentangling ourselves from those expectations seems a reasonable strategy, given the exceptional critical problems this text has caused. What to make of the multiplicity? Either Swift meant to convey a particular, coherent argument (but failed to provide the necessary signals), or he did not (so that the search for one is necessarily unproductive). The latter need not be taken as a sign of the text's meaninglessness or of Swift's renunciation of human dignity. The difficulties posed by the *Travels* stem not from an absence but an excess of meaning. If anything, Swift seems to have had innumerable points in mind, and to have been writing with several audiences in mind, several types of readers who would read and respond differently. The interpretations that explain Swift's satire according to a specific thesis are perfectly valid as partial explanations of a difficult text. Their sponsors' failure to acknowledge the limited applicability of any single theory, however, inevitably leads to inflated claims that are often promptly challenged by proponents of other theories. Not all readers would or should have been thinking of or interested in Whiggery, confinement, colonization, nationalism, or any one of the many principal targets critics have identified as forming the central thrust of the *Travels*.

One clearly conceivable effect of Swift's satire can be sheer bewilderment. Quite possibly Swift intended precisely that. However commonly we expect satirists to convey a clear-cut argument (whether the goal is moral reformation or blistering condemnation), in Swift's best satire the object is

decidedly *not* specific transmission, and the point is *not* merely to impugn a particular target. Swift does not appear to be hiding a definite position in a mass of obfuscation and camouflage, and attempts to decode or otherwise to find coherence are insufficient and seriously misguided. His elusiveness, however, need not be construed as an oppressive reminder of humanity's dismal incompetence. A critic committed to a right reading will come out with a hard or a soft school interpretation, but if we abandon the demands that have generally dictated interpretation, we might arrive at a more complex and doubting reading of the sort I am suggesting. At the very least, if we simply relax the pressure placed on definitive explanation, and enjoy the chaos, we might find that the text works for us in a different fashion. Perhaps Swift is asking us to live with radical uncertainties and difficulties, and mocking our desire for neat-and-tidy; perhaps he wants to force upon us the insolubility of problems and to make us acknowledge this insolubility. The cumulative effect of the *Travels* is to push us to concede that we cannot say with certainty that a single coherence exists in human life or knowledge, and certainly not in our reading of this book.

The text leaves us in an inexplicable tangle, but to say so is not to fault Swift for failure in communication, and neither is it a declaration of universal meaninglessness. The darkening tone of Book 4 leads us to a disconcerting end that is provocative rather than conclusive; Swift propounds an unanswerable question and then exits gracefully. The ending resembles *Tristram Shandy*'s teasing finale, perhaps, more than—or at least as much as—a grim, demonstrable judgment on humanity. The disorientation that overwhelms a reader of the *Travels* need not evoke the "frightening nihilism" identified by Patrick Reilly.[60] We are to feel baffled but not necessarily despairing; we are to learn to live with doubt, not defeated but toughened by the experience. The work's resistance to easy explanation need not be taken as evidence of the futility of human life or of human reading. Rather, the complexity of *Gulliver* seems to invite us to accept the impossibility of tidy certainties, and to adopt more realistic and flexible expectations for the ways in which we read—and live.[61]

## Notes

1. *Gulliveriana,* ed. Welcher and Bush (Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1970), vol. 1, v. The collection includes six further volumes: vol. 2 (Gainesville: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1971); vols. 3–6 (Delmar, NY: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints) appeared in 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976 (the last volume appearing in three books); vol. 7 (also Delmar, NY; published in 1999) was edited by Welcher alone. William Alfred Eddy discusses the Gulliveriana [*Gulliver's Travels: A Critical Study* (1923; rpt., New York: Russell & Russell, 1963], 192–200), but dismisses much of it as "amusing but not convincing," and suggests, probably

accurately, that the "source of inspiration in nine cases out often was the story, not the philosophy" of the original (199).

2. *Gulliveriana,* vol. 6, Bk. 1, lxxi.

3. For information on these and similar pieces, see the introduction to *Gulliveriana,* vol. 6.

4. *Gulliveriana,* vol. 6, Bk. 1, xl–xli.

5. *Gulliveriana,* vol. 6, Bk. 1, lx.

6. Reprinted in *Gulliveriana,* vol. 3.

7. Reprinted in *Gulliveriana,* vol. 2. Desfontaines also translated *Gulliver's Travels* into French in 1727. See Paul-Gabriel Boucé, "Gulliver's Frenchified Travels to Blefescu: The First Two Translations," in *Reading Swift: Papers from The Fourth Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift,* ed. Hermann J. Real and Helgard Stöver-Leidig (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2003): 379–386. Boucé describes Desfontaines's imitation as the work of an opportunist, as an attempt to capitalize on the popularity of the original in France, and as "an insipid, if highly moral, sequel" (383).

8. Booth, *A Rhetoric of Irony* (University of Chicago Press, 1974), especially 3–7.

9. Robert C. Elliott, *The Literary Persona* (University of Chicago Press, 1982), 117.

10. *Gulliveriana,* vol. 4, xi.

11. Reprinted in *Gulliveriana,* vol. 2.

12. Reprinted in *Gulliveriana,* vol. 3.

13. Reprinted in *Gulliveriana,* vol. 1.

14. Hodgart, *Satire* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), 67.

15. For a full account of the hard and soft school readings, see James L. Clifford, "Gulliver's Fourth Voyage: 'Hard' and 'Soft' Schools of Interpretation," in *Quick Springs of Sense: Studies in the Eighteenth Century,* ed. Larry S. Champion (University of Georgia Press, 1974), 33–49.

16. Real and Vienken, "The Structure of *Gulliver's Travels,*" in *Proceedings of the First Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift,* ed. Real and Vienken (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1985): 199–208, 202.

17. Donoghue, *The Practice of Reading* (Yale University Press, 1998), 186.

18. Quintana, "*Gulliver's Travels*: The Satiric Intent and Execution," in *Jonathan Swift, 1667–1967: A Dublin Tercentenary Tribute,* ed. Robert McHugh and Philip Edwards (Dublin: Dolmen, 1967; rpt., 1968): 78–93, 90.

19. Rosenheim, *Swift and the Satirists Art* (University of Chicago Press, 1963), 159.

20. Hunter, "*Gulliver's Travels* and the later writings," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift,* ed. Christopher Fox (Cambridge University Press, 2003): 216–240, 226.

21. Zimmerman, *Swift's Narrative Satires: Author and Authority* (Cornell University Press, 1983), 35.

22. Boyle, *Swift as Nemesis: Modernity and its Satirist* (Stanford University Press, 2000), 26–51, and Downie, *Jonathan Swift: Political Writer* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 266.

23. Donoghue, *The Practice of Reading,* 184.

24. Howard D. Weinbrot's recent study restores utility to the concept of Menippean satire, but the term has generally been applied so broadly as to make it

largely meaningless. Bakhtin and Frye, as Weinbrot points out, defined Menippean satire so loosely that it became "a baggy genre into which almost any work can be made to fit" (*Menippean Satire Reconsidered: From Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* [Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005], 15).

25. Firth, "The Political Significance of *Gulliver's Travels*," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 9 (1919–1920): 237–259; Case, *Four Essays on* Gulliver's Travels (Princeton University Press, 1945); Harth, "The Problem of Political Allegory in *Gulliver's Travels*," *MP* 73 (1976): S40–S47 (Supplement); Lock, *The Politics of* Gulliver's Travels (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980); Ehrenpreis, "The Allegoy of *Gulliver's Travels*," *Swift Studies* 4 (1989): 13–28.

26. Lock, *The Politics of* Gulliver's Travels, 2.

27. Downie, "The Political Significance of *Gulliver's Travels*," in *Swift and His Contexts,* ed. John Irwin Fischer, Hermann J. Real, and James Woolley (New York: AMS Press, 1989): 1–19, 14. See also Varey, "Exemplary History and the Political Satire of *Gulliver's Travels,*" in *The Genres of* Gulliver's Travels, ed. Frederik N. Smith (University of Delaware Press, 1990): 39–55, 41–42.

28. Knight, *The Literature of Satire* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 68.

29. Hawes, "Three Times Round the Globe: Gulliver and Colonial Discourse," *Cultural Critique* 18 (1991): 187–214, 189.

30. Donoghue, *The Practice of Reading,* 166, 182.

31. Fabricant, *Swift's Landscape* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 46.

32. Chalmers, *Jonathan Swift and the Burden of the Future* (University of Delaware Press, 1995), 15.

33. Boyle, *Swift as Nemesis,* 38.

34. Bentman, "Satiric Structure and Tone in the Conclusion of *Gulliver's Travels*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 11 (1971): 535–548, 547.

35. Hunter, "*Gulliver's Travels* and the later writings," 233.

36. Griffin, *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction* (University Press of Kentucky, 1994), 61.

37. Ehrenpreis, "Swiftian Dilemmas," in *Satire in the 18th Century,* ed. J. D. Browning (New York: Garland, 1983): 214–231, 219.

38. Rosenheim, *Swift and the Satirist's Art,* 219.

39. Rawson, Introduction, *English Satire and the Satiric Tradition,* ed. Rawson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), vii.

40. See, for example, Ernest Tuveson, "Swift: The Dean as Satirist," in *Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays,* ed. Tuveson (Englewood-Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964): 101–110, 101.

41. Davis, *Jonathan Swift: Essays on His Satire and Other Studies* (Oxford University Press, 1964), 151.

42. Real, "'A Dish plentifully stor'd': Jonathan Swift and the Evaluation of Satire," in *Reading Swift: Papers from The Second Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift,* ed. Richard H. Rodino and Real (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1993): 45–58, 58.

43. Ehrenpreis, "The Allegory of *Gulliver's Travels*," 27.

44. Downie, *Jonathan Swift: Political Writer,* 273. See also Ian Higgins, *Swift's Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1994). Higgins observes that, "The particular political attack is sufficiently disguised and indeterminate so as to confound any attempt by the authorities to convict the author of seditious libel," but finds the

obfuscation comprehensible enough "to afford readers the aesthetic pleasure of interpretation and application" (155).

45. Dyson, *The Crazy Fabric: Essays in Irony* (New York: St. Martin's, 1965), 3.

46. Paulson, *The Fictions of Satire* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967), 174.

47. Kallich, *The Other End of the Egg: Religious Satire in* Gulliver's Travels (University of Bridgeport, 1970), 89.

48. Suarez, "Swift's satire and parody," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jonathan Swift,* ed. Fox: 112–127, 115.

49. Elliott, *The Literary Persona,* 136.

50. Other examples include John N. Morris, "Wishes for Horses: A Word for the Houyhnhnms," *Yale Review* 62 (1973): 355–371, 362, and Michael DePorte, "Swift and the License of Satire," in *Satire in the 18th Century,* ed. Browning: 53–69, 66.

51. Clark, "Lures, Limetwigs, and The Swiftian Swindle," *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 17 (1984): 27–34, 34.

52. Smith, "The Danger of Reading Swift: The Double Binds of *Gulliver's Travels,*" *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 17 (1984): 35–47, 41.

53. Rawson, *Gulliver and the Gentle Reader: Studies in Swift and our Time* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), 6. For a similar position, see Jefferson S. Chase, "Lying in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and Heine's *Atta Troll,*" *Comparative Literature* 45 (1993): 330–345. Chase identifies Swifts text as "a matrix of lies in which no interpretive perspective can establish itself," and thus feels justified in concluding that, "Perhaps only misanthropes, sadists, and charlatans devote themselves to satire" (332).

54. Leavis, "Swift's Irony," originally published in *Determinations: Critical Essays,* ed. Leavis (London: Chatto & Windus, 1934); reprinted in *Fair Liberty Was All His Cry: A Tercentenary Tribute to Jonathan Swift 1667–1745,* ed. A. Norman Jeffares (New York: St. Martin's, 1967): 116–130, 119.

55. Metscher, "The Radicalism of Swift: *Gulliver's Travels* and the Irish Point of View," in *Studies in Anglo-Irish Literature,* ed. Heinz Kosok (Bonn: Bouvier Verlag H. Grundmann, 1982): 13–27, 17.

56. Griffin, *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction,* 67.

57. Real and Ross, "The 'extreme Difficulty understanding the Meaning of the Word Opinion': Some Limits of Understanding Dean Swift," in *Reading Swift: Papers from the Fourth Münster Symposium on Jonathan Swift,* 349–361, 361.

58. Ibid., 351.

59. In "Swift's Satire: Rules of the Game," *ELH* 41 (1974): 413–428, Elliott entertains a related possibility for a particular scene in Book 3: when "Gulliver expresses contempt for the Laputans, then immediately praises them warmly, we are confused, and not in an artistic way: I would say Swift here has momentarily lost his footing" (415).

60. Reilly, *Jonathan Swift: The Brave Desponder* (Manchester University Press, 1982), 16.

61. For helpful advice on drafts, I would like to thank Lance Harshbarger, Kathryn Hume, Robert D. Hume, and Ryan J. Stark.

NICOLÁS PANAGOPOULOS

# *Gulliver and the Horse: An Enquiry Into Equine Ethics*

> Nothing is great or little otherwise than by Comparison.
>
> *Gulliver's Travels,* II, i, 5

The fact that *Gulliver's Travels* has been read as escapist fiction masquerading as travel writing, or a cross between a fairy tale for children (of all ages) and eighteenth-century social satire, testifies not only to the universality of its appeal but also to the inscrutability of its author's intention. Swift's laconic remark that he wrote the book "to vex the world rather then divert it"[1] is of little help, for even an erudite reader would be hard pressed to say where the vexing begins and the diverting ends, or what the difference is, in this case. It would appear that even the great Goethe was foxed by the artistic subterfuge employed in *Gulliver's Travels,* viewing the work as an example "of the failure of allegory to make an idea prevail,"[2] while Thackeray interpreted Book Four as implying "that man is utterly wicked, desperate, and imbecile."[3]

The ease with which a whole host of commentators have misconstrued Swift's *opus magnum* since its first appearance in 1726 can be partially explained by the peculiarities of the Augustan world view; a world view in which. as Kathleen M. Williams observes, the "single truth can be neither grasped in thought nor embodied in words," whereas "singleness and simplicity" are seen as "the false abstractions of modern thinking."[4] It can also

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be attributed to the vitriolic quality of Swift's satire itself—a satire which cuts so deep that it calls into question the existence of any possible vantage point from which the subject may unequivocally pass judgement on, or even distinguish between, opposite positions. Thus, Swift does not limit himself to satirizing *either* the beings whom Gulliver meets on his journeys *or* Gulliver, but also *neither* and *both,* while it is virtually impossible to say for sure when he is doing which.

It is paradoxical, perhaps, that a writer who was so critical of the modern sensibility should display such a "modern" penchant for revealing the provisional, relative nature of all ethical judgements as well as the breakdown of Aristotle's principle of noncontradiction. Instead, Swift scans to have subscribed to the principle of *coincidentia oppositorum,* or the meeting of opposites, claiming that

> the mind of Man, when he gives the Spur and Bridle to his Thoughts, doth never stop, but naturally sallies out into both extreams of High and Low, of Good and Evil . . . like one who travels the *East* into the *West;* or like a strait Line drawn by its own Length into a Circle.[5]

The present study attempts to shed light on these issues by focusing on the central figure of Book Four and arguably the most ambivalent symbol to be found in all of *Gulliver's Travels,* the horse, while exploring the rationale of presenting the Houyhnhnms as super-rational beings and the "*Perfection of Nature*" (IV, iii, 5). Swift's horse is examined from a variety of perspectives (philosophical, cultural, political, mythological, sociological, and linguistic), while structuralist analysis is brought to bear on the Houyhnhnm/human discourse to highlight its self-reflexive, self-enclosed, self-authenticating, and ultimately self-contradictory nature. The aim of this paper is to show that, by presenting a situation in which the horse seems to be endowed with qualities considered "ideal" by Enlightenment standards, Swift is engaged in the deconstruction of such conceptual opposites as real/ideal, human/animal, rational/irrational, civilized/savage, self/other, true/false, and even good/evil, on which traditional Western ethics are based.

Swift's decision to cast an animal in the role of *animal rationale* gives rise to a pun on the Latin phrase at the heart of his famous claim to Alexander Pope that man is not "*animal rationale,*" but only "*rationis capax*."[6] Analysing this term, we could say that a human being may be a species of animal in the Latin sense of "possessing spirit," or in the Greek sense of "living creature" (*ζώου*), but when the adjective *rationale* is added to the noun, the resulting definition is problematic, a contradiction in terms. Swift's dramatized pun implies that an "animal" in the English sense could more easily display the

kind of consummate rationality envisaged by the ancients and embodied in the Houyhnhmns, because there is no conflict between instinct and reason operating in animal nature comparable to that which characterizes human nature; for the Houyhnhnms, reason *is* instinct. Thus, the reversal of the classical definitions of "animal" and "human" that we find in Book Four may, as Maynard Mack argues, be a way to emphasize the fact that pure rationality is not within human reach.[7] It may also be a way of subverting Enlightenment ideas of progress by showing human beings losing the "divine faculty" of reason and regressing to a Hobbesian state of nature. The text encourages precisely such a reading, since Houyhnhnm legend has it that the Yahoo race originated from two human beings very much like Gulliver whose offspring, estranged from human society for generations, gradually regressed to the level of savagery in which our hero finds them (IV, ix, 2).

As Kathleen M. Williams has observed, "one reason why the Houyhnhnms are a race of animals is for satiric distance,"[8] and indeed, if we look at the way the Houyhnhnms treat those species less privileged than themselves, we realize that the "animal" is remarkably "human," after all. Ironically, the super-rational horses behave to the bestial anthropoids of Houyhnhnmland exactly as humans behave to animals in the real world: they deprive them of their liberty, employ them in performing menial tasks, and use parts of their dead bodies as raw materials (see IV, ix, 2; x, 1). What is more, the Houyhnhnms debate the pros and cons of controlling the Yahoo population by using eugenics or even exterminating them altogether (IV, ix, 3)—an inversion of the cultural achievement signified by Hamlet's "To be, or not to be, that is the question" (III, i, 56), but on a mass scale.[9] It is not surprising, then, that the mere presence of a Houyhnhmn before a Yahoo is enough to scare the latter away (IV, viii, 1), parodying the way horses react to the slightest "smell" of danger in real life. Ironically, in any comparison between beasts and humans in Book Four, the latter always come off worse, suggesting that the real difference between the "animal" and the "human" lies not in rationality but in morality. As Swift suggests in *Further Thoughts on Religion,* what distinguishes Adam from his fellow creatures is, paradoxically, his tendency to behave inhumanely:

> Lions, bears, elephants, and some other animals, are strong or valiant, and their species never degenerates in their native soil, except they happen to be enslaved or destroyed by human fraud: But men degenerate every day, merely by the folly, the perverseness, the avarice, the tyranny, the pride, the treachery, or inhumanity of their own kind.[10]

Thus, just as the power relationship between Gulliver and the Lilliputians is didactically reversed when Gulliver lands in Brobdingnag (II, i, 5), the reader is invited to obtain a valuable lesson in self-knowledge by seeing humans (or humanoids) on the receiving end of racial supremacy in the land of the Houyhnhnms

We may say that, in Book Four, the human is shown masquerading as the animal because in real life the beast is only aping human manners and pretending to be civilized. So much, then, for the absolute distinction between "human" and "animal," but the question is why the super-rational being should be represented by a horse. Many plausible arguments have been put forward to explain this. R. S. Crane, for example, tracing the history of the terms "rational" and "irrational" as a means of dividing the genus "animal," pointed out that the Neoplatonist Porphyry provided a standard teaching manual that had made this distinction a commonplace in the Renaissance and neoclassical periods. Crane claims that, in Porphyry's *Isagoge* to Aristotle's *Categories,* the example of the horse is repeatedly used to stand for the "irrational," in contradistinction to man, the "rational," and that Aristotle's paradigm was repeated in countless textbooks on logic throughout Swift's age, including the manual by his Provost, Narcissus Marsh, whose *Institutio logicæ* (1679) was mandatory reading for all college freshmen.[11] Crane concludes that

> it might well have occurred to a clever satirist then that he could produce a fine shock to his readers' complacency as human beings by inventing a world in which horses appeared where the logicians had put men and men where they had put horses.[12]

One reason for presenting an animal, traditionally viewed as irrational, in the place of a human being, characteristically defined as rational, is to suggest that human nature is self-contradictory because predicated on the problematic opposition between the animal/human as well as the rational/irrational. It is also worth noting that the Greek word for horse changed from *ίππος* in the classical period to *άλογο* (meaning literally "irrational") during the Byzantine period, reflecting the identification of this particular animal with irrationality and unpredictability. Whether or not Swift's neoclassical education would have made him aware of this linguistic shift, the most subtle and carefully hidden irony in Book Four is that the modern Greek word for the creature signifying "Perfection of Nature" does not derive from the term "rational," as one would expect given the Houyhnhnm character and the Socratic ideal which it represents, but from its opposite. Not only has the noble *ίππος* of the ancients been relegated to the irrational *άλογο* of the moderns, but the very concept of "rational" is thereby questioned and undermined.

Picking up Crane's cue, Irvin Ehrenpreis showed that, besides Swift, other "clever satirists" who wanted to shock their readers by putting horses in the place traditionally reserved for humans included Sir Philip Sidney, Samuel Butler, and even Plutarch, who, in *Moralia,* depicts Ulysses conversing with a horse.[13] As Crane points out, the other distinguishing mark of the horse in classical times was considered to be its whinnying ("*equus est animal hinnibile*").[14] Of course, the central tableau of Book Four is precisely that of the hero conversing with the *animal irrationale et hinnibile*—a double absurdity since phonetic differences in the languages of the human and equine species would compound the cognitive incongruities to render mutual understanding impossible. Aristotle would agree that, even if there were such a thing, *logos* for horses could not be the same as *logos* for humans. Ironically, it is Swift's modern Ulysses who is shown at a disadvantage on both counts and as having to bridge the gap. A more modern case of a man talking to a horse, which Swift actually alludes to, is Charles V's proverbial remark that he would speak to his God in Spanish, to his mistress in Italian, and to his horse in German (IV, iii, 2)—the implication being that the last is the most unimaginative language of the three and therefore the most appropriate for such a down-to-earth interlocutor. This does, rather humorously, raise the philosophical problem of which language could be used to facilitate communication between diverse species, but it also relates to another question which is arguably closer to the heart of the matter for Swift: the imperiousness (one is tempted to say "blinkered attitude") of creatures like the Houyhnhnms who, like Charles V, place themselves at the centre of the cosmos and convert all other beings into their objects.

A connection between the figure of the horse and monarchy can also be seen in the royal arms of Great Britain, to which George I added a silver horse courant in 1714. This horse was to evolve into the unicorn which stands opposite the lion rampant in the royal arms of today, both animals being traditionally associated with royalty due to their noble bearing and courage in battle.[15] Given these associations, the super-rational horse also functions as a symbol of empire, while Book Four of *Gulliver's Travels* can be interpreted as an attack on the English treatment of subject-races which anticipates postcolonialism. Thus, Book Four significantly ends with a tirade against eighteenth-century "exploration" which is supposed to indict all other nations *except* the British:

> Ships are sent forth with the first Opportunity; the Natives driven out or destroyed, their Princes tortured to discover their Gold; a free License given to all Acts of Inhumanity and Lust; the Earth reeking with the Blood of its Inhabitants; And this execrable Crew of Butchers employed in so pious an Expedition, is a *modern Colony*

> sent to convert and civilize an idolatrous and barbarous People: But this Description, I confess, doth by no means affect the *British* Nation. (IV, xii, 7–8)

Of course, this facile denial serves as a barely veiled affirmation, while the fact that the passage is located immediately after Gulliver's account of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos cannot be without import. As one critic has suggested, in presenting a land in which an élitist oligarchy maintains an oppressive status quo on intellectual grounds and backs it up by the threat of genocide, Swift may be "drawing an analogy between English political tyranny over the Irish."[16] The degenerate, filth-loving Yahoos could therefore stand for the Irish seen through English eyes, while the debasement which human nature has undergone in their construction may reflect the process by which imperialism dehumanizes those peoples it intends to subjugate or exterminate, so as to preclude the possibility of remorse in its own ranks or, worse, identification with the victims. The ideology of empire is also designed to smooth over or eradicate any class conflicts or tensions within a society, and this is reflected in the absolute, almost deathly harmony characterizing Houyhnhnm relationships, which only serves to highlight the seemingly irreconcilable racial differences between them and the Yahoos. Gulliver living amongst the Houyhnhnms may therefore be seen to stand for Swift himself: an Irishman living amongst the English, and induced by them to hate his own race for not living up to Enlightenment ideals. In being born of English parents in Ireland, the bicultural Swift can be said to have suffered from the same identity conflict as Gulliver, whose physical appearance seems to link him more with the Yahoos (IV, viii, 4), but whose way of thinking is closer to that of the Houyhnhnms.

The scene in which Gulliver bids farewell to his Houyhnhnm master and stoops to kiss its hoof while the horse condescendingly raises its leg to facilitate the act of worship (IV, x, 14) is therefore a pregnant image symbolizing, among other things, servility towards the oppressor under the guise of a medieval gesture of allegiance. This scene may also be an inversion of Christ washing the Apostles' feet (John 13: 5–14). If so, the master horse is posing as a god or Messiah figure, which would fit the regal theme and the theory of divine right that British monarchs have been so keen to promote. Needless to say, the word "Beast" would have been familiar to Swift from the Bible as signifying the Antichrist (Rev. 6: 4–8), the adversary who pretends to be Christ. Not only does the horse do nothing to discourage Gulliver's misplaced adoration, but it acts arrogantly and imperially towards the Yahoo-like foreigner, as though positioned far above him in the Great Chain of Being. Gulliver is therefore seduced into imagining that a great honour is bestowed on him when "so illustrious a Person should descend to give so great a Mark

of Distinction to a Creature so inferior as I" (IV, x, 14). For all their dirtiness and beastliness, the Yahoos at least do not suffer from the arrogance that characterizes the Houyhnhnm master and Swift the Dean, if he had had to choose between the two, would probably have preferred the physical to the spiritual weakness.

As a result, the horse may have been. used in Book Four to embody the *animal rationale* not only to satirize the Aristotelian categories which formed the basis of neoclassical logic, but also by virtue of its regal/imperial associations which, in Swift's mind at least, connected it with the theme of overweening pride. *Gulliver's Travels* follows traditional Christian ethics in regarding pride as the gravest of sins;[17] not only is it thought to inculcate all the others, but also to impede repentance by encouraging the moral error that comes with self-mistaking. Having successfully graduated from the Houyhnhnm School of Pride, Gulliver looks down on his "fallen" fellows in England as belonging to a species altogether different from himself. This mirrors the way the Houyhnhnms lord it over all of Creation, arrogating to themselves the term "Perfection of Nature" simply by virtue of their rational superiority. When the *rationis capax* Gulliver first appears in their midst, for example, they express surprise "that a brute Animal should discover such Marks of a rational Creature" (IV, iii, 1), reflecting the way human beings react to the sight of parrots talking or of monkeys using tools, as well as the way Gulliver had previously been "amazed to see such Actions and Behaviour in Brute Beasts" (IV, i, 6; iii, 14). The Houyhnhnms regard themselves not only as more reasonable than their Yahoo neighbours, but as the only creatures capable of rational thought; in this respect, too, they mirror human beings who arrogantly reserve the "divine faculty" for their own race. Also, despite the fact that the Houyhnhnms are supposed to feel no more pride at being governed by reason than a man would feel "for not wanting a Leg or an Arm" (IV, xii, 13), they are vain enough to believe that any difference between their physiology and that of the Yahoos is naturally in their favour. Clearly, pride has the power to lead astray even the consummate rationality personified by the Houyhnhnms, which in turn has the power to seduce Gulliver into deifying these super-rational beings. Thus, the parting scene between Gulliver and his Master depicts the creature "made in God's image" (Gen. 1: 27) worshipping a hoofed animal which, anatomically speaking, is associated with the Devil.[18] What Swift could be implying here is that the worship of reason practised by the Moderns is a form of idolatry that seduces human beings away from God by encouraging them to place absolute trust in their self-sufficiency.

John Middleton Murry argues that Swift's use of the horse as the "noblest" animal would have been a natural choice for one wanting to represent a hypothetical community of creatures that had overcome their "animal egotism"—men being less credible in such a role.[19] However, the Houyhnhnms

can only be said to lack "animal egotism" in their dealings with one another, and this is because they seem to possess a collective ego, like ants or, indeed, the inhabitants of some imaginary utopia. This explains why the Houyhnhnms have no need for government or law or money (IV, viii, 9–16; ix, 5–7), since no difference of interest exists between them. Also, they are one of the few species in *Gulliver's Travels* that have no proper names, and this makes them strangely impersonal in their dealings with one another, as though possessing no individual identity. Consequently, they have no experience of private affection, and their family or sexual relationships never produce any bond of allegiance or love stronger than that owed to the community at large. Regardless of the way the Houyhnhnms behave to one another, towards other species such as the Yahoos, they behave in exactly the same manner as all other animals: the instinct of self-preservation overrules every other impulse and consideration. Thus, when they finally classify their protégé Gulliver as indisputably belonging to the Yahoo race on the grounds of physiological resemblance, they have no qualms in expelling him as someone who, being more intelligent than the Yahoos, constitutes an even greater potential threat to their ideal community than his "ravenous" comrades (IV, x, 5). This not only represents a way of judging and drawing conclusions about an individual on the basis of his/her external appearance which we would nowadays call racist, it also constitutes the breaking of one of the oldest taboos in human society and central to Swift's Christian creed: withdrawing hospitality from a guest.[20] The inability of the Houyhnhnms to differentiate between Gulliver the individual and the Yahoo race, to which he apparently belongs, should be judged in relation to Swift's comment to Pope that "I hate and detest that animal called man, although I hartily love John, Peter, Thomas and so forth."[21] Just as Swift was able to make this important distinction, avoiding the trap of misanthropy, so racism is not presented as universal amongst the Houyhnhnms and there is at least one horse that does not judge Gulliver by his external appearance alone: the sorrel nag's parting words to him are, significantly, "Take Care of thy self, gentle *Yahoo*" (IV, xi, 1).

Houyhnhnm ethics may not be "egotistical" in the narrow sense of the term, but they are coldly functional, almost Machiavellian, in the way the end (the good of the race) is seen to justify the means.[22] This is another way in which the horses of Houyhnhnmland may be said to be "princely," for it was Machiavelli's *The Prince* (1532) that ushered in pragmatics into the realm of politics, bringing about a sharp division between modern and classical ethics. The argument which is proposed at the Houyhnhnm council for substituting the Yahoos as beasts of burden with asses is characteristically based on practical considerations: the latter are more "valuable Brutes" (IV, ix, 3), since they are ready for service at five years old when the Yahoos are not ready till twelve. Similarly, one could argue that the Houyhnhnms do not preserve the

Yahoos, "the most filthy, noisome, and deformed Animal which Nature ever produced"(IV, ix, 2), for any sentimental reason such as pity, or the unattractiveness of violence, but because the benefits of exterminating them do not clearly outweigh the costs of keeping them alive. Also, the debate as to whether or not the Yahoos ought to be exterminated is very much in the spirit of Machiavellian *realpolitik,* which holds that "men must be either won over or destroyed,"[23] and that a ruler will be overthrown if he does not anticipate and preempt possible threats to his rule. Besides debating the castration of the Yahoo young as a "civilized" alternative to the slaughter of the entire race (IV, ix, 3), the Houyhnhnms practise a rudimentary form of social engineering on their own population as a means of maintaining an ideal balance between the classes, as well as between the sexes (IV, viii, 16). This represents an ironic reversal of horse breeding to achieve maximum strength, beauty, and speed, and Gulliver at first assumes that the Houyhnhnms he meets must be the product of remarkable animal husbandry, concluding that "a people who could so far civilize brute Animals must needs excel in Wisdom all the Nations of the World" (IV, ii, 1). The irony is that the "people" and the "brute Animals" are in this case one and the same, while the dividing line between the two is very difficult to trace in Book Four—especially in the way they treat creatures less powerful than themselves. Of course, the self-ameliorating exercise of power, regardless of moral considerations, is, as Machiavelli points out, not only the prince's right, but an obligation which comes with territory:

> You must realize this: that a prince . . . cannot observe all those things which give men a reputation of virtue, because in order to maintain his state he is often forced to act in defiance of good faith, of charity, of kindness, of religion. (p. 101)

This basic ethical assumption is exemplified in the behaviour not only of human beings towards animals but also of Houyhnhmns towards Yahoos. In this, as in all other things, the Houyhnhnms are strictly following the dictates of reason, a conduct quite commendable from an Enlightenment point of view.

But Swift is not only engaged in parodying Machiavellian ethics by giving them to horses. His intention in Book Four is to show that neither the Enlightenment ethical ideal of self-interest based on rational principles, nor the Christian ideal of charity and self-denial, which it effectively supplanted, can be strictly and consistently adhered to by human beings in their everyday lives. For the Houyhnhnms seem to have reached a logical impasse with the Yahoos and cannot decide what to do with them, while their tolerance of the Yahoo-like Gulliver lasts arguably only as long as his curiosity value. Thus, as the Mosaic law is used in the Christian era to reveal the inability of human

beings to be perfectly law-abiding (Rom. 3: 20), the Houyhnhnms are used by Swift to emphasize the limits of human rationality, not to provide the reader with an ideal to try and emulate. This is clearly borne out by the absurdity of Gulliver walking and even talking like a horse when he returns to England (IV, xi, 18). Also, as Kathleen M. Williams has observed in "Gulliver's Voyage to the Houyhnhnms," the choice of the horse for the super-rational being merely highlights the irrelevance of Houyhnhnm values and virtues "to the ordinary life and standards of mankind."[24] Thus, besides the fact that "the good" for horses differs from "the good" for humans, the ideal society of the Houyhnhnms is as likely to exist in real life as such horses are likely to exist in nature. The latter idea is suggested by the derogatory comparison of the inhabitants of Houyhnhnmland with "the inhabitants of Utopia'" made by Gulliver's more skeptical readers and mentioned in the letter to Sympson (p. 8).

This intertextual reference to Thomas More's famous piece of fantasy literature links Gulliver's narrative with the tradition of Renaissance travel writing,[25] in which explorers often returned home with tales of fantastic creatures, such as talking horses or ape-like men.[26] One of the more popular of these mythical creatures was the unicorn, or *monokeros:* the horse with the horn growing out of its forehead. The unicorn made its first appearance on Assyrian reliefs and was first described in literature by Ctesias (c. 400 BC), who probably had the Indian rhinoceros as his model.[27] Swift's casting the horse in the role of the super-virtuous Houyhnhnm may be due to the improbability of such a creature actually existing, for the unicorn was a rare beast and notoriously difficult to capture; it therefore naturally fits the utopian atmosphere which Swift was trying to create in Book Four. The unicorn was also believed to possess powerful charms, with its horn having medicinal properties if drunk out of or ground up. Indeed, some believed that the unicorn's horn held the secret of eternal life, being connected with the famous *elixir vitae* of antiquity. As a result, this noble and good-natured beast was likened to Christ in medieval times, even serving as the basis for a full-blown allegory of Christ's incarnation and death.[28] These associations would have been familiar to Swift, who may have chosen the horse as his model for the "Perfection of Nature" precisely because it was closely connected with the mythical unicorn in turn associated with Christ, the "flower of creation."

Other mythological creatures which the inhabitants of Houyhnhnmland conjure up are the centaur, a mixture of horse and man, and the satyr, a cross between a man and a goat. The former is, in terms of conception at least, a close relative of the Houyhnhnm, whereas the latter bears many similarities to the Yahoo (Gulliver notices that the Yahoos have "Beards like Goats" [IV, i, 4]) while also relating to one of the central issues in Book Four: the difficulty of categorically distinguishing between "human" and "animal."[29] If we

define "human" in terms of rationality, the satyr-like Yahoo may be deemed less essentially human than the centaur-like Houyhnhmn, and the same conclusion is arrived at in reverse if we define "animal" in terms of physicality or instinctual behaviour. But, as we have seen, Swift undermines this neat equation by making the Yahoo more human-like in form, and the Houyhnhnm less human-like. So, from the inverted relationship between the physiology and behaviour of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos, as well as the symbolic significance of the generic ambivalence of both centaur and satyr, "human" and "animal" are related both in terms of primary ("essential") and secondary ("superficial") qualities, while the very distinction between "essential" and "superficial" may also be undermined. This is not to say that the author does not distinguish his creatures at all. Since the satyr is connected etymologically with the type of literature which Swift was writing in *Gulliver's Travels,* at least in a seventeenth-century understanding of the term, one might speculate that he was more sympathetic towards the satyr-like Yahoos than the deadly serious Houyhnhnms. What emerges from the text is a picture of universal ambivalence and heterogeneity that only a postmodern critical perspective can fully do justice to. Moreover, one of the main targets of Swift's satire is precisely the kind of eighteenth-century travel narrative that included fantastic or mythological creatures like centaurs or satyrs, so here is yet another instance of self-reflexivity in *Gulliver's Travels*.

The reference to More's *Utopia* (1516) in Gulliver's Letter to his Cousin Sympson (p. 8) implicitly alludes to Plato's *Republic,* which has been established as a major source for both More's text and Book Four of *Gulliver's Travels* in its presentation of an ideal city based an rational principles.[30] The main point of comparison is that the super-rational horses of Houyhnhnmland dominate the purely instinctive Yahoos, just as the philosopher-king in Plato's *Republic* reigns over the soldiers and workers representing the lower classes of society, which were believed to correspond to the "lower" elements in the human psyche. Like the inhabitants of Plato's *Republic,* the Houyhnhnms are primarily differentiated amongst themselves on the basis of their sex and social function. What would have endeared the Houyhnhnms most to Plato, however, is their being as good as they are rational: they cannot understand the need for lying or deception of any kind (IV, iv, I),[31] never try to take advantage of or abuse their fellow citizens, while "Unchastity" or infidelity in marriage is unheard of (IV, viii, 12). In the case of the Houyhnhnms, therefore, we have a perfect illustration of the Socratic equation of knowledge with virtue, while sin, aptly illustrated by the degenerate Yahoos or Gulliver's accounts of European customs, does indeed appear to be the product of ignorance or faulty understanding.[32] Of course, the Yahoos cannot, theologically speaking, be subject to sin since they have regressed to a state of nature and so possess neither free will nor moral understanding that would allow them to be held accountable for their actions. However, when Socrates

speaks of sin, he means an error of the understanding that leads to erroneous action, and not a moral trespass in the religious sense.

Interestingly enough, the Houyhnhnms also seem to be modelled on the ancient Greeks in many respects. First, they settle all matters by civilized debate and love to discuss philosophical problems in a classical symposium manner, in which fruitless passion and personal bias have no place. Their highest ideals, as expressed in their "excellent" poetry, are said to be friendship (in the universal, Platonic sense of *philia*) and benevolence (IV, ix, 7). They seem to set great store by running and physical exercise and have even instituted a latter-day version of the Olympic games in which the Houyhnhnm youth meet four times a year (a corruption of the classical frequency of once every four years) to compete at various games and sports: the winners of these games are honoured by songs being sung in their praise. During these festivals, Yahoos are used to carry food and drink for the participants recalling the institution of slavery in ancient Athens (IV, viii, 15). This fusion of Plato's *Republic* with the Athens of antiquity either suggests that the capital of ancient Greece was the closest thing to a utopia ever achieved, or it has the satiric purpose of subverting the neoclassical myth of the Golden Age. In other words, the ideal city of the great philosophers, like the ideal society of the super-rational horses, may simply be a figment of the imagination; or if it did exist as we imagine it, it is no more than a memory now.

Moreover, a closer look at Houyhnhnm reality reveals so many contradictions and inconsistencies that we are not only led to doubt the viability of all rational utopias, but to revaluate the whole question of "the good" or "the ideal" as far as human beings are concerned. As F. R. Leavis has observed, what would be the purpose of teaching their youth "Temperance, Industry, Exercise and Cleanliness" (IV, viii, 14), as the Houyhnhnms apparently do, if as a race they have a natural predisposition to all these virtues anyway and cannot but practise them instinctively?[33] Such an education would only be meaningful if those being educated also possessed tendencies that went contrary to the very principles they were enjoined to observe. The same interdependence applies to the relationship between sickness and health. It is difficult to see how a living organism can exist (as we are told the Houyhnhmm exist) without being subject to diseases of any kind (IV, vii, 12), and how it can die of old age (as we are told the Houyhnhnms die; IV, ix, 9–10), if not by some bodily malfunction or malady. Nor is it possible for a living being not to fear death in the slightest if it is conscious of mortality and knows that death means the annihilation of its being (IV, ix, 9). Life presupposes the will to live, which in turn generates a desire in the individual to prolong his or her existence as long as possible. This state of affairs not only leads to a natural fear of death but also to a principle of self-interest operating to some degree within all individuals and societies, but apparently absent from

the Houyhnhnms. Moreover, what personal motive can an individual have to marry and raise children if nature does not induce them to feel any greater affection for their spouse or offspring than they would feel for a total stranger (IV, viii, 20)? The questions are endless and the logical absurdities are not always so veiled—how can a horse's hoof be used to sow (IV, ix, 8)—and all this in a land where logic is supposed to rule supreme.

Thus the reader is subtly coaxed into looking behind his or her prized assumptions about how society might be improved or how human nature might be reformed to produce an ideal world. In this way, conceptual opposites such as vice/virtue, sickness/health, even reason/unreason are presented as mutually generating and interdependent, so any vision of the world which separates the one from the other and places it above its fellow in ethical terms is partial and self-contradictory. The "good" is always relative and predicated on the "non-good" while every utopia is founded on a dystopia. This explains why the Houyhnhnms do not decide to exterminate the Yahoo race altogether. They need the "evil" other to define themselves; destroying their imperfect Yahoo foils would mean undermining their own self-appointed role as the "Perfection of Nature." Now it becomes clear why Gulliver's detractors include both Houyhnhnms and Yahoos in the category "inhabitants of Utopia," because without the extreme rationality embodied by the equine inhabitants of Houyhnhnmland, the purely instinctive Yahoo cannot be imagined. Just as Hamlet's existential question "To be or not to be?" is intimately related to the question of whether or not he should kill Claudius, with all the complex ethical issues this raises, so the question of exterminating the Yahoos which the Houyhnhnms debate every four years (IV, ix, 1–2) is essentially a question of how much they love themselves; for the purely instinctive Yahoo is the *alter ego* of the super-rational Houyhnhnm and necessary for its existence.

The inter-relation and close alliance between Houyhnhnm and Yahoo, disguised by Gulliver's Houyhnhnm-influenced narrative, may also be seen on a linguistic level. Indeed, the only way in which these two species can be thought of as opposites is through the mediation of language—Houyhnhnm language. Thus, both species display a homogeneity within their own race which emphasizes, or rather produces, the absolute heterogeneity discernible between the two races. However, like the Houyhnhnms, the Yahoos are undifferentiated amongst themselves, save in terms of sex or social position, but, one could argue, this is a product of their lack of a sufficiently evolved language. The fact that the Yahoos are inarticulate while the Houyhnhnms possess *logos* enables the latter to appropriate "the good" for themselves and to label the former as "evil." So we see the whole question of civilization and savagery or of what is "rational" and "irrational" boil down to the use of language and the way the dominant discourse functions to produce value judgements that justify the practices of the dominant class, race, or species.

The differences between the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos emerge as more linguistic than actual, or, to use Hobbes's phrase, "*True* and *False* are attributes of Speech, not of Things."[34]

The main butt of Swift's satire, therefore, is not the apparent "beastliness" of human nature (as illustrated by the degenerate Yahoos), nor the inability of human beings to realize their highest potential (exemplified by the super-rational Houyhnhnms). Such a reading would lead one to the kind of misanthropy which Swift condemns in "vous autr[e]s," who hate the human species because they are disappointed with it for not being *animal rationale*.[35] This is precisely the trap which Thackeray fell into when he railed indignantly at Book Four for its "gnashing imprecations against mankind—tearing down all shreds of modesty, past all sense of manliness and shame; filthy in word, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene."[36] Rather than condemn mankind, Swift's purpose in Book Four is to highlight the provisional, self-validating nature of human judgements by revealing the way that "truth" lies not in the empirical world but in perception and language. Indeed, not only have the Houyhnhnms flattered themselves and degraded the Yahoos by the distinct and opposite meanings they have attached to their respective names, but the word "Houyhnhnm" corresponds exactly to the sound that a horse makes when braying. This highlights the fact that, just as a horse can only utter sounds that its physiology will allow, so a creature can only judge using itself as the moral standard of those judgements. Moreover, if we could imagine a horse language, the limits of that language would correspond exactly to the limits of horse thought, and *vice versa*. The absolute interdependence between "world" and "word,"[37] which a linguistic philosopher would locate in the similarity between the particular signs themselves, is highlighted by the Houyhnhnm phrase "*the Thing which is not*" (IV, iv, 1) to signify a lie: something which the super-rational horses are supposed never to speak. Since the human world is entirely circumscribed by, and limited to, human language, it follows that for us to conceive of a horse world—or any other world, for that matter—is merely to project the ethical assumptions and prejudices inherent in our language onto that "other" world and immediately deny responsibility for them as though we were dealing with a completely different reality from our own: exactly what Gulliver does throughout the *Travels,* in other words. It is clear then that "Houyhnhnm" and "Yahoo" are interrelated, interdependent concepts, differentiated only by the words used to describe or define them while representing subdivisions of the genus "human," just as "human" represents one subdivision of the genus "animal."

Highlighting the subjective, self-reflexive quality of conceptonlization, Swift hides different words or sounds within the names "Houyhnhnm" and "Yahoo" which provide alternative perspectives on these creatures, not intended by those who originally named them. First, the word "Yahoo" os-

tensibly fits the creature which it denotes by resembling a savage howl, but it also sounds like a person spurring on a horse; so, as human subjects, we can speak of a phonetic contradiction here between signifier and signified since the Yahoo is meant to be the beast and the Houyhnhnm the cultivated creature. The reason why this contradiction does not immediately strike us, perhaps, is that the subject in this case is supposed to be equine and not human. Moreover, the word "Houyhnhnm" contains all the letters necessary to make up the word "human" except the letter "a," which is present in the word "Yahoo." Thus, just as the concept "humanity" cannot be found in its entirety in the linguistic make-up of either word, its characteristic qualities have been shared out between the creatures which these words denote. Or, to use Plato's theory of *methexis,* [38] we may say that both Houyhnhnm and Yahoo partake of the Idea of "human being," but neither can be entirely identified with it. "Houyhnhnm" sounds very close to "human," but not quite: it constitutes an imperfect copy of the Idea. Also present in the word "Houyhnhnm" is the coupling of the letters "n" and "m" at the end, which occurs very rarely in English but, interestingly enough, can be found in the word "Enlightenment." Thus, not only is a trace of the word "Enlightenment" hidden within the name of a creature typifying consummate rationality, but the division of human nature into "perfect" and "evil" (meaning, in this case, "entirely rational" and "entirely instinctive"), which the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos represent, can be said to result from the same rationalist tendency in post-medieval culture. Indeed, the Yahoos display all those qualities or characteristics expelled or unacknowledged by Western man: physicality, uncontrolled sexuality, a ravenous appetite, uncleanliness, animal egotism, cowardice, meanness, aggressiveness, the hoarding impulse, etc. It is not surprising therefore that the Yahoos' favourite method of expressing contempt is by defecating (IV, i, 4; viii, 2):[39] the bodily function on which the anthropological paradigm of expulsion is based. Of course, it is not human beings who are usually associated with the practice of defecating in public, but horses—human beings like to think that they have developed more sophisticated ways of communicating than the Yahoos, even if they have not yet completely mastered their bodily functions or transcended the animal part of their nature. But, again, everything appears inverted and distorted as though viewed through a mocking mirror to conceal the fact that human beings are reluctant to see themselves the way they really are.

All this suggests that Swift's choice of the horse for the super-rational being and the "Perfection of Nature" in Book Four is more ironic than has hitherto been acknowledged—so much so that, besides its other associations, the Houyhnhmn may be regarded as a symbol of ambivalence or self-contradiction: the breakdown of Aristotle's law of the excluded middle.[40] Thus, in relating the practices and customs of Europe to the Houyhnhnm

master, Gulliver explains that horses are regarded in his country as the most dignified and beautiful of creatures, and usually attached to persons of high rank who treat them with great kindness and employ them in such noble offices as racing or drawing chariots. But, when these gracious animals become old and ill or are owned by persons of low rank, they are heartlessly worked to death, after which their hide is stripped from their backs and their corpses are left to be eaten by dogs and birds of prey (IV, iv, 2). In other words, a greater paradox than the equine lot can hardly be imagined. Moreover, despite the fact that the Houyhnhnms are presented as paragons of honesty, having no word in their language to signify lying, they are not above treating Gulliver with feigned civility in order to humour him and make him more entertaining in public (IV, iii, 12). Indeed, the Houyhnhnm phrase "to say the Thing which is not" can be viewed as an oxymoron contradicting the basic principle on which representational language is based; for even a lie, or any other "negative" concept of this kind, must have some positive content in order to be conceptualized, in the absence of which no sign can correspond to it and it cannot be known. As Plato points out, "how could [a man] know something which is not? . . . What fully *is* is fully knowable, what in no way *is* is entirely unknowable."[41] It follows that the Houyhnhnms must have some experiential understanding of the concept which this phrase denotes; otherwise, they would have no way to express it—even negatively. In other words, the phrase "the Thing which is not" to signify "a lie" is hypocritical, constituting an attempt on the part of the Houyhnhmns to present themselves as more honest than they really are or ever can be.

The image of the horse is also subtly connected with mendacity in the text. Gulliver, promising henceforth to always tell the truth, quotes Sinon's vow to the Trojans, which tricked them into accepting the gift horse left behind by the Greeks: "Now if Fortune has molded Sinon for misery, will she in spite mold him as false and lying" (IV, xii, 3).[42] Implicit in the image of Sinon and the Trojan horse is the idea of lowering one's defences and letting the enemy in: something which Gulliver arguably does when he allows the superrational horses to trick him into hating himself and his own race.[43] Besides the association of the horse here with human treachery and deception, in Gulliver's vow is implicit the idea of moral relativism, the greatest lie of all is to say that one is not a liar. It should also be noted that Gulliver, in taking this oath, is trying to emulate the Houyhnhnms, so one could argue that it is the horses which have inspired him with false and unrealizable ideals, essentially encouraging him to be dishonest with himself.

Of course, Book Four is not about equine, but about human ethics; for horses have no need to lie just as they have no need for government, laws, armies, and money. Human beings, on the other hand, with their passions, their private interests, and their penchant for imaginatively moulding

the world to suit their needs cannot but be partial in the way they perceive and represent reality. As Hobbes writes, "for though the nature of that we conceive, be the same; yet the diversity of our reception of it, in respect of different constitutions of body, and prejudices of opinion, gives everything a tincture of our different passions."[44] Moreover, the Houyhnhnm definition of telling a lie, besides its oxymoronic quality, constitutes an oversimplification of a complex ethical phenomenon, which arises from an exclusively rationalistic perspective on the world. For the Houyhnhnms, lying may simply be the opposite of testifying to what is self-evident but, for humans, lying means to fabricate the facts knowingly and deliberately, with the aim of obtaining some personal benefit. Yet, one might argue, even this much fuller definition does not do justice to the full range of phenomena related to dissimulation or misrepresentation. For example, what are "facts", and is one also lying when fabricating them unconsciously or only consciously—is there a difference, in any case? Then, there is the even thornier question of motive: can one only be said to be "lying" if the credulity of one's interlocutor advances one's personal interests, or are there other motives for using falsehood? Thus, is Gulliver "lying" to his readers in pretending that his travels actually happened and the Houyhnhnms and Yahoos really exist? Or, is Swift "lying" to us in telling the story of a man who passes for sane but is so deluded that he cannot separate fact from fantasy?[45] What, in other words, is the difference between a lie and a fiction or the act of deceiving oneself and deceiving others? These issues, raised by Swift's narrative, are central to Platonic as well as Aristotelian ethics, which converge on the question of the superiority of knowledge over delusion but diverge as regards the value of artistic representation, with Plato in *The Republic* (X, 608) viewing the lie and the fiction as synonymous and equally pernicious, and Aristotle in *The Poetics* viewing the act of mimesis involved in poetry as potentially facilitating knowledge and therefore bringing us closer to the "truth" (IV, 1–6).[46] Swift the Dean may have been inclined to agree with Plato, but Swift the satirist would probably have identified more with Aristotle's position, and this ambivalence is naturally reflected in the text.

It is clear that, as with all other conceptual opposites in Book Four, "true" and "false" are not only difficult to distinguish (as the one may be masquerading as the other), but being relative, mutually-defining terms, they are also very difficult to judge. Instead of inviting us to pass judgement, the text encourages us to understand the way judgement is usually passed, that is, partially, prescriptively, and self-referentially. Armed with the knowledge that value judgements are always operative in the construction of concepts, a modern critic would expect to find the positive concepts "true" and "good" associated with the one who is defining and the negative concepts "false" and "evil" associated with the other, and this is exactly what

we do find in Book Four of *Gulliver's Travels*. Here the creatures that possess the power of language use it to reaffirm their moral superiority and, by extension, their authority over those that, to use Hobbes's words, "accept names imposed by others." As Nietzsche observes in *The Gay Science* in relation to the error of morality: "What is good for me is good in itself"[47]—a principle that, for all the Houyhnhnms' objectivity and intellectual integrity, applies as much to them as to the bestial Yahoos they so much abhor. The casualty in this whole affair is of course, Gulliver, who is so taken in by the moralizing of the Houyhnhnms that he assumes what is good for the super-rational horses is good in itself, with the familiar tragicomic results: his "becoming" a horse may strike one as an extreme solution, but at least it plots out the contradiction.

## Notes

1. *Correspondence,* ed. Woolley, II, 606.

2. Quoted from T. O. Wedel, "On the Philosophical Background of *Gulliver's Travels,*" *Studies in Philology,* 23 (1926); reprinted in *"Gulliver's Travels": A Casebook,* ed. Richard Gravil (London, 1986 [1974]), p. 83.

3. *The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century: A Series of Lectures* (London, 1853), p. 41. See also, for more of such "Thackerayan" prejudice, Merrel D. Clubb. "The Criticism of Gulliver's 'Voyage to the Houyhnhnms,' 1726–1934," *Stanford Studies in Language and Literature,* ed. Hardin Craig (1941), pp. 203–232; and Donald M. Berwick, *The Reputation of Jonathan Swift, 1781–1882* (New York, 1965 [1941]), pp. 108–111, 148–152.

4. *Jonathan Swift and the Age of Compromise* (Lawrence, Kansas, 1958), p. 210.

5. *Prose Works,* I, 99. See, in particular, John R. Clark, *Form and Frenzy in Swift's "Tale of a Tub"* (Ithaca and London, 1970), pp. 181–230.

6. *Correspondence,* ed. Woolley, II, 607.

7. See "Gulliver's Travels," from the introduction to *English Masterpieces, V: The Augustans,* 2nd ed., ed. Maynard Mack (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1961); reprinted in *Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays,* ed. Ernest Tuveson (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1964), p. 113.

8. "Gulliver's Voyage to the Houyhnhnms," *ELH,* 18 (1951), p. 279; reprinted in *"Gulliver's Travels": A Casebook,* ed. Gravil, p. 140.

9. The Houyhnhnm debate about what to do with the Yahoos anticipates the civilized/savage paradox explored in Joseph Conrad's work and encapsulated in Kurtz's famous phrase: "Exterminate all the brutes!" (*Heart of Darkness,* ed. Paul O'Prey [Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1983], p, 87).

10. *Prose Works,* IX, 264. See also the essay by Stephen Karian in this issue of *Swift Studies,* pp. 87–106.

11. See, in addition to Muriel McCarthy, *All Graduates and Gentlemen; Marsh's Library* (Dublin, 1980), p. 13, Robert Bolton, *A Translation of the Charter and Statutes of Trinity College, Dublin* (Dublin, 1760), pp. 70–71: "In this [First Class] logic shall be read, and particularly Porphyrius's Introduction, which our Will is shall be read through at least thrice a Year."

12. "The Houyhnhnms, the Yahoos, and the History of Ideas," *Reason and the Imagination: Studies in the History of Ideas, 1600–1800,* ed. J. A. Mazzeo (New York and London, 1962), p. 248. See also Hermann J. Real and Heinz J. Vienken, "Vistas of Porphyry's Tree," *Eighteenth-Century Life,* 8 (1983), 92–96. For a Renaissance example, see Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici and Other Works,* ed. L. C. Martin (Oxford, 1964), pp. 32 and 302n.

13. "The Meaning of Gulliver's Last Journey," *A Review of English Literature,* 3, no 3 (1962), particularly pp. 23–26.

14. "The Houyhnhnms, the Yahoos, and the History of Ideas," p. 248.

15. See, on this aspect, Gene Washington, "Natural Horses–The Noble Horse–Houyhnhnms," *Swift Studies,* 3 (1988), 91–95; and Richard Nash, "Of Sorrels, Bays, and Dapple Greys," *Swift Studies,* 15 (2000), 110–115.

16. Clive T. Probyn, *"Gulliver's Travels": A Critical Study* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1987), p. 54.

17. See Arthur O. Lovejoy, "'Pride' in Eighteenth-Century Thought," *Essays in the History of Ideas* (New York, 1960 [1948]), pp. 62–68.

18. Elsewhere, Swift describes "the Reasoners" as unable to distinguish between Christ and Satan; see *"A Tale of a Tub," to which is added, "The Battle of the Books," and the "Mechanical Operation of the Sprit,"* eds. A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1958), p. 275.

19. *Jonathan Swift: A Critical Biography* (London, 1954), p. 340.

20. See, for the obligation to be hospitable, Rom 12: 13; and 1 Tim. 3: 2. See also Alfons Weische, "Hospitalitas, hospitium," *Augustinus-Lexikon,* III (Basel, 2006), 435–439; and *Poems,* ed. Williams, I, 111.

21. *Correspondence,* ed. Woolley, II, 606–607.

22. Although we have an implicit critique of Machiavellian ethics here, Swift shared with Machiavelli a skepticism towards classical utopias which is clearly evident in Books Three and Four of *Gulliver's Travels*.

23. *The Prince,* trans. John Butt (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1975), p. 59. *The Prince* was in Swift's library (see Passmann and Vienken, II, 1141–1144).

24. "Gulliver's Voyage to the Houyhnhnms," p. 279.

25. For a full exploration of this reference to More's *Utopia,* see John Traugott, "A Voyage to Nowhere with Thomas More and Jonathan Swift: *Utopia* and *The Voyage to the Houyhnhnms*," *The Sewanee Review,* 69 (1961), 534–565; reprinted in *Swift: A Collection of Critical Essays,* ed. Tuveson, pp. 143–169. See also Jenny Mezciems, "Utopia and 'the Thing Which is Not': More, Swift, and Other Lying Idealists," *University of Toronto Quarterly,* 52 (1982–1983), 40–62. For a largely dissenting view, see Hermann J. Real, "Voyages to Nowhere: More's *Utopia* and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*," *Eighteenth-Century Contexts: Historical Inquiries in Honor of Phillip Harth,* eds. Howard D. Weinbrot, Peter J. Schakel, and Stephen E. Karian (Madison, Wisconsin, 2001), pp. 96–113.

26. See, in particular, Dirk Friedrich Passmann, *"Full of Improbable Lies": "Gulliver's Travels" und die Reiseliteratur vor 1726* (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, 1997), pp. 197–215.

27. See *Encyclopedia Britannica,* X, 258b-c.

28. See *Encyclopedia Britannica,* X, 258–259.

29. For a fuller discussion of this problem in relation to Book Four of *Gulliver's Travels,* see Ehrenpreis, "The Meaning of Gulliver's Last Voyage," pp. 18–38.

30. The criticism on this subject has been conveniently summarized by Passmann and Vienken, II, 1437–1451.

31. Although Plato is a sworn enemy to falsehood sad deception of every kind (particularly that practised by such satirists as Swift), he grants the practical necessity of lying under certain circumstances. But, just as a powerful medicine is only entrusted to the physician and not to the layperson, so Socrates argues that the use of falsehood is only to be permitted to the philosopher-king, who knows how to practise it for the good of the state (*Republic,* III, 389b).

32. See *Meno* 77a, for example. This rule seems particularly applicable to the cunning English lawyers, who, to the master horse's puzzlement, were not paragons of wisdom but "usually the most ignorant Generation among us, the most despicable in common Conversation, avowed Enemies to all Knowledge and Learning" (IV, v, 18).

33. See *The Common Pursuit* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1966 [1962]), p. 84.

34. *Leviathan,* ed. C. B. Macpherson (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1986 [1651]), p. 105. For Swift and Hobbes, see Passmann and Vienken, II, 869–885.

35. See *Correspondence,* ed. Woolley, II, 623.

36. *The English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century,* p. 40.

37. See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method,* trans. Rev. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd ed. (London, 1989), pp. 443, 453.

38. See *Parmenides,* 151d.

39. For a brilliant study of the scatological theme in Book Four which makes a convincing case for Swift having anticipated Freud's theory of sublimation, see Norman O. Brown, "The Excremental Vision," *Life Against Death* (London, 1959), pp. 179–201.

40. See *Metaphysics,* III, 1006a.

41. *Republic,* V, 477.

42. Virgil, *Aeneid,* II, 78–80 (my translation).

43. See also Howard D. Weinbrot, "Swift, Horace, and Virgil: Brave Lies, Dangerous Horses, and Truth," *"Gulliver's Travels": Based on the 1726 Text, Contexts, Criticism*, ed. Albert J. Rivero (New York and London, 2002), pp. 500–504.

44. *Leviathan,* ed. Macpherson, p. 109.

45. For an interesting exploration of these issues, see Michael Seidel, "*Gulliver's Travels* and the Contracts of Fiction," *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel,* ed. John Richetti (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 72–89.

46. I am indebted to Simon Shepherd and Mick Wallis for this observation; see their *Drama/Theater/Performance* (New York, 2004), p. 213.

47. *A Nietzsche Reader,* trans. R. J. Holingdale (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1977), p. 59.

MELINDA RABB

# *The Secret Memoirs of Lemuel Gulliver: Satire, Secrecy, and Swift*

> [W]hoever has . . . desire of some knowledge of Secrets of State, must compare what he hears from severall great men, or from one great man at severall Times, which is equally different.
>
> Jonathan Swift, *Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*

## I.

What is the relationship between satire, secrecy, and secret history? Jonathan Swift suggests a partial answer to this question in one of the most famous scenes in *Gulliver's Travels,* although its similarity to seductions in secret histories has not been sufficiently noted.[1] Readers of Aphra Behn, Delarivier Manley, and Eliza Haywood will recognize the amatory conventions: the weather is excessively hot; a young woman goes to a river bank or garden and removes her clothes, unaware of the gaze of a desiring male who, inflamed by desire, catches her in a surprised embrace from which she struggles to escape. In Manley's *Secret Memoirs . . . From the New Atalantis,*

> [t]he beautiful Diana . . . passed her down into the gardens. She had nothing on but a petticoat. . . . It was the evening of an excessive hot day. . . . A canal run by which made that retreat delightful. . . . [T]he dazzling lustre of her bosom stood revealed, her polished limbs all

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> careless and extended. . . . Rodriguez . . . stole close to the unthinking fair . . . throwing himself at his length beside her. . . . Her surprise caused her to shriek aloud.[2]

Gulliver, in a reverse of gender roles, reports his near-rape by a "libidinous and mischievous" would-be lover:

> [T]he Weather exceeding hot, I entreated him to let me bathe in the River . . . I immediately stripped myself stark naked, and went down softly into the Stream; It happened that a young Female Yahoo . . . saw the whole Proceeding; and inflamed by Desire . . . embraced me after a most fulsome Manner; I roared as loud as I could . . . whereupon she quitted her Grasp, with the utmost reluctancy, and . . . stood gazing.[3]

Manley had set a precedent for reversing gender roles for the purpose of satire in the seduction scene between the Duchess (Lady Castelmaine) and Germanicus (Henry Jermyn) in *The New Atalantis.* Should we make something or nothing of this coincidence?

Satire has been affiliated with the founding of the public sphere; participation in political debates and in other critiques of power would seem to place satiric discourse in the open. However, secrecy plays an equally crucial role in satiric theory and practice.[4] What is a satirist if not a purveyor of confounding hidden truths, a restless malcontent who rakes the filth from dark corners, removes the ink from blotted lines, uncovers the "Secrets of the Hoary deep" in order to flash them before the reader's eyes or to whisper them in the reader's ear?[5] From the *Book of Revelation* to *Fahrenheit 9/11,* the satiric impulse is to focus on the very things many would wish most to conceal. Secret history raises another set of contradictions. It has been affiliated with the rise of the private pleasures of domestic fiction, as well as with the public ramifications of early modern liberalism. Erica Harth, Ros Ballaster, Annabel Patterson, and Robert Mayer are among those who have begun to explore these different tendencies; various approaches and conclusions suggest the critical possibilities of this relatively neglected minor genre.[6]

The historical overlap between the production of great eighteenth-century satire in English and the production of myriad secret histories, from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, is no mere coincidence. This essay will define the relationship between the two modes of representation generally and will argue for the specific importance of this relationship in the work of the period's exemplary satirist, Swift. Satire and secret history, I will show, share a tendency to destabilize meaning by activating contending versions of truth through such means as irony and

alternative narratives of the same events. Despite evidence that increasing access to information led to the rise of democratic institutions at the end of the eighteenth century, further evidence supports the thesis that the brokering of political, social, and religious power required a clandestine "other." A treaty might be signed in one room while a private deal was being cut in another. The ramifications of the (often scandalous) clandestine world extend far beyond particular treaties or deals.

Swift remarked in his *Memoirs* that the "curious of another age would be glad to know the secret springs of" his own time (*P,* 8:108). That his own age imagined itself as functioning according to hidden motives is corroborated by popular discursive practices that claim to uncover the "real" truth, hitherto unseen and unknown. This essay will establish the grounds for an argument about the consequences of secret history in Swift's work by looking first at the phenomenon of secret history in general and second at the broad issue of Swift and secrecy. Then it will offer a rereading of *Gulliver's Travels* that connects the work in new ways to cultural forces that resist the "noble" Houyhnhnm ideal: that we should most value things of apparent meaning "that strike [us] with immediate conviction" (*P,* 11:267).

## II. "[It] Looked as If There Were a Secret History"

The late Stuart and early Georgian periods produced secret "histories," "memoirs," and "anecdotes" that promise special insider information. Considerable historical evidence corroborates the frequency with which alternative versions compete for credibility both with what is manifest and acknowledged and with one another. Between 1650 and 1800, more than 500 editions were published with "secret history" (or "secret memoirs" or "anecdotes") in their titles.[7] This new category of historiography permits special license: "memoirs" are partial and personal; the words "anecdote" and "secret" literally mean unpublished or unpublishable (Greek, *anecdota:* "things unpublished," secret, private; or, "any item of gossip"; Latin, *secernare,* to separate, "kept from knowledge or observation").[8] Secret history often rewrites the past with hearsay, gossip, and slander; it becomes performative by relying heavily on sex acts and speech acts, seductions and promises.[9] Authority figures like Charles II have much to hide: "'Twas his Practice to be a Papist in his Closet, and a Protestant in his Chappel."[10] At court the symbolic father of his people, he was under the covers the careless procreator of bastards. Secret history's popularity beginning in the late seventeenth century follows closely "the very time," according to Michael McKeon and others, "when patriarchalist theory was receiving its fullest airing in England."[11] Along with other experimental genres, it participates in the national crisis of authority.

Ferrand Spence both defends and apologizes for his translation of Antoine Varillas's *Les Anecdotes de Florence, ou L'Histoire secrete de la maison de Medicis* which contains "such matters as were neglected and flung aside by the Historian" but which nevertheless "have been the Origine or occasion of the greatest Matters."[12] What others have cast aside as waste and chaff—unsubstantiated rumors, sordid love affairs, petty jealousies, private obsessions, bodily habits, and taboos—the secret historian gleans. Not only subject matter but methodology are idiosyncratic: "I have here not followed any exact method of Chronology in this Treatise, not proposing so much to give an idea of facts as that of men."[13] In *The Secret History of White-Hall* (1697), the author promises "new Discoveries of State-Mysteries" while he anticipates and rejects "*the Objection that I foresee would be made upon this subject,* That all that could be writ has been written already, concerning the late Reigns, *I should dismiss it.*" The text will "*promiscuously . . . call to mind*" a "Private League," a "secret correspondence," a "*Wife's petition* [and suicide]," the prevention "*of the late queen's being married,*" "*unseasonable boasting,*" "*censure,*" and other tidbits that "*had, in all likelihood, been forever buried in the profoundest Oblivion . . .* [in] *Dark and almost inscrutable Recesses*."[14]

Multiple versions of crucial events jockey for attention. Events appeared in various newspapers. They were entered in parliamentary proceedings and court records by tireless reporters like Narcissus Luttrell.[15] The same events were represented in pamphlets and broadsides. They were narrated in books like *The Late History of Europe* (1698) and *A Compleat History of Europe* (1698), re-narrated in *The Memoirs of Europe* (1710), and narrated yet again in *The Secret History of Europe* (1711). *The Secret History of the White Staff* (1714) (on government ministers Robert Harley, Francis Atterbury, and Simon Harcourt) was followed by second and third parts (1715), as well as by John Oldmixon's *A Detection of the Sophistry and the Falsities of the Pamphlet, entitl'd, The Secret History of the White Staff* (1714), William Atterbury's *The History of the Mitre and the Purse in which the first and second parts of the Secret History of the White Staff are fully consider'd* (1714), William Pittis's *A Dialogue between the Mitre and the Purse* (1715), and Daniel Defoe's *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff* (1715). Swift casts an ironic but knowing eye upon such competing truths: the narrator of *A Tale of a Tub* has "a Quill worn to the Pith in the service of the State, in the Pro's and Con's upon Popish Plots, and Meal-Tubs, and Exclusion Bills" (*P,* 1:42).[16]

Secret history offered "those sorts of Relations, which they fancy containing something more Secret and Particular, than is to be found in the Publick Newspapers."[17] Claude Vanel's *The Royal Mistresses of France, or the Secret History of the Amours of All the French Kings* (1695) defends and defines the form in its address "[t]o the reader . . . who may think these Stories Fabulous":

> For certain it is, that in the Main, these short Stories agree exactly with what they call the Truth of History, and as for the Circumstances which are added, they may be justly thought rather to illustrate the Stories, and discover the Causes of those odd Events, which others only barely or obscurely relate. For example, 'tis assuredly true, that a Prince committed such and such miscarriages, that such and such Persons of no Worth or Merit were advanced to high preferments, and that others greatly deserving of their Prince and Country, fell into Disgrace, while the True Historian (as they call them) is at a loss for the Reason of these Whimseys of Fortune. But here the Riddle is unfolded.[18]

Truth "in the Main" allows wide latitude for "Circumstances which are added." Defoe's *The Secret History of the White Staff* quotes one of Harley's speeches to the Queen, but prefaces it with the disclaimer, "I have heard [it] was in Terms something like what follows."[19] "Something like," "such and such," "What *they* call the Truth of History," what "*others* . . . relate," what "*they* call them"—these phrases acknowledge the practice of replacing one story with another. *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff,* in keeping with its meta-critical title, comments on the seduction of readers by party-writers who easily shift "the Truth of what is here asserted . . . causing the deceiv'd people to dance in the Circle of their drawing."[20] Another author, John Phillips, justifies himself: "Tho' we ought not rashly to rake into the Ashes of Princes, and expose either their Personal Miscarriages, or their Failures, in the Management of Government; yet, no doubt, but the making of them Publick, may sometimes contribute, not a little, to the General Good."[21]

Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* narrates the course of European monarchy: the "Great Prince [Henry IV of France who] . . . raised a mighty Army, filled his Coffers with infinite Treasure, [and] provided an invincible Fleet" is *not* motivated by any of the usual public mystifications for the exercise of power: "Some believed he had laid a Scheme for Universal Monarchy: Others . . . determined the Matter to be a Project for pulling down the Pope. . . . Some . . . sent him into Asia to subdue the Turk, and recover Palestine" (*P,* 1:103). But the "secret Wheel" and "hidden Spring" of his reign is his unsatisfied "Protuberancy" raised by "an absent Female" (*P,* 1:103). This analysis of politics-as-sex is precisely the kind of insider-truth offered by scores of secret histories. *The Secret History of the Reigns of K. Charles II and K. James II,* for example, observes that "the King [Charles II] . . . preferred the caresses of the expanded nakedness of a French Harlot before the preservation of three nations."[22] Swift's version of Henry IV of France's penile motivation for war also is asserted by Vanel's *Secret History of the Amours of All the French Kings:*

> [W]hat is attributed to Policy, has no other Foundation than an erroneous Indulgence of Princes to their Mistresses, or their Favourites . . . at the same Time that they were believ'd to have in their Thoughts nothing more than the Welfare of their Dominions,'twas only a burning Desire to revenge the Quarrels wherein the Amours had engag'd 'em.[23]

A king becomes "so enthralled . . . for . . . ladies, that he neglects the Government of his Dominions and altogether slights [his queen]." His queen "was so far from being troubl'd at the infidelity of her inconstant Spouse, that she paid him in his own Coin."[24]

Narratives about sexual transgressions—incest, rape, polygamy, promiscuity—describe violations of power within the government. The incestuous abduction of Henrietta Berkeley by Forde, Lord Grey of Werke, for example, becomes the vehicle for the story of the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion against James II in Behn's *Love Letters Between a Noble-man and His Sister* (1688). Characters simultaneously plot for sex and power. The "secret origins" of the "foul and ignominious" Meal-Tub Conspiracy are traced to Charles II's "counterplotting with his Popish Concubine and her close-stool Wench."[25] *The Secret History of Zarah and the Zarazians* (1705) offers a lurid version of Sarah Churchill's sex-life in order to attack the Whigs.

Other texts are less explicit although they still "abound with Cabals, Intrigues, &c" when describing politics, war, faction, and foreign relations.[26] *The Secret History of the White Staff* is not literally about clandestine sex, although its metaphors and rhetoric imply it. Impassioned politicians burn with "secret Fire": "This secret Fire they neglected at first, and impolitickly suffer'd too long to encrease, til it broke out into a Flame, which they could never quench." They are "like hangers-on of the camp."[27] Powerful women ("That Female Buz which had . . . too much influence in Public Management"; "Men, and the Influence of their Female Agents"; "the Artifices of some Females") inspire *double-entendre*: "Men of State thought fit to plough with the Heifers of the Court."[28] *The Secret History of White-Hall* draws attention to its collapsed metaphors: "[I]n King Charles II's reign . . . the Ministers everywhere were in Love with French politicks, whether like other unlawful Amours it was Venal and Mercenary, I leave others to judge."[29]

An ancient precedent was provided by Procopius's *Anecdota* (c. 550), which was discovered and translated in the seventeenth century, first into French (1669) and then into English, as *The Secret History of the Court of the Emperor Justinian* (1674).[30] Procopius was secretary to the general Belisarius during the reign of the Roman emperor Justinian (527–565).[31] Procopius wrote an official *History of the Wars,* comprised of seven volumes lauding Roman victories against the Persians, Vandals, and Goths. Apparently, however,

he felt compelled to compose an unofficial manuscript in order "to tell the whole unvarnished truth," which was comprised of "mischievous and hateful and sordid gossip" and was motivated by "a deliberate attempt to discredit."[32] The hidden manuscript, which was not discovered for eleven centuries, strikes its modern editors as puzzlingly contradictory and irreverent. Procopius, deferential in public, seems secretly determined "to impugn the motives of Justinian and of the able Belisarius, and to cover with the vilest slander the Empress Theodora and Antonina, wife of Belisarius" (*W,* 6:viii–ix). The narrative is bluntly about sex and power. Antonina, descended from a prostitute, raised by "cheap sorcerers" (*W,* 6:9) and mother of many illegitimate children, is "insatiate in her passion" (*W,* 6:11) for another man with whom she recklessly and ruthlessly couples. After reading Procopius's account of Belisarius's stupid victimization by "a sort of flaming hot love" (*W,* 6:33), Edward Gibbon remarked that "the hero deserved an appellation which may not drop from the pen of the decent historian."[33] Justinian is "insincere, crafty, hypocritical, . . . a fickle friend, a truceless enemy, an ardent devotee of assassination and of robbery, . . . keen to conceive and execute base designs, . . . he . . . became the creator of poverty for all" (*W,* 6:99, 101, 103). Theodora is even more depraved. Her youth is spent in brothels in "unnatural traffic of the body," and her maturity in acts of lust and cruelty further exacerbated by abuse of imperial authority (*W,* 6:125). The editor of the Loeb edition calls the whole work "sadly miscoloured" (*W,* 6:x).

To seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century readers, however, the manuscript effectively struck a nerve. Here was a story with elements conveniently (if not exactly) parallel to current events: a victorious monarch (Charles II, William III, or in later years even Anne), a powerful royal mistress (such as Barbara Villiers or Louise de Kerouille), a brilliant but possibly mercenary military leader (such as John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough) with a beautiful, high-profile, ambitious wife (such as Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough), a privileged ruling class associated with sexual misconduct, and a setting rife with political faction and economic/imperial expansion. Procopius set down two competing accounts of the same famous events and people. Yet the author's allegiance to his hidden disparagement, however fantastic or grotesque or exaggerated, takes a certain precedence once it comes to light, even if it takes 1100 years to do so. Procopius's reductive energy can pithily condense seven volumes into one.[34] Here was a paradigm of heroic action transformed into a mock-heroic world of fools and knaves. Here also was a narrator whose doubleness as both a respectable public agent and as an irreverent clandestine saboteur served as a paradigm for ironic narration.

Other classical precedents include Suetonius (c.69–c.140), secretary to the Emperor Hadrian. *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* (c.110; an English translation by Robert L'Estrange first appeared in 1688) follows a pattern of "public"

biography followed by an account of secret life. The life of Caligula is typical in its opening restraint. But by chapter 22, Suetonius writes, "Thus far we have made recital of his Actions that lookt somewhat Princelike; what follows is the story of a monster."[35] Swift owned a copy of Suetonius.

Secret history has attracted scholars for seemingly contradictory reasons. In an investigation of the origins of early modern liberalism, secret history gives voice to Whig polemics during the Restoration in the work of male writers like Sir William Temple, Andrew Marvell, and Gilbert Burnet (Patterson, Mayer). In feminist investigations of the eighteenth-century novel, amatory secret history by Tory women writers like Behn, Manley, and Haywood is the naughty ancestor to respectable fiction.[36] In the first case, secret history seems progressive, encouraging middle-class moral outrage at failures in the lives of rulers and asserting ideals such as free speech and the citizen's right to know. In the second case, it seems conservative, encouraging aristocratic pleasure in voyeurism and libertinism and tempting readers with forbidden sexual indulgence. But neither of these assessments focuses on the ability of the revelations of these narratives to undermine the stability of authority, to establish instead a world of open secrets in which everyone knows that pronounced "facts" cover unspoken and possibly unspeakable "other facts." These secrets might wait undiscovered for over a millennium, like Procopius's account of Justinian's court—or like the account of ancient courts and rulers revealed to Gulliver in Glubdubdrib.

## III. "Must Never to Mankind Be Told, / Nor Shall the Conscious Muse Unfold": Swift and Secrecy

From the early "sublime mysteries" of *A Tale of a Tub* (*P,* 1:32) to the late scatological "Secrets of the hoary Deep" in "The Ladies Dressing-Room," from ephemeral riddles for his friends to interpretive enigmas in *Gulliver's Travels,* Swift's work exhibits a fascination with secrecy. The autobiographical fragment "The Family of Swift" suggests that he inherited a tendency toward stealth, or at least that he identified most strongly with those of his ancestors who were adept at it. An anecdote about Thomas Swift's devotion to Charles I centers on an act of subterfuge. Swift takes obvious pride in the cleverness of his relation who, although plundered at least thirty-six times by the Roundheads, managed to conceal a large sum of money by quilting it into a waistcoat. He eventually escaped to "a town held for the King" where:

> [B]eing asked . . . what he could do for his Majesty . . . take my wastcoat, he bid . . . [The Governor] ordering it to be unripp'd found it lin'd with three hundred broad pieces of gold, which as it proved a seasonable relief, must be allowed an extraordinary supply from a private Clergyman with ten children of a small Estate. (*P,* 5:189)

The size of the sum, "three *hundred* broad pieces of gold [my emphasis]," implies that he had been engaged in this secret tailoring for some time.[37] Swift also savors the dramatic moment of revelation, in which Thomas merely hands over his vest and surprises the Governor with its hidden generosity. Equally vivid is Thomas's spontaneous plot to sabotage Cromwell's soldiers. After discovering their intended route to battle, he contrived a number of iron spikes and "plac'd them at night in the field where . . . the Rebels would pass early the next morning, which they accordingly did, and lost two hundred of their men" (*P,* 5:189). Swift's pleasure in his progenitor's successful secrecy overcomes any commiseration he (as clergyman) might be expected to feel at the violent fate of the soldiers "who were drowned or trod to death by the falling of their horses, or torn by the spikes" (*P,* 5:189). He seems also to have inherited a penchant for mystery from his mother, who never revealed the reasons why she waited in Ireland for three years to reclaim a son known to be in Whitehaven with his nurse (*P,* 5:192). (Perhaps she *did* reveal reasons that her son suppressed.) Swift's advertisement for a future work called "The Author's Critical History of his own Times" proposes extensive exposure of secrets—"Corruptions, Frauds, Oppressions, Knaveries, and Perjuries; wherein the Names of all the Persons concerned shall be inserted at full length, with some account of their Families and Stations" (*P,* 5:346)—a work he never realized.

Part of Swift's attraction to Stella was a shared propensity toward keeping things to themselves. Swift admits that her move at age 19 to be near him in Ireland "looked . . . as if there were a secret history" (*P,* 5:228). He savors an anecdote about how she circumvented an armed robbery by strategic concealment of her person (and by learning to shoot a gun): "She stole softly to her dining-room window, put on a black hood, to prevent being seen, primed the pistol fresh, gently lifted up the sash; and, taking aim with the utmost presence of mind, discharged the pistol . . . into the body of one villain" (*P,* 5:230). In "To Stella Who Collected and Transcrib'd his Poems," Swift teases her about trying to conceal a passionate outburst "which Manners, Decency, and Pride, / Have taught you from the World to hide."[38] Their correspondence is filled with examples of secret understanding, beginning with "our little language" (coded as "ourichar gangridge"), including the "md's," "lele's," and "pdfr's" well-known to Swift scholars.[39] Sometimes he writes to her in code about sensitive matters: "He gave me al bsadnuk lboinlpl dfaonr ufainfbtoy dpoinufnad" and "I would hoenlbp ihainm italoi dsroanws ubpl tohne sroeqporaen siepnot last oiqobn."[40] Or he sends elaborate instructions about delivering a letter to Dean Stearn which "he must not have but under Conditions of burning it immediately after reading, & that before your Eyes" (*J,* 2:655). (The insistence on secrecy is recurrent in the correspondence: "I conjure you to burn this Lettr immediately without telling the Contents of

it to any Person alive.")[41] Even the *Journal*'s "erasures and blottings," it has been argued, "are to be read as a secret code": "The spirals and strokes of his pen . . . guard a secret enclosure of thoughts and meaning" (*J,* 1:liii–liv). He enjoyed the experience of seeing his work published while his authorship was unknown, and he confides in Stella on numerous occasions that "nobody suspects me for it" or "No-body knows who it is, but those few in the secret" or that not even "the Bishop of Clogher smoaks it yet"—referring to "Sid Hamet's Rod," "The New Journey to Paris," and *The Examiner* (*J,* 1:59, 1:185, 1:358). Although the sense of sharing clandestine knowledge figures significantly as an expression of love for Stella ("Keep it a secret" [*J,* 1:50]; "that is a secret only to you" [*J,* 1:60]; others "must not know, that you know so much" [*J,* 2:655]), Swift had other secrets from which she was excluded, such as his relations with Vanessa (Esther Vanhomrigh) and others.[42]

The extent of his attachment to Vanessa, Swift wrote, "[i]s to the World a Secret yet . . . Must never to Mankind be told, / Nor shall the conscious Muse unfold."[43] Their relationship also, Swift admits, "looked . . . as if there were a secret history" (*P,* 5:228) according to the conventions of amatory fiction in which a beautiful young heiress with "Five thousand Guineas in her Purse" grows enamored of her "paternal" tutor: "The World . . . / Wou'd say, He made a treach'rous Use / Of Wit, to flatter and seduce . . . That when Platonick Flights were over, / The Tutor turn's a mortal Lover," the typical seduction plot reiterated by writers like Behn, Manley, and Haywood.[44] Swift's letters to Vanessa reinforce this notion with the promise of a secluded lovenest: he "will take a little Grubstreet lodging . . . and will tell you a thousand secrets provided you will have no quarrels with me" (*C,* 1:305). He instructs her to write in cipher, "I wish your letters were as difficult as mine; for then they would be of no consequence if they were dropped by careless messengers. A stroke thus ____ signifies everything that may be sent to Cad__" (*C,* 2:354). And she demonstrates her skill in code by writing a rebus on Swift's name, with the answer "Joseph Nathan Swift."[45] Cadenus teaches Vanessa that "Virtue . . . knows nothing which it dare not own; / Can make us without fear disclose / Our inmost secrets to our Foes." But bonds of affection between men and women, it seems, are forged by clandestine desire. Having vulnerably disclosed her love, Vanessa soon acts the transgressive part of the young ward, seduced by her older guardian's "dang'rous" and attractive "Wit" and emboldened by love to disclose her forbidden passion: "I can vulgar Forms despise, / And have no Secrets to disguise." The poem maintains a shroud over their relations:

> But what success Vanessa met,
> Is to the World a Secret yet:
> Whether the Nymph, to please her Swain,
> Talks in a high Romantick train;

Or whether he at last descends
To like with less Seraphick Ends;
Or, to compound the Business, whether
They temper Love and Books together.[46]

That Swift spoke of his relationships to both of the important women in his life with reference to secret history indicates the aptness and pervasiveness of this paradigm.

In other circumstances, secrets can be a means of self-preservation. "His watchful Friends preserve him by a Sleight" when they conceal his identity as author of "The Publick Spirit of the Whigs," for which Harley had "secretly sent him 100 pounds to reimburse the printer and the publisher."[47] So, too, the Irish had hidden his identity as the Drapier, a remarkable circumstance considering Swift's description of Ireland as a place of rumor "where every thing is known in a Week, and magnified a hundred Degrees" (*C,* 2:123). Or a capacity for stealth can enable some access to power. In "The Author Upon Himself," Swift imagines his enemy Daniel Finch jealous of his friendship with Harley: "he hears for certain, / This dang'rous Priest is got behind the Curtain: / . . . that Swift oils many a spring which Harley moves." Walpole and Ayslaby, similarly piqued at Harley's choice of confidante, inform the House of Commons "that the Secret's out."[48] Although there was a great deal that Harley concealed from Swift, including top-level negotiations with the Pretender in France, Swift pledges "faithful Silence" to his "friend": "Within our Breast be ev'ry Secret barr'd."[49] Or he promotes himself as a repository of secrets to other ministers: "At Windsor Swift no sooner can appear, / But, St John comes and whispers in his Ear; . . . Delaware again familiar grows; / And, in Swift's Ear thrusts half his powder'd Nose." Or he protests that his close association with the "great" makes people unfairly probe him: "And, though I solemnly declare / I know no more than my Lord Mayor, / They stand amaz'd, and think me grown / The closest Mortal ever known."[50]

A love of stealth is documented repeatedly by puzzles, enigmas, and jokes. The clue, "From me no secret he can hide; / I see his vanity and pride," leads to the answer, "the writer's pen."[51] In *The Life of Swift* (1787), Thomas Sheridan reports that Swift "dexterously inserted" his parody, "A Meditation on a Broomstick," into Lady Berkeley's copy of Boyle in order later to read it "with an inflexible gravity of countenance."[52] Maurice Johnson points out that autographs of Swift's poems "show three different styles of writing": a very formal script, a more relaxed script, and "the so-called disguised hand."[53] "A bad scrawl is so snug," he writes to Stella (*J,* 1:79).

Swift's colleague Manley combined gossip, slander, and secret history in political satire in which women sometimes manipulate power.[54] Swift pursues this idea. Women who attend the Queen are dangerously inscrutable. Lady

Oglethorpe is a "cunning . . . devil" (*J,* 2:437). "Mrs. Masham was with [Harley] when I came; and they are never disturbed: . . . they sit alone together settling the nation" (*J,* 2:412). "[The] Duchess of Somerset, who now has the key [to the Queen's closet], is a most insinuating woman, . . . and I believe will endeavour to play the same game that has been played against [her] (*J,* 1:206). "Parliament should be dissolved before Christmas . . . this is all your d—d Duchess of Somerset's doings. Those scoundrel, starving lords would never have dared to vote against the court, if Somerset had not assured them that it would please the Queen" (*J,* 2:434–439). Even "the Queen is false . . . sooner than turn out the Duchess of Somerset, she will dissolve Parliament and get a Whiggish one" (*J,* 2:435). Swift does not communicate in this way with Stella only. He tells Archbishop King that the Duchess of Somerset "is a great Favourite, and has got the Dutchess of Marlborough's Key. She is . . . a Woman of Intrigue; and will . . . do what ill Offices she can, to the Secretary" (*C,* 1:248). To Arbuthnot, he writes of Abigail Masham: "One thing still lyes upon you, which is to be a constant Advisor to Ldy M—. The Game will of course be playd into her hand" (*C,* 2:46).

Swift's *Journal* and correspondence also brim with gossip and secrets: "Oh, I could tell you ten thousand things of our mad politics, upon what small circumstances great affairs have turned" (*J,* 2:448). In March 1711, he writes: "I gave him [Stratford] notice of a Treaty of Peace, while it was a Secret; of wch he might have made good use" (*J,* 2:502). Or "I have put Mrs. Masham, the Queen's favourite upon buying it [land]; but that is yet a great Secret . . . It is yet a mighty Secret that Masham is to be one of the new lords; they say he does not know it himself" (*J,* 2:410, 2:450). Although Swift did not know that Lord Bolingbroke was betraying his "friends" in secret negotiations with Torcy over the fate of Dunkirk, he confides to King: "I had a whisper from one who should know best, that Dunkirk might now have been ours if right methods had been taken. . . . If there be any Secret in this matter . . . it must be in very few Hands; and those who most converse with Men at the Helm, are, I am confident, very much in the Dark" (*C,* 1:300). In this world of intrigue and peripeteia, Swift writes to King, "[W]hoever has . . . desire of some knowledge of Secrets of State, must compare what he hears from severall great Men, or from one great Man at severall Times, which is equally different" (*C,* 1:185). In *Gulliver's Travels,* one man (perhaps not great, but greatly traveled) narrates different versions of the state of England in what amounts to an ironic cooptation of secret memoirs.

**IV. Secret Memoirs of Lemuel Gulliver: Swift's Versions of History**

"Gullible" Gulliver, often a wide-eyed and frank reporter, at first seems an unlikely figure to associate with stealth and mystery. But Swift's ironic protagonist charts a journey into a world of dangerous secrets. Secrecy

determines politics in each of the countries of *Gulliver's Travels*. Gulliver leaves England in 1699 and, except for brief intervals when he seems primarily engaged with his family, does not return until 1715. Thus he is away from England during the Partition Treaties (1699), the War of Spanish Succession (1701–1713), and the entirety of Queen Anne's reign (1702–1714). Unlike the *Tale*'s narrator, who has written "Fourscore and eleven pamphlets . . . under three Reigns and for the service of six and thirty factions" (*P,* 1:42), Gulliver misses the most virulent Whig-Tory controversies, and returns after the demise of Harley, Bolingbroke, and the Tory ministry. However, English politics has been transplanted. Gulliver travels not to desert islands or primitive societies but to sophisticated foreign courts in the manner of the "secret" travels of scandal chronicles by Madame D'Aulnoy and her English followers.[55]

On the first voyage, Lilliputian authorities operate by stealth. Redresal is "Principal Secretary . . . of private Affairs" (*P,* 11:39). Gulliver is thoroughly searched and with difficulty manages to conceal one "secret pocket" (*P,* 11:37). "Court-Scandal" and "the Malice of evil tongues" run rampant, and Gulliver is victimized several times by "private Intrigue" (*P,* 11:67). The worst plot is revealed to him by a "considerable person at court" who comes "very privately at night in a close chair, and without sending his Name." After locking the door, pretending to sleep, and hiding in Gulliver's pocket, he confides, "It was strictly enjoined that the project of starving [Gulliver] by degrees should be kept a Secret" (*P,* 11:71). On the second voyage, in contrast, the King of Brobdingnag proves his worth by "profess[ing] both to abominate and despise all *Mystery, Refinement, and Intrigue*. . . . He could not tell what I meant by *Secrets of State*" (*P,* 11:135). When Gulliver attempts to win his esteem by revealing the formula for gunpowder, the King objects that "he would rather lose half his Kingdom than be privy to such a Secret, which he commanded me, as I valued my life, never to mention any more" (*P,* 11:135).

On the third voyage, the issue of secrecy is more complex. Balnibarbi is full of caves, a topography conducive to hiding things, but it is inhabited by a population distinguished by its incapacity for keeping confidences. In Langden, "the Bulk of People consisted wholly of Discoverers, Witnesses, Informers, Accusers, Prosecutors, Evidences, Swearers" (*P,* 11:191). When persons are accused of a plot, "effectual care is taken to secure all their Letters and Papers . . . These Papers are delivered to a set of Artists very dextrous in finding out the mysterious Meanings of Words, Syllables, and Letters" (*P,* 11:191). They may use acrostics, anagrams, or other alphabetical codes to "lay open the deepest Designs of a discontented Party" (*P,* 11:191). From this place of espionage and concealment, Gulliver enters the dark magic of Glubdubdrib, of which more will be said below. The fourth voyage is equally if not more profoundly concerned with the human penchant for keeping, breaking, and

sharing secrets. In Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver himself is urgently caught up in the concealment of his Yahoo identity. "I had hitherto concealed the Secret of my Dress, in order to distinguish my self as much as possible from that cursed race of Yahoos; . . . I considered that my Cloaths and Shoes would soon wear out, which already were in a declining condition . . . whereby the whole Secret would be known" (*P,* 11:204). His dilemma leads to a crucial question about the *essentiality* of secrecy in human behavior. Gulliver explains clothing to his Master, "I did not expose those Parts that Nature taught us to conceal" (*P,* 11:205). But the Houyhnhnm finds such "discourse . . . very strange": "he could not understand why Nature should teach us to conceal what Nature had given" (*P,* 11:205). Why indeed?

Here the distinctive, "natural" human characteristic is not the capacity for speech (horses talk) or the capacity for handcraft (horses sew), but for concealment or secrecy. Swift complicates the fundamental Judeo-Christian association of nakedness and shame: people have fallen not simply into mortality but into a tangle of pleasure and anxiety, scandal and desire that constitute the competing stories of the human race. The parallel seduction scenes quoted at the beginning of this essay, as well as other famous examples of nudity in Swift's work (the flayed women and the dissected beau, the beautiful nymph going to bed, Yahoos, etc.), affirm the innately furtive human being. Every Yahoo will hide a shiny stone, and every Yahoo would look better clothed. Swift's views on secrets of generation and of state inform his views on satiric narration. No history of the human condition can proceed without taking into account this defining feature.

The four versions of English history in *Gulliver's Travels* are informed by Swift's "continued preoccupation with the study of history" (*P,* 12:x), as well as an abiding interest in writing history.[56] Does history preoccupy him because it offers a reliable means of understanding the use and abuse of various forms of power? History is rather as mercurial and vexing as any other human endeavor; Swift represents it as a "dark art" in Glubdubdrib (*P,* 11:194). The past is not fixed and dead but restless and malleable, so that history and secret history constantly interact. Versions, "from severall great Men, or from one great Man at severall Times," destabilize one another.

Interestingly, Swift wanted the post of Royal Historiographer.[57] One wonders how he could have hoped that the Queen he had offended with one history (of Christianity in *A Tale of a Tub*) would enlist him to produce another. Nevertheless, he submitted a sample "Memoriall," and Arbuthnot tried to joke about consigning it to flames with a burning glass because it reveals secrets:

> Apollo speaks that since he had inspired you to reveal those things which were hidden ev'n from his own light, such as the feeble springs of some Great Events, and perceiving that a faction wh.

> could not bear their deed to be brought to light had condemned it to an ignominious flame, that it might not perish so, he was resolv'd to consume it with his own celestial one. (*C,* 2:70)[58]

The record of Swift's disappointment confirms the web of subterfuge around his experience of official events. While Bolingbroke was promising Swift to solicit the post of Royal Historiographer from the Queen, he was busy in secret political negotiations with the Pretender. And while Arbuthnot was attempting to gain favor for Swift by intervening with Lady Masham, Thomas Madox, unbeknownst to them, had already been sworn into office.

Several letters and fragments record Swift's unrealized plans to write a history of England from William Rufus to the end of Elizabeth I's reign.[59] With the *History of the Four Last Years of the Queen,* published posthumously (1758), he had hoped to vindicate Tory responsibility for the Treaty of Utrecht. He promises to "strictly follow truth" and not to "mingle Panegyrick or Satire with . . . History" (*P,* 7:1).[60] But the equable pose of the preface turns partisan and accusatory. His odd phrase for Hanoverian succession, "the *German* Family's succeeding to the Crown" (*P,* 7:xxxiii), is rudely circumspect. Moreover, he writes, everybody knew that George I would slander Queen Anne and would encourage "the most ignorant and malicious of mankind" to perform injurious speech acts that "load their predecessors with as much infamy as the most inveterate malice and envy could suggest, or the most stupid ignorance and credulity in the underlings could swallow" (*P,* 7: xxxiv). Compared to the *Journal to Stella* and to the correspondence from the same four years, *Last Four Years of the Queen* conceals the bedroom/backstairs power-brokering by women. The Duchess of Marlborough is mentioned just twice in the 200-page text, the Duchess of Somerset is mentioned only once, and Abigail Masham is not mentioned at all. As in Procopius, history coexists with a destabilizing secret "other."

Swift had considerable knowledge of other historians. The sale catalogue of his library lists over 100 histories, including some secret histories like Suetonius's *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* and Burnet's *History of His Own Times*.[61] Several volumes are annotated and reread (*P,* 5:xxxvii–xxxviii).[62] He criticizes minutiae of style, word choice, and argument, as well as fundamental interpretations of the past. "A good opinion weakly defended . . . that is a mistake" (*P,* 5:241), he notes of Parsons's *Conference about the Next Succession* (repr., 1681). In the margins of Herbert's *Life and Raigne of Henry VIII* (1649) Swift vents his hatred of the Tudor king with epithets like "Bloody inhuman Hell-hound of a King," "Dog, Villain, King, Viper, Devil Monster," "I wish he had been Flead, his skin stuffed and hanged on a Gibbet, His bulky guts and Flesh left to be devoured by Birds and Beasts" (*P,* 5:248, 249, 251).[63]

Swift despises Henry's sexual faithlessness: whenever Herbert rationalizes Henry's uxorious failings, Swift insists on another version in which Henry's unbridled desires and "private Pleasures" motivate a bogus political agenda "to have Posterity to inherit the Crown": "Does the Author question this monster's cruelty? . . . What a softener is the Historian! . . . to gratify his damnable Lusts and Cruelty . . . as men go to Stool so he was damnably laxative [in concupiscence]. . . . This palliating Author hath increased my Detestation of his Hellish Hero in every Article" (*P,* 5:250).

When Joseph Addison writes circumspectly of George I in *The Freeholder* (1715–1716), "I might here take Notice of His Majesty's more private Virtues, but have rather chosen to remind my Countrymen of the public Parts of his Character," Swift dryly remarks, "This is prudent" (*P,* 5:251). When Addison explains the history of the succession as a neatly legal matter, Swift writes, "Are you serious?" (*P,* 5:252). He calls Burnet's *History of His Own Times* "[a]ll coffee-house chat . . . a most foolish story, hardly worthy of a coffee-house" (*P,* 5:287). Objections and criticism of Burnet's content and style continue in the margins for over 700 pages. Swift's impatience is almost comical and often sarcastic, but taken in the aggregate his fragmented remarks do provide an alternative version of Burnet's "own times," and they reconstruct Burnet himself as bumbling and inept. When Burnet betrays writer's weaknesses—mistaken tenses, repeated words, grammatical errors—Swift repeats and redeploys them, and even draws little hands to point out the most embarrassing places: "much, much, much," "was, was, was, was," "think, thought, thought, think, thought," "I never read so ill a style" (*P,* 5:273, 275, 269, 266). Since Burnet's Whig history of his own times extends "from the Restoration of Charles II to the Treaty of Peace, at Utrecht in the Reign of Queen Anne," we may consider Swift's defense of the Tory ministry's negotiation of the same treaty (in his *Four Last Years*) as a competing version.[64] Further, Burnet's work has been cited in recent studies by Patterson and Mayer as an important secret history with trans-Atlantic ramifications in revolutionary America, where it was extremely popular. Mayer notes that "Burnet first conceived of the *History of His Own Times* as a secret history or memoir," and Patterson observes that he "might very well have called [the text] *The Secret History of the Stuarts*."[65] I will return to his work's relevance to Swift's satire.

Swift's annotations to John Macky's *Secret Services* also shed light on the further significance of secret history in *Gulliver's Travels*. The foreign Electress of Hanover had requested information about members of court and Parliament. Macky introduces her to important people in England. Swift's pugilistic marginalia challenge Macky's authority. The Earl of Romney is called "the great Wheel on which the Revolution turned" (*P,* 5:258), to which Swift responds, "He had not a wheel to turn a mouse" (*P,* 5:258). If Macky intends to preserve a record of the names of the powerful men

who make history, Swift's running commentary renames them: "an endless talker," "a great Booby," "a profligate Rogue, without religion or morals," "An arrant Knave in common dealing and very prostitute," "a Dunce," "a Fop," "the vainest Old Fool," "a Puppy," "a good plain hum-dum," "a most arrogant conceited Pedant," "a blundering rattled pated drunken Sot" (*P,* 5:257–262). Swift supplies the secrets to the *Secret Services,* challenging Macky's inside-information with the force of his own. History must not be allowed to fix the characters of men as heroic or noble, but must be unhinged by an undercurrent of slander. Further, Mackey and the other historians share, almost obsessively, the recurrent topic of political succession.

*Gulliver's Travels* mentions "*Anecdotes,* or secret History" in a chapter set in Balnibarbi called "Antient and Modern History Corrected" (*P,* 11:197). We know that the third voyage was written last and inserted as preparation for the devastating effects of the final voyage to Houyhnhnmland. Why must Gulliver first "[c]orrect" history? Gulliver encounters "Counts, Marquesses, Dukes, Earls, and the like," only to discover "Cruelty, Falshood, and Cowardice" and the "Interruption of Lineages by Pages, Lacqueys, Valets, Coachman, Gamesters, Fidlers, Players, Captains, and Pickpockets" (*P,* 11:198). There is some resemblance between the terms of Swift's marginal comments in Macky and Gulliver's comments on a modern senate full of "Pedlars, Pick-pockets, Highwaymen and Bullies" (*P,* 11:180). But there is more.

The concept of history is probed within a pattern of irony that dominates the third voyage. Critics have noted the distinctive way in which the reader is set up to anticipate a certain judgment or interpretation, only to find that Swift's irony has shifted terms or changed the rules of his satiric game.[66] In the School of Projectors, in the visit to Lord Munodi, in the conversation about Struldbruggs, for example, a sequence of episodes encourages the reader to form a set of opinions (projectors do stupid experiments; misanthropes are bad; immortality is good), only to prove those opinions inadequate or wrong (projectors can have good ideas; misanthropes can be benevolent; immortality can be bad). But this summary oversimplifies the destabilizing effects of the satiric process.[67]

History in Glubdubdrib is the counterpart to, or the antithesis of, immortality, the voyage's ultimate hope. One reaches endlessly into the imaginable past, the "Beginning of the World" (*P,* 11:195), while the other endures into the endless future. Both are populated by the living dead: ghosts and Struldbruggs. Thus time stretches away in two opposing directions, with Gulliver teetering at the present moment, a dizzying prospect. In the case of the Struldbruggs, as Michael Deporte argues, Gulliver first reacts with idealism and hope: he imagines immortality as the attainment of wisdom and magnanimity, and we cannot help but admire the altruism with which he tries to write his own future history of wealth, learning, and good deeds. But

soon the terrifying prospect of ceaseless aging disabuses him of his visionary schemes, raising fundamental questions about human possibility that will be tested in a republic of horses.[68]

History on the third voyage is a kind of virtual reality in which Gulliver can summon and interact with "whatever Number among all the Dead from the Beginning of the world to the present Time" (*P,* 11:179). He begins in idealism about the Ancients: "vast Numbers of Illustrious Persons were called up, . . . I chiefly fed my Eyes with beholding the Destroyers of Tyrants and Usurpers, and the Restorers of Liberty to oppressed and injured Nations" (*P,* 11:180). But the longer Gulliver pursues history, the more he is disillusioned, especially in the past century, that is, in the period that produced many secret histories and fostered the rise of English satire. In particular, he raises the perpetual issue: the principle of succession. "[H]aving been always a great Admirer of old illustrious Families," Gulliver to the contrary finds history to be the story of innumerable seductions, infidelities, illegitimacies, and diseases "lineally descended in scrophulous Tumours to their Posterity" (*P,* 11:198).

Gulliver grows "disgusted with modern History" that glorifies the past (*P,* 11:199). When he is "truly informed of the Springs and Motives of great Enterprizes and Revolutions in the World," he rewrites them in terms common to secret memoirs: the escapades of "Cowards, . . . Fools, . . . Sodomites, . . . Informers, . . . Bawds, Whores, Pimps, Parasites, and Buffoons" determine the "Motions and Events of Courts, Councils, and Senates" (*P,* 11:183). Although the sordid origins of "great Enterprizes" dismay him, his animus falls harder on the illegitimate authority accorded to falsely glowing *representations* of the past.

Gulliver cites those "who pretend to write Anecdotes, or secret History" (*P,* 11:183). The operative word is "pretend." Because Gulliver "rightly" rejects eulogizing historians in the preceding paragraph, we might anticipate a rejection of secret historians. But we would be mistaken: his quarrel is not with the substance of secret history—sex, politics, other things more flatteringly concealed about men and women—but with its methodology. What is wrong with writers "who send so many Kings to their Graves with a Cup of Poison; will repeat the Discourse between a Prince and chief Minister, where no Witness was by; unlock the Thoughts and Cabinets of Embassadors and Secretaries of State" (*P,* 11:199)? They lack documentation; they surmise, while Gulliver, summoning up scores of ghosts, literally witnesses "the true Causes of many great Events": "I had a whisper from a Ghost, who shall be nameless" (*P,* 11:199). But then, who is Gulliver's witness to corroborate his strange stories of corruption in foreign courts? Can the historian's credibility depend on necromancy? What he witnesses, however, is precisely congruent with the findings of secret history, including its insistence on corrupt politics

as sexual transgression (and even affirming the cup of poison that sends monarchs to their graves):

> How a Whore can govern the Back-stairs, the Back-stairs a Council, and the Council a Senate . . . a scene of Infamy . . . Perjury, Oppression, Subordination, Fraud, Pandarism, and the like . . . some confessed they owed their greatness and Wealth to Sodomy or Incest; others to the prostituting of their own Wives and Daughters; others to the betraying their Country or their Prince; some to poisoning, more to the perverting of Justice in order to destroy the Innocent. (*P,* 11:199)

Gulliver's pride in the "faithful history of [his] travels" (*P,* 11:274) frames the narrative, beginning in the "Letter to Cousin Sympson" and continuing to the final page. By setting an impossible standard of veracity, which requires talking to ghosts and visiting nonexistent places, he alone can affirm the existence of pygmies, giants, flying islands, and talking horses. The discussion of secret history in the third voyage takes a further ironic turn when Gulliver suddenly resumes his obtuse deference to rank and asserts his "Inferior[ity]": "I hope I may be pardoned if these Discoveries inclined me a little to abate of that profound Veneration which I am naturally apt to pay to Persons of high Rank, who ought to be treated with the utmost Respect due to their sublime Dignity, by us their Inferiors" (*P,* 11:200). Given the improbability of replicating Gulliver's *methodology* of truth, he has made a case for the *substantive* accuracy of secret history, especially in its recurrent theme of promiscuous generation.

The last "Case" Gulliver narrates before leaving Glubdubdrib, a tale of legitimate succession subverted by sexual license in high places, would fit comfortably into *The New Atalantis*. A naval commander, although victorious in battle, loses his only son in the fighting and thus ends the family line. Worse, two false "sons" destroy his remaining hopes for the future. His preferment is handed over to "a Boy who had never been to Sea, the Son of a *Libertina,* who waited on one of the Emperor's Mistresses" (*P,* 11:201). His ship is "given to a favourite Page of Publicola the Vice-Admiral" (*P,* 11:201). Gulliver next visits Luggnagg where he encounters the Struldbruggs. At this point, fantasies about experiencing the beginning of time give way to imaginings about the end of time. The naval commander's story of blighted hopes tweaks the desire for futurity which the Struldbruggs will so painfully disappoint. The very concepts that seem to determine history—succession and posterity—are inherently impossible for Struldbruggs: perpetuity of life obliterates affection beyond grandchildren and memory of even their nearest relations; the everlasting patriarch feels only "impotent Desires" (*P,* 11:212).

Secrets of history on the third voyage are pivotal because they negotiate between two versions of English history narrated by Gulliver in Brobdingnag and two more told later in Houyhnhnmland. In Brobdingnag, Gulliver's first account merely amuses the giant King: "taking me up in his right Hand, and stroaking me gently with the other; after a hearty fit of laughing, [he] asked me whether I were a Whig or a Tory" (*P,* 11:107). From the King's broader perspective, Gulliver's exposition on "Manners, Religion, Laws, Government, and Learning" boils down to a story of seduction and disloyalty: "[T]hey love, they fight, they dispute, they cheat, they betray" (*P,* 11:91). In the second version Gulliver pumps things up into panegyric on his "own dear native Country" (*P,* 11:127). As every reader of *Gulliver's Travels* knows, Gulliver's inflated history is punctured by the King's extensive questioning. Especially "the historical Account . . . during the last Century" is dismissed as "only a Heap of Conspiracies, Rebellions, Murders, Massacres, Revolutions, Banishments; the very worst effects that Avarice, Faction, Hypocrisy, Perfidiousness, Cruelty, Rage, Madness, Hatred, Envy, Lust, Malice, and Ambition could produce" (*P,* 11:132). Readers rarely forget the King's carefully justified and sweeping condemnation of "the most pernicious Race of little odious Vermin" (*P,* 11:132).

If we recall Swift's animus toward Burnet, it is tempting to perceive parts of the second voyage as a parody of the private conversations between a common member of the household and the reigning monarch in *A History of His Own Times,* which, in Burnet's own words was intended "to look into the secret conduct of affairs among us" (*H,* 1:4). Of Burnet, a contemporary observed: "[N]o man living was more ready to foment [partisan rancor]. . . . [T]he first inquiry he made into anybody's character was, whether he were a whig or a tory: if the latter, he made it his business to rake all the spiteful stories he could collect together . . . which he was very free to publish, without any regard to decency or modesty" (*H,* 1:196). In Brobdingnag, a king and queen jointly rule, one governing the nation and the other supervising court activities, in the manner of William and Mary, during whose reign Burnet was kept at court. Gulliver's pride becomes a central satiric issue, as he struts and preens and brags of his intimacy with the reigning sovereigns. Burnet, like Gulliver, seems to spend a lot of time in the monarch's closet. Presumption is precisely the aspect of Burnet that Swift most despises: "The day before [the king] set out he called me into his closet, . . . These were the King's secret motives; for I had most of them from his own mouth" (*H,* 2:551, 2:661). Or he presents himself as the king's crucial informer: "[The Duke of Hamilton] wrote to me very fully on that head, and I took the Liberty to speak sometimes to the King on those Subjects" (*H,* 2:539). Burnet opines that William understood a military campaign "better than how to govern England," and he patronizingly praises Mary for "employ[ing] her time and

thoughts in any thing, rather than matters of state" (*H,* 2:552). Burnet, like Gulliver recommending the "improvement" of gunpowder, believes that he knows better than the monarch does, although his advice and recommendations are rejected:

> I could not help thinking he might have carried matters further than he did. . . . I had tried, but with little success, to use all due freedom with him; he did not love to be found fault with; and though he bore everything that I said very gently, yet he either discouraged me with silence, or answer'd with such general expressions that they signified nothing. (*H,* 2:643)

Protesting his commitment to truth, Burnet "unwillingly" reveals embarrassing information about the queen (her mistreatment of her sister) with the kind of gesture at deference that Swift would transform into irony. Burnet writes: "An incident happened . . . that had very ill effects; which I unwillingly mention, because it cannot be told without some reflections on the memory of the queen, whom I always honoured beyond all persons I had ever known" (*H,* 2:577). Although Swift did not admire monarchs, he had even less patience with those who sought status through proximity to them.

Conflicting versions of truth undermine patriarchal authority, and these effects are tested on Gulliver who has fathered children between voyages: Brobdingnag threatens his manhood; he is at various times child, insect, toy, and little animal. When he finishes his several versions of English history, the King considers him briefly as a sexual being, but only to imagine him as a completely disempowered patriarch: "He was strongly bent to get me a Woman of my own size, by whom I might propagate the Breed: But I think I should rather have died than undergone the Disgrace of leaving a Posterity to be kept in Cages like tame Canary Birds" (*P,* 11:139).

The fourth voyage also includes two versions of history: Gulliver's third version of his own time, from the Glorious Revolution to Anne's reign; and the Houyhnhnm's comparative history of the Yahoos. Gulliver now condemns all aspects of England, indicting government, law, religion, medicine, commerce, education, class, and war with vivid details: the legal dispute over ownership of the cow; exploded body parts as a diversion of war; medicines made from frogs, spiders, and putrid flesh; struggles over subtleties of translation from English into Houyhnhnm, and so on (*P,* 11:246–250). But *this* version is no more reliable. Gulliver confesses his "secret springs," that his distortions are a ploy to stay in Houyhnhnmland: "[T]here was yet a much stronger Motive [than love of truth] for the Freedom I took in my Representation of Things. . . . Let me deal so candidly with the Reader, as to confess, that. . . in what I said of

my Countryman, I *extenuated* their Faults as much as I durst" (*P,* 11:258). As a performative speech act, Gulliver's history is, then, not to represent truth but to "wed" himself to, and secure a relationship with, his Houyhnhnm Master. But exaggeration only weakens his authority. If, after listening to versions of England, the King of Brobdingnag considered using Gulliver's manhood to breed a new species of pets, the Houyhnhnm Master has an even more stunningly anti-patriarchal idea: the castration of Yahoo males.

The Houyhnhnm Master has the final word on human history. Houyhnhnms themselves have "no Letters" and thus no written chronicles: "the historical Part is easily preserved" (*P,* 11:273). They also have no libidos to confuse "the regulation of children," thus obviating fundamental patriarchal issues hinged to succession and procreation, to restless pleasure-seeking between male and female, or to allegiance of father to son, that is, to the mainstay of the plots of secret histories (*P,* 11:268–269). In light of the cautionary lessons of Balnibarbi and Luggnagg about past and future longings, living in the present might seem a plausible alternative. "Here [Gulliver] did not feel the . . . Inconstancy of a Friend, nor the Injuries of a secret or open Enemy" (*P,* 11:276). But of course Swift offers an impossible alternative. "Inconstancy" is human history. Houyhnhnms have no desire for power and almost no experience that might constitute historical change, "there happening few Events of any Moment" (*P,* 11:279). They are "brute" enough to live in the self-enclosed moment but smart enough to recognize in Gulliver's humanity the possibility for seduction: "That because [he] had some Rudiments of Reason, added to the natural Pravity" of humankind, he might try "to seduce them" into revolution (*P,* 11:279). Gulliver's conversations lead to this dangerous possibility. As Swift noted in the margins of Burnet's "secret" *History of His Own Times,* "all plots begin with talk" (*P,* 5:280). Gulliver might "do things with words": secretly promise, seduce, conspire, and tell histories.

Significantly, Gulliver has secrets but no privacy on his travels. He cannot hide in Lilliput where his legs protrude from the largest building. In Brobdingnag his box may be opened at any time. He has no fixed abode on the third voyage, no human dwelling on the fourth, and even back in England, he sleeps in an open stall in the stable. He madly tries to tell anecdotes that, once published, merely compete with other secret memoirs. Gulliver in this sense has become the character so central to these histories: the proud, displaced, frustrated patriarch trying vainly to perpetuate a true version of his self.

*Gulliver's Travels* demonstrates the critical opportunities made available by rethinking satire's relationship to the concept of secrecy and to the discursive practices of secret history. Writers of satire employ unauthorized discourses, such as gossip, slander, libel, and secret history, that "tell on" people. Their attacks depend on clandestine information and tactics of stealth,

allowing them to take their victims and their readers by surprise. Astute readers of satire—the group that Swift described as a few friends laughing in a corner—also become members of a conspiratorial cabal. If secrecy can enforce intimacy and trust, it also can trigger aggression, painful discovery, and revelation. This essay has attempted to disrupt the public/private binary by replacing "private" with "secret" as the counter-term to "public."[69] In the eighteenth century, according to Habermas and others, men, English satirists among them, gain access to forms of power and contribute to a process of democratization by founding a public sphere. This masculine domain of coffeehouse, court, or print marketplace contrasts with feminine venues of privacy in which women and other domestics (including women novelists) reside. Secrecy, however, has neither gender nor spatial restrictions. Anyone anywhere might be "let into it" (a common eighteenth-century idiom). Secrecy thus differs significantly from privacy by crossing both the public/private and the masculine/feminine divides. State-room, closet, slave plantation, learned institution, or boudoir can house the covert behaviors of a population that includes alchemists, mistresses, stock-company directors, kings, spies, priests, midwives, and sea-captains. By engaging us in multiple versions of "truth," secret knowledge enables an ironic perspective on things "that strike [us] with immediate conviction." To a satirist like Swift, the best strategy for challenging abuses of power is to allow the "conscious Muse" to taunt us with things that "[m]ust never to Mankind be told."

## Notes

1. Other readings of this scene include that of Christopher Fox who compares Gulliver to Narcissus. While Narcissus is seduced by his own reflection in the water, Gulliver is horrified by his resemblance to the Yahoos ("The Myth of Narcissus in Swift's *Travels,*" *ECS* 20 [1986–1987]: 17–33).

2. Delarivier Manley, *Secret Memoirs . . . From the New Atalantis,* ed. Ros Ballaster (London: Penguin, 1991), 245–246.

3. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels,* in *Prose Works of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Herbert Davis and others, 14 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939–1968), 11:266–267. Hereafter abbreviated *P* and cited parenthetically by volume and page number.

4. See, for example, Christian Thorne, who began to question the public status of works by the Scriblerians in his recent article "Thumbing Our Nose at the Public Sphere: Satire, the Market, and the Invention of Literature," *PMLA* 116.3 (2001): 531–544. The key text for understanding this resistance is, of course, Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,* trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (1962; Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989). Habermas's influential argument is critiqued extensively by Thorne who emphasizes the importance of the small circle of friends for whom satire seems to be written.

5. Swift, "The Lady's Dressing-Room," in *The Poems of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Harold Williams, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 2:528.

6. See Annabel Patterson, *Early Modern Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and Robert Mayer, *History and the Early English Novel: Matters of Fact from Bacon to Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Studies that emphasize a feminist view of secret history in relation to the rise of the novel and women writers include Erica Harth, *Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); and Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

7. This count is based on the *English Short Title Catalogue, 1473–1800* (London: British Library, 2003).

8. *OED,* s.vv. "Anecdote" (1. "secret, private, or hitherto unpublished narrative or details of history"; 2.a. "any item of gossip") and "Secret" (A.1 "kept from public knowledge").

9. J. L. Austin, whose important work *How to Do Things With Words* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962) is the ultimate source for speech act theory, and Shoshana Felman, who revised Austin's theory with respect to texts in *The Literary Speech Act: Don Juan with J. L. Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages,* trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), focus on promises and seductions in elucidating the performative power of language.

10. John Phillips, *The Secret History of the Reigns of K. Charles II and K. James II* (London, 1690), 150.

11. Michael McKeon, "Historicizing *Absalom and Achitophel,*" in *The New Eighteenth Century,* ed. Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (New York: Methuen, 1987), 30.

12. Ferrand Spence, *Anekdota heterouiaka. Or, The secret history of the house of the Medicis: Written originally by that fam'd historian, the Sieur de Varillas* (London, 1686), a7.

13. John Oldmixon, *The Secret History of Europe* (London, 1711), 66.

14. David Jones, *The Secret History of White-Hall, from the Restoration of Charles II down to the Abdication of the late K. James II* (1697), A4–5.

15. Additional versions exist in diaries and letters, although these, despite an active manuscript culture, usually did not circulate widely.

16. Swift himself had participated in such "Pro's and Con's." His *A New Journey to Paris* (1711) frames "the Secret of Monsieur [Matthew] Prior who traveled as a Spy to France" in the typical attributes of secret history (*Prose Works,* 3:209). The title includes promises of "some Secret Transactions Between the Fr—h K—g, and an Eng— Gentleman," elides proper names, and pretends the work is filtered through layers of translation, edition, and foreign authorship: "by the Sieur de Baudrier. Translated from the French. The Second Edition, Corrected" (*Prose Works,* 3:207).

17. *Polish Manuscripts: or the Secret History of the Reign of John Sobieski* (1700), A2.

18. Claude Vanel, Conseiller en la cour des Comptes de Montpellier, *The Royal Mistresses of France; or the Secret History of the Amours of All the French Kings (*1695), A2–3.

19. Daniel Defoe, *The Secret History of the White Staff* (London, 1714), 54.

20. Defoe, *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff: Purse and Mitre* (London, 1715), 8.

21. Phillips, *The Secret History of K. James I and K. Charles I* (London, 1690), A2.

22. Phillips, *K. Charles II and K. James II,* 85.

23. Vanel, 1–2.

24. Vanel, 19, 21–22.

25. *Secret History of the Reigns of K. Charles II and K. James II,* 106–107.

26. *Polish Manuscripts,* A11.

27. Defoe, *The Secret History of the White Staff,* 9; *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff,* 8.

28. Defoe, *The Secret History of the White Staff,* 44, 51, 42.

29. Jones, *The Secret History of White-Hall,* 106.

30. Patterson mentions that the 1682 reissue of the 1674 translation of Procopius coincided with the Exclusion Crisis and Popish Plot and reflects the politically volatile moment by a change in title: *The Debaucht Court. Or, the Lives of the Emperor Justinian, and his Empress Theodora the Comedian* (See Patterson, 183).

31. The significance of the role of the secretary has been discussed by Richard Rambuss, *Spenser's Secret Career* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

32. Procopius, [Works], trans. H. B. Dewing, Loeb Classical Library, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 6:vii. Hereafter abbreviated *W* and cited parenthetically by volume and page number.

33. Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* ed. J. B. Bury, 3 vols. (New York: Heritage Press, 1946), 2:1351.

34. This reductive quality is a recurrent, although not a constant, feature of secret history and is one of its qualities most readily related to satire. *The Secret History of Europe* explains French ascendancy to power in this summary of European politics: "Sweden and Denmark had just commenc'd Slaves. . . . The Empire was harrass'd by Infidels, and under the Dominion of a Prince who would rather have done his Business by Prayers than Arms. Spain was govern'd by a Child, Portugal by a Madman, Holland by a Faction, England by the Ladies, and France by a King instructed in all the Arts and Enamour'd of the Charms of Power" (107).

35. Suetonius, *Lives of the Twelve Caesars, the First Emperors of Rome* (1692), 254.

36. In addition to Ballaster's *Seductive Forms* on the importance of Behn, Manley, and Haywood in the story of the rise of the novel, see Toni O'Shaughnessy Bowers, "Sex, Lies, and Invisibility: Amatory Fiction from the Restoration to Mid-Century," and William Warner, "Licensing Pleasure: Literary History and the Novel in Early Modern Britain," in *The Columbia History of the Novel,* ed. John Richetti (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 50–72 and 1–22, respectively. See also Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 1–144.

37. Also pertinent are the ten children, further evidence of the patriarch's (pro)creative genius.

38. Swift, "To Stella Who Collected and Transcrib'd his Poems," in *Poems,* 2:730.

39. The abbreviation "md" signifies "my dear(s)"; "lele" signifies "silly," and "pdfr" stands for "poor dear foolish rogue."

40. Swift, *The Journal to Stella,* ed. and intro. Harold Williams, 2 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), 1:208, 2:493. Hereafter abbreviated *J* and cited parenthetically by volume and page number. Swift refers in these instances to the

sensitive matter of an offer of money from Harley and their disagreement over it ["He gave me a bank bill for fifty pounds"], and to a solicitation for help by Sir Thomas Hanmer who wished Swift to "help him to draw up the representation."

41. Swift, *Correspondence of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Harold Williams, 5 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963–1965), 3:141. Hereafter abbreviated *C* and cited parenthetically by volume and page number.

42. For a discussion of Swift's omissions about some personal matters in the *Journal to Stella,* see my "Swift and the Manl(e)y Style," in *Pope, Swift, and Women Writers,* ed. Donald C. Mell (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1996), 131–132.

43. Swift, "Cadenus and Vanessa," in *Poems,* 2:712.

44. Swift, "Cadenus and Vanessa," in *Poems,* 2:708, 2:707. The transgressive love between a young ward and her tutor/guardian frequently involves scenes of reading and "education." The implicit threat of incest is recurrent in the seduction of the young girl by the older paternal tutor. Also recurrent is the idea that the male "teacher" arouses desire in the young woman by encouraging her to reflect his own desires (which could be intellectual as well as physical). For discussions of the tutor/pupil relationship in amatory fiction, see Bowers; Ballaster; and Ellen Pollak, "Beyond Incest: Gender and the Politics of Transgression in Aphra Behn's *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister,*" in *Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, and Criticism,* ed. Heidi Hutner (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 151–186.

45. Esther Vanhomrigh, "A Rebus written by a Lady, On the Rev. D—n S—t," in *Poems,* 2:715.

46. Swift, "Cadenus and Vanessa," in *Poems, 2*:706, 2:712.

47. Swift, "The Author Upon Himself," in *Poems,* 1:196.

48. Swift, "The Author Upon Himself," in *Poems,* 1:194, 1:195.

49. Swift, "To the Earl of Oxford," in *Poems,* 1:210.

50. Swift, "The Author Upon Himself" and "Imitation of Horace, Lib.2. Sat.6," in *Poems,* 1:194, 1:202.

51. Swift, "Riddle," in *Poems,* 3:915–916.

52. Thomas Sheridan quoted in *The Writings of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Robert Greenberg and William Piper (New York: Norton, 1973), 600–602.

53. Maurice Johnson, "Swift's Poetry Reconsidered," in *Essential Articles for the Study of Jonathan Swift's Poetry,* ed. David M. Vieth (Hamden, CT: Archon, 1984), 69.

54. On Swift's cooperative relationship with Manley as a writer of political satire, see my "Swift and the Spider-woman: Swift, Manley, and Tory Satire," in *Locating Swift: Essays from Dublin on the 250th Anniversary of the Death of Jonathan Swift 1667–1745,* ed. Aileen Douglass, Patrick Kelly, and Ian Campbell (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 60–81.

55. Ballaster calls the scandal chronicles by D'Aulnoy and Manley "a peculiarly feminine form of satire" ("Manl(e)y Forms: Sex and the Female Satirist," in *Women, Texts, Histories 1575–1760,* ed. Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss [New York: Routledge, 1992], 220). Marie Catherine La Motte, Baronne D'Aulnoy authored works that were translated into English, such as *Travels into Spain, being the ingenious and diverting letters of the Lady—travels into Spain* (1691) and *Memoirs of the Court of England* (1707).

56. Manley was steeped in history-reading as well. Her father was the author of several important studies, especially a history of Turkey. She based her play *The Royal Mischief* on a history of Persia. In the introduction to *Memoirs of Europe,* Manley claims that her inspiration for her elaborate fictionalization of the time of Charlemagne came from the books in her father's library.

57. For accounts of Swift's attempts to gain this post, see Joseph M. Levine, "Jonathan Swift and the Idea of History," in *Eighteenth-Century Genre and Culture: Serious Reflections on Occasional Forms, Essays in Honor of J. Paul Hunter,* ed. Dennis Todd and Cynthia Wall (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001), esp. 89–90.

58. Gulliver's remarks about his own "faithful History" seem to recall Swift's experience ironically: "I confess, it was whispered to me, that I was bound in Duty as a subject of England, to have given in a Memorial to a Secretary of State, at my first coming over" (*Prose Works,* 11:277).

59. See Swift, *Abstract and Fragment of the History of England,* "Of Public Absurdities in England," "Of Mean and Great Figures" (*Prose Works,* 5:1–86). On this topic, see Davis, *Miscellaneous and Autobiographical Pieces* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), ix–xl.

60. Swift's assertion of impartiality is extensive: "Duty to God and man" supports his authority as "constant observer of all that passed," as independent judge "far from having any obligations to the crown." "A faithful historian . . . cannot suffer falsehoods to run on any longer" (*Prose Works,* 5:xxxiv).

61. Davis reports a total of 657 volumes in the catalogue of Swift's library (*Prose Works,* 5:xxxvii).

62. Swift wrote commentary in the margins of Robert Parsons, *A Conference About the Next Succession to the Crown of England,* (repr., 1681); Herodotus, *Historia Graec* (1618); Herbert Thomas, *A Relation of Some Yeares Travaile Into Africa and Greater Asia* (1634); Jean Bodin, *Les Six livres de la Republique* (1579); Edward Herbert, Lord Cherbury, *Life and Raigne of Henry VIII* (1649); Joseph Addison, *The Freeholder* (1715–1716); Peter Heylin, *The History of the Presbyterians* (1670); John Macky, *Characters of the Court of Britain* (1733); William Howells, *Medulla Historiae Anglicanae,* 9th ed. (1734); Gilbert Burnet, *History of His Own Times* (1724–1734); and Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion* (1707).

63. For a discussion of Swift's views of Henry VIII and monarchy in general, see Michael V. Deporte, "Avenging Naboth: Swift and Monarchy," *Philological Quarterly* 69.4 (1990): 419–433.

64. Burnet, *The History of His Own Times from the Restoration of Charles II to the Treaty of Peace, at Utrecht in the Reign of Queen Anne,* ed. Osmund Airy, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1897). Hereafter abbreviated *H* and cited parenthetically by volume and page number.

65. Mayer, 100; Patterson, 198.

66. This process has been discussed in various ways: see Henry V. Sams's early article, "Swift's Satire of the Second Person," *ELH* 26.1 (1959): 36–44; and Carl Kropf, *Reader Entrapment in Eighteenth-Century Literature* (New York: AMS, 1992).

67. In his shifts of irony, Gulliver on the third voyage has as much in common with the narrator of "A Digression on Madness" as he does with the more stable "Gulliver" of Lilliput.

68. See Michael V. Deporte, "Teaching the Third Voyage," in *Approaches to Teaching Swift's Gulliver's Travels,* ed. Edward J. Reilly (New York: Modern Language Association, 1988), 57–62; and "Hopeless Worlds: The Third Voyage," in *Readings on Gulliver's Travels,* ed. Gary Weiner (San Diego: Greenhaven, 2000), 141–146.

69. Patricia Spacks's recent and interesting study of privacy, as well as her earlier study of gossip, test, yet ultimately reinforce, the public/private binary in the novel and in the later eighteenth century (*Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003]). Although a full re-theorization of satire with respect to secrecy falls beyond the focus of this essay, it is possible to suggest the outline of such an endeavor. Eve Keller, Georg Simmel, Sissela Bok, D. A. Miller, and Eve Sedgwick have discussed some of the ways in which cultural and gender theories illuminate the need in any society to maintain (at least the appearance of) secrets. The latent aggression in secrecy, its power to cause harm, makes it well-suited for the aggressive genre of satire. In an age of terrorism, we post-moderns may be singularly well-positioned to understand the power to injure wielded by secret attackers who know our hidden weaknesses.

DEBORAH NEEDLEMAN ARMINTOR

# *The Sexual Politics of Microscopy in Brobdingnag*

Marjorie Nicolson's well-known analysis of the microscopical subtext of the first two sections of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* has remained the standard reading on the subject since the publication of her 1935 essay "The Microscope and English Imagination." Nicolson argues that Gulliver becomes a metaphorical microscopist in Lilliput, where he is an elevated observer of small creatures and objects, and even more so in Brobdingnag, where his scientific curiosity is complemented by a perspective that makes everyday objects appear to him in magnified detail, as if seen through a microscope.[1] As evidence, Nicolson cites Gulliver's dissection of giant Brobdingnagian wasps and his preservation of their stingers as a gift to Gresham College (The Royal Society), as well as the famous passages in which he observes Brobdingnagian anatomy in hideously magnified detail, such as Gulliver's recollection of one of "the most horrible spectacles that ever an European eye beheld . . . a woman with a cancer in her breast, swelled to a monstrous size, full of holes, in two or three of which I could have easily crept, and covered my whole body."[2] For Nicolson, "A Voyage to Brobdingnag" serves as one of many examples of the covertly and overtly microscope-oriented fiction, drama, and periodical literature of the time. When read together as a genre, Nicolson argues, these texts demonstrate how the figure of the microscopist and his fascination with little worlds made large was a popular object of both satire and awe in the age of Enlightenment.

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While Nicolson's broader argument about *Gulliver's Travels*—that its Brobdingnag section is indicative of microscopy's appeal to writers outside of the scientific community—is undeniably sound, her sweeping thesis on Gulliver's role as microscopist in Brobdingnag demands some careful rethinking. For if Gulliver does play the part of microscopist in Brobdingnag as Nicolson suggests, then he is a most unusual kind: a microscopist who views things he would rather not see and then curses his magnified vision, an unwanted perspective used to observe or accompany women's bodies as often as insects and objects. Moreover, it is not Gulliver's "enlightened" mind but his puny body that endows him with microscope-like sight and compels him, helplessly and aversely, to observe not his *own* skin and specimens but a Brobdingnagian woman's breast "so varified with spots, pimples and freckles, that nothing could appear more nauseous," as well as insects' "loathsome excrement or spawn . . . which to me was very visible, though not to the natives of that country, whose large optics were not so acute as mine in viewing smaller objects" (pp. 130, 148). Gulliver's role in these passages and in others like them is as a miniature "seeing object," whose singular function is to view everything in magnified detail but without the power to pick and choose the objects of his magnified gaze—a power that belongs not to Gulliver but to his gigantic and predominately female owners and manipulators. All of this, I maintain, makes the Brobdingnagian Gulliver far less of an eighteenth-century micro*scopist* than an eighteenth-century micro*scope,* particularly when we consider that Swift's writing of the fictitious Gulliver's reduction to a small woman-manipulated object with magnified vision coincided with the actual microscope's historical "decline" from a sizeable and relatively inaccessible tool of male-dominated science for most of the seventeenth century to the portable commodity popular with middle- and upper-class women that it had become by the early eighteenth century.

If we look more closely at the wasp-stinger incident cited by Nicolson, for example, we find that Gulliver is only in a position to observe these enormous specimens in magnified detail because he happens to have been placed on a windowsill by his gigantic female owner who carries him about in a specially made box or "traveling closet," just like the popular pocket microscopes of the day.[3] As if to underscore Gulliver's status as a miniature woman-owned seeing object, Swift begins the anecdote not with Gulliver's search for wasp stingers to dissect and donate to the Royal Society but with his recollection of "one morning when Glumdalclitch had set me in my box upon a window" (p. 149). In fact, as the following pages will show, Gulliver holds the position of microscopist for only a very short time—if at all—in Brobdingnag before he embarks on a three-stage devolution from microscopist to miniature microscope, to a woman-owned miniature microscope, and finally to a woman-

owned miniature microscope-cum-sexual prop in the hands of the queen's maids of honor. (The maids' use of Gulliver as sexual prop has been commented upon by other critics, but without noting its microscopical subtext.)[4] Gulliver's role as a miniature microscope and his cumulative devolution to a freakish hybrid of pocket microscope and sex toy exposes a heretofore unexplored satirical element of "A Voyage to Brobdingnag": Swift's joke at the expense of "enlightened" male scientists who imagine themselves to be far removed from the world of women and commodities but who are themselves, like Gulliver in the land of the giants, as affected by the whims of female consumption as are the newly commodified microscope and what might be called the ultimate object of female "consumption"—the dildo.

This reading of the microscopical subtext of Brobdingnag demands a reconsideration of a rarely examined chapter in the history of science, on which Nicolson herself is one of the few commentators: the microscope's shift from rare scientific instrument to popular female commodity.[5] Although the microscope's precise date of origin and the identity of its inventor are up for debate, it is safe to say that it was invented in the early 1600s and quickly became the much-used instrument of European scientists such as Antony van Leeuwenhoek, Marcello Malpighi, and Royal Society member Robert Hooke, all of whom made their own microscopes. These men and their fellow natural philosophers were fascinated to see the inner workings of small insects under the microscope and to witness tiny creatures moving about in magnified mold, their own semen (as exemplified in Leeuwenhoek's observations of human spermatozoa under the microscope, with both the sperm and microscope presumably of his own making), and other organic matter. In 1665, Hooke published a book called *Micrographia,* a beautifully illustrated collection of microscopical observations, which was met with high acclaim by the close-knit English scientific community.

All this changed in the 1680s, however, when the microscope began its alleged century-long "decline" within the scientific community, during which comparatively little was written on microscopical observation outside the world of fiction. Hypotheses for the microscope's scientific decline in the eighteenth century range from the Royal Society's collective disappointment over its inability to observe atoms to the irresolvability of theological debates over whether the microscope reveals the orderliness of God's Universe or the godlessness of a chaotic Universe.[6] In recent histories of science, the microscope's decline is most commonly ascribed to its failure to live up to Hooke's claim in the preface to *Micrographia* that "by the help of Microscopes, there is nothing so small, as to escape our inquiry."[7] Unfortunately for Hooke, that noble aspiration would be technologically impossible until the mid-nineteenth century, when major advancements in optical glass technology facilitated the groundbreaking microbiological work of Louis Pasteur.

When considered from a purely cultural perspective, however, the century-long lapse in microscope-oriented scientific innovation and publication beginning in the late 1600s appears to be less of a "decline" than a lateral change of hands. For at precisely the same time that it seemed to have lost its high standing in the scientific community, the microscope caught hold of the English popular imagination (partly as a result of the unexpected commercial success of Hooke's *Micrographia*) and began to be produced in multiple English workshops for the consumption of middle- and upper-class men and women. (As J. B. McCormick notes, "the predominance of the English workshops may also be explained by the lack of guild restrictions on the industry, especially in comparison with France . . . Makers of optical instruments could belong to such guilds as the Clockmakers Company or the Spectaclemakers Company, but the rules on apprenticeship and admission were not strictly enforced. The advantages of greater freedom may have helped to stimulate the creativity of English craftsmen.")[8] No longer the exclusive property of the male elite of the Royal Society, the microscope became a recreational tool for laypersons of both sexes who could now purchase and enjoy affordable and easy-to-use microscopes in conveniently portable small shapes and sizes produced in greater quantities for the amusement of the English public.

Evidence of women's use of these newly commodified microscopes has only recently come to light. Ignored by prefeminist histories of the microscope, the instrument's accessibility and appeal to eighteenth-century women has been taken up by two historians of microscopy, Catherine Wilson, who writes of the eighteenth century's "feminization of the microscope," and Marian Fournier, who observes "the opportunities this instrument proffered young—and not so young—ladies to participate, however far removed, in the adventure of scientific discovery."[9] The earliest critic on record to acknowledge this cultural footnote is Nicolson herself, who traces the advent of female microscope use in Susannah Centlivre's *The Basset Table* (1705) and elsewhere in eighteenth-century drama and fiction.

The most popular and most commonly produced of this new breed of scientific instrument was the appropriately titled "pocket microscope," which belonged as much, if not more, to the world of fashion as that of science. Measuring a mere three to six inches in length and sold in elegant snuffbox-sized containers, brass, silver, and ivory models such as "Mr. Wilson's Pocket-Microscope" and Wilson's screw-barrel model were not only far more user-friendly and elegant looking than the big and bulky compound model built by Hooke; they were also technologically superior, generating images much more clearly at greater magnification.[10] In spite of this, the author of a recent sourcebook on eighteenth-century microscopes says of the popular pocket model, "little or no serious study was undertaken with these instruments."[11]

Thanks to their affordability, portability, and ease of use, these dainty yet powerful instruments became fashionable among middle- and upper-class women who could purchase pocket microscopes with their pocket money, such that the pocket microscope became "very popular among the ladies" as well as the "gentlemen of the wealthier classes."[12] Swift himself, as Nicolson has noted, toyed with the idea of buying one for his lover, Esther ("Stella") Johnson. He wrote to her: "I doubt it will cost me thirty shillings for a microscope, but not without Stella's permission; for I remember she is a *virtuoso*. Shall I buy it or no? 'Tis not the great bulky ones, nor the common little ones, to impale a louse (saving your presence) upon a needle's point; but of a more exact sort, and clearer to the sight, with all its equipage in a little trunk that you may carry in your pocket. Tell me, sirrah, shall I buy it or not for you?"[13] Swift's charmed description exemplifies how, by 1710, these trendy little microscopes were almost as accessible and portable as the common lice they were often used to observe.

But not everyone was amused by this new development. Hooke, for one, saw a direct relation between the fashionable new pocket microscope and the contemporaneous decrease in microscope-oriented Royal Society publication. As early as 1691, he delivered a pessimistic address to the Royal Society about "the Fate of Microscopes, as to their Invention, Improvements, Use, Neglect, and Slighting." Addressing this recent "Change of Humour in Men of Learning, in so short a Time," Hooke decries the microscope's devolution from a productive tool of male scientists into a miniaturized plaything in the hands of frivolous amateurs.[14] Proper use of the microscope, he complains, has been "reduced almost to a single Votary, which is Mr. Leeuwenhoek; besides whom, I hear of none that make any other Use of that Instrument, but for Diversion and Pastime, and by that reason it is become a portable Instrument, and easy to be carried in one's pocket."[15] In Hooke's eyes, the once prestigious microscope had been reduced to a mere toy, a literal and metaphorical shrinkage that was, for Hooke, a symbolic castration of the worst kind. The fact that these fashionable little women's toys could actually magnify better than Hooke's model—a detail notably absent from his 1691 complaint—must only have increased his fear that these contemptible commodities would emasculate the already endangered species of "enlightened" Englishman. (It is no coincidence, then, that the one man named by Hooke as an exemplary microscope user, Leeuwenhoek, is not English.) It is this emasculation anxiety at the heart of Hooke's lament that Swift seizes upon in his portrayal of the scientifically minded Gulliver as a helpless woman-manipulated miniature microscope in Brobdingnag.

Like Hooke, Gulliver goes out of his way to distinguish his enlightened sensibility from the materialism of the new consumer culture. In the beginning of "A Voyage to Lilliput," for example, Gulliver describes his travels as

motivated by the pursuit of knowledge rather than wealth: "I was surgeon successively in two ships, and made several voyages, for six years, to the East and West Indies, by which I got some addition to my fortune. My hours of leisure I spent in reading the best authors ancient and modern, being always provided with a good number of books; and when I was ashore, in observing the manners and dispositions of the people, as well as learning their language, wherein I had a great facility by the strength of my memory" (p. 54). And yet Gulliver's account of his enlightened motives for travel suppresses the actual conditions of his voyages to the East and West Indies, the purpose of which is not to read books and scientifically observe foreign cultures but to import foreign goods for English consumption.

By the time Gulliver reaches Brobdingnag and actually becomes a small, imported commodity himself, his resemblance to an eighteenth-century pocket microscope undermines Hooke's presumption that masculine Enlightenment ideals were ever immune to the new and markedly feminine world of commodities. This, in a nutshell, is Swift's joke at Gulliver's expense. Just as in the history of microscopy itself, the role of women in the microscopical subtext of Brobdingnag only becomes apparent after the object in question has been first claimed by men, who later mark Gulliver's role as "instrument" by imagining him to be a "piece of clock-work . . . contrived by some ingenious artist" (p. 142). Early on, Gulliver is picked up by an elderly male giant who "was old and dim-sighted [and] put on his spectacles to behold me better, at which I could not forbear laughing very heartily, for his eyes appeared like the full moon shining into a chamber at two windows" (p. 135). Gulliver's laughter at the sight of the bespectacled male giant calls to mind not a natural philosopher (or even a microscopic specimen) but, more accurately, a microscope staring back and up into the eyes of its enormous dim-sighted user and mocking him for his optical inadequacies.

As if in mimicry of the microscope's historical change of hands, Swift has Gulliver's philosophically curious adult male handlers retreat to the background once our small microscope-like hero finds himself in the more corporeal sphere of women and children. There, he is snatched up by a breastfeeding baby who tries, "after the usual oratory of infants, to get me for a plaything" (p. 130). From this vantage point, Gulliver is forced to observe a magnified scene of mundane domestic consumption that he finds grotesque:

> I must confess no object ever disgusted me so much as the sight of her monstrous breast, which I cannot tell what to compare with, so as to give the curious reader an idea of its bulk, shape and colour. It stood prominent six foot, and could not be less than sixteen in circumference. The nipple was about half the bigness of my head, and the hue both of that and the dug so varified with spots, pimples and

> freckles, that nothing could appear more nauseous: for I had a near sight of her, she sitting down the more conveniently to give suck, and I standing on the table. This made me reflect upon the fair skins of our English ladies, who appear so beautiful to us, only because they are of our own size, and their defects not to be seen but through a magnifying glass, where we find by experiment that the smoothest and whitest skins look rough and coarse, and ill coloured.
>
> (p. 130)

Whereas an actual male microscopist would not have observed the magnified "fair skins of our English ladies" unless he specifically chose to do so, Gulliver is forced to observe hideously magnified—and specifically female—body parts, even and especially when he does not want to. And in contrast to the female virtuosos of Swift's day who took pleasure in viewing their own skin and hairs magnified under pocket microscopes, for Gulliver, who is in the position of a pocket microscope relegated to the status of domestic plaything, that sight is highly undesirable. Given Gulliver's microscopical point of view, the excessive gastronomic consumption in this scene—the baby's attempt to consume Gulliver, followed by the breastfeeding scene—further satirizes the devolution of the microscope and male microscopist from participants in the elite masculine world of the Royal Society to consumable objects in the world of women and children.

The misogyny used to describe such magnified female body parts is obvious and has been remarked upon by numerous critics.[16] What interests me about Gulliver's disgust with enormous female bodies is the connection Swift makes between this neurosis of Gulliver's (his phobic and microscope-like gaze as a human plaything in the hands of the new female virtuoso-cum-consumer) and Gulliver's scientific pretensions. The following passage shows this particular pathology, or microscopical masculinity crisis, at work. When he is taken to visit the chief temple in Brobdingnag by his forty-foot-tall, nine-year-old mistress, Glumdalclitch (the farmer's daughter), Gulliver tries to play the part of scientific observer by assessing and measuring his minute discoveries: "I measured a little finger which had fallen down from one of these statues, and lay unperceived among some rubbish, and found it exactly four foot and an inch in length. Glumdalclitch wrapped it up in a handkerchief, and carried it home in her pocket to keep among other trinkets, of which the girl was very fond" (p. 153). The passage shows Gulliver initially trying to play the part of the virtuoso by detecting, observing, and measuring the finger. But we find very quickly that he has merely served as the observing apparatus of his enormous mistress: first by his calling this "unperceived" treasure to her attention after finding it in a pile of trash with his magnified gaze and second by assessing it as only he can, with his unique magnified vision. In spite

of Gulliver's attempts to portray himself as a scientific observer in a strange land, by the end of the sentence he cannot keep from unwittingly revealing his true standing: Gulliver as miniature microscope, like the phallic "little finger," is just a "trinket"—a commodity—in the collection of this young female virtuoso and collector. His puzzlingly inaccurate early note to the reader that he is to become the "unhappy instrument" of Glumdalclitch's disgrace (when no palpable disgrace actually befalls Glumdalclitch) appears in this light as a Swiftian pun on the word "instrument" that speaks more to this scientific man's own disgrace as an "unhappy instrument" in the hands of Brobdingnagian women (p. 134). And thus, although Gulliver begins his travels presuming himself a scientific observer, female ownership makes him akin to the new purchasable microscopes-as-playthings, the small instrument rather than the willing observer of new discoveries.

After Glumdalclitch's "instrument" is bought by the queen for 1000 pieces of gold "for the diversion of the queen and her ladies"—underscoring once more Gulliver's newly commodified and feminized status—Glumdalclitch is adopted as Gulliver's caretaker in the royal palace (p. 139). There, her new access to wealth adds to her virtuoso/collector persona a related eighteenth-century prototype: the female "shopper," with Gulliver as a magnifying seeing-object playing a key role as her shopping accessory, carried in his own special box like the pocket microscope Swift imagines purchasing for Stella: "A coach was allowed to Glumdalclitch and me, wherein her governess frequently took her out to see the town, or go among the shops; and I was always of the party, carried in my box" (p. 151).[17] As Hoh-Cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui explain in their study of shops and shopkeeping in eighteenth-century England, by the 1700s, the indoor "shop" had all but replaced the open-air market as the hub of urban consumer activity.[18] Rather than merging with a larger group in an outdoor space, individual consumers would travel conspicuously by coach from shop to shop, accumulating commodities as they went.

Regarding one such shopping trip of Glumdalclitch's, Gulliver recalls: "Whenever I had a mind to see the town, it was always in my travelling-closet, which Glumdalclitch held in her lap in a kind of open sedan, after the fashion of the country, borne by four men, and attended by two others in the queen's livery. The people, who had often heard of me, were very curious to crowd about the sedan, and the girl was complaisant enough to make the bearers stop, and to take me in her hand that I might be more conveniently seen" (p. 153). Gulliver would *like* to explore the town as a curious and enlightened English traveler, but his will to observe and investigate is thwarted by his role as a commodified object with microscope-like vision—a pocket microscope—in the hands of a young woman-gone-shopping. As such, Gulliver sees not the attractions of the town but rather its enormous

magnified inhabitants looking down at him. As Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace notes, in the eighteenth century, the framed spectacle of the coach window enabled female shoppers not only to display their latest commodities en route to buying more but also helped them to display themselves to the urban public, as if their own bodies were the latest fashions on display.[19] The disparity between this reality and Gulliver's is quite telling. In Brobdingnag, the shoplike display of Glumdalclitch's coach window makes a commodity not of the female shopper, but rather of her miniature male accessory, the boxed-up Gulliver, Swift's enlightened man of science turned observing object and object observed. In his new role, the miniature Gulliver, like the fashionable new pocket microscope, is as much a small spectacle himself as an instrument used to produce magnified spectacles.

While Gulliver's magnified gaze makes him literally incapable of seeing "the larger picture," his status as a woman's shopping accessory and thing-that-sees, a miniature microscope, makes him unable to reflect philosophically on the new economy that subjects him to this treatment and subjects others to worse. As Gulliver recalls of another of Glumdalclitch's shopping trips:

> the governess ordered our coachman to stop at several shops, where the beggars, watching their opportunity, crowded to the sides of the coach, and gave me the most horrible spectacles that ever a European eye beheld . . . But, the most hateful sight of all was the lice crawling on their clothes. I could see distinctly the limbs of these vermin with my naked eye, much better than those of an European louse through a microscope, and their snouts with which they rooted like swine. They were the first I had ever beheld, and I should have been curious enough to dissect one of them, if I had proper instruments (which I unluckily left behind me in the ship) although indeed the sight was so nauseous, that it perfectly turned my stomach.
>
> (pp. 151–152)

On this excursion of Glumdalclitch's, Swift has Gulliver vacillating between one state of scientific emasculation—as an eager virtuoso deprived of his tools ("I should have been curious enough to dissect one of them, if I had proper instruments")—and another, as a former man of science shrunken to the stature of a portable object with a magnified gaze, like that of the pocket microscope, more intense than that of most European microscopes ("I could see distinctly the limbs of these vermin with my naked eye, much better than those of an European louse through a microscope," etc.). Overwhelmed by the magnified image before his eyes and reduced to a woman-owned seeing-object with magnified vision, Gulliver is incapable of going

beyond his purely sensory response (describing the sight as "nauseous") and responding to that visual image on an "enlightened" philosophical level as well: by, for example, reflecting not only upon the particulars of the lice themselves (as a natural philosopher would do) but also upon the socioeconomic condition of the people upon whom these enormous insects live (as an economic philosopher would do). In the philosophical terms of the English Enlightenment, Gulliver's reduction to an objectified thing-that-sees makes him incapable of doing little more than seeing, unable to take the crucial step that John Locke calls the transition from "perception" (which is purely sensory) to "reflection" (which is intellectual), and therefore unable to see the larger visual and philosophical picture.[20] And thus, this oblivious seeing-object, in the hands of an enormous modern-day female consumer and incapable of philosophical reflection, is so busy unreflectively perceiving "minute bodies" (Hooke's term for microscopic specimens) that he cannot even realize that he is one himself: a pocket-microscope-as-miniature-spectacle.[21] This, Swift jokes, is the imagined philosophical and cultural predicament of the "serious" eighteenth-century male microscopist, overcome and seemingly objectified by the emasculating and feminine consumer culture in which he and his instrument have become helplessly immersed.

The enlightened Englishman's metaphorical reduction to the position of a pocket microscope—a hyperperceptive but astonishingly unreflective female commodity—is apparent not only in Gulliver's microscope-like gaze and status but also in Swift's use of imagery of gastronomic female consumption to characterize Gulliver's plight.[22] While Swift makes Glumdalclitch a female virtuoso and specimen-collector-turned-shopper, he makes the queen—in the eyes of Gulliver-as-seeing-object—a voracious eater magnified to misogynistically grotesque proportions who almost consumes Gulliver orally after having exchanged him economically (having recently purchased him for those 1000 pieces of gold). As Gulliver recalls, during his first meal at the royal palace, the queen "took up at one mouthful as much as a dozen English farmers could eat at a meal, which to me was for some time a very nauseous sight. She would craunch the wing of a lark, bones and all, between her teeth, although it were nine times as large as that of a full-grown turkey; and put a bit of bread in her mouth, as big as two twelve-penny loaves" (p. 145). Swift has Gulliver frequently invoke the sensory (as opposed to reflective) word "nauseous" to describe this and other magnified images in Brobdingnag not only to reveal the neurotic depths of Gulliver's misogyny, but also to show how male nausea can be used as a pathetic countermeasure against the perceived threat of female consumption. Swift has Gulliver associate these magnified acts of female consumption with the act of "throwing up"—the opposite of and antidote to the act of gastronomic consumption. Gulliver's own misogyny-induced nausea is thus characterized as a comically

futile psychic defense mechanism against the female consumption that has the capacity to reduce not only scientific instruments but also enlightened Englishmen themselves to mere playthings with extreme magnified vision.

Swift completes Gulliver's devolution from ostensibly enlightened Englishman to a pocket microscope-like object of female consumption by placing him in the hands of the queen's maids of honor, who employ him as a sexual prop. As Gulliver recalls, the maids of honor "would often strip me naked from top to toe, and lay me at full length in their bosoms; wherewith I was much disgusted; because, to say the truth, a very offensive smell came from their skins; which I do not mention or intend to the disadvantage of those excellent ladies, for whom I have all manner of respect; but I conceive that my sense was more acute in proportion to my littleness" (p. 157). Horrified by the magnified image before him, Gulliver observes their "naked bodies, which, I am sure, to me was very far from being a tempting sight, or from giving me any other emotions than those of horror and disgust . . . when I saw them near, with a mole here and there as broad as a trencher, and hairs hanging from it thicker than pack-threads; to say nothing further concerning the rest of their persons" (p. 158). The "prettiest" giantess, adds Gulliver, "would sometimes set me astride upon one of her nipples, with many other tricks, wherein the reader will excuse me for not being over particular. But, I was so much displeased, that I entreated Glumdalclitch to contrive some excuse for not seeing that young lady any more" (p. 158). Although Gulliver censors out of his narrative the particular "tricks" that displease him so much, Swift allows the reader to imagine that this enormous woman uses Gulliver—in what might be called the ultimate act of female consumption—as a human dildo, rendering Gulliver's own genitalia both physically and symbolically insignificant.[23]

Swift's humorous conflation of the "dildo's eye view" and the pocket microscope in this Brobdingnagian "sex scene" is not as preposterous as it might seem. Functioning as both a pocket microscope and a phallic prop in the hands of consuming women, Gulliver's body and gaze in Brobdingnag indicate the precise point of intersection between anxieties over the popularization of the microscope and contemporaneous anxieties over the dildo. Following John Locke's belief that, in Catherine Wilson's words, "all true knowledge is *acquired through ordinary unassisted sensory experience,*" the microscope was scorned by Joseph Addison and Alexander Pope as an unproductive "toy of the age" and a reprehensibly unnatural "artificial eye."[24] At the same time, the dildo, on similar grounds, was perceived by its detractors in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century as a reprehensibly artificial penis and un(re)productive female plaything (and as contributing to what many wrongly perceived as a nationwide depopulation crisis).[25] While woman's appropriation of the male member (in dildo form) was seen as a threat to man's claim to his own genitalia, her appropriation and belittlement of the scientific

instrument that served as an "artificial eye" was feared by Hooke as a threat to the enlightened Englishman's claim to the scientific gaze and by others as a threat to the authoritative gaze of God.[26]

As the final stage in Gulliver's devolution from ostensibly enlightened observer to woman-owned pocket microscope to sexual prop, Gulliver's role as a human-dildo-cum-pocket-microscope also adds a new scientific dimension to an established late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century erotic tradition featuring sexual props as male protagonists, as in the comic-erotic poems "Signior Dildo" (commonly attributed to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester) and the anonymous "Monsieur Thing's Origin." Like Gulliver in Brobdingnag, the male heroes of these poems are bought, sold, exchanged, and forced by their enormous female users to observe the unimaginable.[27] The scientific side of female sexual experimentation with newly purchased instruments is apparent in the comic-erotic poem "The Bauble, a Tale" (London, 1721). Here, the newly dildo-wielding female protagonist is characterized as a virtuoso of sorts who conducts "experiments" with her enlightening new scientific/sexual instrument:

> Ten Thousand Methods [she] does explore,
> Experiments not known before.
> Invention racks, in hopes to find
> A Thing more pleasing to her Mind.
> No Philomath e'er pump'd so hard,
> To gain the Longitude-Reward.
> UNHAPPY CHLOE! Fruitless Brain!
> I think, says she, but think in vain.
>
> (p. 5)

Describing Chloe as a "Philomath," the poem equates sexual curiosity with scientific curiosity, satirically portraying female dildo-users as scientifically minded virtuosos. When the talented Chloe is finally successful, she instructs other women in the art of using this "Instrument for *Titillation,*" and "Teaches young Virgins, pale and wan, (without th'Assistance of a Man),"[28] as if this new breed of sexually insatiable, scientifically minded female consumer—as Hooke seems to have feared of the new generation of microscope user—will eventually make English men irrelevant, following Hooke's aforementioned complaint that "I hear of none that make any other Use of that Instrument, but for Diversion and Pastime, and by that reason it is become a portable Instrument, and easy to be carried in one's pocket."[29]

In "A Voyage to Brobdingnag," Swift's satire of the parallel emasculation anxieties surrounding both sexual prop and pocket microscope is realized in Gulliver's complaint of his own objectification and irrelevance, his admission that what "gave me most uneasiness among these maids of

honor . . . was to see them use me without any matter of ceremony, like a creature who had no sort of consequence" (p. 158). The key to this passage is the illogic of the word "see," since the miniaturized Gulliver—with his extreme magnifying gaze—could not possibly view the scenario from a vantage point that would enable him to observe the women in the act of using him. Rather, his field of vision must be limited to a magnified image of the *vagina dentata* that consumes him, blown up to abstraction and at the expense of "the bigger picture." It takes no stretch of the imagination to envision that such a sight would be much like one of Hooke's illustrations of organisms and objects magnified to abstraction on the pages of *Micrographia*. Indeed, it is not unlikely that Swift was keenly aware of how Hooke's Rorschachian depiction of a fly's eyes could take on an almost obscene new meaning when considered alongside the preceding passages from "A Voyage to Brobdingnag"—bringing the likeminded reader full circle to Gulliver's early magnified observation of Brobdingnagian flies. Swift's joke is on the enlightened male scientist of his day for whom, he suggests, the commodification, shrinkage, and "feminization" of the microscope have, metaphorically speaking, made both magnified views one and the same.

Thus, by planting such a simultaneously pornographic and microscopical image in the mind of the pornographically or gynophobically inclined reader, Swift allows us to deduce that Gulliver suppresses this magnified spectacle not just out of some generic male fear of the vagina but specifically because Gulliver's position and gaze in this scene represent the climax (so to speak) of his devolution—and that of his fellow "enlightened" Englishmen in the age of pocket microscopy—from male "giant-among-the-dwarfs" to a miniature objectified pocket-microscope-like commodity in the hands of scientifically and sexually curious female "consumers."

For the remainder of his stay in Brobdingnag, Gulliver finds himself returned to the company of men, but the censored dildo incident and its microscopical subtext remain that section's primal scene. "A Voyage to Brobdingnag" ends, after all, with Gulliver's suppression of that scene and all it represents, with his return home as patriarch to his wife and daughter, whose disconcerting smallness ("My wife ran out to embrace me, but I stooped lower than her knees, thinking she could otherwise never be able to reach my mouth. My daughter kneeled to ask me blessing, but I could not see her till she arose, having been so long used to stand with my head and eyes erect to above sixty foot"), physical manipulability ("I went to take her up with one hand, by the waist"), ostensible aversion to economic and gastronomic consumption ("I told my wife she had been too thrifty, for I found she had starved herself and her daughter to nothing"), and apparent lack of curiosity (significantly, they appear to have no interest in what he saw in his travels), counteract the fantastical "Hooke's worst nightmare" that precedes it (p. 191).

So how does this reading of Gulliver's decline contribute to our understanding of "A Voyage to Brobdingnag" and its microscopical subtext? In short, by reducing an Englishman of enlightened pretensions to a virtual microscope-cum-dildo in women's hands, "A Voyage to Brobdingnag" satirizes the misogyny behind "enlightened" English masculinity and the castration threat it projects onto the new female consumer who is imagined to have abused and belittled both the microscope and the phallus by wresting them from their original and rightful (male) owners. In this light, the Swift of "A Voyage to Brobdingnag" appears as neither misogynist nor antimisogynist per se but rather as a sexual satirist exposing the gynophobia latent in Enlightenment science's aversion to the new consumerism. And thus, Gulliver's eventual use as a sexual prop in the hands of the Brobdingnagian queen's maids of honor must ultimately be understood as an act of consumption *inextricable* from the microscopical subtext of "A Voyage to Brobdingnag." For as we have seen, Gulliver ends up as both pocket microscope and dildo in a cultural satire in which Swift has showed how these two seemingly disparate objects and subject positions have become, metaphorically speaking, and to the imagined horror of Enlightenment purists such as Hooke, virtually interchangeable.

## Notes

1. Marjorie Nicolson, "The Microscope and English Imagination," *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages* 16, 4 (July 1935): 1–92. The essay was later published in Nicolson's book *Science and Imagination* (Ithaca: Great Seal Books, 1956), pp. 155–234. Future page citations refer to the 1935 edition. While studies of general science, the Royal Society, and Enlightenment ideology in *Gulliver's Travels* abound (particularly regarding section three), few since Nicolson have considered how the microscope in particular figures into Swift's scientific satire. One exception is Christopher Fox, who argues that Gulliver plays the part of a microscopical specimen in Brobdingnag ("Introduction: How to Prepare a Noble Savage: The Spectacle of Human Science," in *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains,* ed. Fox, Roy Porter, and Robert Wokler [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995], pp. 1–30). Fox's argument adds a welcome new dimension to Nicolson's but fails to account for the physicality of the microscope, its particular status in the eighteenth century, and Gulliver's resemblance to it. Noteworthy analyses of general science in *Gulliver's Travels* include Frederick N. Smith on Brobdingnag and the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* ("Science, Imagination, and Swift's Brobdingnagians," *ECLife* 14, 1 [February 1990]: 100–114); David Renaker on science and satire in Laputa ("Swift's Laputians as a Caricature of the Cartesians," *PMLA* 94, 5 [October 1979]: 936–944); and Douglas Lane Patey, "Swift's Satire on 'Science' and the Structure of *Gulliver's Travels,*" *ELH* 58, 4 (Winter 1991): 809–839.

2. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels,* ed. Peter Dixon and John Chalker (New York: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 151. Subsequent quotations from this text are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically by page number.

3. The box was also a common and inhumane method of transportation for dwarf performers in traveling freak shows (see Aline MacKenzie Taylor, "Sights and Monsters and Gulliver's Voyage to Brobdingnag," *Tulane Studies in English* 7 [1957]: 29–82.

4. See, for example, Paul-Gabriel Boucé, "Gulliver Phallophorus and the Maids of Honour in Brobdingnag," *Bulletin de la Société d'Études Anglo-Américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles* 53 (November 2001): 81–98; Laura Brown, "Reading Race and Gender: Jonathan Swift," in *Critical Essays on Jonathan Swift,* ed. Frank Palmeri (New York: G. K. Hall, 1993), pp. 121–140; and Ruth Salvaggio, "Swift's Disruptive Woman," in her *Enlightened Absence: Neoclassical Configurations of the Feminine* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 77–102, 85.

5. Nicolson writes that "in England, the period 1660–1685 saw the emergence of the microscope from a stage of mere novelty into an important adjunct to the investigations of the Royal Society, then saw a period of intense enthusiasm for its possibilities, followed by a period of waning interest and of comparative disuse of the microscope among scientists, accompanied by a growing interest in the microscope among laymen" (p. 8). Later, Nicolson explains how "[f]or a time the microscope ceased to be an important scientific instrument and became the plaything of the aristocracy—most of all, of the 'ladies'" (p. 22). She also makes the point that compared with the telescope, the microscope "naturally made the greater appeal. It was . . . easily obtainable and at a price not prohibitive; it could easily be used by amateurs, and its 'discoveries' were immediate and readily intelligible. It became in a short time the ladies' toy. As contemporary advertisements indicate, commercial manufacturers found in the women of the day an important additional source of revenue; exquisite glasses were available for them, in specially prepared cases, which might easily be carried in the place of snuff-boxes; and the charming *virtuosae* of the day delighted in the new fad" (pp. 41–42).

6. This fascinating topic is beyond the scope of this essay but is addressed in Marian Fournier, *The Fabric of Life: Microscopy in the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Catherine Wilson, *The Invisible World: Early Modern Philosophy and the Invention of the Microscope* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Christopher Herbert Lüthy, "Matter and Microscopes in the Seventeenth Century" (Ph.D. diss. Harvard University, 1995); and J. B. McCormick, *Eighteenth Century Microscopes: Synopsis of History and Workbook* (Lincolnwood: Scientific Heritage, 1987).

7. Robert Hooke, *Micrographia: Or, Some Physiological Descriptions of Minute Bodies Made by Magnifying Glasses. With Observations and Inquiries Thereupon* (London, 1665), p. iv.

8. McCormick, p. 12.

9. Wilson, *The Invisible World,* p. 228; Fournier, p. 8.

10. See Maurice Daumas, *Scientific Instruments of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* trans. Mary Holbrook (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1972), for an in-depth commentary on the English instrument-making workshops of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

11. McCormick, p. 41.

12. Ibid.

13. Swift, "November 15 1710," in *Journal to Stella,* ed. Harold Williams, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 1:97.

14. Hooke, "Discourse Concerning Telescopes and Microscopes; with a short Account of Their Inventors, read in February 1691–1692," in *Philosophical Experiments of the Late Eminent Dr. Robert Hooke and Other Eminent Virtuoso's in His Time* (London, 1726), pp. 257–264, 261.

15. Ibid.

16. For more on misogyny in "A Voyage to Brobdingnag" and elsewhere in Swift, see Brown; Salvaggio; Margaret Anne Doody, "Swift among the Women," in Palmeri, pp. 13–37; Felicity A. Nussbaum, "Gulliver's Malice: Gender and the Satiric Stance," in *Gulliver's Travels: Complete, Authoritative Text with Biographical and Historical Contexts, Critical History, and Essays from Five Contemporary Critical Perspectives,* ed. Fox (Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 318–334; Nora F. Crow, "Swift and the Woman Scholar," in *Pope, Swift, and Women Writers,* ed. Donald C. Mell (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1996), pp. 222–238; Louise K. Barnett, "Betty's Freckled Neck: Swift, Women, and Women Readers," *1650–1850: Ideas, Aesthetics, and Inquiries in the Early Modern Era* 4 (1998): 233–245; and Ellen Pollak, *The Poetics of Sexual Myth: Gender and Ideology in the Verse of Swift and Pope* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

17. The relationship between these two eighteenth-century female prototypes is captured by Harriet Guest, who writes that "feminine learning is perceived with increasing insistence in the mid- to late century in a parallel relation to fashionable elegance" (*Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750–1810* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000], p. 73).

18. Hoh-Cheung Mui and Lorna H. Mui, *Shops and Shopkeeping in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: McGill-Queens University Press, 1989).

19. Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997). For more on the advent of female consumerism in the eighteenth century, see *The Consumption of Culture, 1600–1800: Image, Object, Text,* ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995); Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660–1760* (London: Routledge, 1996); and Guest, pp. 1–94.

20. John Locke, *Essay concerning Human Understanding* (New York: Penguin Books, 1974), pp. 119–123.

21. The name that Glumdalclitch gives Gulliver, "Grildrig"—translated by Gulliver as "what the Latins call *nanunculus,* the Italians *homunceletino,* and the English *mannikin*" (p. 134)—highlights his position in Brobdingnag as a women's prop. Paul Odell Clark, drawing from Swift and Stella's "little language," translates "Grildrig" as "*Girl-thing*" (*Gulliver Dictionary* [New York: Haskell House Publishers, 1972], p. 20).

22. As Gulliver wonders upon encountering his first Brobdingnagian, "what could I expect but to be a morsel in the mouth of the first among these enormous barbarians who should happen to seize me?" (p. 125). During the same meal with the queen, the court dwarf (arguably a stand-in for Swift himself) delights in reminding Gulliver that he is a mere morsel in the eyes of the queen by dropping Gulliver into a bowl of cream and inserting him into a marrow bone on her plate.

23. This is, of course, a stark contrast to his adventures in Lilliput, where he uses his enormous member (much admired by the Lilliputians) to put out a fire on the queen's tiny palace.

24. Wilson, "Visual Surface and Visual Symbol: The Microscope and the Occult in Early Modern Science," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 49, 1 (January–March 1988): 85–108, 103 (emphasis original); Joseph Addison, "No. 119. Thursday, January 12, 1709," in *The Works of Joseph Addison,* ed. Henry G. Bohn, 6 vols. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1901), 2:72; and Alexander Pope, "Essay on Man":

> Why has not Man a microscopic eye?
> For this plain reason, Man is not a Fly.
> Say what the use, were finer optics giv'n,
> T' inspect a mite, not comprehend the heav'n?
>
> (1.193–196)

(in *The Poems of Alexander Pope,* ed. John Butt [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963], pp. 501–547). For more on Locke and microscopy, see chap. 7 of Wilson's *Invisible World* (pp. 215–250).

25. See Peter Wagner, "The Discourse on Sex—Or Sex as Discourse: Eighteenth-Century Medical and Paramedical Erotica," in *Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment,* ed. G. S. Rousseau and Porter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), pp. 46–68, 53–54.

26. See also the tongue-in-cheek manner in which the comic-erotic poem "Monsieur Thing's Origin" (Cheapside, 1722) frames the conflict between dildo and penis as a matter of "Art" vs. "Nature," and in the similarly comical disparagement of dildos as "false ware" in the anonymous 1706 poem "Dildoides" (rprt. in *Dildoides* [Kingston RI: Biscuit City Press, 1980], p. 9), which is often attributed to Samuel Butler (see A. H. De Quehen, "An Account of Works Attributed to Samuel Butler," *The Review of English Studies* 33, 131 [August 1982]: 262–277).

27. Rochester, "Signior Dildo," in *The Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester,* ed. Harold Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 253–257. For more on literary representations of dildos—anthropomorphic and inanimate alike—in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Emma Donoghue, *Passions Between Women: British Lesbian Culture, 1668–1801* (London: Scarlet Press, 1993); Harold Weber, "'Drudging in Fair Aurelia's Womb': Constructing Homosexual Economies in Rochester's Poetry," *ECent* 33, 2 (Summer 1992): 99–117; and Jeffrey Kahan, "Violating Hippocrates: Dildoes and Female Desire in Thomas Nashe's 'The Choice of Valentines,'" *Para*doxa* 2, 2 (1996): 204–216. While others have hypothesized the incident's origins in *Arabian Nights* (see Sheila Shaw, "The Rape of Gulliver: Case Study of a Source," *PMLA* 90, 1 [January 1975]: 62–68, 64), it is certainly possible that Swift had read the anonymous poem "Monsieur Thing's Origin," about an émigré dildo from France who—like Gulliver in Brobdingnag, a little man in a strange land—ends up in the hands of an English queen's maid:

> From hence *Monsieur* took moving to the Court,
> To see what Pastime there was, or what Sport:
> So came he to the Hand of Lady's Maid,
> With whom some little time our *Monsieur* stay'd
> She like Cade Lamb was pleas'd with *Monsieur* play'd.
> No sooner had she tasted of his Favour,
> But she embrac'd the Sweetness of his Savour;
> To him alone she shew'd her good Behaviour.

By this time *Monsieur* having thus infus'd
His Friendship in the Maid, she introduc'd
Him to her kind Mistress's first Acquaintance,
As a fine Thing of noted Worth and Sense:
So that the Lady was to make a Tryal
Of *Monsieur*'s Skill, which was without denyal
The best, most pleasing thing as e'er she felt,
Ever since she near to the Court had dwelt.

(pp. 20–21)

28. "The Bauble: A Tale" (London, 1721), p. 3.
29. Hooke, "Discourse Concerning Telescopes and Microscopes" p. 261.

ANN CLINE KELLY

# *Gulliver as Pet and Pet Keeper: Talking Animals in Book 4*

In Book 4 of *Gulliver's Travels,* Gulliver narrates his story from the perspectives of both pet and pet keeper. Focusing on Gulliver's dual role as well as on the dynamics of pet keeping reveals the extent to which *Gulliver's Travels,* particularly Book 4, is situated in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century debates about the nature of Creation and individual identity that challenged the fundamental binaries inherent in the Chain of Being paradigm, namely the oppositions of human to animal and nature to nurture. Diverse sets of individuals—empiricists, philosophers, animal trainers, and pet owners—resisted and countered to varying degrees the Chain of Being premise that Nature is a divinely-ordered, eternal hierarchy of essentially different species. In this unchanging and unchangeable chain of separate and distinct links, humankind is situated just below the angels and, by virtue of that superiority, is clearly removed from the rest of animate creation, over which it has dominion.[1] Disturbed by implications that human/animal difference is not absolute or that identity is not essentially anchored, René Descartes declares that "after the error of those who deny the existence of God . . . there is none that is more powerful in leading feeble minds astray from the straight path of virtue than the supposition that the soul of brutes is of the same nature with our own."[2] Jonathan Swift vexes the issue of what constitutes a "brute" by situating Gulliver as a pet in Houyhnhnmland,

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where "brutes" look just like him, and by focusing on the experience of pet keeping, which collapses the differences between the dominant, rational race and the lesser creatures whom they choose as companions.

Though at first accepting Chain of Being premises about the chasm between man and beast, Gulliver gradually comes to an alternative view engendered by his sojourns abroad, particularly in Houyhnhnmland. Gulliver's epiphany does not come in a flash but over time with a series of back-and-forth shifts of perspective that reflect the dialectical currents in English discourse concerning the relationship of humans to animals and the power of nurture to shape identity. Analyzing Gulliver's shift in attitude toward species boundaries provides a new way to understand the concluding chapters of the *Travels,* in which Gulliver's avoidance of his family and his retreat to the stable for conversations with his pet horses are cited as proofs of his misanthropy and madness. In the so-called "hard school" view of Book 4, Gulliver's mental dysfunction results from his tragic realization that like the Houyhnhnmland Yahoos, humans are essentially irrational and therefore incapable of ever attaining Houyhnhnm virtues. "Soft school" critics, believing that humans are not irredeemable, but potentially rational, characterize Gulliver in a similar way but ascribe his strange, anti-social behavior to his misguided acceptance of misanthropic "hard school" ideas.[3] In contrast to either of these critical views, I contend that Gulliver ends up relatively sane and sociable, an argument based on an analysis of the textual evidence concerning Gulliver's re-assimilation and on a survey of contextual discourse suggesting that the desire to talk to horses is not necessarily a sign of insanity. The question of Gulliver's mental balance, though, is not the most disturbing one Swift's narrative raises. Rather it is an inconvenient and uncomfortable question with radical political, social, and moral implications—to what degree do other species share the qualities humans claim for themselves?

When Gulliver first arrives in Houyhnhnmland, his thinking about species is shaped by Chain of Being principles so that when he sees horses in a field, he instantly understands that they are profoundly different from him and that he is naturally their master. He approaches a dapple gray just as "Jockies [would] when they are going to handle a strange Horse"—by stroking its neck and whistling in a certain way, but the horse makes clear it does not want to be petted.[4] Gulliver assumes he has a unique and privileged place in Nature as a member of the only language-using species, but he becomes confused when the dapple gray whinnies in such an eloquent fashion that Gulliver "began to think [the horse] was speaking to himself in some Language of his own" (225). Gulliver's confusion arises because he knows that linguistic capacity, a manifestation of reason, is an essential quality that distinguishes humankind from all other animals. After some more neighing from the dapple gray, Gulliver "fancied [himself] to understand what

[the horse] meant" (225). Because Gulliver, like Descartes, knows that beasts lack both the bodily organs and mental capacity to produce rational utterances, he speculates that the creatures "must needs be [human] Magicians, who had thus metamorphosed themselves [into horses] upon some Design" (226).[5] Gulliver's association of talking horses with the supernatural is rooted in deeply embedded cultural attitudes apparent, for example, in the considerable body of English folklore concerning "Bankes' horse," whose humanlike abilities were ascribed to black magic.[6]

Gulliver finally "ventured to address [the horse-like individuals] in the following Manner: Gentleman, if you be Conjurers . . . you can understand my language." He entreats one metamorphosed human conjurer to let him "ride upon his Back, as if he were a *real Horse*" (226, my emphasis), an idea to which the addressee signifies his objection. As the four-legged creatures communicate to each other, Gulliver finds himself imagining "that their Language expressed the Passions very well, and the Words might with little Pains be resolved into an Alphabet more easily than the *Chinese*" (226). Because in the English literary tradition animals exhibiting human-like behaviors are associated with non-mimetic or fantastic genres, such as myth, fairytale, allegory, and fable, Gulliver dismisses his initial encounters with the Houyhnhnms as fantasies generated by a waking "Brain . . . disturbed by [his] Sufferings and Misfortunes" or by a sleeping brain sunk in a dream state (228).

Within a very short period of time, though, Gulliver—who initially asserts his dominion over the horses—acknowledges that the power and rationality of these creatures gives them dominion over him. Anxious how he might be treated in this alternative Creation, Gulliver tries to sneak off, but the dapple gray sees him and requires his return in a way Gulliver completely comprehends: "[W]hereupon I turned back . . . to expect his farther Commands; but concealing Fear as much as I could; for I began to be in some Pain, how this Adventure might terminate: and the Reader will easily believe I did not much like my present Situation" (225). When the dapple-gray horse "made Signs" that the strange creature should follow him home so he could show it to the rest of the family, Gulliver begins to call him "Master" and assumes the role of pet (229). At this point human readers, who probably identify with Gulliver, are forced to assume an unaccustomed perspective on species relationships.

In becoming the Master Horse's pet, Gulliver affirms his keeper's physical and intellectual sway over him. Lacking the "flight or fight" instincts of a wild animal, Gulliver exhibits the domesticity, dependence, and subjection that make him a suitable companion animal. Introductory petting helps to define Gulliver's new role. While the horses refuse to be petted by Gulliver, the reverse is not true. The dapple gray and another horse "rubbed [Gulliver's] Hat all round . . . felt the Lappet of [his] Coat . . . stroked [his] Hand,"

and, after a mistaken gesture that makes Gulliver "roar" with pain, "they both touched [him] with all possible Tenderness" (225–226). Although the horses categorize Gulliver as an animal because he lacks the superior form of their species as well as the ability to speak their language, they identify him as a potential pet because he appears to understand and respond to their communications. Indeed, he shows that he is eager to learn from them and is unnaturally precocious. "Visibly surprized" (225) at his attempts to imitate their words, the two horses then start to tutor him in order "to teach him the right Accent. . . . [T]hey both appeared amazed at [his] Capacity" (226). Gulliver accedes to being a pet primarily because he fears that if he were a non-pet animal, he would be eaten, skinned, or put to hard labor. It is no wonder that Gulliver, then, determines that his "principal Endeavor was to learn the [Houyhnhnm] Language" (234), the acquisition of which would explicitly distinguish him from the Houyhnhnmland Yahoos, who lead miserable lives as draft animals.

In becoming a pet keeper, the Master Horse decides to establish a close relationship with a docile creature of a different species that shows signs it might reciprocate his love and attention. As the pet's keeper, he will be a central and controlling figure in his pet's life, perhaps in contrast to his position within his own family or Houyhnhnm society. The Master Horse treats Gulliver unlike other animals in Houyhnhnmland mentioned in the text (birds, rabbits, asses, and Yahoos) by indulging Gulliver with special food and providing him a little hutch "but Six Yards from [his] House" (233). Most significant, though, is the Master Horse's assumption that Gulliver is educable, so he devotes "many Hours of his Leisure to instruct [him]" (234). In addition to Gulliver, the Master Horse may also have another pet—a cat. The text mentions that the Yahoos, perhaps out of jealous spite, "kill and devour the [Houyhnhnms'] cats" (271). Like a domesticated cat, Gulliver is not only intelligent and affectionate but also knows not to excrete indoors or to use his teeth and nails against his owner.

As a pet keeper, the Master Horse treats Gulliver as a close companion or family member. He spends hours talking to Gulliver and, on occasions, stroking him. In addition to the initial petting, Gulliver also describes a later incident in which the Master Horse wants to see what lies under his clothes. After Gulliver undresses, the Master "then stroaked [his] Body very gently," noting the "Whiteness, and Smoothness of [his] Skin, [his] want of Hair in several Parts of [his] Body, [and] the Shape and Shortness of [his] Claws behind and before" (237). While justified as a scientific inquiry, it seems that this ostensibly non-sexual petting provides pleasure to both Gulliver and the Master Horse. Because pets seem eager to be talked to and petted, relationships with them sometimes replace or supplement more complicated, conditional bonds with individuals of the keeper's own species.[7]

Keith Thomas notes that by 1700 in England "all the symptoms of obsessive pet-keeping were in evidence," a new social practice that can be seen as a reaction to the alienation and isolation associated with increasing modernity. Thomas argues that pet keeping changes pet keepers' attitudes about the capacities of animals by encouraging "optimistic conclusions about animal intelligence"; "stimulat[ing] the notion that animals could have character and individual personality; and creat[ing] the psychological foundation for the view that some animals at least were entitled to moral consideration."[8] The Master Horse displays these attitudes in his relationship with his new pet. Like other pet owners, the Master Horse comes to view his companion animal as a hybrid, occupying the form of a lower link on the Great Chain yet having some of the capacities with which his superior, pet-keeping species is endowed, such as sensibility, intelligence, and an ability to understand and respond to language. Indeed, because of Gulliver's fortuitous anatomy, he has the organs needed to produce intelligible speech, that is, speech in the Houyhnhnm's language.

The Master Horse's acceptance of Gulliver "in his Family" (279) illustrates how pet/pet keeper intimacy destabilizes species borderlines when the putative Other becomes Same, a dynamic described by one of Swift's favorite writers, Michel de Montaigne, who analyzes his relationship with his cat in *An Apology for Raymond Sebond* (1595).[9] Seeing the world from his pet's point of view, Montaigne wonders who is truly the dominant species: "When I play with my cat, how do I know that she is not passing time with me rather than I with her?" Of animals in general, Montaigne muses that "they may reckon us to be brute beasts for the same reason that we reckon them to be so. . . . How could they not speak to one another? They certainly speak to us, and we to them."[10] For putting animals on the same plane as humans, Montaigne holds a central place in the development of an outlook that George Boas calls "theriophily," an emergent set of beliefs in the early modern period that dispute humankind's superiority to creatures they deem lesser.[11] Like Montaigne's conversations with his cat, the Master Horse's conversations with his Yahoo-like pet undermine the premises of the Great Chain of Being.

Within the circle of the Master Horse and his friends, Gulliver acquires an oxymoronic label—"wonderful *Yahoo*" (235)—to denote his hybrid character. At the time Swift is writing *Gulliver's Travels,* hybrid individuals who defy species categorization were of interest not only to the Royal Society and but also to the general public, whose love of the "strange and wonderful" encouraged the popular press to headline unnatural linkages and amalgams that simultaneously proved the rule of the Chain of Being and contested it. Examples include "primitive" people who supposedly mate with animals, such as the Irish with wolves or the Hottentots with apes; European bestialists who commit carnal acts with domestic livestock; deformed "monsters" or

animals born of human parents, for instance the seventeen rabbits produced by the celebrated Mary Toft; human souls occupying animal bodies as a result of metempsychosis, metamorphosis, or witchcraft; and precocious creatures, such as Bankes's horse, "The Learned Pig," and Prince Maurice's witty parrot, who seem to possess some measure of reason. Other unclassifiable or hybrid individuals are those with the human form who lack the intelligible language by which humanity is defined, such as deaf mutes, the mentally deficient, and "wild" children nurtured by forest animals.[12]

At first considered as a hybrid Other in Lilliput, Brobdingnag, and Laputa, Gulliver is ultimately accepted to some degree into those cultures because he quickly learns their language and shares a similar bodily form with them. In Houyhnhnmland, a different scenario unfolds because the consensus emerges that he is an undocumentable alien who must be deported. By making Gulliver his pet, the Master Horse put himself at odds with his fellow Houyhnhnms, for whom truths are innate and self-evident. A cardinal premise of Houyhnhnm epistemology is that the non-equine form of the Yahoo is a difference that invariably marks a vicious, irrational species. Displaying the same essentialist logic that John Locke cites as a (faulty) foundation of human understanding, the Houyhnhnms know from the Yahoos' form, for example, that they are "brute Animal[s]" (234) who lack language, and therefore reason, because they seem able to express themselves only in grunts, groans, howls, and strategic defecation. Locke subverts such essentialist notions by observing that a man who talks with no more sense than a cat or parrot would still be considered a human, though dull and irrational, but if a cat or parrot were to "discourse, reason, and philosophize," it still would be considered an animal and treated as such.[13] Locke's assault on the linkage between words and things calls attention to the nominal and socially-constructed nature of concepts such as knowledge, species, and brutishness.

Since Gulliver exhibits Houyhnhnm-like rationality, the Master Horse considers his little pet a Yahoo in name only. The Master Horse's nominalist stance explains why he is not particularly shocked or upset when he sees Gulliver's uncovered body but agrees to perpetuate the idea that Gulliver's clothing is a "skin" that makes him appear slightly different from brutes similar to him in other respects. According to Gulliver, his Master "desired that I would go on with my utmost Diligence to learn their Language, because he was more astonished at my Capacity for Speech and Reason, than at the Figure of my Body, whether it was covered or no. . . . From thenceforth [the Master Horse] doubled the Pains he had been at to instruct me" (237–238), even though the Yahoos whom Gulliver resembles are presumed to be unteachable. After discovering the untoward behavior of the Master Horse, the Houyhnhnm General Assembly condemns him for treating Gulliver like a member of his family and claiming to "receive some Advantage or Pleasure"

from his company. These actions, the Assembly decrees, are not "agreeable to Reason or Nature" (279).

In the case of his exceptional pet, the Master Horse ignores the Houyhnhnm Chain of Being and subscribes to premises inimical to it: that performance, rather than form or essence, defines the individual; and that performance or identity can be altered with nurture. The Master Horse's devotion to tutoring Gulliver may reflect the influence of Locke's revolutionary model of the mind as a *tabula rasa* imprinted by an individual's experience, a perspective that puts the spotlight on how environmental factors, such as living conditions and education, affect the achievement of one's full potential, no matter the species. Thomas notes that in the eighteenth century "[m]any believed . . . that pigs would have progressed much further if it were not for their confinement and the short lives men allowed them," and Samuel Pepys writes that he is of "the mind [that gorillas or baboons] might be taught to speak."[14] Earlier, *Maroccus Extaticus: or, Bankes' Bay Horse in a Trance* (1595) fancifully anticipates this line of thinking by depicting a scene in the stable in which Bankes's horse—studding his speech with the Latin he learned at Oxford—thanks his master for taking the pains to make him an "understanding horse." In return, Bankes expresses his appreciation for the horse's recognition of his efforts, saying, "I have brought thee up right tenderly, as a baker's daughter would bring up a cosset [baby lamb] by hand, and allow it bread and milke."[15] If Gulliver's Master had not "brought [his pet] up right tenderly," Gulliver would probably have ended his days tied to a beam in the Yahoo barn, eating rotted asses' meat, and howling protests undecipherable to the Houyhnhnms, who would register them as brutish noise.

Even after fostering Gulliver's evolution into a "wonderful Yahoo," the Master Horse does not rethink the culturally-inscribed line between the Houyhnhnmland Yahoos and the Houyhnhnmland horses. To him, Gulliver is the exception that proves the rule of Yahoo beastliness. By the same token, Gulliver's exposure to the articulate horses of Houyhnhnmland does not make him—at least initially—revise his view that horses in England are brutes. In conversation with his Houyhnhnm Master, Gulliver callously shocks him by saying that when horses owned by English "Persons of Quality" can no longer perform their companionate or recreational functions, they are "sold, and used to all kind of Drudgery till they [die]; after which their Skins [are] stripped and sold . . . their Bodies left to be devoured by Dogs and Birds of Prey" (241).[16] Gulliver gratuitously adds that the horses of the underclass are treated much worse. At this point in the narrative, Gulliver understands English horses and Houyhnhnmland horses to be different species with essentially different natures, and so he excuses the insensitivity of his countrymen by asserting that horses back home "had not the least Tincture of Reason any more than Yahoos in this Country" (241). As we will see, Gulliver

later changes his mind and comes to believe that English and Houyhnhnm horses occupy a continuum where variety is not produced primarily by nature but by nurture.

Because the Master Horse situates Gulliver as companion or recreational animal, he exempts Gulliver from the economic calculus that expediently defines the lower ranks of the labor force as different and therefore inferior to those of the dominant phenotype. While Gulliver is designated a servant by the Master Horse, he never mentions performing any tasks and is treated more as a family member or friend, despite the radical contrast of his bodily form with that of the more leisured class. Among the Houyhnhnmland horses, small differences in appearance justify consignment to lower links of the Chain of Being. Their cultural perception is that horses of certain colors are not as "exactly shaped . . . nor born with equal Talents of Mind, or a Capacity to improve them; and therefore continued always in the Condition of Servants, without even aspiring to match out of their own Race, which . . . would be reckoned *monstrous* and *unnatural*" (256, my emphasis).

In the Houyhnhnmland labor force, the opposition of horses and asses represents another distinction without a significant difference. Even though horses and asses are both classified as Equidae and can mate to produce progeny, the Houyhnhnms conveniently declared their cousins as other or different from themselves so they could use them as beasts of burden without compunction. A mysterious switch occurred when the Houyhnhnmland horses took a "Fancy to use the Service of the Yahoos, [and] very imprudently neglected to cultivate the Breed [of asses]" (272), despite acknowledging that asses were "comely animal[s], easily kept, more tame and orderly, without any offensive Smell, [and] strong enough for Labour" (272). Perhaps the Houyhnhnm policy to use Yahoos as draft animals—no matter their shortcomings—instead of asses was designed to eliminate the temptation of miscegenation, especially since intercourse could be proven by the appearance of mule or hinny love children. Houyhnhnm strategies further to distance themselves from their ass cousins are evident in their feeding Yahoos with "Ass's Flesh" (230). Gulliver, of course, enacts similar denial of kinship when a female Yahoo sexually assaults him, an event that he momentarily accepts as proof he is "one of their own Species" (267) since she clearly desires to mate with him. In short order, though, Gulliver establishes his difference and his dominion by skinning Yahoos to make himself clothing and a canoe.

If the Master Horse had been discreet, Gulliver and he might well have been able to prolong their affectionate idyll, but the Master Horse, impressed with his pet's precocity, brags about him to the Houyhnhnm General Assembly, announcing publicly the news that Gulliver "spoke in a Language of [his] own, and had thoroughly learned theirs" (272). He then boldly reveals that Gulliver has come up with an intelligent solution to the Yahoo problem that

has vexed Houyhnhnm society for years. Knowing that assertions of Gulliver's rationality would offend his colleagues' views on species boundaries, the Master Horse tries to placate them by saying, "[I]t was no Shame to learn Wisdom from Brutes, as Industry is taught by the Ant, and Building by the Swallow" (273). Not surprisingly, the Master Horse's words have the opposite effect he intends. The General Assembly instantly realizes that the presence of the hybrid Gulliver uncouples their Chain of Being. Unable to tolerate an exception that disproves rules they believe are "*discover'd* not *devis'd*" and fearing the end of the world as they want to know it, the Houyhnhnm Assembly exhorts the Master Horse immediately to send his pet back where it came from.[17] In a show of resistance, Gulliver's keeper refuses to act until his neighbors adamantly protest to the authorities.

The representations of pet/pet owner relationships in *Gulliver's Travels* stand in relief to the violence and hostility pervading the rest of the narrative. These special interspecies bonds are characterized by seemingly mutual and overtly expressed affection that creates an intimate utopian bubble. The Master Horse's emotions come to the surface when he is finally forced to inform Gulliver that he must leave the island. Revealing the depth of his feelings, the Master Horse hems and haws, "at a Loss [about] how to begin what he had to speak. After a short Silence, he told [Gulliver] he did not know how [Gulliver] would take what he was going to say" but that he does not share the sentiments of his neighbors and the Assembly (279). According to Gulliver, the Master Horse allows "that for his own Part he could have been content to keep me in his Service as long as I lived" (279–280). The Master Horse and his Lady come to see Gulliver off, which Gulliver says, "([I]f I can speak it without Vanity) [was] partly out of Kindness" (282). The prospect of leaving his Master makes Gulliver distraught—he falls to the ground in a swoon, "Eyes flowing with Tears, and [his] Heart sunk with Grief" (282).[18] The Master Horse's rapport with Gulliver marks him as a creature of sensibility, one who is capable of empathy with lesser creatures of his own or other species. In eighteenth-century England, the "cult of sensibility" not only promoted the anthropomorphism of pets, but also anti-vivisection campaigns, interest in vegetarianism, and the development of literature focalized on the consciousness of animals, such as Anna Barbauld's "Mouse's Petition," Thomas Gray's "On the Death of a Favorite Cat," or Robert Burns's "To a Mouse, on Turning up Her Nest with the Plough."[19] Gulliver's account of his emotions joins the many eighteenth-century texts that imaginatively express the feelings of creatures categorized as animals.

Interspecies amity, such as that between the Master Horse and Gulliver, is depicted in *Gulliver's Travels* in ways that might evoke both prelapsarian Biblical times and the Classical Golden Age. According to the Bible, human and nonhuman beings in Eden coexisted peacefully and even (in some exegeses) conversed

together. Meat-eating did not commence until after the Fall and will cease only at the dawn of the millennium when the "wolf shall dwell with the lamb . . . and the lion shall eat straw like the ox."[20] As in Eden, vegetarianism prevailed in the Golden Age. Humans, gods, and animals freely metamorphosed into one another or formed hybrid combinations. According to Plato (as paraphrased by Montaigne), in the Golden Age humans had the "ability to communicate with the beasts; enquiring and learning from them. . . . By this means Man used to acquire a full understanding and discretion, leading his life far more happily than we ever can now."[21]

In many ways, Houyhnhnmland displays the idealized pastoral features of Eden and the Golden Age and, as such, seems remote from the tensions of modernity that induce pet keeping.[22] In that light, one might wonder why the Houyhnhnms keep cats or whether the Master Horse's alienation from his fellow Houyhnhnms or even his family pre-disposes him to make Gulliver a companion animal from whom he can gain some comfort and existential validation. Notwithstanding his assertions of contentment in Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver himself feels the need for a pet, and so he catches a three-year-old male Yahoo "Cub" and shows "all Marks of Tenderness" towards "it." The cub, though, "fell a squalling, and scratching, and biting with such Violence" that Gulliver "was forced to let it go" (265).[23] It is not clear whether the cub resists becoming a pet because it is essentially wild, because it has had three years of bestial Yahoo nurture, or because it has no fear of Gulliver.

Gulliver's motives for trying to tame the cub are also unclear. Isolated as the only one of his kind in Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver may need the loving gaze of a lesser animal to act as a mirror to affirm his identity and register his power. Or perhaps Gulliver seeks the pleasure of touching another creature's skin or of having a companion who seems to listen with understanding and approbation, unlike the Master Horse who is generally critical of what Gulliver tells him. Quite indifferent to the pleas from his English family to stay home with them, Gulliver may see the cub as an ersatz child that is potentially more controllable, more adoring, and less demanding than one of his own. Another benefit of Gulliver's keeping the Yahoo cub is that it clearly establishes his non-Yahoo status, since typically pets and pet owners belong to different species.

Mutual interspecies devotion, such as that expressed at the parting of Gulliver and his Master, is a frequent topic of early eighteenth-century satires. In John Gay's "An Elegy on a Lap-Dog," for instance, the death of Celia's pet makes her "frantick with despair," a condition manifest in "streaming eyes, wrung hands, and flowing hair."[24] Gay's narrator counsels Celia that the loss of her dog is insignificant because "In man you'll find more substantial bliss / More grateful toying, and a sweeter kiss," but then he undercuts the appeal of same-species love by praising the dog, who though it "*fawn'd like man,* [it]

*ne'er like man betray'd*."[25] Swift's representation of Gulliver's grief at leaving his Master Horse is similar to the way Gay depicts Celia's—full of ambiguities that make the object of satire unclear. Are Celia and Gulliver being censured for their misplaced affection, or is humankind being criticized for lacking the virtues possessed by their supposed inferiors? Should readers sympathize with Celia's and Gulliver's mourning or mock them for it? The uncertainties in reader response mirror contemporary uncertainties about humankind's relationship with the rest of Creation.

Before being adopted by his Houyhnhnm master, Gulliver also experiences true love as a pet in Brobdingnag. Glumdalclitch treats the little creature her father finds in a field like a baby—putting him in a cradle, making little clothes for him, teaching him how to talk, and no doubt caressing or petting him. But Glumdalclitch's parents fail to honor their promise to her that she could keep her new pet, just "as they did [the] last Year, when they pretended to give her a Lamb; and yet, as soon as it was fat, sold it to a Butcher" (97). The poor child must have been severely traumatized by her parents' actions, for pets are never supposed to be eaten. This time her pet is snatched from her as soon as her father realizes he can earn quick money by charging folks to see its skills, including its ability to speak the Brobdingnagian language. Glumdalclitch eventually persuades her father to let her accompany him on a tour of the kingdom to show off Gulliver's tricks. When her father brings the road show to court, Gulliver convinces the royal princess to make him her slave and admit Glumdalclitch into her service as his "Nurse and Instructor" (102). Although Gulliver sometimes resents Glumdalclitch for being overly protective, when he is whisked away by an eagle his thoughts are consumed with how much he will miss her and she, him: "How often did I then wish my self with my dear *Glumdalclitch,* from whom one single Hour had so far divided me! And I say with Truth, that in the midst of my own Misfortune, I could not forbear lamenting my poor Nurse, the Grief she would feel at my loss" (141). The emotional rhetoric here is that of a child separated from a devoted, nurturing figure. Again, these hyperbolic expressions of interspecies affection can be read simultaneously as satiric and sentimental.

Another creature in Brobdingnag—a male monkey—also wants Gulliver as a pet. Grabbing Gulliver out of his protective box, the monkey carries him up to the roof, where, according to Gulliver, he "held me as a Nurse doth a Child she is going to suckle; just as I have seen the same Sort of Creature do with a Kitten in *Europe*. . . . I have good Reason to believe that he took me for a young one of his own Species, by his often stroaking my Face very gently with his other Paw" (122). Then the monkey cradles Gulliver "like a Baby in one of his Fore-Paws . . . [while] feeding me with the other . . . and patting me when I would not eat" (122). The situational parallels between Glumdalclitch and the monkey may allude to the uncertainty of

man/monkey boundaries inspired by stories of "ape-rape" and speculations by early comparative anatomists that orangutans are a subspecies of humanity.[26] Yet, unlike Glumdalclitch, the monkey has no empathy with Gulliver and treats him as though he were a brute animal or an insensate doll, dangling him upside down from the roof and violently ramming food down his throat. Gulliver is treated in a similarly thoughtless way by one of the Brobdingnagian maids of honor who makes a pet of him but uses him as a sex toy, setting him "astride one of her Nipples." After this dehumanizing experience, Gulliver "entreat[s] *Glumdalclitch* to contrive some excuse for not seeing that young Lady any more" (119).

While Gulliver resembles them in all respects but size, ethnocentricity urges the Brobdingnagians to establish his difference, so the King's scientists set about to discover exactly what kind of an alien thing Gulliver is. Initially they ponder whether he is a clockwork mechanism, an allusion to Descartes' belief that animals are machines who might be able to produce an imitation of speech but are mentally incapable of originating expressions of rational thought. The scientists then move on to consider and reject the ideas that he might be a predatory creature (no teeth or claws), an embryo (limbs too well developed), or a dwarf (too small by Brobdingnagian standards). Unable to locate Gulliver on their taxonomic maps, the Brobdingnagian *philosophes* categorize him as a monstrous "freak of nature" or "*Lusus Naturae,*" which Gulliver sardonically observes is "a Determination exactly Agreeable to the Modern [Enlightenment] philosophy of *Europe*" (103–104). He notes that while these empiricists reject the deductive classifications of Aristotle, they have merely replaced one arbitrary system with another and "invented this wonderful Solution of all Difficulties [in classifying anomalous individuals], to the unspeakable Advancement of human Knowledge" (104). Montaigne also comments on the delusion that the category of *Lusus Naturae* is anything more than a self-comforting fiction: "For [the dominant species], following Nature means following [their] own intelligence as far as it is able to go and as far as [they] are able to see. Everything else is a monster, outside the order of Nature!"[27] Although he looks like a varmint to the Brobdingnagians and a Yahoo to the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver is spared the fate of the beastly Other because in both countries he has a keeper who accepts him as a pet and teaches him the local language.

After his return to England from Brobdingnag, Gulliver quickly regains his ability to interact with regular-sized humans, but his departure from Houyhnhnmland produces profound effects that cripple his ability to socialize normally. The first humans that Gulliver encounters after being forced to leave the horses' island are the sailors who rescue him. Instead of gratitude, Gulliver expresses horror that these creatures are talking to one another—it "appeared to [him] as *monstrous* [my emphasis] as if a Dog or a Cow should

speak in *England,* or a *Yahoo* in *Houyhnhnmland*" (286). Observing Yahoo-like individuals with linguistic capacity compels Gulliver (and the reader) to consider whether these individuals are the same or different from similarly formed creatures who inhabit Houyhnhnmland. At first Gulliver equates the two groups and expects European Yahoos to manifest the violent brutishness of the Houyhnhnmland Yahoos, but Gulliver is forced to modify his generalizations about European Yahoos after conversing with the supremely civilized ship's captain, Pedro de Mendez, whose performance encourages Gulliver to treat him "like an Animal which had some little Portion of Reason" (287). Because Mendez's "whole Deportment was so obliging, [and] added to very good *human* Understanding," Gulliver begins "to tolerate his Company" (288). Step by step, and over a period of days, Mendez acts as a therapist who moves Gulliver from shell-shocked inwardness to being able to walk in a street filled with Yahoo-ish creatures and to overcome his "Apprehensions" about being attacked by their "Teeth or . . . Claws" (288). Eventually Mendez convinces Gulliver to go home to his family.

The interlude with Mendez brings Gulliver to a point where he can "tolerate the Sight of *Yahoos,*" but once home he suffers a severe relapse (288). There he becomes overwhelmed with longing for the "Virtues and Ideas of those exalted *Houyhnhnms*" and can only see his wife and children in essentialist "hard school" terms as inveterate Yahoos that arouse in him "Hatred, Disgust, and Contempt" (289). For some respite from their company, Gulliver tries to recreate an Edenic or Golden Age environment in his stable, which he populates with two pet horses whom he indulges as much as possible. Under his care, "They are Strangers to Bridle and Saddle" and retain their identities as "Stone-Horses," that is, ungelded stallions (290). Although oppressive treatment has evidently caused "the Intellectuals" of English horses "to degenerate" (295), Gulliver assumes his steeds are capable of recovering their rational capacities, so he devotes himself to their improvement.

Gulliver's newfound belief in the importance of nurture is similar to that espoused by William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, an avid horse-lover and author of frequently reprinted contemporary training manuals. Cavendish deconstructs the idea that there is a natural difference between horses and humans by observing that "[i]f the wisest man in the world were taken by a savage people, and put to draw a cart proportion'd to his strength, and if he were beaten when he refused to do his duty, would he draw just as a horse does when he is threaten'd? . . . If a man was locked up from his birth till the age of twenty, and afterwards let out, we should see that he would be less rational than a great many beasts that are bred and disciplin'd."[28] Applying such considerations to *Gulliver's Travels* causes one to wonder whether Gulliver would have sunk into Yahoo behavior were he not coddled by the Master

Horse, or whether the Houyhnhnmland horses would degenerate to the level of English horses if confined to a lifetime of drawing carts and carriages.[29]

Based on his difficulties in convincing Mendez that Houyhnhnmland is not a "Dream or Vision," Gulliver, before he returns to England, makes Mendez promise to keep secret what Gulliver has relayed to him about his life with the horses, because Gulliver realizes it might put him "in Danger of being imprisoned, or burnt by the *Inquisition*" (288), the supposed fate of Bankes and his amazing horse, who were executed for being agents of the Devil. In making Mendez promise to remain silent about the talking horses in Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver recognizes how vigorously the human/non-human boundary is policed in his culture.[30] Nevertheless, Gulliver seeks—as best he can—to recreate back in England the human-horse conversations he had in Houyhnhnmland.

Dedicated to doing for his pet horses what his Houyhnhnm Master did for him, Gulliver tells the reader that he "converse[s]" with his pets "at least four Hours every Day," a regime that produces both "Amity" among them and the ability of his horses to "understand [him] tolerably well" (290). The verb "to converse" implies that some sort of reciprocal verbal exchange is going on, a scenario that has caused many readers to question Gulliver's mental balance. Yet within the context of pet ownership, conversing with animals under the assumption that some mutual understanding can be achieved is not an uncommon practice, though admitting such behavior in general company is still stigmatized even today, despite the numbers of books now on the market about how to communicate with one's pet and the ready availability of professionals in the business of talking to animals, both living and dead, such as "animal communicators" or "pet psychics." Training manuals in circulation during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries validate talking to horses and developing an amicable relationship with them.[31] Some of the most gifted trainers were known as "horse whisperers," a term that entered the language in the nineteenth century, although the practice existed in the seventeenth century. For example, Gervase Markham, author of a popular manual, stresses that the keeper's "greatest labour is to procure love from the Horse," for there must be "a sincere and incorporated friendshippe betwixt them or else they cannot delight or profit each other, of which love the keeper is to give testimonie . . . by his gentle language to his horse."[32]

Gulliver's conversations with his horses are in line with the perspectives of certain contemporary theophilists who suggest that—while humankind might want to deny it—non-human beings are able to communicate in language. In addition to Montaigne, a number of other philosophers entertained this idea, which enraged Descartes. Marin La Chambre, in *Discourse of the Knowledge of the Beasts* (translated 1657), for instance, scoffs at a skeptic for disbelieving that beasts can talk and therefore possess reason: "Animals have often told [the skeptic] that they had Reason, and if he understood them not, it was his fault,

and none of theirs."[33] In response to the skeptic's retort that if animals do not speak English, he will continue to view them as brutes, La Chambre says that the animals "might say the same thing of him as he doth of them, and that they have to doubt whither he Reasons, until they have learnt his Language."[34] For La Chambre, Montaigne, pet keepers, and others, animals with linguistic capacity might be perceived as an everyday reality, but in literary discourse, they are largely confined to worlds of fable, myth, and fairytale. Indeed, most readers understand Gulliver's interlude in Houyhnhnmland as an allegory or fable where language-using horses are normal. Once the narrative moves back to England, the conventions of realism are invoked, and Gulliver's conversations with his pet horses are read as a manifestation of his insanity. Swift's subversive parallels and his inversions of pet/pet owner and human/non-human binaries, though, compel consideration of the line between fiction and non-fiction, a binary that organizes almost every modern library.

While Gulliver's desire to converse at length with his horses might be forgiven as an eccentricity, Gulliver's unnatural treatment of his family and his equation of humans with animalistic Houyhnhnmland Yahoos are the chief reasons most readers view him as a pathologically warped individual. Although his conversations with Mendez demonstrate to him that a creature with a Yahoo form can possess "*human* understanding," Gulliver reverts to essentialism as soon as he enters his front door back in England. At the time of writing Chapter 11, in which he narrates his homecoming and his subsequent settling in, Gulliver tells us that "it is five Years since my last Return to England" (289), that is, 1720. Gulliver remembers that when he arrived home in December of 1715, he could only see his wife as an "odious Animal," whose touch caused him to fall into a "Swoon for almost an Hour." A year after that, he recounts that he still "could not endure [his] Wife or Children in [his] Presence; the very Smell of them was intolerable; much less could [he] suffer them to eat in the same Room" (289).

In 1720, when he is writing Chapter 11, Gulliver seems to have moved somewhat closer to his family, though he gets queasy at the thought of their touching him or his food. At this point in the narrative, he reveals the purchase of his "Stone-Horses" and concludes this penultimate chapter of his *Travels* with a happily-ever-after ending in the stable that seems designed to wrap up the narrative as a whole. The chapter's final words are as follows: "The [horses] live in great Amity with me, and Friendship to each other" (290). Most readers understandably do not accept this ending as a happy one, though, because Gulliver seems more invested in his relationship with his pet horses than that with his family. However, Gulliver seems to be suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome, which causes him to experience frightful flashbacks of Yahoo aggression. His condition may explain his temporary avoidance of his family. To help heal his psychic wounds, he seeks the comfort of the stable, where his

close physical and emotional contact with horses seems to have a salubrious effect, a concept known today as equitherapy.[35]

The final chapter (12) of the *Travels* is supposedly written about three years after Chapter 11. In an undated letter entitled "The Publisher to the Reader" prefacing the original edition of the *Travels* (published in 1726), the fictitious Richard Sympson tells the reader that "about three Years ago," that is, 1723, Gulliver decided to move from Redriff (near London) to Newark, in rural Nottinghamshire. Before Gulliver moves, he gives Sympson his "Papers . . . with the Liberty to dispose of them as [he] should think fit" (9). Sympson edits the narrative and, after asking Gulliver's permission, seeks "the Advice of several worthy Persons" about how to proceed from there (9). The result of these consultations is the decision to publish. Chapter 12 appears to reflect Gulliver's anticipation of the impending publication of his *Travels* on the eve to his move to Nottinghamshire. This final chapter functions like an addendum to the narrative proper. In it, Gulliver explains his rationale for agreeing to publish the *Travels* and defends his veracity. Significantly, Gulliver's outlook in Chapter 12 is quite different from that in Chapter 11. Gulliver's therapeutic conversations with his "Stone-Horses" and his "Speculations in [his] little Garden at *Redriff*" seem to have fostered in him radical new perspectives (295). Rejecting the static, essentialist premises of the Chain of Being paradigm, Gulliver has arrived at the conclusion that the qualities of individuals are not necessarily inherent in their natures but might be the result of nurture. His new belief in the power of nurture undergirds his decision to publish. He asserts that a "Traveller's chief Aim [in publishing his narrative] should be to make Men wiser and better" (291). He says he writes "for the noblest End, to inform and instruct Mankind," to whom he "pretend[s] to some Superiority" from "conversing so long among the most accomplished Houyhnhnms" (293). Just as the Houyhnhnms nurtured him, so he will nurture his readers. In Chapter 12, Gulliver also has concluded that generalizations cannot be made about individuals seeming to belong to the same species because individuals within a nomimal grouping may have widely variant qualities depending on their nurture and because individuals are often hybrids who combine qualities and performances associated with several species. While he once thought that Houyhnhnmland horses and English horses were two different species, on the eve of his move from Redriff, he starts calling English horses Houyhnhnms and announces his intention to create a campaign "To lament the Brutality of *Houyhnhnms* in my own Country." Endowing English horses with sensibility, Gulliver promises to "always treat their Persons with Respect, for the Sake of my noble Master . . . and the whole *Houyhnhnm* race" (295). As the pet of the Master Horse, Gulliver was taught to imitate Houyhnhnm attributes, lessons he seems to have taken literally. Despite snickers at his anomalous performance, Gulliver decides to adopt the gait and intonations of horses. Perhaps Gulliver constructs himself as a hybrid to

preserve his own complicated sense of self. He and his pet "Stone-Horses," in different measures, combine the qualities of horse-ness and human-ness.

By the close of his narrative, Gulliver has moved away from blanket dismissals of those who look like the Houyhnhnmland Yahoos. He uses the intimate "thee" in addressing the "gentle Reader" in the opening paragraph of Chapter 12 (291). The English Yahoos who read Gulliver's book may look like their counterparts in Houyhnhnmland, but their humble willingness to be "inform[ed]" reveals a desire to rid themselves of the vices that define the repulsive humanoid creatures Gulliver encountered in Houyhnhnmland (291). As he finishes his volume, Gulliver never says that he detests "European *Yahoos*" in general, only those "smitten with *Pride,*" which makes them oblivious to the need for self-improvement (296). Gulliver ends his narrative with the following words: "I intreat those who have any Tincture of this absurd Vice [Pride], that they will not presume to appear in my sight" (296). In the sentence before that one, Gulliver had expressed his belief that his depiction of the Houyhnhnmland horses will have an ameliorating effect on those without that "Tincture": "I dwell the longer upon this Subject [the Houyhnhnms] from the Desire I have to make the Society of an *English Yahoo* by any means not insupportable" (296).

Gulliver's recognition that *Yahoo* is a mutable rather than fixed category also may have allowed him to achieve more intimacy with his family in the three years elapsing since he wrote Chapter 11. In Chapter 12, he reports that he allows his wife to join him at the table and announces that he has embarked on a project "to instruct the *Yahoos* of my own Family as far as I shall find them docile Animals" (295). In other words, Gulliver now believes they have the capacity to change and become, like Mendez, "Animal[s] which had some little Portion of Reason," whose company he could "tolerate" (287). Evidently, even at the time he is writing the final chapter, memories of the Houyhnhnmland Yahoos still torment him. At one point he expresses the hope that "in some Time [I will be able] to suffer a Neighbour *Yahoo* in my Company, without the Apprehensions I am yet under of his Teeth or his Claws" (296). Here, though, Gulliver seems to be exaggerating his social isolation because earlier in his narrative he speaks of post-Houyhnhnmland human "Friends" who kid him because he continues to "trot like a Horse" and allows himself "to fall into the Voice and manner of the *Houyhnhnms*" (279).

Gulliver's narrative, then, ends on a relatively upbeat, optimistic note. As he "take[s] a final Leave of [his] Courteous Readers" at the end of Chapter 12, he seems fairly sane and interested in improving the welfare of his family, his acquaintanceship, and his nation. Sympson also testifies to Gulliver's normality. Calling Gulliver his "antient and intimate Friend" in his prefatory letter, Sympson briefly describes Gulliver's post-1723 life in Nottinghamshire by saying that "he now lives retired, yet in good Esteem among his

Neighbors" (9). Sympson also cites the high opinion that Gulliver's neighbors in Redriff had of him, especially concerning his truthfulness, so much so "that it became Sort of Proverb among [them] . . . when any one affirmed a Thing, to say it was as true as if Mr. *Gulliver* had spoke it" (8). If Gulliver were dysfunctionally antisocial or mentally unbalanced, he would not be capable of the behavior implied by Sympson's reports.[36]

Critics who would consign Gulliver to a mental hospital base much of their opinion on the prefatory "Letter from Capt. Gulliver to his Cousin Sympson," which—it must be pointed out—was only added to the volume by George Faulkner in 1735, though the letter itself is dated 1727. In this letter, Gulliver castigates Sympson for convincing him to publish his *Travels* for the "*publick Good,*" contrary to Gulliver's conviction that "the Yahoos were a Species of Animals utterly incapable of Amendment." Saying in essence "I told you so," Gulliver points out that his book has been on sale for six months and yet has not put "a full Stop to all Abuses and Corruptions . . . in this little Island" (6). If one wants to accept the 1735 Gulliver-to-Sympson letter as a legitimate component of the *Travels,* this late-arriving appendix can be read either as a sign of Gulliver's relapse into essentialism and misanthropy or as an indication that Gulliver may have his tongue firmly planted in his cheek, as his Swiftian creator—a known lover of verbal irony—often does. A complete reform of the English nation in six months is risible by any standard.

The onset of pet keeping as a social practice generated a number of perplexing and touchy questions about species boundaries that have gained increasing prominence as time has passed. In the 1970s, Peter Singer and other animal rights supporters brought the moral problems raised by human-animal relationships into the media spotlight where they have remained in polemic form ever since. A more subtle exploration of the issues occurs in a novel entitled *The Lives of Animals* (1999), written by Booker and Nobel prize-winner J. M. Coetzee. As Swift does in *Gulliver's Travels,* Coetzee disconcerts the reader by constructing a dialectical fiction full of opposing views that foreclose the possibility of synthesis. In the introduction to Coetzee's text, Amy Gutmann notes that the story "ends with the ambiguously consoling words" that the main character's son voices to his aging mother, who is an animal rights proponent: "'There, there, it will soon be over.'" Gutmann then adds, "By contrast, these moral matters will not soon be over."[37]

Swift's specific attention to these peculiarly modern "moral matters" in *Gulliver's Travels,* particularly in Book 4, shows that they had already begun to trouble the minds of his generation over three hundred years ago. At the end of his narrative, Gulliver takes up a position that PETA could approve, but Swift—as usual—teases us by never making clear how he wants Gulliver to be perceived or his narrative to be interpreted. Swift also leaves readers

wondering whether the facts on which humans premise their actions towards animals might be nothing more than self-serving fictions.

## An Entirely Dispensable Addendum

Despite the interdictions of contemporary literary theory against investigating biographies of the author to find out what he intended, readers, while they may not to admit, are usually curious about possible connections between the life and the works. What follows here is a brief overview of Swift's relationships with animals, so that readers can draw their own conclusions.

Swift was decidedly not a vegetarian (mutton was one of his favorite foods), but he did express empathy with animals, especially those in the subject position of pet. Permitting his Irish servant, Patrick, to keep a linnet in their lodgings, Swift anthropomorphizes the bird and concerns himself with the bird's psychological state: "I believe he does not know he is a bird: where you put him, there he stands, and seems to have neither hope nor fear; I suppose in a week he will die of the spleen."[38] When the former dean leaves an undesirable cat behind in the deanery, Swift does not simply evict the animal but makes sure it gets returned to its owner. In a footnote to one of Swift's letters concerning the cat, Elrington Ball is quoted as saying that "[t]here is ground for believing . . . that Swift was not without a weakness for cats."[39]

Swift claims that he could remain totally indifferent to politics as long as he had either "a Cat or a Spaniel in the house," but he seems to have devoted less attention to cats than dogs.[40] When his "favorite Dog" is injured by one of his servants, Swift gets a "Dog-Doctor" to tend to him and writes with evident relief of the dog's recovery to Lord Orrery.[41] In "Lady Acheson Weary of the Dean," Swift describes the insatiable appetites of "His Brace of Puppies" as one of the many annoyances he inflicts on his hostess at Market Hill.[42] Another time, Swift's erstwhile dog-sitter, Mrs. Whiteway, informs Swift via letter that his dogs were "in high spirits," by which she seems to be responding to his worry that the dogs were melancholy in his absence.[43]

Of all his companion animals, though, Swift's horses were probably his favorites. The following discussion draws extensively from Michael DePorte's "Swift's Horses of Instruction," in which DePorte illustrates the degree to which Swift was devoted to horses and argues that this attachment might be responsible for his use of horses in Book 4.[44] Swift usually kept a number of horses at the same time and was always on the lookout for better ones. Like Gulliver, Swift assumes horses have sensibilities and treats them in a considerate manner. Bucking conventions that disqualify human names for horses, Swift names one horse after his friend Bolingbroke.[45] He may also have helped Esther Johnson (Stella) procure a horse they called "Little Johnson."[46] Swift writes both Stella and Esther Vanhomrigh (Vanessa) about the rationality his horse shows when they suffered a spill together: "I got a fall off my Horse riding

here from Parkgate; but no Hurt, the Horse understanding falls very well, and lying quietly till I got up."[47] On various occasions, Swift characterizes himself as a horse, as, for instance, in a response to Alexander Pope, who asks how he can keep battling on behalf of Ireland as he becomes older and more ill. Swift replies, "I am like a horse, though off his mettle, can trot on tolerably," though he does not seem to have literally adopted the "Gait and Gesture" of horses, as Gulliver does (279).[48] Too kindhearted for his own good, Swift generally does not get rid of horses that are old or failing. At one point, he describes his stable to Knightly Chetwode as "a very hospital for sick horses," and he is constantly talking about having to put one or another horse "out to grass," in other words, into retirement.[49] In his account books, Swift has a separate entry for "horses." His expenditures were quite large, with about 18 pounds per year being average, and one year (1717–1718) rising to 31 pounds. In the first quarter of that year, for example, Swift's total outlay was 33 pounds, of which 12 pounds was spent on his horses.[50]

Swift rode almost daily, weather permitting, and often took long trips to distant corners of Ireland on horseback, during which he spent far more than four hours a day in the company of horses, although there is no evidence that he talked to them as he rode. If we can believe what he writes to a friend—that he lived like a hermit with scarcely any human company—then it might be possible to conclude that Swift spent more time with horses than people. Although he never mentions having conversations with his horses, he nonetheless treats them as "significant others." He no doubt insults Pope as well as his other English friends by refusing to live in England because he could not afford to keep his horses there. Swift's affectionate relationship with some of his horses can be seen in a playful letter to Mrs. Howard in which he tells her that "while I was caressing one of my Houyhnhnms, he bit my little finger."[51] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu—no friend of Swift's—says that given his being "so passionately devoted" to horses, she "can't help suspecting some very powerfull Motive at the bottom of it," namely bestiality.[52]

Swift also believed in the health benefits of spending time with horses. In his letters to Stella and Vanessa, Dr. Swift constantly prescribes equitherapy and admonishes the women to ride for a number of hours every day: "Now, Madam Stella, what say you? . . . [I]f you rid every day for a twelve-month, you would be still better and better."[53] DePorte observes that Swift himself rode every day to maintain a sense of well-being and equated horse riding with happiness, as for instance, when he reminisces to Vanessa about the good times they had together: "Cad thinks often of these, especially on Horseback, as I am assured."[54] Conversely, he subliminally associates depression with falling off his horse. Upset with the news that Stella was dying, and delayed from reaching her because of bad weather in Holyhead, Swift dreams that he "got 20 falls from his horse."[55]

*Vale. Caveat lector. Finis*.

## Notes

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1. The *locus classicus* of discussions of the Chain of Being is Arthur O. Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being: A Study in the History of Ideas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953). Lovejoy analyzes challenges to the Great Chain of Being in chapter 9, "Temporalizing of the Chain of Being," 242–287. The new view of animals that emerged in the eighteenth century is analyzed in Keith Thomas, "Compassion for the Brute Creation," in his *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in English, 1500–1800* (London: Allen Lane, 1983), 143–191.

2. René Descartes, *Discourse on the Method; and, Meditations on first Philosophy,* trans. Elizabeth Haldane and G. R. T. Ross, ed. David Weissman, 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 1:36.

3. For further definition of the "hard" and "soft" schools of Swiftian criticism, see James L. Clifford, "Gulliver's Fourth Voyage: 'Hard' and 'Soft' Schools of Interpretation," in *Quick Springs of Sense: Studies in the Eighteenth Century,* ed. Larry S. Champion, vol. 18 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1974), 33–49.

4. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels,* in vol. 9, *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Blackwell, 1965), 224–225. Hereafter cited parenthetically by page number.

5. See Descartes, 1:117.

6. Bankes and his horse seemed to have been actual sixteenth-century individuals who were mythologized in numerous accounts, many of which were in print through the eighteenth century. See Edward Rimbert, "Introduction," in John Dando and Harrie Runt [pseudonym], *Maroccus Extaticus: or, Bankes' Bay Horse in a Trance,* ed. Rimbert (1595; repr., London: Reprinted for the Percy Society, 1843), v–viii. The connection of talking animals with the Devil, of course, originates in Genesis, where Satan takes the form of a beguiling snake. (On the other hand, God speaks through Balaam's Ass.) The association of talking animals with black magic reflects itself in the concept of witches' familiars. Witches, of course, are now commonly understood to be harmless old ladies who talked to their cats.

7. See Thomas, 119.

8. Thomas, 119.

9. See Claude Rawson, *God, Gulliver, and Genocide: Barbarism and the European Imagination, 1492–1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). Rawson analyzes how Montaigne's essays on "Cannibals" and "Coaches" influenced Swift's exploration of the "network of unacknowledged perceptions and anxieties about actual kinship between the civilized spokesman and his savage subject" (4). Rawson mentions in passing the similarity in attitudes toward "savages" and animals, as well as the putative equivalence of racism and speciesism.

10. Michel de Montaigne, *An Apology for Raymond Sebond,* trans. and ed. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 17.

11. See George Boas, *The Happy Beast in French Thought of the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1933).

12. The problems of classification coming to the foreground in the seventeenth century are discussed by Erica Fudge, "The Shape of a Man: Knowing Animals and the Law," in her *Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern Culture* (London: MacMillan, 2001), 115–142.

13. John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* ed. Peter Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 333. The eighteenth century's fascination with "monsters" and the troubling questions they raise are discussed by Dennis Todd, *Imagining Monsters: Miscreations of the Self in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

14. Thomas, 131; Samuel Pepys, quoted in Thomas, 132.

15. Dando and Runt [pseudonym], 6.

16. Fudge discusses early modern perceptions about the nonworking or "recreational animal" (her coinage) in *Perceiving Animals* (133).

17. Alexander Pope, "An Essay on Criticism," in *The Poems of Alexander Pope: A One Volume Edition of the Twickenham Text, with Selected Annotations,* ed. John Butt (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 149.

18. Montaigne states that "[w]e often shed tears at the loss of animals which we love: they do the same when they lose us" (43). As proof of the latter, Montaigne cites the example of Pallas's horse, Aethon, an example he draws from Virgil's *Aeneid,* book 11, line 89.

19. For an analysis of evolving attitudes toward animals, see Thomas, chapter 4.4, "Meat or Mercy," 287–300.

20. Isaiah 11:6–9 (KJV). See also Genesis 1:29–30 and Genesis 9:1–3 (KJV). Currently there is much debate about the nature of the dominion God gave to humankind, according to the account in Genesis.

21. Montaigne, 17.

22. See Thomas, 118–119.

23. The OED notes that "cub" can refer to a young fox or figuratively to an "untutored youth." See OED Online, s.v. "cub," definitions 1, 3.

24. John Gay, "An Elegy on a Lap-Dog," in vol. 1, *John Gay: Poetry and Prose,* ed. Vinton Dearing (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), lines 13–14.

25. Gay, lines 27–28, 32.

26. See Laura Brown, chapter 6, "The Orangutan, the Lap Dog, and the Parrot: The Fable of the Nonhuman Being," in her *Fables of Modernity: Literature and Culture in the English Eighteenth Century* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 221–265, esp. 224–227, 236–240. Brown, in her introduction, notes the prevalence of eighteenth-century representations that imagine "an affinity between radically alien species"—such as between humans and their companion animals—and wonders whether that empathetic leap "opens up the possibility of a new way of being that has the potential to rise above difference" (14).

27. Montaigne, 98.

28. William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, *La Methode et Invention Nouvelle de Dresser les Chevaux,* anononymous translation, in John Brindley, *A General System of Horsemanship,* 2 vols. (London, 1713), 1:12–13. Quoted in Betsy Bowden, "Before the Houyhnhnms: Rational Horses in the Late Seventeenth Century," *Notes and Queries* 39 (March 1992): 39. Cavendish's text was originally published in 1658 and was extracted and republished in many subsequent versions. In a letter to Charles Ford, Swift echoes Cavendish's argument that the behavior produced by oppression should not be confused with natural slavishness: "You fetter a Man seven Years,

then let him loose to shew his Skill in dancing, and because he does it awkwardly, you say he ought to be fettered for Life" (*The Correspondence of Swift,* ed. Sir Harold Williams, 5 vols. [Oxford: Clarendon, 1963], 2:342).

29. I also discuss the nature versus nurture debate in my "Swift's Explorations of Slavery in Ireland and Houyhnhnmland," *PMLA* 91 (1976): 846–855.

30. Of course, in addition to talking, the Houyhnhnmland horses, like animals in mythical tales, do anatomically improbable things like building houses, threading needles, and milking cows. Gulliver knows that the Houyhnhnms are not mythical but real because he saw their behavior with his own eyes. The reader is forced to decide how to register Gulliver's account of his experience.

31. See Thomas, 101.

32. Gervase Markham, *Cavelarice, Or the English Horseman* (London: Printed for Edward White, 1607), book 5, pages 45–47. Extracted in different versions, Markham's ideas continued to circulate through the eighteenth century. One selling point, cited on the title page of the 1607 edition, is the promise that the book will show keepers "how to teach [horses] to do trickes, like Bankes, his Curtall."

33. Marin La Chambre, *Discourse of the Knowledge of the Beasts,* translated "by a person of quality" (London, 1657), 262.

34. La Chambre, 263. R. W. Serjeantson, in "The Passions and Animal Language, 1540–1700," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 62 (2001): 425–444, provides the early modern philosophical context for considerations of whether animals could talk. Moreover, today the question of whether animals are capable of producing thought or language (variously defined) is being investigated by scientists and social scientists in a number of fields, including neurology, primatology, experimental psychology, linguistics, comparative anatomy, biology, cognition studies, and evolutionary biology, among others. See, for example, the review of Clive D. L. Wynne's *Do Animals Think?* (Princeton, 2004) in *Science,* 16 July 2004, 344; or Donald G. McNeil, Jr., "Did the Cat Really Say, 'I Vant to be Alone'? Sorry, It Said Meow," "Science Times" in *The New York Times,* 7 September 2004, D3, columns 1–2. The emotional rhetoric on both sides of these "scientific" debates suggests that much is still at stake in maintaining distinct species boundaries.

35. In 2007, equitherapy is a widely practiced treatment for a variety of physical and psychological problems. A few recent books on this topic (among many) are Henry N. Blake's *Talking with Horses: A Study of Communication Between Man and Horse* (1993); Adele McCormick's *Horse Sense and the Human Heart: What Horses Can Teach Us about Trust, Bonding, Creativity and Spirituality* (1997); Chris Irwin, *Horses Don't Lie: What Horses Can Teach Us about Our Natural Capacity for Awareness, Confidence, and Trust* (2001); Wyatt Webb, *It's Not about the Horse: It's about Overcoming Fear and Self-Doubt* (2002); Linda Kohanov's *Riding between Worlds: Expanding our Potential through the Way of the Horse* (2003); Wendy Baker's *Healing Power of Horses: Lessons from the Lakota Indians* (2004); and Carole Fletcher, *Healed by Horses: A Memoir* (2005). A search for "equitherapy" on Google produces 593 hits (February 2007). The popular movie *The Horse Whisperer* (1998), starring Robert Redford, is based on the premise that relationships with horses can heal human psyches.

36. Rawson is one of the few critics who calls attention to Gulliver's re-acculturation and "process of adaptation" as well as to the gap between Gulliver's return to England (1715) and the publication of his *Travels* (1726). Rawson says that

Swift has purposefully eclipsed the image of the re-acculturated Gulliver with the vivid images of his misanthropy; see Rawson, 159–160.

37. Amy Gutmann, "Introduction," in J. M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 11. James Gill, in "Beast Over Man: Theriophilic Paradox in Gulliver's 'Voyage to the Country of the Houyhnhnms'" (*Studies in Philology* 67 [1970]: 532–549), also emphasizes the importance of considering theriophilic discourse and comes to an ambiguous conclusion, although he arrives at it from a different direction. Gill's analysis links reason with living according to Nature and thus privileges the Houyhnhnmland horses but also the Houyhnhnmland Yahoos, whom he sees as superior to "civilized" European Yahoos. At the end of the essay, Gill stresses the "dialectical ironies" of *Gulliver's Travels,* and states his conviction that "further examination will show that theriophilic forms of argument have been adapted in a most pervasive way to the narrative of the fourth voyage to secure a paradoxical conclusion, the aim of which is a recognition of the multiple incongruities of human thought and experience" (549).

38. Swift, *Journal to Stella* ed. Harold Williams, 2 vols. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974), 1:156.

39. Elrington Ball, ed., *Swift's Verse* (1929), quoted in Swift, *Correspondence,* 2:135n.

40. Swift to Pope, 10 January 1721, in *Correspondence,* 2:367.

41. Swift to Lord Orrey, 17 July 1735, in *Correspondence,* 4:369.

42. Swift, "Lady Acheson Weary of the Dean," in vol. 3, *Poems,* ed. Williams, rev. ed. (1937; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), line 334.

43. Mrs. Whiteway to Swift, 2 December 1735, in *Correspondence,* 4:444. Paul V. Thompson and Dorothy Jay Thompson devote a section of their introduction to *The Account Books of Jonathan Swift* (ed. Thompson and Thompson [Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984]) to Swift's many expenditures on his dogs and provide many useful references in which he refers to his love for his dogs; see Thompson and Thompson, xc–xci.

44. See Michael DePorte, "Swift's Horses of Instruction," in *Reading Swift: Papers from the Second Munster Symposium on Jonathan Swift,* ed Richard Rodino and Hermann Real (Munchen: Wilhelm Fink, 1993), 199–211.

45. See Thomas, 113.

46. Swift, *Journal to Stella,* 1:8.

47. Swift, *Journal to Stella,* 1:2.

48. Swift to Pope, 11 August 1729, in *Correspondence,* 3:341.

49. Swift to Knightly Chetwode, 6 October 1714, in *Correspondence,* 2:135; Swift to Chetwode, 17 September 1714, in *Correspondence,* in 2:133.

50. See Thompson and Thompson, lxxxvi–lxxxvii, 4.

51. Swift to Mrs. Howard, in *Correspondence,* 3:196.

52. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu,* ed. Robert Halsband, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965–1967), 2:72. Quoted in DePorte, 199.

53. Swift, *Journal to Stella,* 1:301.

54. Swift to Esther Vanhomrigh, 7 August 1722, in *Correspondence,* 2:433.

55. Swift, "Holyhead Journal," in vol. 5, *Prose Works of Jonathan Swift,* ed. Davis (Oxford: Blackwell, 1969), 203. As I said earlier, the material in this section on horses heavily draws on DePorte's compilation of references and his interpretations of them.

# *Chronology*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1667 | Born in Dublin to English parents; father dies. |
| 1674–1682 | Studies at Kilkenny School. |
| 1682–1688 | Trinity College, Dublin; B.A. *speciali gratia* 1684; work toward M.A. interrupted by Glorious Revolution. |
| 1689–1694 | Secretary to Sir William Temple, Moor Park; meets Stella; first outbreak of Ménière's disease probably in 1690. |
| 1694 | Takes Anglican deacon's orders. |
| 1695 | Ordained priest in the Church of Ireland; moves to Kilroot parish, where he probably writes *A Tale of a Tub* (1697–1698?). |
| 1699–1710 | Appointments and livings in the Church of Ireland. As domestic chaplain to the Earl of Berkeley, Lord Justice of Ireland, Swift begins his career as defender of the rights of the Church of Ireland, working with the Whigs. |
| 1704 | *A Tale of a Tub* published. |
| 1707 | Meets Vanessa. |
| 1708–1709 | *The Bickerstaff Papers.* |
| 1709 | With Steele, founds the *Tatler.* |
| 1710 | Goes over to the Tories. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1713 | Appointed Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin; from this time forward lives mostly in Ireland. |
| 1724–1725 | *Drapier's Letters.* |
| 1726 | *Gulliver's Travels* published. |
| 1742 | Declared insane. |
| 1745 | Dies; buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral. |

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