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Three Times Round the Globe: Gulliver and Colonial Discourse

Clement Hawes

I assured him, that this whole Globe of Earth must be at least three Times gone round before one of our better Female *Yahoos* could get her Breakfast, or a Cup to put it in.

—Lemuel Gulliver

A cluster of related questions haunts the commentary on *Gulliver's Travels*. There has been frequent debate about whether or not Gulliver is a genuine character who undergoes conflict and change. Gulliver has many of the trappings of “character”¹—a proper name, an obtrusively present physique, a family of middling status, a particularized education and profession, national pride, traits of curiosity and wanderlust, an idiosyncratic and unfailing gift for languages—and yet his outlook is disturbingly unstable. Challengers of Gulliver’s personhood thus argue that “Gulliver” is no more than an inconsistently used vehicle for satire, a mere mask to be dropped and reassumed at the whim of the author.² A significant domain of interpretation is at stake: for if Gulliver is not seen as a “character”—and if *Gulliver* is thus not read both with and against the conventions of the nascent novel—then the entire

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dimension of the narrative that shows his sequential shifts and changes is rendered meaningless.³

Critics likewise debate the extent to which a full reading of *Gulliver* requires recourse to supposed failings, such as misanthropy or neurosis, of Swift. This tradition of reading Swift, still among the most prevalent,⁴ produces, by way of historical interpretation, only an individual case history. The moral and psychological terms of this debate, precisely to the extent that they condemn or pathologize Swift as an individual, tend to depoliticize interpretation of *Gulliver's Travels* and, especially, to domesticate its insights into colonial practice and discourse.

A third reiterated critical debate attempts to say just how “historical” *Gulliver* is. It inquires, more specifically, does or does not Swift’s mode of satire require us to seek particular historical parallels—in, for instance, the infighting between the Tory leaders Oxford and Bolingbroke—for every event in *Gulliver*?⁵ Opponents of such “historicized” allegories, rightly dismayed by a deflating pedantry, often retreat altogether from history into notions of universality. The parties to such a debate seem to assume “history” to be little more than the driest of chronicles. Additional emphasis must therefore be given to the fact that the publication of *Gulliver* in 1726 comes within thirteen years of a key turning point in the history of British colonialism, the English acquisition in 1713 of the “Asiento.”⁶ Although English participation in the Afro-Caribbean slave trade dated back to the mid-seventeenth century, acquisition of the Asiento made slave traffic central to the English economic expansion. So began the period, as Laura Brown says, “of the largest slave trade in history, when at least six million human beings were forcibly transported across an ocean, to produce a massive new work force on two continents and in the islands of the West Indies” (42–43).

In support of this process, an institutionalized discourse of the “Other” necessarily arose, a discourse with the political agenda of colonization. This colonial discourse implicated, in a new way, travel literature, adventure novels, illustration, ethnography, cartography, and science: that is, many of the particular targets of Swift’s satire. It is in the politicization of these discourses, rather than in the intestine squabbling of Tory standard-bearers, that we encounter a collectively significant “history.” Thus, despite inter-

pretations of *Gulliver's* historical allegory so sophisticated that they constitute it as a virtual cryptogram, I would contend that literary criticism remains in a state of partial amnesia. *Gulliver* is, as a response to an ongoing and emotionally supercharged colonial history, indeed "historical"—but in a less dull and far more urgent sense than is often recognized.

It is possible to reframe each of these apparently "formal" problems by raising a single political and ideological issue. My reading, which takes up, as a problematic of form, the cultural representation of "history" in a strong sense—as European colonialism—also offers a possible explanation for the reception of *Gulliver's Travels*.

The depoliticized reception of *Gulliver's Travels* reflects a cultural tendency to foreclose the colonial dialectic on which the full satiric effect of the book depends. The satiric effect of *Gulliver's Travels* depends on Swift's ironizing, and, above all, reversing of the commonplaces of eighteenth-century British colonial discourse. This redirection of the tropes of colonial discourse, very typical of Swift's satirical strategies, turns them against the "wrong" object: the middle-class Englishman. This particular satirical strategy is consistent with the established thinking about Swift's "Tory" views: that is, his conservative opposition to the expansionism of "monied" Whig interests, his dislike of nationalism, and his courageous defense of Irish interests against the English. Swift does much more in *Gulliver*, however, than merely anticipate a later Tory critique of the colonial system of mercantilism.⁷ Because of a certain anarchic excess in Swift's writing that seems to exceed the convenient label of "Tory," *Gulliver's Travels* remains, even today, an effective critique of colonialism in any form.

Gulliver's plot, in fact—drawing, as it does, on genres with obvious ties to the political institutions of Afro-Caribbean slavery—consists of a narrative in which Gulliver, the English narrator, is himself colonized. Since the reader is so positioned by the conventions of first-person narrative as to identify more or less closely with Gulliver, he or she likewise undergoes an increasingly painful confrontation with the experience of the colonized. By the end, it is not merely mercantilism, but the very identity of the colonizing subject, that has been dismantled.

Alternative literary sources for *Gulliver* can certainly be adduced. Ancient travel literature is full of fantastic and monstrous racial “Others”: from doglike men who bark rather than speak, men with eyes in their shoulders, and cyclopean, hermaphroditic, or pygmy races. It is true enough that such discourses about the “Other” have a seemingly timeless similarity. In Swift’s time, however, such routine degradations of the “Other” were deeply implicated in the historically specific political project of colonialism. *Gulliver* thus responds less to classical or Rabelaisian models than to the specific discourses of early colonialism. In order to grasp the dialectic of Swift’s satire, then, it is necessary to specify further some of the chief topoi and narrative strategies of early colonial discourses.⁸

A thematics of absolute “Otherness” appears in order to justify unlimited aggression and violence toward the “Other.” Thence comes, to take one crucial example, the theme of “cannibalism,” a term so freighted with racist history⁹ that, as Peter Hulme says, “[it] has no application outside the discourse of European colonialism” (84). Thus the hack writer and editor John Dunton opined in 1691 that cannibalism, because it was worse than slavery, justified the latter: “[Africans] must either be *killed* or *eaten*, or both, by their barbarous conquering enemy” (cited in Dabydeen 28). And cannibalism is the key motif in *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and many other colonial “adventures” that establishes at the most visceral level a frozen opposition between the (Caucasian) Self and its nauseating “Other.” Cannibalism appears as well in earlier “voyage” books, including some books owned by Swift.¹⁰ For instance, Sir Thomas Herbert, author of *Some Yeares Travels into Divers Parts of Asia and Afrique* (1638), describes the African people of Loango as “divels incarnate” who butcher their neighbors and friends with a “vultures appetite” and even proffer themselves, when “worne by age,” to be “joynted” and “set to sell upon the stalls” (11).¹¹ It is thus no accident that Swift uses the topos of cannibalism in “A Modest Proposal” (1729) to represent, in an ironic reversal, England’s devastating exploitation of the Irish poor.

A hyperbolic depiction of the “Other” is evident also in the many topoi of abasement generated in colonial discourse. Hence, for example, the grateful yielding—a highly convenient and guilt-

reducing *self*-enslavement—of the Caribbean Amerindian Friday to English Crusoe, symbolized in colonial sign language by his placing Crusoe’s foot above his head (Hulme 204–06). Defoe, writing about seven years before the publication of *Gulliver*, renders this scene of native groveling twice in the space of a few pages. It signifies not only Friday’s personal debt to Crusoe, but also, along with the scenes of cannibals and shootings thereof, the emblematic colonial encounter when the relationship between European and native must be settled (Hulme 201).

Yet another discursive construction of the colonial “Other” derives primarily from combined impulses of voyeurism and exploitation. Based on the actual practice of exhibiting “unusual” human beings, it could be termed the topos of display. In *The Tempest*, Trinculo’s first thought upon sighting Caliban is to exhibit him as a freak in England: “Not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver . . . When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian” (II.ii.29–33). And the colonized were in fact displayed like zoo animals in “ethnological” exhibitions throughout the capitals of Europe from the sixteenth century well into the early twentieth century (Gilman 76–108; Gould 291–305; Altick 266–87). It is perhaps too seldom noted that Montaigne’s justly famous essay “Des Cannibales” was fashioned out of conversations he had with Brazilian Indians then exhibited in Europe (Stam and Spence 17). In Swift’s time, between 1704 and 1709, a West Indian “midget” was similarly displayed at Leeds and in Lincoln’s Inn Fields (Stallybrass and White 40). In the winter of 1711–12, while Swift still lived in London, this same midget and his pregnant wife were displayed (as the vastly popular and well-advertised “Little Family”) at Charing Cross by a showman who exulted in print about the prospect of “breeding” them (Taylor 65–66). Although similar popular spectacles of the period included Swiss and German dwarves, an infant acrobat, a rope-dancing monkey, a trained marmoset, a baboon, and a “wonderful Femal[e] Creature having a head like a Hog” (Taylor 30–31, 57–64), the display of colonized people went beyond such exoticism: unlike, say, the exhibition of a German dwarf, the exhibition of West Indian midgets constituted a specifically colonial mode of voyeurism, a cultural politics that reinforced slavery.

The sheer fact of such exhibitions, that someone dared to conceive and build the brutalizing booths and cages, seemed to confirm that the spectacle contained nothing human. The phenomenon demonstrates, chillingly, how colonial discourse authorizes the reduction of human beings to exotic curiosities. For our purposes, it is also important that the nonreciprocal ethnological gaze provides a generic source, in colonial discourse, for that fascination with the lower body, that morbid dwelling on what Frantz terms “man’s ugliness, lecherousness, and loathsome natural functions” (53), for which Swift is notorious. As so often, “thinking the body” became in colonial discourse a means of “thinking social topography” (Stallybrass and White 192). It would be foolish to deny that Swift’s temperament played a role in his choice of topics. But such choices are always overdetermined, and they oblige us to avoid reductive explanations. Moreover, it is only by evading the actual voyeurism and coprophilia of colonial rhetoric and practice that one can dismiss his use of such passages as mere individual pathology. We deplore Swift’s “misanthropy,” we shake our heads at his “pathology,” in short, to deflect the intolerable significance of a specific colonial history.

It helps to recall here the suggestive conclusion reached by Stallybrass and White that social differentiation, such as colonial conquest demands, depends on *disgust* (191). It then becomes comprehensible that, as Frantz points out, nauseating descriptions of naked, filthy, flat-nosed, fat-lipped, and depraved “natives” appeared in print “with striking frequency throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries” (53). Take the following passages from several authors of travel literature likely known to Swift. The “Hottentots” (now known as the Khoi-San peoples) were, according to Sir Thomas Herbert, “an accursed Progeny of *Cham*, who differ in nothing from bruit beasts save forme” (Frantz 53). Or again, as Frantz paraphrases Captain Cowley, author of *Voyage round the Globe* (1699): “It was their habit to dance about the ‘Hollanders’ shaking ‘their Privy Parts, with an offer . . . that they should lye with their Wives for a bit of rolled Tobacco” (53). Moreover, according to Cowley, they

are a People that will eat anything that is foul: If the *Hollanders* kill a Beast, they will get the Guts and squeez [*sic*] the

Excrements out, and then without washing or scraping, lay them upon the Coals, and before they are well hot through, will take them and eat them. (cited in Frantz 53)

Swift's "excremental vision" is idiosyncratic only in that he extends it to *Caucasian* bodily functions and folkways.

Descriptions of native women, moreover, focused with intense misogyny on their terrible smell, their nether parts, and their pendulous breasts.¹² Herbert, capping an inventory of the "infernal postures" of Angolan natives, seems to out-Swift Swift with the claim that "the female sex each new Moone [defy] pale fac't *Cynthia* by turning up their bummes, imagining her the cause of their distempers" (10). And the following is only one of several possible examples cited by Frantz, taken from Daniel Beecman's *A Voyage to and from the Island of Borneo* (1718):

The women are generally short squat creatures, but built strong, altogether as ugly in their kind as the men, having long flabby breasts, odiously dangling down to their waist; which they can toss over their shoulders for their children to suck, whom they generally carry on their backs. . . . (55)

In 1799, Charles White, a Manchester obstetrical surgeon and biologist (Gould 282), reproduces the "pendulous breasts" topos in a treatise zealously applying the finely calibrated "Great Chain of Being" to the taxonomic ranking of human races. "We are informed by Drs. *Thunberg* and *Spaarman*," he writes, "that the Hottentot women have long flabby breasts; and that they can suckle their children upon their backs, by throwing the breast over their shoulders" (63). This passage deserves to be juxtaposed with one that fully reveals the racist ideology here masquerading as "natural history." The passage concludes a florid paean by White to the aesthetic superiority of Caucasians. White caps his catalogue of racial differences with a remarkable specimen of mammary iconography:

Where shall we find, unless in the European, that nobly arched head, containing such a quantity of brain . . . ? Where the perpendicular face, the prominent nose, and round projecting chin? . . . Where that erect posture of the body

and noble gait? . . . Where, except on the bosom of the European woman, two such plump and snowy white hemispheres, tipt with vermillion? (135)

At the very conclusion of his treatise, White refers to the slave trade as “indefensible” and avers that he would “rejoice at its abolition” (137). Yet his racial self-delight and his laboriously cultivated disgust toward the “Other,” despite his claim “simply to investigate a proposition in natural history” (137), amount to an aesthetic rationalization for domination—for making both “hemispheres” as “snowy white” as possible.

The final degradation of “natives” involves innumerable comparisons between them and sundry anthropoid primates found in the same area. Sometimes there are allegations of a kind of interspecies “miscegenation.” Herbert, for instance, remarks that the Hottentot language “is apishly sounded (with whom tis thought they mixe unnaturally) . . .” (18). Beekman draws the conclusion that obviously lurked behind this allegation: “They are not really unlike monkeys or baboons in their gestures, especially when they sit sunning themselves, as they often do in great numbers” (cited in Frantz 56). And in his *A Voyage to Surat* (1696) John Ovington makes a common application of this logic to the Great Chain of Being: “. . . if there’s any medium between a Rational Animal and a Beast, the *Hottentot* lays fairest Claim to that Species” (cited in Frantz 56). The consequences of such a subhuman status are clear enough. In a macabre counterpoint to the colonial allegations of native cannibalism, a party of Dutch “settlers” out on a hunting expedition apparently “mistook” a Bushman for a great ape and shot and ate him (Gould 295).

The implosive “clicking” languages of the Khoi-San peoples are now, as Gould says, “widely admired for their complexity and subtle expression” (300). As is suggested by the crude colonial dismissal of their languages as “a farrago of bestial sounds resembling the chatter of apes or the clucking of hens” (Frantz 55), a thematics of Absence often appears in colonial representations in order to render unthinkable the inconvenient facts of extant native culture (Stam and Spence 7). Hume, in a notorious footnote to his essay “Of National Characters” (1754), flatly defines non-European culture as pure absence:

There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures amongst them, no arts, no sciences. . . . Not to mention our colonies, there are negroe slaves dispersed all over Europe, of which none ever discovered any symptoms of ingenuity. (532n.)

Likewise, in later colonial discourse the “Livingstone motif,” in which one white man encounters another in the depths of the jungle, often serves to rationalize otherwise unblinkable evidence of native civilization (Brantlinger 195).

Similarly made invisible are native thought, native self-awareness, and native territory, which is often previously “unoccupied,” like Crusoe’s island (Hulme 185–86), in a consciously emblematic moment of colonial origins. Coetzee points out that the landscape poetry and “official historiography” of South Africa have often converged in seeing the African landscape as silent and empty, a vacuum waiting to be filled by white “settlers” (177). Native history is shown to be neither disrupted by the West nor progressive in its own right. Conventions of characterization and point of view similarly produce invisibility by depicting named and individuated white “characters” in depth while assigning natives, often seen in crowds or “hordes,” the depersonalizing “mark of the plural” (Memmi 85). Consider the following passage about names from Dampier:

The Natural Inhabitants of the Cape are the *Hodmadods*, as they are commonly called, which is a corruption of the word *Hottantot*; for this is the Name by which they call to one another, either in their Dances, or on any occasion, as if every one of them had this for his name. The word probably hath some signification or other in their language, whatever it is. (536–37)

The Europeans’ refusal to differentiate is thus projected onto the natives themselves as a “lack.”

A third crucial colonial topos, the exact obverse of the construction of the savage “Other,” involves variations on a thematics of Sameness. Here the discourse of the “Other” encounters a contradiction made necessary by those situations in which some

form of domestication, as opposed to violence or even extermination, was the preferred colonial tactic. The genealogy of this image is lengthy. From its earliest phases, European colonialism has tended to divide the colonized into “good” and “bad” natives such as the “bad” Caribs and the “good,” but regrettably annihilated, Arawaks (Hulme 43–67). In the hegemonic phase of colonialism, when the native’s internalization of Western values is required, various topoi of “painless” assimilation mark the adaptation of a “good” (useful, tractable) native to the “superior” culture. Thus Dampier concludes a description of some “good natives,” the Miskito Indians, as follows: “They have no form of Government among them, but acknowledge the King of *England* for their Sovereign: They learn our Language, and they take the Governor of *Jamaica* to be one of the greatest Princes in the World” (10–11). The Miskitos are also described as being, in matters of religion, “ready to imitate us in whatsoever they saw us do at any time” (8–9).

Equally often, however, the attempt to assimilate is rendered as only marginally successful, an amusingly superficial bit of “mimicry.” So Hume, in that same footnote, discounts reports of an educated Jamaican black: “In *Jamaica* indeed they talk of one negroe as a man of parts and learning; but ’tis likely he is admired for slender accomplishments, like a parrot, who speaks a few words plainly” (532n.). This derisive treatment of the “Other”’s mimicry of civilization manifests, through the topos of “failed assimilation,” both the need of the native for European culture and his or her immutable inferiority to it. It consolidates the sense that, as Stallybrass and White put it, “the civilized is always-already-given” (41).

One cannot conclude this dismal catalogue of racist topoi without remarking on the colonial representation of cultural development. A “denial of coevalness” (Fabian 32) marks the state of the native culture as either “decadent” or “prehistoric.” Variants on this theme include topoi of regression, degeneration, and paternalistic images of the “Other” as eternal child. The influential eighteenth-century French naturalist Buffon speculated that not only Africans, but also apes, were degenerated from an ancestor common to Caucasians (Poliakov 165). This common topos of degeneration managed to rationalize racial hierarchy while preserving the Biblical account that all humanity descended from

Adam and Eve (Banton 7). Through its protean flexibility, colonial discourse likewise managed to use the seemingly opposite impulse—nostalgic reference to a supposed golden age—for a similarly distancing effect. Most such references, such as the following passage, declaimed by Almanzor in Dryden's *Conquest of Granada* (1670), draw on a well of primitivist imagery:

I am as free as Nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
When wild in woods the noble savage ran.

(I.i.207–09)

Such topoi serve to displace the romanticized “Other,” and the conflict he or she implies, into the past. They constitute the “Other” as temporally remote—often, indeed, as a posthumous phenomenon, as *already past*. Such temporal displacements are a powerful means of taming and domesticating difference. Thus, they often mask the fact that, in Fabian's words, “What are opposed, in conflict, in fact, locked in antagonistic struggle, are not the same societies at different stages of development, but different societies facing each other at the same Time” (155).

Gulliver is huge; the Lilliputians are tiny. Even if they have successfully tied him up, Gulliver's apparent omnipotence promises to enact, all too literally, the dynamics of European encounters with non-European peoples as the West has imagined them. Manipulation of scale, then, is a hyperbolic figuration of British colonial power. In this context, we expect to find, and quickly do, evidence of English technological superiority. In a classic colonial topos, Gulliver dazzles the Lilliputians with the awesome sound of his pistol: “The Astonishment here was much greater than at the Sight of my Scymiter. Hundreds fell down as if they had been struck dead; and even the Emperor, although he stood his Ground, could not recover himself in some time” (19). So Robinson Crusoe, having astonished Friday by shooting a parrot, remarks of Friday, “I believe, if I would have let him, he would have worshipp'd me and my Gun” (212). The almost godlike power of one superior European individual over “lesser” non-Western beings is perfectly traditional. If Gulliver is a bit vainglorious, the

vanity belongs to his position as an omnipotent colonial subject. This topos is replayed later, however, in the Land of Brobdingnag, with more humiliating results. Gulliver's expert knowledge of gunpowder and cannons—his “technological superiority”—reveals, unbeknownst to him, his moral inferiority. The secret of gunpowder, as the ingratiating Gulliver sees it, would make the King of Brobdingnag “absolute Master of the Lives, the Liberties, and the Fortunes of his People” (111). The King—far from being dazzled—is merely horrified. Gulliver is shown to be himself a product (as he says of the King) of “*narrow Principles and short Views*” (110). He is himself quite precisely a product, in short, of the expansionist colonial mentality. Gulliver's obtuseness here is not so much an inconsistency in the plot of colonial assimilation as an extension of it: he has adapted as blindly to his own culture as he does to any other.

Even in Lilliput, moreover, Gulliver's apparent omnipotence is short-lived. For we soon encounter, in reversed form, another familiar colonial topos. As in *Robinson Crusoe*, this topos generally has to do with groveling near the feet of the white master. In this case, however, it is the white, English-speaking European who is thus, before the tiniest of monarchs, made abject: “The Emperor himself in Person, did me the Honour to be by at the whole Ceremony. I made my Acknowledgments by prostrating myself at his Majesty's Feet” (25). And, indeed, no fate could be further from Gulliver's than that of the all-conquering European individual.

Gulliver, in fact, mighty as he seems to be, is enslaved and used as a one-man mercenary army by the Lilliputians. All too soon appears the colonial topos of exhibition, focusing, as often, on the enlarged private parts of the “native.” The Lilliputian Emperor orders Gulliver to stand “like a *Colossus*” with his legs apart. He then orders Lilliputian troops to march between his legs. Unfortunately, as Gulliver confesses, “my Breeches were at that Time in so ill a Condition, that they afforded some Opportunities for Laughter and Admiration” (24–25). After Gulliver has tactlessly extinguished a fire in the Queen's palace by urinating on it, the Lilliputians ponder his punishment. Eventually they decide on the “humane” course of merely blinding Gulliver. However, the Lilliputians reveal to Gulliver that they had considered blinding

him, starving him by degrees, cutting his flesh from his bones, and “leaving the Skeleton as a Monument of Admiration to Posterity” (48). No starker contrast between colonial subject and anatomized object could be imagined.

What most marks the voyage to Lilliput as an ironic appropriation of colonial discourse, however, is the topos of assimilation. Gulliver quickly begins to discard his own culture and to adopt the Lilliputian view of everything. The sharp discontinuities in Gulliver’s character thus do not stem from the generic sacrifice of character development in satire. They are, rather, a satiric appropriation, turned against the English, of colonial topos of comic or painless assimilation. Gulliver cannot be understood without some concept of an evolving “character.” But he exists in a surrealistic historical dimension that cannot be adequately represented within the individualistic confines of the realistic novel. Change is abrupt, mysterious, and far-reaching. So it is that Gulliver suddenly takes such pathetic pride in being—as opposed to Flimnap, his hated rival in Lilliputian court intrigue and a mere *Clumglum*—a lofty *Nardac* (46). And indeed, so labile is Gulliver’s identity that he even feels compelled to make an absurdly solemn defense of the honor of a Lilliputian lady supposedly seen in his chambers. Although the supposedly conjoined parts “differ in volume in the ratio of 1728 to 1” (Traugott 130), Gulliver expends a lengthy paragraph vindicating her honor (42–43). It is a bawdy joke, of course. But it is likewise a sign that Gulliver, entrapped in an increasingly dehumanizing colonial plot, has lost his own perspective.

In a rather trivial sense, Book II mirrors Book I: the big man becomes the little man. But it is more deeply a reversal of positions between colonizer and colonized. Book I features the aestheticizing and disarming charms of miniaturization, but Book II, by politicizing the prettified “games” of colonial domination, reveals the perspective of the dominated. The experience of public exhibition, for instance, now truly painful, becomes the “controlling idea of the Voyage” (Taylor 56):

My Master, to avoid a Croud, would suffer only Thirty People at a Time to see me. . . . I turned about several Times to the Company, paid my humble Respects, said they were welcome;

and used some other Speeches I had been taught. . . . I drew out my Hanger, and flourished with it after the Manner of Fencers in *England*. . . . I was that Day shewn to twelve Sets of Company; and as often forced to go over again with the same Fopperies, till I was half-dead with Weariness and Vexation. (77)

This traveling show goes on for some ten weeks, performing in eighteen large towns, in many villages, for some private families, and, finally, in the metropolis of *Lorbrulgrud*. Even after Gulliver is rescued by the Queen, who buys him, he graduates only to the status of a clever canary.

The Brobdingnagians see Gulliver as merely a clever animal, and the Queen's maids of honor use him as a sexual toy. But the racial reversal goes deeper still. What usually passes in the more grotesque descriptions for Swift's neurotic aversion to "the flesh"—note the assumption of universality—is in reality an exemplary demystification of white skin. The magnified view of the "monstrous Breast" of a Brobdingnagian woman is thus described in terms worthy of the most hyperbolic European voyager:

It stood prominent six Foot, and could not be less than sixteen in Circumference. The Nipple was about half the Bigness of my Head, and the Hue both of that and the Dug so varified with Spots, Pimples, and Freckles, that nothing could appear more nauseous. . . . This made me reflect upon the fair Skins of our *English* Ladies, who appear so beautiful to us, only because they are of our own size, and their Defects not to be seen but through a magnifying Glass. . . . (71)

Although it is tempting to ascribe this merely to Swift's misogyny, we are quickly reminded of its application to Gulliver, and to white males in general. Reminiscing about his discussion of "Complexions" in Lilliput, Gulliver recalls an intimate friend who said, ". . . he could discover great Holes in my Skin; that the Stumps of my Beard were ten Times stronger than the Bristles of a Boar; and my Complexion made up of several Colours altogether disagreeable. . . (67). This is not so much an assault on "the flesh" as on a quite specific dermatological fetish, a topos that justifies colonialism in the name of the supposed aesthetic superiority of

Caucasian skin, hair, and breasts. Even Gulliver himself, in this case, draws the tolerant lesson of cultural relativity.

Among the innumerable “ridiculous and troublesome Accidents” that befall Gulliver in the land of Brobdingnag is an adventure with a “frolicksome” monkey. The adventure is both dangerous and humiliating, insinuating as it does a kinship between Gulliver and a “lower” primate. The monkey holds Gulliver as if to suckle him. “I have good Reason to believe,” Gulliver concludes, “that he took me for a young one of his own Species, by his often stroaking my Face very gently with his other Paw” (98). Precisely that insinuation is the common currency of colonial voyage literature.

In Brobdingnag Gulliver speaks of England in automatic and sanctimonious formulas like the ingenious clockwork toy he appears to be. As Probyn suggests, Gulliver’s “crass complacency” and “smug insularity” are probably a parody of the scene near the beginning of *Robinson Crusoe* where the elder Crusoe’s advice to his son becomes a “paean to middle-class values” (184). One of the most famous instances of Swift’s “misanthropy” occurs in this book, during Gulliver’s searching conversations with the King of Brobdingnag about the history and social institutions of England. Having interrogated Gulliver’s cliché-ridden and yet ultimately damning account of English culture, the King pronounces this terrible judgment: “But, by what I have gathered from your own Relation, and the Answers I have with much Pains wringed and extorted from you; I cannot but conclude the Bulk of your Natives, to be the most pernicious Race of little odious Vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the Surface of the Earth” (108). To be sure, the English chauvinist is meant to feel the force of this withering judgment. But the real twist in Swift’s satire here comes a few pages later, as Gulliver escapes from Brobdingnag aboard an English ship. Of the English sailors, who first appeared to him as pygmies, Gulliver informs the captain, “I thought they were the most little contemptible Creatures I had ever beheld” (122). The echo of the King’s judgment here makes this more than a clever relativistic manipulation of scale. Gulliver, with predictable self-contempt, has again adopted the perspective of an alien culture: “For, indeed, while I was in that Prince’s Country, I

could never endure to look in a Glass after my Eyes had been accustomed to such prodigious Objects; because the Comparison gave me so despicable a Conceit of my self” (122). Not painlessly, but in direct conflict with himself and his own kind, Gulliver assimilates.

Although the personal colonizing process of which Gulliver is victim is largely suspended in Book III, the theme of colonial rule is not. What Swift presents instead is a narrative about the collective subjects of colonialism, nations and people. One episode in particular emphasizes the antagonisms that colonial rule inevitably generates. In the voyage to Laputa, Swift depicts a magnetically powered “flying island” that reigns over, and exacts tribute from, the various dominions on the continent below. When gentler and safer methods of insuring obedience to colonial administration fail, the flying island literally presses down—suppresses—the cities below, making “a universal Destruction both of Houses and Men” (144). As Thomas Metscher observes in an article on the Irish perspective in *Gulliver*, Swift makes clear by implication that in such a situation of colonial suppression, “resistance and insurrections are normal” (14). One episode in particular, censored out in the first and all subsequent editions until 1899, deserves far more notice than it has previously gotten. It contains, as Metscher emphasizes, “the parable of a successful Irish revolution” (14). Some three years prior to Gulliver’s visit, it seems, the King of Laputa (generally decoded as “The Whore,” that is, England) declared war on the “proud People” of Lindalino (= two *Lins* = double-*Lin* = Dublin). Gradually escalating his military tactics against their rebellion, the King first caused the island to hover over Lindalino to deprive it of sunshine and rain (145). When this and harsher tactics were met with defiance, he ordered that preparations be made for his “last Remedy” of “letting the Island drop directly on their Heads” (144). This tactic, however, which risked cracking the “Adamantine Bottom” of the island, likewise failed. After an experiment demonstrated that a magnetic force was indeed pulling the island violently toward the towers of Lindalino, the King “was forced to give the Town their own Conditions” (146). Moreover, as Gulliver was assured by a high official, “if the Island had descended so near the Town, as not to be able to raise it self, the Citizens were determined to fix it

forever, to kill the King and all his Servants, and entirely change the Government” (146). Although most critics see an allusion here to Ireland’s campaign against the debasing currency of Wood’s halfpence, led by Swift’s *Drapier’s Letters* (1724), Metscher insists that the parable is also, and most essentially, anticipatory, a fantasy of “complete national freedom” (14). Both readings make it clear that Swift’s sympathies, as Metscher says, “are with the ‘proud People’ of Lindalino” (14).

The full implications of *Gulliver’s* links with the oppression of Ireland, and with Swift’s tracts protesting that oppression, are rarely teased out so emphatically. Though virtually unique among critics, Metscher is not far wrong when he claims that “the Irish point of view in *Gulliver’s Travels* constitutes the *fundamental satiric perspective* of the book” (15). *Gulliver* must indeed be read as of a piece with Swift’s Irish tracts. There is the danger in such a view, however, of supposing that Swift opposes the European oppression of Caucasians only. Ireland was, as David Nokes says, “a colony in all but name,” and, thus, “it was a colonial system which the *Drapier’s Letters* were written to challenge” (286). As becomes fully clear in Book IV, that colonial system extended far beyond the borders of Ireland.

If the voyage to Lilliput is the most popular of the four travels, the most controversial is Book IV. The reason lies in its merciless completion of the colonial dialectic. The depiction of the flat-nosed and droopy-breasted Yahoos, as Frantz demonstrates, is indebted precisely to the racist voyage literature. But the Yahoos are in fact a hybrid creation, a representation also, as in the description of their violent scramble after “*shining Stones*” and their drunkenness, of European greed, hypocrisy, and brutality (226–28). The merging of Gulliver with that image of supposed “Otherness” is inexorable. But the final twist is Gulliver’s desperate identification with the Houyhnhnms, as an “exceptional” Yahoo, and his violent repudiation of humankind.

Gulliver initially takes the intelligent horses, the Houyhnhnms, for magicians (195). And though he tries to win favor with the Houyhnhnms by presenting them with beads and other such trinkets (199), he is already in the mystified position of the colonized culture, awestruck by the wonders he sees. That reversal, however, is little compared with his ultimate degradation into a Yahoo

“taught to imitate a rational Creature” (203) and endowed with “some small Pittance of *Reason*” (223). That reversal is the meaning of the episode in which the lusty female Yahoo tries to mate with Gulliver as he is bathing (232–33): “For now,” says the mortified Gulliver, “I could no longer deny, that I was a real *Yahoo*” (233).

It is a key turning point, not only of Book IV, but of the entire book, when Gulliver adopts the self-hating term “Yahoos” to describe his own kind. It occurs as he recounts his own adventures to the “Master” Houyhnhnm:

I said, my Birth was of honest Parents, in an Island called *England*, which was remote from this Country, as many Days Journey as the strongest of his Honour’s Servants could travel in the Annual Course of the Sun. . . . That in my last Voyage, I was Commander of the Ship and had about fifty *Yahoos* under me, many of which died at sea. . . . (210)

The word *Yahoos* insinuates itself almost unnoticed into Gulliver’s language. Yet it is among the Houyhnhnms the byword for all that is evil or badly made (240). Its use represents nothing less than the cultural dispossession of Gulliver, his alienation from his own history and origins. Gulliver is becoming more and more the object than the subject of his own story and speech.

It is a crucial point, and far more than a mere “limitation” of the Houyhnhnms, that they display “equine chauvinism” (Elliott 52) in discussion of Gulliver’s anatomy. The master Houyhnhnm, in fact, is as complacently ethnocentric as the average colonist. He sees only what Gulliver, in comparison with a Houyhnhnm, lacks:

He said, I differed indeed from other *Yahoos*, being much more cleanly and not altogether so deformed; but in point of real advantage, he thought I differed for the worse. That my nails were of no use either to my fore or hinder Feet: As to my fore feet, he could not properly call them by that Name, for he never observed me to walk upon them. . . . He then began to find fault with other Parts of my Body; the Flatness of my Face, the Prominence of my Nose, mine Eyes placed directly in front, so that I could not look on either side without turning my Head. . . . (209)

It is even more absurd, and more painful, of course, that “flat-faced” Gulliver, under the pressure of such hippocentric scrutiny, agrees.

As the process of colonization intensifies, Gulliver begins to ape the mannerisms of the Houyhnhnms. Moreover, as in the voyage to Brobdingnag, his assimilation to the Houyhnhnms is accompanied by extreme self-hatred:

When I happened to behold the Reflection of my own Form in a Lake or Fountain, I turned away from my Face in Horror and detestation of my self; and could better endure the sight of a common *Yahoo*, than of my own Person. By conversing with the *Houyhnhnms*, and looking upon them with Delight, I fell to imitate their Gait and Gesture, which is now grown into a Habit; and my Friends often tell me in a blunt Way, that *I trot like a Horse*; which, however, I take for a great Compliment. . . . (243–44)

It can be no surprise, then, that Gulliver is likewise “apt to fall into the Voice and Manner of the *Houyhnhnms*, and hear my self ridiculed on that Account without the least Mortification” (244). His assimilation is painfully idiotic and outlandish, confirmation that he is indeed a perfect Yahoo. It makes all the more pathetic his dream that the Houyhnhnms “would condescend to distinguish me from the rest of my species” (243).

Just as Gulliver has achieved the bliss of a conversion that breaks every tie with his past, however, disquiet intrudes into his rational utopia. The Houyhnhnms hold one of their parleys about the sole controversy in their country, the question “Whether the *Yahoos* should be exterminated from the Face of the Earth” (236). The spokesman for genocide, as Gulliver’s “Master” recounts the debate, produced a lengthy catalogue of the vices of that “most filthy, noisome, and deformed Animal,” the Yahoo (236). The spokesman also reproduced a classic colonial topos, the denial that the *Yahoos* have any claim as original inhabitants of the land:

He took Notice of a general Tradition, that *Yahoos* had not always been in their Country: But, that many Ages ago, two of these Brutes appeared together upon a Mountain. . . . That these *Yahoos* engendered, and their Brood in a short time

grew so numerous as to over-run and infest the whole Nation. . . . that those Creatures could not be *Ylnhniamsky* (or *Aborigines* of the Land) because of the violent Hatred the *Houyhnhnms* as well as all other Animals, bore them; which although their evil Disposition sufficiently deserved, could never have arrived at so high a Degree if they had been *Aborigines*, or else they would have long since been rooted out. (237)

This argument is, despite the Houyhnhnms' claim to perfect rationality, a tautology. The Yahoos deserve to be exterminated because they cannot be aborigines; they cannot be aborigines because they deserve to be exterminated. The dubious "tradition" invoked, like Sir Thomas Herbert's pseudo-Biblical view of the Khoi-San as "accursed Progeny of *Cham*," has every feature of racist mythology. Clearly an allusion to the account in Genesis of human creation and "degeneration" prior to the Flood (Anderson 160–63), it is a self-serving use, whether the Houyhnhnms know it or not, of that sacred myth. Precisely through the "denial of co-evalness," it seeks to place the Yahoos in an "Other" time. Thus, like the "Modest Proposer" of Anglo-Irish cannibalism, the spokesman for the extermination of Yahoos is willing, in the most suave tone imaginable, to appoint himself chief executor of mass death. And though the Houyhnhnm Grand Assembly did not implement this proposal, they did, as Gulliver is informed, adopt the Master's own alternative: a genocidal program, modeled after the human gelding of horses, of castration (238). Later, in an eerie, quasi-cannibalistic assault on those he disdains, Gulliver himself goes so far as to use Yahoos' skin and tallow to make the canoe in which he leaves the country (246).

Rawson, who cites the Biblical Flood as an authoritative precedent for richly merited genocide, disputes the idea that Swift, in order to discredit the Houyhnhnms, is putting obviously ghastly ideas into their mouths. He prefers to understand such sudden and violent shifts in the text's perspectives as a "contradiction in the strict logic of Swift's position" and, in fact, as a function of Swift's own compartmentalized feelings, his simultaneous contempt and compassion for the oppressed (171, 177). According to him, the Houyhnhnms' depiction of the Yahoos as more bestial than human "permits Swift to indulge in an extermination-

fantasy against mankind without arousing such a revulsion against the proposers as would diminish the unsettling force of the fantasy itself" (173). And thus he dismisses as "probably no more than a grim coincidence" the fact that in 1719 the Irish Privy Council proposed castrating unregistered Catholic priests (173). Thus does the "psychological" reading of Swift threaten to make *Gulliver* an apologia for colonial genocide.

Along with the evidence presented thus far, the conclusion of *Gulliver* strongly militates against such a "blame-the-victim" reading. In the closing and most emphatic narrative position comes a passage often attributed to the voice of Swift rather than to the character of Gulliver. It is a justly famous denunciation of the colonial process:

A Crew of Pyrates are driven by a Storm they know not whither; at length a Boy discovers Land from the Top-mast; they go on Shore to rob and plunder; they see an harmless People, are entertained with Kindness, they give the Country a new Name, they take formal Possession of it for the King, they set up a rotten [*sic*] Plank or a Stone for a Memorial, they murder two or three Dozen of the Natives, bring away a Couple more by Force for a Sample, return home, and get their Pardon. Here commences a new Dominion acquired with a title by *Divine Right*. Ships are sent with the first Opportunity; the Natives driven out or destroyed, their Princes tortured to discover their Gold; a free License given to all Acts of Inhumanity and Lust; the Earth reeking with the Blood of its Inhabitants: And this execrable Crew of Butchers employed in so pious an Expedition, is a *modern Colony* sent to convert and civilize an idolatrous and barbarous People. (258)

This outburst is certainly Swift's in some sense, and it bears comparison with the end of *A Modest Proposal*, where, as Ehrenpreis points out (36), we find similar direct and bitter diatribes about, for instance, the ready willingness of England to devour the whole Irish nation. It is preceded by an apologetic account of why Gulliver failed to claim Brobdingnag and the rest for the Crown (257–58), and it is followed by one disclaiming, with bitter irony, any possible connection between such "Butchers" and the British nation (258–59).

Such disillusioned irony is in fact also consistent with

Gulliver's character at this point—or, rather, with Swift's anti-colonial plot against “Gulliver” and against that bourgeois genre, the “realistic” novel, which often tries to organize reality around the inner life of a privileged subject or “character.” Gulliver is himself now the victimized, radically misanthropic—and, indeed, quite insane—product of repeated colonization. The puzzles of Gulliver's disintegrating character and decentered voice thus belong neither to Swift's compartmentalized feelings nor to the genre of Menippean satire, but rather to *Gulliver's* narrative enactment of that violent colonial process which it so consistently and lucidly condemns. For not only is Gulliver *not* a heroic and conquering European individual, but he so lacks true autonomy of voice and thought that he can hardly be said to be an “individual” at all. *Gulliver's Travels* is, as Eagleton says, “a work which, tempting the reader into its space with the bait of the ‘coherent subject’ Gulliver, does so only to reveal Gulliver as an area traversed and devastated by intolerable contradiction” (18). Gulliver, ruthlessly dispersed among “mutually incompatible discourses” (Eagleton 18), is the deliberate antithesis of the superbly self-sufficient Robinson Crusoe. Crusoe, a hero whose proud individuality is ruthlessly defined over and against the foil of a subhuman “Other,” occupies an emblematic position within the expansionist ideology that Swift explodes.

Near the very end of the book, Gulliver is exiled from the Land of the Houyhnhnms for fear he will lead an uprising of the enslaved Yahoos. Upon departing he again abases himself in good native fashion: “. . . and then . . . I took a second Leave of my Master: But as I was going to prostrate myself to kiss his Hoof, he did me the Honour to raise it gently to my Mouth. . .” (247). Moreover, Gulliver's defensiveness about this incident involves his veracity rather than his dignity. “Detractors,” he notes, “are pleased to think it improbable, that so illustrious a Person should descend to give so great a Mark of Distinction to a Creature so inferior as I” (247). This sense of inferiority Gulliver carries home to England, where it translates into a hatred of his own kind. Gulliver, for instance, cannot bear the *smell*, another colonial topos, of even his own wife and children. Even five years after his return he is so incompletely adjusted to English “Yahoos” that his wife and children, to this hour, “dare not presume to touch my

Bread, or drink out of the same Cup" (254). Gulliver is hopelessly alienated. As the prefatory "Letter to his Cousin Sympson" asserts, Gulliver, ensconced in the inhuman utopia of his own stable, now claims to prefer the neighing of two "degenerate *Houyhnhnms*" to "the united Praise of the whole Race" (vii).

It is too programmatic to demand of this superbly ironic conclusion any vision of a human community redeemed from colonial alienation. But in this absence of a fully imagined "syncretic" community (Said 328; JanMohamed 84–85; L. Brown 45–47), we touch on the notorious lack of positive standards in much of Swift's satire. The utopian dimension of *Gulliver*, strongest in showing the resistance of Lindalino and intermittently visible in nearly every voyage, disappears at this point. The story leaves us with only a good individual, the Portuguese captain Don Pedro de Mendez, and a slippery notion of "common sense" against which to measure Gulliver's ultimate misanthropy. And to the extent that the conclusion invites a merely moralistic reading of Gulliver's individual "pride" (Monk 78–79) rather than an analysis of social alienation, we may touch on a limit to the progressive force of Swift's critique. Unless we recognize that such "pride" has a collective dimension—that, indeed, it mimics the nationalistic pride of the builders of empire—the sharp edge of Swift's satire on colonial power may be entirely dulled.

Even so, the defensive reception of *Gulliver* in the self-proclaimed "First World" argues for its continuing value. Like the popular reception of *Huckleberry Finn* as a boyhood idyll; like the common pedagogical treatment of "A Modest Proposal" as a textbook specimen of the trope of irony; and like the odd reception of *Robinson Crusoe*, set in the very cradle of European slavery, as almost anything but a Caribbean book,¹³ the ahistorical reception of *Gulliver* bespeaks the operation of a collective forgetfulness. *Gulliver's Travels* was in its own time a riposte to a specific Whiggish opposition, epitomized by *Robinson Crusoe*, who spoke for the "winners of history." In our time, citizens of the U.S. continue to enjoy privileges shored up by government-backed coups, covert "intelligence" operations, gunboat diplomacy, mercenary armies, the occasional invasion or bombing strike, and, above all, complex economic and financial machinations often discussed, and begrudged by the U.S. public, as "foreign aid." Coming to terms

with this history, both colonial and neocolonial, has evidently been considerably more difficult for us than reconstituting *Gulliver* as a case study in psychopathology, or as a nursery classic, or as an esoteric and remote political allegory, or as a fable about the “human condition.”

Notes

1. Orwell argues that “whenever Gulliver is not acting as a stooge, there is a sort of continuity in his character, which comes out especially in his resourcefulness and his observation of physical detail” (192–93). And Lawlor argues that Swift’s characterization of Gulliver is the “masterstroke in the design of *Gulliver’s Travels*” (320).

2. The locus classicus of this view has been expressed by Ehrenpreis: “In the creation of Gulliver, Swift cannot be recommended for consistency either of character or of fact. Again and again the veneer of probability is broken” (34). Similarly, according to Elliot, “Swift pays little regard to psychological consistency; Gulliver’s character can hardly be said to develop; it simply changes” (45). But what “in novels would be considered inconsistency in characterization can be found in nearly all Menippean satires” (45). Donoghue asserts that “Gulliver is not, strictly speaking, a character at all” (19). And, finally, according to Rawson, “Intelligent readers . . . do not regard Gulliver as a ‘character’ or *Gulliver’s Travels* as a novel. What they witness is a tactical shift in the manner of Swift’s irony, while the *matter* remains constant . . .” (168).

3. This article demonstrates that a certain *thematic* unity can account for the vicissitudes of Gulliver’s “character.” A related problem, outside the scope of this article, has to do with the larger *structure* of the narrative: why these particular voyages in this particular sequence? More also needs to be done with the relationship between Gulliver as character and Gulliver as retrospective narrator.

4. Frantz (57) described Swift in 1931 as “a mind perennially occupied with thoughts on the natural depravity and odiousness of human nature.” In 1934 Leavis referred to Swift’s “insane egotism” and his “disgust-obsession” (132). Orwell in 1950 referred to Swift as a “diseased writer” (208) and his worldview as one “which only just passes the test of sanity” (209). See Norman O. Brown (34) for a summary of the psychoanalytic terminology which has since been applied to Swift, which includes “psychosexual infantilism,” “coprophilia,” “anal fixation,” and “inhibition of normal potency.” In 1983, Rawson (170) emphasized “the stark coexistence of opposite feelings” in Swift’s “normal political thinking.” The most subtle treatment of Swift’s writing in relation to his “emotional distancing” (160–66) and his “excremental obsession” (365–71) was published by Nokes in 1985.

5. See, for instance, Quintana’s *The Mind and Art of Jonathan Swift* for the view that much of the voyage to Lilliput is “an extended allegory setting forth Bolingbroke’s political career” (308). See also Case’s *Four Essays on Gulliver’s Travels* (69–96) for an interpretation that identifies each Lilliputian character with an English public figure. So, too, with each “event,” so that, for instance, Gulliver’s peeing on the royal palace equals the Tories’ illegal negotiation of the

Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 (75). Some editors of *Gulliver* likewise annotate the book by emphasizing such possible correlations.

6. The Asiento was a contract giving the right (exclusive, but undermined by smugglers) to supply an annual quota of slaves to the Spanish colonial possessions. England's acquisition of this monopoly, bestowed on the South Sea Company, was celebrated in London by a torchlight procession (L. Brown 43; Davis 131–32; Dabydeen 44–45). Dabydeen points out that Swift, despite his anti-colonial satire, invested in the slave-trafficking South Sea Company in 1720, the year of the South Sea Bubble. Thus Dabydeen suggests that Swift merely used the theme of slavery as a convenient occasion “for the exercise of wit and satirical prowess” (44). Although it is salutary to recognize Swift's personal failure to avoid complicity with the institutions he satirizes, such a recognition, in my view, does not so utterly negate the force of his satire.

7. Thus Swift, unlike Josiah Tucker, does not criticize mercantilism merely to promote and legitimize the more efficient imperialism of “free trade.” See Semmel (19–30) for the debates between Tucker, David Hume, and Edmund Burke regarding the eighteenth-century theory of free-trade empire.

8. The hallmark of such colonial discourses is the production of a reductive difference—a “manichean allegory,” as JanMohamed has said—that transforms racial difference into moral and metaphysical opposition between “good and evil, superiority and inferiority, civilization and savagery. . .” (63). The kinds of “difference” so allegorically produced are wildly inconsistent, impossible to synthesize into a coherent portrait of the subjugated group (Memmi 83). But, though colonial stereotypes vary according to the given ideological needs of the moment, the very flexibility of colonial discourse preserves its power. What really matters, as Said has written of “Orientalism,” is a “flexible *positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand” (7). The colonized, as Stam and Spence argue, “were ridiculed as lacking in culture and history *because* colonialism, in the name of profit, was destroying the basis of that culture and the memory of that history” (4).

9. See Hulme's discussion of the historical development of the “cannibalism” theme from the time of Columbus (12–43) and the meaning of its contemporary currency in jokes, sensational literature, and anthropological debates (78–87). See also Brantlinger (185–86) for the Victorian fascination, among scientists and sensational writers alike, with the putative practice of African cannibalism.

10. Swift's personal copy of Herbert's travels is still extant (Frantz 50). According to Sypher (31), Swift called Herbert a “coxcomb” and inscribed the word “insufferable” in his own copy of the travels. Dampier's *A New Voyage round the World* is also known to have been in Swift's library (Frantz 57), and “Cousin Dampier” is mentioned in *Gulliver's* prefatory “Letter to his Cousin Sympson.”

11. Herbert hedges this description with a qualifying admission that it is true “if Gonsalvo soza [*sic*] say true” (11). Another early global voyager, Dampier, flies in the face of “common opinion of *Anthrophophagi*, or Man-Eaters” by averring that he “never did meet with any such people” (485).

12. As early as 1810 the European misrepresentation of native breasts was analyzed by the American minister Samuel Stanhope Smith as hyperbole “vended by ignorance, and imposture, and received by credulity.” According to Smith, “Even Ireland not two centuries ago, when, however, it was rarely visited by English travellers, and was regarded with contemptuous pride by its more

powerful and wealthy neighbour, was sometimes subject to similar misrepresentations. Lithgow, in his *rare adventures and painful peregrinations*, says he *saw women in the 'North parts' of that island, I presume with traveller's eyes, who could lay their breasts, or 'dugs,' as he calls them, over their shoulders, and suckle their children behind their backs*. He adds, that *they were more than half a yard in length, and disdainfully compares them to the money-bags of an East-India Merchant, made of well tanned leather*" (133–34n.). Smith contends that humankind is a genetic unity diversified by such environmental factors as climate and soil.

13. *Robinson Crusoe* has traditionally been seen as "a 'Puritan fable', the first true work of 'realism', the novel of 'economic individualism' or, most importantly, the story quite simply of a man on an island—the location of that island being of, at best, subsidiary importance" (Hulme 176).

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