SWIFTIAN INSPIRATIONS

The Legacy of Jonathan Swift from the Enlightenment to the Age of Post-Truth

Edited by

Jonathan McCreedy, Vesselin M. Budakov

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INTRODUCTION

VESSELIN BUDAKOV, JONATHAN MCCREEDY AND ALEXANDRA GLAVANAKOVA

Jonathan Swift's future, long-running legacy seems to have been first predicted in a heartfelt letter from Lord John Carteret to the Dean himself in March 1734-5.[1] "As for futurity," John Carteret writes in this letter, "I know your name will be remembered, when the names of kings, lords lieutenants, archbishops, and parliament politicians, will be forgotten."[2] In a letter to Swift, Alexander Pope similarly predicted his future praise as a writer and assured place in posterity, writing on behalf of George Lyttelton: "He loves you though he sees you not; as all posterity will love you, who will not see you, but reverence and admire you."[3] Pope's cordial remark combines both a high regard for Swift in his private and public worlds, where he seems to have been equally, warmly and highly respected. Jonathan Swift's cousin Deane Swift is comparably reassuring of Swift's immutable acclaim. In his *Essay upon the Life* of the Dean, he predicts that "we may venture to prophesy that Swift's reputation will in spight of his criticks, observators, and detractors, continue to flourish and be adored," because he is "the loud and clear trumpet of the publick voice, which exalteth the reputation of an author, and crowneth his fame with honour and immortality."[4]

A frequently quoted passage during the nineteenth century concerning Jonathan Swift's heritage testifies to all the predictions made by Swift's contemporaries. The anonymously published *Sketch of the State of Ireland* (1808)—attributed to John Wilson Croker—describes the fame and importance of Swift's writing and portrays Swift as being insightful for his contemporaries as well as divinatory for the early nineteenth century. It

[1] Hammond, *Jonathan Swift: Our Dean*, 681.
[2] Swift, Letter 339, Lord C— to Dr. Swift. Jermyn-Street, March 6, 1734-5. *Letters, Written by Jonathan Swift*, 3: 155-6.
[3] Swift, *Volume XVI. Containing Letters*, Letter 374, Mr. Pope to Dr. Swift, May 17, 1739, 141.
[4] Deane Swift, *Essay upon the Life*, 310-11

views him as an enviable policy-maker as well as an exemplary intellectual who devoted his work to raise the reputation of Ireland, whose writing spoke for Irish sovereignty and challenged British imperial policy. It argues that:

> His wisdom was practical and prophetic – remedial for the present, warning for the future: He first taught Ireland that she might become a nation, and England that she might cease to be a despot. But he was a churchman. His gown impeded his course, and entangled his efforts – guiding a senate or heading an army he had been more than Cromwell, and Ireland not less than England: As it was, he saved her by his courage – improved her by his authority – adorned her by his talents – and exalted her by his fame. His mission was but of ten years, and for ten years only, did his personal power mitigate the government; but though no longer feared by the great, he was not forgotten by the wise; his influence, like his writings, has survived a century, and the foundations of whatever prosperity we have since erected, are laid in the disinterested and magnanimous patriotism of Swift.[5]

The vigour of Swift's wisdom, the author of this *Sketch* maintains, not only endured a whole century but was basically instrumental in the growing political maturity of forthcoming generations. Walter Scott—who called Swift the "oracle of Ireland"[6]—seems to share Croker's opinion about the Dean's undiminished importance. According to Scott, it is predominantly owing to satires such as *A Tale of a Tub*, *The Battle of the Books*, and the "moral romance of Gulliver" that the Dean is owed the "permanency of his popularity as an English classic of the first rank."[7]

Deane Swift's *Life*, which describes Jonathan Swift as an influential thinker amongst his contemporaries, also envisions that his writing would resist both unwelcome critics and expand his fame against criticism. Dr Johnson, for instance, was one of those who questioned Swift's literary esteem since he believed that Swift had "a higher reputation than he deserve[d]" and that he was inferior to his contemporaries—even doubting that the Dean was the author of *The Tale of the Tub*.[8] Conversely, in his *Life of Doctor Swift*, Thomas Sheridan stood up to defend the undeservedly underestimated cultural heritage of Swift's works and sorrowfully speculated that, for example, posterity will look upon Dr Johnson's longer, extolling *Life of Savage* compared to the unjustifiably shorter biography of

[5] It has been attributed to John Wilson Croker, *A Sketch of the State of Ireland*, 10.
[6] Scott, *Memoirs of Jonathan Swift*, vol. 1 of *Works of Jonathan Swift*, 21.
[7] Ibid, 436.
[8] Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, on "*The Tale of a Tub*," [A.D. 1763], 1:524.

the Dean. Sheridan sadly points out that "the works of the immortal Swift are either condemned, or slightly praised."[9] Like Sheridan, William Hazlitt who shared the assertion about Swift's high standing instead paid tribute to him as a poet. According to him, Swift's poetry was regrettably shrouded by the general acclaim of his prose. Even without his most eminent prose works, Hazlitt believed that "his name merely as a poet would have come down to us, and have gone down to posterity with well-earned honours;" and that his poetry alone is enough to laurel Swift "in the first rank of agreeable moralists in verse."[10]

The predictions of Swift's contemporaries turned out to be correct. The Dean's voice has echoed in sequels and imitations, competing with the fame of his *bona fide* classics, and achieved a similar satirical and political effect in other times. An early critic reminds us that Swift's reputation entered into the nineteenth century as "the Rabelais of England."[11] Swift owes this praise to Alexander Pope who compared him to Cervantes and Rabelais; yet by calling him "Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver,"[12] Pope acutely noticed the political and satirical personas that were to shape the ethical parameters of Swiftian style and characteristically Swiftian ventriloquism. Today Swiftian features in satire include the words "funny, dark, cruel, unsavory, insightful, revealing, mean, biting, ironic, difficult, brilliant,"[13] and the stockpile of these attributes inspired generations of writers and artists to achieve an equally disturbing voice in critiquing their own times through satire. Imitations, continuations, political cartoons as well as adaptations of, or, allusions to, some of Swift's most well-known works all derive from a continual interest in Swiftian idiom as it proves to be equally topical in other places and times.

Since they were first published, Swift's works have been in continuous appreciation, and of all the works, as Deane Swift predicted, it was the "famous Gulliver, which alone might be thought sufficient to make his reputation immortal."[14] When Rudolf Erich Raspe, for example, placed Gulliver in the main title of Baron Munchausen's equally adventurous travels, he was certainly thinking in terms of marketing. His *Gulliver Revived; or The Singular Travels, Campaigns, Voyages, and Adventures of Baron Munikhouson* (1786) suggests, as the preface makes clear, that the veracity of the travels of Baron Munchausen should be seen in the

[9] Sheridan, *Life of Dr. Swift* in *Works of the Rev. Jonathan Swift*, 1: 512.
[10] Hazlitt, "Lecture VI," *Lectures on the English Poets*, at 217–18.
[11] Wilson, *Swiftiana*, lxxxvi.
[12] Pope, *The Dunciad*, bk.1, lines 20-22, at 435.
[13] Boyle, "Jonathan Swift," 197.
[14] Deane Swift, *Essay upon the Life,* 182.

same light as those made by Gulliver.[15] Raspe's Munchausen is one of more than sixty parodies, sequels, and imitations to have appeared during the eighteenth century alone, which attests to Swift's continually reputed authority.[16] This unremitting interest in Swift went beyond the eighteenth century whose thought—political, allegorical, and satirical—has been an unstoppable subject of critical discussion as well as an object of inspiration for writers who have taken up the challenge to match the quality of critical thinking which Swift laid down.

Speculative works of fiction with adventurous fantastical traits akin to *Gulliver* were often met with scepticism by book reviewers. In one such review, James Fenimore Cooper's *The Monikins* (1835) was uncompromisingly censured by a reviewer who claimed that while the novel "follows the *trait* of Swift," its writer has "neither the sparking wit, the keen sarcasm, nor the polished style of the English satirist."[17] A review of *The Dawn of the Twentieth Century* (1882) was even harsher in pillorying the artistic potential of the novel. The reviewer claims that such a subject "requires the pen of a Swift," while its author shows he is not "a second Dean of St. Patrick's." He has "qualities which undoubtedly Swift did not possess, such as an unlimited capacity for commonplace" in addition to being "lamentably deficient in such minor things as wit, satire, literary skill, and dialectics."[18] The reputation of Swift's imaginative and speculative satires was persistently considered a model of excellence that commentators thought was impossible to reach.

As a political satire and allegory of contemporary British politics and ideology, Swift's *Gulliver* never limited its message to his contemporaries only. His work has had its own Swiftian "afterlives" and was used for political causes which Swift would doubtfully embrace. Besides parodies and imitations in prose and poetry, *Gulliver* regularly transcended generic boundaries. James Gillray's visual Gulliver in caricature, for instance, shows Napoleon the size of a Lilliputian standing in the palm of a Brobdingnagian-sized King William III. In another, a Lilliputian Napoleon is sailing in a square wooden basin, while being watched by the royal family and other people of high standing. Its aim was hilariously to ward off all possible scare-writ scenarios of a likely attack by the French. These early nineteenth-century caricatures were intended to boost morale and instil national pride by humorously belittling both Napoleon Bonaparte

[15] Rudolf Erich Raspe, Advertisement to the Second Edition, *Gulliver Revived; or The Singular Travels*, viii.
[16] Marshall, "*Gulliver*, Gulliveriana," 212.
[17] Unsigned review of *The Monikins* in *New-England Magazine*, at 136.
[18] Unsigned review of *Dawn of the Twentieth Century* in *The Academy*, at 25.

and the fear of invasion.[19] The Channel Tunnel scare of the 1880s, in addition to an ample number of fictionalized accounts of future-war and invasions from the continent, represented the current public perils in a political cartoon by Friedrich Graetz, titled *England's Nightmare* (1882). A lion epitomizing Great Britain is tied to the ground depicted as Gulliver, whilst miniscule French soldiers swarm around him and others emerge out of the Channel tunnel in the distance. The title and the subtitle underneath the cartoon published in *Puck* reads: "England's nightmare. The Great Britain Gulliver overpowered and made helpless by French pygmies while asleep."[20]

A Swiftian voice is sometimes only allusive. Anthony Trollope's 1882 novel *The Fixed Period*—that bears a theme and plot taken from the tragicomedy *The Old Law, or A New Way to Please You*—makes a proposal for euthanizing the elderly which is also, technically speaking, close to the call for mass infanticide in Swift's *Modest Proposal*. One finds a similar gruesome picture of sardonic seriousness in Trollope's novel where he adopts a method of satire which draws upon a presumed earnestness whose effect is to enunciate a critical sardonic vision of politics. Written by a member of a utopian society in the fictive antipodean island of Britannula set in the late twentieth century, the futuristic message of Trollope's satire gives a horrific vision taken in earnest about a necessary and timely annihilation of the weak and elderly in the same cool earnestness that Swift proposes the eating of Irish babies as a solution to economic problems and poverty.[21] In creating his own "modest proposal," Trollope embraces two other themes developed in *Gulliver's Travels*. One of them is the unenviable condition of the immortal Struldbrugs in Book III who are estranged from society and for whom immortality is a curse, and not a wish-fulfilling fantasy, fused with the utopian theme of Book IV. The sardonic effect in Trollope's *Fixed Period* is achieved by a well-meaning yet horrific sounding solution. Only such dystopian calculations can make the extermination of humans look humanitarian. The "fixed period," 67 years old, is the age when people are compelled to undergo euthanasia to sustain the prosperity of a young nation by easing their "burden" to the community. The narrator—a former President of Britannula, who methodically as well as enthusiastically vindicates the doctrine of this fixed period—advocates euthanasia in the same inhumane

[19] Gillray, *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver*, June 26, 1803; Ibid. *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver* (Plate 2d.), Feb. 10, 1804.
[20] Graetz, *Puck*, 1882: 21 and Library of Congress.
[21] For the analogy between the two, see Rogers, "*The Fixed Period*," 18–19, 22–23.

matter-of-factly reasoning of the Houyhnhnm Assembly master, who speaks so coolly of the genocide of the Yahoos.

A number of nineteenth- and twentieth-century titles resuscitated "Gulliverian" subject matter in adventure and speculative fiction. Film adaptations of Swift's satire go back to the 1930s with Aleksandr Ptushko's *Novyj Gulliver* [*The New Gulliver*] in 1935 and Dave Fleischer's *Gulliver's Travels* in 1939, although the first filmic production based on Gulliver goes even further back to 1902 with Georges Méliès's *Le Voyage de Gulliver à Lilliput et Chez les Géants*.[22] More recently, Paul Beatty's novel *The Sellout*, which won the Man Booker Prize for 2016, was recognized by critics as essentially Swiftian in nature. In addition, commentators often refer to Swift's *Modest Proposal* to criticize inept implementations in world or national politics. The Trump administration and the U.S. presidential election campaign of 2016 has consequently turned into a Swiftian object of criticism. It is noteworthy that since the dawn of the "golden age" of satire in eighteenth-century Britain, politics and morality have invariably been the subject matter and object of satirical assessment. In a *London Review of Books* panel discussion, Irish author Colm Tóibín suggested that a modern-day Swift would probably be a blogger, claiming, in other words, that the technological advancement in the twenty-first century have allowed the tools and strategies of political satire to move to other media, yet keeping its essential origins, which is an inherited *modus operandi* that can be traced back to Jonathan Swift.[23] Certainly in favor of such a view, Noah Charney who criticized Trump for nearly wanting to enact the absurdities of Swift's *Modest Proposal* claims that if Jonathan Swift lived today, he would "likely feature as a grumpy pundit on CNN, slinging pithy wisecracks and moonlighting as a writer on *Saturday Night Live*."[24]

Susan Straight foresees a darker picture in her sardonic attack on Trump's widely advertised plan to build a Wall to stop Mexican immigrants from coming to America. Her "A Modest, Modern Proposal" satirically proposes how to prevent "the Descendants of Immigrant and Indigenous Americans, as well as Slaves and Pioneers, Recent Refugees and Pilgrim Refugees, from being a Burden on their Politicians, Enforcement Officials or Country." Upon its implementation every American is compelled to wear a "laminated National Identification Card" which should also contain a blood sample of its owner.[25] Straight's

[22] Ezra, *George Méliès*, 154.
[23] "The Author in the Age of the Internet," *LRB* Panel Discussion.
[24] Charney, "Donald Trump's Modest Proposals," *Salon*, Nov. 20, 2016.
[25] Straight, "A Modest, Modern Proposal."

Swiftian censure seems like a forewarning about the perils and challenges democracy faces in general. Her Swiftian parody has an alarming dystopian tone. It expresses the fear that such unguarded verbal hostility could likely turn into banal normativity, which could undermine the roots of American identity with its melting-pot of multiculturalism and principles of equal opportunity.

Olga Hofmann's painting *Gulliver Trump in the Divided Land of Lillipublicans and Blefucrats* (2016) combines the political critique of *Gulliver's Travels* with the political division in American society during the U.S. presidential election in 2016.[26] It pictures Donald Trump in the center dressed as Gulliver in eighteenth-century attire. He is portrayed as a gigantic figure, remindful of the iconic nineteenth-century illustrations of Gulliver who resembles the Colossus of Rhodes with his legs far apart, while the Lilliputian army marches underneath him.[27] Hofmann's Gulliver stands astride a cleft, divided ground, which appears to be the American Constitution, and "We the People" from its preamble is the only visible part. A multitude of people are positioned behind "Gulliver Trump," comprising both his supporters and opponents. The two political parties, and their voters, who occupy the opposing sides of the severed ground are represented by the two portmanteau words, Lillipublicans and Blefucrats. They represent the Republicans and Democrats respectively, inspired by the continual war between Lilliputians and Blefuscudians in *Gulliver's Travels*. A banner on the right-hand side reads "Make Lillipublic Great Again" to ridicule the right-wing nationalist aspirations expressed by the Trump campaign's slogan "Make America Great Again." Even more comical is another banner that flies from an ascending balloon. It reads "In Gulliver We Trump"—an allusion to "In God We Trust"—which conjures up the presidential candidate's real estate business background and humorously implies a trumpeting of political ideas which do little to discriminate between verity and deception. Gulliver Trump's gullibility is stressed by one more image. A man with a hose in his hands ablutes Gulliver Trump with water pumped up from an adjacent pond that bears the sign "Fake News Swamp," in which a big Jabba-the-Hutt-like frog is happily nested. Hofmann comically represents the whole war of accusations that was thrust upon the media as distributors of fake-news. In the background, above and behind this 2016 Gulliver, a flying saucer soars high in the clouded darkening sky, reminiscent of the flying island of Laputa. While in Swift's satire it has an imperial terrorizing role, in

[26] Hofmann, *Gulliver Trump in the Divided Land* at *Saatchi Art.*
[27] Swift, *Gulliver*, Part I, 38.

Hofmann's painting this Laputa lookalike is monitoring and surveilling the scene below. The flying saucer has the flag of the Russian Federation painted on its underside, which alludes to Russia's interference in the 2016 U.S. elections as well as the controversial, genial diplomatic relationship between President Vladimir Putin and Trump.

Hofmann emulates a long tradition of political cartooning that goes back to eighteenth-century Britain—for example, within James Gillray's political caricatures—and late-nineteenth century America, with Thomas Nast's political cartoons. Nast has been renowned for the "symbolic forms" in his cartoons, two of which have had a long-standing reputation: "the donkey representing the Democratic party" and "the elephant representing the Republican party."[28] In the painting's foreground, in front of Gulliver Trump, are two Roman racing chariots, both of which carry an enormous egg in proportionately big egg cups. The chariot driven by a donkey on the left-hand side embodies the worldview of American Democrats, whereas the right-hand side, a chariot driven by an elephant, conversely, symbolizes the Republicans political perspective. It is a parody of the theological disputes between the Big-Endians and Little-Endians in *Gulliver's Travels*—i.e., the satirized proponents of Catholicism and Protestantism who are humorously depicted as having a bloody war over which end an egg should be cracked open. Inspired by Swift's satire, the painting translates this irresolvable antagonism into the context of the modern-day American presidential campaign with its two main actors, the Democrats and the Republicans, and ridicules their rivalry as being equally trivial. Hofmann's pictorial satire is as much a critique of contemporary American politics as it is an attestation of the universality of Swift's political satire. It shows, in other words, that Swiftian satire defies time and space as it allows for the bridging over of historical periods as well as the application of its critical focus globally.

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Swiftian Inspirations takes its discursive interest in the context of the creative rehashing and revisions of the multifarious Swiftian voices over time. It looks upon inspirations, appropriations, and re-readings of Swift as instances of dialogic reception of Swiftian thought from the age of Enlightenment to the age of post-truth. It aims in particular to illustrate the posterity of prestigious moments and their effects throughout the reception and cultural legacy of Swift the intellectual and thinker. The first section is

[28] Vinson, *Thomas Nast*, 10.

devoted to eighteenth-century visions of Jonathan Swift. Marc Martinez chooses to unravel the ethical parameters of truth and lies within Swiftian satire within the contemporary political discourse that our postmodern age is still in need of both problematizing and resolving. He describes Swift as a hoaxer spreading fake news under the guise of Isaac Bickerstaff. As a political commentator, Martinez claims, Swift assertively advertised the truth of his political criticism and accused his opponents of falsehood, whilst as a satirist he brought the expression of untruth to pure validity. Martinez ultimately draws parallels between the satirical foci and methods in postmodernity with those that are similar to the age and time of Swift. From the fabrication of identity and the fabrication of truth, James Ward turns his attention to the meaning of madness in the eighteenth century and looks into the contemporary connotations of "insanity" with which Swift creatively played. Ward claims that since 1742, when a commission of lunacy found Dean Swift to be of "unsound mind and memory," the myth of Swift's madness and insanity in general have been approached both through "the way we think about Swift and the way that Swift makes us think about mental health." Evgenia Pancheva focuses her reading on Swift's poetic and fictional personas, the multiple identities of a critical and clandestine self-construed political voice. She comments upon the self-alienating technique in Swift's later poems and in *Gulliver's Travels* with the attempt to recontextualize the author's various poetic and political disguises. She argues that Swift's poetry reveals a distinctive form of self-distancing, different from how previous authors had expressed poetic self-reflections. According to her, "distances and masks are typical of Swiftian self-reflexivity" and she explores how he inscribed himself in a poetic rupture "between speaker and fictional persona," while oscillating "between speaker and mask."

The second section deals with the imitations, adaptations and revisions of Swift's satirical works in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. Vesselin M. Budakov, for instance, studies a mid-nineteenth-century science-fiction fantastic voyage which was inspired by Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*: Elbert Perce's *Gulliver Joi: His Three Voyages* (1851). As noted by previous scholarship, Swift's political satire played a vital role in the formation of science fiction in the nineteenth century. Budakov discusses Perce's *Gulliver Joi* as an early example from the genre's formative years. He further points out that it is characteristic of early science fiction to combine mechanical, research-based reasoning with fabulous visions, whereby the rational proves to be rather an instrument of the fantastical. He examines how Perce's imitation of *Gulliver* integrates interplanetary journeys, adventures in a lost world, and utopia in his novel.

Budakov concludes that the polyphony of genres and themes—a pattern inherited from Swift's imaginary travels—anticipated the generic format of the scientific romance later in the nineteenth century. Mariya Dogan offers a reading of Aleksandr Ptushko's *Novyj Gulliver* [*The New Gulliver*] (1935), the first film adaptation of Swift's satire in the Soviet Union and the first full-length animated movie as a whole. Dogan makes clear that Ptushko's movie only loosely resembles the original *Gulliver* since it is ideologically burdened with 1930s Soviet propaganda making Gulliver a revolutionary liberator fighting against a Lilliputian monarchy. Alongside discussing the adaption techniques in Ptushko's movie, Dogan explores this film adaptation as a form of *agitprop* education which "satirized Western capitalism and promoted the enlightenment of the working class." Alexandra Glavanakova explores Swift's political pamphlet *A Modest Proposal* in a diachronic perspective, in the context of contrasted opinions in U.S. politics about race, class, and social inequalities. In her social criticism of the political attitudes towards integration and discrimination in *post-racial* American society, she questions the validity of this concept and critically examines whether democracy can "function effectively without enlightenment in relation to the founding ideals of the Unites States" in the contemporary political situation. Drawing parallels between the eighteenth and the twenty-first centuries, she expounds on the meaning of "a very knowing American" in the darkly satirical proposition of the *Modest Proposal* and moves on to find intertextual allusions between Swift's satire and American literary and non-literary texts that bear the tone and import of absurdities with regard to slavery and racism. In her reading of American "modest proposals," she analyzes two entirely different texts: Benjamin Franklin's *Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim on the Slave Trade* (1790) and Paul Beatty's novel *The Sellout* (2015)—a bitter satire on contemporary race relations—which takes up the bizarre proposition of restoring slavery in post-racial America by a black man. Finally, Mélissa Richard focuses on Charles Sturridge's 1996 film adaptation of *Gulliver's Travels*. She examines moments in the movie which are intensely satirical and considers passages which were liberally omitted or intentionally altered. Richard's claim is that while Sturridge's *Gulliver's Travels* remains fairly faithful to the story, it offers a new version in the interpretation of Swift's satire.

The third section of the book looks into Swiftian legacies concerning the politics of language. Emilia Slavova makes a case for the inception of "polite learning" and "polite society" in early modernity, which thematically subscribes to the ethical and lingual prescriptions in Jonathan Swift's *Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue*

(1712). In her claim, a parallel can be drawn between the debates over language in the early eighteenth century and the disputes about the appropriacy of the use of language in the twenty-first century with regards to a politically correct, democratic method of avoiding discriminatory sexist, class, or racial usages. She argues that the American presidential election campaign of 2016 was particularly antagonistic towards marginalized social groups. Against this context of politics and language, Tatyana Stoicheva focuses her discussion on the Bulgarian translation of Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal,* which was first published in the literary weekly *Literaturen Vestnik* in December 2013. According to her, the publication of the pamphlet is exceptionally political in a new political context as it appeared in an issue of the literary newspaper, which was thematically devoted to anti-government protests and the clash between the police and students earlier in November 2013. She argues that the editor strategically introduced Swift's satirical understatements to Bulgarian readers, by including explanatory paratextual notes along with visuals from the protests attached to the translation. The third section closes with Teodora Tzankova's comments on the slippery and rather demanding territory of translating satire and parody. While Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* may be viewed as a parody of contemporary travel and exploratory fiction, which was used as a tool to challenge contemporary politics, Tzankova raises the question of what happens to the original Swiftian characteristics when they are translated into another language and, additionally, what happens when the cultural and political features of the original change in terms of time and context.

The fourth section focuses on Swiftian visions in a more global context involving satire and politics and the search for analogies between the early Enlightenment and the age of post-truth. Filipina Filipova explores the concept of post-truth in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* from the point of view that readers are expected to interpret what is true and what is false. She claims that in addition to questioning authorial veracity, the Swiftian narrator places readers in an oscillating position to choose between alternatives. She starts by analyzing in detail the narrator's veracity—both asserted and invalidated in Captain Gulliver's letter to his cousin Sympson—and the publisher's preface to the reader. She makes clear that the "narrator who insists on his veracity throughout the whole text of the *Travels* has actually made it impossible to be trusted and has thus subverted the capacity of claims on truth to be believed at face value." In his reading of Swift's *The Drapier's Letters* (1724-25), Jonathan McCreedy searches for an analogy between the 1720s dispute about the devaluation of the Irish coin patented to William Wood—a reason why it

was derisively referred to as "Wood's halfpence"—and Ireland's future economic vulnerability in the aftermath of Brexit. In order to support his argument, McCreedy makes a comprehensive reading of the historical context of *The Drapier's Letters*. He discusses Swift's viewpoint on the disastrous effect the issuing of copper money could have had on the local economy and comments upon the contemporary anxieties about the future of Ireland. He argues that "post-Brexit Ireland has similarities with Swift's grim 'post-halfpence' predictions." McCreedy further speculates that a "harder Brexit" may result in the establishment of a hard border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, which is a potential danger, both economically and politically, to the region as a whole.

Swiftian Inspirations: The Legacy of Jonathan Swift from the Enlightenment to the Age of Post-Truth aims at outlining the literary and critical heritage that Swift left for writers and thinkers from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first century. It examines Swift's authorial inscription in his writings and looks into how Swiftian ventriloquism has allowed for the public problematization of current political issues. Arguably, most of the problems today which Swift bitterly satirized in the eighteenth century are problems of modernity in general. The present book, therefore, begins by providing the eighteenth-century context of the ethical and political parameters of Swift's critical stature, and continues with a discussion of the imitations and adaptations of Swiftian voices in literary works and in other media, then extends its focus to the linguistic approach to Swift. Finally, it highlights the legacy of the author in the political context of contemporary post-truth society. In *Swiftian Inspirations*, therefore, we hope to historicize Swiftian satiric legacies that inspired the literary and critical approaches of the posterity, and, on that account, our book also comes to give substance to the belief of Jonathan Swift's contemporaries concerning his future reputation.

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PART I

JONATHAN SWIFT AND THE ENLIGHTENMENT

CHAPTER ONE

SATIRE, TRUTH AND THE ART OF LYING IN *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*

MARC MARTINEZ

Before writing *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift had indulged, on various occasions, his propensity for facetiously playing with truth and falsehood. In one of his most celebrated literary pranks, he predicted, under the mask of Isaac Bickerstaff, the death of John Partridge, a best-selling almanac writer and Whig propagandist (1644-1715). The interplay of truth and lies, on which hoaxes are based, resonates with the preponderance and amplification of fake news in our present time and seems to suffuse Swift's satire, *Gulliver's Travels*. In his political writings, Swift had a fairly binary conception of truth and falsehood and was intent on drawing a strict boundary between the two notions: he forcefully asserted the truth of his partisan propaganda and pilloried his opponents as liars.[1] In his satires, however, he did not conform to the traditional image of the satirist as operating in a world of clear standards since his attitude evinced ambivalence toward the handling of moral opposites. This fascination for lies tends to obfuscate the lines of demarcation between falsehood and truth, and underlies the politics and poetics of *Gulliver's Travels*—a work which bears some resemblance with his most famous literary hoax, the collection of publications known as the Bickerstaff papers[2]—and which

[1] See his contribution "The Art of Political Lying," *The Examiner*, November 9, 1710. See also Lesley Gilbert Crocker, "The Problem of Truth and Falsehood in the Age of Enlightenment," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14, no. 4 (October 4, 1953): 557-603.

[2] It includes three main publications by Swift: *Predictions for the Year 1708*, *The Accomplishment of the First of Mr Bickerstaff's Predictions*, and an account of Partridge's death by a third party in the form of a letter, *The Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq*., (1709) in which he solemnly defends his prediction. These are published in *Parodies, Hoaxes, Mock Treatises*, ed. Valerie Rumbold (Cambridge:

stems from the same partiality for a popular tradition: the practical jokes played on All Fools' Day.

Gulliver's Travels seem to illustrate the dynamics of the hoax form and bring to light Swift's decided penchant for April foolery associated with it. David Womersley remarks that the "Letter… to his Cousin Sympson," added to the 1735 edition, is dated the day after All Fools' Day, April 2:[3] this prefatory text, which occupies the position and fulfils the programmatic function of the satirical *apologia*, initiates the intricate game of truth and lie, typical of literary hoaxes, which underpins the whole work. The satirist, however, is traditionally supposed to revile the falsifications and manipulations of his targets and to extol, indirectly, moral integrity and rectitude. Accordingly, the major theorists of the form in the 1950s and 1960s have argued that satire rests on fairly clear moral standards against which the vices and foibles of satirical figures can be assessed.[4] Besides, some critics have pointed out Swift's tendency to expose lying in politics and other fields of social interaction: two articles in particular have dealt with the subject.[5] Richard Terry starts from the assumption that Swift, according to Dr Johnson's phrase, is a "hypocrite renversé," since he shows a grim face in order to hide his inward moral qualities. He then focuses on Swift's interest in the "conundrum of fiction

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Cambridge University Press, 2013). Two more pamphlets are sometimes added, *Squire Bickerstaff detected* (1710), not by Swift, and *An Answer to Bickerstaff*, probably by Swift, but printed posthumously in 1765, *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Herbert Davies (Oxford: Blackwell, 1940), vol. 2.

[3] *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. David Womersley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 14. Further references to Swift's works appear parenthetically in the text.

[4] These are the main scholars who endorsed this view: Mack Maynard, "The Muse of Satire," *Yale Review* 40 (1951): 80-93; Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1957); Alvin B. Kernan, *The Cankered Muse: Satire of the English Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1959); Edward W. Rosenheim, *Swift and the Satirist's Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963); Alvin B. Kernan, *The Plot of Satire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965); John M. Bullitt, *Jonathan Swift and the Anatomy of Satire* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1966); Ronald Paulson, *The Fictions of Satire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1967); Ronald Paulson, *Satire and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967); Matthew Hodgart, *Satire; Origins and Principles* (1969) (London: Routledge, 2010).

[5] See in particular Richard Terry "Swift and Lying," *Philological Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (1994): 243-265 and Brean Hammond and Gregory Currie, "Lying, Language and Intention: Reflections on Swift," *European Journal of English Studies* 19, no. 2 (2015): 220-233.

vs. lie": in the context of the emerging novel, the *Travels* explore the "contiguity of fiction-making and lying," a concern shared by early eighteenth-century writers.[6] Brean Hammond, on the other hand, examines the political conditions which produced Swift's anxiety over a society pervaded with lies. I wish to explore the tension between mendacity and veracity, which originates in Swift's partiality to hoaxes. It underlies the types of discourse, fictional, historical and paratextual, developed through the work and the satirical intention. Swift follows in the Lucianic tradition of Menippean satire, which emphasizes truthful lies, and tries to solve satirically this paradox through the intricate interplay of the various voices that seem to obfuscate any fixed interpretive perspective.

In the Bickerstaff papers, Swift focused his satirical strategy on the tension between truth and falsehood constitutive of the hoax. In his *Predictions for the Year 1708*, published in late March, Swift announced that Partridge would die on the 29th and went a step further in the next pamphlet, *The Accomplishment of the First of Mr Bickerstaff's Predictions*, which advertised the actual death of the astrologist. The jest of a death foretold, pulled off with such verve, develops into satirical fake news and rests on a satirical ploy related to another literary form: the satirical epitaph. This type of epigram, which claims to be written on some imaginary tombstone, performatively executes the enemy. A spoof epitaph by Alexander Pope illustrates the way the satirist strives to effectuate his victim's symbolic elimination by burying him before he actually dies. His target is James Moore-Smythe who borrowed some of his lines for his comedy *The Rival Modes* (1727):

> Here lyes what had nor *Birth*, nor *Shape*, nor *Fame*;
> No *Gentleman*! no *Man*! no-*thing*! no *name*!
> For *Jammie* ne'er grew *James*; and what they call
> *More*, shrunk to *Smith*—and Smith's no name at all.
> Yet dye thou can'st not, Phantom, oddly fated:
> For how can no-thing be annihilated?
> *Ex nihilo nihil fit*.[7]

After consigning James Smythe to the grave, Pope proceeds to obliterate his enemy by ruthlessly and relentlessly objectifying him and deconstructing his name. As Matthew Hodgart puts it in his book on satire, with the satirical epitaph: "The satirist mimes the killing of his victim, and

[6] Terry, "Swift and Lying," 243, 244.
[7] Pope, *The Poems of Alexander Pope; a One Volume Edition of the Twickenham Text*, 811.

then fixes him in the rigidity of death like a butterfly hunter."[8] This type of epigram harks back to the original and archaic function of satire whose performative power was supposed to kill with words.[9] In the Bickerstaff papers, just as in Pope's mock-epitaph, the satirical assault consists in wiping out the enemy symbolically by putting him to death figuratively. But whereas Pope's poem, and others of the kind, is obviously fictional and does not aim at deceiving the reader, Swift's anonymous prediction played with the assumption that some people could be taken in by what is, in actual fact, satirical fake news. In his effort to sustain ambiguity and consequently to baffle and confuse the reader, Swift, under the mask of Isaac Bickerstaff, constructs his satirical *persona* as a defender of truth and as an honest gentleman, while at the same time he undermines the social and literary status of the almanac-maker, who appears as the exponent of plebeian culture ("a common Maker of Almanacks"), and is implicitly accused of being a lie-monger:

> I lay the whole Credit of my Art upon the Truth of these Predictions; And I will be content, that *Partridge*, and the Rest of his Clan, may hoot me for a Cheat and Impostor if I fail in any single Particular of Moment. I believe, any Man who reads this Paper will look upon me to be at least a Person of as much Honesty and Understanding, as a common Maker of Almanacks. I do not lurk in the Dark; I am not wholly unknown in the World.[10]

Besides, the satirical import of the Bickerstaff papers is further increased by the predictions about the ongoing War of Spanish Succession and the disparagement of Partridge's Whig views on the Church and the State.[11] Therefore, they show how the bite,[12] or eighteenth-century fake news, can display a political agenda and can be imbued with satirical implications.[13] More pointedly, the hoax occupies a strange borderline

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[8] Hodgart, *Satire*, 82.
[9] Robert C. Elliott, *The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art*.
[10] Rumbold, "Burying the Fanatic Partridge: Swift's Holy Week Hoax," 47.
[11] Ibid., 38.
[12] The term "hoax" first appeared shortly before 1800 according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.
[13] For the Bickerstaff papers as a political and literary hoax, Mayhew, "Swift's Bickerstaff Hoax as an April Fools' Joke," 270-280; Loveman, *Reading Fictions, 1660-1740: Deception in English Literary and Political Culture*, 153-164; Rumbold, "Burying the Fanatic Partridge: Swift's Holy Week Hoax," ed. by Rawson, *Politics and Literature*; McTague, "There is No Such Thing as Isaack Bickerstaff: Partridge, Pittis, and Jonathan Swift," *Eighteenth Century Life*, 83-101.

between truth and falsehood. It is precisely this ambivalent poise which is so characteristic of Swift's major satire.

From a satiric perspective, Swift establishes a polarized moral pattern by setting these opposites off against each other in his *Travels*. As satirist, Gulliver, who is cast in the various roles of character, narrator and author, advertises himself as a staunch advocate of truth and adopts a commonplace attitude by exposing the duplicity of ministers and exalting, indirectly, political truth or integrity. In the various accounts of Europe given by Gulliver, truth–sincerity, faithfulness—is sharply contrasted with lies—duplicity, political, social or sexual treason. Gulliver seems on the surface to move in a world governed by rigid boundaries between these two antonymous notions. Accordingly, truth is presented as a cardinal virtue incarnated by the horses in the last part: the land of the Houyhnhnms ostensibly displays a utopian ideal, much to be desired, because they are ignorant of and seemingly impervious to lies, as indicated by the periphrasis they use to refer to falsehood, "*the thing which was not*."[14]

As a consequence, the horses' language is not polysemous and is necessarily truthful while, among Europeans, the various cants—political, medical and legal—are so impenetrable that they function as masks, concealing the truth: "this Society hath a peculiar Cant and Jargon of their own, that no other Mortal can understand, and wherein all their Laws are written, which they take special Care to multiply; whereby they have wholly confounded the very Essence of Truth and Falsehood, of Right and Wrong."[15] The crafty, insidious use of jargon can even invert apparently fixed binaries: they are "bred up from their Youth in the Art of proving by Words multiplied for the Purpose, that *White* is *Black*, and *Black* is *White*, according as they are paid" (369).

In the prefatory "Letter … to his Cousin Sympson," Gulliver, who is back in England when he writes it, is deeply disturbed by his experience in the land of the Houyhnhnms and endorses their value system. As narrator and author of his journal, he accuses the editor of making him "say the thing that was not" (9) and expresses his indignation at the falsifications his text has been subjected to. He deplores the omissions and additions, which have been inserted in his text by the editor, and even points out errors in the chronology of events (12) and in the name of Brobdingnag, which should be Brobdingrag (13). He concludes the letter with a

[14] First introduced in the third chapter of the last voyage in the 1726 edition (Wormersley, ed., 349) and in the "Letter… to his Cousin Sympson" in the 1735 version (9).

[15] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 371. All further references to this edition are cited parenthetically in the text.

rhetorical question, which is tantamount to a vindication of his truthfulness, as he berates his critics: "Do these miserable Animals presume to think that I am so far degenerated as to defend my Veracity;" (14). Gulliver, who, at the end of his voyages, has become an outraged and ranting satirist, implies that truth is the original state of man and that lying is a sign of his fallen nature.

Refusing to stoop to prove his veracity is not just a way of condemning lies as a symptom of man's degeneracy. It also ironically suggests that Gulliver's obsessive search for self-aggrandizement, which is one of the butts of Swift's satire on human perversion, is tainted with falsehood. Gulliver's pride is targeted by Swift, the real satirist, who ironically undermines his claim that he has pulled off a formidable feat in washing himself clean of several vices, including lying, in only two years: "it is well known through all *Houyhnhnmland*, that by the Instructions and Example of my illustrious Master, I was able in the Compass of two Years (although I confess with the utmost Difficulty) to remove that infernal Habit of Lying, Shuffling, Deceiving, and Equivocating, so deeply rooted in the very Souls of all my Species" (14). The assertion is further undercut by the ironical parenthesis "(although I confess with the utmost Difficulty)" (ibid.).

The possible relationship between lying and pride is highlighted in the episode of the court Lady in Lilliput, which combines a satire on court scandal and fake news. Gulliver who has started incurring the disfavor of the court is now accused of having had an affair with "an excellent Lady" (94), the wife of the Treasurer, his sworn enemy. He consequently tries to vindicate her reputation and to refute the charges with circumstantial evidence. The satirical aim of this passage is to give a negative image of court society, which revels in "Court-Scandal," in fake news and the destroying of reputations. Gulliver, as a victim, is at pains to clear himself of the charges made against him and tries to prove the lady's and his own innocence through mock-judicial rhetoric. Ironically, though, he fails to make the obvious point: it is patently a biological absurdity to suspect him of sleeping with a woman, six inches tall. Since Gulliver does not rule out the possibility of such an affair, the reader is invited to imagine the unimaginable and is encouraged by the narrator's silences to picture to himself aberrant sexual fantasies. Besides, Gulliver's forceful protestations through phrases such as "I solemnly declare" (94) betray his real intention and his sexual bragging since he suggests that he would not just entertain one lady:

> I own she came often to my House, but always publickly, nor ever without three more in the Coach, who were usually her Sister, and young Daughter,

> and some particular Acquaintance; but this was common to many other Ladies of the Court. (95)

What appears, on the surface, to be an indictment on scandal-mongering, court intrigue and fake news by Gulliver proves to be a satire on his pride as an irresistible seducer of a Lilliputian lady. What starts as a commendable attempt at restoring the truth proves to be empty vaunting and blatant lying.

In this passage, Gulliver's rhetoric shifts from the defensive stance of the accused to the offensive attitude of the vituperating satirist as his indignation rises. In his exposure of court scandal, the reviling, slandering tone he uses betrays his moral superiority over the society he is in, but at the same time his acceptance of the social etiquette: he is part of the society he excoriates in his use of the same despicable practice. After challenging the Treasurer, "I defy the Treasurer" (95), he proceeds to use scandal in turn against the scandal-mongers: "I will name them, and let them make the best of it" (95). Besides, irony does not stop here in true Swiftian manner: one of his lines of defence is the appeal to witnesses: "And I still appeal to my Servants round, whether they at any Time saw a Coach at my Door without knowing what Persons were in it" (95). In the next chapter, when Gulliver explains how he got wind of a conspiracy against him, he confesses that he received the visit from a "considerable Person at Court," who "came to my House very privately at Night in a close Chair, and without sending his Name, desired Admittance" (96). In the episode of the Lady, while he rails against fake news, he is caught lying twice. First, he refrains from stating the obvious truth in order to express his masculine pride in an anatomical exploit he could hardly perform. Then, his assertion that he only entertains publicly is immediately refuted. This passage provides a good example of Swift's irony and satirical aim throughout the book as he undercuts the narrator's discourse, which is basically tainted with lies.

At the beginning of chapter 7, in Brobdingnag, Gulliver, who has given a thorough account of the state of Europe, explains that he faithfully reported the outraged reaction of the King at the many vices of the Europeans because of his "extreme Love of Truth." And yet he adds that he "artfully eluded many of his Questions; and gave to every Point a more favourable turn by many Degrees than the strictness of Truth would allow" (190). His conception of truth is not, after all, as strict as he claims it to be. He suggests that he has learned from his Master "an utter Detestation of all Falsehood or Disguise; and *Truth* appeared so amiable to me, that I determined upon sacrificing every thing to it" (388). And yet, he cannot refrain from tampering with truth just after this statement: "I *extenuated*

their Faults [his fellow citizens'] as much as I durst before so strict an Examiner [the Master Houyhnhnm]; and upon every Article, gave as *favourable* a Turn as the Matter would bear" (389). Gulliver is capable of introducing falsehood in the apparently idyllic society of the Houyhnhnms. His master Houyhnhnm, who has discovered the truth about Gulliver's clothes, is immediately silenced:

> I requested likewise, that the Secret of my having a false Covering to my Body might be known to none but himself, at least as long as my present Cloathing should last: For as to what the Sorrel Nag his Valet had observed, his Honour might command him to conceal it. All this my Master very graciously consented to […]. (352)

Not only does Gulliver invite his Master Houyhnhnm to lie but he also makes him compel his servant to lie: he becomes a source of moral contamination. From then on, his Master is deeply conscious of his manoeuvrings: "he manifestly perceived, that in order to favour them [his fellow citizens], I had concealed many Particulars, and often *said the Thing which was not*" (390). This is further evidence that the corrupting influence of Gulliver has had an effect on the perfect horse, who is now well able to recognize a lie when he hears one. The interplay of truth and lies poses a central paradox: while lying seems to be condemned, Gulliver, the character, is not averse to falsehood and, as narrator/author, is often caught tampering with his narrative. Gulliver, as a specimen "smitten with *Pride*" (443), and a degenerate Yahoo for all his cogent protestations and his righteous indignation, shares with the humanity he inveighs against in the book the deeply ingrained inclination to and fascination for "*Lying*, and *false Representation*" (354).

Gulliver's mendacity and distortion of facts, due to his partiality to his country, is also exposed in his manipulation of the narrative. Unlike what Gulliver claimed in the "Letter… to his Cousin Sympson," he is not just a victim of a careless editor; as author and narrator, he too is strongly inclined to bend the truth. He recurrently focuses the attention of the reader on his constant editing of his notes. Of his conversation with his Master Houyhnhnm he only reports "a Summary of the most material Points" and, while he is not averse to taking liberties, he asserts his absolute truthfulness: "I shall here only set down the Substance of what passed between us concerning my own Country, reducing it into Order as well as I can, without any Regard to Time or other Circumstances, while I strictly adhere to Truth" (361).

Therefore, the repeated expostulations of the narrator, who is anxious to prove the veracity of his accounts, tend to alert the reader to his

untruthfulness. Among the Houyhnhnms, Gulliver contends twice that "the Truth immediately strikes every Reader with Conviction," during his stay among the horses (401) and after his return from the country of the Houyhnhnms in the "Letter… to his Cousin Sympson" (13): this axiomatic statement seems to admit of no contradiction and concurs with Gulliver's initial claim that proving his veracity would be unnecessary and even demeaning. The adoption of this precept, however, belies his constant insistence on proving the veracity of his implausible tales in the other voyages: he exhibits miniature sheep from Lilliput and displays "the small Collection of Rarities" that he manufactured himself from bodily parts of Brobdingnagians:

> There was the Comb I had contrived out of the Stumps of the King's Beard; and another of the same Materials, but fixed into a paring of her Majesty's Thumb-nail, which served for the Back. There was a Collection of Needles and Pins from a Foot to half a Yard long. Four Wasp-Stings, like Joyners Tacks: Some Combings of the Queen's Hair […]. I shewed him a Corn that I had cut off with my own Hand from a Maid of Honour's Toe; it was about the Bigness of a *Kentish* Pippin, and grown so hard, that when I returned to *England*, I got it hollowed into a Cup and set in Silver. Lastly, I desired him to see the Breeches I had then on, which were made of a Mouse's Skin. (210-11)

All the objects, albeit outlandish, which Gulliver produces, along with the measurements, the latitudes and the maps, are meant to show that truth is even more glaringly obvious when it is supported by material evidence, facts and objects. And yet, the more Gulliver flaunts his love of truth, the more suspicious the reader becomes since the context shows that he is lying.

Furthermore, Gulliver's discourse is tainted from the outset by the generic tradition the work pertains to: travel narratives were thought to be no more than tissues of lies.[16] In this respect, Swift's description of *Gulliver's Travels* as his "lying travels" in his *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift* is well-nigh tautological. The choice of the cousin's name, Sympson, in the "Letter" connotes forgery and lying because of its association with William Sympson, the pseudonymous plagiarist who wrote *A New Voyage to the East Indies* (1715). In addition, Gulliver's claim that he modelled his language on that of sailors is meant to cast suspicion on his discourse:

[16] The seminal study on this aspect of travel narratives is Adams, *Travelers and Travel Liars, 1660-1800* (1962) and *Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel*.

"In my first Voyages, while I was young, I was instructed by the oldest Mariners, and learned to speak as they did" (12).

In Brobdingnag, the narrator draws a significant parallel between his style, his editing of the story, and his wish to break with the generic tradition of the travel narrative:

> I have been chiefly studious of Truth, without affecting any Ornaments of Learning, or of Style. But the whole Scene of this Voyage made so strong an Impression on my Mind, and is so deeply fixed in my Memory, that in committing it to Paper, I did not omit one material Circumstance: However, upon a strict Review, I blotted out several Passages of less Moment which were in my first Copy, for fear of being censured as tedious and trifling, whereof Travellers are often, perhaps not without Justice, accused. (134)

The advocation of a plain style is a satirical hit at the Royal Society, which required from the explorers of distant lands to bring back reports written in a simple style as a token of the scientific impartiality of the travellers.[17] Gulliver's calculated simplicity and his scrupulous editing in the interest of the reader bespeaks the satirist's resolution to turn the standard signs of truthfulness into signals of falsity. By displaying the porosity between truth and lies Swift not only satirizes the moral turpitude of Europeans but he also debunks, under the mask of Gulliver, the types of discourse which are supposed to be predicated on a clear-cut distinction between the two. Along with science, historiography, which is supposed to rely on facts and to report true events, falls equally under suspicion.

In Brobdingnag, Gulliver's rather flexible notion of truth, which underlies his biased picture of European societies, is immediately justified by the authority of a Greek historian: "I have always borne that laudable Partiality to my own Country, which *Dionysius Halicarnassensis* with so much Justice recommends to an Historian. I would hide the Frailties and Deformities of my Political Mother, and place her Virtues and Beauties in the most advantageous Light" (191). The narrator's tendentious rendering of his account is identified with the historian's handling of his narrative.[18] In Glubbdubdrib, however, Gulliver sets out to condemn the mystifications of historical accounts on the island of the Sorcerers, as suggested by the title of the chapter, "Antient and Modern History corrected." The

[17] A plain style is also, ironically, a Swiftian ideal.

[18] On *Gulliver's Travels* and history, see Varey, "Exemplary History and the Political Satire of *Gulliver's Travels*," 39-55. Rothstein, "*Gulliver* 3; or the Progress of Clio," 104-20. Freedman, "Swift's Struldbruggs, Progress, and the Analogy of History" 457-72.

inconsistent and ambivalent attitude of Gulliver who espouses a partial conception of historiography in Brobdingnag and, at the same time, defends a strict adherence to factual truth in the third Voyage is typical of Swift's attitude towards his protagonist, a satiric tool rather than a fully-fledged novelistic character.

In chapter 7, Gulliver is able to call up the heroic dead of antiquity. He first conjures from the dead the great historical figures of Antiquity, the virtuous sextumvirate, and, in the next chapter, the poets and philosophers, "Antients, who were most renowned for Wit and Learning" (296). He contends that a first-hand account of history by the heroic actors of the past, summoned from the underworld, is an acid test for the accuracy of historical facts: "they would certainly tell me Truth, for Lying was a Talent of no Use in the lower World" (289). He is subsequently "truly informed" (299) about the distortions and fabrications of historians. In his indictment of historical truth, Swift draws on a well-established satiric tradition, the Menippean *topos* of the calling up of the dead.[19] The Greek *nekyia*, initiated by Homer in book 11 of *The Odyssey*, was parodied by Lucian, in his most famous Menippean satire, *True History*,[20] a fantastic voyage undertaken by the author himself. In the first book, Lucian reaches the island of the dead, the "Isle of the Blessed," where he meets heroes of the Trojan War, the poet Homer and Herodotus historian, who is eternally punished for the lies he published in his *Histories*.

The Greek satirist's work, which serves as hypotext for the scene of necromancy, does not just provide a satiric frame for the denunciation of modern history. It also contributes to the basic ambivalence and the underlying principle of truth and falsehood, which runs through the whole book and encapsulates the essence of its satire. Lucian's influence is not only perceived on the diegetic level, it is also clearly discernible in the outer frame of the book, the paratext. Not only does the interplay of truth and lies permeate the "Letter… to his Cousin Sympson," inserted within the fictional frame, it also surfaces in the frontispiece, placed at a further remove outside the fictive world of the book, before the title page, in George Faulkner's 1735 complete edition of the works. Critics have pointed out the resemblance between the portrait of Gulliver, featuring in Faulkner's third volume containing *Gulliver's Travels*, and the frontispiece, representing Swift in the first volume of the Irish publisher. It has been argued that the undeniable likeness between the two blurs the

[19] On Menippean satire, Relihan, *Ancient Menippean Satire*; Blanchard, *Scholars' Bedlam: Menippean Satire in the Renaissance*; Weinbrot, *Menippean Satire Reconsidered: From Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century*.

[20] The title is translated as either *True History* or *True Story*.

distinction between the real author, Swift, and the fictional author, Gulliver.[21] Besides, the Latin inscription, *splendide mendax*, (lying magnificently), written on the pedestal, adds to the intricate game and locks the reader in the inextricable liar's paradox. If the author in the frontispiece presents himself as a liar, what he says is untrue and therefore he is not a liar: what he asserts is the falsity of his discourse. By inserting this motto and inviting confusion between Gulliver and himself, Swift mimics Lucian's ironic procedure at the beginning of his *True History* when he claims: "my lying is far more honest than theirs, for though I tell the truth in nothing else, I shall at least be truthful in saying that I am a liar."[22] Although Swift is equally assertive, he departs from Lucian for one crucial reason; the polyphonic effect of the various voices produced, within and without the tale by Gulliver as character, narrator and fictional author, by Swift the satirist and real author.

On the diegetic level, the bulk of Gulliver's narrative is wedged in between the prefatory letter, which forcefully asserts the narrator/author's truthfulness in the face of falsifiers, and the final chapter, which reads like an assessment of the whole journal when the traveller now back in England endeavors to reassert the singularity of a narrative differing from the others of its kind in its absence of lies and "improbable Tales" (436). The first pages of the concluding chapter seem to hark back to Lucian's programmatic incipit. Just like the Greek satirist, Gulliver protests against the imposition of "the grossest falsities on the unwary reader" and proceeds to define what narrative truth is by designating his account as "faithful History" (436), a hint at Lucian's title and more generally at the whole Lucianic tradition which informs the book. However, unlike Lucian, who flaunts his mendacity in his *True History*, Swift's fictional counterpart is ironically debunked in his insistence on veracity when he reaches the end of his narrative. Swift inserts two lines from the *Aeneid* about Sinon, the Trojan captive who introduced the wooden horse into Troy:

> *Nec si miserum Fortuna Sinonem*
> *Finxit*, *vanum etiam*, *mendacemque improba finget*. (437)

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[21] For an analysis of the frontispiece and its implications, see Holly, "Travel and Translation: Textuality in *Gulliver's Travels,*" 134-152, more specifically 149-150; Wagner, *Reading Iconotexts. From Swift to the French Revolution*; Barchas, "Prefiguring Genre: Frontispiece Portraits from *Gulliver's Travels* to *Millenium Hall*"; Bony, *Discours et vérité dans* Les Voyages de Gulliver; and my "Gulliver en son miroir: référentialité et spécularité satiriques dans *Gulliver's Travels*."

[22] "Lucian, "True Story," 253.

(Nor, if Fortune hath made Sinon unhappy, shall her malice mould him to a cheat and a liar)

Therefore, Gulliver, unwittingly and ironically, aligns his narrative with the greatest liar in literary history and becomes Sinon's alter ego, by ushering into his narrative bogus horses, the Houyhnhnms, these counterfeit animals, which are meant to stand as exemplars of reason.[23] The whole narrative, which reaches at this point its conclusion, is eventually and completely undermined. However, on the authorial level, the 1735 addition of the frontispiece with its programmatic motto conjures up the image of the satirist, Swift, and, instead of blurring the issue, as is generally argued, introduces a sharper distinction not only between the various narrative planes but also between the true satirist and the satirical narrator, between the creator and his creature by providing a more stable interpretive perspective. That Gulliver is a liar has been firmly established by the end of the book. As such, he can be equated with all the lying travellers he emphatically dissociates himself from in the last chapter and with the falsifiers Lucian distances himself from at the beginning of his *True History*. Gulliver turns out to be a true specimen of Yahoo and even, to quote his Master, a "perfect *Yahoo*" (352). The phrase used when Gulliver reveals the truth about himself can be read as true Yahoo. And yet, the qualifier can take on a different meaning: by the end of the travels, Gulliver develops into a perfect Yahoo in the sense of a Yahoo brought to perfection, a quintessential Yahoo: as such, he becomes the reprehensible epitome of human nature, a perfectly accomplished liar. On the authorial level, although Swift and Gulliver are ostentatiously advertised as liars in the frontispiece, there is no alliance between the satirical author and the outraged narrator. While Gulliver, as a liar, is unequivocally, albeit unwillingly, associated with the Yahoos, Swift, as *splendide mendax*, aligns himself with Lucian and other satirists in their endeavor to display truthful lies.

The Latin phrase is borrowed from Horace's ode to Hypermnestra:[24] she was one of the Danaids who were ordered by their father Danaus to kill their husbands but who, unlike her sister, refused and told Danaus a virtuous lie. In the context of the poem, her lie is praised by Horace and differs from the sinful lies, which are generally targeted by satirists. The same type of glorious lie occurs in the conclusion of the third voyage,

[23] For David Womersley, Sinon is Swift's alter ego, *op.cit.* lxvii-lxviii. From my perspective, the quotation serves as Swift's ironic comment on the narrator's mendacity.
[24] *Odes*, III, 11, 35.

which departs significantly from the others. It is the first and only time that Gulliver lands in a real country, Japan, and does not try to prove the veracity of his tale in order to be brought back to England safely. Since the Japanese only tolerate Dutch merchants on their island, he is compelled to adopt a false identity. The introductory and conclusive narratives in the third voyage are more deeply immersed in the hazardous commercial, economic and geopolitical reality of early eighteenth-century, embodied in the figure of the Dutchman. Whereas truth is highlighted in all the fantastic countries he visits, falsehood is an absolute necessity when Gulliver is exposed to the dangers of the real world. Lying occupies the place which is taken up by truth in the narrative structure of the other voyages and therefore fulfils the same positive function as veracity. In this voyage, lying is not viewed as morally degenerate but rather as a necessary means of survival.

By admitting that he is a liar on the pedestal of the frontispiece, on the threshold of his *Travels*, Swift, just like his model Lucian, who provided him with this satirical sleight of hand, is truthful about the content of his work: the account of his voyages is as much a forgery as those by the pseudonymous William Sympson and his persona's narrative is as false to fact as it this plagiarist's. But, on a different level, by confessing this falsehood, he is true to his mode of expression and to his satirical intention: unlike travellers like Gulliver and others of his kind, and unlike the Yahoos of the final voyage and all the other knaves exposed in the work, Swift does not intend to hoodwink his readers but to jolt them into awareness with his vexatious strategy.

Though from a satirical perspective, the fictional world of the *Travels* evoked by Gulliver, ostensibly advocates a clear-cut distinction of moral opposites, Swift deploys a rhetoric of lying, which obfuscates the set of fixed norms underpinning the notions of truth and falsehood on all levels of the narrative. The systematic and dizzy interplay of truth and lies in *Gulliver's Travels* exposes the inadequacy of the conventional theories elaborated in the 1950s and 1960s. Recent scholars have offered a new image of the satirist as a conscious artist and an image of literary satire as an ambiguous art, which, instead of operating along moral polarities, sets the reader on a quest and an open-ended moral inquiry into seemingly stable notions.[25] In *Gulliver's Travels*, the muddling of binary opposites, such as truth and falsehood, which threatens the stability of the message, proceeds from the hoaxer's spirit at work in Swift's April foolery, which

[25] Most prominent among these scholars are Griffin, *Satire: a Critical Reintroduction* and Bogel, *The Difference Satire Makes: Rhetoric and Reading from Jonson to Byron.*

underlies the whole structure of the book. The alignment of the work with other hoaxes and fake news raises the question of the degree of edification that remains. It also explains the protestations of the satirist who complains about the limitations of the genre as a moral and pragmatic mission. Gulliver, as satirist, explicitly deplores this failure in the "Letter… to his Cousin Sympson," which reads like a vindication of the satirist's mission: "Behold, after above six Months Warning, I cannot learn that my Book has produced one single Effect according to my Intentions" (10). The defeat of the satirist's "Intentions" may account for Swift's recurrent remarks about the specific reception of satire in his work. In the Preface to *The Battle of the Books*, the author clearly warns the reader: "*Satyr is a sort of* Glass, *wherein Beholders do generally discover every body's Face but their Own; which is the chief Reason for that kind of Reception it meets in the World, and that so very few are offended with it.*"[26] Through the metaphor of the mirror, he presents the genre as a faithful reflection of the extratextual world and seems to endorse the traditional view of satire as deeply rooted in reality. And yet satiric referentiality seems to miss its mark and to operate facetiously since the reader, however wicked he is, does not recognize his own image. Swift, as conscious satirist, had already introduced the same idea in the Preface to *A Tale of a Tub* but used a more aggressive metaphor: "'Tis but a *Ball* bandied to and fro, and every Man carries a *Racket* about Him to strike it from himself among the rest of the Company" (32). The sporting metaphor of the ball being bandied to and fro not only shows the reader as being unable to see his failings in the mirror of satire, it implies that he actively and maliciously shifts his responsibility onto his fellow creatures. The reader's deficiency, glaringly underlined in *A Tale of a Tub* and in *The Battle of the Books*, is not unlike the human shortcoming associated with the Yahoos who are blind to "the Odiousness of their own Shapes, which all could see in the rest, but not in themselves" (390-1). Despite the intricate play with moral polarities and the obsessive perfection of the art of lying within the fictional world of the *Travels*, Swift, the satirist, drives a wedge between himself and Gulliver, the fictional satirist, even before the fiction begins, in the portrait which offers a likeness between the two. In a work, suffused with moral instability due to the conflicting voices, the edification is conveyed paradoxically by Swift's unequivocally flaunted mendacity. The satirist reprises the rhetorical framework inherited from Lucian to intimate that, unlike the protagonist or the other Yahoos, his story is a truthful lie, which deploys a repertoire of narrative and satirical

[26] Swift, *A Tale of a Tub and Other Works*, 142.

strategies to disclose the Yahoos' inveterate incapacity to be amended. The hoaxer's spirit does not blunt the edge of satiric anger and aggression but might even sharpen it: it bespeaks his bitter recognition of the satirist's inability to change the world.[27] The tension between lies and truth, anger and playfulness is probably Swift's most enduring legacy.

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[27] On the permanence of Swift's bitterness despite his jocosity, see Rawson, *Swift's Anger*.

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CHAPTER TWO

LEGACIES OF MADNESS

JAMES WARD

More than any other single quality, madness haunts the memory and troubles the legacy of Jonathan Swift.[1] The one thing everyone knows about him, as his most important twentieth-century biographer notes, is that "Swift went mad."[2] This chapter probes the legacies of Swift's madness in two ways: by tracing the posthumous history of Swift's own mental health and by showing its wider impact on the cultural and political mediation of madness. Although it may seem like a diffuse and potentially offensive term to employ, "madness" can involve the operation of critical force as well as the application of stigma. While such stigma "has been and continues to be a lamentable part of what it means to be mad," the word itself extends, as Andrew Scull argues, beyond medicine and science so that madness "has much broader salience for the social order and the cultures we form part of, and has resonance in the world of literature and art and of religious belief."[3] Beginning with Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilisation* (1964), then, a number of studies define and apply the word "madness" to include not simply the psychiatric distress which can beset individuals but also the cultural manifestation of such illness as well as the institutional and legal discourses which aim to contain and define it.[4]

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[1] I am grateful to Vesselin Budakov, Alexandra Glavanakova, and Jonathan McCreedy for their invitation to contribute this essay; my thanks to them and to HE Michael Forbes for the opportunity to present an early version of it in Sofia in 2017.

[2] Ehrenpreis, *The Personality of Jonathan Swift*, 117.

[3] Scull, *Madness in Civilization*, 14.

[4] In addition to the works by Scull and Foucault already cited, these include Porter, *Madness: A Brief History* and Ingram and Faubert, *Cultural Constructions of Madness in Eighteenth-Century Writing*.

Jonathan Swift is unusual in being demonstrably connected to each of these three iterations of "madness." His involvement in its institutional containment and oversight dates from 1714, when he was elected as a governor of Bethlem hospital in London. "Bedlam" remains a byword and setting for iconic scenes of madness. Securing a legacy in the literal sense, his will went on to found Ireland's first and Europe's oldest continually-operating psychiatric hospital. St Patrick's University Hospital, Dublin, is today Ireland's largest provider of mental health services.[5] By providing the setting for important works by the twentieth-century Irish poets Austin Clarke and Derek Mahon, this institution has also preserved and extended Swift's literary legacy.[6] Swift's own poetic commentary on his foundation is notoriously wry: he claims, in *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift* (1731), to have "shew'd by one satyric Touch, / No nation wanted it so much."[7] Reflecting deep-rooted stereotypes of Ireland as wild, ungovernable and chaotic, stereotypes which Swift was both responsible for and subject to, the lines provide the first in a long series of self-confirmatory indices of madness. Such sanity-tests, as this chapter argues, have become a characteristic feature in the reception and afterlives of Swift.

Notwithstanding the irony and long historical reach of *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*, the truth is that the need it identifies was genuine, urgent and deep. In 1732, within a year of Swift's composing the first version of the *Verses*, one of the pioneers of mental healthcare in Ireland, Sir William Fownes had written to Swift, "convinced that regard should be had to those under such dismal circumstances" and urging that the city of Dublin's temporary arrangements needed to be replaced with something more permanent.[8] Although Swift has been called hard-edged in his charity and, in his representations of psychiatric disorder, "brutal, graphic and one-sided," he was, as Brendan Kelly notes, "acutely aware of the reality of the plight of the mentally ill."[9] He had seen its effects up close in his friend Joe Beaumont; in 1715 a mutual friend reported on Beaumont's condition to Swift, imploring that he "do any thing to keepe him alive."[10]

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[5] https://www.stpatricks.ie.3

[6] See Clarke, *Mnemosyne Lay in Dust*, *Collected Poems*, 325-48, and Mahon, "Dawn at St Patrick's," *New Collected Poems*, 150-2. See also Ward, "Jonathan Swift."

[7] Higgins and Rawson, *Essential Writings*, 638.

[8] Kelly, *Hearing Voices*, loc. 709.

[9] Nokes, "Swift and the Beggars"; Ingram and Faubert, *Cultural Constructions*, 11; and Kelly, *Hearing Voices*, loc. 737.

[10] Lynall, "Scriblerian Projections of Longitude," 9 (quoting Knightley Chetwode to Jonathan Swift, 25 April 1715).

Beaumont's particular symptom, an obsession with calculating longitude, made him, as Gregory Lynall notes, "a real-life example of the 'longitude lunatic'" depicted in satires such as William Hogarth's *A Rake's Progress* (1732-5), where an inmate of Bethlem is shown scratching calculations and charts onto the walls of his cell.[11]

"Hogarth's The Rake's Progress; scene at Bedlam, by T. Cook. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC-BY.

In ways that echo Swift's characterization of his own asylum as serving to compound rather than alleviate Irish madness, the longitude imputes madness through circular logics of self-evidence. As Katy Barrett writes, it was publicly held that "only the mad would seek to solve longitude […] but also that the attempt to find a solution would eventually drive any sane person mad."[12] Accounts of Swift have tended to associate him with the cultural mediation of madness through such absurdist

[11] *Ibid*., 9. See also Lynall's response to Barrett's "Looking for 'the Longitude'."
[12] Barrett, "Looking for 'the Longitude.'"

tailspins and sanity-baiting paradoxes more than he is recognized for his involvement in and exposure to the underlying reality of mental illness. Consequently, Swift's own mental incapacity tended historically to be taken more as a poetic justice than a tragic irony, making him seem, in one nineteenth-century commentator's words, "as though he were guided […] by an anticipation of his own fate."[13]

In 1742, a committee convened by a writ of *de Lunatica Inquirendo* found Swift to be "of such unsound mind and memory that he is incapable of […] taking care either of his estate or person."[14] This fact led his earliest biographer so far as to call him "the first proper inhabitant for his own hospital"—an interjection, which, despite being a chronological impossibility, became accepted as fact in the years after Swift's death.[15] What made the irony so pointed was that the pronouncement of incapacity followed a long literary career during which Swift wrote regularly and "uninhibitedly about lunatics and lunacy."[16] Indeed his work speaks through madness as much as about it. Whether, as in *A Modest Proposal* (1729), they advocate the sale and consumption of human flesh or choose, as in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), to renounce human company after visiting a land populated by talking horses, his best and most famous satires depend for their effect on being recognized as delusional. His final incapacity appears to elide the satiric distance between author and narrator that such works depend on, mocking affected madness with the real thing. And so madness becomes a defining and inescapable legacy of Swift's life and work. Having introduced this central theme, my chapter traces its origins in early biographical writing about Swift, through competing nineteenth-century traditions of speculative diagnosis and moral denunciation, to arrive at a twentieth-century turn through which madness came to register as a political and cultural symptom as well as a personal one. While this last legacy resonates most urgently with our contemporary moment, it originates in a tradition according to which Swift's own personal mental health has been repeatedly found wanting.

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[13] Lecky, *The Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, 56.

[14] Quoted by Damrosch, *Jonathan Swift*, 467; see also Banks, "The Writ of *De Lunatica Inquirendo.*"

[15] See Boyle, *Remarks*, 264. Wilde, *Closing Years*, 69, attests to the widespread belief in Dublin that Swift was "the very first inmate of his own madhouse."

[16] Ingram and Faubert, *Cultural Constructions*, 9.

Was Jonathan Swift Mad?

The most direct answer to this admittedly unhelpful question is that no one *is* mad, because madness is not a way of being but rather a blanket term, which bundles up illnesses, insults and institutional labels without meaningful distinction. Another possible response is that many people suffer psychiatric or neurological illness during their lifetime and that Swift, even though his exact condition remains a matter of speculation, seems on balance to have been one of these people. The way this second probability has been addressed in the considerable literature around Swift's life and habits says much about the way we think about Swift and the way that Swift makes us think about mental health. Writers on the subject have on the whole been much less concerned to understand Swift's afflictions than they have been to exculpate him from the stigma of insanity.

Reflecting on the findings of the 1742 commission of lunacy in his recent biography, for example, Eugene Hammond is compelled to clarify that "[c]learly lunacy in this context meant 'mental incapability' not insanity."[17] The remark is noteworthy because it echoes so many which go before it: such insistence to the contrary unites otherwise disparate works. These include William Wilde's *Closing Years of Dean Swift's Life* (1846), with its categorical assertion that that "neither in [Swift's] expression, nor in the tone of his writing, nor from an examination of any of his acts, have we been […] able to discover a single symptom of insanity."[18] Irvin Ehrenpreis, author of Swift's standard twentieth-century scholarly biography, insists that "Swift, from birth to death, was insane by no medical definition."[19] Even Mario Rossi and Joseph Hone's *Swift; or, the Egotist* (1934), a study wholly geared to the presentation of Swift through psychoanalytic symptoms and complexes, is careful to point out that despite being "even more highly-strung than the common neurotic," Swift was "never *insane*, either in the ordinary or the technical sense, possibly not even in the last years of senile decay."[20] Insanity is not a clinical term or the name of a condition, so all of these works are to some extent transposing the concept from law. Insistence on the sanity of Swift is therefore a metaphorical exculpation from the stigma and shame of madness as well as a literal insistence that although Swift suffered

[17] Hammond, *Jonathan Swift*, 781.
[18] Wilde, *Closing Years*, 27.
[19] Ehrenpreis, *Personality of Swift*, 125.
[20] Rossi and Hone, *Swift; or, the Egotist*, 159. Emphasis in the original.

documented mental impairment in his old age, he was never at any stage in his life psychotic or delusional.

To the troublesome question of whether Swift was mad, then, these assertions add a repeated protestation that he was never *not* sane. They are of course reactive, made to counter a stubbornly-ingrained biographical tradition of pathologizing Swift's creativity as the product of a dangerous but intermittent mental instability which became permanent in the final years. As Daniel Cook has pointed out, this enduring tradition owes much to one of the first and most controversial works of Swift biography, *Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Jonathan Swift* by John Boyle, fifth Earl of Orrery (1751). Swift's decline "from an outragious lunatic, […] into a quiet, speechless idiot,"[21] forms a dramatic climax in Orrery's life, which is explicitly framed as a didactic work in the form of instructive letters to his son. One passage in particular expands on an account by Swift's cousin Martha Whiteway of a difficult night in October 1742 during which Swift's "left eye swelled as large as an egg," and he was afflicted with "many large boils […] under his arms and body," leaving him in such discomfort that "Five persons could scarce hold him for a week, from tearing out his own eyes."[22] Orrery works this incident up into a literary exemplum, in Cook's words, "a rueful illustration of the vanity of man."[23] Along with a suite of anecdotes and attributed remarks, such accounts licensed a mode of biographical representation in which Swift's final incapacity became both an inevitability and a kind of punishment for the repeated emotional and rhetorical excesses of his "depraved imagination."[24] One of the most potent literary elaborations of this conceit comes in Samuel Johnson's short biography of Swift in his *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81):

> His fits of giddiness and deafness grew […] more severe till in 1736, as he was writing a poem called "The Legion Club," he was seized with a fit so painful, and so long continued, that he never after thought it proper to attempt any work of thought or labour […] at last his anger was heightened into madness.[25]

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[21] Orrery, *Remarks*, 264.
[22] Martha Whiteway to the Earl of Orrery, 22 November 1742. Williams, *Correspondence*, 207.
[23] Cook, "Remarks on Swift," 69.
[24] Orrery, *Remarks*, 267; and on the accumulation of hearsay and anecdote about Swift's illness, see Ingram and Faubert, 9-10.
[25] Johnson, *The Lives of The Poets*, 1008.

Echoing Orrery's assertion that "the violence of his rage encreased [*sic*] absolutely to a degree of madness,"[26] Johnson's account also follows his in that Swift's madness descends in the very act of writing what is admittedly quite an angry poem. Although the giddiness and deafness, which beset Swift, are now widely interpreted as vertigo and hearing loss associated with the inner-ear disorder Ménière's disease, one of these symptoms is traditionally associated with both anger and madness. Johnson's wider discourse about giddiness is particularly intriguing. In the entry for "giddy," his *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) speculates "whether this word may not come from *gad*, to wander, to be in motion."[27] Its etymon is in fact the Old English *gidig*, "insane," and historic primary denotations of the word include "mad, insane, foolish, stupid" as well as "mad with anger, furious."[28] While he may have missed the deep semantic connection between Swift's symptoms, his rage and his madness, Johnson does seem to have had an inkling that giddiness was connected with personal disarray and defective morality. In addition to the "state of being vertiginous" his dictionary equates giddiness with "wantonness of life" and goes on to quote a letter from Swift to John Gay where he associates with giddiness with the "reverse of […] a domestick life."[29]

In the foregoing examples, as so often, moral and medical symptoms are not easily separable in writing about Swift's health. If Orrery's description was largely colored by his efforts at essayistic sententiousness, Johnson's apparently damning and judgmental account does change tenor if read in light of its author's anxiety about his own mental health. Even allowing that their negotiation of readerly sympathy is more complex than it might seem, both cases also show how the mythology of Swift's madness seeps deterministically back into his works. Even the apparently neutral reporting of Whiteway's eyewitness account offers potential images of Swift as a parody of his own satire: he is a mini-Gulliver held down not by hundreds of men but five, enacting upon himself the punishment of the Lilliputians who mandated by law that both Gulliver's eyes be put out. As the eye becomes an egg, it literalizes a trope of satiric inflation so that an organ of insight mutates into one of generation, hatching its final monster, mad Jonathan Swift.

If ready-made moral allegories nascent in the eyewitness account were elaborated by the eighteenth-century biographers then these were, at the hands of their Victorian successors, whipped into a frenzy of denunciation.

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[26] Orrery, *Remarks*, 264.
[27] Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, unnumbered page, s.v. "giddy."
[28] *OED*, "giddy," 1a, 1b.
[29] Johnson, *Dictionary*, "giddy."

Thomas Babington Macaulay, in an otherwise measured review of a long-forgotten history of the war of the Spanish Succession, indulges in a rhetorical set-piece which offsets Swift's work as Tory propagandist for the peace of Utrecht with the counter-efforts of Joseph Addison and Richard Steele. By contrast, with his urbane Whig opponents, Swift is cast as "a darker and fiercer spirit, the apostate politician, the ribald priest, the perjured lover, a heart burning with hatred against the whole human race, a mind richly stored with images from the dunghill and the lazar-house."[30] As this rich symptomatology shows, Swift had within a century of his death become an object lesson in the dangers of emotional incontinence: he illustrates the potential of unrestrained feeling, vented with equal disregard for the proprieties of the various personal, professional and social roles he undertook, to tip over into madness. Like the longitude, Swift's rage becomes both symptom and cause of his madness. As origins and endpoints of infectious disease, the symbolic locales of the dunghill and lazar-house also invoke this circularity. The second of these spaces has a particular significance in the social stigmatization and control of madness. Placed at a symbolic and hygienic remove from centres of settlement and commerce, the lazar house performed a structural function that was taken over, after the virtual elimination of leprosy in Europe, by the asylum. "What doubtless remained longer than leprosy, and would persist when the lazar houses had been empty for years," Foucault writes, "were the values and images attached to the figure of the leper as well as the meaning of his exclusion, the social importance of that insistent and fearful figure which was not driven off without first being inscribed within a sacred circle."[31] In the nineteenth-century popular imagination Swift had become such a figure: untouchable, unassimilable to civilized ways and posing a hygienic threat, "a monster," in the words of William Makepeace Thackeray, "gibbering shrieks, and 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."[32]

Such characterizations show how the cultural construction of Swift's madness reached its apogee in the nineteenth century, but this period also saw the beginning of the campaign to restore him to sanity. William Wilde was an early and influential rejecter of the notion that Swift was insane, characterizing him instead as a long-time sufferer from "*cerebral congestion*, which might, from the symptoms, be styled by some pathologists, 'epileptic vertico'," a condition increasingly compounded by

[30] Macaulay, "War of the Succession," *Works*, 8, 680.
[31] Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, 6.
[32] Thackeray, "Swift," *Works*, 19, 162-3.

"the dementia of old age."[33] Understandably, given Swift's well-documented hearing loss, and the fact that balance disorders are more often connected to the inner ear than the brain, J. C. Bucknill's 1882 diagnosis of Ménière's has supplanted this earlier one. Current medical literature presents a subject who was "mentally fit for most of his 78 years, though troubled by Ménière's disease. In old age he became depressed and latterly aphasic, with terminal dementia."[34] Following a definitive survey of the written evidence, Marjorie Lorch asserts more cautiously that "[n]o determination of the illness of Jonathan Swift can ever be reached," although she also concurs that Ménière's is consistent with the reported symptoms.[35] It is notable that the modern medical literature is anxious, like its biographical counterpart, to correct the historical tradition of associating Swift's symptoms with "madness," in favor of a physical condition, which he endured, while remaining always "mentally fit." While this conclusion is a perfectly reasonable one to infer from the available evidence, it can amount, as I have suggested, to an exculpation as much as a diagnosis. To liberate Swift's memory from a judgmental and disparaging tradition that saw madness as a fitting punishment can be seen as a necessary and welcome move. It does, however, leave Swift on one side of a power imbalance between the mad and the sane, returning us, in fact, to the position adopted in *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift* where he is active in the social control and rhetorical manipulation of madness, but stands apart from its debilitating effects. But this is not where the legacy of Swift's madness ends. Having reviewed the historical representation of Swift's mental health up to the twentieth century, this chapter will in its concluding parts consider some broader political and cultural legacies. The madness once seen as a defining aspect of Swift's life is now a banished spectre. But forms of madness which are given dramatic form in his works are still with us: they persist in our present to provide a haunting backdrop to some of the most problematic issues in contemporary culture and politics.

The Liberation of Lemuel Gulliver

We have seen that by the end of the last century, Swift's sanity underwent a transformation whereby he came to be pronounced sane with a fervor

[33] Wilde, *Closing Years*, 68.
[34] Bucknill, "Dean Swift's Disease"; and Bewley, "The Health of Jonathan Swift," 605.
[35] Lorch, "Language and Memory Disorder," 3135.

comparable only to that with which he was formerly denounced as mad. A text which both extends this process and comments allegorically on it is the 1996 TV miniseries based on *Gulliver's Travels*.[36] The premise of the adaptation is that Gulliver is taken to be insane on his return home. On the word of Dr Bates, who has an ulterior motive in that he has in Gulliver's absence taken over his surgical practice and household, Gulliver is committed to Bethlem (in the series spelt Bethlehem) hospital, an institution whose historical counterpart provides the setting for the "Digression Concerning Madness" in Swift's own *A Tale of A Tub* (1704) and of which Swift was elected governor ten years later. Bates, a character abstracted from the surgeon James Bates to whom Gulliver is apprenticed early in the *Travels*,[37] eventually allows Gulliver to plead for his sanity and relief from confinement before a committee of doctors, trustees and students. As a trial-by-jury of sanity, the hearing imaginatively reworks the 1742 commission of lunacy and accommodates Swift's satire to the twists and turns of the courtroom drama genre. The series also references other iconic representations of madness. Gulliver chalks diagrammatic representations of Laputa on the walls of his cell and is shown using a system of pulleys to illustrate the flying island for an audience of fellow inmates and well-heeled onlookers; both scenes invoke William Hogarth's longitude lunatic. At the conclusion of Gulliver's testimony, which amounts to a full narration of the *Travels*, the tribunal chair responds with a speech which interpolates commentary from two of Swift's nineteenth-century detractors, Thackeray and Macaulay, to accuse him of "gibbering against mankind" with "a heart burning with hatred against the whole human race" and a "mind fuelled with images from the dunghill."[38] Nonetheless, he says that Gulliver may still have his liberty on condition that he admit the untruth of his stories about Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa and Houyhnhnmland. He refuses and is taken down, struggling, to begin further confinement. At this point Gulliver's son makes a dramatic intervention, displaying to the tribunal bench a miniature Lilliputian sheep, which, along with other pieces of evidence, Dr Bates has kept hidden from the authorities and from Gulliver's family. Finally equipped with incontrovertible proof of his testimony, Gulliver reunites with his wife and son as a sane and free man to gasps and smiles all round.

Through this ingenious framing device, this version of the *Travels* comments not just on Swift's text but also on the cultural history of its author's mental health. By citing and overturning the most damning

[36] Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, Hallmark, 1995, DVD, 2010.
[37] Swift, *Essential Writings*, 325.
[38] Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, Hallmark, 1995, DVD, 2010.

judgments of the Victorian moralists, the series may appear to address its final verdict to Swift as much as to Gulliver. This is a riposte, which could therefore be grouped among the many insistences, several of which have been discussed here, that Swift was never insane. But in a literal reading the series' use of the "fantasy keepsake" trope[39] seems to prevent this identification and to suggest something a little more disturbing. In that it offers confirmation of Gulliver's much contested veracity, it reverses the historic process whereby Swift's final incapacity was read as an ultimate and permanent expression of intermittent and underlying madness, one which revealed his "mad" narrators to be more than mere rhetorical constructs and showing them instead to contain elements of a complex and disguised autobiographical self-representation. By offering proof and confirmation of one of these narrators' underlying and enduring sanity the series achieves the worrying unintended consequence effect of validating a deranged worldview. Rather than provide final closure to the question of Swift's madness it has the effect of declaring a satiric fiction of madness acceptable as a verifiable reality. Letting a madman loose in this way is not, I wish to emphasize, a fault in the adaptation but rather a proleptic allegory for what has happened the years since the series was first broadcast. The next and final section will present this most current of legacies via a detour into the 1940s.

Testing Sanity

> The views that a writer holds must be compatible with sanity, in the medical sense. […] The durability of *Gulliver's Travels* goes to show that if the force of belief is behind it, a world-view which only just passes the test of sanity is sufficient to produce a great work of art.[40]

George Orwell's 1946 essay "Politics vs. Literature: An Examination of *Gulliver's Travels*" has become something of a classic, but its take on Swift's mental health replays an old obsession. It is part of the critical tradition, traced in this chapter, which served historically to place Swift on sanity's borderlands—a "long history," whereby, as Seamus Deane observes, "commentary on Swift's psychology and pathology" has been "enseamed within […] commentary on Swift the writer."[41] While Orwell's

[39] See https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/FantasyKeepsake: "An object that proves the adventure the main characters had written off as All Just a Dream was not a dream after all."
[40] Orwell, "Politics vs. Literature," 848.
[41] Deane, "Classic Swift," 243.

remarks have themselves acquired a kind of durability, they reflect a number of problems with this undifferentiated approach. In his characterization of his subject as a "diseased writer,"[42] for example, Orwell presents madness as a permanent existential condition rather than a transient crisis or a chronic debility: as distinct from an affliction which diminishes and attacks the personality of the sufferer, such madness somehow constitutes (or reveals) a true, underlying essential character. Orwell's insistence on sanity "in the medical sense" would, moreover, be enough to disqualify any number of important writers from consideration, including near-contemporaries and successors of Swift such as William Blake, Mary Wollstonecraft, William Cowper and Christopher Smart. Swift escapes this fate but does so, in Orwell's words, "only just." The instrument used to exclude him from such company, "the test of sanity," is an intriguing notion, which seems as first glance uniquely and typically Orwellian. The adjective applies in a familiar, dystopian, sense: with its definite article and singular noun, "the test of sanity" suggests regimes of surveillance and self-surveillance, of assessment by criteria, which are held to be self-evident but never disclosed, of totalizing systems in which minor error can, for individuals, have catastrophic consequences. But it is also Orwellian in a second, more whimsical sense current in other journalism Orwell produced in 1946. Placed alongside "The Moon under Water," about the ideal pub, and "Decline of the English Murder" (the title is self-explanatory), the mental health of Jonathan Swift joins tabloid homicide and public houses as an institution, which forms part of popular culture, and the comforting fabric of civilized life, but which is always in measurable decline. As this chapter has shown, the habit of assessing Swift's sanity through a mix of leisurely curiosity and appalled fascination is not Orwell's invention but rather a persistent and important feature of Swift's reception and legacy.

Like the test of sanity, the bare pass predates Orwell's essay and is a familiar article of Swift lore, one that extends well beyond questions of his health. His birth, seven months after his father's death, scrapes by the margins of biological possibility and legal credibility; his university degree is awarded by special dispensation; his appointment to the Deanship of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin is a promotion that, in Joseph McMinn's words, "felt like a sacking."[43] As we have seen, even the bare pass awarded by Orwell is rescinded, as a lifetime of squeaking by nears its end, and Swift finally flunks the sanity test in 1742. In 1946, Orwell's

[42] Orwell, "Politics," 847.
[43] McMinn, "Swift's Life," 23.

characterization of Swift as a "diseased writer"[44] may seem at first to reflect some of the worst tendencies of a, by then, two-century-old conflation of literary sensibility with psychiatric impairment. However regrettable its stigmatization of Swift's personal mental health may be, Orwell's critique is important in suggesting political dimensions to madness. His essay, as Claude Rawson points out, is perhaps the earliest to compare the Houyhnhnms' plan to exterminate the Yahoos with the genocidal project of Nazism.[45] In this context, "Politics vs. Literature" can be identified with a more general effort in European thought to differentiate those aspects of the Enlightenment legacy that were salvageable in the context of the 1939-45 war from those that were not. The essay could therefore be read alongside Walter Benjamin's 1940 dictum that there exists "no document of civilization which is not at the same time a document of barbarism."[46] A humanist satire, which abounds in what Orwell calls "anti-human implications,"[47] *Gulliver's Travels* presents this duality in unusually stark ways, which also seem to surface in Orwell's own speculative fiction. Near the end of the book, for example, Gulliver ruminates about what would happen in a military encounter between humans and Houyhnhnms. In a passage which Orwell quotes at length in "Politics vs. Literature," Swift's narrator then obliges the reader to "Imagine twenty Thousand of them breaking into the Midst of an *European* Army, confounding the Ranks, over-turning the carriages, battering the Warriors faces into Mummy by terrible Yerks from their hinder Hoofs."[48] As well as the specific image of a face smashed underfoot until it resembles a medicinal powder, the larger vision of Houyhnhmland seems to inflect some of the party rhetoric espoused in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949):

> There will be no laughter, except the laugh of triumph over a defeated enemy. There will be no art, no literature, no science. […] Always, at every moment, there will be the thrill of victory, the sensation of trampling on an enemy who is helpless. If you want a picture of the future, imagine a boot stamping on a human face—for ever.[49]

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[44] Orwell, "Politics," 847.
[45] Rawson, *God, Gulliver, and Genocide*, 257.
[46] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 256.
[47] Orwell, "Politics vs. Literature," 847.
[48] Swift, *Essential Writings*, 500.
[49] Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 280.

Like O'Brien's imagined future, Houyhnhnmland is a place without culture or abstract knowledge, where, as Orwell reminds his readers, they have "no alphabet, and […] not much curiosity about the physical world."[50] In *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, O'Brien asserts that "Oceania is the world" and maintains that even though "when we predict an eclipse, we often find it convenient to assume that the earth goes round the sun," the earth is in fact "the centre of the universe. The sun and the stars go round it."[51] In "Politics vs. Literature" Orwell emphasizes that Houyhnhnms "do not believe that any inhabited country exists beside their own, and though they understand the motions of the sun and moon, and the nature of eclipses, 'this is the utmost Progress of their *Astronomy*.'"[52] Orwell's novel draws on Swift to prophesy a generalized, organized madness, a politics that would in an individual be taken for pathological delusion. In its general tenor as well as its singular final image, O'Brien's speech from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* seems to carry over from Swift something of the "terrible intensity of vision,"[53] which Orwell both admired and decried in *Gulliver's Travels*. "Politics vs. Literature" makes this an apocalyptic vision: Swift's book becomes part of an imagined final legacy of human civilization when Orwell asserts that if he would include *Gulliver's Travels* on "a list of six books which were to be preserved when all others were destroyed."[54]

With its intimations of an unnamed disaster or devastating bureaucratic edict set to destroy virtually all knowledge, Orwell's essay reflects a generalized anxiety characteristic of the time of writing. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and "Politics vs. Literature" fall between the advance of European fascism conceived by Benjamin in 1940 as a "moment of danger," and an aftermath, which Theodor Adorno characterized, in 1951, as "the final stage of the dialectic of culture and barbarism."[55] Recent developments suggest, however, that Adorno's stadial reading may have been premature in its ascription of finality. Similarly, Benjamin's notion of a moment of danger is one that seems, as Neil Levi and Michael Rothberg point out, "to resonate powerfully for many of us today." "For us in the present,' they note, "the moment of danger is that of Trump and Brexit, Jobbik and Golden Dawn, Putin, Erdogan, Modi, Le Pen, and el-Sisi."[56] As well as a

[50] Orwell, "Politics vs. Literature," 838.
[51] Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 277-8
[52] Orwell, "Politics vs. Literature," 838. Emphasis in original.
[53] Ibid., 848.
[54] Ibid., 846.
[55] Benjamin, *Illuminations*, 255; Adorno, *Prisms*, 34.
[56] Levi and Rothberg, "Memory Studies in a Moment of Danger," 356.

moment of danger, our present can also, I would suggest, be conceived as a moment of Swiftian madness, where rhetoric and pathologies blur and where logic escalates imperceptibly from absurdity into atrocity. Several commentators have drawn parallels between Swift's outlandish satirical fictions and recent policies of right-wing populist and authoritarian regimes—most notably there have been repeated comparisons between the Trump administration family separation policy and *A Modest Proposal*.[57]

Such examples suggest a final legacy for Swift's rhetorically constructed madness: it has been bequeathed to us not as outlandish fantasy but as political reality. Our world enacts Swift's satiric fictions, and Orwell's dystopian take on them, in that individual madness has become a governing principle. In place of The Party's regulation of an imposed reality through indoctrination and torture, we inhabit a world whose most powerful person shapes reality through "alternative facts" and stands "able and willing to lie directly to more than fifty million readers from a device in his pocket."[58] Another aspect of the current situation (and, it must be stressed, nothing more), leads Swift into the company not just of Donald Trump but also indeed of Adolf Hitler: all three are public figures whose mental health has been the subject of intense and repeated speculation. This final overlap between personal and political pathology will provide some concluding remarks.

In the case both of Hitler and of Trump, the question whether the label of insanity goes beyond a despairing metaphor and insult, and has any diagnostic basis is one which some recent studies have sought to address. They have offered contrasting results. In their study *Was Hitler Ill?* Hans Joachim Neumann and Henrik Eberle address the question "Was the murder of millions of people the product of madness or mental illness?"[59] To conclude as much, they argue, would not only deviate from accepted evidentiary standards but would diminish their subject's moral responsibility for the crimes of National Socialism.[60] In respect of Trump, by contrast, Bandy Lee argues that such diagnoses can and must be made and shared. She prefaces her collection of case studies with the assertion that mental health professionals are bound by an ethical "duty to warn" if and when someone assumes public office who is dangerously and evidently unfit for the task. Additionally, as Lee writes, the "ascendancy of an individual with such impairments speaks to our general state of health and well-being

[57] Straight, "A Modest, Modern Proposal"; Charles, "Jonathan Swift Turns 350 This Week"; and McEvoy, "In Support of President Trump's Policy."
[58] Meek, "The Club and the Mob," n.p.
[59] Neumann and Eberle, *Was Hitler Ill?*, 3.
[60] Ibid., 187.

as a nation."[61] This last observation, that pathologies can be national as well as individual, echoes and returns us to Swift's arch comment, in respect of the hospital he founded, that "No nation wanted it so much."[62] Swift's sardonic couplet presents a remedy that serves not so much to alleviate symptoms as to highlight their extent. There is, as suggested earlier, more to the historical meaning of these lines than their apparent dismissive and implicitly racist tone might first imply. As we have seen, Swift was well aware of the "dismal circumstances" surrounding the housing and treatment of people with mental illness in Dublin. Swift's take on Ireland's mental health emergency in in the 1730s speaks to the political emergency surfacing three and half centuries after his death: in both cases the rhetoric of madness serves to highlight, not to remedy, an underlying reality of even greater disturbance and dislocation. Swift's madness has been seen, for much of the recent past, as a myth that had finally been set to rest. But ours is a time in which its legacy has taken on new, unexpected and disturbing life.

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[61] Lee, *The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump,* 19. See also Barber, "Does Trump Suffer from Narcissistic Personality Disorder?"

[62] See Swift, "On the Death of Dr. Swift," *Works*, 658.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/books/ghosthunters-grabbers-and-grifters-what-would-jonathan-swift-say-of-our-times/2017/11/28/771165fa-d319-11e7-95bf-df7c19270879_story.html?utm_term=.93b835800fde.

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"Hogarth's The Rake's Progress; scene at Bedlam, by T. Cook. Credit: Wellcome Collection. CC-BY. Assessed 20 May 2019. https://wellcomecollection.org/works/hfrudd44.

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CHAPTER THREE

"ST. PATRICK'S DEAN, GOOD SIR": SELF-REFLEXIVITY IN SWIFT'S POETRY

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According to Northrop Frye, "[t]he lyric is the genre in which the poet, like the ironic writer, turns his back on his audience."[1] Bracketing its presence, the lyric poet, or rather his persona, poses as speaking to himself. He experiences a moment of self-division into lyrical voice and listener, via whom the overhearing reader is inscribed into the deep structure of the communicative act. This seductive admission of the reader into the poet's interior monologue—or rather staged dialogue with himself—creates the genre's specific illusion of involvement, incorporating the self-reflexive mode as its basic communicative strategy.

Appropriated by early modern poetry, Horace's high-minded self-praise and Chaucer's ironic self-deprecation climax in Shakespeare's productive wavering between the two. The poetry of Jonathan Swift, however, constructs a different self-image. Explicitly self-referential poems, such as "An Answer to a Friend's Question," *Verses on the Death of Dr Swift* (written in 1731, published in 1739), or *Cadenus and Vanessa. A Poem* (written in 1713, published in 1726), share in common a peculiar self-distance. In all three, Swift refers to himself in the third person singular, as Dr. Swift, the Dean, or *Cadenus*, an anagram of the Latin *Decanus*, his ecclesiastical title. This fissure between speaker and fictional persona creates a non-lyrical, narrative structure: instead of speaking to himself, the poet *narrates* himself, just as the inimitable Gulliver, the gullible speaker of the truth, tells his stories of little men, big men, and theriomorphic versions of the human.[2]

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[1] Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 271.

[2] For a detailed discussion of Swift on "Swift" and the related bibliography, see Ashley Marshall, "Swift on 'Swift': From *The Author upon Himself* to *The Life and Genuine Character*," 327-363.

Distances and masks are typical of Swiftian self-reflexivity. Oscillating, like him, between London and Dublin, public and private, activism and Stoic withdrawal, Whigs and Tories, "Vanessa" and "Stella," didacticism and scatology, allegory and naturalism, "low" subject and "high" form, his work stages a *sui generis* battle of self-images. More often than not, the alchemy of such tensions creates the elemental conditions, in which beauty springs up like "gaudy tulips raised from dung."[3] When this is not a sought-after effect, there remains the ironic displacement and the play of identities, triggered by a writer who systematically avoided publishing under his own name. Bickerstaff, the Drapier, or the anonymous pamphleteer, *Presto* (*swift*) in *A Journal to Stella*, and a major Scriblerian, he was quite capable of writing his own epitaph, as well as his poetic obituary, a self-ironical but also self-encomiastic mini-epic, selectively recording the facts of his life, as well as opening up spaces for seemingly alienated self-praise. With Swift, Stoic self-address in the manner of Marcus Aurelius resurfaces as an answer to a friend's question, spoken in the first and the third person singular simultaneously. Published anonymously, his mock-travelogue *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) virtually reproduces the chronology of his peregrinations between England and Ireland,[4] while *Cadenus and Vanessa* introjects the Dean as its narrative's protagonist.

Swift's first fake textual identity was Isaac Bickerstaff, author of the parodic astrological almanac *Predictions for the Year 1708* (1708), aping the writings of his contemporary John Partridge. The Bickerstaff-Partridge inter- and para-textual game becomes complicated when, posing as "A person of Quality" to countermand the statements of his own parody, Swift published *An Answer to Bickerstaff,* an *Elegy*, an *Epitaph*, and *A Description of the Death of Mr. Partidge*, tantalizing versions of Enlightenment fake news. When in 1709 the unsuspecting Partridge denounced Bickerstaff as a swindler, Swift wrote *A Vindication of Isaac Bickerstaff*, defending and praising his fictional *doppelgänger*. In the same vein, he published *A Famous Prediction of Merlin*, a Gothic-print hoax claiming to be a sixteenth-century text, which unveiled the events of 1709 with conceivable accuracy.

Swift's second polemical mask, the Drapier of *A Letter to the Whole People of Ireland* (1724), functions as a protective screen against political persecution. Derived from *drape,* and related to *drapery*, the fake name

[3] *The Lady's Dressing Room*, concluding line. All citations of Swift's poems are from Swift, *The Poems of Jonathan Swift, D.D*., vol. 1 and 2, edited by William Ernst Browning. London: G. Bell & Sons Ltd., 1910.
[4] McMinn, *Jonathan Swift. A Literary Life*, 104.

inscribes the idea of invisibility within its very obvious social connotations. Far from appreciating a satirist in disguise, the Privy Council of Ireland condemned the pamphlet as treasonable, and offered a reward for revealing its author. Instead of claimants for the prize, Biblical verses appeared in public places in Dublin, the Biblical support having been possibly "staged by Swift himself":

> And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: *as* the LORD liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan, that he died not.[5] (1 Sam 14:45, KJV)

Disguising himself as the Drapier, Swift also fashioned himself according to ancient models.[6] The pseudonym's initials M. B. probably stand for Marcus Brutus, despotism's ancient enemy. Swift's Brutus, however, is a baptized version of Roman civic virtue, for he also imagines himself as David, the archetypal Biblical fighter against titanic evil:

> I was in the case of David, who could not move in the armour of Saul; and therefore I rather chose to attack that uncircumcised Philistine (Wood I mean) with a Sling and a Stone.[7]

To endorse the Drapier's cause, in a gesture of simultaneous fictional self-division *and* self-affirmation, the sermon *On Doing Good* adopts Swift's official hypostasis of St. Patrick's Dean, while, producing more fake news, the burlesque *An Account of Wood's Execution* (1724) dramatizes the mock-death of the unfortunate mintmaster.[8]

Swift's later polemical masks involve the "stranger to the kingdom" (*A Proposal to Pay off the Debt of the Nation*, 1732), and Simon Wagstaff (*Polite Conversation*, 1739; *Directions* to *Servants,* 1745), yet another of Swift's "idiotic projectors," "full of self-importance and bereft of taste."[9]

Along with such more or less transparent ironic travesties, there is the umbrella identity of Martin Scriblerus, as well as the inimitable utopian-dystopian Captain Lemuel Gulliver, with whom the Swiftian meanderings between self and persona reach a peak. The former provides a common space for the unfolding of a plurality of fictional selves—Swift's, Pope's,

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[5] McMinn, *Jonathan Swift. A Literary Life*, 110.
[6] Ibid., 110.
[7] Ibid., 115.
[8] Another of his mystifications is the comic declaration of the beggars of Dublin complaining of impending ruin.
[9] McMinn, *Jonathan Swift. A Literary Life*, 151.

Arbuthnot's, Gay's. The latter's paradoxical name, suggestive of both naivety (*gull-*) and truth (*-ver*),[10] inscribes him within a hoary Humanist tradition of ironic narrators, featuring Erasmus's Folly in *The Praise of Folly* (1511), and More's Raphael Hythloday, "speaker of nonsense," in *Utopia* (1516).

Martin Scriblerus and the eponymous club are the Swiftian circle's ironic response to the contemporary changes in the production and consumption of texts. In its age, the economic shift from patronage to a market of "hack" writing resulted in a rethinking of the status of the writer, imagined as a lowering of standards. According to the Scriblerians, serious literature requires concentration and time, beyond the speedy mercenary scribbling of Grub Street.

The emblematic scholar, pedant, and eccentric Scriblerus, whose ironic biofiction the club intended to (re)create, is quite literally beyond the market's hunger for texts. Totally unworldly, this cross-breed between Don Quixote and Frankenstein[11] is genuinely monstrous in fashioning genealogical sequences for himself—from his first word being *paper* rather than *papa*, through his infatuation with a Siamese twin, to the preservation of his wife's aborted embryo.[12]

Between the self-denial of anonymity and the self-renaming of the pseudonym, God's own *Lemuel* ("belonging to God," in Hebrew)[13] Gulliver articulates his double, treble, and quadruple identities through the changing optics of a metamorphic perspectivism. A Brobdingnagian in Lilliput, a Lilliputian in Brobdingnag, a Yahoo with the Houyhnhnms, and a Houyhnhnm stuck forever with the Yahoosian human race, in the end he needs a mirror to get used to his own image.[14] Swift published the text under his fictional narrator's name: the frontispiece of the first edition of 1726 has the portrait of Lemuel Gulliver of Redriff, aged 58 (Swift's age at the time), and strikingly resembling his maker.[15] The hoax, however, inscribes its own subversion: the two editions of 1735 contain the Horatian phrase *Splendide Mendax*, "nobly untruthful," as well as "splendidly false."

Commenting on paratextuality in *Gulliver's Travels*, Claude Rawson identifies convention and caution as the main reasons for Swift's self-

[10] On the meaning of Gulliver, see Higgins, "Explanatory Notes," 284.
[11] Hammond, "Scriblerian Self-Fashioning," 91.
[12] Ibid., 91.
[13] See Higgins, "Explanatory Notes," 283.
[14] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 276.
[15] Rawson, introduction to *Gulliver's Travels*, ix-xliii, at xi.

mystification.[16] The oscillation between speaker and mask in Swift's poetry, not necessarily meant for publication, is triggered by a different agenda of self-fashioning: the care for postmortem reputation, as well as its self-ironical, subtle subversion.

Swift's poetry is hardly confessional in the lyrical sense. This is evident in its author's generic preferences: description, narrative, city or domestic georgic, pastoral, allegory, occasional poem, fable, ironic encomium, which rarely reproduce purely lyrical states of the self. At first sight, therefore, and especially in the context of the flexible identities of Swift the polemicist, the alienated self-referentiality of the poet seems quite predictable. Self-alienation in the poems claiming a lyrical quality, however, seems less than genre-bound. In such poems, it is mostly employed for both serious and ironic self-encomiastic purposes.

The persona of the Dean, at one remove from Swift's lyrical voice, is a hallmark of his poetry. Thematically and metrically close to Surrey's octosyllabics in his translation of Martial's "The Good Life," and probably also a tongue-in-cheek echo of Marlowe's seductive pastoralism in "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" (published in 1599),[17] the domestic idyll "An Answer to a Friend's Question" constructs the Dean as an intradiegetic presence, contemplated by the lyrical voice. Divided and alternating, Dean and voice yet share in common the same monumental Stoic self-restraint:

> The furniture that best doth please
> *St. Patrick's Dean*, good Sir, are these:
> The knife and fork with which *I eat*;
> And next the pot that boils the meat ...

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[16] Rawson, introduction to *Gulliver's Travels*, ix-xliii, at xii.

[17] Without the Marlovian sharedness of either the *locus amoenus* or its *otium.* Compare:

> Come live with me and be my love,
> And we will all the pleasures prove,
> ...
> And I will make thee beds of Roses
> And a thousand fragrant posies,
> ...
> Fair lined slippers for the cold,
> With buckles of the purest gold;
> ...
> And if these pleasures may thee move,
> Come live with me, and be my love. ("The Passionate Shepherd to His Love")

In Swift's version of the Stoic "good life," ironic excess is imagined in the first person:

> The next to be preferr'd, I think,
> Is the glass in which I drink;
> The shelves on which my books I keep
> And the bed on which I sleep ...

The ultimate luxury of the elbow-chair is motivated with the corpulence of the Dean, a comic instance of self-doubling that justifies both speaker and Dean: "An antique elbow-chair between, / Big enough to hold the Dean." Next on the list comes the stove and the unnamable thing that should also remain invisible. To mention it, the speaker needs to shift to a comic *pluralis majestatis*, self-deictic but also including his intradiegetic projection:

> And the stove that gives delight
> In the cold bleak wintry night:
> To these we add a thing below,
> More for use reserved than show:

Going back to "Dean," the next line, "These are what the Dean do please," collapses all focalization: it refocalizes[18] the omniscient narrator as internal authorial presence and internal presence as omniscient narrative. The concluding line "All superfluous are but these" closes off the minimalist space of the Swiftian *locus amoenus*. Rendered as Stoic domestic pastoral, the objects of the good life are what they are: the world of Swift's Philemon and Baucis before its encounter with the divine, pre-metamorphic, frozen in its simple usefulness. Their sharedness defines both lyrical speaker and Dean, and through them, the two seem to restore their slightly impaired sameness.

Among the most personal Swiftian poems, the self-written self-eulogistic obituary *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift, D.S.P.D. (wr. 1731, pub. 1739)* is ironically framed by a La Rochefoucauld maxium, defining the self in negative to the other: "In the misfortune of our best friends we always find something that does not displease us." From the outset, the lyrical speaker identifies with this epigraph, for, he claims, like all La Rochefoucauld maxims, it contains natural wisdom: "As Rochefoucauld his maxims drew / From nature, I believe them true." This includes the

[18] I borrow the term from Genette's narratology. For a justification of the application of narratology to the discussion of lyric, see Huhn and Schonert, "Introduction: The Theory and Methodology of the Narratological," 1-13.

speaker, so he can legitimately ventriloquize on both our and his own behalf:

> In all distresses of our friends,
> We first consult our private ends;
> While Nature, kindly bent to ease *us*,
> Points out some circumstance to please *us*.

As in "An Answer to a Friend's Question," the addressee is the reader explicitly rendered visible: "If this perhaps your patience move, / Let reason and experience prove." This open rhetorical structure is reconsidered when speaker and addressee merge, and the rest of us are believed to share the same malevolence in a literal-metaphorical *Theatrum Mundi*:

> We all behold with envious eyes
> Our equal rais'd above our size.
> Who would not at a crowded show
> Stand high himself, keep others low?

Together with the speaker, we are all invited to identify with a list of moral examples—envy of the hero and the good poet, *Schadenfreude* towards the sick. From universal inclusion, however, the persona slides into self-exclusion and explicit address:

> I love my friend as well as you
> But would not have him stop my view.
> Then let him have the higher post:
> I ask but for an inch at most.

Then, in a subtle rhetorical shift, audiences are addressed again -

> If in a battle you should find
> One, whom you love of all mankind,
> Had some heroic action done,
> A champion kill'd, or trophy won;
> Rather than thus be overtopt,
> Would you not wish his laurels cropt? –

only to be reassuringly detached. Through the exemplum of the envious poet, the gaze is redirected to the speaker instead:

> What poet would not grieve to see
> His brethren write as well as he?
> But rather than they should excel,
> He'd wish his rivals all in hell.

In the next lines, this differentiation is blown up by the speaker's renewed onslaught on all humans, including the reader: "Vain human kind! fantastic race! / Thy various follies who can trace?" As it turns out that this also involves a degree of self-denunciation, the roles are swapped and the ubiquity of viciousness reasserted. In the next lines, the perspective shifts from explicit audience-baiting to ironic self-inclusion:

> Give others riches, power, and station,
> 'Tis all on me a usurpation.
> I have no title to aspire;
> Yet, when you sink, I seem the higher.
> In Pope I cannot read a line,
> But with a sigh I wish it mine;
> When he can in one couplet fix
> More sense than I can do in six;
> It gives me such a jealous fit,
> I cry, "Pox take him and his wit!"

Having listed himself among the proem's *exempla,* the poet approaches his subject from within his comical royal we: "Thus much may serve by way of proem: / Proceed we therefore to our poem."

Here starts the narrative of Dr. Swift's supposed death, a curious echo of the fake news of the demise of his polemical opponents, and ironic quietus to the degree zero focalization of the poetic narrative. Adopting a meta-perspective, Swift contemplates postmortem realities, his own corpse included. The stance strongly recalls John Donne, imagining himself in his sickness as objectified by his physicians' gaze,

> Whilst my Physicians by their love are growne
> Cosmographers, and I their Mapp, who lie
> Flat on this bed. ("Hymn to God, My God, in My Sickness," 6-8)

or as anatomizing the dead world:

> But though it be too late to succour thee,
> Sicke world, yea, dead, yea putrified, since shee,
> Thy' intrinsique balme, and thy preservative,
> Can never be renew'd, thou never live,
> I (since no man can make thee live) will try,
> What wee may gaine by thy Anatomy. (Donne, "An Anatomy of the World," 55-60)

In Swift's case, the zero focalization of the narrative is dizzyingly and dazzlingly problematized: the speaker projects himself into his own

elegiac fiction-making, which, reimagining focalization as internal and zero simultaneously, collapses it altogether. Furthermore, abandoning the traditional self-encapsulation of the lyrical poet, the speaker now overhears the cues of others in their comic-melancholy polyphony ("Yet thus, methinks, I hear them speak").

Along with this "vertical" multiplication of selves, there is the "horizontal" doubling of "Swift," for the hacks of Grub Street shall treat Dean and Drapier as different persons:

> Now Grub-Street wits are all employ'd;
> With elegies the town is cloy'd:
> Some paragraph in ev'ry paper
> To curse the Dean or bless the Drapier.

Anatomizing Swift, his physicians shall find, in an uncanny *corporeal* self-division, sound organs in a dead body:

> We must confess his case was nice;
> But he would never take advice.
> Had he been rul'd, for aught appears,
> He might have liv'd these twenty years;
> For, when we open'd him, we found
> That all his vital parts were sound.

With "Suppose me dead," however, specific detail is transcended for the purposes of a befitting judgement of Swift's life and achievement, articulated from within a hypothesized reality:

> Suppose me dead; and then suppose
> A club assembled at the *Rose*;
> Where, from discourse of this and that,
> I grow the subject of their chat.

Having been duly praised and blamed, the Dean is to be properly judged by an impartial anonymous third party. Yet another Swiftian mask, at one remove from his persona, this elegizing and eulogizing *raisonneur* takes a distanced look at the Dean in order to utter an otherwise unutterable Swiftian self-encomium:

> And while they toss my name about,
> With favour some, and some without,
> One, quite indiff'rent in the cause,
> My character impartial draws:

> [His poems were] with a moral view design'd
> To cure the vices of mankind:
> His vein, ironically grave,
> Expos'd the fool, and lash'd the knave.

The Dean's idealism, courage, indifference to power and possessions ("But pow'r was never in his thought, / And wealth he valu'd not a groat"), his unmasking of corruption and folly in high places are all subsumed *sub specie amoris libertati*, his cardinal virtue, highlighted by the anaphora:

> Fair Liberty was all his *cry*,
> For her he stood prepar'd to die;
> For her he boldly stood alone;
> For her he oft expos'd his own.[19]

Typically, the moral glamour of this idealized (self-)portrait is projected upon the political: quite tolerant to inborn human infirmity, he "labour'd many a fruitless hour / To reconcile his friends in pow'r," saved an entire country, criticized crooked politicians, and "gave the little wealth he had / To build a house for fools and mad." The finale of this self-eulogistic inset—and of the abruptly ending poem, offers the concluding judgement of a life devoted to the general good: "That kingdom he hath left his debtor,/ I wish it soon may have a better."

Seemingly full of narcissistic self-indulgence, this concluding part of the poem was taken literally by its first readers, who chose to ignore its ironic implications. Even the arch-ironist Pope, who suggested the idea of writing on La Rochefoucauld's maxims to Swift, and whom Swift generously praises through his confession of envy in its first part,[20] found it "'too Vain'" for a poem dealing with vanity, as well as "'in one or two particulars, not true'."[21] The most flagrant of those particulars is the Swiftian claim to "spare the name" of his satirical targets,[22] while it actually mentions no less than thirteen names, including King George,

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[19] In his self-written epitaph, Swift calls himself Champion of Liberty (Libertatis Vindicatorem): "where fierce Indignation / can no longer / injure the Heart. / Go forth, Voyager, / and copy, if you can, / this vigorous (to the best of his ability) / Champion of Liberty." (*Ubi saeva Indignatio Ulteris / Cor lacerare neguit. / Abi, Viator / Et imitare, si poteris / Strenuum pro virili / Libertatis Vindicatorem*.)

[20] Fischer, "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift," 436.

[21] See *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, edited by G. Sherburn (Oxford, 1956), iv:130, quoted in Slepian, "The Ironic Intention of Swift's Verses," 249.

[22] See Swift's *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*, lines 459-60.

Queen Caroline, Sir Robert Walpole, and William Wood.[23] Swift's other controversial boast is that he never stole another person's line, while, as Slepian demonstrates, the second line of the couplet stating this is a borrowing from John Denham's elegy *On Mr. Abraham Cowley* (1667):

> To steal a Hint was never known,
> But what he writ was all his own. (*Verses* 317-18)
>
> To him no author was unknown
> Yet what he wrote was all his own. (*On Cowley* 29-30).

Such self-subversive inscriptions are topped by the specificity of Swiftian charity, the ultimate good deed celebrated by the ending. Even not so close a reading would reveal the canker in its budding promise of a human Houyhnhnm:

> He gave the little wealth he had
> To build a house for fools and mad;
> And show'd by one satiric touch,
> No nation wanted it so much.

Again, Swift's poetic version of himself as *Splendide Mendax* tricks us readers into the subtle ironies of lyrical-narrative praise through blame and blame through praise, as well.

Occasionally modulated by the lyrical, the mythical narrative *Cadenus and Vanessa* (1712-3), "the most interesting, but certainly the most tantalizing poem Jonathan Swift ever wrote,"[24] displays a seemingly more stable structure of narrative perspectives. It starts at zero focalization, as being told by an omniscient narrator, whose awareness surpasses even that of the Olympian deities, the actual intradiegetic engines of the plot. The story of Cadenus/Decanus, and his trainee Vanessa/Esther (Hester) Vanhomrigh is framed by a mythologized version of the medieval Courts of Love. The cause for their summoning is the suit of "the shepherds and the nymphs" of courtly pastoral, provoked by the dropping temperature of earthly love.

According to Swift's mythopoesis, Venus tries to circumvent the acknowledgement of love's failure by bringing together the young, semi-divine, "prelapsarian"[25] Vanessa and her elderly pedantic tutor, "of half Mankind the Dread and Hate." The two are supposed to construct a special

[23] Slepian, 255.
[24] Tyne, "Vanessa and the Houyhnhnms," 517.
[25] Ibid., 519.

intellectual and spiritual space for a love that would refute the charge. Contained in the broader argument of Venus's Court, Cadenus and Vanessa start their own dispute, fuelled by Vanessa's amorous inattention to instruction, and Cadenus's decorous though flattered resistance to her advances. This dispute is rendered in indirect discourse, with the narrative voice reenacting each interlocutor, and reestablishing internal focalization as zero. This part of the poem reads like an enlightened parody of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, whose title Swift may have echoed in more than one way. It is doubly ironic, in that the Adonis/Cadenus of the piece is the fictional, intradiegetic alter ego of the narrative voice. As in *Verses on the Death of Dr Swift*, distance is established through self-fictionalization, and self-celebration ensues:

> his dignity and age
> Forbid Cadenus to engage.
> But friendship, in its greatest height,
> A constant, rational delight,
> On virtue's basis fix'd to last,
> When love allurements long are past,
> Which gently warms, but cannot burn,
> He gladly offers in return;
> His want of passion will redeem
> With gratitude, respect, esteem:
> With that devotion *we bestow*,
> When goddesses appear below.

Unlike the subtler ironies of the third party in *Verses*, *Cadenus and Vanessa*'s omniscient narrator explicitly ironizes his internal projection. The overall theme of love's failure precludes the less problematic seamlessness of Swift's self-image in *Verses*. In James L. Tyne's wording:

> Because Cadenus, like many of the Dean's personae, is depicted as a naive man and a gull, he is incapable of that ambivalent view that comedy demands. Because Swift is both Cadenus and the narrator, however, he enjoys this binocular vision and the pleasing blend of sympathetic identification and ironic objectivity ... results from the deft manner in which he handles his dual role. (524)

Eventually, the poem's amorous debate remains open-ended:

> But what success Vanessa met
> Is to the world a secret yet.
> Whether the nymph, to please her swain,
> Talks in a high romantic strain;

Or whether he at last descends
To act with less seraphic ends;
Or to compound the business, whether
They temper love and books together;
Must never to mankind be told,
Nor shall the conscious Muse unfold.

So does the entire poem. According to the narrating Dean, Venus, finding man guilty, withdraws from the world like her Shakespearean counterpart after Adonis's death, leaving us mortals, Cadenus/Decanus included, under Cupid's formal jurisdiction, yet basically to ourselves.

Constructed through his own reason and rhyme, St. Patrick's Dean, Dr. Swift, Cadenus, as well as the omniscient narrators imagining Swift in his own poetry, feature a complex, wise, passionate, restrained, evasive human being of remarkable moral integrity, one of the most subtle and memorable self-projections in all literature. Speaking from within different masks in voices sad and ironical, this self-fashioned Swift could also ventriloquize a pen, a shadow, gold, or whatever object he would choose. He could also, in poems like "In Sickness" (written in 1714, published. in 1735), or *Horace, Lib.2, Sat. 6* (1714), simply adopt the confessional mode of the overheard lyrical monologue.

At first sight, unlike the protective screening of the fake or unnamed identities of his prose, Swift's poetic self-images seem to serve the purpose of Horatian self-perpetuation. Yet, their multiplicity, the slides between them, and the multiple ironies they involve suggest a Swiftian reinvention of both the lyrical mode and its archetypal speaker. Protean and histrionic, self-assertive and self-ironical, Swift's poetic voice epitomizes a blend of elusive plasticity and firm moral integrity, recalling the *Splendide mendax*, that nobly untruthful champion of the public good. Subtly problematizing itself, Swift's overall self-construction may be enlightening to post-truth post-humanity, with claiming a new versatility but actually lost in a hall-of mirrors of oversimplified and beautified self-projections, and deafened by self-written paeans to one's self.

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PART II

SWIFT:
IMITATIONS, ADAPTATIONS, AND REVISIONS

CHAPTER FOUR

ELBERT PERCE'S *GULLIVER JOI* (1851): SCIENCE FICTION IN A GULLIVERIAN ROMANCE

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Introduction

The publication of *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) was met with much acclaim and was immediately followed by sequels and parodies which contributed to making Jonathan Swift's satire have an even greater reputation. Ashley Marshall comments that Jeanne K. Welcher and George E. Bush's seven-volume collection *Gulliveriana* includes nearly sixty or more works that were overtly inspired by *Gulliver's Travels*.[1] Many of these imitations and critical responses appeared within several years after the publication of Swift's work. In his *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (1781), Dr. Johnson's essay on Swift both commends and criticizes *Gulliver's Travels*. It points out that the flying island of Laputa in Part III "gave the least pleasure," whereas the description of the Houyhnhnms in Part IV was received with "most disgust."[2] A number of mid- to late nineteenth-century responses explored exactly what were the least liked and most applauded imaginary voyages.

Literary scholarship has suggested that Parts III and IV especially engage with and contribute to the origination of the emerging science-fiction genre in the nineteenth century. Paul K Alkon shares Darko Suvin's opinion that the genesis of science fiction is exceptionally indebted to Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. He suggests that Swift's satire has either been viewed as the forerunner or as the archetypal pattern of science fiction.[3] He claims that the dividing line between science fiction

[1] Marshall, "*Gulliver*, Gulliveriana, and the Problem of Swiftian Satire," 212.
[2] Johnson, "Swift," *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets*, 3:421.
[3] Alkon, "*Gulliver* and the Origins," 164, 174.

and the other genres which Swift's satire evidently relied upon may be seen—according to the old wave of science-fiction scholars—in the clear-cut separate themes of the four voyages of *Gulliver's Travels* which overall "lacks generic unity": Parts I and II are "adventure-fantasy," Part III is science fiction, and Part IV is a philosophical treatise in the form of fantasy that problematizes utopianism.[4] For the new wave of academics, however, it is exactly this diversity of subjects and genres and their fluidity in a generically formless *Gulliver* that looks like a pattern for science fiction, making *Gulliver's Travels* "a unified work" out of assorted themes and genre forms, because, as Alkon maintains quoting Suvin, the central focus in science fiction is "cognitive estrangement" that makes readers "look at humanity from a radically estranged perspective."[5]

The "Gulliver" fiction of the nineteenth century builds upon and explores this eclectic usage of themes and genres. It expands upon the original *Gulliver,* mainly by choosing one of its four voyages, and then expands upon the Gulliverian subject within other places and times, collaging correlated genres. Swift's critical satire was employed as a vista through which contemporary social problems were addressed even decades after the first *Gulliver*. However, Swift's *Gulliver* allowed for further exploration of the pattern because it parodied and also incorporated the features of different literary modes, which, in turn, led to it being praised for its literary style. Darko Suvin argues that out of the several trends within speculative fiction in the nineteenth century, "the science-fictional subgenre of Extraordinary Voyage" was a particularly dominant form. It "evolved from the classical models of Swiftian satire and of travel to a numinous Space," and its "intertexts were the Earthly Paradise, satire, utopia, tall tale, fantasy, and *roman planétaire* of the Cyrano-Godwin type."[6]

The extraordinary voyage developed a platform of diverse and interrelated intertextual links. Suvin argues that, from its burgeoning days, science fiction nurtured a generic and thematic diversity of expression which elaborated on the classical, post-Morean utopian discoveries in imaginary voyages.[7] A case in point is a group of nineteenth-century early science-fiction fantastical journeys which benefited from Swift's *Gulliver*. In some of these, the new Gulliver is a descendant of, or is related to, the original Gulliver; in others, though not called Gulliver, the protagonist is

[4] Ibid., 174.
[5] Ibid., 175-6.
[6] Suvin, *Victorian*, 338-9 and 394.
[7] Ibid., 339.

clearly a Gulliverian type.[8] Elbert Perce's *Gulliver Joi: His Three Voyages; Being an Account of his Marvelous Adventures in Kailoo, Hydrogenia and Ejario* (1851), for instance, retells the story of an interplanetary journey involving a flying machine, not like James William Barlow's *History of a World of Immortals without a God* (1891) where the narrator travels to Venus psychokinetically. The latter of the two is apparently a clearer allusion to Part III of *Gulliver's Travels*. Walter Copland Perry's *The Revolt of the Horses* (1898), on the other hand, introduces a future war that takes place in 1950. In Thomas Lee's *Falsivir's Travels: The Remarkable Adventures of John Falsivir* (1886), a Gulliver-like protagonist discovers a Symmesian hollow earth with a race of humans who are the ruling class oppressors of a race of giants. Even H.G. Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896) may be analyzed as a Darwinian rereading of Swift's Houyhnhnms and Yahoos.[9] These nineteenth-century adventures transparently parody Swift's satire, yet they also serve as a means of critiquing the original against a new backdrop and appear to be fictional interpretations of Swift's political satire. In these works, a Gulliverian style was adopted to adapt contemporary issues to a literary mode by means of imitation. It is characteristic of popular fiction, according to Northrop Frye, to capitalize upon themes which were intrinsic within romance by means of "displacement," which is inherently a method of parodying a previous source.[10] These nineteenth-century adventures—to take my cue from Gary Saul Morson—not only allude to or parody Swift's imaginary voyage, but also make a parody of a parody. This is because *Gulliver's Travels*, as original as it is, is after all a parodic satire of utopia, scientific discourse, and travel literature.

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[8] A select list of tiles which further explore Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*: Elbert Perce, *Gulliver Joi* (1851); *Mr Oscar Preen in Japan and Laputa*, publ. in five instalments in *Tinsley's Magazine* (1870); Mortimer Collins, "Fifth Voyage of Captain Lemuel Gulliver," a chapter in vol. 2 of *Squire Silchester's Whim* (1873), pp. 49–64; Antares Skorpios [a pseud. used by James William Barlow and Jane Barlow], *History of a World of Immortals without a God* (1891), 2nd ed. in 1909; Wendell Phillips Garrison, *The New Gulliver* (1898); Walter Copland Perry, *The Revolt of the Horses* (1898); Edwin Lester Arnold, *Lieut. Gullivar Jones: His Vacation* (1905); Dean Gulliver, *The Land of Unreason* (1905); Elliott E Mills, *The Further Surprising Adventures of Lemuel Gulliver* (1906); Barry Pain, *The New Gulliver and Other Stories* (1913); W. Hodgson Burnet, *Gullible's Travels in Little Brit* (1920). More recently, Adam Roberts, *Swiftly* (2004). On the sequels of *Gulliver*, see Stableford, *Science Fact and Science Fiction*, 456–7.

[9] On Darwinism, Dr. Moreau, and Gulliver, see Bozzetto, "Moreau's Tragi-Farcical Island," 34-35, 37.

[10] Frye, *Secular Scripture*, 36-37.

Early science fiction cannot be severed from the fantastical, and to fuse the two cannot be just an authorial predilection. It is a trend that goes back to the mid-seventeenth century upon which Swift relied within his *Gulliver's Travels* also; it is a generic mode which unaffectedly continued throughout the nineteenth century (and may even be seen in many science-fiction works from the twentieth century onwards). These two are complimentary according to the Swiftian pattern and were viewed as being effectual and constructive within the science-fiction subgenre of *voyages extraordinaires*, which was the prevailing speculative form of fiction in the nineteenth century. Adam Roberts has maintained that science fiction can be defined as "that form of fantastic romance from which the magic has been replaced by the materialist discourses of science."[11] As has been held by many scholars, science fiction was invariably merged with the fantastic, even during its emergence as a genre—which went back long before the nineteenth century. This blend was defined as *scientific romance* in the nineteenth century, which Patrick Parrinder has succinctly defined as a form which involves "the use of scientific (or, more often, quasi-scientific) elements in highly coloured romantic fiction."[12] In Roberts's opinion, the origins of science fiction lie in the fantastic facet of Ancient Greek voyage fiction,[13] while its "ur-form," as Suvin similarly contended earlier, is "extraordinary travel, with stories of interplanetary travel the most influential."[14] With a tradition that goes back to the seventeenth century—with Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* (1638) or Cyrano de Bergerac's *Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon* (1656)—these improbable journeys in the nineteenth century, in addition to other planets, also led to the discovery of a lost

[11] Roberts, *History of Science Fiction*, xiv.
[12] Parrinder, *Science Fiction*, 4.
[13] Adam Roberts claims that science fiction re-emerged in the age of the Reformation, whereas its sources may first be found in Ancient Greek literature. In the preface to the second edition of *The History of Science Fiction* (2016), he complains that his argument was not met with acclaim when it appeared in 2006 (vi). It is, however, thought-provoking as it draws a cultural-historical backcloth to the role of early modern ideology and religion in the origination of the genre and enriches the commonly held argument that utopia, the sister-genre of science fiction, was originally inspired by voyage narratives in the age of the great discoveries and explorations. For Roberts's comments on the Reformation and early science fiction, see his *History of Science Fiction*, vi, xi, xiii, and 3-4. On the link between utopia and travel, see among others, Chloë Houston, "Traveling Nowhere," 87–88. On the reception of Roberts's thesis, see Rogers and Stevens, Introduction, 13–14.
[14] Roberts, *Science Fiction*, ix and x.

world or of a Symmesian hollow world. However, they are basically interrelated to another form—namely the utopian discourse which envisioned other-worldly places so as to express satire and social criticism through allegory.[15]

Arguably nineteenth-century narratives inspired by Swift's *Gulliver* capitalize upon their archetype's multiple themes and follow its formless style. They blend empirical and fantastical elements within their discussions of social, ideological, or philosophical questions, appealing to the readers of their time. In this chapter, which focuses only on Elbert Perce's *Gulliver Joi* (1851), I want to highlight the union between the science-fiction interplanetary journey and the fantastical setting of a romance. This coalescence, it should be noted, serves as a tool for marketing a social satire. While the coexistence of science and fantasy is complementary in Perce's romance, science neither truly rationalizes nor substitutes fantasy but is used rather to enhance the fantastical, which, in David Hartwell's words, is one of science fiction's primary charms—its "sense of wonder."[16]

Elbert Perce's *Gulliver Joi* (1851)

Gulliver Joi: His Three Voyages; Being an Account of his Marvelous Adventures in Kailoo, Hydrogenia and Ejario (1851) by Elbert Perce (1831-1869)[17] is essentially a fantastical journey that exploits science to subscribe the work to what had been known by the end of the nineteenth century as *scientific romance*. This is recognized today either as proto-science fiction or early science fiction.[18] It utilizes "several narrative categories: genuinely speculative sf; mild-mannered *Bildungsroman* leading to marriage; interplanetary romance; the Lost Race tale; and a Myth of Origin story which foretells the narrator's magical restoration of a lost kingdom."[19] However, its short and meagre advertising reviews—though sympathetic of Perce's imaginative and inventive style—generally

[15] Ibid., x-xi.

[16] David Hartwell has observed that "science fiction's appeal lies in the combination of the rational, believable, with the miraculous. It is an appeal to the sense of wonder." See Hartwell, *Age of Wonders*, 67 and also 66, 71, 79, for further discussion.

[17] Clute, "Perce, Elbert," *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*.

[18] On the origins of the term *scientific romance* and its relation to the French *roman scientifique*, see Stableford, *Science Fact and Science Fiction*, 468-9.

[19] Clute, "Perce, Elbert," *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*.

agree upon the inferiority of his "new" Gulliver. The *Literary World* probably credited the novel with the longest critical notice:

> A story for children on the model of Gulliver's Travels. A shipwrecked sailor takes refuge on a barren rock, which proves a Monte Christo of luxurious caverns, and is inhabited by a magician, who sends his guest off to one of the planets with a telescope to steer by. In the description of the manners and customs of this planet, Kailoo, there seems some satire intended on the United States; but the satire, if such, is vague and pointless. Two other voyages follow of a similar kind, the incidents of all being absurdly extravagant, without being redeemed by a particle of fancy.[20]

Another book review of *Gulliver Joi* combines its critical commendation with several other adventure novels for boys and highly esteems the way in which education and entertainment converge. It reads: "These fine little volumes we can highly commend, both for their attractive form and beautiful illustrations, as well as for the admirable manner in which are blended interest and instruction for the juveniles […]. The first named is full of that kind of imagination and ingenuity which so attracts boys in the original Gulliver."[21] An advertisement consents that while the travels of Perce's Gulliver are equally sensational they are secondary in quality, though exceptionally diverting. "These voyages," it reads, "are certainly not less marvellous than those of Gulliver the First. They hardly, however, match them in the talent displayed by the author. As extravaganza, they will be found to contain many points of rare amusement."[22]

Similar to several eighteenth century imitations and parodies of *Gulliver*, Perce's adventurer is ancestrally related to the original Gulliver.[23] In two such sequels, *The Travels of Mr John Gulliver, Son to Capt Lemuel Gulliver* (1731) by Pierre Desfontaines, the translator of *Gulliver's Travels* in French, and *Modern Gulliver's Travels. Lilliput: Being a New Journey to That Celebrated Island, Containing a Faithful Account of the Manners, Character, Customs, Religion, Laws, Politics* (1796) continue the fantastical journeys, yet, this time they are undertaken by Gulliver's son. Like these two continuations, Elbert Perce makes his adventurer a descendent of Lemuel Gulliver. The protagonist's aphoristic confession at the beginning agrees with the maxim that "love of adventure is hereditary, and never more has this saying been verified than in [his]

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[20] "*Gulliver Joi: his Three Voyages*" in *Literary World*, 329.
[21] "*Gulliver Joi*: *his Three…*" in "Critical Notices," *American Whig Review*, 449.
[22] "*Gulliver Joi: His Three Voyages*" in "Book Trade," *Merchants' Magazine*, 525.
[23] Alkon, *Science Fiction before 1900*, 14.

own life."[24] While his father was a poor shoe-maker who never occasioned to leave his native place, the narrator seems to take after somebody else in the family: "my great great great grandfather on my mother's side, after whom I have the honor of being named, was an inveterate traveller, as may be seen by perusing his life, written by an eminent divine long since departed this life" (13).

Though viewed as inferior to Swift's *Gulliver*, Perce's *Gulliver Joi* was not slighted for being enterprising, yet considering the targeted audience, his romance was intended to highlight high-octane Gulliverian adventures. In Part 1, after the unexpected death of his father, Gulliver sets out on a journey and he survives a shipwreck not long after that. He is cast ashore onto a small rocky island where he meets a strange old scientist—Roderick, whose name is revealed only at the end of the adventure—who starts teaching him astronomy. The scientist invents an inextinguishable, perpetual source of energy called "the malleable flame"—from which he produces combustive red powder (29). This, together with the malleable flame, is used to power a flying vehicle (32), furnished with gadgets including a telescope and a loadstone that help navigate the pilot's trajectory towards the planet Kailoo. The scientist offers Gulliver Joi to take a journey to a planet which they can see though a powerful telescope (28). During the first voyage to Kailoo, he meets an English family, Mr. and Mrs. Brown—who have adopted the name of Colorondo—and he falls in love with Martha, their daughter.

One of the peculiarities of Kailoo is that trinkets are scattered on the ground, and those who happen to collect them immediately disappear into the air. They are in fact kidnapped by the elephantine Hydrogenians, who live in the upper aerial regions, and whose gigantic frames are reminiscent of Swift's Brobdingnagians. When Martha accidentally falls victim to this treacherous attraction and disappears, Gulliver is determined to save his beloved. He ignites his rocket machine, but a malfunctioning vane brings him back down to the planet Earth instead. In Part 2, Gulliver Joi comes across Roderick who constructs a hydrogen balloon for him so that he can fly back to Kailoo. Once there, he deliberately gets transported to the upper regions of the Hydrogenians by taking hold of one of the luring trinkets. Ultimately he reunites with Martha. They manage to escape from both the Hydrogenian upper regions and the planet Kailoo, and are joined by Martha's parents. They then fly back to earth in a balloon. Part 3, the voyage to Ejario, which is essentially a lost-race tale, casts Gulliver Joi onto the shore of a female-governed nation where strong women rule over

[24] Perce, *Gulliver Joi: His Three Voyage*, 13. Hereafter cited in text.

weak men. After a number of escapades, Gulliver restores the patriarchal male order and returns to America.[25]

Gulliver Joi has two successful interplanetary missions. In these journeys, Perce follows the two dominant means of transportation speculated about in earlier fiction. These are the scientific and the fantastical means of conveyance to outer space, though in many speculative works there seems to be a mixture of the two, which also occurs in *Gulliver Joi*.[26] Regarding the scientific descriptions of travel, *Gulliver Joi* is similar to the technological accounts in George Tucker's *A Voyage to the Moon* (1827). In Tucker's scientific satire, the narrator, who is a captive in Burma, befriends a Brahmin who shares with him a secret that he has visited the moon. Together they construct an air-tight flying machine, equipped with a thermometer, two telescopes as well as an air-pump which provides air in the apparatus. The machine is made both of copper and the rare lunar metal *lunarium*, which is attracted to the lunar magnetic field—a slight allusion to the loadstone of Laputa and the seventeenth-century studies in magnetism and flying as well as to Cyrano de Bergerac's [*The Other World:*] *Comical History of the States and Empires of the Moon* (translated in English in 1656).[27] Tucker's romance aims to be (almost) purely scientific, rather than mythical, while earlier examples of voyages to the moon in fiction often blended scientific form and fantasy. Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone or the Discovrse of a Voyage thither by Domingo Gonsales* (published 1638), for instance, proposes a flying mechanism carried by birds as a semi-scientific method of flying.[28] The other more dominant form of transportation employed in *Gulliver Joi* is purely fantastical and it follows precedents widely explored within speculative fiction. The English family Gulliver Joi meets in Kailoo are there by accident. An "immense water-spout" (73-74) threw them into outer space and sent them to the planet. By way of comparison, in Lucian's *True History*, the narrator's ship is caught by a violent whirlwind and is carried to the moon after seven days and nights. Similarly, in Rudolf Erich Raspe's Baron Munchausen tall-tales in *Gulliver Revived* (1785), a hurricane blows the narrator's ship one thousand leagues above the sea and its phenomenal speed transports him to the moon which takes six weeks to reach. Predominantly, Part 2 is a fabulous narration about

[25] Bleiler, "Perce, Elbert," *Science Fiction: The Early Years*, 592.
[26] On the change from the fantastical to the technical trend in early science-fiction vehicles and their outer space passage, see Roberts, *History*, 62.
[27] See Higgins, "Explanatory Notes," 320, 323, 324.
[28] Following Godwin, a similar method of avian-powered ascension was later employed in Daniel Defoe's *Consolidator* (1705).

balloon-like humanoid beings who breathe hydrogen instead of air. Part 3 is also fantastical. Since it can be defined as an exotic lost-race anti-utopia,[29] it relates the circumstances that led to the subjugation of men and their mental and physical gender change into feeble humans, while a dragon informs a huntress how to topple the patriarchal system. In all its parts, the scientific and the fantastical elements are a blend of the generic framework which, by the 1860s, had been termed *scientific romance* or what H.G. Wells later called "fantastic and imaginative romances."[30]

In his two missions to the planet Kailoo, Gulliver Joi uses two different vehicles, based upon speculative airborne science: a spaceship that looks like a rocket and a balloon. Perce, similar to Tucker, dedicates several pages to the mechanism of the rocket and to the technicalities of its propelling power. However, in the second voyage, he leaves behind futuristic, speculative science and turns to the balloon since it was a well-known and more realistic method of flying. It turns out Gulliver's first mission was just exploratory, and he was oblivious to the true motives of the scientist who taught him astronomy and eventually sent him to fly to Kailoo. The scientist actually sends him there with the hope that he will meet his sister's family, the Browns. For this reason, a balloon with a carriage large enough to accommodate several people is built for Gulliver's second expedition.

Perce's Gulliverian balloon flight is a response to contemporary aeronautic explorations. The old scientist's flying apparatus, designed to carry several people, was certainly inspired by the inventor John Wise and his intention to build the largest flying balloon of its time. A short announcement in the summer of 1850, for example, advertises that "Mr. Wise has nearly completed his immense balloon. It will be large enough to carry up some half dozen persons. Mr. W. designs making an ascension from this city [i.e., Lancaster?] early in August next."[31] Perce implied that Gulliver's fantastical journeys, though fabulous, were also scientifically feasible, or, at the very least, were not especially different from what were the scientific achievements of the age. Roderick builds a balloon which is able to carry at least four people in a rescue mission to bring his sister and her family from Kailoo. At the end of the third part, while Gulliver Joi was

[29] I use *anti-utopia* in the meaning defined by Lyman Tower Sargent as a critique of utopia and utopianism: "*Anti-utopia* is in common use as a substitute for dystopia, but as such it is often inaccurate, and it is useful to have a term to describe those works that use the Utopian form to attack either Utopias in general or a specific Utopia." See Sargent, "Three Faces of Utopianism," 8 and 9.
[30] Quoted in Stableford, introduction to *Scientific Romance*, vii.
[31] "Mr. Wise has nearly completed," *Star of the North*, 18 Jul 1850, n.p. [1], col. 6.

in feminitopian Ejario, Roderick constructs another balloon, "sufficiently large to contain twelve persons" (271) for potential new adventures back in Kailoo. Perce approximates the parameters of scientific application in his fiction to the mid-nineteenth-century's scientific knowledge.

Ever since its invention in the late eighteenth century, the issue of steering hot air balloons proved the greatest difficulty for balloonists and balloon scientists.[32] Edgar Allan Poe's "The Balloon Hoax" (1844) which details a fictional three-day trans-Atlantic journey of the steering gas balloon "Victoria" obviously solved this problem, in fiction at least, like his earlier hoax "The Unparalleled Adventure of One Hans Pfaall" (1835) which is a story about a contrived journey to the moon. Jules Verne's *Five Weeks in a Balloon* (1863), written a decade after Perce's *Gulliver Joi*, claims that science was still in search of proper methods of steering. A character who complains about this notorious difficulty is skeptical that "it will ever be possible to steer balloons," unless a powerful but exceedingly light engine is invented to "resist any considerable air current." He goes on to say that "up to now, effort has been most concentrated on steering the car rather than the balloon, which is a mistake."[33]

The design of a rocket in Gulliver Joi's first space journey, and the novel's overall turning of attention towards rocketry, dismisses the popular public interest in ballooning. The rocket, whose use had been only military since the beginning of the nineteenth century, was originally reassessed as being a feasible method of transportation within outer space. Perce's rocket is not unlike Jules Verne's gigantic cannon a decade later, which fires a capsule to the moon. Perce conceives of a navigable rocket machine for Gulliver Joi in his first voyage which is technical and inventive, and is propelled by inextinguishable energy, the malleable flame. In Gulliver Joi's subsequent voyages, however, he chooses the balloon instead. His choice makes Gulliver Joi's scientific adventures mirror the achievements of contemporary science so as to imbue a sense of plausibility concerning future outer space journeys. In this sense, he is also truly scientifictional as he makes fiction and plot based upon scientific execution,[34] and not on fable or the fantastical; in making science *the* instrument of story-telling, *Gulliver Joi* thus expanded the genre of the romance adventure by including futuristic visions of travel in contrast, for example, to one of the most popular Gulliverian imitations, *Lieut. Gullivar Jones* (1905)—later reissued as *Gulliver of Mars* (1964)—where the protagonist leaves the earth wrapped up in a magic flying carpet.

[32] On the difficulty of balloon steering, see Lynn, *Sublime*, 3, 7, 52-7, 117.
[33] Verne, *Five Weeks in a Balloon* in *Around the World*, 197.
[34] On *scientifiction*, see Gernsback, "New Sort of Magazine," 3.

In Kailoo, Gulliver Joi receives a friendly welcome and eventual acceptance by the local population. This is an atypical trait within utopias and extraordinary voyages in general, since foreigners are usually treated with reserve. But travelers in utopias and fantastical adventures are invariably introduced to high-standing officials, whether that is a monarch, or ruler of the visited, or a newly discovered (and often lost) world. Honnolumeek, the first resident of Kailoo he meets, teaches Gulliver the culture and history of the planet by using a pictorial book, titled "Kailoo – Its Past History and Future Destiny" (44). Much like his archetypal personage, Gulliver Joi proves to be a true linguistic wizard as he picks up the Kailoo language fairly quickly despite its utterly alien phonology and word order. After he mastered speaking and reading the language, Gulliver and his instructor go to the capital city. It is made of broad streets "paved with square plates of iron." Most of the houses are built of metal, and those which are made of wood are polished to look like furniture (51). The coach they take is driven by horses moving with breakneck speed on the flat iron-plated roads (51). Fountains with running water "the color of wine" (51-2) complete the picture of a Shangri-La that combines the bliss of convenience with fairy-tale fantasy and advanced civil engineering. Such an imaginative setting easily enhances the feeling of wonder of a world that is technologically advanced but is also made to look like an unattainable fairy-tale.

The speeding coach and whipped animals, however, do not make this world too estranged from our own, yet Perce's flight of fancy, in the next scene, describes a futuristic tunnel system complete with high-speed trains in it. Evidently it is inspired by the 1840s experiments in mechanical engineering when atmospheric railways or pneumatic transport were launched. In 1824, John Vallance obtained a patent for building a pneumatically propelled tube train. In 1835, Henry Pinkus obtained another patent for a different mode of transportation that allowed for trains to be pneumatically driven. This consequently led to the patent being issued to Samuel Clegg and Joseph Samuda for the West London Railway, whose engineering details are described in Samuda's *Treatise* (1841), and the opening of the Dalkey Atmospheric Railway in 1843 as well as the London and Croydon Railway in 1845.[35]

[35] On pneumatic transport proposed by Vallance and Pinkus, see "Atmospheric Railway." *Magazine of Science,* 186-187. On the mechanics of atmospheric railways, see Samuda's *Treatise*, 2-7, and 8, which discuss the London and Birmingham Railway. Details on the execution of the projects are recorded in the *Report form the Select Committee on Atmospheric Railways*. See, among others, iii, 1-4 (for Dalkey Atmospheric Railway) and 1-3, 8 (for London and Croydon).

Perce imagines a nearly outlandish, ultramodern form of transport, namely "the *tirsh*," that speedily overcomes long distances in a pneumatic tube train. The *tirsh* is a line of passenger cars in "an under-ground tunnel" described as "a cylindrical-shaped room, filled with seats" and "lighted by thick glass windows" (53). It is "fitted air-tight in a thick tube or tunnel, the side lubricated with a liquid that completely destroys the friction" (54). Gulliver's instructor explains how the *tirsh* is powered: "At the farther extremity of this tube, which is about five hundred miles distant, is a powerful machine used for the purpose of exhausting the air in the tubes, and, as a matter of course, the pressure of the atmosphere behind drives us forward with very great rapidity" (54). In fact, Perce imaginatively executes the original John Vallance design with a train moving inside a tube like a piston. An author claims that the patentee even built a model at Brighton, "and many persons were thus blown through the tube."[36] However, Vallance's patent was never put into practice, basically because travelling "in the interior of a tube, would not accord with the taste of the public" (Ibid.). All the other patents and realizations of atmospheric railways had a carriage outside attached to a piston that moved inside a cast-iron tube below the rails.[37]

While *Gulliver Joi* extrapolates from contemporary mechanics to speculate about a scientific progress in an alien world, the social relations in Kailoo and Hydrogenia are not otherworldly at all, but are an allegorical satire of the present time. As its focus is on the swift changes in adventures, *Gulliver Joi* presents a less comprehensive picture of these societies compared to the utopian blueprint in George Tucker's *Voyage to the Moon* (1827) or in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* which expatiates upon Thomas More's utopia and sees anti-utopian and even dystopian features in it. Perce's scientific fantasy selectively highlights only a few of the ruling deficiencies in these two unearthly civilizations to stress the ethically hollow pragmatism of Western societies. Kailoo is "not an absolute monarchy" (87), the King informs Gulliver. Unlike Houyhnhnmland which needs no laws as it is considered perfect, Kailoo which is also viewed perfect in its own right is sustained by a legal system. Laws are coined by the people when there is a need for a law to be passed and even then they are presented to the ruler for approval. The ruler is entitled to make amendments to previously passed laws (88). It is obviously

[36] "Atmospheric Railways," *Magazine of Science*, 186.

[37] As an author succinctly puts it, "atmospheric railway trains were propelled by a piston fastened beneath the first car, called the piston carriage. The piston moved in a continuous cast-iron tube, fifteen inches in diameter or larger, located between ordinary iron railway tracks" (Ferguson, review of *Atmospheric Railways*, 612).

governed by a constitutional legislature. In addition to its democracy, Kailoo does not discriminate against foreigners. Colorondo, who is an English resident in Kailoo, is actually "the highest officer under the king" (61) and later in the novel Gulliver is appointed "to an office second to the prime-minister" (105).

What contradicts the Kailoo democratic ambiance is the discriminating system of servitude. Kailooites are the ruling race and their servants are the *carlets*. Carlets are described with the same animosity as the Yahoos in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and are given a similar animalistic and grotesque depiction. The description of this tension in *Gulliver Joi* follows chapter 9 of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and alludes to the system of slavery in contemporary America which Perce openly censures. In Swift's work, the only debate question at the General Assembly of the Houyhnhnms is whether "the *Yahoos* should be exterminated from the face of the Earth;"[38] in Kailoo it is whether or not the carlets should be liberated. The Yahoos, "the most restive and indocible, mischievous and malicious," need to be "continually watched" or otherwise they commit crimes (253). The Kailoo King shows a similar attitude towards the carlets considering them as ungovernable, but the political dispute about their liberty lies within the various interpretations of their Constitution:

> The only cause of contention in our otherwise perfectly peaceful country is, whether it is according to the Great Code of Laws—which is a code of laws made by the founder of this people, and which is preserved and handed down to the people by a number of priests, whose only calling is to explain the laws; but who have so many different explanations, that one scarcely knows which one to believe, to keep the *carlets* in bondage or not. Truly they somewhat resemble human beings, for we can teach them to speak; but here the resemblance ceases, for they are both beastly in shape and morals; and we have to keep them under very severe laws to prevent them from committing crimes. (88)

By relating the Assembly debate in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* to the bondage debate in Kailoo, the author provides, through fiction, his own interpretation of Swift's satire. He discerns in Swift a humane—not a misanthropic—theme and makes *Gulliver Joi* a channel of social criticism. Perce's Gulliver declares that what he hears reminds him of the slavery in America and sympathizes with those in the United States "who are laboring to free our country from this disgraceful badge that is the only mar to our motto, 'The land of the free'," but, from an 1850's point of view, Perce's traveler is skeptical about a positive resolution about the

[38] Swift, *Gulliver*, 253.

emancipation of slaves (91). Perce takes a clear abolitionist stand and criticizes American slavery in the same way that Swift challenges the perfectibility of utopian Houyhnhnmland. He condemns the denigrating attitude towards the slaves, professes abolitionism, and denounces the hypocritical reading of the U.S. Constitution.

The class and racial tension in Kailoo seems to suggest a political system at stake. The King alludes to a mood of defiance amongst the Kailooites who advocate for the emancipation of the carlets. The carlets, however, are not entirely innocent in their subjection. Due to the system of surveillance in Kailoo, a report reaches the King of the servants' occasional night meetings which are of an insurrectionary nature. Gulliver Joi is even present at one of their gatherings where alcohol fuels their language of full-scale revenge and hatred against their masters: "Speeches and toasts of the most exciting nature were given, stirring up the carlets to rebellion against their masters, advising them, when the time came for action, to spare none, young or old, but to slay every Kailooite in the country, and then govern it themselves" (104). At this point, Gulliver Joi realizes that the suggestions made in the report addressed to the King to limit the rights of the carlets and permit their continual monitoring are justified. It is hard to tell whether Gulliver Joi is dubiously consistent with his social criticism when he refrains from his sympathies for the servants or if Perce is stressing that subjection as a whole generates only evil. What is certain, however, is that Perce follows Swift's aversion to barbarity (no matter who exercises it). And just like Lemuel Gulliver who turns into a danger of a likely rebellion among the Yahoos and is ultimately forced to leave Houyhnhnmland, Gulliver Joi is falsely accused of treason and faces the same fate because he reportedly attended one of the conspiratorial meetings (111-112). His former friend and instructor Honnolumeek, who was turned down by Martha, now becomes Gulliver's enemy and, seeking revenge, charges Gulliver with treason and forces him to leave Kailoo.

However, the power of subjection in Kailoo—which is presumed to be unshakeable—is not entirely omnipotent, for the Kailooites are as vulnerable as any other beings in the universe. *Gulliver Joi* brings into play a change of perspective from Swift and it implies that an individual's freedom in one country may be easily restricted in another. The self-assurance of the Kailooites is jeopardized by another, higher and inexplicable power to which they seem to be helpless. Scattered trinkets on the ground of Kailoo, attached to invisible cords, kidnap those who appear to be attracted to them. While the content of the Kailoo voyage is extrapolated from contemporary mechanics and fantasies about interplanetary travel, Gulliver Joi's subsequent aerial expedition, to Hydrogenia, is

essentially fanciful. As the name of their realm suggests, Hydrogenians' lives are sustained by breathing hydrogen. For them, air is what water is for the inhabitants in Kailoo and on earth, while water is an alcoholic beverage. Thus, they toss trinkets as bait for recreation called *Mollowoging*, which is "nearly synonymous with fishing, save that Hydrogenians fish in the air" (148). Their catch is fittingly called a Mollowog.

Adam Roberts notices that the link between science fiction "narrative of interplanetary travel and the chivalric-romance narrative of exotic terrestrial travel is especially close."[39] As Martha falls victim to the Hydrogenian form of fishing, Gulliver Joi acts in a chivalric manner to save his beloved. He intentionally gets caught by one of the trinkets (132). Then he wakes up captured in a glass vase, where he is provided him with oxygen to enable him breathe (133). Hydrogenia is a comical parody of the divine firmament and truly also a parody of Laputa. In Hydrogenia, Gulliver Joi is viewed as a miracle (as he survived the swift journey of flight) and later as a prodigy (as he quickly learns the language and communicates freely with his captors). Kailooites are generally "tender" (148), compared to humans, and all die before they reach Hydrogenia. However, Gulliver and Martha remain alive after this ordeal and turn into a nation-wide sensation as "phenomenal beings."

In Part 2, the voyage to Hydrogenia, which is basically an intertextual rewrite of Swift's Voyage to Brobdingnag, Gulliver Joi is kept in a glass container just like Lemuel Gulliver, who lives in a little box in his case. Similar to his prototype, Gulliver Joi is subjected to the same humiliation of being shown as an exhibit at public shows. In Swift's satire, Lemuel learns from his language teacher—the farmer's nine-year daughter whom he calls *Glumdalclitch*, or little nurse—that he should be shown "as a Sight" and be "exposed for Money as a publick Spectacle" and will subsequently be "carried about for a Monster."[40] Lemuel's exhibition proves to be "profitable," and this induces his master to make of him a public spectacle in "the most considerable Cities of the Kingdom" (ibid.). Advertised in the press, and made public at fairs and market-places, the sensation of public shows such as these was marketable in eighteenth-century Britain.[41] According to Dennis Todd, the Scriblerians often derided such public entertainments. As Todd further argues, Alexander

[39] Roberts, *History of Science Fiction*, 60.
[40] Swift, *Gulliver*, Book 2, 87-88. Lemuel, however, quickly finds some solace in being likened to a monster by alluding to the similar fate of the Hanoverian King of Great Britain, who is humorously implied to be a freak. See Higgins, "Explanatory Notes" in Swift, *Gulliver*, 305.
[41] Higgins, "Explanatory Notes," in Swift, *Gulliver*, 305.

Pope suggests in his *Dunciad* (1728-1743) that public spectacles such as these point to "the degeneration of high arts" and ultimately to a culture that promotes an appeal for curiosities and develops mindless and pointless observation of physical anomalies, Swift's *Gulliver* also criticizes the "thoughtlessness" and intellectual degeneration in "the attraction of popular entertainments."[42] Elbert Perce's *Gulliver Joi*, it should be noted, further explores the effect of such visual superficialities and offers, in this sense, an update to the ethical and cultural issue as well as a fictional interpretation of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

Soon after his arrival in Hydrogenia in search of Martha, he learns the language fairly quickly, his master Maldi Fremung appoints a servant to take care of him and provides him with a specially equipped apartment with fresh air. But as in Swift's satire, Gulliver Joi's master intends "to exhibit a live Mollowog" in the whole country, for which "tickets securing seats will be sold" too (144-145). Gulliver Joi does not protest that he is "to be shown through the country as a prodigy," as all the publicity increases the chance of finding Martha (145). He learns that his arrival and captivity was widely reported in the press, informing the public of his progress in Hydrogenia. An article under the title "A Singular Mollowog" describes the human as "a creature … clothed in garments much resembling our own," yet "the strangest part of all is, that it speaks!" (146). The press, in other words, presents Gulliver Joi as a near Lilliputian yahoo amongst Brobdingnagians.

Perce expands upon Swift's satirical indictment against the fascinations with exhibited curiosities and he criticizes in particular mid-nineteenth-century American journalism and the promoters of the emerging show business. He condemns the sensational character of contemporary journalism that seems to have relied upon the demand of the readers' curiosity and which ultimately profited from the credulity of the general public. He humorously implies that the press is essentially guided by the power of commercialization of individual stories, while that newsworthiness is subdued to the principle of advertising and profit-making. Gulliver Joi's hope that publicity, though embarrassing, may be rewarded because it indeed helps him to find Martha. Soon after his shows, the press comes out with another sensational news headline which is: "Startling News! Another Mollowog!"—which publicizes the survival of Martha and her life in Hydrogenia (157). In addition to newspaper competition, which the author also seems to censure, Perce attacks the masterminds and promoters of contemporary show business, describing them not as employers but as

[42] Todd, "Hairy Maid at the Harpsichord," 239 and 248.

parasitic exploiters. Maldi Fremung and Mr. Fiflim—Gulliver Joi and Martha's masters—are almost identical to Gulliver's captors during his Voyage to Brobdingnag. They seem to embody a mercantile type of individualism, which is epitomized, for example, by P.T. Barnum and his American Museum, where all forms of curiosities, oddities, and hoaxes were put to show.

We can only speculate that Perce's attack on contemporary amusements, which he adopted from Swift, was informed by real-life events. While Gulliver Joi's and Martha's masters are the embodiment of P.T. Barnum, the near Lilliputian size of Gulliver Joi conjures up the image of General Tom Thumb—i.e., Charles Stratton, known as the world's shortest person,[43] a true celebrity and probably "the most popular performer of the century"[44] who was Barnum's exceptionally "profitable exhibit" in his American Museum.[45] Thus the whole chivalric mission in the voyage to Hydrogenia may have been incentivized by Tom Thumb's amatory relationship with a woman of his size. In 1847, the *Boston Transcript* gave a report of a rumored marriage that never took place between Tom Thumb and "a little maid."[46] Perce humorously exploits the popular knowledge of the day to inveigh against the ideology of entertainment as an ideology of subjection similar to enslavement. When Gulliver Joi and Martha are in Barbarum, they are protected by the government as escapees from Hydrogenia. But in this country they go under the same humiliating experience as oddities on show. Gulliver tries to negotiate a term of release after a month's exhibition to the public, to which Mr. Fiflim disdainfully retorts that in both Barbarum and Hydrogenia, Gulliver is considered "a mere Mollowog" (194) who has no rights. Though sentimental and shallow at times, Perce's fantastical romance in its first two parts insists on the creation of a more humane and dignified society, professing an ethical position that clearly challenges power and defends individual freedoms.

Gulliver Joi's fantastical adventure in a glass container, among the fantastical creatures of Hydrogenia, is interspersed with imaginary scientific elements which aim to heighten the awareness of the purely imaginative. Perce extrapolates from contemporary photographic processing an imagining of a news periodical made of exceptionally thin silver sheets. These, as may be guessed, develop momentarily on touch: the news-sheet is "made of silver beaten until it had arrived to the thickness of paper, and

[43] Lehman, *Becoming Tom Thumb*, 18.
[44] Ibid., ix.
[45] Wallace, "P.T. Barnum," *Encyclopædia Britannica*.
[46] Quoted in Lehman, *Becoming Tom Thumb*, 87.

printed with a peculiar acid, at the touch of which the silver blackened" (145). In search of Martha whose captor takes her to Barbarum, an island across the ocean, Gulliver Joi and his helpers take a *keo*, which is an inflatable boat that very much resembles Lieutenant Peter Alexander Halkett's 1840s boat-cloak invention, made of Macintosh India-rubber cloth with air-proof cylinder.[47] Perce's version of the Hydrogenian *keo* is "composed of a substance resembling oiled silk, but formed in the shape of our boats. The sides being hollow were filled with hydrogen; and hydrogen was confined in boxes placed under the seats" (184). The author shows an inventive mixture of the scientific and the fabulous. In describing a *keo* resembling a Halkett boat, he imagines it as being a balloon and a gondola combined that sails in the ocean, which for the Hydrogenians is made of air.

During his third voyage, the adventure in Ejario, Gulliver Joi appears on a gynecocratic[48] island with stronger women and weaker men. This part may have been inspired by Desfontaines' *The Travels of Mr John Gulliver*, *Son to Capt Lemuel Gulliver* (1731) which describes the reversal of gender roles in a distant land "where the female inhabitants enjoying superiority over the other sex, act the same part as the men do among us" in Europe.[49] Perce's adventure seems rather to ridicule the advertised dress reform of women's rights activists of the early 1850s and, on that account, this voyage to gynarchic Ejario advocates a protection of patriarchy.

Elbert Perce's *Gulliver Joi* joins in the debate about a most recent and unprecedented cultural "revolt" in mid-nineteenth century America. This was the feminist reform of fashion which marketed the Bloomer costume. This new female outfit symbolically challenged cushioned male normativity and was viewed as a threat to gender role conventions as it was recommended by women's rights activists. The costume was a knee-length full skirt over what looked like baggy trousers.[50] In the early 1850s, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, one of the primary authors of *The Declaration of Sentiments* (1848)[51] along with Lucy Stone, and Amelia Bloomer promoted the "Bloomer" costume, named after Amelia Bloomer who

[47] Timbs, *Year-Book of Facts in Science and Art*, 26.
[48] Bleiler, "Perce, Elbert," *Science Fiction: The Early Years*, 592.
[49] Pierre Desfontaines, preface to *Travels of Mr John Gulliver,* 1:5.
[50] Ginzberg, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*, 80; Sigerman, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*, 56.
[51] *The Declaration of Sentiments* was signed at the first Women's Rights Convention that took place at Seneca Falls, New York, in July 19–20, 1848. See Frost-Knappman and Cullen-DuPont, *Women's Suffrage*, 72-76.

advertised it in her paper, *The Lily*. It was first launched by Stanton's cousin, Elizabeth Smith Mill in 1850.[52]

The novel outfit for women was entirely a northern trend that provoked large dispute about its use and it was reported to have been well received by commentators. The "new style of dress for the ladies—the short skirts and trowsers—is making rapid headway at the North," and the author goes on to say that there is "hardly a paper we open that does not chronicle the appearance of some enterprising female in this costume, and nine times out of ten the editors who have seen them speak in terms commendatory of the new fashion."[53] By the time the first book reviews and announcements about *Gulliver Joi* had appeared in October and November 1851, the Bloomers topic had spread to Europe. In late August 1851, for example, *The Examiner* published a short article, "Bloomerism in Edinburgh," regarding the appearance of two ladies in bloomers who, it turns out, with a sense of relief, were American after all.[54] About the same time, J.H. Nightingale's *Bloomerism, or, The Follies of the Day* was "[f]irst performed at the Theatre Royal, Adelphi, on Thursday, October 2, 1851,"[55] a comedy which culturally responded to the many humorous *Punch* publications of 1851.[56] Women's rights activism and the Bloomers' dress reform as a symbolic expression of female emancipation in 1850s America are the context of Perce's derisive criticism of women's attempts to institutional power. The criticism was prompted by the circulated fears that the Bloomers actually promoted social cross-dressing, and this apparent change of the gender roles was viewed as unacceptable and a radical subversion of patriarchal tradition.

In the previous two journeys, Gulliver Joi is the foreigner who has to find his way to be accepted and he ends up as a runway from both Kailoo

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[52] See Stanton, Anthony, and Gage. *History of Woman Suffrage*, 127; Ginzberg, *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*, 80.

[53] "The Bloomer Costume," *Spirit of the Age,* June 1851: n.p. [3].

[54] "Bloomerism in Edinburgh," *The Examiner*, 555.

[55] Nightingale and Millward, *Bloomerism*, title page [1].

[56] For example, in a *Punch* cartoon a woman dressed in a Bloomer costume scolds her husband who is reading a book on a sofa: "Now, do, pray, Alfred, put down that Foolish Novel, and do Something Rational. Go and play Something on the Piano; you never Practise, now you're Married." The caption hints at certain publicized threats which bloomers were accused of having brought to the patriarchal system: namely, a social cross-dressing and gender role subversion. "The Bloomer Convulsion," an article below this caption, scornfully ridicules dress reformers, and finds in their demands (as women's rights activists) only a superficial parity with men and jocularly infers that "With pantaloons, comes equality." See "The Bloomer Convulsion," *Punch*, 189.

and Hydrogenia. However, in Ejario, although not warmly welcomed at the beginning, he manages to gain the approval of Ejarioan women. When he appears in this lost world of Amazons, women initially see him as a yahoo since he possesses the qualities of courage and fortitude, characteristic of the women in female-governed Ejario, yet he also reminds them of the men in Ejario, despite not wearing a long beard, which is a distinctive feature of Ejarioan men. Gulliver Joi may be compared to a yahoo in Houyhnhnmland where Lemuel Gulliver is a rational being capable of speech and discourse but is physically similar to the yahoos.

The Ejarioan women put Gulliver Joi to the test in order to prove his masculine pride (223-4), and once he has accomplished this he is rewarded with a badge of silver in the shape of breeches with a figure of a dragon-shaped monster at the bottom (227). Because he possesses qualities characteristic of the female sex (i.e., courage and dexterity in riding), Gulliver Joi is to be initiated into the Mysteries of the Dragonites (228). The women in the court are comically presented on rocking-chairs all "rocking furiously" (229) in a form of funfair feminine Arcadian utopia. Under the Queen's order, the women make a low "salaam" (230), which gives a rather Oriental tinge to the whole atmosphere that may be viewed as a comical association with the Bloomers who were mocked for wearing pantaloons that looked like Turkish trousers.[57] During the ceremony of Gulliver's initiation, he is dressed up in a petticoat, and then after a curtain is theatrically drawn, he is forced to spit on a pair of leather trousers suspended from the mouth of a golden dragon (231). The Queen's son, the prince whom Gulliver Joi sees as being exceptionally despondent confides in him and asks for his help (228). It turns out that the whole island is under some sort of spell, and the key to breaking it is attached to the claw of a monstrous dragon in a cave. The prince's story—in the form of an inset fairy-tale titled "Legend of the Golden Dragon and Magic Breeches"—is a chronicle of the rise of the women's rule in Ejario. The legend of the dragon and the liberation of women in Ejario is a parodic imitation and mixture of different partially appropriated elements of classical narratives that include Diana and Actaeon, the legendary fights of St. Samson or Saint George with a dragon, in addition to the parodic exploit of Aristophanes' what-if satire *The Female Haranguers; or, Women in Council Assembled* (trans. 1837). All these are blended to highlight a wrongfully achieved emancipation in Ejario and disparage women's suffrage in American society.

[57] Fischer, "'Pantalets' and 'Turkish Trowsers'," 110-140.

According to the legend, Ejario was previously ruled by a despotic misogynist king called Tabolin the Cruel, who was renowned for his cruelty towards women. The king decreed that he would grant wishes to anyone who would present him with a white deer, with the exception of the desire to be crowned either king or queen. Subsequently, a huntress by the name of Cortelia found a snow white deer in the woods and started chasing it, as she wanted to attain freedom for women as her wish (232-4). The deer was actually sent to Cortelia by a "dragon-shaped monster" (234) who advised her to take the deer to the king, and in exchange for it she should want one of the king's breeches (235-6). Women then had to build a temple honoring the monster, including a statue of him in gold. A padlock should "fasten the breeches securely upon one of the teeth" of this golden dragon, and its golden key (238) had to be returned to the monster in the woods and placed on one of his toes. Meanwhile the monster, who transformed into a man, appeared in the court and informed the king that he should go to the woods the next day where a huntsman would give him a golden arrow that would kill his biggest enemy (242). After the king took this arrow from the stranger in the woods, he returned to his chambers, said the magic words, and the arrow killed him (243)—though at the end of this third voyage it becomes clear that he was actually only transformed, awaiting his resurrection as a male ruler.

After the death of the monarch, a "magic breeches" spell was spread around in Ejario. As a consequence women developed masculine traits and a dislike for fashion, whereas men started to develop effeminate tastes such as liking jewelry and fine clothes (244). Men were emasculated: their shoulders narrowed, and, it may be assumed, as a kind of punishment, the hair "dropped from their heads" (244) but they grew inordinately long beards to look comically unattractive. Then Ejario was divided into two camps, between those which followed their liberator, Cortelia, and those who followed the former king's daughter, Franzletta, who was the legal inheritor to the throne (245). The two competing interests, a democratic and royalist, complete a rather toxic picture of political tensions (245). According to an ancient belief, a stranger will liberate men from female dominance, and a prophecy says that whenever a son in the royal family is borne with hair on his head, the queen's position and the female dominance will then be in jeopardy (246-7).

The inset legend is archetypal in utopian fiction, wherein a chronicle of a utopian state is narrated to an outside visitor. Here, it is by means of a folkloric-mythopoeic ploy that recognizes a Messiah of masculinity in the identity of the stranger. Deeply invective and sardonic in its third part, *Gulliver Joi* suggests that women's rights for emancipation in Ejario were,

at their core, based on revenge not on a desire for egalitarian balance and that the whole implementation of a female governance is, therefore, doomed to be considered as being solely utopian in its essence. Perfectibility, in this sense, is never achieved, first because their freedom generated factions and gave birth to two different states which are now at war. Secondly, because Ejario has an established dictatorship of one gender over another, similar to Swift's Houyhnhnmland which has two races: one of rational creatures over the other of irrational and primitive beings. As a critique of utopian plans, the third voyage in *Gulliver Joi* is a clear anti-utopia. It wants to suggest that if women take power, anarchy, political factions, and war will ultimately follow, while social order and subjection remain equally despotic, and thus less preferable to patrimony. The moral it wants to communicate is that the original hankering for freedom engenders a war of the sexes and ultimately a gynecocracy, and the reversal back to a patriarchal order is consequently achieved through a war of the sexes, whose leader is Gulliver Joi. The writer's conservative outlook, expressed through a sardonic and farcical view of the woman question, prevents him from discerning the social need for emancipation and he simplistically views the 1850s women's right activists as endangering patriarchy by taking a war against *man*kind. The Ejario part was largely influenced by Swift's Book 4, which explores the contrast between anthropomorphic creatures and primitive humanoids, whereas in Ejario it is one between the ruling class of women and the subdued class of men. *Gulliver Joi* integrates science-fiction elements into fantastical scenes of otherworldliness, and such extrapolations mingled with imaginative realities appear to be the constituents of an instrument for perceiving an allegorical allusion to a defamiliarized present-day America. In Perce's moral and fantastical geography, in Gulliver Joi's first two extraordinary voyages, the romantic adventure problematizes the fragility of freedom and denounces commercialized publicity and amusements of the mid-nineteenth century. In its third part, however, it undertakes a critical invective against the publicized women's suffrage of the early 1850s.

Conclusion

The continued fame of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver Travels* can be estimated by the impact it had on the emerging genre of science fiction in the nineteenth century. The extraordinary voyage was the literary form in the nineteenth century which extensively explored scientific reasoning in a fantastic setting. This was a dominant early science-fiction form that

followed the Swiftian mode of fiction.[58] Elbert Perce's *Gulliver Joi* not only subscribes to this fashion of fictionality, but also expands upon the form by imitating the generic lack of unity of Swift's *Gulliver's Travel* as well as by parodying some of the iconic scenes in Swift's satire. It incorporates a sundry of competing sub-genres, themes, and devices to achieve its satirical and critical aims. Similar to its object of imitation, *Gulliver Joi* is composed of varied genre components that include imaginary voyages and the traveler's extraordinary adventures, capitalizing on the Gulliverian pattern to employ allusions not only to its object of imitation but also to the intertextual content in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. It shows that factual, scientific narration encroaches upon romance fantasy of unrealistic improbabilities—a fashion that goes back to seventeenth-century speculative fiction which became exceedingly more articulated in the nineteenth century. *Gulliver Joi* pertains exactly to the formative years of the rise of the scientific romance and illustrates a cohabitation of scientific and fantastical tropes. Politically intertwining liberal and conservative messages, *Gulliver Joi* is a generic medley that includes satire, anti-utopia, science fiction, fantasy, as well as a fairy-tale, into a single romantic and extraordinary adventure to other planets and lost worlds. Following the Swiftian pattern, *Gulliver Joi* anticipates the generic framework and development of the early form of science fiction which was to take shape later in the nineteenth century and even thereafter.

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[58] On Swift and extraordinary voyages, See Suvin, *Victorian Science Fiction in the UK*, 338, 394-395; on Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* and science fiction, see Alkon, "*Gulliver* and the Origins," 164-166, 174-176; for a discussion on extraordinary voyages and science fiction, see Roberts, *History of Science Fiction*, x, and 92-96 for his reading of *Gulliver's Travels*.

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CHAPTER FIVE

ALEKSANDR PTUSHKO'S *THE NEW GULLIVER* [*NOVIY GULLIVER*] (1935): THE WORLD'S FIRST FULL-LENGTH ANIMATED FILM AND PRAGMATICS OF IDEOLOGICAL ADAPTATION

MARIYA DOGAN

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* proved to be exceptionally welcoming material for cinematic adaptations: the first one, a four-minute feature titled *Gulliver's Travels Among the Lilliputians and the Giants*, was produced as early as in 1902 by George Méliès,[1] a French filmmaker who is generally regarded as the founding father of narrative film. While genres of screen adaptations of Swift's novel range from children's fairy-tale (Dave Fleischer's 1939 animated version) to psychological drama (Charles Sturridge's 1996 mini-series) to romantic comedy (Rob Letterman's 2010 film), the authentic text is usually transformed to challenge old morality codes and reflect contemporary reality. Adaptations of the satirical novel often reimagine semantics and pragmatics of the original text and bring forward fascinating mixtures of historical and cultural artefacts based on the well-recognizable plotline.

From its early years, Russian cinema engaged in a dialogue with literary classics, because it allowed both securing the cultural status of motion pictures as the new form of art, and also established its position as "high art" in its own right. Stephen Hutchings and Anat Vernitski in the introduction to *Russian and Soviet Film Adaptations of Literature, 1900-2001* explain that the birth of Russian film coincided with the development of the new socialist state and the need to promote the new and revitalized national self. Cinema's ability to transmit acceptable and easily understandable

[1] Ezra, *George Méliès*, 154.

messages gave the screen adaptations a vital pedagogical function. The chief rationale for literature adaptations during the early Stalinist era was their ability to reinforce the ideology of socialist regime. That is why, while the majority of early Russian films were adaptations of well-known fictional novels, their sources were revised and transformed to relocate the plot into the new reality of the emerging socialist ideology. Thus, many screen versions of the texts from school literature curricula contributed to the formation of the Soviet literary canon and "reinforced points of Stalinist orthodoxy absent from the literary originals."[2] For example, the screen versions of Caucasian tales by Pushkin, Tolstoi and Lermontov that were produced between 1926 and 1928 by Georgian State Cinema were illustrative of ties between the disparate republics of the newly formed Soviet Union.

The development of early Soviet cinema was assisted and supervised by top state officials, including Joseph Stalin himself, who personally was a critic and appraiser for many such films. According to a renowned Russian film critic Aleksandr Troshin, Stalin was appointed the rights of a "supreme director": "he gave lessons, he dictated not only what kind of cinema (theatre, literature, music, etc.) should be created, but also how it should be created."[3] The release of any recording on the big screen was without exception preceded by a screening at the Kremlin cinema hall where a final verdict was declared. Some of these film reviews are preserved in the memories and personal records of their participants: amongst them, Boris Shumyatsky, who oversaw the Soviet film monopoly during 1930-1937, and Stalin's daughter Svetlana Allilueva, who later wrote that "many wonderful films began their march to the audience from this little screen in Kremlin."[4]

It is not surprising, therefore, that, as one of the effective ways of educating the New Soviet man, the rapid development of Soviet cinema was accompanied by the formation of a particular genre of films designed for young moviegoers. Similar to all Soviet films, from the very beginning of its existence, children's cinema has become a powerful tool of agitation and propaganda. These films allowed for the expansion of the network of film distribution and the extension of the audience for politically adjusted features. Alla Salnikova and Anton Burmostrov in "Soviet Children's Cinematography in the 1920s and Its Young Spectators" prove that such films were widely praised by political ideologists and educators alike as an

[2] Hutchings, *Film Adaptations*, xxii.
[3] Qtd. in Alekseev, "To the Problem of Formation," 13. Throughout the text, translations from Russian into English are done by the author.
[4] Ibid.

adequate and sufficient medium for introducing new Soviet values into children's consciousness. Judging from specialized cinematology journals as well as educational periodicals from that period, it can be argued that children's cinema was one of the most "planned" and controlled genres designed to both satisfy the needs of the young audience and, at the same time, to raise a new generation of Soviet people, endowed with new ideals, stereotypes and behavioral models.[5]

These tendencies can explain why Swift's novel *Gulliver's Travels* was already brought to the screen during Soviet cinema's years of inception. The book satisfied the propaganda committee's major requirements: it was already familiar and loved by the young audience while its exotic setting and fantastic plot could be easily adjusted to promote the Marxist theory of class struggle. Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* gained the particular attention of the Russian-speaking community with the first translation into Russian that appeared between the years 1772 and 1773. It was published in various translations and abridgements throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, but the first unabridged translation into Russian appeared only in the early twentieth century, which means that the novel was predominantly accepted by the public as a children's book.

The adventures of Lemuel Gulliver raised important questions, vital for addressing the theme of identity formation: the action of the book takes place in a restricted space of an enclosed fantastic world, where the appearance of the protagonist introduces dissonance and, thus, underlines the flaws of the regime. By comparing the systems of the two universes, the plot could be used to illustrate the defects of monarchic rule in Lilliput. Robert Bird in "Schematics and Models of Genre: Bakhtin and Soviet Satire" writes that Soviet adaptations of Swift's novel often positioned Gulliver as an agent of revolution in the land of unenlightened Lilliputia. "The Lilliputians are literally, 'lower types,' as surveyed from the Soviet Gulliver's vantage point, which is superior in both the physical and moral senses."[6] A director who took the task of adjusting the eighteenth-century satirical novel to the needs of the new state was Aleksandr Ptushko.

Ptushko (1900-1973) was a well-known figure in Soviet film industry and was among the first film directors to recognize the potential of the use of special effects on screen. In 1927, he started his cinematographic career at Moscow's Mosfilm Studio as a puppet engineer and later became director of his own series of silent puppet films. These films were important experiments in various animation techniques, including the

[5] Salnikova, "Soviet Children's Feature Films," 131.
[6] Bird, "Schematics and Models," 441.

combination of puppets and live action in the same frame which became the main technique of Ptushko's first full-length feature *The New Gulliver* (*Noviy Gulliver*, 1935).

On cinematographic level, the puppet animation in *The New Gulliver* was a technological breakthrough. The director started experimenting with various styles of motion-picture photography as early as 1928 and at that time worked out new methods of three dimensional figure animation. In 1932, his first film was released under the title *Vlastelin Byta* (*Master of Existence*). The film combined live action with stop-motion puppetry in the same frame. After its success, Ptushko and his team began their work on the first full-length animated film in the Soviet Union. Two and a half years were required to produce this picture, and in 1935, *The New Gulliver* was released to general acclaim: it was personally approved by Stalin who was said to have been particularly supportive of its animation. The film received the award "For the Best Program" at the Second International film festival in Venice (1934); the certificate of honor of Mosfilm Studio at the International film festival in Moscow (1935); it was screened throughout Europe and the United States and its cinematographic innovations got favorable reviews of international critics. As a result, Ptushko was allowed to set up his own department at Mosfilm, which for more than 30 years continued to make stop-motion animated films, among them the well-known and still enjoyed in the post-Soviet states *The Golden Key* (1939), *Stone Flower* (1946), and *Sadko* (1952).

While animation is often considered to be a component of children's subculture—as an art form that is primarily addressed to them and is based on their psychology—its early Soviet examples discussed rather sophisticated subjects. Olesya Gorokhova in "Transformation of the Child Image in Russian Animation in 1920—1940s" explains that early Soviet sketches and animated shorts were frequently used as *agitprop* cartoons that satirized Western capitalism and promoted the enlightenment of the working class. Animation was an especially favorable medium for the needs of propaganda, writes the scholar, because through an exaggerated and easily understandable visual narrative, typification, idealization and glorification, it could address virtues of the communist world and vices of capitalist society.[7]

In this light, the birth of animation was attributed a particularly important role in Soviet Russia. After it was first introduced in the early 1910s, it was abandoned for over ten years and re-emerged only in 1924 with a ten-minute film *Soviet Toys* (*Sovetskiye Igrushki* by Dziga Vertov).

[7] Gorokhova, "Transformation of the Child's Image," 262.

This is to say, that the formation of the genre coincided with the development of the new state, and, therefore, had to conform to the strict system of the emerging social ideology. During the mid-thirties, when *The New Gulliver* was released, the first generations of young Soviet citizens who grew up already entirely under the Stalinist regime started to claim their independence from the older generation. These young citizens of the Soviet Union had little idea about the pre-revolutionary past of their country and, therefore, were eager to absorb the new (Soviet) image of patriotism. In his development of the ideological agenda, Ptushko concentrated on two concepts: the theme of two contrasting universes and the phenomenon of volumizing the protagonist. By addressing the familiar plot of Swift's novel, the director could experiment with the new techniques of cinematography (combining live action and puppet animation in one frame) and explore the political message to its best advantage.

The New Gulliver used only a general canvas of Swift's plot. The film begins and ends with a live-action sequence that shows the main character, fourteen-year-old Petya Konstantitov, in the real world during his school summer holidays. The frame story explains that as a member of the pioneers' organization, Petya, while staying in the summer camp "Artek," received an award for building a sailboat from driftwood. As an award the boy is given his favorite book, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. Later that day, during a trip to a nearby island, Petya and his friends ask their older friend and counsellor to read the book aloud. Listening to the story in the summer sun, Petya falls asleep and dreams about the events described in the book.

The plotline, connecting the realistic frame story with the protagonist's adventures in the land of fantasy, is suggestive of an interesting intertextual association, which might signify an important influence on Ptushko's work. While Ptushko insisted that the Soviet method of animation developed independently from the American one, he also expressed particular respect to the tradition of American colleagues.[8] In 1934, one year before the appearance of *The New Gulliver*, Walt Disney produced a black and white short cartoon *Gulliver Mickey* released by United Artists. In this version of the story, Mickey Mouse is also drawn to the land of Lilliput after reading Swift's novel: together with his orphaned nephews, he starts reenacting the plot, pretending to be Gulliver. In the fantasy land, Mickey's pocket-watch turns into a horse and a quill into an arrow. The

[8] Sputnitskaya, "The Peculiarities of the Protagonist's Volumization," 75.

story ends with the fight between Gulliver Mickey and a giant spider, which is the same size as the protagonist.[9]

There is no doubt that the evolution of animation in the Soviet Union was parallel to the development of the technique in Western cinema and shows influences from the works of the leading cinematographists of the period. In "Peculiarities of the Protagonist's Volumization in A. Ptushko's Film *The New Gulliver* and the Problem of Identity in Soviet Children's Cinema of the Second Half of the 1930s," Nina Sputnitskaya cites Ptushko's personal notes from 1930s–1940s to prove that the director attributed his interest in the volumization of characters to the earlier film by Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack *King Kong* (1933). Allusions to these two earlier films—Disney's animated short and Cooper's classic monster adventure—which appear in Ptushko's work, demonstrate that the director was familiar with the development of the genre in the West.

At the same time, *The New Gulliver* was a product and a sign of its particular historical and cultural context. The short initial sequence that together with the credits lasts no more than ten minutes contains a number of ideological markers, which are supposed to set the tone for the following events of the plotline. One of the most important among them is the age of the protagonist. As a fourteen-year-old, Gulliver is a coeval with the Soviet State, thus symbolizing both the ideal new citizen and the new country as well. Similar to many other early Soviet films with young protagonists (*Little Red Devil*s, *Vanka the Young Pioneer*, *Mishka Zvonov*, *Kirilcho*, *Orphaned* to name but a few), the leading character of *The New Gulliver* lacks the characteristics of a child. In the initial sequence of the film, Petya and his friends are shown to act like grown-ups: they march in a procession from the residential block to an open polygon to hold an assembly, where they then perform a ceremony to reward their peers. By meeting and exceeding production quotas, the young men participate in the construction of the socialist future—in other words, they function as prophets of the Stalinist utopia. Age, therefore, loses its significance altogether, and the characters psychological maturity depends not on their physical age, but on their ideological consciousness.

In 1928 Boris Yurtsev, founder of the Soviet children's cinema, wrote:

> Obviously, the revolution, the civil war and later unfolding fronts of construction and industrialization, infused with enthusiasm from all layers of the Soviet population, did not pass unnoticed by a Soviet child. Therefore, from a passive, sometimes simply mischievous youngster, a

[9] *Gulliver Mickey*, dir. by Burnt Gillett.

> Soviet child turned into an active person, gaining a lot of experience and knowledge, inaccessible to greenhouse children of the past. [...] Children live just like adults, seething with organizational matters.[10]

The New Gulliver is illustrative of these tendencies that will later become prominent in Soviet children's cinema. Petya is a champion of production, but, at the same time, an inseparable member of the socialist community, a young patriot citizen, a participant of industrialization, and an assistant in collective labor for the benefit of constructing the new Motherland. Svetlana Leontyeva in her analysis of Soviet childhood notes that these characteristics were frequently attributed to children who were members of the Soviet children's organization of pioneers:

> As representatives of special, unique children with respect to other citizens, pioneers were thought to possess a set of unparalleled rights and laws which elevated their status and provided them with patronage functions. This ability is reflected and fixed in a stereotypical image of a heroic child.[11]

Elements of exaggeration and fiction, usual for films created for a young audience, could highlight heroic moods of young characters, who were ready to sacrifice their lives for the sake of communism. Nevertheless, the ideological messages of such films exceeded the requirements of children's cinema. Despite their lighthearted and entertaining moods, the films also reflected the idea that boys and girls who possess a steady life position and a set of strong beliefs were indistinguishable from adult party members. Therefore, they were able to perform the same tasks as their grown-up counterparts and could even often achieve better results.

There is, however, another important reason why Ptushko portrays his main character as a child. As the protagonist is shown in a summer camp which represents an ideal model of society, there is no need to provide reference to his background and family. Similar to the other films with young heroic protagonists, *The New Gulliver* denies the present-day utopia's connection to the pre-communist past and brings to the forefront the theme of renewal and rebirth. As Evgenii Margolit explained in his study of the Soviet cinema of the 1920s-1960s, "Soviet children's cinema articulated the ideal community of the future as the land of children with the government as the people's authoritarian father."[12] There is no surprise, therefore, that in Ptushko's reading of Swift's novel, the authority

[10] Qtd. in Gorokhova, "Transformation of the Child's Image," 262.
[11] Leontyeva, "Children and Ideology."
[12] Margolit, *The Living and the Dead*, 230.

is fulfilled by the community, which becomes a new model of a big family.

After Petya falls asleep while listening to his counsellor reading *Gulliver's Travels*, he dreams about sailing through a storm on a ship that is attacked by pirates. This episode is transitional from the live-action introductory sequence, representing the ideal world of socialist reality, to the fantasy universe of monarchical rule and puppets. Although the roles of the pirates are performed by live actors, the scene brings the viewer into the cinematic world of fantasy. Due to the intentionally emphasized body language and facial expressions of the actors, flickering images and increased projection speed, the episode stylistically resembles early silent motion pictures. At this point the protagonist is already asserted as a guarantor of justice and a fighter for the rights of the oppressed. Petya sees that one of the pirates hits and kicks another captive, a boy whose naked torso and salwar outfit is intended to represent his status as a slave. Together with two other prisoners, Petya fights the pirates and takes power. In this vaudevillian battle, the boys are assisted by a giant fish that devours those pirates who are thrown overboard. The mechanical puppet serves as an announcement that the protagonist is approaching the land of marionettes. At this moment, the ship crashes into the rocks and despite the protagonist's attempts to save the other mariners, no one else survives the shipwreck. Petya recovers ashore, surrounded and tied up by Lilliputians.

The influence of Jean-Jacques Grandville's illustrations both on Petya's dream and on the visual line of Ptushko's film altogether is evident. Judging from its cover, the book that is given earlier to the boy as a reward is the 1930's Russian edition of *Gulliver's Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World* published by *Academia* in the "Treasures of World Literature" series. Nikolay Ushin's front cover illustration, taken from the third part of the book and showing Gulliver and the flying island of Laputa, also notably resembles the engravings of Grandville. Many scenes in the film are in effect re-enactments of his famous pictures, including Gulliver tied down by the people of Lilliput, Gulliver observing the parade, and Gulliver against the wall of the imperial palace. The fact that the protagonist's dream is inspired by the visual medium of Grandville's illustrations, can explain a surrealistic tint of the storyline, which, instead of following more closely Swift's text, acquires the meaning of an imitation if not a parody.

At this moment the viewers finally have the first chance to meet the puppets of Ptushko's animation. The film features three thousand different puppets, each of them with a detachable head, which allowed for the

portrayal of a wide range of facial expressions. Their clothing with its decorative exuberance is stylized to represent the lush costumes of the seventeenth century court. Ptushko dressed his royal puppets in breeches, short fitted coats, silk shirts with jabot collars, and elaborate wigs with tight curls to symbolize the vanity of the ruling class. Although each puppet was created individually, generically the figures of the court members reflected the tradition of depicting capitalists in Soviet agitation posters of the 1920s: they are big-bellied, standing on thin legs with exaggerated, fierce facial expressions. The puppets with their weak arms and legs, short rounded bodies and disproportionally big heads resemble the anatomy of a child, which on a psychological level actualizes the characters' childish features and becomes a metaphor for their infantile naivety, lack of will and immaturity.

The somewhat comical image of crude and misshapen adults allows the viewers to see their failings and weaknesses as a result of the lack of development or education. While they exist in an impermeable universe, which does not permit the passage of evolutionary changes, the Lilliputians are bound to remain full of temptations and lies.

When the protagonist, Petya the new Gulliver, enters the island country of Lilliput, he as a "big" child is inserted into the world of "little" adults, and these definitions have not only physical, but also moral and philosophical meanings. The ability to show the two worlds side by side is of particular importance within the ideological message of the film. Susan Buchan describes the processes behind the comprehension of puppet animation, which, as she explains, is meant to expose the true nature of the real world.

> Puppet animation represents a different "world" for the spectator, something between "*a* world", created with the animation technique, and "*the* world", in its use of real objects and not representational drawings. [...] "*A* world" as different from "*the* world" is a distinction of ultimate relevance in a phenomenological investigation of the visual experience of object animation, what it represents and how we perceive this world.[13]

For Ptushko's film, showing the two worlds in comparison meant that both the realistic world of the Stalinist utopia and the animated universe of imperial reign had to be perceived not as ultimate and unquestionable absolutes, but as subjective realities with possible imperfections. It is not surprising, therefore, that later reviews of the film frequently drew attention to the static nature of the protagonist's character, a true Man-

[13] Buchan, *Animated Worlds*, 21.

Mountain, and the lively and entertaining Lilliputians. Sputnitskaya, for example, notes that although shortly after its release the film was accused by international critics of promoting communism and a biased view of the socialist system, the ideological message of *The New Gulliver* proved to be unstable. Decades later, writes the scholar, other connotations became obvious and now a new semantic field of associations is visible, which, most likely, was not intended by the authors. Petya, who is an intruder into the land of Lilliput, seems static and unmoving in relation to small men, who are livelier and more voluminous than Gulliver. Sputnitskaya illustrates this perception with the analysis of the official poster for the film where a large figure of Gulliver in the background is looking flat and disconnected in relation to the Lilliputians in the foreground who add dynamics to the poster's composition.[14] Sputnitskaya continues:

> To paraphrase the famous statement of Yuri Lotman, you can state with certainty that the juxtaposition of a boy and a puppet in *The New Gulliver* emphasizes the deadness of a human, and the world of artistic Lilliput is much more attractive than the regulated lifestyle of "Artek."[15]

After Petya is tied down to the ground, he is given water from a hose operated by a manual water pump similar to those used by fire brigades. The chief of police decides to add a sleeping pill to the water and Petya is put to sleep until further investigation is completed. The fate of the Man-Mountain is debated in the parliament, where the case about "the unauthorized entry of the New Gulliver into the Lilliput" is heard by the representatives of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Food Industry. Naturally, both institutions intend to pursue their individual goals, so while the army officials suggest killing the giant with the weapons that they themselves can provide for this cause, the agriculturalists want to hold the intruder prisoner and feed him to satiety with their produce. As a fight starts among the members of the parliament, the monarch is called to settle the matter. The grotesque prevails in the stylistics of this scene: filmed with long shots, it shows a priest gallantly lifting his cassock to tiptoe away from the scuffle, the prime minister holds two parliamentarians by the scruff of their necks, the police officer loses his front teeth in the fist-fight while the king is genuinely entertained and enjoying the view.

The camera gradually brings the viewer closer to the absurd and incessantly gesturing sovereign, who seems to obsessively hold on to his sceptre and orb. The pencil-thin moustache on the king's face, his swollen

[14] Sputnitskaya, "Peculiarities of the Protagonist's Volumization," 77.
[15] Ibid., 82.

nose, half-open mouth with full lips and a row of protruding front teeth help create an infantile image of the ruler. The king of Lilliput is not capable of speaking his mind and his speech is played to the parliamentarians from a phonograph record while the sovereign simply opens his mouth. The vinyl breaks down, adding yet more parody to the satiric nature of this mock speech, and the prime minister hurries to repair it. Once the plate is glued back together, the viewers find out that the central part of the speech has disappeared from the recording and the new speech ironically voices the credo of the dictatorial regime: "I live to ... entangle the people."

The parliament makes a decision to use Gulliver for military purposes and the sleeping boy is transported from the shore to the city on a special platform pulled by 15 tractors. The boy wakes up when the king puts a sceptre to his nose. Although the protagonist is immediately shown to be suspicious and ironic of the monarchical rule, for he laughs at the pretentiousness of the king and refuses his proposition of cooperation, still the boy genuinely enjoys the military parade that passes under his feet: dozens of tractors pulling platforms with cannons, barrels with food, accompanied by fat cooks, marching military troops, and acrobats on bicycles and tricycles.

Suddenly, the action switches to dungeons, where members of the proletariat are planning a revolt against the ruling regime. In a cave that seems to be carved in a cliff on the sea coast away from the imperial capital city, these people present a stark contrast to the characters introduced earlier. They appear to be disciplined and organized while their speech is intelligent and enticing. A special technique is used for the figures of the workers, which is meant to set them apart from the representatives of the wealthy upper class. Ptushko designed the bodies of revolutionists from dark-color plasticine that was secured on wire frames. They have lean athletic bodies with more accurate anatomical proportions than the members of the court. Facial features and outlines of clothing are drawn schematically with thin incision lines. Lack of nuances in the puppets representing the proletariat and simplification of their characters allow Ptushko to represent the working class as a group, a unity, without the unnecessary attention to individuality. This group can be read as a semantic sign of a new era, where no excessive notice is taken of material affluence and vanity. A similar technique of simplification and schematization in depicting the image of characters would become characteristic of other works of early Soviet animation. Gorokhova, for example, points out tendencies towards typification and idealization of individuals in early Russian cartoons. She argues that characters in early Soviet animation often are portrayed not as separate people, but as a kind

of generalized types, carriers of distinctive features (that is, of a certain age and emotional traits), and representative of a group.[16]

The workers agree to begin the revolt on the following day, but they are concerned about the giant who might fight for the king and his court. Even though the Lilliputians agree that they are ready to combat the Man-Mountain in case he decides to take part in the military operations of those in power, they decide to first find out which side he might support. Soon they come upon a briefcase, the only real-life object that was washed ashore after the shipwreck. Inside, they discover a notebook in the Russian language (or in his native tongue, as it is later referred to by Petya), which belongs to the giant. The revolutionists work in unison to extract the notebook from the briefcase and use harpoons to open it and turn its pages. One of the pages displays a calligraphic inscription: "Long live the mighty workers' union of the entire Earth!" This appears enough to assure the proletariat that Gulliver will help them in their battle against the oppressive regime.

Meanwhile, the king and his ministers hold a fun-fair to display their new military device—the giant boy. The scene which shows Petya surrounded by the Lilliputian court is technically one of the most demanding scenes of the film. In some shots the live actor was filmed alongside mechanically-operated puppets, while in others, a full-size puppet of the actor was animated together with the marionettes. In the shots when the living actor had to participate in the same frame as the dolls, the movements of the actor were recorded in stop-motion technique, meaning that he had to move slowly and in accordance with the puppets to make the movement seem natural on screen.

During the scene, Petya is sitting in front of the palace at a giant pedestal which serves as a table for him and, at the same time, locates the seats of the other guests. The platform is placed on the market square where the Lilliputians are entertained by street artists and musicians. Gulliver, fed from a conveyor line, enjoys the menu that is announced on a poster: "Unprecedented show!!! Feeding of the Man-Mountain!!! Food conveyor!! 1000 cows 1000 sturgeon 1000 cooks. The entire royal court present at the table. Splendid concert 1000№." Machines that are used during the fun-fair—crane delivering barrels with drinks to Gulliver's table and conveyor line that brings him trays with food—refer to the Soviet industrial boom of the 1930s. Similar to tractors, a telephone and a movie camera that appear in the earlier scene of the parade, these details contradict the assumed historical period of the plot setting. At the same

[16] Gorokhova, "Transformation of the Child's Image," 263.

time, signs of mechanization and industrialization prove that the development of Lilliput has outpaced the monarchical regime and justify the need for a coup.

The concert "in honour of the high guest" is the culmination of the fun-fair. Once the chief of police and the prime minister realize that Gulliver has consumed all their food supplies, they decide to distract the giant from eating. One of the entries of the program is the song "My Little Lilliputian Girl" ("*Moya Lilliputochka*" composed by Lev Schwarts). Intended as a parody of Russian sentimental romance, the song ironically gained renown and later became one of the famous episodes of *The New Gulliver*, while its popularity outshined that of the film itself. The fictional singer named Fo-La, performing the song, is commonly understood by reviewers as a reference to Aleksandr Vertinsky, one of the prominent figures of the Russian "Silver Age," who gained popularity at the beginning of the twentieth century with his ariettas and romantic songs. Fo-La's singing is accompanied by a dance of the royal *corps de ballet*, their choreography and costumes resemble a cabaret show rather than a classical performance. The queen, sitting next to the king, notices that he is exceptionally excited about the appearance of the dancers. She then slaps the monarch in the face and covers his eyes.

The song and the accompanying visual sequence are rare episodes in Ptushko's film when the viewers are shown the women of Lilliput. As the only scene that provides reference to the position of women in the fantasy country, it is particularly important within the study of the adaptation of the original text to the needs of communist ideology. With their rounded eyes and mouths, marionette movements and elaborate dresses, the women of Lilliput, apparently, are viewed as a major source of temptation for Lilliputian men. While only men are visible in the parliament and in the factory, the roles that are assigned to women revolve around either wifely duties or entertainment for males. Such attitudes, however, are contradictory to the image presented in the introductory live-action scene of the film, where girls and boys attend side by side the reward ceremony in Artek. Here Ptushko alludes to the principles of "new morality" that had become popular in Soviet Russia by the 1920s. Alexandra Kollontai, one of the main theorists of Marxist feminism, introduced the concept of "the new woman, the plenipotentiary of the new socialist society" in *The New Morality and the Working Class*:

> Life in the last decades, under the heavy hammer blows of vital necessity, has forged a woman with a new psychological sense, new needs, and a new temper. [...] Who, then, are these new women? They are not the pure, "nice" girls whose romance culminates in a highly successful marriage,

> they are not wives who suffer from the infidelities of their husbands, or who themselves have committed adultery. Nor are they old maids who bemoan the unhappy love of their youth, just as little as they are "priestesses of love," the victims of wretched living conditions or of their own depraved natures. No, it is a wholly new "fifth" type of heroine, hitherto unknown, heroines with independent demands on life, heroines who assert their personality, heroines who protest against the universal servitude of woman in the State, the family, society, who fight for their rights as representatives of their sex.[17]

In the 1930s, the ideal woman of the Soviet state was free from the old sanctimonious morality and prejudice and saw her mission not in her family, but in social realization. Svetlana Smagina in her analysis of the "new woman" image in the Soviet cinema of the 1930s notes that female characters in the films of this period were represented primarily as workers, Stahanovites who take pride in their ability to work harder than men and produce more than their co-workers. On screen, these values are posed as principles of the new attractiveness and femininity.[18]

This explains why the images portrayed by Ptushko in the scene of the cabaret are meant to be understood as one of numerous precedents of monarchical tyranny. It is not accidental, therefore, that the performance of the royal *corps de ballet* is followed by a dance of Lilliputian dwarfs—the epitome of the oppressed. The puppets of the dwarfs are significantly smaller than the Lilliputians themselves and it is possible to distinguish only the general silhouettes of the creatures. In other words, the size of a Lilliputian in relation to a dwarf is proportional to the difference in size of Gulliver and the Lilliputians. This perception of scale in Lilliput acts as a proof that the laws of nature and system of balance within this universe are parallel to the norms of the real world. Sigizmund Krzhizhanovsky, the co-author of the screenplay for *The New Gulliver*, commented upon the peculiarities of scale in Swift's novel in his work "Countries Which are Not":

> [A]s a true artist, Jonathan Swift allows himself to violate measure only once: to miniaturize or magnify the bodies of the people among which he lives. Beyond this he is extremely precise and never departs from realistic manner of writing.[19]

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[17] Kollontai, "New Woman."
[18] Smagina, "The Image of 'New Woman'," 170.
[19] Qtd. in Bird, "Schematics and Models," 450.

Such dimensional constants determine the integrity of the artistic world, and also raise the question of size to a philosophical and ideological level. Although these miniature people appear to have human features, the master of ceremonies treats them like animals, keeping the Lilliputian dwarfs in a cage and using a whip to make them perform the spectacle. This signifies that size can be not only a source of strength and authority, as it is in Gulliver's case, but can also become a means of abuse and injustice.

As soon as Petya observes discrimination in Lilliput and realizes how mistreated the oppressed are, he asks for proof regarding the well-being of the king's subjects. In response, he is offered another song, "Under the King's Wise Rule" ("*Pod mudroy vlastyu korolia*" composed by Lev Schwarts), which praises the reign of the monarch. The boy, however, realizes that the entire performance is a lie and starts doubting the "harmlessness" of the regime. As the Lilliputians sing about the wise leadership of their king, Petya interrupts them and starts singing the pioneer song from the introductory scene at the summer camp. It is picked up by workers and echoes around the country. Members of the court escape the fair in horror as now there could be no doubt that in the coming battle the Man-Mountain will support the uprisers. The workers of a military factory stop work, they take over the arsenal, and start the revolution. They warn Petya about the planned murder attempt against him, and the boy manages to spit out the poison that he is given by the king's spies.

When the government orders police and army to help in their fight against Gulliver, the ministries send in tanks, troops, and the Lilliputian fleet to conquer the boy and kill him. The Man-Mountain captures the royal ships, ties them with a rope and turns the course of the battle. As the proletariat occupies the city, the court runs away and the king is left hanging from a clock on a city tower, reminding the viewers about his puppet nature. Gulliver proclaims: "I declare open the meeting of free Lilliputians!" but he wakes up from the laughter of his friends and realizes that he has said the last phrase aloud. With these words, the protagonist re-enters the original world and, despite his confused look, seems happy to return to reality. As Petya looks straight into the camera, his last words in the film are addressed both to his friends and to the viewers: "Guys! How big you are! How big life is!"

The conflict of *The New Gulliver* is based not on the relationships between the protagonist and the Lilliputians, but on the interaction between the two universes and on the characters' claiming their borders. In a fantasy universe, once an outsider is placed into the new world, he is

asked to accept the principles of nature that govern the fairy-tale land. This happened, for example, to Alice in Wonderland, where the girl had to change her size in order to gain entry into the beautiful garden behind the door. With each size change, the girl becomes wiser and more experienced in fulfilling the task she would like to achieve. Petya Konstantinov, on the other hand, does not feel the need for change in the land of Lilliput and is comfortable in his exaggerated proportions. He remains a spectator in the new country and is set to comprehend events of Lilliput from the familiar point of view of the Soviet working class. As a representative of the socialist utopia, the protagonist does not question his identity and does not break up with the utopian world, but monitors the differences and calmly takes note of the events. Even though Petya expresses disapproval of the regime, he does not attempt to influence the political situation in Lilliput until he is drawn into action by the uprisers.

Lilliputians also treat Gulliver either as a phenomenon of nature or as an unknown mechanical device, and only in the final scenes do they manage to establish productive cooperation with him. Although the idealized protagonist is placed in the center of the plot and acts as a prophet of change, he is not a driving force behind the development of the storyline. This allows the authors of *The New Gulliver* to further support their ideological message and to prove the advantage of the communist regime: even in enclosed universes, the advance of proletariat rule is inevitable and its advent will, eventually, manifest itself in the form of the Stalinist utopia of young pioneers.

The New Gulliver is representative of the initial stage of the development of Soviet cinema, the stage of experiments and the formation of the main features. Animated films, designed as an independent artistic and educational cinematographic genre, were recognized at the state level, supported and controlled by the party. Ptushko's film through the new methods of characters' typification and schematization exposed main trends in the interpretation of the image of a child as a product and oracle of the revolution. Similar films, which combined elements of fantasy with a representation of the viewer's daily routine, remained in constant demand throughout the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty first century. Russian animation and children's cinema continued to place realistic characters into alternative worlds, and Swift's satirical novel, which provided fruitful material for Ptushko's adaptation, would time and again be addressed and modified by film-makers, giving life to autonomous and inspiring works of art.

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CHAPTER SIX

REWRITING JONATHAN SWIFT'S *A MODEST PROPOSAL* IN "POST-RACIAL" AMERICA

ALEXANDRA GLAVANAKOVA

This country was founded by slave owners who wanted to be free.
George Carlin, *What Am I Doing in New Jersey*

True freedom is having the right to be a slave.
Paul Beatty, *The Sellout*[1]

This chapter explores several American rewritings of Jonathan Swift's satirical essay and political pamphlet *A Modest Proposal* with a special focus on social criticism in the context of the polarized debates in the U.S. on racial intolerance, class division, and economic inequality. While the most obvious temptation for the satirist, and equally for the scholar, concerning these issues in the contemporary age of post-truth, fake news, and "Make America Great/White Again" slogans, would undoubtedly be that American original: the current U.S. President, the critical gaze here will be directed elsewhere. Because the problem with any attempt to satirize Trump's improbable, but very real, presidency is that he has already acted so outrageously as to be beyond parody, though the attempts to satirize him have been plentiful**.** For example, Howard Jacobson uses Swift's epigrammatic words as an epigraph: "How is it possible to expect that mankind will take advice, when they will not so much as take warning"[2] to a stinging satire about the current leader of the free world. However, Jacobson's novella has little potential to shock its readers since they have no doubt come across much more scandalous material in the

[1] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 83.
[2] Swift, "Thoughts on Various Subjects," 304.

news and on social media. The title,[3] for instance, is lifted from a notorious 2005 "Access Hollywood" hot microphone recording when Trump stated that his fame allowed him to grab women "by the pussy"—although he later argued that this was mere "locker-room talk." Jacobson calls Donald Trump "a carrot-face without feelings,"[4] rising to power in the current "era of the unlikely,"[5] which has become strongly dissociated from the Enlightenment values and ideals, on which America was founded.

It has to be noted that Trump can be characterized as an American original in many ways. He is as original as "a pair of Levy's blue jeans."[6] Perhaps he is also "a true contemporary vernacular hero in the great American tradition," commencing with Mark Twain's *Huck Finn*.[7] Trump *is* an American original also in building the image of self-made success through constant self-promotion in the media. He has linked his appeal irrevocably to consumerism, branding not just various products but mostly himself.[8] Thus, a consumerist culture has entrusted with power a person who is a celebrity, once again reviving the debate on the celebrity-hero opposition:

> The hero was distinguished by his achievement; the celebrity by his image or trademark. The hero created himself; the celebrity is created by the media. The hero was a big man; the celebrity is a big name.[9]

A celebrity represents derived values, whereas a hero is authentic, for this is a person "who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself."[10] Not only a celebrity, Trump has been perceived as being part of the "American rogue gallery" too.[11] Indeed, he has been exposed repeatedly and alternatively as a pseudo-democratic demagogue, emulating the strategies

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[3] Harold Jacobson's novella *Pussy* (2017) is similar in tone to Philip Roth's *Our Gang* (1971), which draws a caricature of the then-president Richard Nixon in the character of Trick E. Dixon.
[4] Freeman and Jacobson, "The Author of Satirical Trump Novel *Pussy* on Why We Live in "Obscene Times,"" n.p.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Kroes, "Signs of Fascism Rising," 218.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Some of the many commercials Trump has participated in are for Pizza Hut, MacDonald's, Visa Card, Oreo biscuits, as well as numerous others selling Trump, the man, and commercial products bearing his name.
[9] Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, 61.
[10] Campbell, *The Power of Myth*, 151.
[11] Kroes, "Signs of Fascism Rising," 219.

of populists like President Andrew Jackson (1767-1845) and Huey Long (1893-1935), the Louisiana governor and U.S. senator; of the image-maker President Theodore Roosevelt (1858-1919), and of Vice President Spiro Theodore Agnew, who resigned during Nixon's second term of office on suspicion of bribery, extortion and tax fraud. Trump is an American original in another more menacing manner.[12] As Kroes notes, the current president may be standing "in a toxic line of descent in American history, a line connecting the outbursts of nativism and nationalism, of racism and white supremacy, of hate of strangers and social and cultural diversity."[13]

Therefore, Trump is not an aberration, in my view, but rather a reflection of the complexities of American identity and leadership. For Trump could be regarded as a synthesis of what I would call *malign* American individualism associated with the mentality, anti-intellectualism and taking the law in your hands of the Wild West, which stands in contrast to the *benign* Emersonian individualism of the good-because-divine self-reliant individual. Indeed, the same country that elected Barack Obama elected Donald Trump. The same country that exhibits goodwill, generosity, fortitude, strength, leadership under certain circumstances, demonstrates aggression, arrogance, anxiety, prejudice and bigotry under others.[14]

I would go further and argue that the election of Donald Trump could also be a very positive development for America. My argument is that his presidency sensitizes the American people in general, and the U.S. political class in particular, as well as the rest of the world for that matter, to issues of racism, class division and economic inequality; to questions concerning the potency of liberal democracy in practically implementing the Enlightenment ideals of equal individual rights, the rule of law, humanism and rationalism. What Trump in the position of leadership problematizes is the correlation between enlightenment and democracy and the probability of the one persisting without the other. It is the very fact of Trump's election that questions the health of a multiethnic democracy and its future as more than a utopian vision. His election and

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[12] In addition, Kroes draws a parallel between Trump and Mussolini in their strategies of populist maneuvering, and quotes an article in the German press, which refers to Trump as "America's blond Mussolini" (219).

[13] Kroes, "Signs of Fascism Rising," 223.

[14] Some of President Trump's anti-immigration initiatives seem to echo retrograde ideas flourishing at the beginning of the 20th century. For example, Madison Grant's *The Passing of the Great Race: Or, the Racial Basis of European History* (1916) propositioned the cleansing of America from "inferior races" through birth control, racial segregation, anti-miscegenation and anti-immigration laws.

now presidency require the urgent answers to the following: What is it that makes America *great* now, again, or ever? How can the project of America work, if at all? Today wide-ranging anti-enlightenment sentiments have inspired mass movements leading to the election of anti-democratic demagogues in several countries. But can democracy function effectively without enlightenment?

It is in this particular context that issues of integration and discrimination in a post-racial society emerge with a new urgency. "The problem is that we don't know whether integration is a natural or an unnatural state," Paul Beatty, the author of the novel *The Sellout*, aptly formulates: "Is integration, forced or otherwise, social entropy or social order?"[15] What does the term "post-racial" actually mean? Does it refer to presumable racial blindness? Does it refer to political correctness taken to the extreme? Does it refer to the establishment of a non-racist society? For the purposes of the current analysis, Vincent Stephens's definition of the term is appropriate: post-racialism is "to live in a space where race is no longer a significant discriminator."[16] However, Stephens immediately questions the applicability of post-racialism to the American context, given the history of racism in the country. He is more inclined to interpret the concept as another mask, another "way of burying the persistence of slavery under the veneer of progress, inclusion and the acceptance of diversity."[17] While post-racialism remains an "American ideal of great rhetorical force,"[18] racism is often camouflaged in official political discourse, so that it mutates and resurfaces into other forms, which still serve to maintain white racial supremacy.[19] Glenda Carpio also claims that the "legacy of slavery underwrites the post-civil rights backlash against African Americans and the new forms of segregation and institutionalized poverty to which they have been subjected."[20]

Critics have tried to pinpoint the exact day when American society is thought to have entered this particular stage.[21] According to Tim Wise, the

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[15] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 168.
[16] Stephens, *Postracial America*, xiv.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Stephens, *Postracial America*, 9.
[19] See, for example, Linda Burnham's categorization of these forms for which she provides the following labels: "double-blind racism, dog-whistle racism, color-blind racism, and visually evocative racism" (81).
[20] Carpio, *Laughing Fit to Kill*, 23.
[21] See, for example, Roopali Mukherjee, "Antiracism Limited," *Cultural Studies* 30 no 1 (2016): 47-77, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2014.935455; Ian F. Haney-

idea of a post-racial society can be traced back to the time of the passing of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, since in one example he provides of a Gallup poll conducted at the time, "two-thirds of whites claimed that blacks were treated equally in white communities."[22] Or perhaps the year was 1967 when Thurgood Marshall was appointed the first African-American member of the Supreme Court? Or when Barack Obama was elected president in 2008? As one character in Beatty's novel remarks:

> You know the only place where there's no racism? ... Remember those photos of the black president and his family walking across the White House lawn arm-in-arm. Within those fucking frames at that instant, and in only that instance, there's no fucking racism.[23]

Still, Colson Whitehead resorts to irony a year after Obama's election, when, he writes that America "officially became a postracial society. Fifty-three percent of the voters opted for the candidate who would be the first president of African descent, and in doing so eradicated racism forever."[24] Whitehead highlights the realization that the Obama-era modifier is incorrect, because it assumes that centuries of racism that began with the arrival of the first enslaved African on American soil could be magically obliterated. Though the "conflicting worldviews [of black and white] had been eclipsed by the façade of equality in the image of Obama,"[25] reality and fiction have exposed the concept of a post-racial society in America as incorrect, more wishful thinking than fact. The current presidency reveals that "post-racial America" is indistinguishable from preceding history, for there is a "lack of any measurable political change,"[26] as Beatty observes–a claim reiterated by Tim Wise that there has been "no widespread systemic change"[27] regarding racism.

The unreality of post-racialism gives rise to bitterness and anger. Anger emerges as the prevalent sentiment of the moment, which has led not only to the election of Trump, but also to a series of recent publications

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López, "Is the Post in Post-Racial the Blind in Colorblind," *Berkley Law Scholarship Repository*, 32 Cardozo L. Rev. 807, 2010. https://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/facpubs.

[22] Tim Wise, "Between Barack and a Hard Place," 33.

[23] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 244.

[24] Whitehead, "The Year of Living Postracially," n.p.

[25] Newkirk, "The Myth of a Post-Racial America," n.p.

[26] Beatty, "Interview," n.p.

[27] Tim Wise, "Between Barack and a Hard Place," 29.

on the subject.[28] To summarize, anger fuels satire. Satire in general "thrives upon heteroglossia, polyphonic scenes, or rampant chaos."[29] Regarding its purpose, based on Steven Weisenburger's distinction, satire can be generative or degenerative. Whereas the first seeks to correct and rectify a wrong against a presumed set of norms, the latter functions as radically subversive, aiming to undermine hierarchies of value and to reflect suspiciously on ways of making meaning, including its own.[30]

In this context, the consideration of Jonathan Swift's literary legacy becomes even more significant. Published anonymously, his pamphlet *A Modest Proposal* (1729) originated in anger as well. The text exposes the social reality in Ireland in the early eighteenth century. Through "the complicated interplay of compassion and contempt,"[31] with the rhetorical force of ridicule, irony and exaggeration, Swift critiques the pervasive lack of morality. His ferocious scorn, bitterness and moral pessimism bleed into the impeccable argumentation of a seemingly rational "project."[32]

> I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.[33]

His intention is to shock an indifferent public into realizing the extremity of poverty and suffering in Ireland at the time. Deeply skeptical of the heightened optimism of Enlightenment rationalism for social improvement and personal perfectability, Swift adopts the persona of an English economist, whose proposal sounds perfectly reasonable but the reasons provided are absurd and the proposed solution—cannibalism—is unquestionably morally

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[28] There has been an avalanche of publications on the topic of the social, political and literary repercussions of anger in the current age. See, for example, Pankaj Mishra, *Age of Anger*. *A History of the Present* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017); Rebecca Traister, *Good and Mad: The Revolutionary Power of Women's Anger* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018).

[29] Dickson-Carr, *African American Satire*, 5.

[30] Weisenburger, *Fables of Subversion*, 3.

[31] Rawson, "A Reading of *A Modest Proposal,*" 128.

[32] Project proposals on any matter were the vogue of the day. In American literature, which was only just beginning to develop during the same period, the significant "Project for Moral Perfection" was penned by Benjamin Franklin as part of his Autobiography: the first self-help book to spell out the true essence of the self-made man and the American dream.

[33] Swift, *A Modest Proposal*, 504.

repugnant. The pursuit of reason, Swift seems to be suggesting, can lead beyond humanity and sanity, as the proposer advises in addition to "flay the Carcase; the Skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable Gloves for Ladies, and Summer Boots for fine Gentlemen."[34]

I, as many others, have puzzled over the identity of Swift's "very knowing American" acquaintance in London who is quoted as something of an authority on the matter. One interpretation suggested by Thomas Lockwood[35] is that America, though swiftly civilized by the colonizers, appeared at the time as the wilderness, where one can know about the cooking of infant flesh. Cannibalism provides another link with the image of the wilderness and of Africa in the white imaginary.[36] The "very

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[34] Ibid., 505.

[35] Lockwood, "Is Eating Babies Really So Terrible?" n.p.

[36] Extensive study of the origin and function of cannibalism in the pamphlet has been made by several scholars. Martyn Powell claims, "Swift's *Modest Proposal* was not an aberration–this cannibalistic strain runs through eighteenth-century Irish literature when dealing with the relationship between imperial metropolis and colony" (38). In *God, Gulliver and Genocide. Barbarism and the European Imagination 1492-1945*, Claude Rawson examines extensively images and allegories of cannibalism in Swift alongside Old and New World writings. Daniel Eilon further claims that a passage in Locke's first *Treatise of Government* provided Swift with a source for *A Modest Proposal* (1). Locke, in Eilon's analysis, wrote a refutation of Sir Robert Filmer's *Patriarcha*, where he particularly objected to the immorality of some of the precedents cited by Filmer as ancient examples of absolute and inalienable authority: fathers who sold or gave away their children. Locke uses irony to counteract and reject the vicious reasoning provided by Filmer's examples. Here are some of his points:

> But if the Example of what hath been done, be the Rule of what ought to be, History would have furnish'd our A- with instances of *this Absolute Fatherly Power* in its heighth and perfection, and he might have shew'd us in *Peru*, People that begot Children on purpose to Fatten and Eat them. (Locke, *First Treatise*, Ch. iv, par. 57, 199)

This particular paragraph from Locke's *First Treatise*, in Eilon's view, is Swift's source of the central idea of his pamphlet.

Of special relevance here is Thomas Jefferson's assumed racist attitude for Toussaint and the Haitians. He allegedly described them as "Cannibals of the terrible republic" in a letter to Aaron Burr, then a Republican strategist, in February 1799, when Jefferson was John Adam's vice president. The Haitian revolution resounded deeply in the American South to which attests Herman Melville's subtle examination of the whites' fear of the barbaric, cannibalistic "Negroes" in the novella *Benito Cereno* published in installments in *Putnam's Monthly* in 1855 on the brink of the Civil War.

knowing American," who provides the information about the edibility of children, could be a reference to the experience of Caribbean and continental North American slavery, and possibly to the plight of American Indians. There are, indeed, a number of echoes and allusions to slavery in the pamphlet,[37] though this is not the only text by Swift, which deals with questions of bondage. More specifically at the end of the proposal's first paragraph, Swift suggests that one future for the starving children might be to "sell themselves to the Barbadoes."[38] He returns to the idea of sale a little later when he suggests that a twelve-year-old "will not yield above Three Pounds, or Three Pounds and half a Crown at most, on the Exchange."[39] The age of twelve is common in documents concerning slavery as the dividing point between child and adult slaves. In addition, the Irish are referred to as "our Savages,"[40] a word, which was used at the time to label Africans. More important than these details, however, is the pamphlet's rhetoric of consumption and calculation.[41] Swift's insistence on costs and profits, on the two shillings needed to rear a child to a year and the ten shillings "for the Carcase of a good fat Child"[42] has its counterpart in the language of slavery. Harriet Beecher Stowe employs a similar technique in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* where the benevolent, goodhearted slave-owner, Augustine St. Clare, who suffers from a fatal case of Hamletian procrastination, calculates the value of his own white flesh, should he be put on the market for sale.

Swift's pamphlet has been rewritten numerous times and recontextualized with different purposes and effects in the U.S.[43] One of the Founding

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[37] For an analysis see, John Richardson, *Slavery and Augustan Literature: Swift, Pope and Gay* (New York: Routledge, 2004).
[38] Swift, *A Modest Proposal*, 502.
[39] Ibid., 504.
[40] Ibid.
[41] James Ward examines Swift's essay in the context of the commercial discourse of the day. In this particular reading though Swift is positioned "as an outsider offering a horrified commentary on an insanely inquisitive culture," the Proposal "as a saleable product cannot help but participate in the cult of commodity fetishism it satirizes" (1).
[42] Swift, *A Modest Proposal*, 505.
[43] Several examples of the many: David Noise. "A Modest Proposal (with Apologies to Jonathan Swift)" *Psychology Today*. December 12, 2012. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/our-humanity-naturally/201212/modest-proposal; *A Modest Proposal/A Modist Prepozel* by Mary Ellen Carroll and Jonathan Swift (New York, NY: Presse Endémique, 1994) is a book recording the 1991 exhibition in Galerie Hubert Winter in Vienna of eight white wool naval blankets from WW II, which were monogrammed with the

Fathers of America, Benjamin Franklin, taught himself to write by reading Swift. The evidence is not only in the brilliance of Franklin's irony, in his adoption of many pen names, in the attributes of the author's persona, but also in the rigor of the logic and the ghastliness of the argument he often provides.[44] Franklin too resorted to the use of fictitious masks, impersonation, and anonymity; his satirical pieces and literary hoaxes are clearly modeled after Swift's. A lighter humor, as can be expected from a man who at the decidedly young age of 26 wrote his own epitaph, is observable in several of Franklin's writings: *The Advice to a Friend on Choosing a Mistress* (1745); *A Letter to a Royal Academy About Farting* (also known as the *Fart Proudly* text) (1781); and "The Petition from the Letter Z" (1778), addressed to Swift's Isaac Bickerstaff. In addition, the character of Poor Richard, the alleged author of Franklin's *Almanack*, was also a token of admiration for Swift, and his imaginary almanac-maker, Isaac Bickerstaff.[45] Franklin quotes Swift profusely in *Poor Richard's Almanack* and refers to "an old Friend of mine, Mr. Gulliver, a great Traveller" in a satirical piece from 1766.[46] Many of Franklin's own satires typically

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entire text of Swift's pamphlet, transliterated into a phonetic spelling using the American Heritage Dictionary's format. This work of art represents a surrealist remediation of the text and its multiple rewritings in a different social and historical context. Photos of the exhibition are available at:
https://www.galeriewinter.at/en/artists/mary-ellen-carroll/a-modest-proposal/;
Joe Haldeman published the story "To Howard Hughes: A Modest Proposal" in 1974. A Vietnam veteran, who had been wounded in the war, Haldeman wrote anti-militaristic science fiction. In this story, he used Swift's technique for anti-war purposes: a billionaire creates his own nuclear arsenal and uses it to blackmail countries into nuclear disarmament by threatening to unleash it.

[44] For more on this see, Stanley Brodwin, "Strategies of Humor: The Case of Benjamin Franklin," *Prospects*, 4, 1979, 121-167,
https://doi.org/10.1017/S0361233300002842; Jill Lepore, "Introduction to The Autobiography and Other Writings by Benjamin Franklin," Everyman's Library, 2015.
https://longreads.com/2015/09/07/franklin-reconsidered-an-essay-by-jill-lepore/

[45] Franklin created the Poor Richard persona based in part on "Isaac Bickerstaff," a pseudonym for the character of Jonathan Swift. Franklin's Poor Richard, like Bickerstaff, claimed to be a philomath and astrologer. Like Bickerstaff, he predicted the deaths of actual astrologers who wrote traditional almanacs. Since Franklin meant most of the *Almanac* to be read as a serious text, the satirical tone is more often absent.

[46] Franklin. ""Americanus": On Obstructions in the Thames," in *Benjamin Franklin's Letters to the Press 1758-1775*, ed. Verner W. Crane (Chapel Hill, [1950]), 77-8. Reprinted from *The Public Advertiser,* August 22, 1766.

operate through a similar method and structure as Swift's: offering a seemingly steel-proof logic to outrageous propositions.

Swift's influence is evident in Franklin's last piece: *Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim on the Slave Trade* (1790). Here, Franklin assumes the pen name of "Historicus," one of the over 100 pennames he used, including "Silence Dogood," "Americanus," "Homespun," "The Busy-Body" and others. Written in the form of letter to the editor of *The Federal Gazette*, this particular text aims to parody an actual speech in defense of plantation slavery delivered by James Jackson, a member of the House of Representatives from Georgia, who went on to be a Senator and Governor of the same state at the turn of the eighteenth century. In this letter, the author's persona claims to quote a speech from 1687 made by the fictitious Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim, "a member of the divan of Algiers." Franklin has the Algerian politician defend slavery and the enslavement of Christian sailors. The main argument he puts forward is that the enslavement of white people is no different from the experience they have in their own countries, which are often governed by despots. Such is the case of the miserable life of English sailors. When captured, they "have only exchanged one slavery for another: and I may say a better"[47] one. On these grounds, the manumission of Christian slaves is presented as a "detestable proposition"[48] in the letter. In this manner, Franklin places the arguments of a Southern U.S. politician on an equal par with that of an Algerian one, and a Muslim. In addition, the author's persona states that likeminded arguments produce similar effects on the minds of the listener, so all concerns that the British Parliament, "to say nothing of other legislatures"[49] like the newly established American one, may abolish the slave trade, are groundless.

The historical context in which this particular text appeared is indicative of Franklin's attitude towards slavery, which in itself is of primary importance when considering the dynamics between enlightenment and democracy in the context of the American experiment. For, in the words of George Carlin, the stand-up comedian and sarcastic cultural critic of America, "This country was founded by slave owners who wanted to be free."[50] On February 3, 1790, less than three months before his death, Franklin petitioned Congress to provide the means to end slavery. When the petition was introduced to the House and the Senate, pro-slavery congressional representatives, mostly from the Southern states immediately

[47] Franklin, "On The Slave Trade," 78.
[48] Ibid., 79.
[49] Ibid., 80.
[50] Carlin, *What Am I Doing in New Jersey*, 1988.

rejected it. A committee was selected to study the petition further. On March 5, 1790 it claimed that the Constitution restrained Congress from prohibiting the emancipation and trade of slaves. These facts must have motivated Franklin to pen "On the Slave Trade" emulating Swift.

It should be noted that Franklin owned slaves from 1735 until 1781, as was the common practice in his time. According to sources,[51] Franklin's household held seven slaves and allowed the sale of slaves in his general store. His newspaper, *The Pennsylvania Gazette* advertised the sale of slaves and frequently published notices of runaways. However, he also published antislavery ads from Quakers. According to Marilyn Wise, after returning from England in 1762, Franklin became more anti-slavery, believing that the institution promoted black degradation.[52] In 1787 Franklin became the President of the "Philadelphia Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage," also known as the Abolition Society, formed by Quakers in 1774. It was the first in America, which served as inspiration for the foundation of abolitionist societies in other parts of the country. Also in 1787, the Virginia Plan concerning the proportion of suffrage was submitted to the Constitutional Convention. This issue was finally resolved with a compromise whereby only three-fifths of the slave population were to be counted for purposes of taxation and representation–a proposal put forth by the Northern states to counter the Southern states' desire for greater representation. Since Franklin, according to his own account,[53] attended the sessions of the Convention, the reduction of the slave to three-fifths of a human being, whatever the logic behind this, may have struck him as an outrageous idea in terms of common humanity and common sense. A significant part of the political compromise was the inclusion of an article in the Constitution stating that the slave trade with the U.S. would remain legal until 1807—this was a condition imposed by the Southern States. Eventually international slave trade was banned with the passage of the Act Prohibiting Importation of Slaves in the U.S., which took effect in 1808, when Britain passed too the comparable Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.

The Sellout by Paul Beatty follows in a line of exploration akin to Swift and Franklin both in theme and tone. The mixture of dystopia with (urban) realism in the novel evokes Swift's pamphlet. Notably, Beatty's

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[51] See, Marilyn Wise, *Seasoned to the Country: Slavery in the Life of Benjamin Franklin*. Xlibris Corporation, 2013.
[52] Ibid., 198.
[53] Smyth, ix, 612-13, a letter to Jane Mecom, dated Sept. 20, I787.

text falls within a long tradition of African-American satire.[54] For centuries, African-Americans have confronted racism within the system of slavery, and in its aftermath, with humor,[55] which "has often functioned as a way of affirming their humanity in the face of its violent denial."[56]

The first novel by an American writer to win the Man Booker Prize in 2016, *The Sellout* offers a piercing satire of race relations in contemporary America. Beatty's protagonist logically arrives at the outrageous proposition that the reinstatement of segregation and slavery could be a solution to the race problems in present-day U.S. The novel functions not just as a satire, but also as a documentary of life in the town of Dickens, and in racist America, in general, to make it painfully obvious that "There was a Black President, but no real change."[57] This social experiment in "reverse racism"—the New Jim Crow code against whites, described as "a campaign of localized apartheid"[58] in the book; the inclusion of streams of racial slurs; the excessive use of the n-word; the hilarious vignettes about nearly every black stereotype imaginable (Mammy, pickaninny, Sambo, zip coon, hep cat, ghetto chick, etc.) are intended to be shockingly provocative for the reader. The very first sentence of the book sets the tone:

> This may be hard to believe, coming from a black man, but I've never stolen anything. […] But here I am, in the cavernous chambers of the Supreme Court of the United States of America, my car illegally and

[54] The pool of texts is enormous. Suffice it to mention just several by way of illustration. From the period of the Harlem Renaissance: Langston Hughes, *The Ways of White Folks* (1934), Rudolph Fisher, *The Walls of Jericho* (1928), George Schuyler, *Black No More: Being an Account of the Strange and Wonderful Workings of Science in the Land of the Free* (1931). More recently, there have been several compilations of African-American humor: Daryl Cumber Dance (ed.), *Honey Hush! An Anthology of African American Women's Humor* (1998), Mel Watkins (ed.), *African-American Humor: The Best Black Comedy from Slavery to Today* (2002), Paul Beatty (ed.), *Hokum: An Anthology of African-American Humor* (2006). The writings of Ishmael Reed and other more recent satirical voices: Derrick Bell, Darius James, Trey Ellis should also be mentioned.

[55] For a detailed examination of the history of African-American humor see, Dickson-Carr's *African American Satire: The Sacred and the Profane Novel*, which examines how, by transgressing the boundaries of taste and propriety, satirical African-American novels critique racism. See also, Glenda Carpio, *Laughing Fit to Kill*; Mel Watkins, *On the Real Side: A History of African American Comedy from Slavery to Chris Rock.*

[56] Carpio, *Laughing Fit to Kill,* 19.

[57] Beatty, "Interview," n.p.

[58] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 233.

> somewhat ironically parked on Constitution Avenue, my hands cuffed and crossed behind my back, my right to remain silent long since waived and said goodbye to as I sit in a thickly padded chair that, much like this country, isn't quite as comfortable as it looks.[59]

The protagonist lives in "the murder capital of the world,"[60] Dickens, "a ghetto community"[61] on the southern outskirts of Los Angeles, and works the land, growing square watermelons, which are just as exotic for people as having a black president, and weed (one variety is called "Anglophobia") in an area called "The Farms." Dickens is described as a "locale, nothing more than an American shantytown. A post-black, post-racial, post-soul flashback, if you will, to a time of romanticized black ignorance…"[62] Populated by African-Americans and Latinos, who have become the majority in the area, the town is deteriorating. When Dickens is removed from the map of California, the narrator embarks on a mission to have it reinstated with the help of Hominy Jenkins. The aged Hominy, "the last real nigger"[63] was once a child actor of the black Buckwheat stereotype[64] in the TV show *The Little Rascals*, as *Our Gang* series came to be known: an actual series of 220 one-reeler shorts, dating from 1922 to 1944, about a group of kids doing mischief on a weekly basis often involving ridiculously racist episodes.[65] After a failed attempt at self-lynching, Hominy volunteers to serve as the narrator's slave. He admits he wishes to feel relevant again, and so becomes a bondsman who refuses to be freed.[66] Another part of the narrator's plan involves segregating Dickens: the public transport, the local hospital and especially the local school so that it allows only black, Latino and other nonwhite students, which eventually, and absurdly, leads to improvements in every aspect of social life in Dickens and to its eventual return on the official map of the U.S.

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[59] Ibid., 3.
[60] Ibid., 67.
[61] Ibid., 27.
[62] Ibid., 220.
[63] Ibid., 244.
[64] The character of Hominy is most probably modeled on the actor Billie Thomas, the only one to appear in all 52 MGM *Our Gang* shorts from 1934 to 1943.
[65] One example is the *Our Gang* short film *Baby Brother* from 1927, in which Allen "Farina" Hoskins (black) paints a black baby with white shoe polish so that he can sell him to a lonely rich boy, Joe Cobb (white), as a baby brother.
[66] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 82.

The author's and the narrator's voices are drenched in a post-soul tone of cynicism and nihilism.[67] They make desperate efforts to avoid political apathy and cultural escapism, to overcome "the profound sense of psychological depression, personal worthlessness, and social despair widespread in Black America,"[68] in the aftermath of the Rodney King trial and the riots of 1992. The confounding dilemma of the reality of post-racialism is clearly expressed by David Ikard:

> Encouraged as we are to see our society as not just postracial but postoppressive, it becomes difficult—especially for African American youth and young adults—to reconcile their lived experiences and the micro- and macroagressions they endure on a daily basis with the master narratives of inclusiveness and egalitarianism that often trivialize or discount those experiences.[69]

The narrator refers to himself as "a no Panglossian American,"[70] for he has realized that "Be it ancient Rome or modern-day America, you're either citizen or slave. Lion or Jew. Guilty or innocent."[71] His last name is Me, though he is called "Bonbon" by his girlfriend, "Massa" by his slave, and "Sellout" by his archrival, Foy Cheshire. Eventually, Me faces criminal charges and appears before the Supreme Court, in the case "Me vs The United States": "the latest in a long line of landmark race-related cases."[72] In his own defense, Me pleads that he is guilty of being human, "And when I did what I did, I wasn't thinking about inalienable rights, the proud history of our people. I did what worked, and since when did a little slavery and segregation ever hurt anybody, and if so, so fucking be it."[73] Beatty suggests through paradox and exaggeration that the reestablishment

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[67] The idea of "post-soul" was first coined by Nelson George in *Buppies, B-Boys, Baps and Bohos: Notes on Post-Soul Black Culture* (1992), and further expounded upon in *Post-Soul Nation: The Explosive, Contradictory, Triumphant, And Tragic 1980s As Experienced By African Americans (Previously Known As Blacks And Before That Negroes)* (2004). This notion refers to the backlash in the 1980s and 1990s against the achievements of the Civil-Rights movement, when the real hope for change was undermined, especially among black activists. See also Bambi Haggins, *Laughing Mad. The Black Comic Persona in Post-Soul America* (New Brunswick Rutgers University Press, 2007).

[68] West, *Race Matters*, 135.

[69] Ikard, *Blinded by the Whites*, 18.

[70] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 23.

[71] Ibid., 6.

[72] Ibid., 8.

[73] Ibid., 23.

of slavery could serve the purpose of heightening awareness of the poverty, violence, and life limitations in a marginalized black community. He interrogates the meaning not only of racial equality but debates the meaning of the socially constructed category of race regarding the life of African-Americans.

The reader can unambiguously perceive that Beatty's writing is fueled by anger. This anger aims to expose beliefs and discourses of colorblindedness, post-raciality, racial identification and racial authenticity. *The Sellout* displays many common points of reference with Beatty's first novel *The White Boy Shuffle* (1996), written as a parody of James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. In this earlier text, Beatty also targets assumptions about African-American political, ideological and cultural life. The main character of Gunnar Kaufman, a "Negro Demagogue," becomes as an improbable a leader as the character of Me, and eventually "steers" the black community to mass suicide. Thus, Beatty questions the role and efficacy of black leadership.

The writer employs a number of strategies to parody white hegemony, particularly to subvert the policies of multiculturalism, political correctness and ideas of racial equality tied up to post-racialism. He utilizes Swift's technique of describing a well-designed proposal while engaging in *reductio ad absurdum*, which is also a notable characteristic of African-American satire.[74] *The Sellout* recalls the story "Racial Preference Licensing Act" in Derrick Bell's collection *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism.* Bell employs Swiftian strategies of irony and sound reasoning to argue for a new Federal law, which would allow white business owners to obtain a license to discriminate openly against black employees and customers. In return for this privilege, the whites would pay a 3 percent tax into an "equality fund" that would be used to support business opportunities and education for blacks.

The signature mark of Beatty's novel are the myriad jokes, scenes and 'feats' of unmitigated racism. Me's campaign for segregation is akin to Ralph Ellison's invisible man as well who is motivated to perform violent and insane acts by the persistent racism in the U.S., manifested in the whites' erasure of African-American humanity.

> In *Invisible Man* Ellison employs the discourse of craziness via his protagonist to throw light back on the pathological and self-destructive contours of white supremacist thinking and blacks' unconscious and conscious participation in it.[75]

[74] Dickson-Carr, *African American Satire*, 14.
[75] Ikard, *Blinded by the Whites*, 2.

Similarly, the sellout in Beatty's novel sets out to challenge the status quo and to plot subversive acts out of a feeling of despair in an effort to reclaim racial pride, courage and self-determination. Me carries on the torch from his father, the psychologist, academic and "nigger whisperer" F. K. Me. The father performs sadistic sociological experiments on his son, in order to steel him for his adult life in a highly racist society: treating him with electroshocks for each time he fails to answer a question correctly; mugging and beating him in front of a crowd of spectators to prove a point about (the lack of) human empathy; forcing him to grow and pick cotton in anti-bellum fashion; and putting him in a pig pen to be baby-sat by a sow. The humiliating education Me junior is subjected to has one aim: to make out of him a "Renaissance nigger, a modern-day Galileo."[76]

Beatty targets post-racial colorblindedness by making the protagonist counteract the racial skepticism and helplessness, which has overwhelmed him. His crime, as Me explains to a police officer, is that "I've whispered 'Racism' in a post-racial world."[77] With the use of every conceivable racial slur involving blackness, Beatty offers a complete stepping away from the political correctness paradigm, which the election of Trump has come to represent to many. However, Beatty does not aim at desensitizing his reader, but rather "pluck[s] out your subconscious and beat[s] you silly with it, not until you were unrecognizable, but until you were recognizable."[78] He incorporates rampant racism in order to deliver this message. One example is the scene at the zoo in the opening pages of the novel, where a woman marvels at how "presidential the four-hundred-pound gorilla looked," whose name "coincidentally was Baraka."[79] When she realizes that she has been overheard by a black person, the protagonist, she cries remorsefully and in her attempt to apologize to him, blunders yet again with the Freudian slip: "Some of my best friends are monkeys."[80] Thus, Beatty targets the white supremacist ideology of post-racialism and colorblindedness where "the very language that we use to identify and resist these assaults is hijacked and politicized as racist."[81] By subverting

[76] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 53.
[77] Ibid., 262.
[78] Ibid., 286.
[79] Ibid., 5. The scene would gain an even greater resonance, if the reader knows the fact that Ota Benga—a young man captured in the Congo—was displayed in 1906 in the Bronx Zoo monkey house in New York City, at times in one cage with an orangutan.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ikard, *Blinded by the Whites*, 9.

habitual official discourse about race in America, he aims for social and political critique.[82]

Another major strategy of satire employed by Beatty is that instead of resisting racism, racial profiling and racial stereotypes, Me and his slave, Hominy, embrace them, amplify them and attempt to identify with them in their behavior and attitudes.[83] Beatty ridicules not only every Black stereotype he humorously improvises on, but also all forms of popular entertainment, many of which have African-American origin, such as the vaudeville show, minstrels, Blackface performances, the Technicolor cartoons, dating from the 1930s and 40s, including *the Looney Tunes* animated series. These are exposed for their unchecked racism, though they were staple entertainment for American children at least until the late 1960s. He examines the appropriation of these stereotypes by hegemonic consumer mainstream culture and through his brutal humor aims to implode them. Through parody and caricature, the writer extricates the stereotypes from their expected environment "by painting everybody over [in purple and green] to see who still believes in equality."[84]

Beatty foregrounds all forms of popular culture, incorporating TV images, shows, ads, music, comic strips, film, and other art forms. Black popular culture, which has been appropriated by mainstream culture, is portrayed as the site of commodification as well. As race intersects with mass culture and popular culture, the market value of Blackness is foregrounded once again.[85] For example, "The L.A. Festival of Forbidden Cinema and Unabashedly Racist Animation,"[86] which shows cartoons such as *Coal Black and the Sebben Dwarfs* (1943)[87] is contrasted to the politically respectful editions of American and world fiction rewritten by Cheshire, the narrator's foil. Foy sets out single-handedly on a project he terms "Fire the Canon," by rewriting, for example, *Huckleberry Finn.* Since he establishes that "Brother Mark Twain uses the 'n-word' 219 times. That's .68 'n-words' per page in toto," he has it removed and "replaced with 'warrior' and the word 'slave' with 'dark-skinned

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[82] Carpio, *Laughing Fit to Kill,* 22.

[83] A parallel can be drawn here to the highly offensive parody of African-American stereotypes in Darius James, *Negrophobia: An Urban Parable* (1992).

[84] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 266.

[85] See Hall, "What is This "Black" in Black Popular Culture?" 108.

[86] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 238.

[87] This animated cartoon produced by Warner Bros was one of the Censored Eleven *Looney Tunes*, withdrawn from distribution in 1968 because of them being ethnically offensive.

volunteer.'"[88] His version bears the title "*The Pejorative-Free Adventures and Intellectual and Spiritual Journeys of African-American Jim and His Young Protégé, White Brother Huckleberry Finn as They Go in Search of the Lost Black Family Unit.*"[89] To counterpoint the fallacy of political correctness carried to ridiculous extremes, Me ironizes Foy by suggesting that children be called "little black euphemisms."[90] However, Foy continues with his "bastardizing" of canonical literary texts, which serves as Beatty's sardonic attack on the validity and effectiveness of the policy of political correctness. Foy forces his revised editions of the classics: *Uncle Tom's Condo*, *The Point Guard in the Rye, The Dopeman Cometh, The Adventures of Tom Soarer, The Old Black Man and the Inflatable Winnie the Pooh Swimming Pool, The Great Blacksby, Of Rice and Yen, Measured Expectations, Middlemarch Middle of April*, on school boards to be included in the curriculum as "WME, A Weapon of Mass Education."[91]

The irreverence the writer demonstrates through the grotesque images he draws aims not just to shock the reader into awareness of the most offensive racist acts performed to this day in "post-racial" America. Beatty's target is language itself, for "what degenerative satire subverts is not so much social structures like racism, but rather the language and mindset of texts that help mediate and proliferate such violent structures."[92] A signature feature of African-American humor is the use of continuous code-switching. Beatty constantly plays around with African-American, Latino, political and judicial discourses (using even mundane expressions translated verbatim in Latin) among others. This constant code-switching, while adding to the humor, requires an extra effort on the part of the reader to navigate the text. Beatty employs all varieties of the Black vernacular style including vulgar and curse words. The heterogeneous forms of language incorporated in the novel include "underworld slang, cant, professional jargon, popular slang, standardized English, obscenities, versions of lyric, and ethnic expletives"; the permissive language partakes of the satirical process of "dismantling and

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[88] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 95.

[89] Beatty here satirizes the many attempts to tone down the racist language of a book with a flagrant anti-racist message, a more recent one being the substitution of the n-word with "slave" in order to make the text more palatable for school-aged children. See, Mark Twain, and Alan Gribben. *Mark Twain's Adventures of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.* (Montgomery, Alabama: NewSouth Books, 2011).

[90] Beatty, *The Sellout*, 97.

[91] Ibid., 217.

[92] Christian Schmidt, "Dissimulating Blackness: The Degenerative Satires of Paul Beatty and Percival Everett," 152.

exposure."[93] In this manner he satirizes both African-American and hegemonic discourses. From here arises the "key paradox: by moving onto degenerate ground, the satirist reveals language as a great cover-up, but it is only with language that one keeps moving at all."[94]

Through a series of Swiftian satirical techniques, Beatty mounts a critique of essentialist notions of Black identity defined by African origin, or by racist concepts. He reveals the frustration with racial allegiance and racial equity, while focusing on the problematic nature of Black self-determination and empowerment in the presumably post-racial society. Beatty admits to being deeply influenced by William Cross's theory of the five stages of the acquisition of Black identity, first developed in 1971 and published in *Shades of Black* in 1991. Cross proposes the "Nigrescence model," describing the process of becoming black as a movement from the stage of self-degradation to self-pride. Beatty both applies the model to his main character's development and parodies it by suggesting that a final stage of "unmitigated Blackness"[95] be introduced and by the repetition of the burning existential question uttered with variations throughout the novel: "Who am I? And how can I be that person?"[96] and "Who am I? and How may I become myself?"[97]

In his portrayal of contemporary America as "a dysfunctional plutocracy,"[98] Beatty aims for verisimilitude in speculative fiction, as in effect he combines, in Swift's fashion, the outrageous mockery of American politics, entertainment, popular culture, schooling, etc. with reportage. Beatty makes it clear that no resolution is possible to racism knowing the extent of dehumanization and abuse of Blacks. However, the role of degenerative satire for me becomes problematic because there is no corrective. The only moral standard against which the current state of affairs is to be measured is the American ideal, yet unrealized and possibly unrealizable.

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[93] Weisenburger, *Fables of Subversion*, 25.
[94] Ibid., 26.
[95] Ibid., 277.
[96] Ibid., 40, 43.
[97] Ibid., 39, 250, 260.
[98] Ibid., 4.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

SWIFT'S LASTING IMPACT AND LEGACY: FROM BOOK TO TV ADAPTATION

MÉLISSA RICHARD

Introduction

Legacy can be defined as anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor.[1] It can either be handed down directly or through an intermediary: someone who has been inspired by the author's works. Part of Jonathan Swift's lasting legacy is evident in the numerous re-writings, book adaptations for children and young adults,[2] comic books as well as films adaptations of his *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). Swift's satire is part of our common culture thanks to several TV adaptations which have made it accessible to a wider audience. Many people know *Gulliver's Travels* as a book for children often only composed of the first two journeys. The impact on readers is different if they only read the first two voyages where the satirical aspects may be toned down in adaptations, even if the first travel is often considered as the most satirical part of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* with its numerous political allegories. Usually, directors tend to focus on the tale-like side of *Gulliver's Travels* and less upon the content of his adventures. The adaptation under study in this chapter had a lasting impact on an entire generation of children and adults in the 1990s and the subsequent years. In fact, the 1996 movie adaptation of *Gulliver's Travels* by Charles Sturridge, starring Ted Danson, was immensely popular at the time. This paper will focus on the similarities and differences between the book written by Jonathan Swift in 1726 and Sturridge's TV adaptation, which has been regularly shown on Channel 4

[1] "Legacy," *Oxford Dictionaries*.

[2] See, among others, John Lang. *Gulliver's Travels in Lilliput and Brobdingnag* (London: Thomas Nelson & sons, 1906), Jonathan Coe, *The Story of Gulliver* (London: Pushkin Children's Books, 2016).

in the United Kingdom since its release in 1996, 270 years after the first publication of the book. In what follows I will shed light on the moments when the director took the liberty to add or to amplify certain passages of the book, or conversely when he chose to omit or to change a few aspects of the original story, often for cinematographic purposes. These choices, it should be noted, appear to transform the message of Swift's satire either by enhancing or completely changing it. Thus the movie reshapes Swift's original message, while not necessarily altering it, and, therefore, the movie had its own special impact upon its viewers. As a consequence, the movie might have a different—but by no means less significant—legacy which is possibly unlike the one found in the original book.

Different Approaches

First, contrary to the book, this three-hour television movie begins with Gulliver coming home from his adventures, whereas in Swift's satire, he returns home at the end of each journey. As the producer, Duncan Kenworthy, explains in the "Making Of" in the extra features of the DVD of *Gulliver's Travels*:

> That's our major departure from the book that we set Gulliver's stories within the frame work of a man who's returned home and is recounting and reliving obsessively the adventures that he has experienced.[3]

In Jonathan Swift's text, every voyage starts with a travel at sea, followed either by a storm, a mutiny or any other problematic issues, and Gulliver tells the story of his adventures before coming back home at the end of each journey, only to start another one as soon as he is back. However, in the TV adaptation he has remained at sea for nine years and has experienced all four voyages before returning to England with a mind full of wonderful and incredible tales. His wife and son, as well as other people, react to his story of unbelievable worlds and peoples with disbelief, and he is soon declared insane by doctors and is then forced to justify and explain his adventures during a final trial in a mental hospital. This means that, from the very beginning, Gulliver's truthfulness is questioned, which is also a major issue in the book. An example of this is revealed in the letter to cousin Sympson, which questions the faithfulness of altered texts:

[3] "Making of," Special Features, in Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, 1995, DVD, 2010.

> I find likewise that your Printer has been so careless as to confound the Times, and mistake the Dates, of my several Voyages and Returns; neither assigning the true Year, nor the true Month, nor Day of the Month: And I hear the original Manuscript is all destroyed since the publication of my book.[4]

In his article, Claude Rawson also explains that:

> Swift appears at first sight as a classic example of the ingenuously "normal" observer, unlikely to be encumbered with dissident or antisocial prejudices and plain and matter of fact in his outlook and speech. There is a small indefinable crackle of uncertainty in "The Publisher to the Reader," signed by Gulliver's cousin Richard Sympson, of whom we know nothing yet, which precedes the narrative and that speaks without prior context of Gulliver's prolixity and his addiction to sailors jargon of which the book has had to be pruned.[5]

There are obviously numerous similarities between the book and this adaptation, the most important of which is that the TV adaptation covers all four parts of *Gulliver's Travels*. It remains true to the main outline of the story and to Gulliver's character. This paper will show the main differences and similarities between the book and the TV adaptation without attempting to be exhaustive. Both faithful to the story but also moving away from the plot line and the point of view, the director offers his own personal reading of *Gulliver's Travels.* This new outlook triggers new possible interpretations for viewers. The director remains faithful to Swift's legacy as a writer but he has also created a novel interpretation which will have its own legacy of or impact on generations of viewers. One may wonder what the director chose to focus on and what he chose to omit. Interestingly enough, in the numerous adaptations for children, satire is usually left behind and this paper will try to show if this is also the case in the Charles Sturridge version. In other words, is Swift's satirical heritage kept alive thanks to this TV movie, or does it bring about an array of new ideas, different to what Swift intended?

Similarities

First we will see how the director stays faithful to the original narrative and its satirical attacks. As previously mentioned, Sturridge's TV adaptation is one of only a few which show the four different parts of

[4] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 9.
[5] Rawson, "Gulliver, Travel and Empire," 2.

Gulliver's travels. Just like in Swift's satire, there is first *A Voyage to Lilliput,* then *A Voyage to Brobdingnag,* followed by *A Voyage to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbdubdrib and Japan*, and finally *A Voyage to the Land of the Houyhnhnms.* Former versions—such as *Gulliver's Travels* (released in 1939), directed by Max Fleischer, and *Gulliver's Travels*, released in 1977, starring Richard Harris—tended to focus on the first two voyages only or sometimes predominantly on the first only where Gulliver is a giant among the Lilliputians.[6] Gulliver being a giant in Lilliput and living among giants in Brobdingnag has often been adapted for children's stories. But Charles Sturridge's adaptation, as mentioned earlier, covers all four voyages and keeps many satirical attacks of the book almost intact. Firstly, the adaptation reveals a harsh satire on politics to viewers who, in turn, can find similar satirical attacks in Gulliver's own descriptions. For example, in the first voyage to Lilliput, the TV adaptation follows closely the indirect criticism of the incongruity of war and conflicts which Swift reveals in his depiction of the Big Endians as the fierce enemy of Lilliputians. The Big Endians break their eggs upon the bigger end while the Little Endians break their eggs upon the smaller end. This conflict is the representation of British quarrels over religious matters and more precisely between Roman Catholics (Big-Endians) and Protestants (Little Endians), in the Episcopalian form of the Church of England. Swift's Gulliver is amazed to see that:

> It is allowed on all hands, that the primitive Way of breaking Eggs before we eat them, was upon the larger End. But his present Majesty's Grandfather, while he was a Boy, going to eat an Egg, and breaking it according to the ancient Practice, happened to cut one of his Fingers. Whereupon the Emperor, his father published an Edict, commanding all his Subjects, upon great Penalties, to break the smaller End of their Eggs.[7]

The movie also ridicules this conflict. A clear reference to the above passage is made in the scene in which the Emperor of Lilliput is planning a war against the people of Blefuscu. The viewer sees the Emperor who is strategically preparing his attack on Blefuscu, thanks to small models of boats on a giant board. He directly mentions his hatred of the Big Endians, but he rather looks like a spoiled child playing with a war game. Peter O'Toole who plays the Emperor is humorously portrayed as one who eats constantly, followed by his two servants with two golden plates of food. The Emperor's pettiness is fully shown in Swift's satire. One example of

[6] Chessalbaneze, "Gulliver Adaptations: Worst to Best."
[7] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 43.

his meanness may be seen when he becomes angry with Gulliver who refuses to destroy the enemy's entire fleet. This means that Swift's criticism ridicules the court and its rituals, an example of which is the imaginary ceremony stick in Lilliput. Consider the following excerpts:

> For, as to that infamous Practice of acquiring great Employments by dancing on the Ropes, or Badges of favour and Distinction by leaping over Sticks, and creeping under them.[8]

or

> The Emperor holds a Stick in his Hands, both ends parallel to the Horizon, while the Candidates advancing, one by one, sometimes leap over the Stick, sometimes creep under it, backward and forward, several times, according as the Stick is advanced or depressed.[9]

This episode is made into a scene in the movie where the members of the court perform the ceremony. The English actor Nicolas Lyndhurst plays a former peasant who becomes a high ranking Lilliputian figure solely because he is good at limbo dancing. The Emperor randomly appoints him new Lord Chancellor. The scene is both funny and satirical particularly when the Emperor who has ordered the execution of the former Lord Chancellor makes a tyrannical comment: "Has the old Chancellor been executed yet? (distant gunfire) Oh, good—we'll make this chap the new Lord Chancellor."[10] This is clearly a satire of the arbitrary decisions made by a petty, absolute monarch.

Besides, Sturridge's TV adaptation humorously depicts the school of learning in Gulliver's third voyage which Swift kept as a disguised satire on the Royal Academy. In the movie, Gulliver wanders around the corridors of this apparently famous academic institution just to discover weird and often pointless experiments being performed behind several dusty doors by elderly and senile men. As pointed out by David Renaker in his "Swift's Laputians as a Caricature of the Cartesians," Jonathan Swift often ridiculed the experiments carried out by the Royal Academy, and thus the "episodes of Laputa and Balnibarbi have come to be seen as a travesty on the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*."[11] So this passage in the Academy of Lagado is a clear parody of the Royal Society.

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[8] Ibid., 54
[9] Ibid., 34.
[10] Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, Hallmark, 1995, DVD, 2010.
[11] Renaker, "Swift's Laputians," 936.

It is how Swift's narrator sees one of these laboratory experimentalists, played by John Gielgud in Charles Sturridge's film adaptation:

> The first Man I saw was of a meager Aspect, with sooty Hands and Face, his Hair and Beard long, ragged, and singed in several Places. His Clothes, Shirt, and Skin, were all of the same Colour. He has been Eight Years upon a Project for extracting Sun-Beams out of Cucumbers.[12]

Gulliver also wanders throughout the corridors of the Academy where he discovers several unusual and unbelievable experiments, for instance, scientists attempting to build houses starting from the roof and conducting other equally inconceivable research experiments. An interesting point is that Gulliver is *really* walking through the corridors of the madhouse and cannot tell the difference between his memories and reality. The scientists are as mad as the asylum's patients. And while they hide behind the cover of science and rationality, we get the idea that their experiments seem to be essentially rather pointless.

The director decided to keep some of the notoriously humorous episodes of Swift's satire in his movie when they were not too shocking. In the narrative, Gulliver is portrayed as a sex toy in the second voyage but this has been omitted from the adaptation:

> The handsomest among these Maids of Honour, a pleasant, frolicsome Girl of sixteen, 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.[13]

Another one is equally infamous and details how Gulliver extinguishes the fire of a burning castle by urinating on it. It is how Swift's Gulliver describes this episode:

> The Heat I had contracted by coming very near the Flames, and by labouring to quench them, made the Wine begin to operate by Urine; which I voided in such a Quantity, and applied so well to the proper Places, that in three Minutes the Fire was wholly extinguished, and the rest of that noble Pile, which had cost so many Ages in erecting, preserved from Destruction.[14]

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[12] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 167.
[13] Ibid., 108.
[14] Ibid., 50.

This scene is truly graphically represented in the movie. It shows the wet and disgusted Queen who is far from being thankful and expresses her contempt for Gulliver.

One of the principal themes in both Swift's satire and its film adaptation is the theme of rejection. The fact that Gulliver is ostracized wherever he goes, even at home, is striking. For example, in Lilliput, the Queen sees Gulliver as a monster. When Gulliver wanders on the castle's grounds, he catches a glimpse of the Queen in her private apartments surrounded by her servants and she shouts in horror, "Get away from me, you horrible monster!,"[15] while violently closing her window at his giant face.

Gulliver is generally treated as a freak as well as both as a source of fascination and fear, which is especially true to his experience in Brobdingnag. In their article, "Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England," Katharine Park and Lorraine J. Daston describe the artificiality of curiosities and monsters as follows:

> Increasingly in the wonder books, the emphasis fell on the works of nature rather than the works of God. Monsters were treated as jokes or "sports" (lusus) of a personified nature, rather than as divine prodigies. They signified her fertility of invention and through her God's own fertility and creativity, rather than his wrath. Not only could human artifice create monsters, but all natural monsters were in a certain sense nature's artefacts, and nature became the artisan par excellence.[16]

The way others see Gulliver constantly changes his identity. He is called with different names such as "Nardac," which is one of the highest rank in Lilliput: "[t]his great Prince received me at my Landing with all possible Encomiums, and created me a *Nardac* upon the Spot, which is the highest Title of Honour among them"[17] as well as a "Man-Mountain"[18] in the narrative and in the film. A discussion about what to call him takes place when he is poking his head inside the king's palace, between the personages played by Nicolas Lyndhurst and Peter O'Toole. In Brobdingnag he is called "lusus naturae."[19] Neither in the book nor in the movie does he have a fixed identity. He rises from a corn spirit to the

[15] "Making of," Special Features, in Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, 1995, DVD, 2010.
[16] Park and Daston, "Unnatural Conceptions," 43.
[17] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 47.
[18] Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, Hallmark, 1995, DVD, 2010.
[19] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 77.

Queen's jester and companion in the Brobdingnag part both in the book and the film. He is seen as a near animal and a freak in these newly discovered worlds. As Ann Cline Kelly explains,

> [b]efore being adopted by his Houyhnhnm master, Gulliver also experiences true love as a pet in Brobdingnag. Glumdalclitch—the daughter of his former master—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.[20]

Finally, some passages of Swift's *Gulliver* are translated cinematically to generate suspense. Some of Gulliver's almost heroic actions are adapted for screen. One example is the numerous attacks of the jealous dwarf who develops a strong hatred of Gulliver who became the smallest man of the country and stole his status:

> It was the common Practice of the Dwarf, to catch a Number of these Insects in his Hand, as School-boys do among us, and let them out suddenly under my Nose, on Purpose to frighten me, and divert the Queen. My Remedy was to cut them in Pieces with my Knife, as they flew in the Air, wherein my Dexterity was much admired.[21]

Nevertheless, the director adapted and modified these attacks. He mixed the attacks of the dwarf and those of the wasp which do not happen at the same time in Swift's satire. The wasp section becomes a great action sequence in the adaptation, thanks to the impressive CGI and puppetry and to a lot of Special Effects. The producer Duncan Kenworthy asked Jim Henson's Creature Shop to be in charge of creating CGI wasps and prosthetic make-up for the Yahoos.[22]

In his TV adaptation, Charles Sturridge often stays faithful to many of the critical and humorous episodes in Swift's satire: the satire of court-related practices, the nonsense of war or the abusive power of England with the queen of Brobdingnag's philosophy, the colonizing power of England over Ireland with the island of Laputa, and the uselessness of scientific researches with the description of the academy of Lagado. However, Sturridge changed or added a certain number of aspects.

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[20] Kelly, "Gulliver as Pet and Pet Keeper," 334.
[21] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 98.
[22] "Making of," Special Features, in Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, 1995, DVD, 2010.

Slight Alterations

First, as mentioned before, there is a different narrative time-scheme in the movie. The first main difference is the fact that Gulliver comes back from all his travels at the beginning of the movie. Whereas in Swift's narrative Gulliver comes home after each journey, in the movie, he is not home until the end of all his adventures that took him seven years, and this reinforces the idea that he has to prove the veracity of his travels. Yet, mainly because it is a movie there is a need for some sort of suspense, as previously mentioned, required by the specificity of the medium. That is why, in the film adaptation some passages convey a different atmosphere compared to how Swift's narrator describes them.

In the third voyage, Gulliver meets Lord Munodi but their encounter in the movie and in Jonathan Swift's narrative are completely different. In the movie, at some point, Gulliver is surrounded by dead corpses in hanging cages and he wanders in the desert at the mercy of the Struldbrugs. He is then found by Lord Munodi (the sorcerer) and, when they both arrive at Lord Munodi's house, Gulliver is offered a drugged glass of wine every evening at dinner. Strikingly enough, this night seems to endlessly repeat itself which creates a sense of threat and suspense useful for the development of the movie. At this point the narrative almost turns into a ghost story with lots of servants walking through doors and the spirits of famous historical figures being brought back from the dead. As we will see there is a parallel between Gulliver's confinement in the asylum and his confinement at the sorcerer's house but also between the sorcerer and Dr. Bates—the landlord and physician who replaced Lemuel Gulliver during his absence. The sorcerer and Dr. Bates both keep Gulliver under control since he is trapped and drugged in his confinement. They both try to snatch Gulliver's life away. While Dr. Bates wants to take Mary, Gulliver's wife, as his own spouse and also take over Gulliver's practice as the local physician, the sorcerer who is obsessed with the study of historical events by bringing the dead back to life seems to be especially interested in Gulliver's blood. Gulliver finally manages to escape, by summoning many historical figures and disrupting the sorcerer's control over them. Contrarily, Lord Munodi is not as frightening as he is described by Swift's Gulliver:

> I soon found out the Person's House to whom I was recommended, presented my Letter from his Friend the Grandee in the Island, and was received with much Kindness. This great Lord, whose Name was *Munodi*,

> ordered me an Apartment in his own House, where I continued during my Stay, and was entertained in a most hospitable Manner.[23]

The different approach in the movie creates a form of entrapment and alienation. Mary also plays a major role in the plot line. She is, with Gulliver's son, one of the last persons to truly care about Gulliver, and, as she starts to be convinced by Dr. Bates that Gulliver is mad, the viewer fears she might abandon her husband in the asylum and accept Dr. Bates's proposal. It reinforces the loneliness of Gulliver and produces a sense of threat, necessary to keep the viewer's attention. Gulliver needs to escape from his imprisonment, which is differently presented by Swift who describes his protagonist as one who is misunderstood and lonesome. While Swift's satire also shows evidence of Gulliver's confinement, in the movie, the idea of isolation is reinforced by a parallel with another character: the son of the King of Laputa who is rejected by his peers and is similarly misunderstood. Each inhabitant of the island is trapped in their thoughts and needs a "*flapper*" to hit themselves so they can focus on what people are saying. But the prince in the film does not need such a thing because he is able to focus on people's speech unaided.

What are commonly considered as qualities and talents are seen as flaws in this society. That is why the prince is ostracized because of his ability to listen to what people are saying and because of the fact that, in the film, for example, his instrument keeps playing in tune during the "Concert for the End of the World," while the others are discordant. Moreover, the prince's father threatens him with having to wear the dunce's cap for providing reasonable suggestions concerning what to do when the island is nearly tipping over. The prince finds an ally in Gulliver, but their connection is soon lost. He is similar to Gulliver who creates ephemeral connections with people, while Gulliver finally ends up left alone in the asylum called Bethlehem: rejected by everyone and misunderstood. This outcome is even more striking when the reader or viewer knows that Jonathan Swift left 12,000 pounds for the creation of St Patrick's University Hospital—a psychiatric asylum—which was founded in 1746: one year after Swift's death.

Another difference between Jonathan Swift's satire and its film adaptation may be seen in the depiction of the Struldbrugs. Swift portrays the Struldbrugs as immortal from birth but also weak, old and blind, as seen in chapter 10 of the third voyage: "A child happened to be born in a Family with a red circular Spot in the Forehead, directly over the left Eye-

[23] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 162.

brow, which was an infallible Mark that it would never dye."[24] Charles Sturridge's interpretation is that despite their weakness the Struldbrugs are also threatening. He also made water the source of their immortality—probably inspired by the legend of the fountain of youth—and this brings a satisfying element of peril to the movie. It is risky because Gulliver could be tempted contrary to the original narrative. However, in both the movie and the book, the Struldbrugs embody the threat of degeneracy and corruption.

From an emotional point of view, television spectators can empathize with Gulliver's character, whereas Swift's satire deals little with the real psychology or any depth of feelings of Gulliver. Swift often presents Gulliver satirically but also as a cold individual who became misanthropic by the end of his travels. Some may even view him as rather unpleasant and proud, and this is supported by the addition of his fictive letter to his cousin in the 1735 edition where he criticizes him for distorting his narrative: "I hope you will be ready to own publickly, whenever you shall be called to it, that by your great and frequent Urgency you prevailed on me to publish a very loose and incorrect Account of my Travels."[25] In addition, throughout the four parts, Gulliver constantly digresses and rarely spends any time reflecting on what he has perceived. He is more a vector of satire rather than a truly deep character. But the viewers can hope that in the TV adaptation (even if Gulliver seems to be mad at first) the main character will be saved by the end of the movie. Such a strategy is justified by the need to create for the viewers a form of empathy with the main character of the story. It adds a necessary romantic hue in the characterization of Gulliver: he is no longer a character of satire but, as presented by Sturridge, a character with whom television spectators could more easily relate. It's a bit awkward as it stands. Nevertheless, even if he is no longer a satirical tool, in the end he becomes a cinematographic tool shaped to trigger emotions and sympathy. This reveals how one media translates satire into another media and puts forward the transformation that this translation has on the original message.

Adapting books for the screen can be problematic because of the differences between the two media, the text and the movie, and the director was expected to find a solution to how an episode or an element in the plot line or a literary device could be translated from book to film. For example, *Gulliver's Travels* is a journal, and the reader discovers the story by reading the accounts there, but the movie is a different medium, and the

[24] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 193.
[25] Ibid., 7.

viewer is more of a witness to the story. The journal, however, is integrated in the plot line of the film adaptation in an indirect way. Charles Sturridge's Gulliver also has a journal, but the viewers learn about it through Gulliver's son. The journal is no longer used as the medium of the story but as an element of the plot. Just like a common reader, his son and indirectly the viewer discover the contents of the journal progressively, thus keeping the idea of testimony. The director also deliberately omits some elements of the story because he chose to focus on a particular message. Indeed, owing to the impressive visual effects, he was able to keep many major scenes of Swift's satire so the omissions go hand in hand with intended modifications. However, his modifications either reinforce Swift's message through a different medium or bring their own individual message.

Necessary Differences

The movie imposes some necessary changes. One of the most important of them is linked with a dominant feature in Swift's satire, which is language. Gulliver has to struggle and learn each language as he travels through different parts of these imaginary worlds. These are languages he has never heard of before and which have no common roots in the languages Gulliver speaks. In the movie, the director chose to use English as the international language, naturally first because it is a British/American production and second because it may also reach a wider audience. Gulliver does not have to adapt to each place, and all the different inhabitants share the same language just like the common viewer.

As mentioned before, the movie has a completely different time-frame. Contrary to the book, the appearance of Lemuel Gulliver, the protagonist of the narrative, is delayed. In the book, the reader gets to discover Gulliver's story through Gulliver's own personal narration of his own life, but, in the movie, we stand next to Gulliver's wife Mary and their son who discover Gulliver in their stable after he has spent nine years of adventures on various islands. As the actress, Mary Steenburgen explains in the "Making Of" of the mini TV series,[26] Mary Gulliver has been waiting for her husband to return from the sea and just when she is on the verge of accepting a proposal from the man she has been working for (Dr. Bates), Gulliver returns. Contrary to the book, where Gulliver's children Johnny and Betty are only mentioned and are not really involved in his adventures,

[26] "Making of," Special Features, in Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, 1995, DVD, 2010.

Gulliver's son, Tom in the movie, has a much more important role to play than in Swift's *Gulliver*. He is a character with whom children and young viewers can identify with. Interestingly enough, the character of the only son and the character of the owner of the house who tries to seduce Mary are additions to the story; their inclusion completely changes the dynamic of the plot. The son, who is an ally to Gulliver, is both scared and fascinated by his father's return. He trusts his father's accounts and prevents the viewer from considering that Gulliver is completely insane. Books I, II, and III are even told through him reading Gulliver's journal.

On the other hand, Dr. Bates (played by James Fox) adds a dramatic dimension to the story. As a physician he treats Gulliver's madness and he is trying to steal his identity as a husband; he creates a form of suspense necessary to the plot of the movie. Dr. Bates is mentioned in the book but his character is much more developed in the movie and takes on a much more important role: "I was bound Apprentice to Mr *James Bates*, an eminent Surgeon in *London*, with whom I continued Four years."[27] In the TV version, Dr. Bates has indeed taken over Gulliver's practice and he is living in his house. Mary is now his housekeeper. Just like with Odysseus in Homer's *Odyssey,* Gulliver comes back home but has no longer a clear identity of himself and he needs to recover his former status. Dr. Bates's incessant courting of Mary is stressful and makes the viewer wonder whether Gulliver will lose his mind, his wife, and his home by the end of the movie, or if his stories will be considered as trustworthy. Dr. Bates's motives are also quite selfish since he wants to ultimately get rid of Gulliver and keep Mary away from him as he has proposed to her at the beginning of the TV movie and Mary Gulliver keeps delaying her response. However, Dr. Bates also embodies the voice of reason. His firm assertion that Gulliver is insane puts doubt into our minds as Gulliver might be violent or dangerous and, as viewers, it is sometimes easy to doubt his sanity. Lemuel Gulliver's energy and his frenzy might give an impression of madness. Moreover, the addition of the Room of Answers brings an even more dramatic dimension to the story since Gulliver tries to strangle Dr. Bates after he sees himself in a hallucination, whereupon he tells himself not to come home.

The treatment Gulliver receives in the asylum is quite inhuman and is meant to shock the viewer. It does not put Dr. Bates in a favorable light. Dr. Bates, upon being attacked by Gulliver, starts to administer him with laudanum, so as to dull his senses and lessen his violent behavior. This does not reinforce the idea that Gulliver is mad but rather that the

[27] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 15.

medicines and the consequences of his imprisonment in the dungeon might have caused him some psychological damage. The movie insists on the difficulty of defining sanity and madness, and the play on words in the third voyage is quite revealing. When the sorcerer, the Lord of Glubbdubdrib, played by Omar Sharif, discovers Gulliver alone in the desert he tells him: "You're insane. (pause) I mean you're insane to be outside the Academy, unarmed and on foot.[28]" Although Gulliver's madness is mentioned at some point in the book, it is not as developed as it is in the movie. Swift only mentions it briefly at the end of the second voyage: "I behaved myself so unaccountably, that they were all of the Captain's Opinion, when he first saw me; and concluded I had lost my Wits."[29] The sailors see Gulliver as mad, in the book, because he is no longer accustomed to being surrounded by normal people and he behaves in a rather unusual way: he speaks very loudly as he used to do in Brobdingnag to be heard by the giants:

> He said "he wondered at one Thing very much, which was, to hear me speak so loud;" asking me "whether the King or Queen of that Country were thick of Hearing?" I told him, "it was what I had been used to for above two Years past, and that I admired as much at the Voices of him and his Men, who seemed to me only to whisper, and yet I could hear them well enough.[30]

However, there is no real mention of Gulliver's complete madness. As readers we may doubt Gulliver's sanity, but it is not the main theme of *Gulliver's Travels*, which focuses on other satirical targets.

The changes in the movie—such as the insistence on Gulliver's probable insanity—are additions or modifications that help create a form of expectation for the viewer. Because of the different medium, the director had to add a few necessary details to the story to create a more dynamic development of the filmic storytelling, nevertheless despite the different media, there are a number of similarities between the text and the mini-series. When he finally comes home, Gulliver immediately hides in the stable with the horses just like he does at the end of his fourth voyage, although the time frame is reversed in the movie. Because he is back home, viewers are not able to see Gulliver at sea, whereas, in Swift's text, descriptions of Gulliver's travels and voyages at sea are given. However, the director manages to bring Gulliver's experience as a sailor in the

[28] Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, Hallmark, 1995, DVD, 2010.
[29] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 137.
[30] Ibid., 135.

movie, by using flashbacks and hallucinations. For example, Gulliver thinks he is in the middle of a storm while, actually, he is sheltered in the stable. He imagines the entire stable starts to shake and water starts to flood the entire room. Throughout the movie, Gulliver's memories and reality are intertwined. As a consequence of these cinematographic techniques, the viewer experiences Gulliver's vivid memories. For example, when Gulliver plays with his son and little toys marching underneath him, the toys suddenly become Lilliputians and the scene shifts back to Gulliver's memories in Lilliput. It should also be pointed out here that the only scenes where Gulliver's memories and reality are not constantly converged appear in the fourth part of the movie, which might be a sign that Gulliver is progressively truly coming back home and that he is now able to distance himself from his adventures. Those cinematographic techniques enabled the director to stay faithful to the story by using other means and showing the same situations and emotions in a different manner.

Parallels

Even if there are some changes, the director managed to achieve parallels with Jonathan Swift's satire. The main example is the parallel between the asylum, seen as a sort of prison in the movie, and the box in which Gulliver is carried around during the second voyage in the book: "My Master, pursuant to the Advice of his Friend, carried me in a Box the next Market-Day to the neighbouring Town."[31] The director draws a close parallel between the confinement of Gulliver in a box by the giants and his confinement in the asylum in England by his peers, but also between Gulliver's imprisonment in the asylum's dungeon and his release in Part III to resurrect the dead souls in Lord Munodi's palace. Gulliver is perceived as having no country, no friends, or no safe place to go to. The director stayed faithful to Swift's text but he also highlighted some more marginal elements and episodes in the text.

In addition, to reinforce the sense of loneliness and rejection, the director adds another dimension which is not present in Swift's satire but which serves the same purpose by creating a sense of alienation. During the second half of the movie, Gulliver's wife Mary tries to send him letters but they are deceitfully read and hidden by Dr. Bates in the shelves of his study. Tom later finds them, and this leads to a dramatic standoff in the asylum. Another modification is that during the first voyage, Gulliver is

[31] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 88.

first welcomed by the queen: "Her Imperial Majesty was pleased to smile very graciously upon me, and gave me out of the Window her Hand to kiss."[32] By contrast, in the movie, the Queen is constantly afraid of Gulliver and looks at him with scorn. Gulliver is moving from one tricky situation to another and this stresses the dramatic dimension which is still necessary to the movie.

The main themes of Swift's satire are treated differently in the adaptation, and although they do not appear to be satirical at first, they do hint at certain fundamental questions as Duncan Kenworthy explains. The director kept some satirical undertones but insisted on making the film adaptation accessible to a wider audience:

> There's no getting away from the fact that *Gulliver's Travels* is a satire, but, of course, although it sounds terrifying and intellectual, in fact, satire is just simply poking fun at the ridiculousness of human behaviour, which certainly is as true today as it was 250 years ago.[33]

In the book as well as in the movie, there is a strong emphasis on the notions of doubt, truthfulness, and veracity. In Swift's satire, it is the narrative itself which is questioned. In the movie, Gulliver's sanity is always questioned. There is, therefore, an indirect satire of travel literature and its relation to reality. In his satire, Jonathan Swift mocks those travelers who pretended to have seen wonderful countries, objects, and inhabitants. He criticizes the desire of those writers to amaze and to surprise the reader. But to deal with the question of veracity and truthfulness at the core of Swift's narrative, Sturridge uses another approach. In the television adaptation, the question is not to determine whether what is written in Gulliver's journal is to be trusted but whether or not Gulliver is mad. Sturridge's Gulliver, however, may be considered completely mad or traumatized because of the terrible ordeal through which he is going. With the constant movement between past and present, the viewer does not really know if he is witnessing hallucinations or trustworthy flashbacks. Locked up in an asylum, Gulliver is analyzed and judged to see whether or not he is insane. Yet, the testimonial aspect is included in the movie, when Gulliver's son discovers his father's journal in his bag. It is a journal full of drawings, tales, and anecdotes which are shared with the viewer when Gulliver is no longer able to tell his story face to face, since he is locked up in a cell. Moreover, the journal is also

[32] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels,* 33.
[33] "Making of," Special Features, in Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, 1995, DVD, 2010.

the embodiment of Gulliver's story and is a source of conflict between Mary, Tom, and Dr. Bates. Other writings are also sources of tension such as when Dr. Bates asks for Gulliver's recreated writings and drawings from his journal to be erased from the walls in the asylum's dungeon and, as mentioned, when he hides Mary's letters from Gulliver. In Swift's *Gulliver*, fantasy, imagination, and lies are used as tools for political criticism, whereas, in the movie, Gulliver's experience and his son's imagination are apparently praised. Despite the fact that Bates criticized Tom for having his head "full up with nonsense,"[34] the scientists and assembled public audience are bewildered when the Lilliputian sheep is finally revealed. It turns out that Gulliver had taken a sheep from Lilliput as food when escaping Lilliput on his raft in Part I. Tom—having found it in Gulliver's bag—brings it to the trial and this miniature sheep proves that Gulliver *was* telling the truth. He is then finally considered as sane and freed from the asylum.

The family is reunited and Gulliver becomes a father and a husband again. The movie insists on the real ordeal Gulliver went through and the selfless, pure love of his son and wife, compared to Dr. Bates's greed. Indeed, in the "Making Of" documentary of the film in the DVD, the executive producer Robert Halmi describes the incredible special effects—digital effects, green screen, blue screen and models such as the perfect replica of a palace in Lisbon—that were created to make the story plausible and realistic. Duncan Kenworthy goes on further by saying that

> It's crucial to the drama that the audience really believes that Gulliver has visited all these places, they're not simply the ravings of a madman, which is what everyone else in the story believes. So I was very keen that we also shoot in real places, real locations.[35]

Although those special effects were created thanks to very precise shootings and complicated techniques, it can be noted that Enlightenment rationalism—embodied in Dr. Bates and the physicians in the asylum—is ridiculed, while the desire to believe in impossible, wonderful tales is put forward with the positive ending and the proof of Gulliver's sanity, proven by the evidence of the existing Lilliputian sheep, brought by Gulliver's son.

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[34] Sturridge, dir., *Gulliver's Travels*, Hallmark, 1995, DVD, 2010.
[35] Ibid.

Conclusion

The movie focuses on many topics present in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* but it also lays the emphasis on different aspects such as the notion on sanity, confinement, and freedom. The director of the TV adaptation Charles Sturridge might have decided to stress these aspects voluntarily but they are also part of a necessary narrative strategy. The TV adaptation needs a form of suspense and mystery, and it is clear that the characters of the son and Dr. Bates add a dramatic side to the plot. The viewer sees how life has been going on while Gulliver was at sea which makes his character even more estranged. Contrary to Swift who satirizes the extraordinary and sometimes unbelievable side of the tales which could be found in contemporary travel fiction, the director apparently encourages us to dream and believe in the possibility of wonderful, scary, or unbelievable worlds. It highlights the importance of keeping a childlike imagination in a world of rules and control: hence the fact that Gulliver's son is the one finally proving his dad's sanity. His childlike open-mindedness contrasts with the rationality and malevolence of Dr. Bates who is supposed to embody reason and common sense. Yet, despite being a child, Gulliver's son was in fact right the entire time. Although there are numerous hints at Swift's satirical criticisms, political satire becomes secondary, and creativity and imagination are put forward. This TV adaptation is a reminder that in addition to Swift's satirical attacks, his ability to create unbelievable worlds and his imagination are Jonathan Swift's main legacies today and what most people remember from his works.

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PART III

SWIFT AND/IN THE POLITICS OF LANGUAGE

CHAPTER EIGHT

POLITENESS, POLISHING THE LANGUAGE, "POLITICAL CORRECTNESS": FROM JONATHAN SWIFT'S *PROPOSAL FOR CORRECTING, IMPROVING AND ASCERTAINING THE ENGLISH TONGUE* TO PRESENT-DAY LANGUAGE AND CULTURE WARS

EMILIA SLAVOVA

Introduction

The eighteenth century is known for its passionate attempts to purify, preserve, polish, and "fix" the English language—a tradition in which Jonathan Swift often features as one of the central figures. This obsession with linguistic prescription is equaled by a similar obsession with prescribing manners and etiquette, and establishing an ideology of politeness. While the link between politeness and linguistic prescription may be easily demonstrated, it may be less obvious how the two relate to the late-twentieth-century term "political correctness." My aim is, first, to show how the three concepts are interrelated and second, to demonstrate how each one has attracted heated debates concerning not only linguistic matters, but primarily cultural, social and political ones. Looking at the eighteenth century from a twenty-first century perspective can offer interesting comparisons, parallels and insights.

Politeness and Polishing the Language in the Eighteenth Century

Politeness seems to be one of those traits that are considered quintessentially English. The preoccupation with manners, etiquette and politeness can be traced in multiple literary sources, conduct guides, etiquette books, periodicals, and other documents published in Britain, attesting to a strong prescriptive tradition. This tradition peaked around the eighteenth century, growing into a dominant national ideology, and as Burke points out, the term *the culture of politeness* was coined to describe the period.[1] However, back in the eighteenth century, the paragon of good manners was still to be found in France. To acquire the right manners, young men of noble origin had to travel to the big European capitals and absorb their culture and habits, a tradition that was known as the Grand Tour. English people had a lot to learn from the people of the world, as they themselves were seen as lacking in the art of polished behavior. Politeness only came to be perceived as quintessentially English in retrospect, as evident from Lord Chesterfield's *Letters*:

> Now, though I would not recommend to you, to go into women's company in search of solid knowledge, or judgment, yet it has its use in other respects; for it certainly polishes the manners, and gives *une certaine tournure*, which is very necessary in the course of the world; and which Englishmen have generally less of than any people in the world.[2]

The polishing of manners (like polishing a rough diamond in need of smoothing) was central to the concept of politeness. The link between politeness and polish is made transparent in the etymology of the word "polite." According to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*),[3] "polite" originated in the fifteenth century (in the form *polyt, polytte*) and derives from the Latin adjective *polīt-us* (polished, accomplished, refined, cultivated, polite) and the verb *polīre* (to smooth, to polish).

"Polite" was used in a wide range of collocations, many of them obsolete today: *polite tongue, polite learning, polite education, polite poem, polite arts, polite scholar, polite manners, polite nations of the world,* and so on. They all referred to human activities characterized by refinement, sophistication, culture, and cultivation.[4] As Klein observes, the

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[1] Burke, "A Civil Tongue," 39.
[2] Lord Chesterfield, *Letters to His Natural Son*, LETTER XXIV.
[3] Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd Edition, 1989.
[4] Slavova, "The Development of Politeness as "Social Currency."

"polite" devoted themselves to leisure, sports, the ornamental, to fashion and display, and considered themselves "the Quality" and "the better sort," the gentlemen and ladies of England, in contrast to the "useful part of mankind," the "business" people (the middling sorts) or the "laborious people" (the lower sort, the common people).[5]

The obsession with regulating manners was closely related to an obsession with "fixing," or "ascertaining" the English tongue, so as to eliminate all confusion and contamination. The examples of other European languages were strong: *Academia della Crusca* was established in Florence in 1582 with the purpose of maintaining the purity of the Italian language, and *l'Académie française* was founded in 1635 as an official authority on the French language. Ascertaining the language, as explained by Baugh,[6] had three main aspects: regulating the language and setting up a standard of correct usage; refining the language by removing defects and introducing improvements; and fixing the language permanently in the desired form.

One famous advocate for establishing an *Academy of English* was Daniel Defoe, who in 1697 published his *Essay upon Projects*. In the section titled *Of Academies*, Defoe explained his vision in detail, referring to the French model and discussing the effect this had on making the French language the most widely spoken one at the time:

> The French, who justly value themselves upon erecting the most celebrated academy of Europe, owe the lustre of it very much to the great encouragement the kings of France have given to it. […] The peculiar study of the academy of Paris has been to refine and correct their own language, which they have done to that happy degree that we see it now spoken in all the courts of Christendom, as the language allowed to be most universal. [7]

Purity of style, purging of affectations, and eliminating innovations are among the measures proposed. Defoe's proposal also makes clear the connection between language regulation and refinement on the one hand, and polite learning, on the other:

> The work of this society should be to encourage polite learning, to polish and refine the English tongue, and advance the so much neglected faculty of correct language, to establish purity and propriety of style, and to purge it from all the irregular additions that ignorance and affectation have

[5] Klein, "Politeness for Plebes," 362.
[6] Baugh, *History of the English Language*, 188.
[7] Defoe, *Essay upon Projects*.

> introduced; and all those innovations in speech, if I may call them such, which some dogmatic writers have the confidence to foster upon their native language, as if their authority were sufficient to make their own fancy legitimate.[8]

The agents of this society were to be selected among "persons of the first figure of learning," gentlemen of the nobility and private gentlemen, as well as people who have deserved the position "for mere merit."[9] The authority of the society would be such that no author would be allowed to coin new words without the permission of those arbiters of style and language, as "'twould be as criminal then to coin words as money."[10]

In his analysis, Richard Watts reinforces the connection between the ideology of politeness and the codification of English in the eighteenth century. In what he calls *the myth of the polite language*, Watts outlines the following metaphorical blends:

1. A Correct Language is a Polished Language.
2. A Polished Language is a Refined Language.
3. A Polished Language is a Polite Language.[11]

Thus, the ideology of politeness and the ideology of the standard (polished, refined) language seem to run in parallel and reinforce each other. Likewise, the attempts to codify manners (through a vast array of conduct literature) and to codify the English language (through dictionaries, grammar books, and the establishment of an academy to take charge of language and fix it in a perceived refined state) are very similar in nature.

Jonathan Swift's *Proposal*: A Deconstruction

Jonathan Swift's *A Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue* (henceforth, *Proposal*), published in 1712, is another well-known and often quoted example of the attempts to fix the language. As Watts observes, while seemingly addressed to the Earl of Oxford, the proposal was published as an open letter and written with a much larger audience in mind,[12] lamenting the corruptions of the English language and

[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Watts, *Language Myths*, 187.
[12] Ibid, 170.

the abuses it has been subjected to by the very people who pretend to polish and refine it:

> [2] My Lord; I do here in the Name of all the Learned and Polite Persons of the Nation, complain to your Lordship, as *First Minister*, that our Language is extremely imperfect; that its daily Improvements are by no means in proportion to its daily Corruptions; and the Pretenders to polish and refine it, have chiefly multiplied Abuses and Absurdities; and, that in many Instances, it offends against every Part of Grammar.[13]

The letter has been almost unanimously accepted at face value, as an earnest plea to the Earl of Oxford to intervene and perhaps establish an English Academy, similar to the ones already existing in Italy and France. Albert Baugh, for example, describes Swift's *Proposal* as "the culmination of the movement for an English Academy."[14] For Milroy and Milroy, the pamphlet is described as "the great classic of complaint literature in English."[15] Similarly, the introductory text to Swift's *Proposal* on the British Library's official site presents it as an earnest complaint about the state of the language, suggesting a regulatory body like the one established earlier in France:

> In 1712, the English language, according to the satirist Jonathan Swift, was in chaos. He outlined his complaints in this public letter to Robert Harley, leader of the government, proposing the appointment of experts to advise on English use. The model was to be based on that of the Académie Française, which had been regulating the French language since 1634. His proposal, like all the others made, came to nothing. To this day no official regulation of the English language exists.[16]

Interestingly, the British Library text makes reference to other proposals by Swift, none of which came to fruition. The underlined text is hyperlinked and leads to *A Modest Proposal*,[17] a bitter satire proposing the selling of Irish children as food in order to solve Ireland's economic crisis. The parallel may have suggested that both proposals were satire; but somehow this possibility was overlooked by most researchers.

Chronologically, Swift's *Proposal* (1712) follows Defoe's *An Essay upon Projects* (1697), and has traditionally been seen as a continuation of

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[13] Swift, *Proposal,* Paragraph [2].
[14] Baugh, *History of the English Language*, 330.
[15] Milroy and Milroy, in Watts, *Language Myths,* 158.
[16] British Library, "Swift's *Proposal for the English Tongue.*"
[17] British Library, "*A Modest Proposal*."

this line of argument. In spite of the almost unanimous consensus about the meaning of the *Proposal*, Watts offers an alternative reading, suggesting that instead of the literal interpretation, Swift's text should be seen as a parody of Defoe's. In interpreting the text, he claims, one should take into consideration the socio-historical context of the times, as well as Swift's political affiliations and his well-known penchant for satire:

> Although Swift explicitly declares his statement to be a complaint ("I do here… complain to your Lordship… that our Language is extremely imperfect…"), that does not necessarily mean that the whole text should be literally taken as a complaint. Contemporary readers of Swift must have expected that anything written by him would be either satire or satirical narrative (cf. *Gulliver's Travels*).[18]

To support his claim, Watts analyzes the context of the early eighteenth century. In the first decade, Swift was part of a group of friends, writers, and Whig party members, consisting of Richard Steele, Joseph Addison, and Daniel Defoe. They were concerned with establishing the norms of polite behavior and a prestigious language, using the pages of the two extremely popular periodicals, *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*:

> The first decade of the eighteenth century witnessed the concerted effort on the part of a number of writers (e.g. Shaftesbury, Addison, Steele and Swift himself) to define and exemplify polite behaviour as a culturally and socially desirable goal, intimately linked not only with forms of linguistic behaviour, but also with the chimera of a fixed, prestigious standard language.[19]

This changed in 1710, when both Jonathan Swift and the Earl of Oxford changed their political allegiance from Whig to Tory. As a result, Swift found himself in opposition to his former Whig friends: Defoe, Addison and Steele. In his typical style, Watts maintains, Swift used "a smokescreen of irony and satire, which would have been relatively easy to interpret for contemporary readers,"[20] to make fun of his former friends and current political foes and to criticize their claims to belonging to polite society.

A closer look at the "culprits" for degrading the English language seems to support this reading. The first to blame are young noblemen, followers of King Charles II and educated in the Court, "which used to be

[18] Watts, *Language Myths,* 161.
[19] Ibid, 172.
[20] Ibid, 173.

the Standard of Propriety and Correctness of Speech" in the past, but apparently are no longer so:

> [8] To this succeeded that Licentiousness which entered with the *Restoration*, and from infecting our Religion and Morals, fell to corrupt our Language; which last was not like to be much improved by those who at that Time made up the Court of King *Charles* the Second; either such who had followed Him in His Banishment, or who had been altogether conversant in the Dialect of those *Fanatick Times*; or young Men, who had been educated in the same Company; so that the *Court*, which used to be the Standard of Propriety and Correctness of Speech, was then, and, I think, hath ever since continued the worst School in *England* for that Accomplishment; and so will remain, till better Care be taken in the Education of our your Nobility, that they may set out into the World with some Foundation of Literature, in order to qualify them for Patterns of Politeness.[21]

Secondly, Swift attacks the poets from the time of the Restoration, who introduced the practice of abbreviating words in order to fit their verses. It is a practice he seems to oppose and wants to abolish:

> [10] There is another Sett of Men who have contributed very much[22] to the spoiling of the *English* Tongue; I mean the Poets, from the Time of the Restoration. These Gentlemen, although they could not be insensible how much our Language was already overstocked with Monosyllables; yet, to save Time and Pains, introduced that barbarous Custom of abbreviating Words, to fit them to the Measure of their Verses.[23]

Finally, Swift pokes fun at young university students from Oxford and Cambridge, who are obsessed with pedantry and acquiring a certain style and manners. Their reading of the "daily Trash sent down to them" most probably refers to *The Spectator*, which was regularly sent to students from the capital, according to Watts' analysis:

> [12] Several young Men at the Universities, terribly poss[ess]ed with the fear of Pedantry, run into a worse Extream, and think all Politeness to consist in reading the daily Trash sent down to them from hence: This they call *knowing the World*, and *reading Men and Manners*. Thus furnished they come up to Town, reckon all their Errors for Accomplishments, borrow the newest Sett of Phrases, and if they take a Pen into their Hands,

[21] Swift, *Proposal*, Paragraph [8].
[22] The word in the original is "must," rather than "much." However, this seems to be a typo.
[23] Ibid, Paragraph [10].

> all the odd Words they have picked up in a Coffee-House, or a Gaming Ordinary, are produced as Flowers of Style; and the Orthography refined to the utmost.[24]

After critically analyzing Swift's *Proposal* in its political and historical context, Watts makes the conjecture that "to take Swift literally is an extremely risky undertaking."[25] Instead, he sees the text as subtly ironic, mocking "the Whig craze for politeness"[26] and criticizing not so much the perceived corruption of the English language but rather the "improvers" of the language, Swift's former friends and current political enemies. The language issue is then the smokescreen, Watts asserts, no doubt widely popular in the eighteenth century, behind which there are more deeply hidden political motives:

> Whether or not the *Proposal* is considered to be the "great classic of complaint literature", Swift's open letter to the Earl of Oxford certainly illustrates the degree to which he was able to use the standard language question as a smokescreen to hide behind while indulging in political infighting. It is also significant that language can become such a convenient instrument precisely because it is part of the ideological discourse of politeness.[27]

It is this same merging between surface linguistic concerns, on the one hand, and much deeper social and political ones, on the other, that can be found three centuries later, in the debate over "political correctness."

From Politeness to "Political Correctness"

In the early twenty-first century, language is again a battlefield where political passions are enacted, with liberal and conservative positions reminiscent of the eighteenth-century debates between the Whigs and the Tories. Politeness has lost much of its appeal, but there are new attempts to regulate speech and social manners. Non-racist, non-sexist, inclusive speech codes have been imposed and disseminated, to reflect the new social realities, the democratization of society, and the move towards greater equality. They have been implemented at various levels, by various institutions, usually in the form of guidelines for non-sexist, non-racist or inclusive language. For those upset by the trend towards greater equality,

[24] Ibid, Paragraph [12].
[25] Watts, *Language Myths*, 182.
[26] Ibid, 176.
[27] Ibid, 182.

however, the term "political correctness" has been used as a way of attacking, and ridiculing, attempts at language reform and language sensitivity. While mostly attacking linguistic expressions on the surface, the detractors' deep concern is usually with the de facto social, cultural and political equality sought by previously suppressed groups: women, people of color, immigrants, LGBT+ people, or other minorities. This section explores the historical context of the trend towards greater social equality and linguistic inclusivity, inaccurately referred to as "political correctness" (hence, the scare quotes).

The 1960s were a watershed moment in British and American society. After recovering from the post-war shock and a subsequent period of economic growth and stabilization, a series of equality movements swept through and transformed Western societies, as observed by Paul Jay:[28] the Civil Rights movement; the women's movement; the gay and lesbian rights movement, and so on. University education in both the UK and the USA was transformed, too. Higher education became more accessible and inclusive, and new groups of previously excluded groups gained access to education. Even the most conservative British universities opened their doors to women; people of color, working class people, and gay and lesbian members became students in large numbers, and some of them later joined the teaching staff at universities—a trend which transformed first the student body, then the professoriate, and then the curriculum:

> These demographic changes brought a revolution in both the texts and the issues treated by scholars in literary and cultural studies. Work on women writers and African American, Latina/o, Native American, Asian American, gay, lesbian, and queer literatures transformed the curriculum of literature departments and the research agenda of its faculty in ways that dramatically reconfigured the historical and geographical boundaries of traditional practices.[29]

In Britain, the shift in social attitudes is well reflected in the changing discourse around U and non-U, a term that gained recognition in the 1950s. U, standing for upper-class, legitimate, appropriate, versus the non-U, non-upper class, incorrect, not proper, not legitimate, were discussed at length in a popular book called *Noblesse Oblige: an Enquiry into the Identifiable Characteristics of the English Aristocracy.*[30] The book featured a shortened version of an earlier scholarly paper by a professor of linguistics,

[28] Jay, *Global Matters*.
[29] Ibid., 1.
[30] Mitford, *Noblesse Oblige*.

Alan Ross. In it, he examined the linguistic markers distinguishing the English aristocracy from the common people, pretending to be purely descriptive, but in fact drawing clear prescriptive rules about what should and what shouldn't be said, and by whom.[31] *Noblesse Oblige* caused a major social stir in the 1950s, and many people tried to follow the linguistic demarcation lines so clearly drawn by it. By the 1970s, however, the mood had already changed. A sequel, *U and Non-U Revisited*, revised the linguistic snobbery of the previous book and announced that now egalitarianism and equality, rather than elitism and superiority, were the new norm. In a symposium discussion, represented in the book, Philip Howard speaks, addressing Professor Ross:

> In my opinion the difference between 1956 and 1978 is far more fundamental than you state. Twenty-five years ago it was possible to draw distinctions between those who said 'lavatory' and those who said 'toilet', those who sat 'in the lounge' and those who lounged in the 'sitting-room', those who used 'napkins' and those who used 'serviettes', those who had 'dirty clothes' and those who had 'soiled linen', and those beasts who committed fish-knives, and were accordingly in a class of their own beyond the pale. … In any case, since those days, I have to tell you, Professor, that there has been a social revolution in language as in other things. We are all equal these days, or, at any rate, we are all nervously wearing masks… Mass education until sixteen, television, and the revulsion against that most unfashionable of deadly sins, élitism, have changed the way we speak and the way we live.[32]

As a result of this change in social attitudes, the importance of politeness as a social imperative and a marker of distinction in British society considerably subsided. The associations that politeness carried, not only with kindness and good intentions, but with good breeding and elite social status, made it obsolete in the new climate of egalitarianism and anti-elitism. Instead, "communication skills" developed as the likely contender to take the place of politeness as a regulator of social and linguistic behavior. Communication became heavily regulated, not by etiquette manuals, as in previous centuries, but mostly by communication, diversity, and customer service training, disseminated through corporate culture.[33] Social etiquette evolved into business etiquette. And the source

[31] Ross, "U and Non-U"
[32] Buckle (ed.), *U and Non-U Revisited*, 29.
[33] Cameron, *Good to Talk?*

of authority shifted from Great Britain towards the new global leader, the USA.[34]

In line with the changing social norms of Anglo-American society and the trend towards egalitarianism and inclusivity, there has been a concerted effort to reform the English language on both sides of the Atlantic in order to avoid sexist, racist and other discriminatory usages. This trend both reflects the changing social climate, and also shapes it, since language is not merely a reflection of society, but an active participant and agent in changing social attitudes and norms. Various regulations have been issued by professional organizations, publishing houses, and academic institutions in order to regulate language usage. Without any claims at providing an exhaustive list, here are several examples of such practices.

In 1986, the *American Philosophical Association* prepared guidelines encouraging members to show sensitivity, to avoid sexist language and to "take special care to avoid giving needless and unintended offense":

> First, our profession has long focused on language. Accordingly, we are attuned to the emotive force of words and to the ways in which language influences thought and behavior. Second, we pride ourselves on our willingness to question assumptions. Yet the uncritical use of sexist language may blind us to our having adopted a particular value-laden perspective. Such blindness may systematically distort our theories and interfere with the careers and lives of many of our colleagues and students, both female and male. Third, as scholars and teachers we pursue truth wherever it leads: to the reform of our ordinary concepts and beliefs and, if necessary, of our everyday language.[35]

Referring to a number of recent feminist publications (such as Robin Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place,* 1975; Dale Spender's *Man Made Language*, 1980), as well as an earlier 1977 publication by the American Psychological Association issuing similar guidelines for avoiding sexist language, the *American Philosophical Association* suggested the following guidelines for the non-sexist use of language:

- When constructing examples and theories, remember to *include* those human activities, interests, and points of view which traditionally have been associated with females.
- Eliminate the generic use of "he" by using plural nouns;

[34] Slavova, "The Development of Politeness as "Social Currency."
[35] APA, "Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language."

- Eliminate the generic use of "man" and use "person"/"people," "individual(s)," "human(s)," "human being(s)" instead; for "mankind," substitute "humankind," "humanity," "the human race";
- Eliminate sexism when addressing persons formally by using "Ms" instead of "Miss" or "Mrs."; use the corresponding title for females ("Ms.," "Dr.," "Prof.") whenever a title is appropriate for males; use "Dear Colleague" or "Editor" or "Professor," etc. in letters to unknown persons (instead of "Dear Sir," "Gentlemen").
- Eliminate sexual stereotyping of roles by using the same term for both females and males (e.g., "department chair" or "chairperson").[36]

In 1996, the Linguistic Society of America (LSA) also issued *Guidelines for Nonsexist Usage* for the preparation of written and oral presentations in linguistics. The document explained the rationale behind the need of such guidelines, stating that sexism often occurs unintentionally, or out of a need for humor, or the use of traditional examples, or simply due to lack of attention and reflection. The results, however, could contribute to the stereotyping of the sexes, or demeaning and offending women, as observed in a growing body of research:

> Sexist practices are those that contribute to demeaning or ignoring women (or men) or to stereotyping either sex; sexism is often not a matter of intention but of effect. These guidelines reflect a growing body of research which indicates that many people find sexist language offensive. Although linguists (like all scholars) need to guard against sexist linguistic and scholarly practices in their main texts and accompanying citations and acknowledgments, sexism in the linguistics literature is most often obvious in constructed example sentences. Sometimes this is the result of an effort to inject humor in otherwise dry prose, sometimes it is due to the use of traditional examples, and sometimes it is simply due to inattention.[37]

The suggested steps included using plural forms rather than generic masculine pronouns; replacing the generic sense of "man" with alternatives; using he or she, s/he as alternatives when the sex of the referent is unspecified, or alternating between masculine and feminine forms; avoiding examples which refer only to one of the sexes; avoiding sexual stereotyping; and generally avoiding androcentric examples.

These guidelines were significantly expanded in 2016, and non-sexist language was transformed into inclusive language, broadening the scope of cases covered. The 2016 LSA *Guidelines for Inclusive Language* referred to decades of research and focused on diversity, respect to all

[36] APA, abridged, "Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language."
[37] LSA, "Guidelines for Nonsexist Usage."

people, equal opportunities, and suggested ways in which linguists could proactively use inclusive language to avoid marginalization, offence, misrepresentation, or the perpetuation of stereotypes. Furthermore, the guidelines should be used not only in academic writing and publications, the document stated, but also in various other forms of formal and informal communication, and might even be extended beyond English whenever possible. An interesting change concerns the use of he/she pronouns from the earlier guidelines: the new guidelines suggest using the singular "they" instead:

> Whenever possible, when referencing individuals whose gender is not known, specified, relevant, or lies outside of traditional binaries, use appropriate alternative pronouns that do not specify or presuppose a particular gender (e.g., *s/he*, *one*, or the now-common and accepted singular gender-neutral *they*).[38]

While the LSA does not impose obligatory rules on language use, it encourages all linguists to follow their guidelines in their teaching, research, writing, poster presentations, reviews, recommendation letters, policy statements, vacancy offers, editing, and other professional activities. The guidelines are mainly aimed at English, and there is awareness that different languages have different norms, yet there is the suggestion that across languages, the main principle should remain the same. In addition to the language choices suggested, recommendations are also given regarding the example sentences used to describe linguistic phenomena.

In a *Position Statement on Gender and Language* of the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE)[39] from 2018, there is the observation that language is inherently dynamic and ever evolving, and that English has undergone an active shift over several decades, regarding the intersection of language, gender, and equity. This has been reflected in a number of statements, starting in 1978 and regularly updated and evolving, to reflect the organization's commitment to gender equality and its contemporary understandings of non-binary gender identities. After a distinction is made between *gender*, *sex* and *sexuality*, the statement recommends the use of language that reflects the reality of gender diversity and more nuanced and inclusive discussions of gender in the classroom and the community. It also contrasts its current view on gender

[38] Ibid.

[39] NCTE, a U.S. organization founded in 1911 and devoted to "improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education."

as occurring along a spectrum, as opposed to previous binary notions of gender:

> The most common concepts of gender are based on the long-perpetuated notion that gender is a binary matter, and that it always aligns with a binary designation of sex (male/female). Yet contemporary understandings of gender clarify that gender identity and expression occur along a broad spectrum that is not limited to two binary alternatives, such as woman/man or girl/boy. The previous NCTE "Guidelines for Gender-Fair Use of Language" (2002) was grounded in a traditionally binary concept of gender, and was thus limited by that binary in its discussion, for example, of she/he pronouns. The "Statement on Gender and Language" (2018), based in the contemporary understanding that gender is a cultural construct that is not limited to binary categories, recommends usage that moves beyond the gender binary in order to include individuals whose identities might otherwise be unacknowledged or devalued.[40]

The linguistic recommendations include avoiding *he* as a universal pronoun; but also avoiding the binary *he/she*, the previously recommended option. Referring to the most recent editions of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (2017), the *Associated Press Stylebook* (2018), and other style guides, the document suggests that "the pronoun *they* is appropriate to use in writing when referring to singular antecedents, including when writing for publication." Respectively, the gender-neutral singular pronouns *they, them, their,* and *theirs* are recommended, and the reflective pronoun *themself* or *themselves*, stipulating that "a person's stated preference should be respected."[41] The verb agreeing with the neutral singular they is *are*, just as the singular *you* takes the verb *are*.

Another highly authoritative style guide, the *Purdue Online Writing Lab (Purdue OWL)*, also refers to the new policies introduced by the Associated Press and the *Chicago Manual of Style*, and adds more examples of the use of the gender-neutral *they* in the history of the English language, while commenting on its current role as signaling the growing acceptance of non-binary people:

> Gender neutral pronouns were not invented in the modern period—they have a vast and long history. The Oxford English Dictionary's first citation for a gender-neutral, indefinite *they* is from about 1375 from the romance of William of Palerne. The use of *they* as an indefinite pronoun which refers to people in general has been used even longer. *They* appears in 1382 in Wycliffe's translation of the Bible. Additionally, in *Much Ado about*

[40] NCTE, "Position on Gender and Language."
[41] Ibid.

> *Nothing,* Shakespeare uses *they* in the line, "To strange sores, strangely they straine the cure" (see OED Online).
>
> However, it has only been recently, with the changing conception of gender and society's growing acceptance of non-binary individuals, that gender-neutral pronouns have been more widely discussed.[42]

Outside of academic usage guidelines, the singular *they* has also made substantial progress. In 2015, the word was chosen as Word of the Year by members of the *American Dialect Society,* a 127-year-old organization including linguists, lexicographers, etymologists, grammarians, historians, researchers, writers, editors, students, and independent scholars:

> The use of singular *they* builds on centuries of usage, appearing in the work of writers such as Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Jane Austen. In 2015, singular *they* was embraced by the Washington Post style guide. Bill Walsh, copy editor for the Post, described it as "the only sensible solution to English's lack of a gender-neutral third-person singular personal pronoun.[43]

Other examples of non-binary, inclusive language include terms of address, such as *Mx*, as an alternative to the traditional gendered forms *Mrs.* and *Mr.* of previous times. While still not widely in use, it can be seen on some official documents and forms, as well as in the most authoritative source on the English language, the *Oxford English Dictionary*, where it was introduced in 2015:

> *Mx, n.* A gender-neutral title of courtesy prefixed to a person's surname, sometimes with first name(s) interposed. (Introduced Dec. 2015).[44]

On the London Underground, the gender-neutral trend is reflected in the replacement of the traditional "Ladies and gentlemen" with the neutral "Hello everybody" in public service announcements. The move was supported by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan. As Khan said, Transport for London (TfL) "serves a vibrant, diverse and multicultural city, and provision of an inclusive transport service is at the heart of TfL's purpose."[45]

Online platforms such as Twitter have also issued policy statements warning against hate speech and online abuse, as well against misgendering

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[42] Purdue OWL, "Gendered Pronouns & Singular 'They'."
[43] American Dialect Society, "2015 Word of the Year is singular 'they'."
[44] "Mx, n.," *OED*, 3rd edition,
[45] BBC News, "Tube to Change 'ladies and gentlemen' Announcements."

individuals.[46] Likewise, in Facebook's *Community Standards*, there are clear warnings against the use of hate speech based on "protected characteristics—race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, caste, sex, gender, gender identity, and serious disease or disability."[47] Online communication being one of the fastest growing and under-regulated areas of present-day communication, it seems vital to impose certain standards and rules and to protect vulnerable groups from online abuse.

It is worth noting that in none of the guidelines and materials discussed above is the term "political correctness" being used as a reason for choosing certain linguistic forms and avoiding others. But the term proved extremely potent in the hands of its detractors and has been used to undermine efforts not only to reform language, but to reform society, as well as any attempt at creating greater equality.

The Backlash against "Political Correctness"

The introduction of non-discriminatory, gender-neutral language has not been warmly embraced by all. In fact, there has been vehement backlash by certain groups of people, often claiming to support free speech and oppose its enemy, "political correctness" (or PC). The term gained central place in the "culture wars" between liberals and conservatives in the United States, from where its use spread globally, mobilizing groups to oppose what they see as censorship and social engineering aimed at undermining the natural order of things. Interestingly, the term came into use in the 1970s and gained popularity in the 1990s, roughly corresponding to the decline of the term "politeness." Initially used by left-wing academics between themselves as an inside joke to mock their own sometimes extreme attempts at self-righteousness and excessive orthodoxy, "political correctness" was quickly adopted by the right and turned into a term of abuse.[48] As writer and academic Moira Wiesel observes, there was a wave of stories in the 1990s, appearing in newspapers and magazines and warning about the dangers of the politically correct. Wiesel also notes that this was a response to the new "studies departments" and new curricula at many universities, reflecting the new social realities and making space for previously excluded people: queer people, people of color and women. The attack on "political correctness" was an attack on

[46] Twitter Help Center, "Hateful Conduct Policy."
[47] Facebook Community Standards, "Objectionable Content."
[48] Cameron, *Verbal Hygiene.*

the perceived left-wing, liberal turn that had taken place in academia and had disrupted the status quo:

> All of a sudden, instead of being a phrase that leftists used to check dogmatic tendencies within their movement, "political correctness" became a talking point for neoconservatives. They said that PC constituted a leftwing political programme that was seizing control of American universities and cultural institutions—and they were determined to stop it.[49]

In Britain, the crusade against "political correctness" was embraced by many right-wing news outlets and politicians, but it found particularly fertile ground in the United Kingdom's Independence Party (UKIP). In their 2010 Policy Statement, they raise the alarm that Britain and Britishness and under threat, and "political correctness" is seen as one of the main culprits, with a whole chapter devoted to it: 5. Threats to Britishness: The Politically Correct "Liberal Elite":

> No discussion of the crises facing modern British society would be complete without a discussion of this treasonous political, media and legal class - the "politically correct class". It includes the left wing media, the educational establishment, EU-funded and government funded NGOs and think tanks, politically correct enforcers in local councils and others with a financial and ideological stake in the continued social reengineering of Britain (5.1).[50]

The document clearly frames political correctness as one of the greatest enemies of British identity, hiding behind claims that it protects vulnerable minorities, while entirely changing and reengineering British culture (5.5). The statement attacks quotas for disadvantaged groups (women, ethnic minorities, gays, etc.) as "deeply immoral," "reverse discrimination," and "state enforced egalitarianism" (5.7). Multiculturalism is presented as "another tenet of the politically correct class" which is "toxic" and harmful (5.8), while UKIP pronounces itself "unashamedly as unicultural, one culture for all" (5.10). As a countermeasure to all the threats discussed, UKIP promises to "dismantle all the machinery of equality, diversity and (allegedly) antidiscrimination industries in the public sector" (11.10), and to "end multiculturalism and promote an all embracing uniculturalism" for all UK citizens (12.1). Finally, the statement evokes the anachronistic stereotype of British politeness, which UKIP intends to bring back, as a

[49] Wiesel, "How the Right Invented a Phantom Enemy."
[50] UKIP, "Restoring Britishness."

subtle call to return to the "good old days," parallel to the call to "make America great again":

> 13.3 UKIP will encourage higher standards of behaviour in society, including greater politeness, courtesy, manners, not swearing in public, and reflect these aims in schools, policing and public transport priorities.

The UKIP Policy Statement may have been a marginal document in 2010; by 2016, many of its talking points had entered mainstream political discourse, with anti-immigrant sentiment (much of it directed at the newest arrivals: Bulgarians and Romanians), anti-EU propaganda, fear-mongering and anti-political correctness being the central tenets of the pro-Brexit debate. Hate speech was on the rise, and sometimes escalated into hate crime, with a dramatic increase of incidents of racist attacks in the wake of the EU referendum. Commentators questioned whether this hatred had always been there, suppressed, or had been generated by the events and discourses surrounding the referendum. Sociologist Paul Bagguley from the University of Leeds called it "celebratory racism," with people "expressing a sense of power and success that they have won." [51] His explanation was that while people have not changed, and most of the people are tolerant, the Brexit result has emboldened the intolerant to feel legitimized and openly express their feelings at last. And as another academic, Michael Keith from the Oxford University's Immigration Research Center was widely quoted as saying, "The unspeakable became not only speakable, but commonplace."[52] Politeness may have been a noble objective of the British nationalists, but it certainly did not extend beyond a narrowly defined white British population.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the crusade against "political correctness" found another major outlet in the English-speaking world: it was embraced and championed by one of the presidential candidates in the 2016 presidential election campaign, later to become the 45th President of the United States (POTUS) against the odds, and was adopted as one of his main talking points. "I think the big problem this country has is being politically correct," he said during one of the TV pre-election debates, challenged to explain his outrageous attacks on women.[53] "Political correctness" could be blamed for anything wrong in American society; being politically incorrect was equated with being honest and telling it like it is. PC attacks were gleefully welcomed by many people who were

[51] Quoted in Khaleeli, "A Frenzy of Hatred."
[52] Quoted in Chakrabortty, "After a Campaign Scarred by **B**igotry."
[53] Gabbatt, "Donald Trump Quotes."

suddenly given the greenlight to express previously suppressed prejudices: racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic or Islamophobic ones. On many occasions, verbal attacks grew into physical violence, sometimes with fatal consequences. As in Britain, under the thin veil of attacking hypocritical language, there lay deeper attempts to undermine hard won battles for racial, gender and social equality. The progress made since the 1960 had to be upturned.

What distinguishes the 45th POTUS from other prominent figures attacking "political correctness" is that he has actually broken all taboos and has uttered insults against almost every group conceivable. He has gained the support of the most extreme hate groups in the USA, and has exonerated hate crimes, such as the murder of a protester in Charlottesville, saying "You had people that were very fine people on both sides."[54] Yet, after all the vitriol, "Lock her up!" chants at rallies, and open verbal abuse at opponents, he addressed the nation with a call for greater civility, following the sending of pipe bombs to leading democrats and media outlets in October 2018. "The media also has a responsibility to set a civil tone and to stop the endless hostility and constant negative and oftentimes false attacks and stories,"[55] he added, quickly deflecting any responsibility for the uncivil tone he himself had set, while at the same time directing blame at the media, whose voice he had systematically tried to discredit by calling it the "enemy of the people."[56]

But as Nesrine Malik in *The Guardian* rightly observes, the end of civility was exactly what the 45th POTUS promised, and what his voters enthusiastically embraced. It gave them the freedom to offend minorities, women and other vulnerable groups with impunity, Malik continues, while thriving on exclusion and seeing others as inferior, demanding politeness and respect upwards, towards those in power, the white and the male, but denying it to everyone, which, in essence, is what "political correctness" is all about. So, what happened to civility? Malik asks. "Trump supporters didn't realize it was, in fact, at heart, political correctness, and they voted it out."[57]

[54] Jacobs, "Charlottesville."
[55] Todd, Murray and Dann, "Trump Preaches Civility."
[56] Stewart, "Trump Calls Media the 'True Enemy of the People'."
[57] Malik, "If Donald Trump Wants Civility."

Conclusion

Looking at two periods of time divided by over 300 years between them, some parallels become clearly visible. Both cases, the eighteenth century and the twenty-first century one, present proof of how deeply interrelated linguistic issues are with political ones. While language alone cannot fix social inequalities, it can serve as an important symbolic regulator and can influence people's perceptions and attitudes. Politeness, an eighteenth-century English obsession, a marker of distinction setting apart the elite from the common people, has transformed in the twenty-first century and has developed into a social norm that requires respect for all; a democratic, egalitarian project, expressed both at the level of society through a number of inclusive social policies, and at the level of language through recommendations for the use of inclusive, non-discriminatory language. Yet this project is under severe attack both by privileged groups who are uncomfortable with losing their privileged status, and by disenfranchised people who find it more expedient to be allowed to openly express their hatred towards other groups, seen as rivals for resources. The crusade against "political correctness" is thus a smokescreen hiding a deeply held discomfort in the face of demands for greater social equality and justice. The same people who abhor "political correctness" and resent being pressurized to give respect to people they deem unworthy or inferior, insist on greater civility and politeness when they themselves feel threatened. They should be reminded of the way Jonathan Swift defined good manners and good breeding:

> Good manners is the art of making those people easy with whom we converse.
> Whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best bred in company.[58]

It is worth noting that Swift used *persons*, not *men*. He might have been an early precursor of political correctness.

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CHAPTER NINE

THE FIRST BULGARIAN TRANSLATION OF *A MODEST PROPOSAL* AND *LITERATUREN VESTNIK'S* INTENDED RECEPTION

TATYANA STOICHEVA

The first rather belated Bulgarian translation of Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* (2013), done by Alina Tasheva, edited by Bilyana Radoslavova, was published in *Literaturen Vestnik*.[1] The pamphlet is a welcome addition to Swift's still far too modest place in Bulgarian literature and culture.[2]

What gives the translation of *A Modest Proposal* a political slant is the fact that it appeared in the number the journal dedicated to a political topic: the clash on November 12, 2013 between students and the police as part of the regular protests against the socialist government during the better part of 2013.

The political debate on the journal's pages apparently follows in the footsteps of previous debates on current political issues. *LV's* initial program describes the journal as "a national weekly for literature, literary criticism and art," its task being "to present modern trends in literature, literary criticism and the humanities."[3] All this must have guaranteed a trustworthy expertise assigning *LV* a sufficiently high literary status for its

[1] *Literaturen vestnik* (December 4-10, 2013): 12-13. It started in February 11-16, 1991 as a journal for modern Bulgarian literature and culture. Becoming part of all processes and events in Bulgarian literature and culture over the past twenty-eight years, it made a name for itself as a most authoritative literary media. Hereafter I shall use the abbreviation *LV*, i.e. *Literaturen Vestnik's* initials.

[2] For Swift's reception in Bulgaria, see Stoicheva, "Jonathan Swift," 82-89; Filipova, "Swift's Impact in Bulgaria," 238-47.

[3] *LV*. February 11-16, 1991, 1.

publishing of classic texts such as the "Proposal."[4] However, the journal's initial program makes no mention whatsoever that the editors would promote, in times of national emergencies, debates in right-wing politics.

In this context, the appearance of the pamphlet's translation shows a connection between *A Modest Proposal* and the political circumstances in Bulgaria in 2013. The entrusting of the author and his text with far more complex functions does not come as a surprise since Swift's literary fame goes with his prominence as a political writer; the inimitable *A Modest Proposal* speaks for itself: nearly 300 years ago the pamphlet addressed a severe socioeconomic crisis in Ireland; the public stir over it produced a solution to the satisfaction of the people concerned.

Newspaper coverage of the students' strike varied. *Kapital Daily* had day-by-day reporting and long comments by various authors (23 Oct. – 23 Nov.). In *Trud* and *24 Chasa* brief news went with the occasional photo of a student's injured eyebrow next to the mention of a policeman's bruised leg. The socialist *Duma* made the most of anti-strike students' complaints about failed classes and an eventual money refund. The site of *Kultura* journal, true to its cultural mission, had a comment by Georgi Gospodinov.[5] In it he found a connection between the November 1st students' celebration and the November 12th demonstration when the students failed to start a nation-wide strike. *LV* reprinted Gospodinov's comment from *Kultura* as its lead together with comments on the political stalemate.[6] The same issue offered the translation of *A Modest Proposal*.

I shall argue that the journal appropriates Swift's text for the aims and objectives of the rightist protests in 2013. Rightist readers are urged to seriously consider Swift's message, bearing in mind the Bulgarian crisis and the political future of the nation. The socialist government's stubborn resolve to hold power was playing right into the hands of its political opponents, who needed to reclaim legitimacy after their parliamentary representation melted away over the past twelve years. In a broader perspective the author's and the text's fostered relationship with Bulgarian protesters also trigger historical associations for the frequent harnessing of Bulgarian literature for political ends.

In my analysis I shall use principles and concepts of literary pragmatics. Such an approach changes the established functions of the literary text since it discusses the latter as an act of communication so as to bring to life actors with their contexts. I shall discuss text and context to

[4] All references to the Bulgarian translation of *A Modest Proposal* appear as follows: "Proposal."

[5] Gospodinov, "Za shtitovete na bezzashtitinite," n.p.

[6] Gospodinov, "Lead," *LV* (December 4-10, 2013): 1.

demonstrate the text's relations with the 2013 political perspective and social performance next to the sociocultural and historical perspectives.[7] The complexity presents problems not just for a short piece of research: the veering from literary matters to linguistic concepts and then to the sociopolitical contexts, not to mention the complicated arrangement of examples, cannot help leaving out quite a lot from the field of linguistics, literature or the culture of the target society.[8]

The sociopolitical context for *LV's* political debate and Swift's translation was modelled by the political crisis lasting throughout 2013 and the first few months of 2014. The first wave (January-February 2013) was sparked off by the power companies' high electricity bills gaining considerable support against the government of GERB ("right-of-centre, liberal conservative Party").[9] It took protesters a couple of weeks to bring down the government. Then the parliamentary elections on May 12, 2013 were won by the socialists, heir to the former Bulgarian Communist Party, after 1989 the Bulgarian Socialist Party ("a left-of-centre social-democratic Party").[10] Short of parliamentary majority, the socialists made a coalition with the Movement for Rights and Freedoms ("a Liberal party mainly supported by ethnic Turks and some Bulgarian Muslims").[11] The right-wing parties, however, failed miserably ending up with no parliamentary representation whatsoever for the first time after 1989.

The second wave of protests, which the students' clash became part of five months later, erupted in mid-June, barely a fortnight after the BSP-MRF government took office due to its blundering with mogul Delyan Peevski's appointment as Head of the National Security State Agency (DANS). Daily anti-government marches went on until the autumn but the overthrow of the government was still ahead of the protesters as they identified solely with the rightists, thus estranging all those who did not share their political views. On the day when the Constitutional Court declared its decision that Peevski could keep his position in Parliament after the scandal provoked his enforced resignation, a group of students occupied the main building of Sofia University (October 25-late November 2013) lending the protests new strength. [12]

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[7] Sell, "Literary Pragmatics," 526. Also Van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis," I: 470.

[8] Sell, "Literary Pragmatics," 525-526.

[9] "GERB," *Wikipedia*, accessed October 22, 2017.

[10] "Bulgarian Socialist Party," *Wikipedia*, accessed October 22, 2017.

[11] "Movement for Rights and Freedoms," *Wikipedia*, accessed October 22, 2017.

[12] The students' protest started with the occupation of Sofia University's largest lecture hall. In a couple of days, they had exerted control over the entire building.

LV's reprint uses Gospodinov's commentary from *Kultura* journal about the strike as its lead; Gospodinov himself is entrusted with editorship of the entire No 40. Apart from being on *LV*'s staff, the man is also a leading Bulgarian writer in a surprising variety of literary genres.[13] His spread of literary awards covers almost every single work he has produced, whether it be poetry, novels, short stories, essays, plays or film scripts. He has been the most translated contemporary Bulgarian author since 1989.

Gospodinov's literary reputation enhances his own participation on *LV's* staff, not to mention the authority of the journal under his editorship, in this issue, another strong position of trust. His prestige as a well-known writer enables him to choose topics and materials as well as to have the last word in their arrangement, comment and layout so as to activate the power of the selected texts and have an effective communication with the reader.

Yet, the Bulgarian preface to Swift and the pamphlet bears *LV's* initials rather than Gospodinov's name. This is proof that the translation of *A Modest Proposal* is introduced into the lead's political context in agreement with *LV*'s aims and objectives. Therefore, the pamphlet is regarded as no less instrumental in the journal's engagement with the students' protest and the then political situation.

LV's decision to debate the sociopolitical context by means of Swift's pamphlet takes us to the role of discourse in the media as a 'symbolic power resource' and to the media's potential to control public discourse when it comes to information and knowledge.[14] In such a context Swift and his text adopt anything but a passive role.

The pamphlet is appropriated by the Bulgarian context as it is being modelled in step with the political situation as represented in *LV's* lead. The English text is supposed to mobilize the readership's mental models

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Then on November 12, they tried to block the traffic in front of the National Assembly in the hope of starting a national strike but were stopped by the police. Public response to the occupation varied. So did the reactions of other students in Sofia and elsewhere. The New Bulgarian University declared support, the Medical Academy refused to join in while at Veliko Tarnovo University students took control of one lecture room.

At first, the protest was against politicians' cynicism, corruption and unaccountability. This, however, earned the students sharp rebuke for having ignored social issues, such as education. The failure to start a national strike precipitated the end of the occupation. See Znepolski, "Studentskite okupatsiu of 2013 vav fokusa na dve ratsionalnosti."

[13] Georgi Gospodinov, *Wikipedia*, accessed October 24, 2017.

[14] Van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis," 470.

for *LV's* and the writing subject's intentions so that they should be understood correctly. Apart from that readers are also to construct their own context models adapting them to the writing subject's intentions in the selected communicative situation.[15] The reaching of a tacit agreement between *LV* and its readership not only stamps the overall context but, similarly, it modulates the relationship between discourse and ideology in the journal's explanatory paratexts. The journal tells readers about the author and his famous pamphlet filtering Irish facts and circumstances as much as it deems sufficient to establish an obvious link between the Irish material and the Bulgarian crisis. In the process, readers can rely on their socially shared mental representations as a source of their supposed ideological identification.[16]

Van Dijk's techniques for a successful media communication with the reader explain the functioning of ideology. Ideologies act as tools helping social groups and each member understand ongoing social events and processes while disciplining groups and individuals to act and behave in their social activity and discourse according to the rules.[17] Of course, when it comes to rallying large groups round a particular idea, ideologists will mobilize only the most general beliefs making sure that those are "socially relevant" to most participants.[18]

The objective of the original author-reader communication is facilitated by Swift's use of the pamphlet genre. As a product of political journalism, the pamphlet draws the attention to topical social issues unlocking its own potential as it advances a powerful argument.[19] The genre's modern meaning took shape only in the eighteenth century despite a previously uninterrupted 200-year old genealogy. What made it a success in Britain was that leading writers, such as Defoe, Steel, Addison, and Swift, not forgetting a flock of lesser ones, employed it to debate topics of high social interest. Popularity helped the genre clarify its substance while its effectiveness both as a literary product as well as an instrument of sociopolitical pressure extended its influence upon society and the political and intellectual spheres.

In colonized Ireland, however, the pamphlet asserted its authority in a different manner. The Anglo-Irish literary scene and the publishing industry exploited the genre for economic ends to such an extent that the

[15] Van Dijk, "Discourse and Knowledge," 589.
[16] Van Dijk, "Discourse and Ideology," 384.
[17] Ibid., 380.
[18] Ibid., 381.
[19] "Pamphlets," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, accessed October 15, 2018.

public blamed them for its own widespread ignorance of the government's predatory economic policy and the plight of the poor.[20]

The selection of the Bulgarian genre is modelled by the need to propose a clear explanation for author, text and context. The subject has introduced what it imagines are relevant details, keeping in mind the leading role of the Bulgarian political context.

LV's political project in the author-reader communication act asserts itself in the brief front-page paratext, *LV's* own preface to Swift and his *Proposal*, as well as in the arrangement of materials including the protesters' photos. [21] All the materials are geared to incorporate Swift and his text into the local context. It is the ideological presentation, which has to make Swift's relationship to the Bulgarian context as obvious as to appear quite natural, and therefore, as simply true.[22] In such a presentation the Irish and Bulgarian contexts should look like appropriate bedfellows even if at times the odd pair may produce a note of discord.

The readers' initiation into the political background and Swift's pamphlet starts on the front page.

The reader's attention is caught by a fairly large photo by Vasil Garnizov of the November 1st students' celebration. On it the students carry in front of their bodies large cardboard pieces with the titles of Bulgarian classic books and the authors' names. Among them is also Gospodinov's *Invisible Crises*. Below the photo editor Gospodinov's lead explains the metaphor ("a line of some ten cardboard shields meant to lead the protesters as well as protect them"). The intellectual potential of books as leaders may have appeared adequate for the annual national celebration of the nineteenth-century beginnings of modern mass education. Yet, their power as cardboard shields gave no protection to the students in their clash with the police some ten days later.

Having deciphered the details, the reader then may look to the left to make a choice from the contents list. Despite the major importance of the front-page protest and the expected debate on politics, the contents list does not instantly redirect the audience to the relevant materials. For some reason these are listed as No 3 following a story about legendary footballer Hristo Stoichkov. What comes out on top, however, is Swift's name and *A*

[20] Moore, "Devouring Posterity: *A Modest Proposal*, Empire and Ireland's 'debt of the nation,"' 685.

[21] I am indebted to Bistra Stoimenova and Zhenina Encheva for their help with the processing of the photos.

[22] For ideology as "obvious" and "natural" see, Wodak, and Meyer, "Critical Discourse Analysis: History, Agenda, Theory and Methodology," 8.

Modest Proposal. In case the uninformed reader ignores the pamphlet's central importance, a short text below raises the alert. In it Swift's text is described as "a 1729 read about crises."

Брой 40
1,50 лв.

4-10.12.2013
Год. 22

Литературен Вестник

Джонатан Суифт
Скромно предложение
(четиво за кризи от 1729)

Херман Кох
Още една сода за Христо
(Стоичков, разбира се)

По протестите.
Подхванато от мрежата
Александър Кьосев
Иван Бедров
Теодор Михайлов

Критика
Миряна Янакиева
Емил Димитров

Поезия
наградените в конкурса „Веселин Ханчев"

Алеш Дебеляк

Димитър Ганев

Архив
Георги Янев за библиотеката на Гео Милев

Сн. Васил Гарнизов

За щитовете на беззащитните

Георги Господинов

Те се появиха с големи картонени листове като корици на книги, със саморъчно изписани заглавия и имена на автори. Кориците приличаха на книжни щитове. После разбрах, че така ги и наричали. Беше в Деня на будителите. И някак естествено те застанаха в началото на шествието. Една редица от десетина картонени щита, които трябваше да водят и пазят протестиращите. Паисий, Софроний, Ботев, Талев, Димов, Смирненски, Вапцаров, Гео Милев и дори две днешни книги вървяха начело в това прекрасно самоорганизирало се шествие. Беше слънчев този първи ноември, различен. Бях особено щастлив и спокоен да вървя подир книгите щитове. И тези момчета и момичета излизаха всяка вечер оттогава. Четящия човек, за който тайно си мечтаем. Рицари без броня, като момчето от онзи български филм с Апостол Карамитев, който те едва ли са гледали, онова, с картонения щит и броня от кашони. Странни донкихотовци, наивници, както ги нарекоха, тръгнали срещу истински великани... Скоро щяха да се сблъскат с истинските щитове, шлемове, палки, белезници, ключове. Нестройната пехота на четящите срещу добре смазаната машина на полицията.
Един вторник, на 12 ноември.
Най-тъжната София, която съм виждал. София – закрит град. Полицейски, блокиран град. Толкова струпана полиция тези улици не помнят. Като огромно кафкианско насекомо с лъскавите фасетки на шлемовете. Протестиращи срещу полиция. Картонени срещу метални щитове. Шлемове срещу голи лица. Четящи срещу ръмжащи. Резултатът винаги е ясен. Снимките от онзи вторник още не са за гледане.
Това правителство направи великански гафове, но най-големият е, че не разбра какъв шанс имаше с този протест. Шансът да се оттегли тогава, през юни. Сега ще бъде шанс за всички ни, ако то си отиде, без да употреби грубо насилие. Не изпускайте този последен шанс, г-н премиер (вече с малка буква). Прочее, какво четете вечер?
През цялото време ние не спестихме ирониите си към протестиращи и студенти. Нарекохме ги хунвейбини, тези с книгите. Студентът с очилцата, проснат на паважа на „Цар Освободител" под тежкото тяло на полицая, вероятно е лумпен или наркоман. Или не, пърформър, влязъл в странен танц с полицейско тяло не от своята категория. Този с пукнатата глава просто „не е добре с главата". Организирани и платени ги нарекохме, защото не можехме да си представим другото. Раздавали по 30 до 80 лева на стачкуващ, за рана - 700. Толкова евтина пропаганда отдавна не е имало. Все пак си дължим известен вкус и старание. Тук, ако обвиниш някого, че е част от мафията, безчестен, непрозрачен, той никак няма да се засегне. Ако кажеш на ксенофоба, че е ксенофоб, няма и да те разбере. Пък и това вече минава за ценност. Но речеш ли, че протестиращият човек е красив и смислен, о, небеса, отечеството е в опасност...
Не Пеевски, успелият, а тези от кварталите, дошли с децата си от градинките, разделяли нацията. Не Петното, този рицар на безкнижието, а четящите разделяли народа. Не Орешарски, разпускащият седенки, а преподавателите. Не криещият се като плъх Бисеров, преял с пари, а протестиращите били сити. Не тези, овъртолили се в обръчите от фирми...

на стр. 3

Fig.1

The leading position of Swift and his text indicates *LV's* respect towards this text and its author in expectation that readers turn to Swift. Yet, it is more likely that few, if any, would have any familiarity with *A Modest Proposal*. Still, the writer's name can ring a bell among recipients who have vague recollections of *Gulliver's Travels* in children's versions. More perceptive readers would realize that high-quality literature can bring home political messages far more persuasively than political slogans and commentaries.

The use of "*a* crisis" in the singular would have meant that Swift had addressed a specific event, whereas the plural (*crises*) and the date of writing denote a broad generalization: the situation in Ireland is lent universal validity across time and space. The implication is that dated as the text may be, it can be related to the Bulgarian stalemate and, despite the time lapse and its foreignness, provide readers with a sense of perspective into the crisis in hand. The large photo on the right (Fig. 1) makes it clear that what the situation demands is that one should act. The journal's message is that the pamphlet's text should be recontextualized for the needs of the current crisis; the paratext instructs readers how to interpret *LV*'s representation building, awareness of the pamphlet's clear associations between Ireland's socioeconomic situation in the early eighteenth century and the Bulgarian deadlock.

The leading part—Swift's name and his pamphlet's title get on the front page, the choice of lexis and morphology for the pamphlet's introduction, the cultural code of the elliptical paratext, the cryptic message urging readers to turn to the text—all these supply the analyst with an apt summary of *LV*'s strategy towards the "Proposal."

LV's second paratext introduces the pamphleteer and his text.[23]

[23] For the original layout of *LV*'s preface, see p. 12, column 3 to the right of the first two paragraphs of the Bulgarian texts of the "Proposal" (Fig. 2). The text continues on p. 13 (Fig. 3). For the Bulgarian original of the introduction on p. 12 (Fig. 2), see the Appendix.

Още една сода за Христо

от стр. 9

Нещо повече – за Стоичков това означаваше и че ще се яви на първата сутрешна тренировка в девет, без да е поспал.
Понякога – в ранните часове, някъде между нощта и деня – се опитвах да заговоря за „определените неща", които не ми даваха мира през оня период. Но Стоичков никога не проявяваше интерес. Най-много да се оплачеше от струпването на блондинки по време на нощния ни лов.
Самият аз на разсъмване се чувствах като плувец, който след като е прекосил море от алкохол, най-сетне е почувствал твърда земя под краката си. И това се опитвах да обясня на Стоичков понякога – с колкото се може по-малко думи, естествено, но дори и малкото думи му идваха в повече.
Когато в седем и половина сутринта обърнеха щъркелите върху масите на последния нощен клуб, аз поръчвах на Стоичков една финална сода, след което всеки поемаше по пътя си.

Впоследствие си мисля, че всичко се обърка в нощта, в която двамата се разходихме по Кайе Сан Рамон. На Кайе Сан Рамон работят предимно курви от карибския регион, на които не им пука особено дали играеш в нападение за ФК Барселона или не. Вместо да подсвирнат на Стоичков, курвите започнаха да подвикват по мой адрес:
– Блонди, блонди… Фоки-фоки?
Сърдита гримаса изкриви устните на Стоичков.
– Какво толкова намират тия жени у теб, че не ми обръщат внимание? – изсъска той. – Само защото си рус ли?
Ходихме до Ситжес, където в хотелска стая живееше Ромарио. Един-едничък път играхме волейбол на плажа. И няколко дни след инцидента на Кайе Сан Рамон дочух, че изведнъж Стоичков станал дупе и гащи с Ромарио.
Според мен Ромарио далеч не притежаваше моите умения да приказвам с жени. Обективно погледнато, той си беше красавец, но до последно не проумях защо Стоичков се пренасочи така внезапно към тоя разглезен бразилски келеш, след като що се отнася до разговорите с жени, аз можех да му бъда от къде-къде по-голяма полза.
Понякога по заобиколни пътища научавах, че Стоичков е висял с Ромарио на бара на „Distrito Distinto" или „Up and Down" до ранните часове на деня, при което си давах вид, че случилото се въобще не ме засяга. В действителност обаче то съвсем не ми се отразяваше добре.
След време Стоичков бе продаден на Парма. Аз пак се заседявах често-често в чирингитото в Монгат. Междувременно „определените неща" бяха на път да ми се изяснят. Веднъж обаче при гледката на плажа, морето и ярката светлина неминуемо се замислих за Стоичков.
Една вечер, щом се прибрах от Монгат, набрах номера му в Парма.
– Христо?
Не очаквах да вдигне веднага и затова забравих да изрека нещата, които исках да изрека. Съобщих му, че вече се чувствам по-добре, че все още пия много, но че изцелението е близо; че съм имал време да премисля всичко и поради това вече не страдам от дружбата му с Ромарио.
Отсреща се възцари продължителна тишина.
И тогава, сякаш от нищото, аз го попитах дали знае как да си поръча минерална вода *con gas* на италиански. Дочух звънкия му смях от далечна Парма и за миг се изкуших да отворя темата за жените, да се поинтересувам дали е открил някого в Парма, който да тика разговора след осъществяването на първия контакт.
Но нещо ми подсказа, че моментът не е подходящ, че ще е по-разумно да изтърпя до някой следващ път.
Впоследствие осъзнах, че през онзи етап от живота ми дупката във времето не се бе уплътнила съвсем.
Никога не съм обичал плажовете и така и не се научих да играя сносно футбол – но винаги съм умеел да разговарям с жените. Някъде между плажа и футбола се таи една истина, която и до ден днешен не успявам да облека в правилните думи.
Впоследствие често съм си задавал въпроса дали имах нужда от Христо Стоичков, за да достигна до това прозрение, или не.

Преведе от холандски МАРИЯ ЕНЧЕВА

Скромно предложение

Как децата на бедните хора в Ирландия да не са в тежест на своите родители или държавата и да бъдат от полза за обществото
от д-р Джонатан Суифт, 1729

Печално зрелище е за тези, които се разхождат из този голям град или пътуват из страната, когато видят по улиците, пътищата и пред вратите на къщите тълпи от просякини, следвани от по три, четири или шест деца, целите в дрипи и молещи всеки минувач за милостиня. Тези майки, вместо да работят за честното си препитание, са принудени да прекарват цялото си време в блуждаене по улиците, за да молят за прехраната на своите беззащитни деца, които, след като пораснат, или стават крадци, поради липса на работа, или напускат своята мила родина, за да се бият на страната на Претендента в Испания[1], или сами се продават на Барбадос.
Всички, мисля, са съгласни, че този огромен брой деца в ръцете, в краката или на гърбовете на своите майки, а често и на своите бащи, при сегашното окаяно състояние на държавата, е много голяма несправедливост. Затова, който успее да намери честен, евтин и лесен метод да превърне тези деца в стабилни и полезни членове на обществото, напълно би заслужил да му бъде издигнат паметник като спасител на нацията.
Но моята задача далеч не е ограничена до това да се вземат мерки само за децата на явните просяци. Тя е с много по-голям мащаб и ще обхване всички деца на определена възраст, с родители, които в действителност могат също толкова малко да издържат деца, колкото и тези, които просят на улицата.
Аз, от своя страна, години наред обмислях този важен въпрос, зряло претеглях няколкото предложения на нашите проектанти и винаги установявах, че те грубо бъркат в своите изчисления.
Наистина едно новородено може да преживее цяла астрономическа година, като се храни с кърмата на майката и с много малко друга храна на цената на не повече от два шилинга. Тази сума майката може да си набави под формата на пари или на остатъци от храна, като се възползва от законното си право да проси. А по отношение на децата, достигнали едногодишна възраст, предлагам да вземем такива мерки, благодарение на които, вместо те да са в тежест на родителите си или на енорията и да искат храна и дрехи до края на живота си, да допринасят за прехраната и отчасти за дрехите на хиляди други.
Друга важна изгода от моя проект е, че ще предотврати доброволните аборти и онази ужасна практика на жените да убиват незаконните си деца (обичай, уви, твърде разпространен у нас). При това бедните и невинни деца несъмнено са принесени в жертва повече за да бъдат избегнати разходите, отколкото срамът, което обстоятелство би предизвикало сълзи и жал и у най-жестокото и безчовечно сърце.
Доколкото населението на нашето кралство обикновено се изчислява на милион и половина души, то по мои сметки от тях трябва да има около двеста хиляди двойки, в които жената е годна за разплод; от това число вадя тридесет хиляди двойки, които могат сами да издържат децата си (макар да се боя, че едва ли са толкова много предвид настоящите беди в кралството), но ако допуснем, че това е така, то остават сто и седемдесет хиляди, годни за разплод. Отново изваждам петдесет хиляди за тези жени, които помятат или чиито деца умират случайно или от болест през първата година. Така резултатът е сто и двадесет хиляди деца, раждани в бедни семейства годишно.
Въпросът, който възниква, е как ще бъдат отгледани и обезпечени тези деца, което, както вече казах, при настоящото състояние на нещата е абсолютно невъзможно чрез методите, предлагани досега. Не можем да използваме децата нито в занаятите, нито в селското стопанство; не строим къщи (имам предвид в провинцията) и не обработваме земя. Тези деца могат много рядко да се прехранват с кражби, преди да навършат шест години, освен ако не са надарени с изключителен талант, при все че, признавам, научават основите на този занаят много по-рано, но през това време не са нищо повече от начинаещи. Както ми каза един високопоставен господин от графство Кавън, който не се съгласи с мен, той не се бил сблъсквал с повече от един-два случая на кражба, извършена от деца под шестгодишна възраст, дори и в тази част на кралството, която е известна с най-бързото усъвършенстване в тази професия.
Нашите търговци ме увериха, че момче или момиче на възраст под дванадесет години не е продаваема стока и дори когато достигнат тази възраст, няма да бъдат оценени на повече от три паунда или най-много три паунда и полвин крона. Това не може да компенсира

[1] Синът на английския крал Джеймс II, който губи трона в резултат на революцията от 1688 г.

„Скромно предложение" (A Modest Proposal) е знаменитият памфлет на Джонатан Суифт, публикуван анонимно през 1729 г. В годината на провалена реколта и масов глад в Ирландия, Суифт търси „практично" и „общественополезно" разрешение на проблема с многото просяци и бедняци в страната. Чрез една висша форма на ирония и сарказъм, превърнали текста в класика на сатирата, Суифт „намира" решение ни повече, ни по-малко в това откърмените едногодишни бебета на бедните да се продават за храна на богатите. Срещу пълното безсилие и апатия на властта радикалното предизвикателство е единственият ход, за да бъдеш чут и да дадеш глас на безгласните. Шокиращият ефект на текста, който не е намалял и днес за съвременния читател, да не говорим за тогавашния, е в хладния, прагматичен тон, детайлната аргументация, подплатена със статистика, социални и политически доводи. Памфлетът предизвиква мощен обществен резонанс и води дори до наченки на социално законодателство в Англия и Ирландия. „Предложението", слава богу, не се е сбъднало в буквалния смисъл, но без съмнение е пророческо по отношение на все по-голямото инструментализиране и дехуманизиране на модерния свят от 18. век насам, превръщането на човека в анонимна статистическа единица, обект на социални и политически експерименти. Оказва се, че текстът въпреки цитиранията си е слабо познат у нас, а този цялостен превод и публикация излиза за пръв път сега в ЛВ, след близо 300 години. Но пък какво по-добро време за поява тук.
ЛВ

Сн. Ранобудните студенти

родителите или кралството, понеже разноските за прехрана и дрипи са поне четири пъти повече от това. Затова най-смирено предлагам своите мисли по този въпрос. Мисли, които, надявам се, няма да предизвикат никакви възражения.
Един много образован американец, с когото се запознах в Лондон, ме увери, че месото на малко, здраво и добре гледано дете на една годинка е в най-висша степен вкусно, засищащо и полезно за здравето ядене, независимо дали е задушено, на грил, печено или сварено. Сигурен съм, че може да се използва и за приготвянето на фрикасе или рагу.
Смирено предлагам на общественото внимание следната идея – от сто и двадесетте хиляди деца, които вече изчислихме, двадесет хиляди да бъдат запазени за размножаване, от които ¼ да са от мъжки пол, което е повече от разрешеното за овце, бикове или свине. Тези деца рядко са плод на брак – обстоятелство, на което нашите диваци рядко обръщат внимание, и затова е достатъчен един мъж, който да обслужва четири жени. Останалите сто хиляди биха могли на едногодишна възраст да бъдат продавани на знатни и богати хора в кралството, като през последните няколко месеца майката трябва да кърми обилно детето, за да може то да се закръгли и угои, така че да е достойно за добра трапеза. От едно дете могат да се приготвят две ястия за събирания с приятели. Когато семейството вечеря саму, месото от предната или задната част на тялото би станала добро ястие, а сварено с малко сол или пипер би ставало за ядене и на четвъртия ден, особено през зимата.

Изчислявам средно, че едно току-що родено дете тежи 12 паунда[2], а за една астрономическа година, ако се храни добре, може да достигне тегло от 28 паунда.
Допускам, че това ще бъдат малко скъпички блюда, поради което подходящи за земевладелците, които и без това вече са погълнали повечето от родителите и изглежда имат пълно право и на тяхното потомство.

[2] 12 паунда = 5.44 кг (бел. пр.)

Fig.2

Детското месо ще върви през цялата година, но в по-големи количества през март и малко преди и след този месец. Тъй като, както един сериозен автор, известен френски лекар, ни съобщава[3], рибата е възбуждаща храна, в римокатолическите държави около девет месеца след постите пазарите ще бъдат залети от детско месо, защото делът на папските деца в кралството е поне 3:1. Косвена изгода от всичко това ще бъде намаляването сред нас на поддръжниците на Папата.

Вече изчислих, че разноските по отглеждането на дете на просяци (към които включвам и всички селяни, които притежават къща, всички черноработници и 4/5 от фермерите) възлизат на около два шилинга на година, включително и дрипите. Мисля, че нито един джентълмен не би отказал да плати десет шилинга за месото на едно хубаво, охранено детенце, което, както вече казах, ще стигне за четири ястия от превъзходно, хранително месо, когато вечеря сам с приятел или със семейството си. По този начин дворянинът ще се научи да бъде добър господар и ще бъде тачен от своите арендатори, майката ще спечели осем шилинга чиста печалба и ще бъде годна за работа, докато не роди друго дете.

Тези, които са по-пестеливи (както изискват времената, признавам), могат да одерат трупа, чиято кожа, ако се обработи, може да се превърне във възхитителни ръкавици за дамите и летни ботуши за изисканите господа.

Колкото до нашия град Дъблин, за тази цел могат да бъдат създадени кланици на най-удобните места и можем да сме сигурни, че няма да има недостиг на касапи. Въпреки това аз бих препоръчал децата да бъдат купувани живи и осолявани веднага щом минат под ножа, както правим с печените прасета.

Един много достоен господин, истински любещ своята родина, чиито добродетели аз високо ценя, наскоро обсъжда с мен тази тема и си позволи да внесе малки подобрения в моя проект. Той каза, че много господа в нашето кралство напоследък са избили елените си. Недостигът на еленско би могъл да се компенсира с месо от млади момчета и момичета на не повече от четиринадесет и не по-малко от дванадесет години. Наистина в момента огромен брой хора и от двата пола са застрашени от гладна смърт заради липсата на работа. Родителите биха били щастливи, ако са още живи, а ако не – техните роднини, да се отърват от децата. Но отдавайки нужното на моя превъзходен приятел и толкова заслужил патриот, не мога да се съглася изцяло с него. Относно децата от мъжки пол, моят американски познат ме увери от опит, че тяхното месо обикновено е жилаво и сухо, като това на нашите ученици заради многото движение и вкусът му е неприятен, а да ги угояваме няма да оправдае разходите. Колкото до децата от женски пол, тук се осмелявам да изразя своето скромно съображение, че това би било загуба за обществото, защото много скоро те ще са годни за разплод. Освен това е възможно някои добросъвестни хора да осъдят това начинание (разбира се, изобщо не биха имали право) като граничещо с жестокост, което, трябва да призная, е било у мен най-голямото възражение срещу всеки проект, колкото и благородни да са намеренията му.

В оправдание на моя приятел, той призна, че тази идея му била внушена от Псалманазар[4], „абориген" от остров Формоза, който пристига в Лондон преди повече от 20 години и в разговор с моя приятел му споделя, че в неговата страна, когато някой млад човек трябвало да бъде екзекутиран, екзекуторът продавал трупа на знатни хора като най-висш деликатес; и че по негово време тялото на охранено петнадесетгодишно момиче, което било разпнато заради опит да отрови императора, било продадено на първия министър на негово императорско величество и на други велики мандарини[5] от двора разфасовано за четиристотин крони.

Действително, не мога и да отрека, че ако направим в нашия град същото с няколко закръглени девойки, които нямат и пукнат грош, но пътуват извън страната само с карета и се появяват в театъра и на официални събирания само в одежди от чужбина, за които никога няма да платят, то нашето кралство нищо не би загубило от това.

Някои песимисти са много разтревожени за големия брой бедни хора, които са стари, болни или осакатени. Бях помолен да помисля за решение в някаква посока, което да избави народа от тази печал и бреме. Изобщо не се затруднявам да дам отговор на този въпрос, понеже много добре се знае, че те всеки ден умират и изгниват от студ и глад, и мръсотия и паразити, толкова бързо, колкото може да се очаква. А колкото до младите черноработници, в момента те са в почти толкова обнадеждаващо състояние. Не могат да си намерят работа и последователно чезнат от липса на храна до такава степен, че ако в даден момент бъдат случайно наети за общ труд, те нямат достатъчно сила да го извършват и по този начин държавата и те самите са щастливо освободени от бъдещи злини.

Направих твърде дълго отклонение и затова се връщам обратно към основната си тема. Смятам, че ползите от моето предложение са очевидни и многобройни, както и от първостепенна важност.

Първо, както вече отбелязах, ще бъде намален броят на привърженицците на Папата, които ежегодно ни надвишават и са основен фактор за разплод на нацията, както и наши най-страшни врагове, които си стоят вкъщи нарочно, желаейки да поднесат кралството на Претендента и надявайки се да се възползват от отсъствието на толкова много добри протестанти, предпочели по-скоро да напуснат страната си, отколкото да останат вкъщи и да плащат десятък на епископите срещу съвестта си.

Второ, по-бедните арендатори ще имат нещо и за себе си, което може да бъде отнемано в случай на нужда според закона, за да бъде платена рентата на техния господар, след като вече царевицата и добитъкът са им иззети, а парите са нещо непознато.

Трето, тъй като издръжката на сто хиляди деца на възраст от две години и повече, не може да бъде изчислена на по-малко от десет шилинга на парче за година, то националният доход ще се увеличи с петдесет хиляди паунда годишно, без да включвам печалбата от новото ястие, което ще се появи на трапезата на всички наши богати джентълмени с изтънчен вкус. Парите ще циркулират помежду ни, а стоките ще са изцяло наше собствено производство.

Четвърто, жените, които непрекъснато развъждат потомство, освен че ще получават годишна печалба от осем шилинга на година от продажбата на техните деца, ще се отърват от задължението да ги отглеждат след първата им година.

Пето, тази храна ще привлече много посетители в тавернитe, чиито съдържатели със сигурност ще се постараят да си доставят най-добрите рецепти за перфектното приготвяне на това блюдо, в резултат на което техните заведения ще се посещават от всички изтънчени господа, които справедливо се гордеят със своето разбиране за добра кухня, а един опитен готвач, който разбира как да угоди на своите гости, ще съумее да го направи толкова скъпо, колкото им е по вкуса.

Шесто, това би допринесло в значителна степен за увеличаване броя на браковете, които всички мъдри нации окуражават или чрез възнаграждение или чрез наложени закони и наказания. Майките ще се грижат повече за децата си и ще бъдат по-нежни към тях, когато са сигурни, че бедните деца ще бъдат обезпечени от обществото и едновременно с това самите майки ще получат по нещо. Ще станем свидетели на съревнование между омъжените жени, коя ще успее да излезе на пазара с най-дебелото дете. Мъжете ще проявяват такава привързаност към жените си, докато са бременни, каквато проявяват към кобилите си, когато се ожребват, кравите, когато се отелват, и прасетата, като се опрасват, и няма да ги бият и ритат (каквато е честата практика) от страх да не пометнат.

Много други преимущества могат да бъдат изброени. Например увеличаване на износа на говеждо месо с няколко хиляди трупа: увеличаване на свинското месо, усъвършенстване на изкуството за правене на добър бекон, който толкова ни липсва заради масовото избиване на прасета за нашите трапези, но който в никакъв случай не може да се сравнява по вкус и великолепие с месото на добре отгледано, охранено едногодишно дете, което, ако бъде опечено цяло на грил, ще стане превъзходно блюдо за празника на Негово благородие Кмета или което и да било друго увеселение. Тези и много други ще изпусна от съображения за краткост.

Ако предположим, че хиляда семейства в този град биха били постоянни потребители на детско месо, освен другите, които биха си го поръчвали за празници, най-вече сватби и кръщенета, изчислявам, че Дъблин ще поглъща годишно около двадесет хиляди трупа, а останалата част от кралството (където може би ще се продават малко по-евтино) – останалите осемдесет хиляди.

Не мога да се сетя за каквото и да било възражение, което може да бъде издигнато срещу моето предложение, освен ако не бъде изтъкнато, че по този начин ще намалее популацията на кралството. Признавам, че това обстоятелство беше и една от основните цели на моето предложение.

Искам обаче читателят да отбележи, че предвиждам този цяр само за кралство Ирландия и за никое друго, което някога е съществувало, съществува или ще съществува на Земята. Затова нека никой не ми говори за други начини за справяне с проблема: да облагаме напусналите страната с пет шилинга за всеки спечелен паунд; да не използваме нито дрехи, нито мебели, които не са наше собствено производство; да отречем напълно всички материали и инструменти, които разпространяват чуждестранния лукс; да излекуваме скъпо струващите гордост, суета, мързел и склонност към комарджийство у жените; да се стремим към пестеливост, умереност и въздържание; да се научим да обичаме страната си, в което отношение се различаваме дори от лапландците и обитателите на остров Топинабу; да се откажем от враждебността и дебненето и да не действаме повече като евреите, които започнаха да се избиват едни други в момента, в който градът им беше завзет; да внимаваме да не продадем държавата си и съвестта си за нищо; да научим земевладелците да проявяват поне малко милост към своите арендатори; и накрая да вменим на нашите съдържатели на магазини малко честност, трудолюбие и умение, които, ако в този момент бъде приета резолюция да изкупуват само ирландска стока, веднага ще се обединят, за да измислят как да измамят и да ни излъжат в цената, количеството и качеството и които никога не могат да бъдат накарани да направят едно честно предложение за справедливо търгуване.

Затова повтарям, нека никой не ми говори за тези и теmподобни разрешения, докато не види поне един лъч надежда, че някога ще има сърцат и честен опит те да се реализират на практика.

Колкото до мен самия, аз в продължение на много години се измъчих да предлагам пусти, безполезни и илюзорни идеи. Накрая, когато вече почти се бях отказал от успех, за щастие случайно се натъкнах на мисълта за това предложение, което, понеже е напълно ново, имаше нещо твърдо и истинско в себе си, не предизвиква нито особени разходи, нито много проблеми, намира се напълно в границите на нашите възможности и не крие опасност да си навлечем гнева на Англия. Защото този вид стока не подлежи на износ, а месото е с такава деликатна консистенция, че не може да бъде съхранявано в сол дълго време, въпреки че вероятно бих могъл да посоча страна, която би погълнала цялата ни нация и без сол.

Въпреки всичко аз не съм неистово увлечен от собствената си идея дотолкова, че да отхвърля всяко предложение, направено от умни хора, ако то е също толкова безвредно, евтино, удобно и ефективно.

Но преди нещо подобно да бъде предложено в противовес на моя проект, бих искал авторът или авторите му трезво да обмислят два въпроса. Първо, по начина, по който стоят нещата в момента, как ще намери храна и дрехи за стотици безполезни усти и гърбове. И второ, понеже в нашето кралство живеят около един милион създания с човешки вид, чиито средства за съществуване, ако бъдат взети заедно, ще възлизат на дълг от два милиона паунда, - и като добавим професионалните просяци заедно с групата на фермерите, черноработниците и селяните, които притежават къщи, с техните деца и жени, които по същество се явяват също просяци, - бих искал тези политици, на които не се харесва моето предложение и които може би биха били толкова смели, че да ми отговорят, първо да попитат родителите на тези деца дали от днешна гледна точка не биха счели за невероятно щастие, ако ги бяха продали на една годинка за храна по описания от мен начин, така щяха да си спестят безкрайната върволица от злощастия, през които са минали оттогава заради гнета на земевладелците, невъзможността да си плащат рентата без пари или занаят, заради липсата на препитание, заради това, че нямат нито къща, нито дрехи, които да ги предпазят от суровото време, и заради неизбежната перспектива да оставят подобно или дори по-лошо наследство на своето потомство завинаги.

Напълно искрено заявявам, че нямам ни най-малък личен интерес, заемайки се да пропагандирам това необходимо начинание, и нямам друг мотив освен общественото благо на моята страна чрез развиване на търговията, осигуряването на децата, облекчаването поне малко на бедните и доставянето на удоволствие за богатите. Нямам деца, с продажбата на които бих могъл да се надявам и на едно пени, тъй като най-малкото ми дете е на девет години, а жена ми е минала детеродната възраст.

Сн. Георги Божилов

Преведе от английски
АЛИНА ТАШЕВА
Под редакцията на БИЛЯНА РАДОСЛАВОВА

Литературен вестник 4-10.12.2013

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[3] Става дума за разсъжденията на Пантагрюел от романа на Ф. Рабле „Гаргантюа и Пантагрюел" (кн. V, гл. 19).

[4] Джордж Псалманазар (1679–1763 г.), чието истинско име остава неизвестно, е първият и единствен „абориген" от измисления остров Формоза, посетил Европа. През 1704 г. издава книгата „Историческо и географско описание на остров Формоза". (бел. пр.)

[5] Мандарин – висш сановник в Китай; управител на област. (бел. пр.)

Fig. 3

This text, unlike the anonymous elliptical sentence on the front page, carries *LV*'s initials, i.e., all the staff are in solidarity with the way the reader should read the preface and its context. The subject's polemical tone is a distant echo from Swift's polemics: the Irish writer employs reason and logic, the Bulgarian subject is eloquent and emotional,

preferring to address the reader's feelings rather than their understanding– a dominant feature of Bulgarian (not only) political speech and writing. *LV*, much like Swift, seems determined to wage and win its own war[24] for the readers' recognition of the journal's and consequently, the reader's no less unanimous agreement with rightist beliefs and values as these have been formulated in the introduction to the "Proposal."[25]

LV's Preface to "Скромно предложение" (Skromno predlozhenie) [*A Modest Proposal*][26]

(1) "Скромно предложение" [*A Modest Proposal*] is Jonathan Swift's renowned pamphlet published anonymously in 1729. **(2)** In the year of crop failure and mass starvation in Ireland Swift was in search of a "practical" as well as a "socially beneficial" solution to the problems of the numerous beggars and paupers in Ireland. **(3)** Employing a superb form of irony and sarcasm that made the text a classic of satire Swift "hit upon" a way out; it was neither more, nor less than that one-year-old children of poor families be sold to the wealthy to serve them as food. **(4)** It is against the total impotence and apathy of a system of power that radical challenge devises the only effective way to make oneself heard in speaking out to give voice to the silenced. **(5)** The text's shocking effect undiminished for readers to this day, let alone for readers at the time, lies in its cold pragmatic tone, the statistics-loaded, detailed argumentation, as well as in its social and political claims. **(6)** The pamphlet elicited a powerful public response; it did lead to the beginnings of social legislation in England and Ireland. **(7)** The "Proposal," thank God, did not materialize in the literal sense, but one cannot doubt its prophetic character as regards an ever greater mechanization alongside the dehumanization of the modern world since the eighteenth century–the transformation of humans into anonymous statistical digits, and objects of social and political experiments. **(8)** As it happens, the text, in spite of repeated references, is barely known among us; its full translation and publication is now in *LV* for the first time, after nearly 300 years. **(9)** But then, would any other time be more appropriate for its appearance here. *LV*.[27]

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[24] From the Greek *polemicos*, meaning "war."

[25] For the layout of Swift's text, see Fig. 2 and Fig. 3.

[26] The Bulgarian preface is included in the appendix of this chapter. The emboldened numbers indicate the nine sentences of the text. The subsequent analysis will refer to each of these in turn.

[27] Unsigned preface to "Скромно предложение" [*A Modest Proposal*]. All translations are by the author.

The beginning **(1)** combines information and evaluation: the text's title, the fact that this is "Jonathan Swift's renowned pamphlet" and the date of its anonymous appearance (1729). Next comes the explanation about the context and the reasons for its writing. In **(2)** the subject chooses a fixed time-reference (the 1729 "crop failure and mass starvation in Ireland") which decontextualizes the famine from its original context (1725-1728), in the wake of other crises.[28] The description of the pamphleteer's search for "a practical" as well as "a socially beneficial" solution echoes the pamphleteer's target: those who pursue profit in any financial and economic scheme disguising their greed under the veil of socially beneficial projects. The quote hardly explains Swift's meaning as a fulmination against Liberalism but *LV* would be in deep water explaining to rightists that Liberalism is not always a good thing for every single member of society. The hurdle is cleared by means of affording a brief glimpse of Swift's inimitable art in sentence **(3).** Here the Bulgarian rendering of the pamphlet's meaning understandably makes more detailed preparations of the reader for the chilling discovery. We are first asked to keep in mind Swift's great art and the text's prestige as a "classic of satire"; next comes the subject's declaration that the pamphleteer discovered a solution even if we are not told what it was. It is the unimpassioned "neither more, nor less" that serves as an introduction to the announcement of the dreadful "project": the contrastive leap to the two adverbs, each in the comparative degree, produces a double negative to emphasize the subject's pretended indifference: the ploy resorts to Swift's bitter irony while trying to dispel the doubts of readers who may refuse to stomach the horrific news.

The description of the solution in the passive voice construction (children as a saleable commodity for wealthy customers) introduces the receiver of the action (the wealthy) as more important than the doer (the children's parents) as is only natural when one comes to *practical* matters, such as trading with customers in the privileged position. Clearly, the parents' reaction is not worth mentioning; what obtains is the "practical and socially beneficial" result as promised earlier. Now in **(3)** the attentive reader can discern the complex meaning of the wealthy customers' two characteristics with Swift's assistance rather than with that of *LV*: the diversification of the diet benefits both separate individuals and society to the same extent (or rather society benefits since the wealthy are happy on the account of being well fed as well as freed from the "melancholy" sight

[28] Kelly, "Swift on Money and Economics," 130; for the famine, see Swift's letter to Pope of August 11, 1729, quoted by Fox, "Introduction," 5.

of "beggars from the female sex").[29] *LV's* suggestion that society is interested solely in the "wealthy" would be counterproductive among rightists of slender means. Letting the "wealthy" be is perhaps a wise move.

So far the introduction has offered readers some useful tips about the circumstances surrounding Swift's text and his argument (renowned and anonymously published; 'a "practical" as well as "socially beneficial" solution'; the wealthy). At times the subject's technique borrows from Swift's superb art to make the reader admire it. The approach suggests that writing about literature appears as the privilege of a special group, while the common reader is allowed to see it from a distance only as a masterpiece, unable to find out for themselves how the text is made.

Afterwards the focus shifts to the empowered and the potential speaker's defense of the distressed. **(4)** The representation of the system of power in the strongest derogatory terms ("total impotence and apathy") paradoxically creates the best conditions for the one who will speak out in the name of those who cannot do so. "Against" in frontal position makes a stark contrast between power in name only ("total impotence and apathy") and the subject's "radical challenge" aimed at unveiling its antagonist's uselessness.

The subject's rhetoric finds a source of strength in Swift's *radical* solution but it also aims at its own effect, as the "*radical* challenge" gets far stronger by means of introducing the helpless authorities against an antagonist who dares to express his indignation in defense of the silenced. The shifts between the definite and the indefinite articles (*the* total impotence and apathy of *a* system of power, *the* only effective way, *the* silenced), the reflexive pronoun as part of the verbal action (making *oneself* heard) to give voice to the silenced—mark two different groups. While the definite article emphasizes *the* speaker's idea and action as the most adequate ones, as well as an approved characteristic of the whole group of activists, the indefinite article accepts the validity of the enemy group's features as sufficient for their definition. In the process of speaking the passive infinitive of the first verb (to make yourself heard) is transformed to the active voice in the second verb; on being heard the receiver of the action acquires agency to bring everything to the desired end ("giving voice to the silenced"). Morphologically things may fit into the global perspective since the subject aims at a universal situation in human history as more appropriate to the Bulgarian crisis. It may be

[29] For Swift's contempt for the wealthies' parasitic way of life and consumerism, see Kiberd, "Jonathan Swift: A Colonial Outsider?" 71-85.

tempting to imagine how a rightist leader makes himself heard against the government's impotence and apathy but I see it as somewhat pretentious.

Concerning Swift's text the interpretation equates the emotions of today's readers with those of the Irish in 1729. The admiration for Swift's art relates to sentence (**3**), this time bringing to a climax the tribute the subject pays to Swift's masterly strokes. It is a pity that the declamatory statements cannot reveal Swift's sophisticated communication with the reader in greater depth to make us, modern readers, far more involved in the pamphlet than the Bulgarian writing subject cares for.[30]

In (**6**) the reader is allowed, however, to sigh with relief. The powerful public response and the beginnings of social legislation strike the welcome positive note of justice in the authorities' corresponding measures, an optimistic about-turn towards common sense. Unfortunately, this respite does not last long. Sentence **(7)**, the last one to talk about Swift, the writer, and the pamphlet's meaning, dashes all harmony. In retrospective, the subject started with the Irish context and Swift's solution of the problem in **(2)** and **(3)**; then Irish distress is transformed into a stage in human history to show how a would-be leader can achieve a legendary exploit against the political abuse of power **(4)**. Now, in **(7)** the Irish author is decontextualized from the original context for the sake of being re-contextualized in the modern world. Swift's misanthropy is left unmentioned but it comes in handy to elicit conservative readers' sympathy as the subject ushers a sudden vision of humanity as prey to regular dehumanization. In this way the subject acknowledges that even the ideology of free enterprise and capitalism can show occasional inconsistencies but it is left to rival ideologies to dispel the opponent's generalizations.

In sentences **(4-7)** the pamphlet's meaning refers to a broad range of topics. There is a shift here as the Irish context, the pamphlet and its author are decontextualized in order to be re-contextualized into a global context as the subject moves freely from the plight of the poorest Irish or the unsurpassed satirist's genius in support of the underprivileged, to the confident assertion that the horrible idea of the project must have affected eighteenth-century readers no less harshly than it does those of today, until it comes to the pessimistic conclusion about humanity's doubtful survival.

Sentences (**8-9**) make unabashed use of Swift and the pamphlet, going back in more than one way to the Bulgarian context and the arrival of the translation of *A Modest Proposal*. The reminder about the translation of *A Modest Proposal* circles back to the text's importance for the journal's

[30] For a perceptive comment on the embarrassment of the pamphlet's reader as eater, see Phiddian. "Have You Eaten Yet? the Reader in *A Modest Proposal*." 603-621.

objectives and quite likely, to the credit *LV* should take for its unmentioned commission of the translation **(8)**. The "here and now" have come full circle with the subject's approval of the journal's political objectives as they are hinted at on the front page expecting readers to see the journal's formulations as the last word about "the here and now" by means of mobilizing Swift's art as a pretext for political propaganda **(9)**.

If we apply to *LV's* preface Genette's chief function of the preface genre ("to get the book read properly"),[31] we can say, I suppose, that the journal shows the same concern: that *LV's* two paratexts be read properly, i.e. in line with its own political objectives.

The introduction makes no mention of Swift's abhorrence of Liberalism, the ideology adopted by "the wealthy" against the "silenced," as each social group has been vaguely called in the Bulgarian text. The closest the text comes to 17th century liberalist ideology is in the use of "practical," as well as in "socially beneficial, each an echo of Swift's ironic usage. The distressed parents' plight does not awaken much interest, they are left to themselves. What is considered most worthy of attention is the public speaker's rise in defense of the Bulgarian distressed.

LV makes a neutral observer see the subject's and the staff's desire to be in control not just of knowledge about Swift but of the way the readership should believe in *LV's* competence to think and channel their general knowledge like a guru who can speak for the "silenced" while modelling their ideological beliefs as it suits the occasion and the journal's part in it.

What contributes still more to the overall impact of the preface and Swift's text is the visual effect of the photos and the connection they make with the pamphlet's title and text on pages 1, 12 and 13, since the latter two are incorporated in Swift's text.

[31] Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, 197.

Fig4

Fig.5

To analyze their message I turn to Barthes and his denoted and connoted photographical messages in terms of ideology.[32]

All three photos show students: on Fig.1 they are celebrating November 1; Figs. 4-5 concentrate on the students' abortive attempt to initiate a nation-wide strike. The easiest connotations suggest youth, intelligence, innocence. Of course, the photographer has chosen for the second set objects and people forming a strong association with the strike (the empty boulevard, an overturned rubbish container, a boy sitting on the ground, a row of policemen). The three photos can be taken as a sequence of the two events in development; the first elicits the joy of students and passers-by alike, the other two provoke the reader's anxiety for the protesters.

On Fig. 4, the photo signed "The early-rising students" is a girl sitting upon an overturned container; she is cross-legged with her hands on her ankles with downcast eyes. Maybe she is trying to work out, like other protesters, what is to be done next. On the front-page photo (Fig. 1) she carries Gospodinov's book *The Invisible Crises*. The other photo by Georgi Bozhilov, Fig. 5 on page 13 shows that behind the girl, in the absence of traffic, is a boy. He is completely engrossed in a book, unaware of everything and everybody else around him, policemen included. Unlike the girl, he chose to read rather than contemplate the situation.

While *LV's* preface aims to explain Swift's "Proposal" and the way one should decode it, the students' photos have nothing to do with the pamphlet. On the contrary, it is the English text that forces the images into explanation, in what Barthes sees as the text's function to assign a meaning to the picture giving it "a culture, a moral, an imagination." Therefore, it is up to the text to produce, after it has been read, the connotative signifieds for the reader.[33]

The benefit of this role reversal (the text explains the photos) is obvious. The perceptive reader can draw an analogy between the girl lost in thought and Swift's poor infants due to their lack of prospects. Going still further, the reader may compare the two students' silence in the photos to the bustle and the noise, which accompanied their clash with the police as well as imagine the protesters' deafening cry against the political turmoil as a threat to their own and the nation's future.

While suppressing ideology, role reversal releases the unresolved tension of the preface and Swift's text as it introduces moral values. These values appeal nationwide to political opponents' common sense and create

[32] Barthes, "The Photographic Message."
[33] Ibid., 26-27.

an atmosphere of warmth due to the photos' becoming part of Swift's text. The girl's picture is placed next to the paragraph in which the "proposer" enumerates the general "benefit," if poor parents agree to sell their children. The reminder about the dire future of Irish children brings in the Bulgarian students' position as identical, an alert to the nation to accept responsibility for its future intellectual potential. The layout of the boy's photo is a real gem. Right under it the "proposer" appeals to the Irish in a way reminiscent of what Bulgarians need to hear no less often:

> [O]f learning to love our country […] of quitting our animosities and factions […] of being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry and skill into our shopkeepers […][34]

And finally, the cultural-historical context of Bulgarian literature as far as we can place it into perspective in terms of its position among other national literatures as well as with regard to politics in light of *LV's* decision to use Swift's text for political aims.

In the global literary context Bulgarian literature is but a small literature.[35] Thus, the translation of an author who does not just belong to a great literature but himself enjoys a worldwide reputation, is, as *LV* admits, an important literary event. Thanks to it Bulgarian literature acquires greater prestige, not to mention the boosting of its otherwise modest resources. It is the journal's acknowledgement of and respect for Swift's greatness that must have given *LV* the idea to make use of his pamphlet for its political project; never mind that eager submission to foreign authority undermines Bulgarian literature's confidence amidst its *confrères* both great and small.

Bulgarian nationalism emerged in the course of the nineteenth century asserting the emerging nation's right to mass literacy and the establishment of an autocephalous church alongside steps for political autonomy. Each of those extra-literary activities made strong claims on modern Bulgarian literature from the very first days of its beginning. Later, political demands on literature would abate at times but were always close at hand. Socialism gave the political slant an extra push with the governing Party's unflinching requirements for "party ideology in literature." *LV's* effort to legitimate rightists in the conflict with their political antagonist by means of Swift and his "Proposal" speaks for itself.

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[34] Swift, *A Modest Proposal,* 11.

[35] Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, 134-135. Also Znepolski. "Studentskite protesti ot 2013 vav fokusa na dve ratsionalnosti."

I showed that the publishing of *A Modest Proposal* together with *LV's* two paratexts supply some accurate information about the writer, his pamphlet, and the mass distress in Ireland in the wake of poor harvests. But on the other hand, the journal exploits the pamphlet by means of the explanatory paratexts, the protesters' photos as well as the overall layout to hold the reader's interest in a way that should also guide their evaluation. In the process the original eighteenth century context is downplayed while Swift's credit for political writing is decontextualized to be recontextualized to fit modernity and the 2013 Bulgarian unprecedented political crisis.

The melting of spatial and temporal differences between the Irish and the Bulgarian crises also shifts the focus away from Ireland and the "Proposal" to generalizations: the universal importance of leaders for the sake of the silenced, Swift's pessimistic judgment of the future as a warranty on the identical position of Irish infants and Bulgarian protesting students, and last but not least, *LV's* enthusiasm to set the current political agenda in the country by means of its own application of Swift's text.

Swift's authority as a political writer and his memorable text may have been expected to give a new lease of life to the tired cliché that literature can and does wield the ultimate power in a state of political deadlock. In this *LV* comes very close to what the students' protest had tried to imply earlier, in the demonstration, some ten days prior to their clash with the police and their regrettable failure.

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Appendix

The Bulgarian Preface to *A Modest Proposal*

(1) „Скромно предложение" (*A Modest Proposal*) е знаменитият памфлет на Джонатан Суифт, публикуван анонимно през 1729г. (2) В годината на провалена реколта и масов глад в Ирландия, Суифт търси „практично" и „общественополезно" разрешение на проблема с многото просяци и бедняци в страната. (3) Чрез една висша форма на ирония и сарказъм, превърнала текста в класика на сатирата, Суифт намира решение ни повече, ни по-малко в това откърмените едногодишни бебета на бедните да се продават за храна на богатите. (4) Срещу пълното безсилие и апатия на властта радикалното предизвикателство е единственият ход, за да бъдеш чут и да дадеш глас на безгласните. (5) Шокиращият ефект на текста, който не е намалял и днес за съвременния читател, да не говорим за тогавашния, е в хладния, прагматичен тон, детайлната аргументация, подплатена със статистика, социални и политически доводи. (6) Памфлетът предизвиква мощен обществен резонанс и води дори до наченки на социално законодателство в Англия и Ирландия. (7) „Предложението", слава богу, не се е сбъднало в буквалния смисъл, но без съмнение е пророческо по отношение на все по-голямото инструментализирине и дехуманизиране на модерния свят от 18в. насам, превръщането на човека в анонимна статистическа единица, обект на социални и политически експерименти. (8) Оказва се, че текстът въпреки цитиранията си е слабо познат у нас, а този цялостен превод и публикация излиза за пръв път сега в *ЛВ*, след близо 300 години. (9) Но пък какво по-добро време за поява тук.

ЛВ December 4-10, 2013

CHAPTER TEN

PARODY AND SATIRE IN TRANSLATION: AN ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TASK

SOME NOTES ON THE BULGARIAN RECEPTION OF *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS* BY JONATHAN SWIFT

TEODORA TZANKOVA

If there is one point on which everyone agrees in the long and eventful history of the reception of *Gulliver's Travels*, Jonathan Swift's most famous work, it is the satirical dimension of eighteenth-century fiction. Swift himself might be considered a misanthrope or a humanist, but *Gulliver's Travels* satirizes, to say the least, politics and politicians, science and scientists, particular people and the human race in general. Many scholars have examined Swift's satire as a parody of travel writing, of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), of political and scientific discourse, and even of the emerging genre of the novel.

What interests me in this chapter is not to continue a discussion on parody and satire in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* but rather to show how parody and satire are rendered in translation. The question is appealing because, unlike other literary devices, these two are very much related to the specific literary and socio-cultural context in which the original work was conceived. Neither shall I dwell on the theoretical debate on the nature of parody and satire, or on whether parody is a particular kind of satire or an independent genre or device. Although I agree that both are often intermingled and reinforce each other's effects, I believe they can be examined separately for the sake of convenience.

In the case of Swift, it is worth noting that he himself contributed to the theory of parody and satire, as well as to their masterful practice, and provided definitions for both terms. In "The Author's Apology," an addition to *A Tale of a Tub* made in 1710, he admits having written "parodies, where the author personates the style and manner of other

writers, whom he has a mind to expose."[1] Despite the fact that the eighteenth-century usage of the term "parody" differs from the present-day use of the term,[2] the definition quoted above fits the more or less common understanding of parody today as "the imitative use of the words, style, attitude, tone and ideas of an author in such a way as to make them ridiculous."[3] Both the eighteenth-century approach to parody and the generally accepted understanding of the term today, however, touch upon its intertextual nature.

As for satire, Swift writes in the preface to *The Battle of the Books* (1704):

> Satire is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own; which is the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets in the world, and that so very few are offended with it.[4]

This is actually a sort of negative definition; it describes the state of affairs, doubtlessly suggesting that satire doesn't get the effects it should get and hence changes are needed: beholders do not but should discover their faces in the glass of satire and are not but should be offended by it. Swift does not say what satire is, but he suggests that it is definitely aimed at the "beholders" and that its aim is to offend them. Nevertheless, there is something more worth noting in this quote and that is the reflexive character of satire. It is not incidental that Swift uses the key image of the glass, so symbolically charged: the glass reflects those who look into it and, at the same time, provokes them to reflect upon themselves. Likewise, satire reflects as a mirror those who look into it—although generally they do not discover their own faces—and provokes them—or rather should provoke them—to reflect on themselves and be offended. This view posits two options: either the object of satire, the satirized subject, is identical with the beholder, or the object of satire and the beholder are different but have common, satirized features, which the beholder should recognize. No doubt, he could have named the writers he intended to expose. As for the beholders, he seems to be referring to *any* of them; however, he also seems to have had enough experience to know what they generally do, so the beholders he talks about are defined and somehow known.

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[1] Swift, "The Author's Apology," 27.
[2] See Richard Terry, "The Semantics of 'Parody'," 67-74.
[3] Cuddon, *The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*, 640.
[4] Swift, "The Preface of the Author" to *The Battle of the Books*, 210.

The emphasis Swift puts on the "other writers" and the "beholders" in his definitions highlights the importance of context. If the beholders are identical with the objects of satire, then they must be concrete; and if the beholders are not identical with the objects of satire, but only have common features with them, then the scope of the reference appears to be broader. In either case, Swift's definitions allow readers to look at his writings as directed at his "here and now."

The inalienability of the Irish writer's works from their context poses a problem in translation, particularly when the literary, cultural, social, and historical background changes substantially from eighteenth century Britain to present-day Bulgaria. The change in the way a literary work is received can best be described with the help of Hans Robert Jauss's term "horizon of expectations." He famously declares that "[a] literary work is not an object which stands by itself and which offers the same face to each reader in each period"[5] and explains further that "the interpretative reception of a text always presupposes the context of experience of aesthetic perception."[6] This context constitutes the "horizon of expectations." Modern readers necessarily have a different horizon of expectations from those in the eighteenth-century and thus they will certainly interpret Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* differently.

The afterlife of parody and satire in translation is clearly a vast question. In the case of *Gulliver's Travels* and its translations in Bulgarian, it has been scholarly approached in Filipina Filipova's valuable monograph *The Bulgarian Gulliver or the Travels of the Parodic* (2007).[7] Her study examines the parodic elements in Swift's satire and their rendition in all Bulgarian translations that had appeared until 2004. The other indispensable starting point for Gulliver's presence in Bulgaria is Tatyana Stoicheva's paper on Jonathan Swift in *Reception of European Literatures in Bulgaria: English Literature* (2000),[8] which is a diachronic and analytical approach to Swift's text. Against this background, my aim is to focus on the present-day situation and to look at parody and satire by highlighting some key points.

Swift's satire is available in Bulgarian in bookstores in several editions: (1) an abridged edition retold for children by Jonathan Coe;[9] (2) Erich Kästner's retelling of Gulliver's adventures (together with other

[5] Jauss, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," 10.
[6] Jauss, "Literary History," 13.
[7] Filipova: Филипова, *Българският Гъливър* (2007).
[8] Stoicheva: Татяна Стойчева, „Джонатан Суифт," 82-89.
[9] Coe: Джонатан Коу, *Гъливер*, прев. Анелия Данилова (2014).

stories);[10] (3) an abridged edition for young adults containing the first two books only, translated by Dona Gogova;[11] (4) an edition for children or young adults of the first two books translated by Vesela Zhelyazkova and Tsvetan Stoyanov,[12] first published in the late 1950s and then reprinted multiple times; and (5) the complete text in the translation by Teodora Atanasova and Boyan Atanasov,[13] first published in 1977 and then reprinted several times. The only episode missing in this edition is the successful insurrection in Lindalino against the king in chapter 3 of Book III. The episode was omitted from all English editions prior to 1899; hence its omission from the translation by Teodora Atanasova and Boyan Atanasov (hereafter Atanasova and Atanasov) should be attributed to an already censored source text. *Gulliver's Travels* is also among the obligatory readings for literature classes in the 9th grade of Bulgarian secondary school.

The overview is telling enough: there is a huge interest in Swift's satire, although not necessarily in its full version. As it has happened worldwide, *Gulliver's Travels* has often been retold or shortened to its first two books only and has been treated as a children's book. This fact would compel us to take into account children as a reading public and their horizon of expectations. My aim, however, is to look at the question of parody in the full translation by Atanasova and Atanasov, and I will particularly regard how this translation has retained intertextual relation to Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and to travel literature in general. Swift's parody of Daniel Defoe's novel may be traced in the following heterogeneous elements: some facts of Daniel Defoe's and Robinson Crusoe's lives alluded to in the opening paragraphs of *Gulliver's Travels*; some details of the undertaken voyages; the ending of *Robinson Crusoe* and its overall vindication of human reason, enterprise and labor as well as of British imperialism; and finally, the use of first-person narration. The parody may be considered successful only if these elements are recognized by the reader of the Bulgarian translation as belonging originally to *Robinson Crusoe* and mocked by Swift.

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[10] Kästner: Ерих Кестнер, *Ерих Кестнер разказва: Тил Ойленшпигел, Мюнхаузен, Дон Кихот, Гражданите на Шилда и Пътешествията на Гъливер*, прев. Ваня Пенева (София: Емас, 2006).

[11] Swift: Джонатан Суифт, *Пътешествията на Гъливер*, прев. Дона Гогова (София: Дамян Яков, 1999).

[12] Swift: Джонатан Суифт, *Пътешествията на Гъливер*, прев. Весела Желязкова, Цветан Стоянов (София: ПАН, 2011).

[13] Swift: Джонатан Суифт, *Пътешествията на Гъливер*, прев. Теодора Атанасова, Боян Атанасов (София: Изток-Запад, 2014).

The first fact to be taken into account is that although Bulgarian readers have been familiar with *Robinson* since 1849 in all kinds of retellings, abridgements, and adaptations,[14] the first full translation of Defoe's novel into Bulgarian appeared only in 1989, i.e., after the last translation of *Gulliver's Travels* in 1977. Therefore, a parody of textual features, such as style or wording, is chronologically impossible and coincidences of phrases or structures, if present, would be just accidental.

As if to put things right, in the preface to the translation of *Gulliver's Travels* by Teodora Atanasova and Boyan Atanasov, Alexander Shurbanov argues that Swift's satire, immensely parodied travel literature, in general, and *Robinson Crusoe*, in particular.[15] The preface, in other words, prepares readers to seek for such intertextual dialogues. The average Bulgarian reader may not be familiar with Defoe's life and the allusions to it will remain obscure. John Robert Moore pointed out,[16] for instance, that by marrying Gulliver to "Mrs. Mary Burton, second daughter to Mr. Edmund Burton, hosier, in Newgate-street, with whom I received four hundred pounds for a portion"[17] Swift makes a comic reference to Defoe who was a hosier in his youth, married a heiress and ran through her considerable dowry. The fact that the famous explorer William Dampier is Gulliver's cousin (xii) has also been interpreted[18] as a hint at Defoe's claims to be related to Sir Walter Raleigh. These allusions are not properly parodic but aim rather to establish a subtle connection between Swift's satire and the author of *Robinson Crusoe* and thus to prepare the ground for further intertextual relations.

If Bulgarian readers may not be acquainted with the particulars of Defoe's life, they have all the reasons to be familiar with the adventures of Robinson Crusoe. That is why some details surrounding the travels of Gulliver might be familiar. The opening paragraph of chapter 1 of Swift's satire (1-2) and its parodic references to the way voyage authors report personal details and particularly to the beginning of *Robinson Crusoe*[19] seems the obvious choice for an analysis. However, I would like to look more closely at another passage which I find more interesting. It is the

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[14] See Aretov: Аретов, „Даниел Дефо," 73-81.

[15] Shurbanov: Шурбанов, „Необикновените пътешествия на Джонатан Суифт," 8.

[16] Moore, "A Defoe Allusion in 'Gulliver's Travels'," 79-80.

[17] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels,* 2. Further references to this work follow parenthetically in the text.

[18] See, among others, Hadzhikosev: Хаджикосев, *Западноевропейска литература*, 311, and Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions*, 19.

[19] See Ian Higgins, "Explanatory notes" in Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 287.

scene in Book I, chapter 6, in which the narrator decides to give an account of his domestics and informs the readers that

> Having a **head mechanically turned**, and being likewise forced by necessity, I had made for myself a table and chair convenient enough, out of the largest trees in the royal park. (60, chapter 6, Book I, emphasis added)

The translation by Teodora Atanasova and Boyan Atanasov reads:

> Понеже съм много **сръчен**, а също така подтикнат от нуждата, аз си изработих маса и доста удобен стол от най-големите дървета в кралския парк. (74, chapter 6, Book I, emphasis added)

The adjective used in Bulgarian for "a head mechanically turned" is of more common use than its correspondent phrase in English and may very well define Robinson as a whole: he is, or has rather become, "сръчен" (handy), while making all kinds of items on the island.

> Cf. The working part of this day and of the next were wholly employed in making my table, for I was yet but a very sorry workman, though time and necessity made me a complete natural mechanic soon after, as I believe they would do any one else.[20]

> Този ден, както и следващите три дни, времето ми за работа бе изцяло запълнено е правенето на маса, защото все още бях несръчен, макар че не след дълго нуждата ме превърна в един съвършен и изкусен майстор—както, смятам, би станало и с всеки друг човек.[21]

Both expressions, in Swift's original and in Atanasova and Atanasov's translation, refer to Defoe's novel in a parodic manner. However, the attributive "head mechanically turned" refers to a mental disposition, likens the human body to a mechanical device, suggests a digression from a course, and recalls other of Swift's works, namely *A Tale of a Tub* (1704) and its appendage *Mechanical Operation of the Spirit*[22] which, in

[20] Defoe, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe,* ch. 5.
[21] Defoe: Даниел Дефо, *Животът и приключенията на Робинзон Крузо*, прев. Огняна Иванова (София: Отечество, 1989), 68.
[22] I owe the observation to Paul Baines's commentary on the role of science and technology in *Gulliver's Travels*. See Baines, "'Able Mechanick': *The Life and the Adventures of Peter Wilkins* and the Eighteenth-Century Fantastic Voyage," 9-13.

turn, are alluded to by Defoe.[23] The Bulgarian adjective "сръчен" derives from "ръка" (hand) and is associated with physical abilities. As a result of these lexical choices, something of the richness of the original, something of its philosophical dimensions and ironic undertones is missing in the Bulgarian version.

The intertextual links are stronger in the last chapter of Swift's *Gulliver's Travel*s. In fact, Gulliver's final return reverses the long-awaited coming back of Robinson. While the latter finds prosperity and domestic happiness, the former can barely bear human beings and becomes more miserable than ever. While Robinson takes care of the colony he founded on his island, Gulliver condemns colonialism (353-355).

If the above-mentioned allusions can be grasped by an attentive Bulgarian reader who is familiar with Defoe's novel, there is another kind of reference in *Gulliver's Travels* which cannot go unnoticed—Gulliver's overt comments on his own narrative, which he often compares to other people's writings. In the first chapter of Book II, after describing how he made his mistress understand that he wanted to be left alone in the garden to "discharge the necessities of nature" (98), he remarks:

> I hope the gentle reader will excuse me for dwelling on these and the like particulars, which however insignificant they may appear to grovelling vulgar minds, yet will certainly help **a philosopher** to enlarge his thoughts and imagination, and apply them to the benefit of **publick as well as private life**, which was my sole design in presenting this, and other accounts of my travels, to the world: wherein I have been chiefly studious of **truth**, without affecting any ornaments of learning or of style. But the whole scene of this voyage, made so strong an impression on my mind, and is so deeply fixed in my memory, that in committing it to paper, I did not omit **one material circumstance**: however, upon a strict review, I blotted out several passages of less moment which were in my first copy, for fear of being censured as tedious and trifling, whereof travellers are often, perhaps not without justice, accused. (98, chapter 1, Book II, emphasis added)

The translation by Atanasova and Atanasov reads:

> Надявам се, че любезният читател ще ме извини, задето се спирам върху тези и тям подобни подробности, които, колкото и маловажни да изглеждат на низки, прости умове, все пак непременно ще помогнат на **философа** да разшири мисловния си кръгозор и

[23] Baines notes that Defoe made a reference to *Mechanical Operation* in *The Consolidator* (1705). See "'Able Mechanick'," 23.

> въображението и да ги приложи за полза на хората както **в обществения, така и в частния живот**, и единствено с тази цел разказвам на читателите за това и за други мои пътешествия; при което главно съм се старал да предавам **истината**, без да прибягвам за украса до философии или някакъв особен стил. Но всички събития на това пътешествие толкова ме поразиха и тъй дълбоко се запечатаха в паметта ми, че когато взех перото, за да ги опиша, не изпуснах нито **една съществена подробност**; обаче след един критичен преглед на написаното заличих няколко по-маловажни откъса в първоначалния си текст, от страх да не бъдат преценени като незначителни и досадни, нещо, в което често обвиняват пътешествениците може би не без основание. (102-103, chapter 1, Book II, emphasis added)

The passage parodies travel literature as well as the pretence of narrators who tell the truth without omitting any detail, no matter how trivial. Few Bulgarian readers, however, are acquainted with the alluded genre—even if *Robinson* is taken as a representative example, it cannot account for the whole genre. Bulgarian readers can only make deductions about whether the travel literature of the early Enlightenment was truly so full of boring details or whether the narrators in travel literature really give them unmerited importance. Arguably, when the reference is acknowledged but the object referred to is unknown, parody cannot function properly.

The same is true for Gulliver's remark on philosophers, their exclusive social status, and the impact they had on the public and private spheres in the early eighteenth century. Although the key concepts are rendered correctly by Atanasova and Atanasov, many Bulgarian readers may not be familiar with the context of the Enlightenment and the social role of the philosophers of the late seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries. They are likely to get the irony, but, at the same time, Swift's critical approach to his contemporaries is also likely to remain too imprecise.

Another interesting case is the description of the storm at the beginning of the second book. E. H. Knowles famously found out that the entire paragraph was taken almost word for word from Samuel Sturmy's *Mariner's Magazine* (1669),[24] and the passage is often given as an example of parody of a specialized nautical jargon.[25]

> Finding it was likely to overblow, we took in our **sprit-sail**, and stood by to hand the **fore-sail**; but making foul weather, we looked the guns were all fast, and handed the **mizzen**. The ship lay very **broad off**, so we thought it

[24] Knowles, "Dean Swift," 223.

[25] The fragment has been commented in Filipova: Филипова, *Българският Гъливър*, 152-156.

> better **spooning** before the sea, than **trying or hulling**. We reefed the **fore-sail** and set him, and hauled aft the **fore-sheet**; the helm was hard a-weather. […] When the storm was over, we set **fore-sail** and **main-sail**, and brought the ship to. Then we set **the mizen, main-top-sail, and the fore-top-sail**. Our course was east-north-east, the wind was at south-west. We got the **starboard tacks** aboard, we cast off our **weather-braces and lifts**; we set in the **lee-braces**, and hauled forward by the **weather-bowlings**, and hauled them tight, and belayed them, and hauled over the **mizen** tack to windward, and kept her full and by as near as she would lie. (84-85, chapter 1, Book II, emphasis added)

Atanasova and Atanasov render the passage in the following manner:

> Като разбрахме, че има изгледи вятърът да се усили, свихме **кливера** и стояхме в готовност да свалим платното на **фок-мачтата**, а понеже времето се разваляше, погрижихме се да закрепим здраво оръдията и да свием **бизана**. Корабът бе застанал напълно на **дрейф**, косо към вятъра, и затова решихме, че е по-добре да се движим по посока на вятъра, отколкото срещу него, да свалим всички платна и да оставим да ни носят вълните. Скъсихме **фока** и го свихме; после закрепихме **шкота на фок-мачтата**; кормилото бе дадено на борт към надветрената страна. (…) Когато бурята премина, вдигнахме платната на **фок- и грот-мачтите** и насочихме кораба по курса. След това вдигнахме платната на **бизан-мачтата, грот-топсела и фок-топсела**. Нашият курс бе изток-североизток, а вятърът духаше от югозапад. Вдигнахме долния **галс**, отпуснахме **брасите и щагите**, вдигнахме **галсите** на подветрения борт, снехме **щорм-мачтата** към надветрения борт и поддържахме толкова остър курс, колкото корабът позволяваше. (93, chapter 1, Book II, emphasis added)

It goes without saying that the *Mariner's Magazine* is unknown in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian language uses foreign words for nautical terms borrowed mostly from German and English. Atanasova and Atanasov have rendered the paragraph accordingly, and the effect of gibberish has been achieved. They even inserted a footnote to explain that the whole passage mocks the authors of adventure novels, even though such an explanatory note may be viewed as redundant. Sea adventure books like Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, Rafael Sabatini's series about Captain Blood, and the novels by Jules Verne and James Fenimore Cooper have been the favorite readings of generations of Bulgarian young adult readers. Moreover, these translations have been credited with introducing the nautical terminology in Bulgarian.[26] As a result, for Bulgarian readers,

[26] Aretov: Николай Аретов, „Приключенски роман," 192.

the quoted paragraph *does* make a parody but, paradoxically, its object—sea adventure fiction—was written long after Swift's death.

The almost imperceptible replacement of one object of parody (travel literature in the original) with another one (the sea adventure novels in translation) seems appropriate. However, it is not inconsequential. Unlike travel literature, sea adventure novels are not concerned with truth-telling, nor do they aspire to appeal to (would-be) philosophers and push ahead social reforms. By their very nature sea adventure novels have the more modest purpose of entertaining and educating their readers—both children and young adults—in patriotism and moral values.[27] The difference in ambitions and targets implies a difference in status. Sea adventure novels are generally considered a light reading, a low genre. Thus, the seemingly innocent replacement of the object of parody of *Gulliver's Travels* in the translation by Atanasova and Atanasov lowers the status of parody and hence seems to affect the whole narrative.

The question of satire is, on its part, also related to a reality external to Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. When mocking fictional characters and countries, Swift relies on the capacity of his contemporary readers to associate these with the non-fictional reality of the day. The particular allusions Swift himself had in mind have been studied and well-known: Lilliput corresponds to England, Blefuscu to France, the High-heels to the Tories, the Low-heels to the Whigs, Flimnap to Walpole, Laputa to England, Lindalino to Ireland, the Academy of Langado to the Royal Society.[28] Except for the most obvious ones, modern readers can hardly guess the political allusions in Swift's satire. To help Bulgarian readers see the contemporary political picture, Alexander Shurbanov's preface to Atanasova and Atanasov's translation specifies some of the analogies between the fictional worlds and eighteenth-century Britain without going too much into details.[29] There are no footnotes in Atanasova and Atanasov's translation of *Gulliver's Travels* to give readers any cultural background, so the reading may proceed smoothly and free of any privileged interpretation. Consequently, Bulgarian readers have the means to acknowledge the satirical points made in *Gulliver's Travels* but can rarely appreciate them since they have no direct knowledge of the targets of Swift's satire.

However, despite the fact that the Dean directs his satire at his "here and now," the subjects he treats, such as politics, wars, corruption,

[27] Aretov: Аретов, „Приключенски роман," 191.
[28] See Greenberg's notes in Swift, *Gulliver's Travels: an Authoritative Text*, esp. 13, 19, 22, 30, 31, 145, 151.
[29] Shurbanov: Шурбанов, „Необикновените пътешествия," 10, 11, 12, 16.

unpractical science, and all sorts of human vices prove to be universal and defy particular sociohistorical context. For this reason, the fictional characters, institutions, and countries in *Gulliver's Travels* match the particular targets of his satire but are not restricted to them. The emperor of Lilliput may be George I but might quite as well be any conceited and small-minded ruler. Laputa may be England or Russia or, why not even North Korea, and the Academy in Lagado—the Royal Society or the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.

Swift encourages the multiplicity of associations by encouraging multiple interpretations. In his definition quoted above, he puts forward the beholder, i.e., the reader, as the addressee of satire. Irrespective who or what the object of satire is, it is the readers who should recognize themselves in the glass and act accordingly. Such a stance is in line with Michael F. Suarez's conclusion that

> The purpose of satire for Swift, then, is less the reformation of the target, who is typically too foregone or ill-disposed for amendment, and more about the moral education of the reader.[30]

In other words, the Irish author puts less faith in the satirized subject and his ability to recognize himself in the glass of satire and reform than in his readers and their ability to recognize the common features between themselves and the satirized subject and reform. Thus, neither the targets of Swift's satire nor its addressees are stable and fixed. They are changeable, multiple, and subjective. The alterations they experience in different settings and with different readers speak for how powerful and enduring satire is.

There is, however, one peculiarity concerning satire in the Bulgarian translation of *Gulliver's Travels*. Some of the most satirical passages in the fictional adventures are those in which Gulliver meets inhabitants of the remote countries he visits and retells their stories and views. In such cases, Atanasova and Atanasov usually use renarrative forms to express indirect experience, but also doubt and incredulity. Nevertheless, there are some cases in which other people's thoughts are rendered with evidential forms, which should be interpreted as agreement or at least lack of opposition on Gulliver's part. For example, one of the projects in Lagado is described as follows:

[30] Suarez, "Swift's Satire and Parody," 115.

> The first project was, to shorten discourse, by cutting polysyllables into one, and leaving out verbs and participles; because, in reality, all things imaginable **are** but nouns.
> The other project was, a scheme for entirely abolishing all words whatsoever; and this was urged as a great advantage in point of health, as well as brevity. For it is plain, that every word we speak, **is**, in some degree, a diminution of our lungs by corrosion; and consequently, **contributes** to the shortening of our lives. An expedient was therefore offered, that since words are only names for things, it would be more convenient, for all men to carry about them such things, as were necessary to express a particular business they are to discourse on. And this invention would certainly have taken place, to the great ease as well as health of the subject, if the women, in conjunction with the vulgar and illiterate, had not threatened to raise a rebellion, unless they might be allowed the liberty to speak with their tongues, after the manner of their forefathers; such constant irreconcilable enemies to science, **are** the common people. (213, chapter 5, Book III, emphasis added)

In Atanasova and Atanasov's translation the passage reads:

> Първият проект беше да се скъси говорът, като се превърнат многосричните думи в едносрични и като се изпускат глаголите и причастията; защото в действителност всички неща, които можем да си представим зрително, всъщност **са** съществителни.
>
> Другият проект предвиждаше пълното премахване на каквито и да е думи; авторът му изтъкваше неговите големи предимства както по здравословни съображения, така и заради по-голямата му краткост. Защото е очевидно, че с всяка дума, която изричаме, дробовете ни постепенно **се разяждат** и следователно това **скъсява** живота ни. Ето защо предлагал следния способ: тъй като думите са само имена на предмети, би било по-удобно всички хора да носят със себе си неща, които ще им бъдат необходими, за да изяснят въпроса, по който ще говорят. Това изобретение непременно е щяло да бъде приложено— едно истинско улеснение и от полза за здравето на отделния човек, — но жените наред с простолюдието и неграмотните заплашили, че ще вдигнат бунт, ако не им се разреши да говорят, като използуват езика си, както са правели дедите им; ето какви постоянни и непримирими врагове на науката **са** обикновените хора. (186, chapter 5, Book III, emphasis added)

The Bulgarian verbs in bold mean that Gulliver accepts at face value that all things imaginable are nouns, that speaking shortens our lives, and that common people are irreconcilable enemies to science. In English his position regarding these matters remains uncertain. Does Gulliver's *naiveté* contribute to satire? Probably yes, because it does not let the

readers comfortably side with him but provokes further disagreement on their part not only with the authors of the projects but with the *gullible* narrator as well.

Parody and satire lead a life of their own in translation. The insufficiencies of the horizon of expectations of modern Bulgarian readers are compensated to a certain degree with the help of paratexts. Still, the objects of parody and satire change. There are losses and gains as well as modifications of perceptions. Translation, in general—it may be argued—leads to downgrading the genre of the work in the case of parody and broadening its scope in the case of satire. *Gulliver's Travels*, both in English and in translation, requires attentive and active readers, well-read, well-informed, and self-critical enough to get its inherent allusions and to make new of their own.

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PART IV

SWIFT, POLITICS, AND POST-TRUTH

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A WONDERFUL YAHOO THAT COULD SPEAK LIKE A HOUYHNHNM: POST-TRUTH AND *GULLIVER*'S GENTLE READER

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At the end of 2016, it was announced the Oxford Dictionaries Word of the Year 2016 was *post-truth*—an adjective defined as "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief."[1] This word has been chosen because of its increased frequency (by 2,000 percent) in the context of the EU referendum in the United Kingdom and the presidential election in the United States. The concept to which it refers has been gaining popularity for at least a decade and yet, as the article on the decision explains, "*[p]ost-truth* has gone from being a peripheral term to being a mainstay in political commentary, now often being used by major publications without the need for clarification or definition in their headlines."[2] It is believed that the word was first used by the late playwright Steve Tesich in an essay for the *Nation* magazine published in 1992. However, if in his essay on the Iran-Contra scandal and the Persian Gulf War, Tesich lamented our will to live in some post-truth world in the sense of '*after the truth has been known'* the meaning of the word has changed to denote '*after the truth has become irrelevant*'. What is new is not the readiness to revert to lying for political gains. What is new is that "truth is not falsified, or contested, but of secondary importance."[3] Lies are used not to convince but simply to "reinforce prejudices" and "validate the

[1] "Word of the Year."
[2] Ibid.
[3] "Art of the Lie," 11.

us-versus-them debate mindset that outsider candidates thrive on."[4] There is nothing new about politicians and journalists being economical with the truth. What is new is that so many seem to be content with what the American comedian Stephen Colbert describes as "truthiness," which is here a quality attributed to the "facts" we would readily believe because they sound true to us or, if there is "an Air of Truth" about them, as the fictional Publisher we know from the preface of *Gulliver's Travels* might have said.[5]

Many have tried to establish the root causes of this phenomenon. The usual suspects are well known: modernity, the spread of digitalization, the power of the Internet, the alluring world of social media and the multiplicity of sources that produce "facts" to be used as rhetorical weapons for political gains. However, as Helen Pluckrose has correctly observed, this is not a problem with facts but with the way in which "we discern between fact and opinion and the way we frame the combination of these and use them to make sense of our world."[6] Add anger and the us-versus-them mentality, and you have the perfect conditions for creating communities willing to privilege what appeals to their own emotions over attempts at objectivity-driven reasoning. Making sense of the world is often, if not always, a collective effort. We base our judgements, whether we realize it or not, on the ways in which our selected circle of like-minded "significant others" make sense of the world around us. There is nothing new about this. What is probably novel is the proliferation of ways to create such values-generating communities, and the speed with which it can be done. We are but a mouse-click away from any community we might wish to join and whose principles we might want to uphold. Social media provides a good example in this respect as one cannot be a functional member of a social media group unless one is prepared to issue numerous "likes" that consolidate the group identity. However, Professor Julian Birkinshaw has reminded us that this way of making sense of the world should not be blamed on the Internet and the smartphone revolution only, as the trend dates back to the pre-computer era: "[t]he phenomenon even has a name—agnotology, the study of culturally induced ignorance or doubt. And it comes in a variety of flavors, from the relatively benign (persuading people through 'spin' or selective use of facts) to the deliberately malicious (wilful peddling of objectively incorrect information)."[7]

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[4] "Art of the Lie," 11.
[5] Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 9. Further references to this work appear parenthetically in the text.
[6] Pluckrose, "The Problem with Truth and Reason in a Post-Truth Society."
[7] Birkinshaw, "The Post-Truth World—Why Have We Had Enough of Experts?"

Culturally induced ignorance requires, by necessity, communities of like-minded members. I would argue that such communities thrive at times of notable changes on the number and variety of the media we use to communicate and express ideas. The spread of the Internet has certainly amounted to a paradigm shift, making it possible for users to create their own content and, by so doing, their communities of followers. However, it is certainly not the first time such a shift has taken place. Human thought has experienced previous dramatic shifts that have led to similarly dramatic outcomes. If we often refer to the printed media as "the press," it is because Gutenberg's mobile printing press invented in around 1440 displaced the manuscript and block printing to become synonymous with the enterprise of publishing. The wider availability of printed material was so significant in its outcomes that it can easily be seen as the first step towards mass communication. The development of printing at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century in England, together with the rise of town bourgeoisie and the number of workers living in cities like London, meant that there would be an ever-rising volume of secular literature on offer. Ellison finds that "the eighteenth century experience with the proliferation of texts and the expansion of its communication systems is unique in the history of media."[8] She analyses the concept of eighteenth-century reading and information overload and concludes that works such as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), Behn's *The History of the Nun*, *or the Fair Vow-Breaker* (1682), Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* (1704) and Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722) reflect a transitional point of shifting away from traditional oral discourse and toward emerging printing discourses.

Not surprisingly, the proliferation of texts and the expansion of reading communities was fertile ground for new genres to emerge as they changed attitudes toward reading. The many new sources that were becoming accessible gave freedom to their authors to experiment with novel types of writing. It also gave freedom to their readers to choose their reading matter according to their individual preferences and tastes:

> Pamphlets, broadsides, cookbooks, medical manuals, almanacs, periodicals and "novels" come increasingly to share shelf space in the shops with religious and didactic literature. 'Novels' in those new bookshops meant a lot of different products: amatory novellas about seduced virgins and rapacious libertines; sensationalized inside accounts of the steamy affairs and scandals of aristocrats, politicians and courtiers; breathless biographies

[8] Ellison, *Fatal News*, 2.

> and last-dying words before execution of criminals, pirates, highwaymen, and whores; yarns by travellers to exotic and faraway places...[9]

Needless to say, all these new forms of writing in the broadest sense created their respective reading communities. Literacy was on the rise and the literate had more to choose from.

Guardians of taste like Swift, however, were alarmed by what they perceived as the inevitable lowering of standards, if tradition was to give way to the transitory fashions of the day. Swift was a literary man and he knew all too well the dangers of authorial intent. His writings show how problematic he saw this new figure of the omnipotent writer who lacks the noble spirit of the Ancients but can now address a multitude of omnivorous readers. His *Battle of the Books* was his answer to the debate going on in the late seventeenth century concerning the superiority of contemporary modern writers over classical ones. Losing patience with the on-going dispute about ancient and modern learning, the ancient and modern books in St. James's Library take up the controversy and engage in a battle (on a Friday). The story of their battle is briefly interrupted by an incident with the spider and the bee, representing allegorically each respective camp. The spider is full of poison and dirt, and it turns everything into excrement and venom. He is subsequently blown up, having preyed on numerous flies. Aesop, who has observed this dispute, exclaims: "[…] pray, gentlemen, was ever anything so modern as the spider in his air, his turns and his paradoxes?"[10] The bee, on the other hand, represents the Ancients who, like the bee, fill their hives "with honey and wax, thus furnishing mankind with the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light."[11]

The same idea is further developed in the *Tale of a Tub.* One of its digressions deals with modern authors who have eclipsed their ancient predecessors and have "turned them out of the road of all fashionable commerce"[12] so successfully that it has become impossible for the learned person to say whether there have been any Ancients at all. In fact, the imaginary writer of the *Tale* has discovered many gross errors in the writings of a "certain author called Homer" (122): his account is extremely poor and deficient, his knowledge of mechanics deplorable, he is completely ignorant of the doctrine and discipline of the Church of

[9] Richetti, *Cambridge Companion*, 6.
[10] Swift, *The Battle of the Books*, 10.
[11] Swift, Ibid, 10.
[12] Swift, *A Tale of a Tub,* 121. Further references to this work appear parenthetically in the text.

England, and he is wholly unaware of all the wonderful discoveries since his age (and made "especially within [the] last three years" (123)). Reluctantly, the *Tale* author proclaims Homer "to be the inventor of *the compass,* of *gun powder* and the *circulation of the blood"* (123) but he challenges any of Homer's admirers to find a "complete account of the *spleen"* (123) in his writings. Faced with such gross "defects," the author of the *Tale* has no other option but to "take pen in hand" and proudly declare:

> I dare venture promise the judicious reader shall find nothing neglected here that can be of use upon any emergency of life. I am confident to have included and exhausted all that human imagination can *rise* or *fall* to. Particularly I recommend to the perusal of the learned certain discoveries that are wholly untouched by others, whereof I shall only mention, among a great many more, my *New Help [for] Smatterers*, or the *Art of being Deep Learned and Shallow Read*; *A Curious Invention about Mouse-traps*; *A Universal Rule of Reason, or Every Man his own Carver*; together with a most useful engine for *catching of owls*. All which the judicious reader will find largely treated on in the several parts of this discourse. (123)

The method behind this "madness" is clearly explained in the Digression in Praise of Digressions (*A Tale of a Tub*, Sect. VII.): the moderns are far better than the ancients because they have discovered "a shorter and more prudent method to become *scholars* and *wits* without the fatigue of *reading* or *thinking*."[13] Their miraculous new approach is twofold. Instead of reading books, they only learn their titles and "brag of their acquaintance"[14] but they make sure they examine the index by which the book is governed. In fact, their ingenuity knows no ends. In the Conclusion to the *Tale*, its author boasts of currently experimenting with a method quite popular amongst the Moderns, which consists in writing upon nothing. The subject may be completely exhausted but it is important to let the pen move on.

The controversy surrounding the concepts of ancient and modern learning, and writing, preoccupied Swift because he was equally disturbed by the rapidity with which standards in thought and language were eroding. "I see no absolute Necessity why any Language would be perpetually changing,"[15] he exclaims in his *Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Tongue*—the only proposal he

[13] Swift, *A Tale of a Tub,* 131.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Swift, *Proposal for Correcting, Improving and Ascertaining the English Language,* 16. Further references to this work appear parenthetically in the text.

signed with his own name. In it, he laments the deterioration of the English language, brought about by the "Scribblers of the Week," the use of monosyllables, the "barbarous custom of abbreviating words" (21), the "foolish opinion" that spelling should reflect pronunciation, thus utterly destroying etymology, and the all-too-confident new type of language users:

> Several young Men at the Universities, terribly possessed with the fear of Pedantry, run into a worse Extream, and think all Politeness to consist in reading the daily Trash sent down to them from hence: This they call *knowing the World*, and *reading Men and Manners*. Thus furnished they come up to Town, reckon all their Errors for Accomplishments, borrow the newest Sett of Phrases, and if they take a Pen into their Hands, all the odd Words they have picked up in a Coffee-House, or a Gaming Ordinary, are produced as Flowers of Style; and the Orthography refined to the utmost. To this we owe those monstrous Productions. (24)

The only possible solution to this abomination, suggests Swift, is to set up an Academy, following the French example, which should be run by those who are best qualified to lay down the rules of good style. However, he hastens to add, it is very important to find a method of "fixing language for ever" (31). The Romans began to lose their simplicity of style and in their preference for affected speech produced "Barbarities even before the Goths invaded Italy" (31-32). The same sentiment is echoed in his *Continual Corruption of the English Tongue* where the imaginary author includes the recent example of a letter written in a style influenced by "the books, pamphlets and single papers offered […] every day in the coffee houses,"[16] and exclaims rhetorically: "If a man of wit, who died forty years ago, were to rise from the grave on purpose, how would he be able to read this letter? And after he had got through that difficulty, how would he be able to understand it?"[17] The continuum of conventions that have made understanding between the generations possible seems to have been broken and inherited wisdom has been sacrificed at the altar of "ignorance and want of taste."[18]

As has been observed, "Swift's views were those of his time. He added substantially nothing to the discussion; he merely brought the matter more prominently under the eye of authority."[19] However, Swift's concern with

[16] Swift, *Major Works,* 253.
[17] Ibid, 253.
[18] Ibid, 253.
[19] Monroe, "An English Academy," 117.

continuity between reading communities separated by the divide of time deserves attention as it invariably invites the question of competing claims on the validity of interpretation: a current theme in the *Tale of a Tub. The Tale* uses allegory in so far as the three brothers whose careers it follows represent each a denomination in the Christian church. However, the *Tale* is constantly interrupted by digressions, allusions and references. It is not accidental that the story revolves around the brothers' efforts to interpret their father's will in such a way as to make it correspond to the fashions of the day, which always seem to be at odds with it. It turns out that the interpreters' ingenuity knows no limits and the written word crumbles under the attack of the deliberate power gesture whatever the author's intentions might have been. Ellison has observed that Swift's *Tale* "reminds readers of a significant development in the early eighteenth century that today characterizes multimedia: copied and excerpted, the original text may never be read."[20] In fact, Swift's narrator offers the recipe of some philosopher from an imaginary island for creating a universal system that would allow containing in one small volume all things that have been known, believed or practiced in life. It is based, literally and not only figuratively, on diluting and fragmenting the original text:

> *You take fair correct copies, well bound in calf's skin and lettered at the back, of all modern bodies of arts and sciences whatsoever, and in what language you please. These you distil in* balneo Mariae, *infusing* quintessence of poppy Q.S., *together with three pints of* Lethe, to be had from the apothecaries. *You cleanse away carefully the* sordes *and* caput mortuum, *letting all that is volatile evaporate. You preserve only the first running, which is again to be distilled seventeen times, till what remains will amount to about two drams. This you keep in a glass vial hermetically sealed for one-and-twenty days. Then you begin your catholic treatise, taking every morning fasting (first shaking the vial) three drops of this elixir, snuffing it strongly up your nose. It will dilate itself about the brain (where there is any) in fourteen minutes, and you immediately perceive in your head an infinite number of* abstracts, summaries, compendiums, extracts, collections, medullas, excerpta quaedams, florilegias *and the like*, all disposed into great order and reducible upon paper.[21]

The three brothers from the *Tale* are faced with a choice as to whether to stick to their father's will not to alter the coats he left them with or to

[20] Ellison, *Fatal News,* 71.
[21] Swift, *Major Works,* 122.

transform the coats by adding the shoulderknots that have become fashionable. The cleverest one among them comes up with the idea that even if the will does not contain such permission, they might be able to find the syllables constituting the word "shoulderknot" in its text. When it turns out that even the syllabled traces of presence of the required word are missing, the decision is quite simple: it is enough to find the letters of the word. Not finding the letter "K" in the will, however, is easily solved by the "very good argument that K [is] a modern, illegitimate letter" (100) and it is a gross mistake to spell "knot" with it anyway. Such a strategy should not shock the reader because: "the learned brother aforesaid had read *Aristotelis Dialiectica*, and especially that wonderful part *de Interpretatione*, which has the faculty of teaching its readers to find out a meaning in everything but itself" (101).

Not surprisingly, fashions change and the three resourceful brothers have to find ways to make adding gold lace, satin lining, fringe decorations, broomsticks and embroideries with Indian figures not circumvent the father's will not to change the coats. Finally, tired with the effort of perpetually searching for further evasions, they decide to lock the will in a box and never examine it again but only refer to it whenever they see fit. The truth contained in the will has no meaning any more as the good brothers have diligently created their own post-truth universe out of preferred interpretation dictated by passing fashion. In this they have been guided by their love for three young ladies they want to impress: the Duchess d'Argent (or covetousness), Madame de Grands Titres (ambition) and the Countess d'Orgeuil (pride). The appeal to their emotions and, above all, vanity is stronger than the reasoned instructions with which their father has drawn his will.

Undoubtedly, this is an elaborate allegory of the disputes between major branches of the Christian Church. However, the many digressions place the leading symbol of religion seen as fashion in the context of the wider debate about new ways of reading and producing written discourse. Henke discusses the self-reflexivity of the *Tale,* whose multi-levelled irony targets above all the act of writing—i.e. the Hack's own act of writing, and styles and genres of writing as well as other written texts:

> Apart from the remnants of fictional plot and character in the allegory of the three brothers, Swift's satire is a prime example of self-reflexive metaliterature: hetero-referential in its intertextual relation to other texts and discourses outside itself (which however often bear self-reflexivity

upon it), and self-referential in that the act of the text's writing is its own topic.[22]

The conclusion of the *Tale* discusses the fate of the book that "has missed its tide" (162). It is very much dependent on the bookseller as an intermediary to the new and more numerous reading audience: he is the one who "knows to a tittle what subjects will best go off in a *dry year*, and which it is proper to expose foremost when the weather-glass is fallen to *much rain*" (163). When he has seen Swift's narrator's treatise and consulted his almanac, he gives the narrator to understand "that he had manifestly considered the two principal things, which were the *bulk* and the *subject*, and found it would never *take* but after a long vacation, and then only in case it should happen to be a hard year for turnips" (163, italics in the original). In this the bookseller from the early eighteenth century, as described by Swift, does not differ significantly from present day Google's search algorithms, "which offer users personalized results according to what the system knows of their preferences and surfing behaviour."[23] Both approaches would keep readers from coming across views that differ from what they have already "liked" or are inclined to consider, and this is an essential element in the creating and consolidation of self-reinforcing like-minded communities that "strengthen each other's beliefs by shutting out contradictory information."[24] This probably explains the highly effective mechanism of post-truth politics today, which opts for reinforcing prejudice rather than attempt to persuade by argument. The aim is not to create a consistent worldview but to imply that a consistent worldview does not matter anymore.

In our times, this process has been undoubtedly helped by the fragmentation of information sources. The world of the Internet, where anyone can be an author or publisher, has made it possible, amongst other things, to spread particularly efficiently rumour and gossip tailored to the needs of like-minded clusters. The technology may be new but the method will be well known to any Swift scholar, as Swift was quite sensitive to the changes in the concept of authorship that he witnessed and actively explored. In many of his works, he impersonates the style and manner of those he wants to expose, making obvious the ease with which the authority of the source can be undermined. He often resorts to the strategy of deliberate mystification and deletion of authorship as manifested most convincingly in the notorious Bickerstaff papers where, under the name of

[22] Henke, *Common Sense*, 112-113.
[23] "Yes, I'd Lie to You," 22.
[24] Ibid.

Isaac Bickerstaff, the author not only parodies astrology, but copies the style of the famous astrologer John Partridge in order to predict Partridge's exact day of death and to continue to claim that Partridge has actually died even after the protestations of the real astrologer that he is still among the living. In other words, the sham author "kills" both the real one and the very idea of the privileged position of the author. The author's presence, Swift knew very well, is not based on God-given authority but on a succession of rhetorical moves whose repetitiveness makes them easy to recognize. Texts dissolve, as shown in the *Tale of a Tub.* Readers, in their turn, succumb all too easily to the strategy of style and often judge the acceptability of the content by the acceptability of the form. Consequently, the most blatant fraud might be taken for the truth as long as it creates the illusion of truthfulness.

However, Swift's narrators are often more elusive in their moral judgement. The author of *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of poor People in Ireland, from being Burden to their Parents or Country; and for making them beneficial to the Publick* (1729) is anything but the source of a comic gesture. His voice is devoid of passion or preference. It should by all means be the voice of reason supported by numerous calculations that consolidate its authority regardless of the matter at hand:

> I do therefore humbly offer it to publick consideration, that of the hundred and twenty thousand children, already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine, and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore, one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune, through the kingdom, always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump, and fat for a good table. A child will make two dishes at an entertainment for friends, and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt, will be very good boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.[25]

One would hardly be inclined to believe that Swift was genuinely proposing to use the children of the Irish poor as a source of food and a way to alleviate the social burden associated with them. And yet, Swift copies the style of economists dedicated to projects for the public good so

[25] Swift, *Major Works*, 492.

matter-of-factly that the resulting satire is not only less amusing but also deeply disconcerting because there is none of the frivolity of tone that might suggest it is all but a prank on the reader. This is what makes Downie observe that the elusiveness of Swift's satire is both compelling and infuriating:

> It is the reason that Swift, like Shakespeare, attracts so many diverse interpretations, some ingenious, some fanciful, some preposterous. And yet, with nothing issuing from the author's mouth to gainsay them, they continue to proliferate. We must seek Swift's meaning through an awareness of his over-riding literary concerns, and an appreciation of his rhetorical strategy. Only then can we begin to approach his meaning with a measure of confidence. For Swift's positive is almost always an implied positive, and we will search the surface of his work for it in vain. Having supplied the text, he challenges the reader to interpret his signs. It is in the task of interpretation that, to Swift, the reformative process.[26]

However, Swift has also made sure that interpretation required an effort. *Gulliver's Travels* is a narrative maze of claims and half-truths that are turned on their head. Unlike present-day post-truth media, the Publisher of the *Travels* seems to be entirely preoccupied with the veracity of the text he is offering to his public. He hastens to assure us that he has long known Mr. Lemuel Gulliver as an "ancient and intimate" friend as well as relative on his mother's side. He dwells on the provenance of the author's family and vows to have seen the tombs and monuments of the Gullivers in the churchyard at Banbury. Finally, he states that "the Author was so distinguished for his Veracity, that it became a sort of Proverb among his Neighbours at *Redriff*, when anyone affirmed a Thing, to say it was as true as if Mr Gulliver had spoke it" (9). Yet the same Publisher admits to having applied his resolve to "fit the Work as much as possible to the general Capacity of Readers" by striking out "innumerable Passages" relating to the winds, tides, management of the ship in storms and other details "in the Style of Sailors" (10).

All these assurances may have persuaded the reader in the truthfulness of the account had this preface not been preceded by another one: the letter addressed by Captain Gulliver to the same Publisher, or his cousin Sympson. In this letter Gulliver deplores having been "prevailed upon" to "publish a "very loose and uncorrect [sic] Account" of his Travels (5). He explains that he has agreed, very much against his own judgement, to

[26] Downie, *Jonathan Swift: Political Writer*, 272-273.

"suffer [his] Travels to be published" (6) because of the motive of public good employed by his Publisher and "some others." He feels cheated as the Yahoos have failed to improve their ways in the six months following his "Warning" and thus the promise of reforming them has been broken. Hence the need to remind Sympson of the original premise of his publication:

> I desired you would let me know by a Letter, when Party and Faction were extinguished; Judges learned and upright […] Wit, Merit and Learning rewarded; all Disgracers of the Press in Prose and Verse, condemned to eat nothing but their own Cotton and quench their Thirst with their own Ink. These and a Thousand other Reformations, I firmly counted upon by your Encouragement; as indeed they were plainly deducible from the Precepts delivered in my Book. (6)

Gulliver is equally indignant at the carelessness with which his manuscript has been treated. Not a single date has been printed correctly, Brobdingnag has been misspelled as Brobdingrag and in addition to the many inaccuracies of the printer, the publisher has allowed himself too much freedom: "I do not remember I gave you Power to consent, that anything should be omitted, and much less that anything should be inserted," complains the author (5). His indignation should be righteous because of the high standards he has set for himself:

> I was able in the Compass of two Years (although I confess with the utmost Difficulty) to remove that infernal Habit of Lying, Shuffling, Deceiving, and Equivocating, so deeply rooted in the very Souls of all my Species; especially the *Europeans* (8).

Hence the bitterness of having being deceived by a frivolous publisher, an incompetent printer and a reading public incapable of mending their ways.

Gulliver's indignation is indeed a warning to his readers, albeit a warning of a different kind. Neither Sympson's preface, nor the published work are to be interpreted as wholly consistent with the author's original text or intention. Readers have to decide from the very beginning what should be believed and what needs to be questioned. They have been deprived of the comfort of veracity promised by Sympson who himself has been accused of so many inaccuracies. What they have been offered instead is a "post-truth" textual universe that has been distorted by sloppiness and indifference in the process of being mediated between author and reader.

The four books of travel tales that follow these conflicting prefaces create a complex web of intratextual references, which, if followed literally, can only confuse credulous readers. They have to rely entirely on Gulliver's descriptions, comments and impressions and yet Gulliver himself is often completely misunderstood by those with whom he interacts. This discrepancy in perceptions applies even to the most basic level of linguistic exchanges. Gulliver boasts of understanding and speaking the Lilliputian language but the Lilliputian officers who search him complain that he expresses himself "very imperfectly" (36) and have doubts they have interpreted correctly his description of his watch. Gulliver's readers are not allowed to be mere receivers of meaning simply because meaning itself is rendered questionable. Neither can they be interpreters of some prevailing and all-encompassing authorial intention as they have to "distinguish Gulliver the character from Gulliver the author,"[27] while, at the same time, both have been proven unreliable by their own words and actions.

Swift was all too aware that "as the vilest writer hath his readers, so the greatest liar hath his believers."[28] It may be the natural disposition of many to lie, he warns, but there is also the inclination of the multitude to believe. It is precisely this readiness of the multitude to trust the writer's authority uncritically that is being attacked by the complex strategies of constructing the writer-reader relationship both in the *Travels* and elsewhere. The unreliable Gulliver whose proclaimed veracity is undermined by his own account prevents the reading audience from turning into a self-enforcing community trapped into its own confirmed prejudices and expectations, no matter what their political beliefs may be.

In fact, on the question of politics and power Gulliver is particularly elusive despite the elaborate detail with which he describes the political structure of the places he visits and the way his accounts of his own country have been received. Upon his arrival in Lilliput, he has nothing but admiration for the Lilliputian Emperor, who not only happens to have strong features, well-proportioned body and limbs, graceful motions and majestic presence but is even "taller […] than any of his Court" (31). He has been described as a "most magnanimous Prince" (37). Gulliver praises the "Ingenuity of that people" and the "Economy of so great a Prince" (44). Predictably, however, the Emperor's Court decision to blind him as punishment for not having agreed to bring Blefuscu, Lilliput's arch-enemy, into submission, dampens Gulliver's enthusiasm for royalty and

[27] Rodino, "Splendide Mendax," 1057.
[28] Swift, "The Art of Political Lying."

before ending his first voyage he vows never to have confidence in princes or ministers, if he can possibly avoid it (72).

The second voyage, however, throws this conclusion into the air almost from the beginning. Upon his very first encounter with the Queen of Brobdingnag, Gulliver hastens to assure her that he would be proud to "devote [his] life to her […] Service" (95) as he would not be ill-treated if under the protection of "so great and good an Empress, the Ornament of Nature, the Darling of the World, the Delight of her Subjects, the Phoenix of the Creation" (96). The King, in his turn, is described as a "Prince of excellent Understanding" (118) but he proves a far more problematic figure for Gulliver. In many ways, the Brobdingnagian King is the opposite of the power-thirsty minute ruler of Lilliput. He is struck with horror at Gulliver's pride in his nation's use of weapons that "tear the Houses to Pieces, burst and throw Splinters on every side" and dash out "the Brains of all who came near" (125). He is amazed how such an "impotent and grovelling an Insect" as Gulliver "could entertain such inhuman Ideas" (Ibid.) and declares that he would rather lose half of his Kingdom than be privy to such a horrible invention. In reply, Gulliver can only exclaim, "A strange Effect of *narrow Principles* and short Views!" (Ibid.) as he cannot comprehend a king who, led by "some nice unnecessary Scruple" (Ibid.) would let such a marvellous opportunity that would make him "absolute Master of the Lives, the Liberties, and the Fortunes of his People" (Ibid.) slip by. Gulliver can only conclude that this lack of judgement is to be attributed to ignorance as politics has not yet become a science in Brobdingnag and the King's knowledge of governing is "confined within very narrow Bounds; to common Sense and Reason, to Justice and Lenity" and "to the speedy Determination of civil and criminal Causes" (126).

Gulliver's third voyage gives him another opportunity to comment on political projects aimed at the public good rather than its opposite when he visits the School of Political Projectors at the Academy of Lagado. He defines as "wild impossible Chimeras" (175) the projectors' scheme for introducing wisdom, fairness and justice into the system of selection for public office and has no more to say about these professors than that they appear to be "wholly out of their Senses." (174)

It is only when he finally arrives at the country of the Houyhnhms, whom he perceives as being deprived of any falsehood or hypocrisy and thus an example of virtue and reason to be emulated, that he suddenly turns into a bitter and critical voice of his own society or, to be precise, of those in it whom he can now define as Yahoos. He rants against lawyers as "avowed Enemies to all Knowledge and Learning" (231) and speaks, for

the first time, about social injustice and the bulk of the people who are "forced to live miserably, by labouring every day for small Wages to make a few live plentifully" (231). He mentions prostitutes, venereal diseases, immoderation in food and drink, nobility bred in idleness and luxury, physicians who have invented imaginary cures, colonizers who are but an "execrable Crew of Butchers" (269) and politicians and ministers of state led by nothing else but a "violent Desire of Wealth, Power and Titles" (235). Yet again, however, he hastens to specify that this description does not refer to the British nation, "who may be an Example to the whole World for their Wisdom, Care, and Justice in Planting Colonies" (269).

Readers have to decide for themselves which Gulliver to trust. Very much like Swift's Moderns, Gulliver is entangled in a multiplicity of narrative voices that are logically and, sometimes morally, incompatible with his proclaimed intent as a reliable author. The narrator who insists on his veracity throughout the whole text of the *Travels* has actually made it impossible to be trusted and has thus subverted the capacity of claims on truth to be believed at face value. I would argue that he has taught his readers the valuable lesson that they have no other option but to make the intellectual effort of going beyond statements presented as facts. In this he has provided an invaluable service indeed because lying or the "thing which is not," as the Houyhnhnms might say, is always there for a reason. Credulity and indifference are its best allies. The frequent juxtaposition of contradictory points of views, "facts" and opinions presented by the narrator of the *Travels* who is otherwise so devoted to the truth, to judge by his own words, is more than a mere attempt at subverting the idea of the narrator's authority. It is a nudge to the gentle reader meant to wake their critical instincts and, perhaps most importantly, wake their intellectual curiosity as an antidote to post-truth conformity.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

"IS BREXIT THE MODERN-DAY 'WOOD'S HALFPENCE'?" RE-EVALUATING SWIFT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES IN A TIME OF CONTEMPORARY CRISIS AND UNCERTAINTY IN IRELAND

JONATHAN MCCREEDY

My chapter will take the stance that Ireland's economic uncertainty as a result of Brexit is comparable to historical incidents into which Jonathan Swift involved himself from 1724 onwards, concerning a coin (a halfpence) patented by the English ironmaster William Wood, who intended to introduce it into the circulation of Ireland's currency. Swift's *The Drapier's Letters* (1724-5) was a seven part pamphlet series written with the sole intention of preventing the halfpence from being officially adopted due to legitimate fears that it would instigate hyperinflation in Ireland and trigger subsequent nationwide disasters. Swift warned the Irish people about this impending catastrophe by providing them with economic facts and figures in accessible terms, and he also ignited fury among the populace by exposing political corruption and scandal in connection to the affair. Due to genuine fears of revolt in Ireland, and a united boycott of the new currency, the British government withdrew Wood's patent and the coin was never used. Therefore, *The Drapier's Letters* stand as being one of Swift's greatest writing achievements, largely because they almost singlehandedly prevented Ireland falling into devastating economic ruin, and he undoubtedly saved lives in the process.

Today, we can read *The Drapier's Letters* to better understand the crisis that has hit Anglo-Irish relationships because of the Brexit negotiations from 2016 onwards, which is increasing in its antagonism and every day

taking on new and undesirable forms.[1] Ireland's lack of control of its economic future today can be compared to past events since the destiny of its domestic affairs is being determined by individuals on the British mainland who have no conceivable personal investment in them, and lack full understanding of the consequences of their decision making.[2] Since Ireland was a relative "unknown" to the English during the halfpence scandal, and arguably remained so during the Brexit referendum in 2016, this weakened its ability to fight for itself.[3] As Swift was an Irish unionist, he was frustrated that England did not reciprocate or acknowledge the political loyalties of his people. He particularly "resented and rejected any suggestion that Ireland was a colony"[4]—which continues to be a universal gripe for modern-day Irish unionists.

I will focus on what can be perceived as democratic unfairness that Northern Ireland's democratic rejection of Brexit—to the tune of 55.8%[5]—has gone largely unnoticed in parliamentary discussion. This grievance can be interpreted as being yet another historical example whereupon Ireland has not had its views valued and how laws are enforced upon its territory regardless of agreement. It is therefore a sad state of affairs that Jonathan Swift could not be alive today to use his powerful rhetoric to help bring the intense levels of political and economic turmoil, which Ireland is now enduring, to heel. Swift could theoretically begin a campaign anew today to expose the now readily apparent, ludicrous issues brought to the world's attention concerning Ireland's economic and political fate in connection to Brexit through a modern range of media (blogs, vlogs, TV interviews, Twitter, Facebook, etc.).[6]

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[1] This chapter was completed in March 2019, prior to the United Kingdom's planned exit from the European Union on March 29, 2019, so it is by its nature written in the midst of negotiations which have yet to be finalized.

[2] The Brexit voting slip had no option or space for marking one's decision about Ireland's future following an exit from the EU, concerning its border and trade law re-negotiations. This would have been dismissed as being irrelevant and a fantasy in 2016, but since late 2017, its relevance to the making of a lasting trade agreement between the UK and the EU post-Brexit has grown from being pertinent to that of being of crucial importance.

[3] Murphy writes: "Overall however, the Northern Ireland situation was largely a footnote in the broader national Brexit referendum debate. This was not just regrettable, but reckless." Murphy, *Europe and Northern Ireland's Future*, 178.

[4] Swift, *Swift's Irish Pamphlets,* 14.

[5] Murphy, *Europe and Northern Ireland's Future*, 164.

[6] Indeed, Swift's pamphlets have been reworked for a present day audience based on modern-day political events, which have strived to keep his satirical and literary style intact—for example, Straight, "A Modest, Modern Day Proposal."

The overall chapter takes as its basis the argument that the crises of the Wood's halfpence fiasco and Brexit share core features underlying how they affect Ireland's economy and Anglo-Irish relationships, despite taking place 300 years apart. They are as follows:

1) Both are the result of predominately "English" decision-making without the democratic consent of Ireland, since Northern Ireland rejected Brexit with a 55.8% majority.[7]
2) Both involve the severe mismanagement of Ireland's affairs by a British government in relation to poorly planned and executed economic decisions.
3) Both provoke the increasing of tensions between the governments and people of the UK and Ireland.
4) Both invoke economic instability in connection to the value of currency and trade relationships.

Northern Ireland's contentious role within the Brexit negotiations will also be focused upon. I will look at the main issues which are:

1) How England and Northern Ireland voted in the June 2016 referendum in regards to Irish economic and political concerns.
2) The problem of what will happen to the Irish border following Brexit. This concerns the so-called Irish "backstop"—negotiated and agreed upon by Theresa May and the EU, but which has repeatedly failed to be ratified by the Westminster government—on the 11th of December 2018, March 13 2019, and counting.

William Wood and the Halfpence Scandal

In 1720, Ireland's economy was in danger of falling into unprecedented calamity, and it was primarily because of the greed of one man—the aforementioned William Wood. Wood was an English ironmaster and financial speculator who successfully lobbied to obtain the right to hold a monopoly on making Ireland's currency, arranged through bribes and chicanery.[8] He was a shrewd and shameless businessman whose aim was

[7] However, this was in vain since the province's voting demographic was amalgamated with the English, Scottish and Welsh results and it proved too small to influence the overall tally.

[8] If Wood has a parallel persona or counterpart within today's political crisis it would be that of any given individual who seeks to manipulate or engineer Brexit for his/her own financial gain—a person who is not a political player, but an

to make a colossal fortune by cheating on the terms of his patent. He succeeded in carrying out many clever ploys including the filling of his coins with substandard materials—"Trash" in Swift's words[9]—and thus deceitfully made valuable sterling currency out of metallic junk, which was basically worthless. He would even succeed in tricking Sir Isaac Newton at the Royal Mint by supplying him with superior coins to those being manufactured.

Wood obtained his patent, without any negotiation with the Irish administration whatsoever. Three years later, in 1723, the Irish House of Legislation issued a strongly worded official appeal to King George I to stop its imminent production. However, this fell entirely on deaf ears, due to a series of calamities, and the patent was not withdrawn. Firstly, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland failed to travel to England at the appropriate time and missed his opportunity to put forward the plea, and secondly, there was alleged political act of sabotage by Prime Minister Walpole. It was Swift's outrage against this injustice which brought him into the debate and spurred him on to write *The Drapier's Letters*. The official appeal from the Irish House of Legislation reads as follows and noticeably contains the majority of arguments which Swift would himself later use:

> On Friday, September 20th, the House resolved itself into a committee "to take into consideration the state of the nation, particularly in relation to the importing and uttering of copper halfpence and farthings in this kingdom." After three days debate, and after examining competent witnesses under oath, it passed resolutions to the following effect:
>
> (1) That Wood's patent is highly prejudicial to his Majesty's revenue, and is destructive of trade and commerce, and most dangerous to the rights and properties of the subject.
> (2) That for the purpose of obtaining the patent Wood had notoriously misrepresented the state of the nation.
>
> (3) That great quantities of the coin had been imported of different impressions and of much less weight than the patent called for.

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opportunist. Donald Trump is a William Wood figure in respect to the well accepted viewpoint that he entered the 2016 Presidential race solely to give exposure to his brand and bring financial gain to the Trump Organization. Indeed, his ex-lawyer and long-term "fixer" Michael Cohen swore under oath in Congress on February 27 2019 that this was the case, quoting Trump that his campaign was the "greatest infomercial in political history." See Matza and Prasad, "Reaction to Cohen Testimony."

[9] Swift, *Swift's Irish Writings*, 40.

(4) That the loss to the nation by the uttering of this coin would amount to 150 per cent.

(5) That in coining the halfpence Wood was guilty of a notorious fraud.[10]

Following its rejection, Swift immediately took it upon himself to become a spokesman for the Irish populace, and over the course of two years he wrote a seven-part political pamphlet series, which is titled today *The Drapier's Letters*. Within, he comprehensively outlined the consequences of the implementation of Wood's halfpence. Swift made every effort to ensure that all Irish citizens had access to his pamphlets. He put up his own money to fund their publication and the printer agreed to sell them cheap enough for peasants to purchase and share.[11] This was essential because the Irish people were kept as "strangers" to the Wood's halfpence affair as much as possible, being generally ill-informed. This paints a picture of cover-up, conspiracy and deceit within the negotiations. Swift would later call the negotiations a "secret to the people of Ireland,"[12] which is not unlike Northern Ireland today where the country received ill-informed and vague post-Brexit economical predictions—particularly in connection how cross-border trade would eventually work. Also, just like in 1724, modern-day Ireland as a whole is set to be the major economic sufferer of the British-made crisis.[13]

In *The Drapier's Letters*, Swift wrote specifically to those in the population whose pockets were to be hit the hardest. For instance, in the first pamphlet, Letter I: "To the Shopkeepers, the Tradesmen, Farmers and Common People of Ireland" is written in a style favorable to and befitting a lower-class, less educated audience. In hindsight, this courtesy would have been beneficial today since prior to the Brexit referendum, those without a higher education degree in Ireland had no easily digestible means of understanding the complicated economic ramifications of Brexit. Despite the populace living in a time of near universal internet access, in June 2016 it was difficult to come to a clear step-by-step understanding about Brexit, due to lack of economic foresight by politicians, propaganda

[10] Swift, *Swift's Irish Pamphlets*, 11.
[11] Ibid., 14.
[12] Ibid., 14
[13] The House of Lord's *Brexit: UK-Irish Relations* report stated the following in December 2017: "Richard Pym warned that, if the UK moved to trading with EU countries on World Trade Organization (WTO) terms following Brexit, some WTO agricultural tariffs would reach 60–70%. Given the centrality of agriculture to the Irish economy, Ireland thus stood to be among the "worst hit by WTO terms." House of Lords, *Brexit: UK-Irish Relations*, 10.

and fake news within the media and elsewhere, and the unhelpful addition of internet sites such as gov.com, which presented information about Brexit in discouragingly lengthy documents written in legalese. It has only been since late 2018 that easily digestible material became commonplace on the internet. For instance, on the BBC News website every single Brexit article is accompanied by a user-friendly data section titled "Your Guide to Brexit Jargon," which has drop-down menus that explain subject-specific terms in two sentences or less. In a different style, the popular YouTube channel "TLDR News" uses colorful and friendly animations, whereupon anthropomorphized countries have characteristic googly eyes and feet with trainers. Despite this arguable flippancy, these are very helpful videos which explain, for instance, the misunderstood definition of the EU Custom's Union.[14] This type of accessible material can be considered in a sense a modern-day equivalent of *The Drapier's Letters*. However, the difference is that Swift's pamphlets educated the populace prior to the official adoption of the halfpence into circulation, whereas the modern versions are useful today primarily as a means of checking jargon in news articles. Since they were tardy and arrived long after the Brexit referendum, they had no impact upon voters, which is a shame since they could have informed people better about the effects of leaving the EU.[15]

Collectively, *The Drapier's Letters* aimed to carry out the following five objectives, all of which were laser-guided in addressing the populace of Ireland in a concise, rhetorical manner, to stir up dissent through the dissemination of fact-based knowledge. Swift immediately derailed the smooth transition of the coin into circulation and put Walpole's government into an awkward, unexpected scandal—about a currency which they cared little about—which left them weak against a formidable rhetorical enemy and a furious populace. In summary, Swift's aims were:

1) To bring economic data into the public domain in an accessible manner.

[14] TLDR News, "European Customs Union - Explaining Brexit."

[15] The British public had few detailed economic figures and predictions concerning Northern Ireland and Ireland prior to Brexit, and it was not until December 2016 that a House of Lords Committee released a huge comprehensive report titled *Brexit: UK—Irish Relations*. It was released six months after the Referendum and it had no identity as a persuasive document to advise whether or not Northern Ireland should leave the EU.

2) To forecast the economy using physically tangible and familiar objects—not numbers.[16]
3) To inform specific demographics with topics pertinent to their trades, class, etc.
4) To provide direction as to how one could legally rebel against the injustice being committed—viz. to invoke the right to refuse a coin which was not gold or silver.
5) To provide information about the scandal's intrigues and sordid details in a stirring rhetorical style intended to provoke Irish unity against a single enemy—William Wood.

However, Wood did not go down without a fight. In a surprising parallel to Brexit-era Britain—but on a much smaller scale—Wood circulated "fake-news"—or false information—in lengthy and paid opinion articles in newspapers with the intent to mislead an unsuspecting English reading public in connection to the halfpence scandal. "Fake news" during the Brexit referendum included the now iconic and infamous, double-decker Brexit bus with its grossly inaccurate figures about EU spending written on its side, and UKIP's notorious "Breaking Point" anti-immigration poster, which was reported to the police for inciting racial hatred against migrants.[17]

Wood defended the legitimacy of his work in his opinion articles, which brought him a degree of contempt and ridicule. However, the evidently foolish King was clearly taken in by these falsehoods and was convinced that it was a sound economic plan to introduce poor quality coinage into Ireland's circulation. Indeed, dangerously—and in parallel to Donald Trump within his countless tweets—Wood defended his credibility and position by espousing conspiracy theory so as to turn public opinion against his enemies. Most notably, Wood told the (seemingly gullible) readership of English newspapers that Ireland was on the brink of revolution and was opposing the coinage because they wanted no less than to topple the monarchy. This upset Swift deeply and offended his unionism to the core because the idea that his country was plotting independence was absolute anathema to him. However, this pain aside, he became very worried that Wood's clever "fake news" articles would gain traction within English society owing to their lack of general knowledge

[16] It is a mystery how Swift manages to know the weights of the metals used to make currency and their worth. But, they are not exaggerated economical figures like those in the *Modest Proposal*.
[17] Mason and Stewart, "Nigel Farage's Anti-Migrant Poster."

about Ireland—a trait which often remains true to this day.[18] In opposition to Wood's falsehoods, substantiated rumours circulated that he obtained the patent for his halfpence by making a corrupt deal with the Duchess of Kendal, who was the King's mistress. Indeed, Wood paid her the enormous sum of 10,000 pounds to "persuade" the king to approve the deal. It was transparent, however, to most in society that his dealings in Ireland were a scam. Swift would define his actions in *The Drapier's Letters* as a willingness to "ruin a nation entirely for his own advantage."[19] Wood's character was one that employed lies, fake predictions and flattery, which Swift euphemizes as an ability to "tell a fair story."[20]

Much like Wood did 300 years previously—during the 2016 presidential race and to the present—Donald Trump has relied upon a similar tactic in connection to his obsession with fulfilling his campaign promise to build a "big beautiful wall" along the U.S-Mexico border. Trump exploits the general ignorance of what border territories are like to the majority of Americans and plays upon hackneyed and racist Hispanic stereotypes, specifically that Mexicans are drug dealers and rapists. Despite many setbacks, and a month-long governmental shutdown, in January 2019, Trump invoked an Emergency Powers Act in an attempt to attain 8 billion dollars so as to combat the alleged "invasion" of drug mules and migrants flooding into the U.S. However, as Swift did in 1724, Trump's "fake news" would be challenged by the exploited El Paso population who stood up and spoke out against him in a bold attempt to educate the manipulated populace that in fact what they were hearing was a false narrative. Most recently, and memorably, the Democratic congressman Beto O'Rourke held a successful protest rally during Trump's much publicized visit to El Paso on February 12, 2019, to the President's considerable chagrin, and defended his city's reputation as a statistically safe place to live in Texas, and one which had historically low levels of migration. He stated at this rally:

> While some try to stoke fear and paranoia, to spread lies and a false narrative about the U.S-Mexico border and to demand a 2,000-mile wall

[18] It is revealing that the BBC News website includes a video titled "Brexit Basics: the Backstop" which includes—as its name suggests—a very basic explanation of what the proposed economic arrangement entails. This video is an elementary and colorful review which takes the general assumption that its viewer knows practically nothing about Northern Ireland, even to the point of not knowing where its border is. See BBC, "Brexit Basics: What is the Backstop."
[19] Swift, *Swift's Irish Pamphlets*, 49.
[20] Swift, *Swift's Irish Writings*, 39.

> along it at a time of record safety and security, El Paso will come together for a march and celebration that highlights the truth.[21]

Ironically, in the light of this modern-day example, Swift attacked Wood for exploiting the English and their lack of basic knowledge about Ireland—making them ripe for manipulation—by stating that they knew as much about the country as they did about Mexico. In *Letter VI* "A Letter to Lord Chancellor Middleton," Swift provides a full list of the inaccurate ways the English audience perceived Ireland with bitter emphasis upon their prejudices, which they held towards its people. Wood could successfully exploit these racist stereotypes and use them to persuade his readers that the Irish were plotting against the king. He cheaply played upon their fears that the native Irish were all revolutionaries hell-bent on the destruction of the state.

> As to Ireland, [Englishmen] know little more than they do of Mexico; further than that it is a country subject to the King of England, full of bogs, inhabited by wild Irish Papists; who are kept in awe by mercenary troops sent from thence: And their general opinion is, that it were better for England if this whole island were sunk into the sea; for, they have a tradition, that every forty years there must be a rebellion in Ireland.[22]

Swift laid out Wood's series of wild "fake-news" claims in *The Drapier's Letters*, *Letter IV,* and subsequently he voraciously disputed Wood's falsehoods. To begin with, he retells them using an ironic tone:

> First, all those who refuse to take his coin are Papists; for [Wood] tells us that none but Papists are associated against him; Secondly, they dispute the King's prerogative; Thirdly, they are ripe for rebellion, and Fourthly, they are going to shake off their dependence upon the crown of England; That is to say, they are going to choose another king.[23]

Swift virulently denies that the Irish were ready to mount a rebellion against the British state and the king, and makes the claim that he—as an everyman representative of the country—is in fact loyal enough to have the last drop of blood bled out of his body to protect the English monarch.[24] Swift attacks Wood's devious employment of "fake news" by means of sowing doubt and discord within the *Letters* concerning the

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[21] Weissert, "El Paso Bristles at Trump's Claim."
[22] Swift, *Swift's Irish Pamphlets*, 90.
[23] Swift, *Swift's Irish Writings*, 75.
[24] Ibid., 66.

ironmaster's reputation and ethics, which he utterly demolishes throughout the pamphlets by means of virulent character assassination. Swift's expert "trolling" in the public sphere—where he was an unbeatable and intimidating foe—ruined Wood's reputation and effectively put an end to his writings being taken seriously.[25]

Like with the endgame of the January 2019 US governmental shutdown, when President Trump conceded and withdrew his 6 million dollars demand for border wall funding, Robert Walpole's government eventually conceded to the Irish people and completely put a stop to Wood's patent and his halfpence entering into financial circulation, although the government had to pay off Wood at great expense.[26] It was a wise decision by Walpole since the coin's continued usage had no foreseeable positive economic outcome for anyone. It was a proud moment for Swift since he singlehandedly saved Ireland from economic collapse. It is one of the few unquestionable victories that was scored against Walpole's government at this time by his otherwise thoroughly subjugated country and—rightfully so— Swift earned the title of the "Hibernian Patriot" by the relieved and jubilant populace of Ireland. It is a matter for ominous economic speculation to consider what would have happened to Ireland had it not been for his heroic and legally risky intervention.

The Drapier's Letters and Brexit: A Modern-Day Comparison

In this section, I shall discuss how issues pertinent to the present day Brexit debate can be found within *The Drapier's Letters*. It seems that, in certain respects, Swift's letters have barely aged a day, because seemingly Anglo-Irish relations have not changed much either. Using logic, research, knowledge of the law, and his ruthless opposition to Irish trade restrictions, Swift cut through much illogical and ill-informed debate during the Wood's halfpence fiasco. As a stoic leader, he stoked the ire of the Irish populace and showed them the means and arguments required to

[25] By focusing all his hate on Wood in the *Letters*, Swift created a central villain, or bogey man—emphasising his already unpopular public persona. However, Swift's true, covert, antagonist in *The Drapier's Letters* was in fact Prime Minister Walpole, whose mismanagement of the affair irked him most of all. Wood's ambition and greed initiated the crisis, but in private, Swift viewed him a wretched, but ultimately harmless, pirate. See DeGategno and Stubblefield, *Critical Companion*, 76.

[26] DeGategno and Stubblefield, *Critical Companion*, 76.

boycott the offending coin and in so doing saved Ireland's economy from collapsing. Today, however, without its "Hibernian Patriot," Ireland stands to be the country most affected by Brexit, as has been confirmed by the EU and other sources.

One difference as to why no such "Hero" lives today is because of the role which the media takes in political debates. Swift's campaign was a success in part due to an absence of pamphlets written by oppositional political voices in Ireland, and because his precision in providing a set of instructions and factual economic information monopolized and dominated the country's attention. Swift skilfully exploited this gap in the debate, and this permitted him to speak uncontested to the populace and earn his appointment as their national spokesperson. Today, he would struggle to find a singular, unique platform to address the Irish without competition. He would share a medium and debate with people online, for example, or on 24-hour news channels.[27] That is not to say, of course, that Swift would not relish such a challenge—as he did throughout his life, in some of his most biting printed exchanges—but, in the present day, the sheer size of the media means that even the most accomplished orators struggle to have their voices heard and are often lost in the shuffle amongst countless, ever changing, online articles and Twitter. As demonstrated, Swift had few difficulties in disproving Wood's brand of "fake news" but he certainly did not have to deal with modern-day "fake news" troll factories. Noah Charney predicts how Swift would situate himself within the modern-day news circuit, and this is certainly plausible. However, owing to the aforementioned issue of media oversaturation, it is very unlikely that Swift could repeat his achievement with *The Drapier's Letters* today.

> If he were alive today, Jonathan Swift would likely feature as a grumpy pundit on CNN, slinging pithy wisecracks and moonlighting as a writer on "Saturday Night Live." He would rip shit up on Twitter, slicing those who should be cut down to size and holding up a mirror to show the emperors that they are wearing nothing at all. If we get really lucky and technology

[27] Today, Swift would perhaps have for his modern political nemeses Democratic Unionist Party members. The DUP's decision to campaign for Leave would have been seen by Swift as an act of exhibiting loyalty to the English. McMinn writes that "unquestioning loyalty by Irish Protestants was a form of blindness and dishonesty which [he] would not tolerate." Swift, *Swift's Irish Pamphlets*, 18. Additionally, Swift would have considered members of the DUP as fierce political opponents on account of their religious affiliation to the Free Presbyterian Church, whom the Anglican Dean would classify as a party of Dissenters.

> throws us a bone, his DNA might be cloned so we could install him as the next host of "The Daily Show."[28]

Using March 2019 as a date stamp—the time of this chapter's research completion—the United Kingdom stands on the verge of economic crisis. The scheduled date for Brexit—March 29, 2019—is fast approaching and, as it stands in Westminster, there is a possibility of a "No deal Brexit," unless the government approves Theresa May's "Chequer's Plan,"[29] which has an increasing likelihood of failure.

Today, Anglo-Irish political tensions are greater than any time in recent memory, and day by day they are escalating in negative tone. Anti-Irish rhetoric is becoming more prevalent in political discourse, and all too predictably a war of words is being fought on multiple fronts—one pitting Brexiteers (British MPs in support of Brexit) against the Irish government, and the other being a bitter all-Irish scuffle taking place between the pro-Brexit Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) from Northern Ireland and the Irish government.

In retrospect, since 2016, the Irish government has failed to score many decisive political points or to have significant impact upon the international stage during the Brexit talks. Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) Leo Vardakar and Tánaiste (Deputy Head of the Irish government) Simon Coveney are little known political figures outside of the UK and Ireland, and they are rarely front and center in international debates about Brexit. Even Sinn Fein politicians from Northern Ireland—the defunct Provisional IRA's political wing—have practically had a non-existent voice during the Brexit debates, although this can be considered an outcome of their decision to abstain from taking their seats in Westminster, and not to take part in parliamentary debate at all. Since they hold seven seats, and are a virulent anti-Brexit party, they could have theoretically given Northern Ireland a strong oppositional voice concerning repeated calls for the removal of the Irish "backstop" by Brexiteers. However, as it turned out, most main players on the international stage were not from Ireland at all, and consisted mainly of English and continental European politicians: for instance, Donald Tusk, Boris Johnson, Michael Gove, Nigel Farage, Jacob Rees-Mogg, and Guy Verhofstadt.

Hard-line Brexiteers are fighting back hard against Irish politicians who criticize the UK's official stance towards negotiating trade laws with

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[28] Charney, "Donald Trump's Modest Proposals."

[29] The "Chequer's Plan" is the shorthand name for *The Future Relationship Between the United Kingdom and the European Union*—a 104 paged document which was presented to parliament in July 2018.

the EU. That is, they argue that affairs concerning the Northern Irish border are to be decided once all decisions concerning post-Brexit trade are settled. Northern Ireland First Minister Arlene Foster stated on November 22, 2017 that "some people" (a not so veiled reference to Leo Vardakar) are "taking their moment in the sun, to try and get the maximum in relation to the negotiations."[30] On December 27, she went so far as to say that the Taoiseach was using Brexit opportunistically to push forward negotiations for a united Ireland.[31] On the same day, the Labour politician Kate Hoey stated in a radio interview that the Republic should not be so negative about the Irish border situation, and, in what seems to have been an unintentional statement, she let slip that Ireland should "pay for the border" for some undefined reason. This immediately led to ridicule that she had been taking "diplomacy lessons from Donald Trump."[32] A response in *The Sun* editorial column on November 18, 2018 condescendingly spoke down to the Irish PM Leo Vardakar in a piece titled "Ireland's Naïve Young Prime Minister Should Shut his Gob on Brexit and Grow Up."

> A country on which so much of its economy depends. We are Ireland's biggest trading partner and nearest neighbour. The effects of a "hard Brexit" could be catastrophic. Yet Varadkar's rookie diplomacy, puerile insults and threats to veto trade negotiations are bringing it ever closer. We can only assume his arrogance stems from a delusion that he can single-handedly stop Brexit. Indeed Ireland's political establishment clearly believes we can be forced to vote the "right" way at a second referendum, just as they made their citizens do over the EU Lisbon Treaty they initially rejected. It is not going to happen.[33]

It reeks of domineering imperialism to say that Ireland should be humble and obedient to the English as implied here and especially in the piece's title. According to the *Sun*'s editorial, it is an affront that Ireland has the nerve to speak up.

This lack of serious political opposition to Brexit parallels with Swift's time when strong Irish political representation during the Wood's halfpence debacle was weak. Arguably, had Swift not taken up Ireland's cause, England would have predictably bullied the country into accepting

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[30] Manley, "Arlene Foster Claims Taoiseach is Being 'Reckless'."
[31] Foster's theory was that Northern Ireland was being used recklessly and even "played around with" for political gain. Weaver, "DUP Leader Accuses Irish Government."
[32] Buchan, "Brexit: Labour MP Draws Trump Comparison."
[33] *The Sun*, "Ireland's Naïve Young Prime Minister."

the coin, which would certainly have led the country into a devastating period of economic turmoil.

Ireland's Economic Woes Following a "No-Deal" Brexit

A "no deal" Brexit is seen as an anathema to all but the most hard-line of Brexiteers in the British government, owing to the strong likelihood that it will plunge the United Kingdom into a period of serious economic uncertainty, or even the greater crisis of having the Union (specifically concerning Scotland and Northern Ireland) fracture in time. Increased calls for a new independence referendum by the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) by invoking the "indyref2" clause have unsurprisingly gained public support. Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland have stepped up their demands for a border poll, even to the point of tweeting a photograph of the party president Mary Lou McDonald standing behind an "England: Get out of Ireland" poster on St. Patrick's Day 2019, with the caption "No explanation needed" underneath.[34]

The Irish government remains grimly pessimistic that a "no deal" Brexit will occur, despite the British government voting on March 13, 2019 that it be taken off the negotiating table in future discussions with the European Union.[35] This is a fair position since the vote to prevent a "no deal" taking place is a mere amendment and is in itself not law, whereas Article 50—which dictates that the United Kingdom will leave the European Union on March 29—*is* a legally binding clause in the Lisbon Treaty, requiring difficult negotiations with the EU to delay or change. In a December 2018 white paper titled *Getting Ireland Brexit Ready,* the Irish government declared in no uncertain terms the enormity of the problem of a "no deal" Brexit:

> A no deal Brexit would be an exceptional economic event which would be met with exceptional measures to support the continued operation of the Irish economy and our international trading links. That is why the Government's budgetary strategy aims to make the economy more resilient through creation of fiscal capacity, balancing the books, investing in capital infrastructure, providing dedicated loan funds for affected businesses and building resilience to larger economic shocks through the 'Rainy Day' fund.[36]

[34] Guy, "New York St. Patrick's Day Banner Sparks Controversy."
[35] "House of Commons Vote on No Deal Brexit."
[36] Government of Ireland, *Getting Ireland Brexit Ready,* 8.

Ireland's fate is largely affected by the decisions that the UK will take post-Brexit in terms of its renegotiated trade laws, which it is powerless to alter. For instance, if the UK aligns itself with the World Trade Organization, Ireland's agricultural section will be hit by a raise in tariffs that could lead to much ruination of businesses. According to leaked British governmental papers, Ireland "could face food shortages and a 7 per cent drop in gross domestic product if the United Kingdom leaves the European Union without a deal."[37] The key products affected would be "ready meals, cereals, biscuits and a whole range of other food lines from the big multinational groups, including some time-sensitive products."[38] Additionally, the Irish government states in *Getting Ireland Brexit Ready* that "Brexit has already had an impact on the tourism sector and additional funding of €7.7m has been allocated to the tourism agencies to ensure that the sector is Brexit ready."[39]

The Northern Ireland Border and Brexit

On the one hand, Northern Ireland had identical political debates to England during the Brexit campaign. For instance, concerns over immigration and deeply entrenched Euroscepticism specifically drove the Leave agenda there. This was represented by tensions concerning the current ten percent Syrian population living in Dungannon and popular statements by Ian Paisley Jr. including "Europe is broken"[40] and the DUP's anti-Europe stance in general. Unique to Northern Ireland was naturally the all too predictable rabble-rousing desire to use Brexit as a means to justify Irish unification, regardless of the voting outcome. As it turned out, the passing of the Leave vote prompted the Chief Negotiator of Sinn Fein, Martin McGuinness, to immediately call for a border poll, on the morning of the election result.

Northern Ireland voters were also alone in possessing fears that patrols and controls would be re-introduced at the Irish border. This is because if the UK were to leave the EU, security checks on goods and people would become a necessity.

> Following Brexit, however, the UK and the EU will be able to operate different customs and tax policies, but also different regulatory policies. If this happens, a 'hard' border will be needed to process customs and tax

[37] Carswell and Taylor, "EU Agriculture Chief Phil Hogan Rails."
[38] Ibid.
[39] Government of Ireland, *Getting Ireland Brexit Ready*, 49.
[40] MacCormaic, "Little Love for EU in Northern Ireland Parties Stake out Positions."

> declarations, and also to check products crossing the border for their compliance with their destination's product regulations.[41]

Currently, the Northern Ireland border is "frictionless" and without militarized presence. It is "310 miles in length, features over 200 formal crossings and is traversed by some 30,000 people daily for purposes of work alone."[42] In principal, this is facilitated by the Common Travel Area (CTA) arrangement which has allowed for free travel around the island without need for passport identification since 1923. However, during the "Troubles"[43] all points of egress and ingress were patrolled by British army personnel with the aim of preventing paramilitary activity from taking place. The signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 brought about the demilitarization of the border, and to this day it is difficult to know whether one has crossed it or not, which is of great symbolic importance, especially to Irish nationalists.

However, Brexit has threatened the status quo and the "invisible border" between Northern Ireland and the Republic is in danger of being eliminated for the first time in twenty years, bringing back patrols and unwelcome memories of the "Troubles." No Northern Ireland parties are, or were in 2016, in favor of a "hard border." However, only two parties—Sinn Fein and the SDLP—campaigned for a Remain vote by specifically focusing on the likelihood of the border being re-erected following Brexit.[44] Both sought to maintain Irish nationalist rights under the Good Friday Agreement by keeping it invisible.[45]

By and large, concerns about paramilitary attacks by dissident Republican groups at checkpoints was of cross community concern, especially by voters living at in border regions of Northern Ireland. To quote *Brexit and Ireland*:

> There is a potential powder keg in the return of border controls. […] It would be highly foreseeable that there would be a reaction, from protest

[41] De Mars et al., *Bordering Two Unions*, 33.
[42] Ibid., 11.
[43] The "Troubles" is a term "commonly (and confusingly) used to refer to two separate but related periods of crisis in modern Irish history, the first being the eras of the Anglo-Irish War and the Civil War from the Easter Rising of 1916 to the ceasefire of 1923; the second being of much longer duration, from the outbreak of violence in Northern Ireland in 1968 following civil-rights demonstrations to the ceasefire of 1994" (*Oxford Companion*, 571). This chapter defines the "Troubles" as being the latter historical conflict.
[44] Connolly, *Brexit and Ireland,* 211.
[45] Ibid., 211.

> and civil disobedience, through to potentially active targeting by anti-peace, dissident republican groups. That would manifest itself in physical force.[46]

Perhaps this is why the five border constituencies in Northern Ireland collectively voted Remain,[47] with Foyle, in county Londonderry, having the highest percentage of all parts of the United Kingdom, with a 78.3% Remain result. Unfortunately, the fears of many Londonderry voters about increased levels of violence proved well founded since on January 19, 2019, a car bomb was detonated outside of the city's courthouse by the "New IRA" to celebrate the supposed centenary of the beginning of the Irish War of Independence in 1919. This terrorist attack attained international news coverage and viral video status on YouTube, and ignited debate concerning Northern Ireland's future safety from dissident Republican attacks.

At least six options to avoid a hard border in Ireland have been proposed. However, the first listed here was never seriously considered, and the remaining five are currently under urgent renegotiation. The penultimate two have been voted upon in the House of Commons as amendments. They are:

1) Special status for Northern Ireland.
2) The Irish "backstop" arrangement as part of the Chequer's Deal.
3) A "technological" solution for the border problem.
4) "Norway plus" arrangement.
5) A second referendum or "People's Vote."
6) A delay in Brexit until June 2019, to allow for finalising of the border issue.

To provide context, in November 2017, Owen Patterson, former NI Secretary of State, dismissed outright Ireland's concerns about the border, stating that there were "perfectly sensible technical solutions to the problem of the border."[48] This solution usually refers, amongst other technologies, to sophisticated electronic applications which can be used to scan the contents of vehicles. However, on the March 16, 2018, The

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[46] Ibid., 211.

[47] The Remain voting percentages for the border constituencies were: West Tyrone (66.8%), Foyle (78.3%), Fermanagh and South Tyrone (58.6%), Newry and Armagh (62.9%) and South Down (67.2%), with a collective mean percentage of 66.76%.

[48] BBC, "UK and Irish Politicians Clash Over Irish Border."

Northern Ireland Affairs Committee released a 65-page document titled *The Land Border Between Northern Ireland and Ireland* which published findings firmly disputing claims that "technology" was the solution to the border question, summarizing this as being based on a flawed and incomprehensive knowledge of technological border-checking techniques. The Affairs Committee stated "We have, however, had no visibility of any technical solutions, anywhere in the world beyond the aspirational that would remove the need for physical infrastructure at the border."[49]

Final Comparisons and Conclusion

It is a clear tragedy that a figure like Swift did not emerge in the modern age to stand up against the United Kingdom's mismanagement of Brexit, and fight Ireland's corner on the international stage, bringing about positive change for the country or at least awareness of its economic plight. The main difficulty underlying Ireland's pre-Brexit woes, north and south of the border, was a level of near complete ignorance by mainland British voters—primarily in England—who were preoccupied by issues, such as immigration, which would ironically pass through governmental negotiations with the EU in a relatively straightforward fashion. However, the need for a "backstop"—despite being successfully agreed upon with the EU by Theresa May's government in late 2018—would prove highly contentious within Parliament, despite the issue of its arguable necessity being present since 2016. Swift's presence on the international stage, with his acute foresight into Anglo-Irish political matters, theoretically would have been an asset at the time of the referendum. One of his aims could have been to educate voters on the British mainland about Ireland's border issue, which the SDLP and Sinn Fein failed to do since they campaigned solely within their Northern Ireland constituencies.

However, with Brexit, the issues Swift would have had to contend with would have been greater and much more challenging, owing to it being a UK-wide decision to leave the European Union. It is not a single issue concerning the forcing of the withdrawal of a coin-minting patent, backed up by a corrupt monarch and government. In fact, it is more likely that Swift's potential dealings with a modern-day British government would

[49] Northern Ireland Affairs Committee, *The Land Border,* 4. Nevertheless, as late as December 2018, Brexiteers from the European Research Group [ERG] think-tank have continued to insist upon adopting various technologies used in the border between Norway and Sweden as a means to solve the situation, contrary to the report findings that they will not work in Ireland. See Euronews, "Irish Border: Can Technology Remove the Need for a Backstop."

concern his promotion of ideas about how Ireland should deal with England in terms of post-Brexit trade. Ireland's economy today, as in his own time, remains tied to British trade to the extent that it amounts to the following:

> In 2015 alone, Ireland exported €39 billion in goods and services to the UK, 17 per cent of total Irish exports. (Only the USA, at 22 per cent, accounts for more Irish exports.) Even more dramatically, Ireland relies on the UK for 32.2 per cent of our imports. Many of these goods are not just the consumer stalwarts that line our supermarket shelves. They are also "intermediate" goods, i.e. the parts or ingredients needed to produce stuff that Irish companies go on to export.[50]

This makes Ireland highly vulnerable to changes in the United Kingdom's economic future. However, in his *A Proposal for the Universal Usage of Irish Manufacture* (1720), Swift states that Ireland should break economic ties with UK and become self-sufficient[51] to protect itself from English economic domination of its produce. Although this may sound close to Trumpian policies of only "buying American" and taking steps towards isolationism, ideas from *A Proposal* promoting Ireland's distancing from the United Kingdom, trade-wise, could in fact become a reality if a no-deal Brexit takes place and negotiations between the UK, the WTO, or the United States bear fruit. Free trade arrangements with the European Union and a promotion of its own produce could theoretically work out better for Ireland. Therefore, new pamphlets written by Swift specifically for Ireland's post-Brexit economy could, in fact, prove valuable today for influencing decision making of Irish traders on the international market.

One final, highly displeasing irony is that the "fake news" spread by William Wood in Swift's time—namely that Ireland was allegedly ready to rise up against the monarchy—is in fact beginning to become a reality today within dissident Republican communities. Paramilitary groups such as the "New IRA" are seeking to take advantage of the Brexit crisis for the purposes of bringing about a united Ireland using terrorist violence and to generate public support for their activities, using disapproval against Brexit as their persuasive tool. This danger was unknown to Swift during

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[50] Connolly, *Brexit and Ireland*, 39.

[51] "[Swift's] argument suggests instead that the Irish would prosper from wearing clothes produced by their own countrymen. The quite modern notion of reducing foreign imports and relying on domestic goods as a remedy for stabilizing the economy seems eminently sensible, except for the English imperialist notion that Ireland had no authority to declare a boycott of English trade goods." DeGategno and Stubblefield, *Critical Companion*, 265.

the halfpence scandal, when it was merely a manipulation of negative Irish stereotypes that made it possible for Wood to scare the English into supporting him, for patriotic purposes. Today, Swift would most likely charge himself with the role of preventing Republican uprisings in Ireland by promoting a focused need to protect the border and the fragile peace agreement in Ireland. This is a necessity since the Irish question is rarely spoken about within Westminster debate in this light. The "backstop" is among the most highly disliked parts of the so far twice rejected "Chequer's Plan" because it keeps Northern Ireland in the EU Custom's Union, which therefore bars one part of the United Kingdom from making new trade agreements, and makes it separate from the rest of the country—creating complicated domestic produce checks at British ports. The other issue concerns how long Northern Ireland will stay in the Custom's Union, which is undefined, leading to fears and accusations that the United Kingdom will be tied to the European Union forever. All this being said, however, a strong Irish voice—which Swift would no doubt have provided—would bring furious attention to the deadly threat of dissident Republicanism and to the necessity of safeguarding Northern Ireland's peace process. This far outweighs in terms of immediate importance trade issues that are temporary and negotiable. In short, lives are not in danger if such talks fall through or meet delays. It is, therefore, a sad state of affairs that the House of Commons does not give attention to the worries of people from border regions in Northern Ireland. Swift could very well have described this oversight as being an example of British mainland ignorance towards Irish affairs, in conjunction to the habitual preference to rate their personal concerns above those of the genuine Irish ones, just as it was in the 1720s.

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