

Subversion of Enlightenment Discourse in  
Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*

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“Instead of letting your hardships and failures discourage or exhaust you, let them inspire you. Let them make you even hungrier to succeed.”

(Obama 27)

## Abstract

The Enlightenment era saw the rise in popularity of an epistemology that valued fact and reason due, largely, to the evolution of scientific knowledge. This resulted in an epistemological shift that emphasised reason and fact and gave rise to new forms of discourse. These discourses influenced the development of several genres that were simultaneously being formed through the growth of literary criticism and were disseminated through a booming literary market. Genres such as travel writing, journalism, historiography, and scientific writing possessed particular codes which gave the impression of truth through their presumed embodiment of fact and reality. These new 'realistic' discourses produced the impression of facticity, truthfulness, and authenticity through the use of statistics, geometry, measurements, verisimilitude, objectivity, reason, reportage language, and the scientific method. To many of the contemporary readers these discourses were the quintessence of truth, a perception created through the emergence of science's new systems of knowledge that also reconceptualised representations of truth, fact, and reality. *Gulliver's Travels*, published by Jonathan Swift in 1726, is a work of literature that inverts the relationship these epistemologies and discourses seek to establish with truth. The *Travels* uses some of the newly created techniques for writing factually that appeared in these genres and combines them with an imagined, fantastic, satirically exorbitant fantasy. Satiric prose entangles, entwines, and thereby inverts these linguistic codes of realism and fact through a radically fantastic fictional performance. The satire of *Gulliver's Travels* juxtaposes reality with fantasy, converges the values of the scientific epistemology of factual truth with works of pure imagination, and makes the truth far stranger than fiction. Through the *Travels'* parody, unreliable narration, juxtaposition, and satire's own fundamental paradox of reality and fantasy the ability of these discourses to inevitably signify 'truth' is subverted. Swift's satire in *Gulliver's Travels* provides a commentary on the popular discourses of reality and facticity present in his context of the early eighteenth-century as he questions this discourse's relationship to 'truth'.

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## Introduction

In Jonathan Swift's context of early eighteenth-century Britain writings claiming reality, fact, and truth were prolific. Certain crucial developments in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had a big influence on crystallising a number of the more recognisable genres of nonfiction writing that we recognise today. In particular, the scientific developments that occurred in this period birthed what was termed 'new science'. This 'new science' sought to create an empirical objectivity based on fact and mathematics which, by the early eighteenth century, had influenced many sectors of society; so much so that facticity in many ways dominated men's thought (Hall 90). In the literature of the period this resulted in a growing distinction between fact and fiction as facticity was highly valued as the academic mode and fiction began to be perceived as more trivial. Fact-focused writing became increasingly segregated as it avoided any collusion with the fictive (Zimmerman 141). The mode of rhetoric that came of age in the early eighteenth century, as a result of the conjunction of 'new science' writing and journalistic reportage during the 'Age of Reason', was rational, authoritative, and fact-based (Ward 113-337). It is these discourses of fact and reality that Swift engages with in *Gulliver's Travels* and which his satire works to undermine.

The roots of the satiric tradition go extremely far back: "the emergence of satire, if not as a formal genre, then at least as a distinct type of literature, is probably very ancient." (Hodgart 14). From Ancient Rome, to Egypt, to before the written word, satire has had a place in criticising the dominant power of its day. The mode rebels against the governing hegemony by exposing the flaws of the powerful institutions, people, and facets of society. Despite this thesis' focus on the difficulties of definitions we must set parameters for the form and function of satire, but it is a mode which does not benefit from being pinned down. Griffin gives a definition of satire in his book *Satire: A Critical Reintroduction*:

A work of satire is designed to attack vice or folly. To this end it uses wit or ridicule. Like polemical rhetoric, it seeks to persuade an audience that something is reprehensible or

ridiculous; unlike pure rhetoric, it engages in exaggeration and some sort of fiction. But satire does not forsake the 'real world' entirely. Its victims come from that world, and it is this fact (together with a darker or sharper tone) that separates it from pure comedy. Finally, satire usually proceeds by means of clear reference to some moral standards or purposes. (Griffin 1)

Satire functions more as a tone or mode, than a genre. For, satire takes a particular "approach to subject, by a special attitude to human experience which is reflected in its artistic conventions. It is in fact very difficult to distinguish it clearly from other literary forms on any other basis" (Hodgart 12). Satire has an overwhelming number of forms and sub-forms and the satirist has very few boundaries, utilising whichever literary vehicle they so choose to deliver their critique. As satire is most clearly distinguished by the manner in which it addresses its subject, we are better to view it as a tone: "satire ... is not a well-defined category, but a convenient expression to cover a variety of literary works that have many characteristics in common" (Hodgart 8). Satire can present in any genre or within any category; so long as it delivers a scornful and humorous commentary on an aspect of its 'real world' setting it is an act of satire. Hodgart states that "faced with these varieties of form critics have, not surprisingly, been unable to reach agreement on the strict definition of satire" (13). This evasiveness is perhaps advantageous, for in recognising its ability to be fluid we are better able to recognise and appreciate it in its application across multiple genres and categories. Satire is a literary tone which has thrived without being boxed in by a rigid definition. It sets an example of how we could approach other literary terminology with a more open concept of its meaning and function to better account for the complex and unexpected ways in which these forms can be used.

*Gulliver's Travels*, written by Jonathan Swift and published in 1726, is a book that moves through different satirical forms and targets. The voyages to Lilliput and Brobdingnag have a narrative of fantasy fiction with a cutting satire of real historical particulars immersed in the text. For

instance, the conflict between the French and the English is re-enacted in miniature through the Lilliputians and their conflict with the Blefuscuans: “the Emperors of Blefuscu did frequently expostulate by their Ambassadors, accusing us of making a Schism in Religion” (Swift, *Travels* 64). In the land of Brobdingnag Gulliver gives the King a full account of English society, leaving the King “struck with Horror at the Description I had given” (Swift, *Travels* 151). Although, in these segments the fantasy narrative is dominant as Swift constructs a fanciful performative fiction with pygmies, giants, epic battles with wasps and rats, and several nasty encounters with a dwarf. This tone shifts in Part III “A Voyage to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbudrib, and Japan”. In these chapters the satiric critiques of the social reality take centre stage through a tone of cynicism as a parody of the modern academics of Swift’s context delivers its mockery: “the Professors appearing in my Judgement wholly out of their Senses” (Swift, *Travels* 205). Part IV, entitled the “Voyage to the Land of the Houyhnhnms” has another change in tone as it delivers a broader misanthropic satire on the nature of humanity. Gulliver is confronted, not only with the reality of the human body, but the reality of human nature when viewed with the rationality of the Houyhnhnms: “although there were few greater Lovers of Mankind, at that time, than myself; yet I confess I never saw any sensitive Being so detestable on all Accounts” (Swift, *Travels* 249). *Gulliver’s Travels* is saturated with satirical targets and critiques of Swift’s society in Britain in the early eighteenth-century.

Throughout the many shifts of tone and target in *Gulliver’s Travels* Swift constructs a fiction that is fantastical in its imagination, creativity, and outrageousness. However, the purpose of this fantastic fiction is to deliver a very pointed commentary of particular realities, facts, and truths beyond the fiction. This is intrinsic to all satire, but *Gulliver’s Travels* provides an excellent demonstration of this paradoxical dynamic of truth and untruth as it tells truths about reality by radically fictional means. Swift also goes further in his investigation of truth and untruth as he explores how epistemological and rhetorical understandings of truth are produced and disseminated. In the *Travels* Swift impersonates the discourses of facticity and reality that were predominant in the early eighteenth-century and then inverts them through the performance of his

fiction, which undermines the discourses perceived relationship to truth. The conventions of discourses of fact and reality (as they are employed in journalism, scientific writing, travel writing, and historiography) are imitated, blended, and juxtaposed with fantasy to invert their meaning and reveal their flawed affiliation to truth.

The growing epistemology of facticity, objectivity, and reality in the early eighteenth-century was simultaneous with the evolution of literary criticism, culminating in the development of a rhetoric that embodied these values. Literary criticism incorporated these values into genres such as journalism, scientific writing, travel writing, and historiography. These genres prioritised objectivity, facticity, reality, and were represented as embodiments of 'truth'. The discourses presented a convincing verisimilitude to much of society in the early-eighteenth century with their codes of reality, fact, and truth signified in their uses of: eye-witness accounts, statistics, scientific and mathematic authority, measurements, and documentary observations. Swift imitates these generic discourses and inverts their codes of reality and facticity to subvert their representation as truth. The principles and signifiers of this rhetoric are intertwined, layered, and juxtaposed with fantasy to confuse the reader. Parts of the narrative that the reader knows to be fact are presented as fiction and things that sound fictional, they know are fact. As the literary criticism of the early-eighteenth century segregated writings of fact and reality from any inference of subjectivity or fiction, genres such as these developed as perceived discourses of truth. Genres certainly have their uses in framing literature; but when they are reified and divisive, they begin to do more harm than good. They are, in fact, "least useful in the most interesting cases" (Heyne 330), *Gulliver's Travels* is one such interesting case.

Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* makes particularly innovative use of the new discourses of 'reality' that were gaining increasing authority in his time. In fact, sometimes he conveys his most extravagantly fantastic (fictional) sequences using these discourses very fully through parody. Swift constructs a specific caricature of Daniel Defoe's 1719 book *Robinson Crusoe*. Throughout *Gulliver's*

voyages Swift inserts parodies of *Robinson Crusoe* into the fiction, exaggerating its attempt at a realism that, while perhaps successful in creating a reflection of reality, did nothing to represent truth. *Robinson Crusoe* is a fictional travel book; however, it uses a discourse of realism by narrating minor details and facts to construct a verisimilitude for its audience. This is parodied by Swift in the *Travels* in Gulliver's relating of every minor detail of his bowel movements, claiming it as a proof of his commitment to truth: "I did not omit one material Circumstance" (Swift, *Travels* 111). Swift parodies *Crusoe* to mock Defoe's attempts to construct a true representation of reality through a discourse of realism and fact. Through drawing attention to Defoe's mistakes and undermining his narration through a caricature Swift demonstrates the need to be suspicious of the creation of an effect of facticity when there are no actual facts being referred to. While *Crusoe* was effective in producing a verisimilitude, Swift reminds readers that it has no actual ties to reality or any real factual relevance and thus, Swift undermines the value of Defoe's narrative of realism. That Swift makes such critiques through a fantastic fiction, such as Gulliver looking for a private place to defecate while staying in a home of giants, is certainly ironic but it also contributes to the truth untruth rhetoric paradox that *Gulliver's Travels* constructs.

The dynamic between the fictional narrative and the social reality is made significant through a parody of 'new science' and its scientists (or natural philosophers) in Part III "A Voyage to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbudrib, and Japan". The visits to Laputa and Balnibarbi in particular deliver an extremely specific imitation of the science and its practitioners in the early eighteenth-century. The critics Dr Marjorie Nicolson and Dr Nora Mohler theorise this parody was based on the Royal Society of London's publication *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (301). In Gulliver's visit to the Grand Academy of Lagado the Royal Society of London is caricaturised, particular experiments written in the *Philosophical Transactions* are reanimated and their relationships to reality, fact, and truth questioned by radically fictional means. For instance, the fantastic experiment Gulliver describes of a scientist attempting to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers is a parody of several experiments that were researching botany in relation to air and

sunlight: “Preposterous as this may seem, it is no more incredible than the other experiments which prove to have scientific sources” (Nicolson and Mohler 328). Swift takes real scientific experiments from a journal which embodied this rhetoric of truth as fact and reason; and presents its contents as extravagantly fictional, despite “adding to them little-except the cucumbers!” (Nicolson and Mohler 328). Swift’s imagination takes something real and makes it apparently unreal (Nicolson and Mohler 312), disrupting the readers perception of codes of reality present in certain discourses as representative of truth.

Satire has always referenced realities beyond its manifested fiction, but this is also true of many fictional genres. Where satire’s relationship to the reality beyond its fiction is unique is in its reliance on the reader’s recognition. Satire, for its effective operation, depends on the reader making a link between fictional events, characters, places, and so on and a particular real-life context. In order to grasp the full breadth of the satiric writing the reader must connect the fiction to the subtextual reality. In this satire is distinct from other literary fictional discourses. Satire cannot fully function without this recognition. Gulliver tells the story of the scientist who was cutting in half the brains of the two opposing political parties and swapping them around, so each politician had half the thoughts from the other party: “the two half Brains being left to debate the Matter between themselves within the Space of one Scull, would soon come to a good Understanding” (Swift, *Travels* 207). This is still a humorous general commentary on politics, but to truly understand the satire the reader needs to connect it to the particular political setting of Swift’s context to recognise the Tories and the Whigs, as its original audience would have. In this instance of recognition lies the satiric truth behind the manifest fiction. The *Travels’* paradoxical relationship with reality and fiction operates on multiple levels to subvert the assumed ability of a particular rhetoric to signify truth or untruth. *Gulliver’s Travels* is a particularly unique satire as it not only engages with the social reality but with the very discourses of reality themselves. Swift is one of the earliest and most successful writers to use the textual codes of realism in evoking an extravagantly impossible, fantastic, fictional, satirical world.

In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift's satire engages with the modern discourses and rhetorics to subvert the epistemological perception that these languages were inevitably representative of truth.

As Swift said:

Falsehood flies, and truth comes limping after it, so that when men come to be undeceived, it is too late; the jest is over, and the tale hath had its effect: like a man, who hath thought of a good repartee when the discourse is changed, or the company parted; or like a physician, who hath found out an infallible medicine, after the patient is dead. (Swift, *Interesting and Valuable Papers* 300)

*Gulliver's Travels* is Swift's truth, chasing after the falsehoods of his contemporary discourses. Truth and lies is a reoccurring theme throughout the *Travels*. It appears through Gulliver's travel lies, his role as a splendide mendax, his unreliable narration through claims of relating absolute fact, and the Houyhnhnms and their ability to perceive truth without language. In the early eighteenth-century discourses of 'facticity' were taking over the literary field, this rhetoric claimed to represent 'truth' despite being tempered with lies and imagination. In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift demonstrates how this rhetoric does not automatically signify 'truth' factual, moral, or otherwise.

This thesis examines how Jonathan Swift's satire in *Gulliver's Travels* subverts the perception that the discourses of reality and fact present in his context were inherently representative of 'truth'. Chapter One establishes a contextual background of Swift's Britain in the early eighteenth-century and explores the societal shifts and developments that lead to a new epistemology of truth as fact and the resulting formation of a rhetoric of reality and facticity as a language of truth and the genres that formed and disseminated this rhetoric. Chapter Two examines how Swift's satire undermines the discourses of fact and reality through an impersonation of the travel genre, realism, and historiography. In these imitations Swift demonstrates that these discourses do not automatically tell truth; whether factual, realistic, or moral/philosophical. The genres and languages of these discourses are appropriated to subvert epistemological ideals in Swift's context of a system

of language being capable of signifying truth. In Chapter Three the thesis will explore how *Gulliver's Travels* engages with the epistemology of new science in the early eighteenth century and satirises it through parodies of the Royal Society of London and the scientific method. The *Travels* mocks new science through a satiric discourse that converges social reality and fantasy. Satire itself has a paradoxical relationship between social reality and fantasy as its purpose is to deliver censure, and perhaps moral truths, on specific aspects of its contextual social reality through an elaborate fictional creation. Real epistemologies and rhetorics of 'truth' from Swift's milieu of early eighteenth-century Britain are inflated and reproduced hyperbolically to appear as fictional. Just as imagined stories are told in the objective and factual language of the dominant 'truth' rhetoric of Swift's context. Hence, in *Gulliver's Travels* Swift subverts the belief that a particular language has an inherent ability to constitute 'truth' or reality.

## Chapter One

Jonathan Swift was born in Dublin in 1667. His most famous work of satire was *Gulliver's Travels* which he published at the age of 59, although, he had already built a strong reputation as a discontent through his political involvement and pamphleteering. Politics in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was a rough terrain. Britain was entangled in civil wars as England battled for dominance over Scotland and Ireland; and within her borders the government fought with the crown. In the mid-1600s the Puritans in English Parliament were in conflict King Charles I as they feared he would attempt impose Catholic worship on England and Scotland. When the King attempted to arrest a number of ministers for treason an outright conflict began and in 1642 warfare ensued. Charles I was defeated in battle and was tried for treason by Parliament for waging an unjust war "whereby the country has been miserably wasted, the public treasure exhausted, trade decayed [and] thousands of people murdered" (Hunt 2). In 1649, less than twenty years before Swift was born, the King was beheaded. This hugely affected the political climate throughout Swift's lifetime as the system of government in England underwent a significant period of change as it introduced laws to limit the power of the next monarch, Charles II. The son of an executed tyrant, Charles II was "eager to achieve a new settlement between the monarchy and Parliament. A mutual – though wary – respect thus emerged between the two institutions" (White 22). However, upon the death of Charles II in 1685 his brother James II took the throne and attempted to undo the truce the crown had reached with Parliament. In 1688, at the urging of Parliament William and Mary (the Prince and Princess of Orange) arrived and quickly overthrew James II who fled to France to live in exile. The ascension of King William III and Queen Mary II was later termed the 'Glorious Revolution' as it marked:

the establishment of a lasting Protestant settlement in British politics. New constitutional arrangements were established that would endure into the modern age. A Bill of Rights enacted by Parliament in 1689 implemented new rules and conventions governing the

affairs of state: the illegality of the Crown raising taxes or mobilising armies without Parliament's support, for example, along with the requirement for regular sessions of Parliament to be held, the right to free elections and the right to free speech. (White 32)

Once the Bill of Rights was passed the absolute power of the monarch was curbed by Parliament and monarchs could no longer reign without their support. The inconstant and tumultuous monarchy led to a parliament that held more control of the nation and therefore had an increasing quantity and boldness of political opinions. Swift's opinions called him to the attention of the monarch Queen Anne, who "suspected him of being irreligious" (Cody 6). These political opinions of Swift and many others were explored through pamphlets and treatises.

It was through these political mediums of writing that Swift entered this new political fray in the early eighteenth century. The political parties of the Tories and the Whigs had cropped up during the attempts to divert the line of succession to avoid James II. After being united in their efforts to bring about the 'Glorious Revolution' with the coronation of William III and Mary II the division between the parties was milder. However, they were still fundamentally opposed in their values.

Tories represented the resistance, mainly by the country gentry, to religious toleration and foreign entanglements. Toryism became identified with Anglicanism and the squirearchy and Whiggism with the aristocratic, landowning families and the financial interests of the wealthy middle classes. (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "Whig and Tory" 2)

Swift had involvement with both parties, for which many critics label him a hypocrite. He petitioned the Whigs for aid in the interests of the Church of Ireland, and he maintained friendships with a number of Whig ministers. However, in 1708 Swift began to attack the Whigs in political pamphlets which led the leader of the Tory government, Henry St John Bolingbroke, to recruit Swift to his party's cause.

Swift was part of the inner circle of Tory government from 1709 to 1714 and in this period was the editor of Tory publication *The Examiner*. Swift's political pamphleteering earned him enemies and infamy. Indeed, the essay "The Publick Spirit of the Whigs" was decried by Queen Anne as "a false, malicious, and factious libel" (Quinlan 4). Swift's pamphlet was prosecuted "ostensibly because of the disparaging references to the Scots" (Quinlan 12). In 1714 Swift and the whole of the Tory party were removed from power and Swift was exiled to Ireland due to a perceived sympathy to the plight of Scotland. Swift's political career came to a disappointing end as he returned to Dublin fearing that he would "die here in a rage, like a poisoned rat in a hole" (Swift, *Letters* 31). Maurice Quinlan posits that Swift's enemies, in one respect, contributed to his fame: "for his bitter experience in public affairs undoubtedly influenced to some degree the memorable satire in *Gulliver's Travels* on kings and queens, courtiers and statesmen, government, and the law" (Quinlan 17). Upon his relocation to Ireland Swift wrote some of his most famous works such as: "Proposal for Universal Use of Irish Manufacture" (1720), "Drapier's Letters" (1724), *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), and "A Modest Proposal" (1729). Considering Jonathan Swift's foray into politics gives another, more personal, perspective through which to observe the political commentary in *Gulliver's Travels*.

Despite Swift's participation in the Tory party, Swift's political satires do not align with the views of one particular political party. Swift was an Irishman, a man of the Anglican Church, a supporter of the lower classes and a spokesman against the very hegemonic powers that he was part of. His opinions were numerous and varied, not to be easily pinned down. David Oakleaf argues that no one has surmised Swift's views better than he did himself (4) when he said, as "a lover of liberty, I found myself much inclined to be what they call a Whig in politics ... but as to religion, I confessed myself to be an high churchman" (Swift, *Interesting and Valuable Papers* xxvi). As such, Swift's political pamphlets were varied in their targets, his only allegiance being to "fair liberty" (Swift, "Verses" 40). From essays such as: "The Publick Spirit of the Whigs" and "A Modest Proposal" to Menippean works such as *Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels*, it is evident that Swift does not discriminate between Whig or Tory but ruthlessly attacks any that he finds wanting.

In *Gulliver's Travels*, for example, Swift certainly satirises both parties. The critique focuses on the division of the parties more than their respective tenets. In Gulliver's visit to Lilliput, he encounters: "two struggling Parties [...] under the Names of Tramecksan and Slamecksan" (Swift, *Travels* 63), who distinguish themselves by the height of the heels on their shoes. The Emperor of Lilliput claims to wear the low heels of the Slamecksan, but the Lilliputians suspect some preference towards the Tramecksan: "at least we can plainly discover one of his heels higher than the other; which gives him a Hobble in his Gait" (Swift, *Travels* 63). The reference to the Tories and the Whigs is obvious to the reader, particularly a reader in the early eighteenth century, and the conflict between the two parties is made to seem ridiculous and childish: "the Animosities between these two Parties run so high, that they will neither eat nor drink, nor talk with each other" (Swift, *Travels* 63). In reframing the division between the Tories and the Whigs in a silly caricature, the satire delivers a criticism on both parties.

David Oakleaf argues that Gulliver's awkward movement through several remote communities reflects Swift's seemingly contradictory relationship to politics, and his place in his context (12). Gulliver misrepresents himself as 'fitting in' to these different societies: "he proudly celebrates his standing as a Nardac of Lilliput [...] and, after his last voyage, trots and whinnies to assert his presumed Houyhnhnm superiority" (Oakleaf 12). However, he does not actually fit in any of these communities. Gulliver adapts to survive but never thrives in his environment -- not even in England, which he always seems to leave as soon as possible after his various returns home, despite a terrible track record of misadventures abroad. In Lilliput he is a prisoner; in Brobdingnag he is constantly in danger from a malicious dwarf; in Laputa he does not fit as a Laputian nor a flapper; and in the land of the Houyhnhnms Gulliver is more of a domesticated Yahoo than one of the noble horses he emulates. Oakleaf posits that this imitates Swift's changing political identity:

*Gulliver's Travels* reflects as a comedy the question at the centre of his political life his circumstances posed a single question for the emphatically independent political writer.

Was he a clergyman or a playfully indecorous satirist? Was he a Whig or a Tory? Was he English or Irish? To which group did he belong? With which group did he identify himself? Since every I implies a we, these questions work variations on the question of identity: 'Who are you?' (12)

We may ask the same question of *Gulliver's Travels* as a book. Like its author and its protagonist, it is not easily pinned down to one straightforward category. It is fluid and complex in its relationship to many different genres. Swift's political context was complicated, as was his role in it and as is his satire of it.

The English Reformation drastically changed the role of religion in Swift's context. The English Reformation began long before Swift was born with King Henry VIII seceding the Church of England from Rome in the sixteenth century. However, many years of conflict followed as the subsequent Tudor monarchs attempted to achieve religious uniformity. The nation Swift was born into had been divided by religion for almost a century: "Like many of his society, Swift was haunted by the cultural memory of war, by experience of current war, and by anticipation of imminent wars" (Oakleaf 11). Despite some of his conservative religious ideals, a legacy of war made Swift aware of the fatal flaws of religion: "we have just Religion enough to make us hate, but not enough to make us love one another" (Swift, "Thoughts" 1). For Swift, "war had radically transformed the communities to which he was most deeply attached, the Anglo-Irish community and the Church of Ireland" (Oakleaf 11). Bulman argues that the separation of Church and state, under James II, was not out of a liberal religious tolerance, but a dire need for civil stability after decades of war: "the acceptance of this idea was driven not by a clarion call for increased freedoms, but by a desperate cry for peace" (Bulman 6). It was at the beginning of Swift's adulthood that the religious conflict finally began to calm.

As Britain adjusted to a new normal, Swift was living in England as a secretary of Sir William Temple. Sir William Temple was a Baronet who had worked under the secretary of state for Charles

II. Temple spent much of his political career attempting to negotiate a peace between the English and the Dutch and for a time he held considerable influence over the Privy Council. He retired in 1681 as he “found himself out of step with Charles’s policies” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Temple” 2). Temple’s involvement in politics and the monarchy likely had a great impact on Swift as he began his own career in politics and the Church.

Jonathan Swift joined the Anglican Church professionally as a Deacon in 1694 and became a priest the following year. In England itself, the Anglican Church was the preferred religious institution of the gentry and aristocracy and it held the support of the Tories. In Ireland, however, Anglicanism (represented by the Church of Ireland) was a minority and struggled to “maintain its devotional and pastoral position” ... “amongst indigenous Roman Catholics” (Walsh 162). In joining the Church of Ireland, Swift had joined “an embattled institution, under severe economic strain, politically dominated by England and the English church hierarchy” (Walsh 162). Swift wanted to be appointed a Bishop in England (Gardiner 693) but his controversial writings sabotaged this goal and in 1713 Swift was promoted to Dean of St Patrick’s Cathedral in Dublin.

Writings such as *A Tale of a Tub* and “A Modest Proposal” support our “image of Swift the servant of human liberty, the defender of the lower clergy, the advocate of the Irish common people” (Walsh 161). However, in his religious writings modern readers would find “an awkwardly conservative and conventional thinker” (Walsh 161). Again, we try to make sense of Swift’s seemingly contradictory views and principles:

Many of his attitudes fit badly or not at all, however, with a modern democratic or ecumenist or pluralist view: his impassioned resistance to the ‘comprehension’ of dissenters or non-conformists (their admission to worship and employment within the established church); his insistence that, while thought is free, religious, and political expression must be restricted, even censored... (Walsh 162)

The juxtaposition of Swift's conservative religious sermons and his rebellious satirical works, his career as a high churchman alongside his critique of the Church, are among the many paradoxes of his character. He is an author who resists simple categorization. Is he a liberal, conservative, socialist, or monarchist? Swift's opinions on politics and religion are mirrored in his writings, and so, just as he defies categorisation himself, so too does his work.

In *Gulliver's Travels* a satire of religion goes hand in hand with a satire of war. Works such as *A Tale of a Tub* and "An Argument Against Abolishing Christianity" focus on showing the flaws of religion. However, in *Gulliver's Travels* the satire on religion is of the violence it inspires. In Part I, "A Voyage to Lilliput", Swift constructs a parallel history of England and Ireland with the war between Lilliput and Blefuscu. Lilliput and Blefuscu differ over their beliefs of which end to break an egg at. The Emperor of Lilliput commands that all eggs must be broken at the small end: "the People so highly resented this Law, that our Histories tell us, there have been six Rebellions raised on that Account; wherein one Emperor lost his Life, and another his Crown" (Swift, *Travels* 64). The rebels and exiles flee to Blefuscu, for refuge with other "Big-Endians". Swift mirrors the divide between religions through linking the egg breaking to the interpretation of a holy text:

accusing us of making a Schism in Religion, by offending against a fundamental Doctrine of our great prophet Lustrog ... this however, is thought to be a meer Strain upon the Text: For the Words are these; That all true Believers shall break their Eggs at the convenient End...  
(Swift, *Travels* 64)

This can be read as a reference to different interpretations of the Bible by the Roman Catholics of Ireland and many parts of Europe, and the Protestants dominant in England. Swift alludes to his opinion on this divide through Gulliver's statement that: "which is the convenient End, seems, in my humble Opinion, to be left to every Man's Conscience..." (Swift, *Travels* 64). In reducing such a long and horrific conflict to a quibble over how to break an egg, Swift makes the bloodshed over such a trivial difference of belief between the Catholics and Protestants appear ludicrous: "It is computed,

that eleven Thousand Persons have, at several Times, suffered Death, rather than submit to break their Eggs at the smaller End” (Swift, *Travels* 64). This religious difference is linked to the relationship between England and Ireland as Gulliver is faced with the consequences of his actions in defeating the Blefuscu’s attack on Lilliput. The Emperor of Lilliput intends to colonise Blefuscu and impose his religious beliefs upon them: “compelling that People to break the smaller End of their Eggs; by which he would remain sole Monarch of the whole World” (Swift, *Travels* 68). Blefuscu, like Ireland, is to be suppressed and ruled by the Lilliputians, or the English. Swift indicates his opinion on this subjugation through Gulliver as he argues with the Emperor: “I plainly protested, that I would never be an Instrument of bringing a free and brave People into Slavery” (Swift, *Travels* 68). This satire of religion may seem liberal to many modern readers, although Swift is not critiquing religion itself in *Gulliver’s Travels* but the escalation of religious differences to war and colonisation. It is the attempt to impose religious beliefs on populations through extreme force that Swift is arguing against.

Swift’s position in the Church leads some critics to argue in favour of a religious reading of *Gulliver’s Travels*. Part IV, “A Voyage to the Land of the Houyhnhnms”, in particular is often interpreted as a commentary on the Christian doctrine of Original Sin. According to this doctrine, all humanity is born into a state of sin as a result of Adam and Eve’s committing of the first sin of eating the forbidden fruit. From this action stemmed the guilt and shame of humanity. We can see a parallel to this doctrine reflected in Swift’s Yahoos. Gulliver comes across strange and disturbing creatures on first arriving in the land of the Houyhnhnms:

Their Heads and Breasts were covered with a thick Hair, some frizzled and others lank; they had Beards like Goats, and a long Ridge of Hair down their Backs, and the fore Parts of their Legs and Feet; but the rest of their Bodies were bare, so that I might see their Skins, which were of a brown Buff Colour. (Swift, *Travels* 241)

Upon observing them Gulliver is “full of Contempt and Aversion” (Swift, *Travels* 242), not realising that the creatures he is describing are humans. Some critics argue that Gulliver exhibits Christian

humanism in the shame and disgust he feels at the human body: “they had no Tails, nor any Hair at all on their Buttocks, except about the Anus” (Swift, *Travels* 241). The Yahoos are linked to the view of humanity represented in the doctrine of St Augustine. According to Augustine “the stigma of original sin is impressed upon the body of the human being through the persistent stimulus of an unreasonable sensuality” (Bonaiuti and La Piana 163). Gulliver is confronted with this “unreasonable sensuality” when he is accosted while bathing in a river: “a young Female Yahoo standing behind a Bank ... inflamed by Desire ... embraced me after a most fulsome Manner... (Swift, *Travels* 285). Gulliver cries for help and is mortified: “I could no longer deny, that I was a real Yahoo” (Swift, *Travels* 286). We can perhaps detect a link between the shame surrounding the human body and Christian dogmas in Part IV of *Gulliver’s Travels*. Although, Swift uses the human body in a similar way throughout the text. It is a method of his satire and it is used in a critique of science as well. For critics to argue that “*Gulliver’s Travels* cannot be understood without approaching it by way of the doctrine of Original Sin” (Webster 9) seems excessive. There is religious satire present but that is one facet of the work. McManmon argues that “a reading of the work as a Christian document would really be an interpolation” (67). Swift’s satirical commentaries in *Gulliver’s Travels* can easily be misinterpreted by placing too much or too little importance on his role in politics and the Church. In not knowing enough about his place in his context a reader could easily see Swift as a progressive writer in his support of the downtrodden, which would be another misinterpretation. Swift was conservative in some respects and liberal in others, therefore we cannot assume his opinions based on his positions within politics or religion. Swift rejected rigid categorisation, both personally and literarily. The technicality of Swift’s satires and the layers of irony they hold, mean that even through close textual readings it is still difficult to say with any certainty what Swift’s opinions were.

Additionally, it is important to remember that the attitudes in the *Travels* actually belong to Gulliver, and there are many ways in which the text makes clear that he is a very unreliable narrator. For instance, Gulliver is wholly taken in by the Houyhnhnms admiring them to such a degree that he tries to emulate them: “I fell to imitate their Gait and Gesture” ...and... “in speaking I am apt to fall

into the Voice and manner of the Houyhnhnms” (Swift, *Travels* 298). This imitation of the Houyhnhnms presents a ridiculous picture as a Gulliver is envisioned trotting and neighing like a horse, however Gulliver takes such comparisons as high praise: “my Friends often tell me in a blunt Way, that I trot like a Horse; which, however, I take for a great Compliment” (Swift, *Travels* 298). Gulliver’s views are not Swift’s, for it is doubtful that Gulliver’s own affinity for the Houyhnhnms reflects a penchant in Swift for the equine. Gulliver’s account of his voyages cannot be taken at face value and the reader must look beyond his narration to decode Swift’s true intentions within the fiction.

Placing the *Travels* in its contextual setting allows the reader to better understand the intention of Swift’s critiques. Even so, Swift and Gulliver are difficult men to understand. Considering the complexity of Swift’s varied attitude to politics and religion in his time provides a parallel to the complexity of Swift’s satires in *Gulliver’s Travels*. Just as Swift himself was fluid and seemingly paradoxical in his views, so is his writing. *Gulliver’s Travels* holds different relationships to fiction, facticity, truth, and reality throughout the voyages. Like its author, it is not linear or black and white in its satires of Swift’s context. Gulliver’s unreliability aids the text in its movement through multiple types of discourse and it is through Gulliver’s use of the various discourses of facticity that were emerging as authoritative at this time – scientific description, mathematical precision, reportage, travel writing, and so on – that Swift is able so effectively to challenge the reader’s assumptions about social, political and religious ‘truths’. Resulting in *Gulliver’s Travels*’ complex relationship to fiction, facticity, truth, and reality.

The start of the eighteenth century saw the rise of the Enlightenment era. It was a movement towards rationality. New ideas in science, nature, philosophy, religion, politics, and law were being pursued by the inquisitive minds of the age. But this did not diminish the importance of the Church in society, indeed “the peculiarity of England was that the strong modernising drive that we identify with the Enlightenment was integral to the preservation of the establishment in state

and Church” (Haakonssen 3). However, the torrent of new information did result in a shift of thought and natural philosophers took over as the authorities on the natural world.

The Enlightenment’s shift towards the new sparked debate throughout society as the new wrangled with the old at every turn. Everett Hall, in his book *Modern Science and Human Values*, discusses the turbulence this movement caused in the society of the early eighteenth century. In ethical philosophy, the intellectualists clashed with the emotivists; in humanism, the rationalists fought the affectives; and in literature, the moderns tangled with the ancients. As Hall tells us, in each of these conflicts methods of impartiality challenged methods of feeling or emotion. The debate in ethical philosophy was over how people made moral decisions. Intellectualists believed that moral evaluations should be made through reason and impartiality for fair and objective judgements (Hall 384). Hall argues that intellectualists “simply presumed that reason is, by its very nature, impartial; just as it is no respecter of persons in formulating mathematical truths, so it is completely fair and objective in passing moral judgement” (384). Emotivists countered that moral judgements must be made through emotion; reason has no effect on choices except as a means of attaining the ends elected by our emotions (Hall 384). Through the arguments of the intellectualists and the emotivists we can see the increasing value of facticity. Emotional decisions were regarded as subjective and prejudicial, while reasoned decisions were seen as objective, and thus fair. The debate in humanism mirrored the one in ethical philosophy in relation to the importance the rationalists placed on impartiality. Rationalists in this field thought of humanism in terms of mathematics and empiricism. Some going so far as to attempt “to develop a series of mathematical formulae by which the relative probable goodness of acts, that is, their probable effect upon the sum total of human happiness, could be determined” (Hall 386). While affectives argued that feeling was key in the humanist tradition (Hall 386).

In Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal”, his satire makes the point that reducing humans to statistics leads to barbarous acts. Swift uses mathematics and impartiality to make infant

cannibalism seem perfectly rational. In his essay he calculates how to make the most profitable and long-term industry out of selling babies to butchers for the tables of the upper-class: “the remaining hundred thousand may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality” (Swift, “Modest” 70). Swift also gives a rational argument for instructing mothers to gorge their babies on milk in the month prior to their slaughter: “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” (Swift, “Modest” 70). These suggestions are not intended to be taken seriously but to demonstrate that by reducing humanity to statistics and morality to rationality heinous acts can be justified. Swift uses the argument of the rationalists against them, demonstrating through satire the fatal flaw of this rationality, absent of emotion or humanity. This satire was a critique of rationalist thought and the influence it had in the English’s treatment of the Irish. Specifically, it can be linked to a criticism of The Penal Laws. The Irish Parliament began instituting laws from 1695 which restricted the rights of the Irish people, particularly the Irish Catholics. These laws compounded the poverty of the nation and justified gross acts:

We are inform'd that in the bill transmitted from that kingdom to prevent the farther growth of Popery &c. there is a clause for castrating unqualified Popish priests, instead of the punishment formerly inflicted for marking them in the forehead with a P. (“Catholic Historical Society of Ireland” 30)

In each of these instances the proposer shows no humanity at the prospect of eating babies or castrating Catholic priests but relies on the ‘political arithmetic’ of Sir William Petty (the ancestor of today’s demographics) to rationalise their drastic propositions. Petty was “the first British economist to employ a thoroughly statistical approach, believing that only by quantitative analysis could precise reasoning be achieved, and accurate conclusions reached” (Fox 1). “A Modest Proposal” creates a parody of these rational discourses through appropriating codes of mathematics, rationality, and a scientific research-based tone. Sir William Petty is a particular target of this parody.

In his works on demographics and population statistics in Ireland he made proposed schemes to increase the population of Ireland through relocating fertile demographics of the population:

repatriating 100,000 Irish Catholic families who spoke little or no English, and distributing them evenly around England such that there would be one for every 11 indigenous families.

They were to be accompanied by 40,000 unmarried women between 15 and 30 years old and 10,000 youths aged between 15 and 20 years. (Fox 10)

Swift inverts this argument by reversing it and proposing an argument for decreasing the population through cannibalism in the same rational and statistical discourse as Petty. He uses irony to prompt the reader to draw parallels between the cannibalism of babes and the treatment of the Irish. In this satire Swift reveals his allegiance to the 'old' way of thinking, a loyalty to the epistemologies that valued humanist ethics over those of rationality.

The argument between intellectuals was sparked at the question of whether contemporary art and thought had surpassed that of Ancient Greece and Rome. Those in favour of the new methods and ideals were the moderns and those who believed the old and time-tested methods were the ancients. Jonathan Swift was involved in the literary debate, as a defender of the ancients. Swift was very vocal in his derision of the moderns: "we of this Age discovered a shorter, and more prudent Method, to become Scholars and Wits, without the Fatigue of Reading or of Thinking" (Swift, *Tub* 149). Swift's *The Battle of the Books* is a satire of this debate. Locating his narrative in the library of Saint James' Palace, Swift illustrates a battle between the ideas of the moderns and the ancients in which "the books themselves do the fighting" (Mueller 205), each of them competing for superiority. In *Gulliver's Travels* also, Swift makes many digs at the modern systems of thought. In his visit to Glubbudrib Gulliver calls on the ghosts of the ancient philosophers "who were most renowned for Wit and Learning" (Swift, *Travels* 215). Through Gulliver's discussions with the ancient figures Swift delivers his assessment of the moderns. Aristotle tells Gulliver: "new Systems of Nature were but new Fashions, which would vary in every Age; and even those who pretend to demonstrate

them from Mathematical Principles, would flourish but a short Period of Time” (Swift, *Travels* 216). The over-reliance of mathematical principles that occurred in the new structures of knowledge in the early eighteenth-century is a consistent satiric criticism that appears throughout the *Travels*. As when the Lilliputians use mathematics to determine how to transport a restrained Gulliver to the city: “these People are the most excellent Mathematicians, and arrived to a great Perfection in Mechaniks” (Swift, *Travels* 40). The Lilliputians also rely on mathematics to measure Gulliver and then calculate how much food he will need:

his Majesty’s Mathematicians, having taken the Height of my Body by the Help of a Quadrant, and finding it to exceed theirs in the Proportion of Twelve to One, they concluded from the Similarity of their Bodies, that mine must contain at least 1728 of theirs, and consequently would require as much Food as was necessary to support that Number of Lilliputians. (Swift, *Travels* 60).

This demonstrates an over-reliance on mathematics as a much simpler solution was present, to stop feeding him when he was full. Swift resisted the new ideals and modes of thought that were dominating society and as a result *Gulliver’s Travels* has strong satirical commentaries on the new epistemologies emerging in his context.

While new science was a core component of the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason in the early eighteenth century, its roots began much earlier. It was in the first half of the seventeenth century that the essence of the new scientific method begins to appear through the works of Francis Bacon, Galileo Galilei, and René Descartes. British philosopher Francis Bacon in his work *Novum Organum (New Method)*, published in 1620, proposed an investigative method to replace the Aristotelian practice favoured by the Church. In the book, Bacon details three steps to the new method: firstly, an account of the facts; secondly, a classification of the facts into one of three categories – instances of the presence of the characteristic under investigation, instances of its absence, or instances of its presence in varying degrees; thirdly, any facts that do not fit into these

categories, in regard to the particular investigation, are to be dismissed. Bacon believed that through a knowledge of the facts of nature he could attain truth and the natural laws of practice: “therefore, the very things themselves (that is facts of nature) are, in this kind of enquiry, both truth and utility” (Bacon 329). Galileo in Italy in the 1630s presented telescopic observations which provided proof of the Copernican theory that the sun was the centre of the universe. These scientific theories threatened the Aristotelian system the church had sanctioned. In 1633 Galileo was forced to recant his argument in *The Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* to escape being labelled a heretic, demonstrating the power of the Church at the time and how opposed they were to any threat to their authority on fundamental issues. Everett Hall argues that Galileo Galilei may have formulated the new scientific method for the first time through the geometrical expositions and demonstrations in his work *Dialogues on Two New Sciences*, published in 1638 (91). In the text Galileo is influenced by Aristotelian methods of observation, and neo-Pythagorean perceptions of nature, but he also “united a conviction of the mathematical perfection for nature” ... “with the experimental attitude of the craftsmen-engineers” (Hall 91). The book presents his theory on the three great laws of dynamics: of inertia, of gravity, and of their combination. Experimentalism was innocuous enough but when it was combined with mathematicism to hypothesise new approaches to nature, the Church viewed it as dangerous (Hall 93). In this we see the beginnings of the new scientific method. However, at this time it certainly was not a movement in partnership with the Church; on the contrary, the ‘enlightened’ thinking was suppressed by the hegemonic institution of the Catholic Church at the time. In France in 1637 Galileo’s peer René Descartes published *Discourse on the Method for Reasoning Well and for Seeking Truth in the Sciences*. In this theory Descartes offers a method of four laws for scientific enquiry: first, accept nothing as true unless it is apparent; second, split the topic into as many sections as possible for simpler examination; third, begin with the simple problems and advance to the complicated; fourth, review the progress throughout the process. Descartes’ investigations in mathematics considered quantities as lines and developed a code of symbols to portray his findings: “of all those who have hitherto searched for the truth in the

sciences, only mathematicians have been able to find any demonstrations” (Descartes 11). Through combining elements of algebra and geometry he invented analytical geometry. Descartes considered science a human endeavour that was rooted in observation and experimentation (Wilson 26). For Descartes, the journey to truth was a process of elimination made through testing hypotheses. A distinction between scientific fact and belief, was being tested through observation, experience, and reason. At the foundation of the new science was fact. The theories of Bacon, Galileo, and Descartes laid the groundwork of the new science that was beginning to gain confidence and authority in Swift’s England almost a century later.

Across Europe in the mid seventeenth century organisations were being established that were dedicated to aiding the development of new thought. The Royal Society of London was established in 1660 under the leadership of Robert Hooke and received the patronage of Charles II in 1662. Without the support of tertiary institutions, it was these societies that made the pursuit of knowledge in science possible for many experimentalists and theorists in this period. As new science developed, inventions and processes arose with commercial value and scientific progress became linked to the rise of commercialism. A relationship emerged between “new science and the new monarchical institution, the nation-state, and the merchant capitalist” (Hall 94), demonstrating the alliance between the old hegemony and the Enlightenment that was unique to Britain. As a result, scientists at these academies received financial aid, patents for their work, and social prestige. Hall argues that it is “almost impossible to overestimate the importance, as a social and institutional factor, of the Royal Society in promoting the new scientific attitude in England” (96). Isaac Newton’s discovery of gravity, the laws of motion and calculus, along with Robert Hooke’s discovery of cells, were some of the most significant works to come out of the Royal Society of London. The popularity of science and natural philosophy grew through the dissemination of hypotheses and experiments. Scientific material was “accessible through essays, pamphlets, books, and public lectures” (Christie 1). The Royal Society began publishing journals known as *Philosophical Transactions* in 1665. The journal shared the theories and findings of its members with the public, allowing for an exchange of

ideas and knowledge (Hall 96). Through making accounts of scientific knowledge and investigations available to general society science and reason gained even more traction in British society. The content of the scientific media was controversial to a public which had previously deferred to the beliefs of the church for knowledge of the natural world: “works of new science became items of ‘prurient consumption’” (Chirstie 1). Methods of experimentation and empiricism were consumed by society and science and reason became idolised. The Royal Society of London was founded before Swift was born but it was during his lifetime that it flourished. As an avid supporter of the ancients Swift “did not believe in the doctrine of progress that underlay such organizations as the Royal Society and scientific exploration more generally.” (Mueller 230). For Swift, the new science and its dominance of the societal consciousness was problematic.

Ergo, new science is a consistent target of satire throughout *Gulliver’s Travels*. Swift, the loyal ancient, takes issue with overzealous scientific practitioners who would disregard traditional practices to create a new way of doing things that is not half as effective:

In these Colleges, the Professors contrive new Rules and Methods of Agriculture and Building [...] the only inconvenience is, that none of these projects have yet been brought to Perfection; and in the mean time, the whole Country lies miserably waste... (Swift, *Travels* 195)

The modern epistemologies were taking over those of the ancients but for Swift, a dedicated disciple of the ancients, these new modes and methods were a degeneration. Douglas Patey concurs Swift’s satire warns: “a society may decay by failing to be guided by or live up to its examples” (14). Upon its release, the satire of Part III of *Gulliver’s Travels* sparked much debate. In its context many spoke out about Swift’s lampooning of new science, although there is some argument that that it is not “science” itself but the “scientist” that Swift criticises in the *Travels*. The Earl of Orrery claimed that Part III was “in general written against chymists, mathematicians, mechanics, and projectors of all kinds” (Patey 2). To which Dean Swift replied:

Certainly DR. SWIFT has laughed egregiously in the voyage to Laputa, and exerted a vein of humour, not against the whole tribe of chymists, projectors, and mathematicians in general; but against those, and those only, who despise the useful branches of science, and waste their lives in the pursuit of aerial vanities and extravagances. (Swift, *Works of Dr Swift* 144)

Part III of the *Travels*, entitled 'A Voyage to Laputa', thus conducts a specific, pointed satire on particular aspects of 'new science' in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. It creates a parody of real-life scientists, experiments and hypotheses that took place at the Royal Society of London. Swift caricatures the Royal Society to convey his condemnation of science as an ideology and the pursuit of scientific experiments for vanity, rather than experiments that hold value through a practical purpose for society.

New science had a significant and far-reaching effect on society in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. So much so that the discourse of the period changed to encompass these new epistemological values. One way in which the discourse changed was through the emergence of a new rhetoric that mirrored the pursuit of knowledge of 'new' science. In his book *Satire: A Critical Reinroduction* Dustin Griffin observes the arguments of W.S. Howell. In Howell's extensive study into logic and rhetoric in England from 1500 into the nineteenth century he argues "that there was a gradual rejection of the older rhetoric under pressure of modern epistemology and natural science" (Griffin 42). The former rhetoric was one of "communicating what was already known", while the new rhetoric was one of "inquiry": "The older was concerned with the transfer of knowledge, the newer with the discovery of it" (Griffin 42). This shift was a direct result of the popularisation of empiricism and factuality from new science and the new rhetoric attempted to embody the objectivity, rationality, and facticity of new science.

This correlation is further evidenced by the Royal Society's practice of language and its subsequent appropriation in literature. The members of the Royal Society were concerned at the potential for misunderstanding and confusion of their scientific writings. To combat this, they

adopted a “simple vocabulary” and “sharply separated” “fact and conjecture” (Zimmerman 140). A plain language of objective fact was thought to be better suited to relate the discourse of scientific inquiry. The dominance of new science in the culture of the early eighteenth-century saw this language of the Royal Society being adopted into literature in a variety of genres and techniques emerged that emulated this rhetoric. In genres such as travel writing, journalism, and historiography the discourse shifted to imitate that of the Royal Society, they adopted plain language, objective fact, and a variety of techniques that suggested a factual authority.

Journalism, as we understand it today (based in fact and objectivity) emerged in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as a reflection of the values in science and their popularity in society. The factuality and impartiality “in the public sphere” informed “public opinion” and “these values became part of a more ambitious public ethic of journalism” (Ward 161). The journalistic practice was a new arena in Jonathan Swift’s context. The term itself had only appeared in the seventeenth century and was just beginning to be associated with the press in the eighteenth century. The weekly newspaper is where, according to Ward, “an embryonic journalism -ethics starts to be asserted, including the first articulation of a ‘proto-objectivity’ – a commitment to factuality and impartiality” (116). For, since the “first half of the 1600s, English weekly papers claimed that their reports were impartial ‘relations’ of the truth and based on ‘matters of fact’” (Ward 116). Journalism and scientism were venerated with facticity and the two fields shared methods of writing that developed a particular language for scribing the discourses of fact. This language came to be known as reportage. The language and writings of reportage employ a “wide range of methods – criteria to detect bias, ingenious instruments, careful experiment, mathematical modelling, quantification, and peer review” (Ward 86). The results of these methods of inquiry are then presented with: “disinterestedness and impartiality, relatable experiment, intersubjective evidence, intellectual modesty, plain language, and self-restraint” (Ward 86). This language would present itself in writing through the use of statistics and calculations, evidence of research and analysis, and

a tone of objectivity. Reportage embodies the values of nonfiction and infers them through its language.

However, the contextual readership of journalism took its claims of objectivity with a grain of salt: “many people saw it as not much better than the partisan, often-hysterical.” (Ward 117). The field was a “precarious commercial enterprise” (Ward 117) and “without a rigorous method for verifying its stories, comprised by an ever-present temptation to sensationalize or moralize. The facts of news journals were always suspect” (Ward 117). Journalism was not perceived as a reliable source of information in seventeenth century society and did not inspire the same acclaim that the writings of new scientism provoked: “editors’ claims to be reporting impartial facts and true opinion never carried as much weight as the same claim made by celebrated authors, philosophers, and scientists or the reports of the Royal Society” (Ward 117). For the editor’s asserting their writings as impartial fact were “men of dubious social status and of known political bias” (Ward 117). However, despite their questionable reputation, the newsbooks played a significant role in disseminating the discourses of scientism and facticity, as they communicated directly with the general populace touting the importance of a new method of relating knowledge: their use of this method “did more than most other discourses to spread among the populace the notions of fact, reasonable belief, and impartiality” (Ward 117). While the field of journalism was not of the same status of scientism in the early eighteenth century, it had a huge impact in disseminating the dogmatized discourses of factuality and impartiality.

Journalism assumed and contributed to the development of new ideas about methods for arriving at, and techniques of writing and representing facticity, accuracy, precision, truth, and reality. This discourse engaged in new methods of observing, studying, assessing, and representing the natural world. In *Gulliver’s Travels* Swift takes these codes and techniques of writing that implied fact and an accurate representation of reality and applied them to outrageous fictions. For example, journalism emphasized peer-review which Gulliver impersonates when he hedges his account of his

travels against future travellers finding fault in his relation: “it is highly probable, that such Travellers who shall hereafter visit the Countries described in this Work of mine, may be detecting my Errors, (if there be any) and adding many new Discoveries of their own” (Swift, *Travels* 311). Of course, no future travellers will be visiting Swift’s imaginary countries. Swift is ironically applying the techniques of journalism and scientific writing to his fiction as Gulliver, in his role as an unreliable narrator, prepares for potential contradictory accounts of these fantastic lands from his peers. The paradox Swift’s satire creates between the rhetoric of fact and a fantastic fiction in the *Travels* subverts this rhetoric’s standing as a discourse of fact and thus representative of reality. However, these discourses with their new rhetoric of “inquiry” and techniques for representing fact reigned dominant in Swift’s context. They were disseminated to the public through the booming book market and reified through the development of the field of literary criticism.

In the early eighteenth century there was an increasing level of literacy among the middle class. The growing group of middle-class readers who thought of themselves as “modern” caused a growth in demand for scientific, philosophical, political, travel and literary reading and writing. This culminated in a skyrocketing book market and a subsequent scramble for authority over the influx of literary works: “authors, critics, booksellers, and readers struggled for intellectual and cultural dominance over books and texts in a way that is historically unique” (Domsch 4). Literary criticism emerged to claim dominance over the literary field. This literary criticism:

like literature itself, served as a forum for discussion of a wide range of social, political, and religious issues as critics sought to create, through the education of taste, a body of polite popular opinion in all these areas [...] observers throughout Europe agree that never before had the world seen so many critics. Patey 3

The principal concern of this criticism was in classifying and defining literature. Thus, critical writings in genre theory began to set borders and parameters between what was and was not a characteristic of a particular genre. As Patey explains: “it was in this period that our understanding of

literary theory as an “‘institutional’, ‘specialised’, ‘professional’, ‘disciplinary’, or ‘autonomous’” sense – emerges” (10). The rhetoric influenced by ‘new’ science gained societal prominence through certain literary discourses and was fuelled by the growth of the literary market and reified as a discourse through literary theory.

This critical flurry of literary terminology, definition, and categorisation that was occurring in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries led unsolidified concepts such as genre to be assigned stringent meanings and parameters: “criticism for the first time developed generic forms and institutional contexts that are still recognisable today” (Domsch 3). Genres are defined as “classes of texts” (Todorov, *Discourse* 16). Drama, horror, romance, science fiction, mystery; they are groups of formulaic and “tautological” (Todorov, *Discourse* 16) narratives. Tautological formulae are always true: “in logic, a statement so framed that it cannot be denied without inconsistency” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Tautology” 1). Literary works take the form of certain frameworks or include particular characteristics that signify them as part of a specific genre. Whatever else occurs in the plot or to the characters, the presence of these signifiers will always render the text a part of its genre. For example, in *Gulliver’s Travels* the book’s various locations, and the narratives of voyaging signify it as part of the travel genre and no matter how it rebels against that classification through its satire, it remains a travel book. However, within that, there are sub-genres: the first chapters of Part III draw on the genre of the scientific report; many parts of Part IV draw on the classical genres of the philosophical treatise, the symposium, and the utopia. The *Travels* engages with multiple discourses and parodies them to invert their methods of observing and relating the world. Swift engages with the literary criticism of his period, which was exceedingly preoccupied with the discourse of fact and demonstrate the flaws of this discourse in literature.

The travel genre is one such discourse utilized in *Gulliver’s Travels*. Tzvetan Todorov suggests that genres do not emerge through developments in literary theory, for genres have been present in literature long before there were critics to analyse them, but through societal shifts that contribute

to the rise of a new discourse: “not ‘what preceded the genres in time?’ but ‘what presides over the birth of genre, at any one time?’” (Todorov, *Discourse* 16). The genre of travel writing experienced a significant growth in popularity and form in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. England was expanding its colonial reach and trade was the key to commerce. Travel was a core part of England’s growth, but a lack of longitudinal navigation technology led to countless shipwrecks. To combat this “parliament offered a huge bounty to anyone who could unlock the mystery of the longitude and thus help ensure the safety and progress of British vessels on the high seas” (Fabricant 4). These factors drove a huge growth in travel writing, both fictional and nonfictional. Nonfictional travel writing reflected the context’s values of facticity and impartiality, while fictional travel writing reflected these same values through realism.

Readings of *Gulliver’s Travels* through the lens of particular genre discourses can be helpful to further unpick Swift’s satire but critics must resist the urge to categorise and pin down the author or the text: “we will try not to impose a unified genre where none was intended and none can exist” (Novak, “Picaresque” 35). While *Gulliver’s Travels* partakes in multiple genres, it belongs to none. According to Novak: “there is no genreless text; there is always a genre or genres, yet such participation never amounts to belonging” (“Picaresque” 35). A cognitive reading of the *Travels’* participation in genre reveals Swift’s proclivity for dismantling polarised epistemologies and rhetorics: “no writer has ever documented more persuasively the relentless human ambition to totalize systems of understanding and, at the same time, the ultimate futility of those systems” (Rodino 14). Indeed, Irvin Ehrenpreis posits “that Swift found life and human nature penetrated by polarities which only God could resolve, and that instead of transcending them, he tried to infuse them into the art of his masterpiece” (Smith “Afterword” 258). *Gulliver’s Travels* provides many instances infused with paradox. When Gulliver gets caught in fantastical weather with gigantic hail in Brobdingnag, he uses the language of fact to quantify his experience:

there suddenly fell such a violent Shower of Hail, that I was immediately by the force of it struck to the Ground [...] Nature in that Country observing the same Proportion through all her Operations, a Hail-stone is near Eighteen Hundred Times as large as one in Europe; which I can assert upon Experience, having been so curious to weigh and measure them. (Swift, *Travels* 132).

This tone of explanation creates a paradox of fantasy and reality. The action and the narration appear contradictory and surprises the reader. This garners the reader's attention so they can recognise the satire of this form of explanation that is enmeshed in the paradox. Swift creates paradoxes that undermine the distinctions between genres and, by extension, the new rhetoric of the early eighteenth-century.

This satire of early eighteenth-century rhetoric is also exemplified in Gulliver's encounter with gigantic wasps in Brobdingnag. The rhetoric of fact, objectivity, and inquiry is applied to an imagined story of a fight with giant wasps. As Gulliver sits in the window eating a breakfast cake:

above twenty Wasps, allured by the Smell, came flying into the Room, humming louder than the Drones of as many Bagpipes. Some of them seized my Cake, and carried it piecemeal away; others flew about my Head and Face, confounding me with the Noise, and putting me in the utmost Terror of their Stings. However I had the Courage to rise and draw my Hanger ... I dispatched four of them, but the rest got away... (Swift, *Travels* 126)

This is a fantastical fiction, a tiny Gulliver battles a hoard of wasps "as large as Partridges" (Swift, *Travels* 126), over a sweet cake. Gulliver crosses blade with sting as he fights them off in a clearly untrue and imagined conflict. Yet, Gulliver authenticates this fantastic battle through appropriating the techniques of the rhetoric of "inquiry", he gives measurements "I took out their Stings, found them an Inch and a half long" (Swift, *Travels* 126) and keeps the stings of the wasps to donate to the scientific collections on his return to London "Upon my return to England I gave three of them to

Gresham College" (Swift, *Travels* 126). The rhetoric used in genres such as the travel genre is satirised by Swift in *Gulliver's Travels*; its flaws are exposed, and its epistemologies challenged.

Frederick Smith observes that authors did not abide by these new rules: "eighteenth-century practice differed from its theory" ("Introduction" 15) as authors took this literary theory "not as a set of prescriptive conventions but as a malleable array of literary expectations" ("Introduction" 9). Swift's earliest works complied with genre categories "however, from "The Ode to Congreve" onward he was attracted to satire, and to the brand of satire that deliberately and overtly scrambles literary type" (Smith, "Introduction" 17). We can certainly see that *Gulliver's Travels* flouts any critical attempts to reify its genre: "the age's scepticism toward genre is hinted at within the book itself; in almost every instance where a specific genre is mentioned ... it is questioned in some way, said to be spurious, accused of being incorrect or potentially misleading" (Smith, "Introduction" 20). In Lilliput Swift references the genre of religious doctrines as Gulliver learns of the conflict between the people of Lilliput and the Blefuscu is due to differing interpretations of a holy text:" a fundamental Doctrine of our great Prophet Lustrog, in the fifty-fourth Chapter of the Brundrecal, (which is their Alcoran)" (Swift, *Travels* 64). In the author of the Brundrecal being a titled as a Prophet and in the comparison to the "Alcoran", Swift is referring to the Quran written by the prophet Muhammed and the holy text of the Muslim faith. However, Swift uses the genre in an unexpected way by having his imitation of a holy text attempt to dogmatize something so ridiculous as how to crack an egg: "the Words are these; That all true Believers shall break their Eggs at the convenient End" (Swift, *Travels* 64). As Smith states: in *Gulliver's Travels* "genres are not respected or are used for purposes for which they were not intended" (Smith, "Introduction" 20). It was not until the next century that these restrictive terms and categories began to be strictly followed. Genre theory did heavily influence literature in the early eighteenth century but authors like Swift did not respect any critically constructed boundaries in their texts. In *Genres in Discourse* Todorov discusses Blanchot's argument to dismiss the notion of genre entirely (Todorov, *Discourse* 14). But it is not genre epistemologies themselves that are the problem, in fact they are helpful frameworks in

literature providing support for authors in constructing their narratives. It is the reification of these genres and the interpretation of their discourses as representatives of truth or reality that Swift addresses in *Gulliver's Travels* and Swift's satire transgresses literary boundaries to undermine such discourses.

Swift was writing *Gulliver's Travels* in a period which was forming the basis for modern literary theory and criticism through a focus on terminology and classifications, yet authors were using these rigid concepts freely and creatively. Smith identifies a literary paradox in the early eighteenth century: "the critical insistence on generic categories ... created opportunities for generic and stylistic experimentation and for humour, irony, and pathos that did not exist a century before or a century after" (Smith, "Introduction" 16). *Gulliver's Travels* takes the structure of a travel book but mimics the styles of numerous genres, "Gulliver likewise alludes in the course of his travels to numerous other genres and subgenres: histories, accounts of manners and customs, translations, holy books, panegyrics, scientific essays, moral treatises, laws, inventories, articles of impeachment, and his own journal, the basis of his published travelogue" (Smith, "Introduction" 20). Swift "turns away from idyllic poetry ... and begins to use genre as a pretence, a nominal frame within which he may unabashedly explore a range of genres, styles, and tones" (Smith, "Introduction" 18). Approaching *Gulliver's Travels* with a preconception of the book's genre often results in a limited understanding of the multiple epistemologies at work in the text. The *Travels* imitates multiple genre discourses questioning their relative reliability and mocking those who are too ready to believe something just because of the way it is written.

*Gulliver's Travels* was first published in 1726 and upon its release Jonathan Swift took issue with the editorial liberties the publisher had taken. As evidenced in Swift's correspondence with George Faulkner: "the English printer made several alterations which I must disapprove of" (Swift, "Contexts" 275); and with Charles Ford: "not onely to blot out some things he thought might give offence, but to insert a good deal of trash contrary to the author's manner and style, and intention"

(Swift, "Contexts" 275). Swift worked on remedying these inaccuracies for later editions, with a 'corrected' edition being printed in 1727 (Rivero vii). A preface was added written by Gulliver's Cousin Sympson in which Sympson takes responsibility for any inaccuracies regarding "winds and tides" or "longitudes and latitudes" (Swift, *Travels* 29), as he claims to have edited the text to make it a more readable length. In Faulkner's 1735 Dublin edition of *Gulliver's Travels* Swift includes a letter from Captain Gulliver to his Cousin condemning the "very lose and uncorrect account of my travels" (Swift, *Travels* 253). This is a mockery of the claims made by authors of (supposedly real) travel stories – by claiming the earlier editions were lose and incorrect. Through Gulliver Swift makes it seem as if there were real experiences behind the *Travels*, and that these could be more correctly represented. Swift simultaneously continues his satire of the preoccupation of literary discourses with accurately representing reality and attempts to remedy the alterations his own publisher had taken with his work. Sympson's role was originally to cover for any mistakes Swift made in Gulliver's lack of seafaring knowledge; however, he became a scapegoat for the errors of the editor: "I do not remember I gave you the power to consent that any thing should be omitted, and much less that anything should be inserted" (Swift, *Travels* 253). It is ironic that even as Swift mocks author's concern with precision with their representations of supposed reality, he embodies the same concern with the accuracy of his fiction.

There are still multiple editions of the story about; often the public urination, grotesque nudity, and the whole voyage to the Houyhnhnms are removed to form less traumatising editions for children. While Swift felt the inaccuracy of the first edition left the style "debased, the humour quite lost, and the matter insipid" (Swift, "Contexts" 277), this did not prevent it from flying off the shelves. The book "became an instant best seller as well as a cultural event" (Rivero vii). The popularity of *Gulliver's Travels* has continued: "*Gulliver's Travels* has held our attention for nearly three centuries because of its uncanny ability to be whatever we have wanted to be: a political book, a children's book, a merry book, a mad book, satiric, ironic, parodic, perhaps a novel, perhaps not"

(Rivero vii). The *Travels* participates in a plethora of discourses, inverting them and destabilising their techniques through imitating them in fiction.

It was in Swift's period, of the early eighteenth-century, that facticity, reason, and impartiality grew as representations of truth; and it was at the same time that literary critical theory was establishing conventions and categorisations of literature. Culminating in the development of a rhetoric with new techniques and codes for representing facticity and reality. These were key factors in Swift's context, greatly influencing his society and his literary environment. Swift, as we know, was resistant to these shifts in the Enlightenment and he critiques these discourses and questions their relationship to truth in *Gulliver's Travels*. As Everett Zimmerman notes: "Swift's critique of the intellectual movements of his time is conducted through his transmutations of inherited literary forms, a comment on the connections of the literary to the intellectual situation" (Zimmerman 14). In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift commandeers the popular genre discourses and rhetoric of "inquiry" of his setting and remoulds it with a fantastic fiction to serve his own purposes in undermining the epistemology behind it.

## Chapter Two

The lands Gulliver visits, the characters he meets, and the events that occur are all the work of fantasy. However, at times Swift applies or parodies the epistemological techniques associated with discourses of fact and reality present in genres such as journalism, travel writing, and historiography; to satirise the belief that the rhetoric of his contemporaries inevitably represented 'truth'. The dominance of the epistemology of fact in Swift's context was reflected in the discourse of the period as literature had a preoccupation with fact, impartiality, realism, and verisimilitude. Swift creates a paradox of radical fantasy with a discourse of 'reality' and subverts tones of reportage and realism as representative of truth. Through its satire *Gulliver's Travels* complicates the functioning of these modes drawing attention to the limited abilities of a discourse to be an accurate representation of reality or truth.

The travel genre is one discourse which Swift parodies to undermine its portrayal of 'truth'. While the travel genre was at the height of popularity in Swift's context, to grasp how Swift uses the genre to subvert discourses of reality it is necessary to go further back to the works of Marco Polo and Sir John Mandeville in the fourteenth century. For the authors of the works published under these names, knowledge of the globe was severely limited, and they filled these gaps in knowledge with fiction. In Mandeville's *Travels* the fictional narrator, named Sir John Mandeville, gives a supposedly first-person account of pilgrimages to Jerusalem, India, and Indonesia. It is in the second half of the book that Mandeville goes beyond the realm of fourteenth century global knowledge and begins to invent bizarre races: "all the men and women of the isle have hounds' heads" (Mandeville 130). *Mandeville's Travels* becomes "an inextricable blend of real facts and fabulous inventions" (Todorov, *History* 61). *The Travels of Marco Polo* was written by Rustichello da Pisa based on stories the Italian explorer Marco Polo told him. The book describes Polo's travels around Asia, particularly China. Fact and fiction are blended through Polo's interpretations of the unfamiliar sights he encounters. For instance, when coming upon a rhinoceros in Western Asia he mistakes it for a

unicorn: "they have wild elephants, and great numbers of unicorns, hardly smaller than elephants in size" (Benedetto 283). Susan Abernethy, as quoted by Jessie Szalay at livescience.com, states: "at first, many viewed the book as fiction, more like a chivalric fable with its seemingly tall tales and descriptions of fantastical animals" ... "It was only after Polo's death that people realized the book contained the truth about his travels and what he witnessed." (19). Furthermore, Christopher Columbus reportedly set sail for China with an annotated copy of *The Travels of Marco Polo* and "took on his journey letters for the Great Khan who had been described by Marco Polo" (Todorov, *History* 61). In these narratives fiction and social reality are blended due to the limited knowledge of the author or the readers. These early examples of travel writing illustrate the genre's complex historical relationship with both fiction and reality.

In Swift's context, international journeys had increased exponentially since the works of Polo and Mandeville. The improvement of the quadrant (to navigate latitude) in the seventeenth century led to much more successful sea voyages (Sorrenson 6). However, without the means to determine longitude shipwrecks were common and voyages were rife with danger. In the early eighteenth century between attempts to map the globe, establish trade and colonise, travel was a vast industry. As a result, travel writings flooded society in Swift's context. The blend of the fantastic fictional narrative and social reality in *Gulliver's Travels* aligns with early works in the travel genre but Swift utilises the genre to construct an allegory delivering a critique of his context in early eighteenth-century Britain. Allegory and satire go hand in hand in *Gulliver's Travels* as the satire's indictment of the early eighteenth-century context is the implicit criticism behind the travel fiction.

As Gulliver visits fictional communities, he finds companions with whom to discuss their way of life in comparison to England's. In the land of the Houyhnhnms and Brobdingnag England, and indeed humanity, is made to look cruel and barbaric in comparison with the more enlightened and reasonable societies. Gulliver describes to the King of Brobdingnag the effects of gunpowder, as cannonballs "sink down Ships with a thousand Men" ... "divide Hundreds of Bodies in the Middle" ...

“[dash] out the Brains of all who came near” (Swift, *Travels* 151). To which the King was horrified at how Gulliver “could entertain such inhuman Ideas, in so familiar a Manner as to appear wholly unmoved at all the Scenes of Blood and Desolation” (Swift, *Travels* 151). England’s brutality is put into a different perspective for the reader by considering it through the eyes of the King and Swift’s satire finds its target. In Lilliput and Lagado aspects of their societies, the politics, war, and sciences, are reflections of English society. As Gulliver describes them from the perspective of an outsider, they appear ridiculous. The nobles in Lilliput compete for postings through a competitive skipping contest: “Candidates petition the Emperor to entertain his Majesty and the Court with a Dance on the Rope; and whoever jumps the highest without falling, succeeds in the Office” (Swift, *Travels* 53). Swift literalises the jumping through hoops the English upper classes do for the Queen. In illustrating the type of performance nobles undertake to gain favour with the monarch from a removed perspective, the reader can easily be convinced of its ludicrousness. The format of the travel book allows Swift to mock England through Gulliver’s patriotic defence of its barbarities and through Gulliver’s removed observation. The travel fiction is a construct through which to deliver an allegory of satirical critique for England in Swift’s context of the early eighteenth-century, giving the fiction a foothold in the real world which enables the *Travels* to convey a kind of “truth” with relevance to particular time and place.

Travel writing worked to give its accounts validity through codes which implied fact. Cartography, geography, dates and times, and weather were often included in travel writing to give the story validity as fact. Swift imitates these codes in his own allegorical travel writing in the *Travels*, but he applies them to fantastic fictions thereby undermining their value as representatives of fact. When Gulliver describes the land of the giants, Brobdingnag, he parodies the codes and language of travel writers in the early eighteenth-century: “I now give the Reader a short Description of this Country, as far as I have travelled in it, which was not above two thousand Miles round *Lorbrulgurd* the Metropolis [...] The whole Extent of this Prince’s Dominions reacheth about six thousand Miles in Length, and from three to five in Breadth” (Swift, *Travels* 127). Travel writers from

Swift's context followed the same process of describing cities through measurements, which is evidenced in Daniel Defoe's travel book *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, published in 1724, in which he describes in great detail the different widths of the river:

At London, including the Buildings on both Sides the water, one sees it, in some Places, Three Miles broad, as from St. George's in Southwark, to Shoreditch in Middlesex; or Two Miles as from Peterburgh House to Montague House; and in some Places, not half a Mile, as in Wapping; and much less, as in Redriff. (Defoe, *Tour* 96)

Such an excessive focus on measurement is mocked in the *Travels* as Gulliver makes sure to describe the circumference, length, and width of the imaginary capital city *Lorbrulgurd*. Gulliver also uses mathematics to give an impression of validity to his description of the population of Brobdingnag as he states:

The Country is well inhabited, for it contains fifty one Cities, near an hundred walled Towns, and a great Number of Villages. To satisfy my curious Reader, it may be sufficient to describe *Lorbrulgurd*. This City stands upon almost two equal Parts on each Side the River that passes through. It contains above eighty thousand Houses. (Swift, *Travels* 128).

This passage sounds very similar to the descriptions given of London in Defoe's nonfiction travel book: "I find Two Thousand Houses which in other Places would pass for Palaces" (Defoe, *Tour* 17). Gulliver's account sounds very reasonable, and it is easy for the reader to forget with this language that what the narrator is describing is an enormous civilization of giants each "as Tall as an ordinary Spire-steeple" (Swift, *Travels* 102). Swift takes the codes of measurement and mathematics a step further as he invents new units of measurement:

It is in Length three *Glonglungs* (which make about fifty four English Miles) and two and a half in Breadth, as I measured it myself in the Royal Map made by the King's order, which was laid on the Ground on purpose for me, and extended an hundred Feet; I paced the

Diameter and Circumference several times Bare-foot, and computing by the Scale, measured it pretty exactly. (Swift, *Travels* 128)

Swift takes his imitation of these codes for (supposedly) signifying truth to the point of ridiculousness through painting the picture of Gulliver pacing out measurements on a gigantic map. The fantasy is re-emphasised to remind the reader what they are reading has no value as fact despite its discourses magniloquent use of measurements and mathematics.

Cartography, the science of graphically representing a geographical area through maps or charts, is a code of fact and reality largely specific to the travel discourse and is another method for quantifying travel accounts as fact. Although, as the map in *Mandeville's Travels* exemplified, the inclusion of cartography does not automatically mean that what is depicted is true; the *mappaemundi* of *Mandeville's Travels* displayed Paradise as a real place (Greenlee 1). In the early eighteenth-century cartography had been incorporated into the growth of travel writing and was a method for quantifying the narratives of travel writers. Swift mocks cartographers and travel writers for missing the colossal country of Brobdingnag in their travels as Gulliver offers to help them correct their maps:

From whence I cannot but conclude, that our Geographers in *Europe* are in a great Error, by supposing nothing but Sea between *Japan* and *California*: For it was ever my Opinion, that there must be a Balance of Earth to counterpoise the great Continent of *Tartary*; and therefore they ought to correct their Maps and Charts, by joining this vast Tract of Land to the North-west Parts of *America*; wherein I shall be ready to lend them my assistance. (Swift, *Travels* 127).

Some editions of the *Travels* actually contain a map of Brobdingnag, on which Gulliver depicts how the country joins to North America and cites himself as the discoverer in A.D. 1703 (Swift, *Travels* 98). Swift reminds the audience of his context that the presence of these codes of measurement,

mathematics, and cartography in the travel discourse do not necessarily denote fact or truth by using them in a fantastical fiction that clearly has no factual value.

Both fiction and nonfiction travelogues were popular in the early eighteenth century, but despite more geographical knowledge and despite claims to be relating impartial fact many travel writers continued to fill the gaps of their knowledge with fiction. Percy Adams in his book *Travelers and Travel Liars* identifies three types of travel literature present in Swift's context and appearing in *Gulliver's Travels*: "Jonathan Swift was knowingly or unknowingly introducing posterity to the three kinds of travel books of the eighteenth century" (Adams 1). The three types of travel writing Adams identifies are those that are true, those that are imaginary, and those that are "travel lies" (1). In other words, nonfiction, fiction, and fiction masquerading as nonfiction. Swift uses this third category to deliver satirical truth—that is, honest social critique. Through the Yahoos, in particular, Swift tells universal truths on the flaws of humanity: "For they are cunning, malicious, treacherous, and revengeful. They are strong and hardy, but of a cowardly spirit, and, by consequence, insolent, abject, and cruel" (Swift, *Travels* 285). Swift's travel lies are certainly the easiest to identify. The lands and communities that Gulliver encounters are fantastical imagined civilizations; for instance, in the Kingdom of Lilliput where "the common Size of the Natives is somewhat under six Inches" (Swift, *Travels* 72). The fictions are presented as facts by implementing the discourse of 'truth' of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The fiction of a race of people under six inches tall is presented as fact by citing measurements and proportions of the world around them: "the tallest Horses and Oxen are between four and five Inches in Height" ... "their tallest Trees are about seven Foot high" ... "Vegetables are in the same proportion" (Swift, *Travels* 72). The lies gain an air of fact through the appropriation of the context's rhetoric of truth. Swift's contemporaries were attached to the idea that mathematics, measurement, and geometry provided the "truest", most "factual" representation of reality. *Gulliver's Travels* impersonates this discourse and inverts it by applying it to the fantastical. The *Travels* imitates the rhetoric of truth-telling that was authoritative in its context and undermines its connotation of 'truth' by applying it to that which is obviously not true.

The eighteenth century's globalisation and academic evolution made a market ripe for travel literature: "it was the age of opportunity for travel lies" (Adams 9). Travel liars took advantage of this market and contrived stories to deceive readers: due to bias, through omission, and in want of fortune or fame. Adams contends that travel liars took advantage of the demand for travel literature and "stretched or sliced or varnished the truth" (9). Thus, "lies mingled with the truth to form the eighteenth century's picture of the world" (Adams 18). One example of a lying travel text Adams cites is the accounts of The Patagonian Giants. Tales of a race of people double the height of men living in Patagonia first appeared in sixteenth century and lasted until the late eighteenth century. Readers in this context were taken in by the written accounts of these giants:

There were skeptics who argued and scoffers who laughed, but within a matter of months most of the dissenting voices were stifled – some even recanted- and the people of Europe and America believed in giants. (Adams 20)

A journal from Pigafetta, an Italian explorer, provides the most extensive eye-witness account of these Patagonian giants: "he was so tall, that we reached only to his waist, and he was well proportioned" (Adams 21). This travel lie strikes a familiar chord, bringing to mind Gulliver's companions in Brobdingnag. Swift explicitly criticises these travel liars as Gulliver decries the falsities of his contemporaries:

I have perused several Books of Travels with great Delight in my younger Days; but, having since gone over most Parts of the Globe, and been able to contradict many fabulous Accounts from my own Observation; it hath given me a great Disgust against this Part of Reading, and some Indignation to see the Credulity of Mankind so impudently abused.  
(Swift, *Travels* 310)

Gulliver is disgusted at the lies that were presented and read as fact in the travel writings of his childhood. Ironically, Gulliver is sure to be the most extravagant travel liar of all. Of course, Swift does not intend for anyone to be fooled and fiction makers are only liars if they pretend to be telling

the factual truth. Which Swift is not, despite Gulliver's indignation at critics who would question his tales: "some of them are so bold as to think my Book of Travels a meer Fiction out of mine own Brain" (Swift, *Travels* 27). While Swift may have no intention to deceive, Gulliver himself is certainly a travel liar.

Gulliver's travel lies function through his position as an unreliable narrator. For instance, Gulliver gives the King of Brobdingnag an impression of nonfiction travel literature in telling him about England, but the King is less than impressed: "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" (Swift, *Travels* 149). Gulliver then resolves to embellish his description to gain the King's admiration: "I 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" (Swift, *Travels* 150). Gulliver's position as an agent of truth or lies changes throughout the text and is made even more unreliable by not being consistently unreliable. As Novak says, Gulliver:

... is frequently everyman, often a fool and occasionally a mad man. Sometimes he is naïve and gullible; at the end he is a disillusioned idealist. He can be cruel or cold or act with the detachment of a scientist examining a corpse, and he can be generous and affectionate. But at all times he is capable of living in an illusion, of trying to adapt himself to whatever society he may encounters and of losing himself in the day-to-day effort at sustaining his ego.

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Gulliver is oftentimes more a satirical device than a protagonist, his role as an unreliable narrator and as the voice and subject of Swift's satire often overtakes his role as the hero of the voyage. This device of satirical narration is one of the factors that make *Gulliver's Travels* such a controversial text for critics as they attempt to determine Swift's true meaning behind the lies, travel or otherwise.

The discourse of Swift is inextricably wound up in the falsities of Gulliver. And Gulliver at once embodies and condemns the travel liar, acting as both the mouthpiece and the subject of Swift's satire:

It is easy for us who travel into remote Countries, which are seldom visited by *Englishmen* or other *Europeans*, to form Descriptions of wonderful Animals both at Sea and Land. Whereas a Traveller's chief Aim should be to make Men wiser and better, and to improve their Minds by the bad, as well as good Example of what they deliver concerning foreign Places. (Swift, *Travels* 310)

Gulliver ironically disparages travel liars for their vanities in inventing extraordinary tales rather than telling the public the truth of things. This may mean that to Swift the role of the travel writer is not to deliver a factual truth but to tell stories that enhance the reader's perception of moral truth. In a roundabout way, Swift tells his version of the truth of society in the early eighteenth century through *Gulliver's Travels*, perhaps attempting to "make Men wiser and better" (Swift, *Travels* 310).

Gulliver's lies are a medium through which Swift relates his noble satiric truth. Thus, we can view Swift as a noble liar, or '*splendide mendax*'. Adams' travel liars abided by the dictum "be careful to mix some truth with your lies" (2); while Horace's "*splendide mendax*", from Odes written in 23 BC, were untruthful for the greater good. The embodiment of the ancient *splendide mendax* was Sinon, a character from *The Aeneid*. Sinon convinces the Trojans to let the Trojan Horse through the gates, claiming to be telling the absolute truth: "Sinon is my name. Tho' plung'd by Fortune's pow'r in misery, 'Tis not in Fortune's pow'r to make me lie" (Virgil 37). Of course, the horse was concealing soldiers who went on to conquer Troy. In Virgil's view, however, Sinon's lie was for the greater good as it led to the creation of Rome. *Gulliver's Travels* is Swift's Trojan Horse, and Gulliver Swift's consummate liar. Swift smuggles his satire into the minds of readers in his society disguised in the travel lies of Gulliver. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, translators uniformly regarded '*splendide mendax*' as high praise. '*Splendide mendax*' thus for Swift infers a reputation

that depends upon telling the truth, no matter the personal cost. While Gulliver is Swift's vehicle of this '*Splendide Mendax*' he is more often the voice of the early eighteenth-century travel liar as he uses facticity and realism to present fantasy, claiming irrefutable truth: "I imposed on myself as a maxim, never to be swerved from, that I would strictly adhere to the truth; neither indeed can I be ever under the least temptation to vary from it" (Swift, *Travels* 311). Gulliver's words can never be taken at face value, despite his constant assurances to the contrary: "I rather chose to relate plain Matter of Fact" (Swift, *Travels* 310). This in itself is an ironic technique: the more someone claims they are telling the truth, the less we believe they are. Through Gulliver's lies Swift is able to tell his truth. For fiction can hold value as truth (while not as fact), be it moral, psychological, or sociological. Gulliver is at once a modern travel liar, a satirical unreliable narrator and an ancient *splendide mendax*.

The *Travels* is not a straightforward member of the travel genre for just as Swift impersonates the genre, so too does he subvert it. The book imitates many aspects of the travel genre: a first-person narrative, journeys, sea voyages, shipwrecks, meeting indigenous communities, and blending the truth with the lie. Gulliver's many assurances that he will "*strictly adhere to Truth*" (Swift, *Travels* 311) stand out as ironic to the reader as his descriptions of immortals and flying islands are clearly fiction. Yet, in the final chapter of Swift's fantastical fictional tale Gulliver has the audacity to criticise travel writers for falsifying their accounts: "every Traveller, before he were permitted to publish his Voyages, should be obliged to make an Oath before the *Lord High Chancellor*, that all he intended to print was absolutely true" (*Travels* 310). The integrity of 'true' travel writing is called into question for the reader as the techniques of travel liars are exposed through Gulliver's example. Thus, Swift inverts the travel genre through imitation and mockery. While conventions of the travel genre are blended, tangled, and undermined; they remain vitally central to the structure and function of the book and its satire: "the fact that a work 'disobeys' its genre does not mean that the genre does not exist" (Todorov, *Discourse* 14). Although the genre is being criticised, it remains integral to the book. *Gulliver's Travels* certainly has significance as a travel

book, but its widespread satire gives it relevance to a surfeit of genres, people, philosophies, and texts.

In reading Mandeville's tales of pygmies, man-eating giants, centaurs, and trees with fruit that make you live hundreds of years, parallels can be drawn to the Lilliputians, Brobdingnags, Houyhnhnms, and Struldbrugs of *Gulliver's Travels*. The *Travels* has much in common with these early examples of the travel genre. In the absence, or in Swift's case disregard, of factual knowledge the authors supplement their tales with fantastical lands and creatures. *Mandeville's Travels*, *Marco Polo*, and *Gulliver's Travels* blend the real and the imagined. In *Gulliver's Travels* this is done through the treatment of the human body. Within the fantasy of *Gulliver's Travels* Swift reinserts 'reality' by using the human body to viscerally return the reader to the limitations of 'reality'. Gulliver's confrontation with the Brobdingnagian women demonstrates this insertion of realism into fantasy:

I must confess no Object ever disgusted me so much as the Sight of her monstrous Breast, which I cannot tell what to compare with, so as to give the curious Reader an Idea of its Bulk, Shape and Colour. It stood prominent at six Foot and could be no less than sixteen in Circumference. The Nipple was about half the Bigness of my Head, and the Hue of both that and the Dug so verified with Spots, Pimples and Freckles, that nothing could appear more nauseous... (Swift, *Travels* 108)

In this particular instance, Swift is satirising the perspectives of natural philosophers in his context, who were altering their natural point of view through telescopes and microscopes. As Robert Hooke proclaimed: "by the help of Microscopes, there is nothing so small, as to escape our inquiry; hence there is a new visible World discovered to the understanding" (Hooke, *Micrographia* 4). Swift mocks this preoccupation with altering the natural perspective through exaggerating it through a fantastical fiction: "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" (Swift, *Travels* 108). Swift tempers his fantasy of a race of giants with realism as he reinserts

the limitations of the human body and perspective into the fantasy. While this passage acts as a satiric critique of natural philosophers in his context, it also creates a juxtaposition of realism and fantasy which contributes to a subversion of discourses of 'reality' as truth.

Realism is a set of techniques which aim to create in writing a credible illusion of the real. In the rhetoric of the early eighteenth century this verisimilitude was a central value and was often read as signifying truth; but realism is just that, an appearance of reality not reality itself. While fantasy is an embodiment of fiction writing as an imagining of the impossible. Fantasy is largely viewed as the antithesis of reality, for fantasy makes no attempts to conform to any aspects of reality as it creates an entirely imagined world. As with earlier examples of travel literature, Swift does not abide by a separation of reality from fantasy but engages realism to juxtapose the real with the imagined. In the same breath, a passage can be a wild fantasy fiction, with giant women frolicking naked, and a 'realistic' portrayal through the insertion of the limitations of the human body. Gulliver's encounter with the Struldbrugs in Luggnagg can be read as an example of this. When Gulliver is told of the race of immortals living in Luggnagg he is "struck with inexpressible Delight" (Swift, *Travels* 225). Gulliver's imagination runs away with him as he considers persons "exempt from that universal Calamity of human nature" (Swift, *Travels* 225). Gulliver eagerly describes to the Luggnaggians what he would do if born a Struldbrug: "I should be a living Treasury of Knowledge and Wisdom, and certainly become the Oracle of the Nation" (Swift, *Travels* 227). Gulliver's fantasies come undone as his interpreter corrects him in the mistakes he fell into "through the common Imbecility of human Nature" (Swift, *Travels* 228). Indeed, whilst the Struldbrugs were immortal Gulliver had "supposed a Perpetuity of Youth, Health, and Vigour, which no Man could be so foolish to hope" (Swift, *Travels* 229). Gulliver is confronted with the reality of human nature as the body is reinserted into his fantasy: "at Ninety they lose their Teeth and Hair; they have at that Age no Distinction of Taste, but eat or drink whatever they can get, without Relish or Appetite" (Swift, *Travels* 230). Throughout *Gulliver's Travels* Swift brutally reinserts 'reality' into the fiction with the visceral, and sometimes disgusting realities of the body and its functions.

Scatology in *Gulliver's Travels* is used as another intrusion of realism into fantasy. Swift juxtaposes a fantastic imagining with the most fundamental and gross reality of human nature, the necessity of urination and defecation as a method of attack on the use or 'reality': "Swift-without squeamish apology-turns it [scatology] into a formidable weapon in a constant attack" (Lau 122). Gulliver urinates on the apartments of the Empress of Lilliput: "Urine; which I voided in such a Quantity that [...] in three minutes the Fire was wholly extinguished" (Swift, *Travels* 71). In Brobdingnag Gulliver is confronted by the lack of inhibition shown by the ladies of court in his presence: "Neither did they at all scruple while I was by, to discharge what they had drunk, to the Quantity of at least two Hogsheads" (Swift, *Travels* 135). At the Grand Academy of Lagado he meets a scientist attempting to reverse digestion and turn excrement into food: "an operation to reduce human excrement to its original food, by separating the several parts, removing the tincture which it receives from the gall, making the odour exhale, and scumming off the saliva" (Swift, *Travels* 198). And in the Land of the Houyhnhnms Gulliver is besieged as the Yahoos defecate on his head: "they began to discharge their Excrements on my Head" (Swift, *Travels* 242). These instances of scatology are conducting individual satires throughout the *Travels*, satires on royalty: perspective, science, and humanity. But as a culmination the scatology undermines the truth value of discourses of realism through taking realism to such a revolting extreme through descriptions of scatology and the body: "no other English satirist employs this device with so much flexibility or force. His full exploitation of the various possibilities of scatology to serve his diverse purposes is a measure of his artistic skill" (Lau 122). The scatological references converge realism with fantasy, the values of early eighteenth-century discourse are used excessively to undermine their worth, for "through this magnified detail Swift points out the vile facts of human life [...] Swift challenges man's complacent view of himself and life about him through the presentation of facts that have been ignored or unexamined" (Lau 104). By interrupting the fantasy with references to bowel movements, excrement and urination Swift uses the weapon of the modern discourse against itself. If a commitment to reality is what is valued, then here is the actual reality. It is impolite and embarrassing, but it is the reality of the

human condition. The verisimilitude is taken to a confronting level as Swift inserts the 'realities' of the human body into the fantastic fiction, forcing the reader (of Swift's period) to re-examine their perception of the 'reality' of the world and its representation in the discourse of the early eighteenth-century.

The combination of fiction and realism is known as novelistic realism, introduced by Swift's contemporary Daniel Defoe in his novel *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719. Swift's treatment of realism and fantasy in *Gulliver's Travels* serves several purposes: it conducts specific satires such as on the 'new scientists', it is a parody of Defoe's work of novelistic realism, and it undermines perceptions of the real and the imagined as antitheses by blending them together. In the early eighteenth-century novelistic realism was a very new idea in fiction, the imagined story was unpopular next to the plethora of nonfiction narratives, particularly of travel writing. Novelistic realism makes the fictional more believable by including descriptions of familiar, everyday details lending the narrative an appearance of verisimilitude. Daniel Defoe introduced novelistic realism with his book *Robinson Crusoe*. *Robinson Crusoe* is a first-person account of the sailor Robinson as he navigates shipwrecks, slavery, pirates, and being marooned. But it is through the narrative tone of the text that it achieves an appearance of truth. Defoe suspends the reader's disbelief in his fiction through "the narrator's unwavering commitment to the minute, objective description and circumstantial detail [...] unliterary prose doing justice to the facts of one particular person's experience" (Mullan). For instance, Defoe includes details such as dates, weather, and ordinary tasks: "from the 26<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> I worked very hard in carrying all my goods to my new habitation, though some part of the time it rained exceedingly hard" (Defoe, *Crusoe* 74). The accumulation of these factual details creates the impression of everyday reality and culminates in a verisimilitude. This commitment to realism demonstrates the increasing dominance of an attentiveness to the discourse of facticity, which had developed in early eighteenth-century epistemology and began to influence fiction.

*Robinson Crusoe* holds an interesting position within the context of the period's concern with genre, reality, factuality and truth. The book is a travel novel, but its use of novelistic realism allowed it to convince some readers that it was nonfiction: "Defoe succeeded so well in his verisimilitude that some readers were at first deceived" (Adams 2). Defoe was superbly qualified as an author of travel realism due to his many years, both before and after *Robinson Crusoe*, writing highly detailed reportage. His other works included political pamphlets, journals, and even a nonfiction travel book *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*. In each genre Defoe writes with a dedication to particular detail:

An eminent Weaver in Norwich gave me a Scheme of their Trade on this Occasion, by which, calculating from the Number of Looms at that time employed in the City of Norwich only, he made it appear, that there were 120,000 People busies in the Woolen and Silk Manufactures of that City only... (Defoe, *Tour* 55)

Defoe was an author devoted to the verisimilitude of discourse and epistemology of the early eighteenth century. So much so that he carried over a discourse of realism to a work of fiction, giving an imagined story a very highly developed and effective verisimilitude.

Swift and Defoe were contemporaries and, some would suggest, rivals: "In the biographies of Defoe, for instance, will be found brief suggestions of personal rivalry, or even feud, between Swift and Defoe" (Ross 11). What we can definitively determine is Swift's mockery of Defoe's commitment to realism in *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe's attention to the minute aspects of reality is mocked in *Gulliver's Travels*. Swift satirises *Crusoe's* novelistic realism by exaggerating the details of reality to the point of disgust. In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift commits himself to reinserting the reality of the human body through scatology: "I hid my self between two Leaves of Sorrell, and there discharged the Necessities of Nature" (Swift, *Travels* 110). Swift imitates Defoe's narration of minute detail and mocks the attempt in exposing more 'reality' than a reader wants to endure. Gulliver's justifies sharing this information by assuring the reader of his commitment to relate every detail of

his reality: "I have been chiefly studious of Truth, without affecting any Ornaments of Learning, or Style" (Swift, *Travels* 111). Although, Swift explains that he did edit several "Passages of less Moment" ... "for fear of being censured as tedious and trifling, whereof Travellers are often, perhaps not without Justice, accused" (Swift, *Travels* 111). In this passage Swift makes a direct reference to *Crusoe*, inferring that Defoe's narration of these superfluous details was "tedious and trifling" (Swift, *Travels* 111). In his mockery of *Robinson Crusoe* Swift again imitates a genre, that of novelistic realism. However, he does so ironically, in order to exaggerate its defects in a parody.

Swift continues his mockery of *Robinson Crusoe* when he parodies a mistake of Defoe made in the book. When Gulliver empties his pockets in Lilliput to discover a trove of knickknacks, trinkets, and firearms that he had overlooked previously mentioning as he swam ashore:

In the left Pocket, we saw a huge Silver Chest, with a Cover of the same Metal, which we, the Searchers, were not able to lift. We desired it should be opened; and one of us stepping into it, found himself up to the mid Leg in a sort of Dust, some part whereof flying up to our Faces, set us both sneezing for several times Together. (Swift, *Travels* 49)

This is a description of a container of tobacco powder in Gulliver's pocket. He goes on to describe a pocket watch, a handkerchief, a gun, a comb, a razor, a knife, and so on. At one-point Defoe has *Crusoe* strip off while swimming to a shipwreck: "I pulled off my clothes" ... "and took to the water" (Defoe, *Crusoe* 52), but then narrates *Crusoe* filling his pockets with biscuits: "I went to the bread-room and filled my pockets with biscuit" (Defoe, *Crusoe* 53). Defoe later states that *Crusoe* had left on his seaman's britches. However, these britches do not normally have pockets or if they do, they are "much too small for biscuits" (Hunter 68). Defoe's mistake was a great joke to readers at the time and the context's audience would have easily understood Swift's reference. Hunter posits that Gulliver's pockets, in reminding readers of Defoe's error, implies a critique of "authors who try to pass off genuine memoirs are often tripped by simple facts" (68). Swift reminds readers of the irony

of factual errors in a book dedicated to reality and facticity, simultaneously satirising this narrative mode.

Reality and its relationship to truth becomes an intricately philosophical topic, but “there are many reasons one might care to have an analysis of how truth relates to reality” (Rasmussen 1). What this thesis focuses on are the different facets of reality which bear no intrinsic relationship to truth, those of realism and verisimilitude. While verisimilitude is an appearance of being real, realism attempts to recreate reality often through an attention to detail. Both are reflections of the world not the world itself and thus are a representation. However, in early eighteenth-century discourse these modes were being presented and read as irrefutable ‘reality’ or truth. The techniques and codes which gave an appearance or reality such as cartography or those that mimicked the discourses of new science writing such as reportage, deceived the readers in Swift’s context into thinking that discourses of fiction were truth. Readers of early eighteenth-century discourse accepted such accounts as these as true because of their similarity in language and codes of fact present in the writings of ‘nonfiction’. However, “truth-to-life is not valued in the same way as truth” (Stoehr 1). Fictional discourses in Swift’s setting mimicked the values, language, and techniques of discourses of ‘truth’ and their appearance of reality was so complete that many readers were fooled. Even in works of ‘nonfiction’ lies were presented through a ‘so-called’ commitment to ‘reality’ and the reader is taken in, as demonstrated by the travel writing of the period. Writings of the early eighteenth-century were being presented and read as truth due to their use of ‘realistic’ discourse. This is a core aspect of the satire of *Gulliver’s Travels*: “I doubted, some Authors less consulted Truth than their own Vanity or Interest, or the Diversion of ignorant Readers” (Swift, *Travels* 164). Authors presented their writings under a pretence of ‘reality’ through use of realism and verisimilitude to give their works ‘value’ as fact or truth.

Various newly authoritative discourses of fact were present in the writing of Swift’s period, arguably the most influential was that of the Royal Society, which instructed its associates to include

nothing but plain fact in scientific articles. According to Patey, “one of the most familiar banners of the ‘new science’ and the Royal Society was their rejection of what Hobbes called ‘insignificant speech’” (Patey 5). This led to natural philosophers and modernists developing a different kind of language that attempts to remove all trace of subjectivity and relate nothing but the bare factual data. The modernists believed this method of writing was an evolution from the work in natural philosophy by the ancients. Connected with and influenced by the growth of scientific writing, the early eighteenth century also saw the rise of reportage, a language that would become extremely influential in the centuries that following. ‘New science’ created an empirical objectivity that was based on fact and mathematics, but it needed a plain language that assisted reasoning. The Royal Society’s statutes proclaimed: “in all reports to be brought into the Society, the matter of fact shall be barely stated, without prefaces, apologies, or rhetorical flourishes” (Ward 93). For facticity to be considered valid it had to be impartial, thus its distinction from the subjectivism of more personal perspectives, as well as the imaginative exorbitance of fiction, was vital to the legitimacy of scientific reportage. Bacon dictated that historians, too, must report with “impartial veracity” and abide by the rule of “writing nothing but Matter of Fact” (Ward 88). Science was the catalyst for the rise of facticity in the early eighteenth century and its movement towards an impartial language influenced other literary fields.

For instance, in the book *History of the Royal Society*, written by Thomas Sprat in 1667, another argument for plain language is made: “it has been, a constant Resolution, to reject all the Amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style: to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, when men deliver’s so many *Things*, almost in an equal number of *words*” (Phiddian 37). In *Gulliver’s Travels* Swift mocks this attempt to reduce language to nought but fact by taking it one step further to ask why bother talking at all. As Gulliver visits the Grand Academy of Lagado he encounters scientists aiming to abolish words entirely and use things to communicate instead: “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 the particular Business they are to discourse on” (Swift,

*Travels* 203). This is an example of a repeated technique of Swift's satire, to exaggerate his targets premise to the point of ridiculousness to draw attention to its failings:

I have often beheld two of those Sages almost sinking under the Weight of their Packs, like Pedlars among us, who when they meet in the Streets, would lay down their Loads, open their Sacks, and hold Conversation for an hour together; then put up their implements, help each other to resume their Burthens, and take their leave. (Swift, *Travels* 204).

If all description is removed only nouns are left, so why bother writing or speaking these names either. Swift sarcastically exaggerates the aspiration for bare language taking the Royal Society's desire for a language that embodies its values of plain fact and objectivity one step further to demand no language but a use of things instead of words. The *Travels* subverts this perception of "insignificant speech" by embellishing it to expose its foolishness.

In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift satirises reportage's value of objectivity through imitating it to the point of ridiculousness to demonstrate its failings. When Gulliver suffers his first shipwreck, he describes the event as a journalist, with the relation of plain fact. Gulliver imitates the tone of an eighteenth-century journalist as he describes his voyage, using measurements and plain facts: "we found ourselves in the Latitude of 30 Degrees 2 Minutes South. Twelve of our Crew were dead by immoderate Labour, and ill Food" (Swift, *Travels* 34). Gulliver goes on to report on the sinking on his ship using measurements, mathematics, and time: "On the fifth of *November*, which was the beginning of Summer in those Parts, the Weather being very hazy, the Seamen spyed a Rock, within half a Cable's length of the Ship" (Swift, *Travels* 34). The satire is recognisable to the reader as the tone of narration does not match the action. The reportage Swift imitates is inverted as it does not tell an accurate tale of the shipwreck in avoiding any telling of Gulliver's fear or grief. Gulliver does not describe any emotions at the death of his crew, "I cannot tell; but conclude they were all lost" (Swift, *Travels* 35). Gulliver's whole crew has died, and he is lost at sea; yet he has no fear or grief but is occupied observing facts and measurements: "I walked near a Mile before I got to Shore,

which I conjectured was about Eight o’Clock in the Evening” (Swift, *Travels* 35). Swift inverts the language of reportage, devaluing facticity, and objectivity through in its own tongue. What the plain language of these discourses implied was: “a belief that human subjectivity is an obstacle to truth that can and should be overcome” (Zimmerman 141). In the *Travels* this belief is countered through applying the tone to action that does not seem like a ‘true’ representation without emotion. For what real person would show no emotion at the death of his entire crew. The modern epistemology of plain, objective discourse as a language of truth is undermined as Swift demonstrates that this language does not account for the ‘truth’ of human nature. While these dominant discourses and the epistemology that influenced them idealised facts as the epitome of truth, in *Gulliver’s Travels* Swift uses the language of nonfiction reportage in the setting of an outrageous fantasy to question the relationship between facticity and truth. The paradox of telling fantasy stories in the language of “near mathematical plainness” (Phiddian 38) undermines views that this language has an intrinsic connection to truth; for, despite the language used, the exorbitant tales of Gulliver’s voyages are clearly fictional.

This factual, ‘realistic’ and objective discourse was so highly valued by the early eighteenth-century that “matter of fact was a social as well as intellectual category” (Phiddian 39). The codes of writing used in scientific writing to infer ‘truth’ were being emulated in numerous literary fields. Particular codes which were viewed as verification of fact, and therefore irrefutable truth, were gaining influence in all types of writing. However, these codes could be fabricated and in the discourses of the day they were used to manipulate the reader into perceiving an account as substantiated fact for the reader equated them with proof of undoubtable truth. These codes of fact were rooted in science and mathematics and it was the epistemologies of these fields that gave the codes of numbers, observation, measurement, etc. so much weight as truth. In the *Travels* Gulliver parrots these codes of fact but applies them to the most outrageous fantasy to reveal that they possess no intrinsic link to truth. Particularly in his reaction to seeing the floating island of Laputa Gulliver employs the codes of ‘factual’ discourses. Gulliver first describes the island through the

codes of mathematics and geometry: “the flying or floating Island is exactly circular; its diameter 7837 Yards, or about four Miles and a Half, and consequently contains ten Thousand Acres. It is three Hundred Yards thick” (Swift, *Travels* 185). The fantastical sight is quantified through measurements and equations as Gulliver converts yards to miles and considers the measurements of shape and distance. The codes of fact from the natural sciences are then used to examine the geological composition of the island:

The Bottom, or under Surface, which appears to those who view it from below, is one even regular Plate of Adamant, shooting up to the Height of about two Hundred Yards. Above it lye the several Minerals on their usual Order; and over all is a Coat of rich Mould ten or twelve Foot deep. (Swift, *Travels* 185)

The explanation begins to sarcastically refer to the overcomplication of these scientific codes of fact as Gulliver explains three times that he is looking at the bottom of the island. Description of the type of rock, minerals and fungus is then given and measured giving further ‘factual’ evidence to give authority to the fantastical island that is being described. Gulliver then branches into meteorology as he lectures on the weather system of the island:

The Declivity of the upper Surface, from the Circumference to the Center, is the natural Cause why all the Dews and Rains which fall upon the Island, are conveyed in small Rivulets towards the Middle, where they are emptied into four large Basons, each of about Half a Mile in Circuit, and two Hundred Yards distant from the Center. From these Basons the Water is continually exhaled by the Sun in the Day-time, which effectually prevents their overflowing. Besides, as it is in the power of the Monarch to raise the Island above the Region of Clouds and Vapours, he can prevent the falling of Dews and Rains whenever he pleases. (Swift, *Travels* 185)

This description of weather of the island moves further towards the fantasy fiction as Gulliver describes the rain being collected in basins and the capabilities of the flying island to fly above the

rain. But as the explanation becomes less 'realistic' Gulliver makes claims to be peer-reviewed: "the highest Clouds cannot rise above two Miles, as Naturalists agree, at least they were never known to do so in that Country" (Swift, *Travels* 185). His more fantastical claim is supported by experts in the field. In this passage Swift commandeers the codes of fact from the popular modern epistemologies of the period and illustrates their meaninglessness in representing truth. Swift applies their tone, language, and perspective for understanding truth to a fantastical object of a floating island. This juxtaposition demonstrates that the discourse of these epistemologies can make even the obviously false sound reasonable and true, provoking in the reader a scepticism of nonfiction writings that rely on these codes to connote fact or truth. Thus, subverting a perception of an intrinsic value of these codes to a discourse of truth.

The modern discourse of the early eighteenth-century claimed to be an evolution from ancient subjective and therefore partisan and unreliable epistemologies and discourse. However, just as with their ancient counterparts, the modernists' suppositions found their way into their works. Patey argues that, "with their own new entities and forces, the new scientists are as guilty as the old of using insignificant speech to frame explanations that do not explain" (Patey 6). Swift points out that their own methods contain the same assumptions of knowledge. On the floating island of Laputa Gulliver meets the Laputians, a race of academics consumed by their pursuit of knowledge: "the Minds of these People are so taken up with intense Speculations, that they neither can speak, or attend to the Discourses of others" (Swift, *Travels* 177). Swift mocks the language of the modern natural philosophers through Gulliver's description of his clothing fitting in Laputa:

He first took my Altitude by a Quadrant, and then with Rule and Compasses, described the Dimensions and Out-lines of my whole Body; all which he entered upon Paper, and in six Days brought my Cloths very ill made, and quite out of Shape, he happening to mistake a Figure in the Calculation. (Swift, *Travels* 180)

The pretentious measurements of the Laputians needlessly complicate a simple practice of measuring clothing. In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift applies the tone of reportage to multiple targets, leaving each of them undermined. One such target is the over complicated explanations of the natural philosophers in the early eighteenth century. While the new scientists disparaged the predecessors for their methods of explaining science. The same tone of pontificating reportage is applied to the simple science of magnetism in the explanation of the Loadstone in Laputa:

When the stone is put parallel to the Plane of the Horizon, the Island standeth still; for in that case, the Extremities of it being at equal Distance from the Earth, act with equal Force, the one in drawing downwards, the other in pushing upwards; and consequently no Motion can ensue. (Swift, *Travels* 189)

Gulliver is describing a fairly ordinary observation of a magnet having two poles, yet the explanation obfuscates the uncomplicated. Swift imitates "contemporary canons of scientific explanation" (Patey 6) and undermines them through inverting them with hyperbole. Throughout *Gulliver's Travels* tones of the modern discourses of the early eighteenth-century are challenged through imitations that lead factual, realistic, and objective language to displace and contradict its own values.

Another example of Swift's parody of scientific explanation in *Gulliver's Travels* is the passage in which Gulliver explains the navigation of the floating island of Laputa using geometrical algebra (A, B and C):

To explain the Manner of its Progress, let A B represent a Line drawn cross the Dominions of Balnibarbi; let the Line c d represent the Load-stone, of which let d be the repelling End, and c the attracting End, the Island being over C; let the Stone be placed in the Position c d with its repelling End downwards; then the Island will be driven upwards obliquely towards D. When it is arrived at D, let the Stone be turned upon its Axle till its attracting End points

towards E, AND THEN THE Island will be carried obliquely towards E... (Swift, *Travels* 187-188)

Gulliver is describing the movement of magnets through geometrical algebra, drastically over complicating a simple science to mock the pontification of the modern new scientists. However, this mathematical code for understanding nature and measuring science is being applied to an extremely fantastical subject of a floating island. It is through the juxtaposition of the discourse of fact and the subject of fantasy that Swift subverts these discourses perceived ability to be languages representing truth.

Swift addresses different subjects under the lens of Gulliver's reportage and the application of this tone acts to undermine them. These subjects are also layered to combine numerous satirical targets in one action of Gulliver's. For instance, when Gulliver arrives in the land of the Houyhnhnms and stumbles across the Yahoos his reaction layers satires of science, travel writing, and humanity. Gulliver imitates the gaze of a travel writer observing an exotic wild animal, hiding in shrubbery to study the Yahoos from a safe distance:

Their Shape was very singular, and deformed, which a little discomposed me, so that I lay down behind a Thicket to observe them better. Some of them coming forward near the Place where I lay, gave me an Opportunity of distinctly marking their Form. (Swift, *Travels* 241)

Gulliver goes on to remark on the bodies of the Yahoos using scientific language such as "*Pudenda*" (Swift, *Travels* 241) and juxtaposing it against vulgar terminology such as "*Dugs*" (Swift, *Travels* 241). The 'new scientists' perspective on nature is satirised here as despite their focus on observing nature they miss the obvious in not recognising the Yahoos as human. The tone of reportage is used to construct these layers of satire and is simultaneously a target, as all these modes of factual epistemology are undermined by the fact Gulliver does not recognise that what he is describing is a human. The reportage is used to infer a contradiction between rhetorical claims, scientism, and

juxtaposed observations. The 'fact-centric' writing of these discourses in Swift's context distorted their perception and their ways of relating of the world.

Swift makes his opinion clear on the quality of the writing in these modern discourses through his satire in Gulliver's meeting with a Professor at the Grand Academy of Lagado. This Professor had created an engine loaded with his entire vocabulary to randomly generate books:

Every one knew how laborious the usual Method is of attaining to the Arts and Sciences; whereas by his Contrivance, the most ignorant Person at a reasonable Charge, and with a little bodily Labour, may write Books in Philosophy, Poetry, Politicks, Law, Mathematicks and Theology, without the least Assistance from Genius or Study. (Swift, *Travels* 201)

What can be read into this satire is perhaps an insinuation that the writers of philosophy, poetry, law, mathematics, and theology were already writing "without the least assistance from genius or study" (Swift, *Travels* 201). This experiment also comments on the meaning of language, for this Professor is attempting to find meaning in random text: "the Professor shewed me several Volumes in large Folio already collected, of broken Sentences, which he intended to piece together; and out of these rich Materials to give the World a compleat Body of all Arts and Sciences" (Swift, *Travels* 202). Language itself has no intrinsic meaning, only the meaning it is given by a writer or reader. Thus, no type of language can be a language of 'truth' regardless of tone, narration, vocabulary, codes of fact, or phrasing.

Another genre which Swift appropriates in *Gulliver's Travels* to question its relation to 'truth' is that of historiography. In the early eighteenth-century historiography was another genre undergoing further distinction due to the rise of facticity and literary criticism. At the beginning of the eighteenth-century it was Aristotle's theory of exemplary history that was dominant. Exemplary history taught by example and aimed: "not at particular truths but at general truths, at the universals of human nature and social or political conduct" (Griffin 125). Swift's friend Henry St John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke concurred that history was the "philosophy of teaching by example how to

conduct ourselves in all the situations of private and public life” (Bolingbroke 191). However, this view of historiography was beginning to recede as the modern’s values of facticity and objectivity continued to influence literary theory: “the older tradition of exemplary history was coming to a close in the eighteenth century, it was competing with a younger tradition of “critical” history” (Griffin 126). Critical history pursued the ‘truth’ through an analytical approach to information: “the true historian must submit all reports to critical scrutiny in order to determine their value” (Griffin 127). Under the influence of literary critics who were working to pen in and define literary scopes, paired with the position of facticity in society as a dominant ideology, the theory of exemplary history and its moral truths was surpassed by critical history and its facts.

Satire and historiography have a longstanding relationship as allies (Griffin 115). Exemplary history and satire have much in common, they both centre around delivering a larger moral lesson based on relating historical particulars. They “work in tandem and perform similar functions” (Griffin 115). This shift towards objective historiography was where satire and historiography began to part ways: “the former is calumny, partisanship, mere prejudice or opinion; the latter is a judicious and critical report of the facts” (Griffin 126). Indeed, “historians claimed their writings were factual chronicles – not poetry, speculative philosophy, or partisan commentary” (Ward 88). Despite this shift in the dominant historiographic literary theory, panegyrics and satires continued to permeate the literary market: “in the customary formulation of the time, panegyric is associated with applause, satire with reproach. But the historian, it seems, should stand impartially between these two extremes” (Varey 44). The theorists’ ideal example of critical historiography in the early eighteenth century should present the truth and allow the facts to speak for themselves, to applause or condemnation.

In *Gulliver’s Travels* Swift impersonates both forms of historiography and disparages critical history and its lack of morality. As Gulliver gives an account of England’s wars to his Houyhnhnm Master he tells a critical historiography:

I related to him the revolution under the Prince of Orange; the long War with France entered into by said Prince, and renewed by his Successor the present Queen; wherein the greatest Powers of Christendom were engaged, and which still continued: I computed at his Request, that about a Million Yahoos might have been killed in the whole Progress of it; and perhaps a Hundred or more Cities taken, and five times as many Ships burnt or sunk. (Swift, *Travels* 263)

Gulliver relates plain facts with an objective tone and quantifies his account with statistics on the deaths, the cities seized, and the ships destroyed. However, Gulliver shows no emotion or indication that he has an awareness of the horror of one million humans killed. This is a critical historiography as it tells the facts of the event but has no concept of moral truth. This mode of historical writing is satirised through Gulliver's Houyhnhnm Master:

He thought his Ears, being used to such abominable Words, might, by Degrees, admit them with less Detestation: that although he hated the *Yahoos* of this Country, yet he no more blamed them for their odious Qualities, than he did a *Gnnayh* (a Bird of Prey) for its Cruelty, or a sharp Stone for cutting his Hoof. But when a Creature pretending to Reason could be capable of such Enormities, he dreaded lest the Corruption of that Faculty might be worse than Brutality itself. He seemed therefore confident, that, instead of Reason we were only possessed of some Quality fitted to increase our natural Vices; as the Reflection from a troubled stream returns the Image of an ill shapen Body, not only *larger* but more *distorted* (Swift, *Travels* 266).

The Houyhnhnm Master inserts the moral truth through his emotive response to Gulliver's impartial historiography. The passage becomes an exemplary historiography as the Master questions the morality of humans who could reasonably justify death on such a scale. In this passage critical historiography and exemplary historiography are juxtaposed to criticise how this critical discourse

can tell the truth when it lacks the ability to recognise the true human effect of such an overwhelming loss of life.

In 1714, Swift himself petitioned to be the official historiographer of Queen Anne's reign. Being overlooked for the role, he went on to write it independently. *The History of the Last Four Years of the Queen* was written by Swift in 1713 but was not published until 1758, thirteen years after the author's death. Swift's petition for the role of historiographer and his work in *The History* profess similar aims of critical historiography in allowing facts to stand on their own: "I shall strictly follow the truth, or what reasonably appeared to me to be such, after the most impartial inquiries I could make ... Neither shall I mingle panegyrick or satire with an history intended to inform posterity" (Swift, *The History* 27). A claim echoed less convincingly in his later work of *Gulliver's Travels*: "I have given thee a faithful History of my travels for sixteen years, and above seven months, wherein I have not been so studious of ornament as truth" (Swift, *Travels* 245). In contrast to Swift the satirist, Swift the historian attempts an "on the whole sober and detached" (Varey 43) manner. Although Simon Varey is of the opinion that "Swift's few departures from that tone are the most revealing parts of *The History* (43). Varey's point is illustrated as Swift is unable to restrain himself when faced with describing what he found to be a particularly stupid bill which proposed authors must include their name and residence in every publication:

there would have been an end, in all likelihood, of any valuable production for the future, either in wit or learning: and that insufferable race of stupid people, who are now every day loading the press, would reign alone, in time destroy our very first principles of reason, and introduce barbarity amongst us, which is already kept out with so much difficulty by so few hands" (Swift, *The History* 272).

Swift is unable to maintain the impartiality of the critical historiography and is forced to allow subjectivity to colour his account as he decries the idiocy of his contemporaries. In Swift's *The*

*History* the impartiality of the historian is illusive as his opinions and political bias leak into the text to create a partisan record of the last four years of the reign of Queen Anne.

Swift has another attempt at writing a historiography of his political setting in *Gulliver's Travels* but within the context of his satire there is no need to be restricted by impartiality or plain fact. Swift creates a parallel historiography within the plot of "A Voyage to Lilliput": "Blefuscu is France, Lilliput England; High-Heels are Tories, Low -Heels Whigs; Flimnap is Walpole; Limnac, Lalcon, and Balmuff are identified by the offices they hold as Stanhope, the Duke of Devonshire, and Lord Cowper respectively" ... "and so it goes" (Varey 39). A parallel historiography is "a history that unfolds alongside and in juxtaposition to that of the larger society" (Imlay 4). In the war between Lilliput and Blefuscu a parallel to the war between England and France is identifiable: "Blefuscu is an Island situated to the North North-East Side of Lilliput, from whence it is parted only by a Channel of eight Hundred Yards wide" (Swift, *Travels* 65). Over Swift's lifetime France and England had consistently been in conflict over their religious differences, just as the Lilliputians and Blefuscuians: "the Big-Endian Exiles have found so much Credit in the Emperor of Blefuscu's Court; and so much private Assistance and Encouragement from their Party here at home, that a bloody War hath been carried on between the two Empires for six and thirty Moons" (Swift, *Travels* 65). Just as France provided refuge and support for the Catholics of England (particularly Catholic royalty such as James II after he fled from England), Blefuscu was a safe harbour for the Big-Endians of Lilliput. Griffin considers that, like satire, parallel historiography: "often focused on Theophrastan types and exemplary or cautionary figures" ... "and made use of selected historical particulars to establish a general proposition" ... "which might then be given particular application" (Griffin 125). The conflict of France and England is reimagined as a medium through which to make a commentary and deliver 'truths' on religion, war, and colonisation. The conflict is recreated in a ridiculous fantasy fiction, a long and bloody religious conflict is reduced to an absurd squabble over at which end to crack an egg. The parallels to a real-world historic event allow Swift to link his satire more clearly to its targets, for the connection to this historical particular is immediately recognisable to a reader in

Swift's context. Swift is able to contrive his historiography to deliver his moral 'truths' on a particular real-world context to his reader. *Gulliver's Travels* gives Swift the freedom to tell his own satiric historiography.

Swift satirises historiography in Part III of *Gulliver's Travels*, on the island of Glubbudrib. In this land of sorcerers Gulliver calls on ghosts and interviews them on modern learning and history. Gulliver begins to discover inconsistencies in the historiographical representations of noble families and historical events; pages and coachmen filtering into noble bloodlines, a cowardly General and Admiral who achieved victory by chance, and corrupt Kings:

I found how the world had been misled by prostitute writers, to ascribe the greatest exploits in war, to cowards; the wisest council, to fools; sincerity, to flatterers; Roman virtue, to betrayers of their country; piety, to atheists; chastity, to sodomites; truth, to informers.

(Swift, *Travels* 217)

Gulliver laments the lies of historians: "I discovered the roguery and ignorance of those who pretend to write anecdotes, or secret history" (Swift, *Travels* 217). Through Gulliver Swift satirises the fictions of historians claiming objective fact. Accusing them of corruption, selling out to embellishing the truth for a better story and presenting it as fact. Some historiographical liars, like travel liars, present fiction as fact but Swift is also criticising historiographical "prostitutes" who "sell out" their knowledge of the facts to create untruthful interpretations of historical reality – they do not necessarily make up facts, but they tell the story in a distorting fashion that suits whoever pays them. What this comes down to is a historiography that tells neither 'truth' nor fact. Gulliver's séance exposes the fallacies in this modern discourse: "I was chiefly disgusted with modern history" (Swift, *Travels* 217). Swift satirises critical historiography's representation as a discourse of truth and fact by finding eye-witness accounts that refute historiographical accounts. In this satire of historiography's relationship to truth Swift challenges the epistemologies behind the discourse.

Gulliver identifies historiographers' departures from fact and 'truth' so Swift can question the perception that this discourse, with its supposed allegiance to fact, can inexorably be read as an expression of 'truth'. Historiography and satire have much in common. But, while historiography attempts to hold itself apart and impartial from history, satire embraces its subjectivity to deliver partisan 'truths' on its historical particulars. Where historiographies are recognised as nonfiction, satire is not. Griffin argues that this constitutes a "naïve and unhistorical view" (124) of satire and historiography; for what if history "is only a sophisticated kind of fiction?" (Griffin 124). After all, historiography is still a story: "a construction" ... "the imposition of an interpreter's grid or template on an undifferentiated 'historical field'" (Griffin 124). Griffin proposes that when considering the fictional or factual textuality of all narratives we should see "a continuum, not a gap, between the interpretive descriptions of the novelist and documentarist and the work of the satirist" (132). Satire poses a particular challenge in interpreting its position on such a continuum, as its facticity or reality is adulterated by fantasy, imagination, and parody: "the writer of satire makes no simple binary division of statements into 'fact' and 'fiction'" (Griffin 132). The satire in *Gulliver's Travels* uses literary constructs from both sides of the supposed distinction between fiction and nonfiction, at once impersonating them and turning them inside-out.

The new discourses and rhetoric that grew in literature through the epistemological values of fact, reality, and objectivity in Swift's context were "intended to be truth in itself" (Zimmerman 142). For readers in the early eighteenth-century these discourses were the language of truth, their representations of reality were verified and authenticated through their rhetorical techniques and codes. But Swift combats the belief that truth can be inherent in language. For Swift, the truth is:

bitterly won, often repellent, rarely conducive to the serenity of the flabby and incurious mind. To pursue, whether in the name of literature, learning, or religion, the easy path of deceptive generalization, satisfying fancy, or diverting eloquence, is as sin against the truth

and ultimately against man's capacity to know truth and survive that knowledge.

(Rosenheim 206)

To accept the scientific epistemological definition of truth was, to Swift, evidence of a lazy mind. Truth takes different forms and for the dominant modern epistemology of Swift's context truth was made-up of impartial fact, reason, and reality. But for Swift, the champion of the ancients, truth was a moral field. Satire is a mode which deals with truth in this moral field, it tells "general truths, at the universals of human nature and social or political conduct" (Griffin 125). Satire provided Swift the perfect medium through which to deliver his partisan truth. For, it is a mode linked with the telling of truth, often truths we do not want to hear, and the fiction is the medium through which this truth is told: "fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth" (Camus 1). The satirist has a freedom that modern writers of factual truth do not:

The writer of satire makes no simple binary division of statements into 'fact' and 'fiction,' truth and distortion, evidence and innuendo. Satirists are released from certain restraints – about violating particular truths or fairness, about exaggeration or bias or evidence, whether in drawing or in applying a character. They have a license to lie. (Griffin 132)

Yet, through these lies satirists deliver commentaries and present their moral or philosophical judgments of a particular social reality. Thus, giving readers a subjective truth, concerned not with factual accuracy but with what is accepted to be true on a broader scale of human decency.

To modernist rhetoricians in the early eighteenth-century empirical fact was representative of truth. But in the *Travels* Swift's satire exposes the lack of moral truth in these modern discourses by applying their rhetoric to the description of the travesties of war. When Swift is explaining the effects of gunpowder to the King of Brobdingnag, he shows no moral awareness of what he is describing: "the proper Quantity of Powder and Balls, would batter down the Walls of the strongest Town in his Dominions in a few Hours; or destroy the whole Metropolis" (Swift, *Travels* 151). Gulliver acts as the subject of the satire as he embodies the modern narrator and their commitment to

relating fact and giving an impartial account, it is factually accurate but Swift questions its ability to constitute truth when it misses the point. The King is the voice of Swift as he draws attention to the lack of humanity in this form of narration, “he was amazed how so impotent and groveling an Insect as I ... could entertain such inhuman Ideas” (Swift, *Travels* 151). In this respect these modern rhetoricians are unreliable narrators, they are so closely focused on factual accuracy that their point of view is limited. There are different kinds of truth at work in *Gulliver’s Travels*: the satiric truth, the parody of the modernist fact/reality/truth, and the moral or universal truth.

In Part IV of *Gulliver’s Travels*, “A Voyage to the Houyhnhnms”, this theme of moral truth is at its most poignant as Swift’s satire becomes broader to critique human nature as a whole. In the Houyhnhnm community the Yahoos are primitive beasts ruled by their baser instincts of greed and violence. Swift’s representation of humanity satirises that vice of pride and reminds his audience that we are still just animals through the description of the human body: “They climbed high Trees, as nimbly as a Squirrel, for they had strong extended Claws before and behind. Terminating on sharp Points, hooked” (Swift, *Travels* 241). Swift delivers confronting moral lessons and universal truths in this voyage, as he reminds the reader of the ‘reality’ of human nature through an animalistic portrayal of the human body. For Gulliver, these truths of humanity have a severe effect:

The ‘truths’ which he learns, and which move him radically to alter his previous attitudes, are concerned not with the particulars under satiric assault, but with ‘that animal called man’ in that universal aspect which is the province of the moral philosopher... (Rosenheim 211)

Gulliver is so disgusted at the truth of the humanity and its failings of greed, violence, pride, and gluttony that he resolves to join the Houyhnhnms community and when forced to return to his family in England he is filled with “Hatred, Disgust and Contempt” (Swift, *Travels* 309) at the sight of them and prefers to spend his time in the company of the horses in the stable.

Along with a bleak moral truth on human nature the “Land of the Houyhnhnms” continues a satire on the prevalent discourse of the early eighteenth-century. Swift’s critique of this discourse continues through the Houyhnhnms and their understanding of truth and lies. The Houyhnhnms have no word for lying: “He replied, That I must needs be mistaken, or that I *said the thing which was not*. (For they have no Word in their Language to express Lying or Falsehood)” (Swift, *Travels* 253). The Houyhnhnms have no understanding of falsehood and possess the capacity to recognise the truth immediately, without the mediation of language. The Houyhnhnm society is centred around reason and truth: “the Use of Speech was to make us understand one another, and to receive Information of Facts; now if any one *said the Thing which was not*, these Ends were defeated (Swift, *Travels* 258). In this perhaps Swift suggests that it is not the modern discourse itself that is being satirised but how it claims to present itself as fact and truth through the use of certain techniques and rhetoric. As Swift has demonstrated in the previous chapters, writers of these discourses claiming, to be in pursuit of truth were saying the “Thing which was not” (Swift, *Travels* 258).

Gulliver attempts to combat his Yahoo nature and emulate his Houyhnhnm master in an allegiance to truth: “I had likewise learned from his Example an utter Detestation of all Falsehood or Disguise” (Swift, *Travels* 276); however, in Gulliver’s accounts of England he still “concealed many Particulars, and often *said the Thing which was not*” (Swift, *Travels* 278). Despite Gulliver’s reverence of the Houyhnhnms he exhibits Swift’s misanthropic view of human nature as he cannot resist the temptation to embellish his discourse for the sake of pride. For Gulliver’s lies were in an attempt to describe the people of his society as better than they were, aligning him with Swift’s contemporaries and their embellished writings for the sake of vanity. Edward. W Rosenheim describes these writers and their prideful falsehoods:

“false knowledge is merely the genesis of the infinitely greater sin of false pride ... when, in the face of error, man congratulates himself upon his rationality, his superiority to those

creatures with which he is linked in bestiality, his mastery of that truth to which his life is devoted, his exploitation of a unique power which he has in fact only neglected and abused..." (Rosenheim 221)

In his inability to adhere to truth Gulliver illustrates a rhetorician of this early eighteenth-century discourse. Despite numerous and profuse claims of fact and truth, Gulliver's tales are clearly false due to their radical fantasy but in the passages where he lies to other characters for pride he acts as the subject of the satire, for Swift to deride the writers of his period representing their tales as matter of fact and absolute truth and selling out to falsehood for the sake of vanity. In the very last sentence of the *Travels* Gulliver and Swift both "intreat those who have any Tincture of this absurd Vice, that they will not presume to appear in my Sight" (Swift, *Travels* 316). Gulliver at times is the criticiser of these writers and at times the example of this writer. But for Swift, these rhetoricians who manipulated readers through the use of their discourse were indeed best not to appear in his sight. In *Gulliver's Travels*: travel liars, scientists, journalists, historians, politicians, and lawyers are all censured for lying, overlooking, or misrepresenting 'truth'. Paradoxes of truth and lies are used in varying frameworks to satirise a selection of liars Swift identified in his society.

The Houyhnhnms take language out of the equation altogether as a signifier or medium through which to understand truth not even having a word for untruth and having no written language. When Gulliver creates a dictionary for translating the neighs of the Houyhnhnms to English his master is perplexed:

I formed all I learned into the English Alphabet, and writ the Words down with the Translations. This last, after some time, I ventured to do in my Master's Presence. It cost me much Trouble to explain to him what I was doing; for the Inhabitants have not the least Idea of Books or Literature. (Swift, *Travels* 253)

The Houyhnhnms are a rational and truthful community yet they do not need a written language to represent those values. There is no need for certain codes, vernacular, or phrasing to give

impressions of fact and truth for they hold no intrinsic value to truth itself. The lack of language in this equine society is not just due to the fact the Houyhnhnms would struggle to hold a pen with their hooves (Castle 239), rather it functions as a satire on the way the written word was being perceived in Swift's period as holding an innate ability to signify truth. In part IV of the *Travels* Swift engages with the epistemological perception of fact as truth and the resulting belief of his context that a discourse of fact was a language signifying truth: "in its most fundamental sense, the myth of the Voyage to the Houyhnhnms is a myth about true knowledge" (Rosenheim 214). Swift's satire demonstrates that the modern discourse of the early eighteenth-century with its values of fact and reason does not inexorably hold value as truth.

Discourse has a significant role in forming readers' perceptions of the world. And in Swift's context of the early eighteenth-century these discourses that represented the modern epistemologies of new science's fact, impartiality, and 'reality' were being interpreted as languages of truth and thus their content was taken to be truth. In the *Travels* Swift uses these same discourses to illustrate that no language can embody or manifest truth. Terry Castle agrees that a core element of the satire in the *Travels* is of the role of the written word in Swift's period:

one might even be tempted to claim that satire of the written word is an underlying principle of organization in that work. No matter how other perspectives shift from book to book (most notoriously our view of the narrator himself), a critique of the written word seems to remain a constant. It works as a symbolic reference point against which other elements of the satire may be aligned. (Castle 249).

But the satire goes beyond simply criticising the written word. What Swift does with his parodies of dominant and popular discourses from his setting is destabilise their relationship to the values of modern epistemologies (those of facticity, reality, and impartiality) and exemplify through a juxtaposition with a fantasy narrative that these discourses possess no inherent ability to tell truth: "Swift's parabolic pedagogy can tacitly justify its return to an anachronistic attitude toward how to

tell the truth in narrative” (McKeon 330). In *Gulliver’s Travels* Swift appropriates different discourses of his context in the early eighteenth-century and undermines their connection to truth through paradoxically converging them with extreme fantasies. What Swift demonstrates in the *Travels* is that language itself has no fundamental relationship to truth.

### Chapter Three

The satiric mode is fundamentally a paradox of fiction and reality. It “makes use of ‘fictions’” (Griffin 117) to deliver critical commentary on real historical particulars, and therefore, there is an “indispensable relationship between satire and historic fact” (Rosenheim 33). Swift makes use of this paradox in *Gulliver’s Travels* to deliver and support his critique on representations of ‘reality’ or ‘truth’ in discourse in the early eighteenth century. As Swift’s satire goes out of its way to confuse the reader’s ability to recognise fact from fiction in exaggerating real historical particulars to the point where they appear as fiction. Through use of parody and satirical techniques of irony, wit, and paradox the *Travels* demonstrates that the written word can mislead readers and thus compromise their ability to recognise truth from lie. In this, Swift’s book not only satirises the discourses of the early eighteenth century but the epistemologies that birthed them, particularly those of new science. The *Travels* critiques the modern epistemological values of new science through a paradox of reality and fantasy. However, this criticism continues to be rooted in language through the satiric rhetoric and dialectical strategies used to criticise these epistemological values of science, fact, and reason.

Edward W. Rosenheim, Jr provides a helpful discussion of satire in his book *Swift and the Satirist’s Art*. Satire is a transmuting mode, often enmeshed with other literary genres and evolving over the centuries (Rosenheim 2). Thus, satire’s form varies greatly, making a definition difficult to pin down: “when in one age satire appears to be marked by certain identifying conventions, these often disappear or are altered in what is called satire in succeeding ages” (Rosenheim 2). After some discussion, Rosenheim arrives at this definition: “*satire consists of an attack by means of a manifest fiction upon discernible historic particulars*” (Rosenheim 31). Such a definition focuses on the relationship between the performative fiction and its referentiality to a real-life context and contributes to the premise that at the core of the satiric method is a paradox of fiction and reality. While scholars have added to Rosenheim’s satiric theses since his book was published in 1963, his

work remains useful in constructing a general understanding of the dynamic between satire and fiction and reality; and will be helpful in examining how Swift uses the mode of satire itself as a way to subvert a discourses ability to represent reality in *Gulliver's Travels*.

The relationship between satire's manifest fiction and a real-life context is reliant on the perception of the reader. Satire lies in the moment of recognition, when the reader sees beyond the fiction to the real-life reference and the satirical critique is thus perceived:

at that moment of recognition, the words we read or hear acquire new dimensions and lose familiar ones. We are conscious that the possession of explicit sorts of knowledge or belief is indispensable to an understanding of the author's intention; our conceptions of what the work "means," of its mode of conveying "truth," of the way in which we are expected to respond to it are all clearly altered. (Rosenheim 9)

The contrived fiction gives way to a subtext of criticism based on a real-life event, person, or society. The recognition of a referentiality to a real-life context is essential to the effective operation of satire and distinguishes the mode from other fictional genres. To fully understand satire you must link it, as its contextual readers would have, to the particular politics of the country and the years in which the satirist was writing. Satire shares this real-world connection with discourses such as historiography and journalism, an inextricable link to a particular real-life context. However, while these genres in the early eighteenth-century delivered their commentary on real-life through rhetorics inferring truth in their use of facticity, reportage, and objectivity; satire delivers its criticism of real-life (its moral truth) through a fictional performance.

"Satiric fiction" is a concept explored by Rosenheim that describes the contrived imagined narrative through which the attack on historical particulars is delivered. The fiction is performative and adds flair to the social critique, often through comedy. For instance, the attack on English politicians made in Lilliput is enriched comedically through the fictional parodies of these characters

jumping through hoops and skipping rope for the approval of their seniors. However, satiric fiction does not just contribute comedy, it presents in a multitude of forms:

It may appear as a slight but patent exaggeration, a brisk derisive metaphor, a manifest sarcasm--constituting, it may well be, the kind of "wit" which for most of us marks the satiric "touches" imbedded in writing whose general nature is not satiric at all. (Rosenheim 18)

In *Gulliver's Travels* the satiric fiction is especially vibrant as it paints many fantastical worlds, as we can see in Lilliput as Gulliver single-handedly defeats an armada; in Brobdingnag where Gulliver survives a King-Kong like assault from a chimpanzee; in Glubbudubdrib where there lives a race of immortal beings; and in the land of the Houyhnhnms where Gulliver stitches the skins of adolescent Yahoos into a coat. Within these imagined communities and characters lies a subtext of criticism of very specific targets from Swift's context. The fiction operates as the medium through which the satire is conducted. However, Rosenheim argues the satiric fiction "is as indispensable to the satirist's art as is the attack itself" (119). These exorbitant fictions support the satire of the historical particulars in the *Travels*.

*Gulliver's Travels* is particularly diverse in its performance of satiric fiction. The *Travels* moves through multiple fictional displays as Gulliver visits civilizations of pygmies and giants, conflicts with a dwarf and a monkey, visits a floating island, and finds happiness amongst a race of talking horses:

In a work like *Gulliver's Travels*, fiction is ever present and often, as fiction (rather than as a symbol or surrogate for historical reality), dominates our attention; the satiric frequently yields to the non-satiric through the absence of specific objects of attack of any sort.

(Rosenheim 102)

The satiric fiction in *Gulliver's Travels* is so vibrant that it can function independent of its satiric motive. For instance, the scene in which the Lilliputians tie down and climb onto Gulliver is a famous scene that continues to capture audiences in the twenty-first century:

I attempted to rise, but was not able to stir: For as I happened to lie on my Back, I found my Arms and Legs were strongly fastened on each Side to the Ground; and my Hair, which was long and thick, tied down in the same Manner ... I felt something alive moving on my left Leg, which advancing gently forward over my Breast, came almost up to my Chin; when bending my Eyes downwards as much as I could, I perceived it to be a human Creature not six Inches high, with a Bow and Arrow in his Hands, and a Quiver at his Back. (Swift, *Travels* 35)

In such a fantastic and vivid imagining: “satiric fiction, no longer a mere vehicle of attack, can assume a transcendent and memorable power in its own right...” (Rosenheim 119). The artistry of the fiction that surrounds the satiric attack makes it memorable: “It is with this element and its power, in the hands of an artist such as Swift, to make of the attack upon the historically particular a source of permanent literary satisfaction” (Rosenheim 106). This “permanent literary satisfaction” is evident in the myriad of reimaginings and retellings of *Gulliver's Travels*. The satiric fiction took on a life of its own, particularly when read by those outside of Swift's context who did not experience the recognition of the fiction's attack of real-life particulars.

The book's fictional façade was so powerful that the *Travels* managed to gain significance as a book of children's literature. In a letter to Swift, just days after *Gulliver's Travels* was published, John Gay wrote “from the highest to the lowest it is universally read” ... “from the Cabinet-council to the Nursery” (Smedman, 78). Child readers did not comprehend the sophisticated connotations to their real context but enjoyed the fantastical stories of giants, dwarves, and pygmies. These elements of the story are very reminiscent of the children's genre as they paint vivid pictures of fantasy worlds, and fantasyland is “always the province of children” (Smedman, 77). Sarah Smedman

in “Like Me, Like Me Not: *Gulliver’s Travels* as a Children’s Book” ruminates on “how and why a bitter satire aimed at eighteenth-century political, religious, and cultural targets has attracted child readers” (75). Smedman theorises that Swift’s creative and descriptive fantasy worlds delight young readers: “not only did he discover Lilliput and the other countries from his imagination, he mapped them, described them, limned their inhabitants and their culture” (Smedman, 77). The first two parts of *Gulliver’s Travels* are often still reimagined as a children’s stories in literature and film. The satiric motives and “realities” are perhaps the most easily overlooked in the first half of the book, as the critical content is (comparatively) more subdued. In Part III and IV the plot is secondary to the satire as Swift’s condemnation of his context and humanity overtakes the surface fiction. The Yahoos would surely be the stuff of nightmares for children. In focusing on the fictional performance of *Gulliver’s Travels* it is clear why the book has seen such long-lasting success as a children’s story. From a child’s perspective, with no recognition of the satiric motives, these first sections function as a fantasy story about Gulliver’s travels to amazing and curious lands.

The dynamic between the fiction and the reality fluctuates within each imagined civilization. There are points in the narrative where the façade of a fictional performance is near abandoned as Swift’s attack dominates the narrative. In the instances where Gulliver describes aspects of British society to the King of Brobdingnag and his Houyhnhnm master the fictional narrative is paused for the satiric attack to progress. Gulliver describes the faults of England as he discusses the war with France entered by the Prince of Orange and continued by Queen Anne: “to set forth the Valour of my own dear Countrymen, I assured him, that I had seen them blow up a Hundred Enemies” ... “and beheld their dead bodies drop down in pieced from the Clouds” (Swift, *Travels* 266); and the King and his Master are the voices of satire: “He said, whoever understood the Nature of Yahoos might easily believe it possible for so vile an Animal, to be capable of every Action I had named...” (Swift, *Travels* 266). In passages such as this, the satiric fiction largely fades to the background as the attacks on historical particulars become more concentrated and more explicit. The satire’s link to historical particulars, or real-life, becomes the central focus of the narrative. This intrinsic link of

satire to reality demonstrates the ability of fiction to represent “reality” just as the modern discourses of the early eighteenth-century represent “reality”. Whether packaged in a discourse of fantastical fiction or one of reportage and fact, the relationship to real historical particulars is much the same.

Rosenheim suggests thinking of satire as a scale to account for the movement or fluctuation between fictional moments that retain a clear link to specific real world reference points, and ones that exceed their immediate satirical function and take on an imaginative life of their own. The relationship between the fiction and reality is essential to the mode of satire, the interaction between the imagined and the real is fundamental to the construction of the contextual criticism. In each instance, regardless of what balance is struck, the fictional and the real operate symbiotically within satire:

All satire is not only an attack; it is an attack upon *discernible, historically authentic particulars*. The “dupes” or victims of punitive satire are not mere fictions. They, or the objects which they represent, must be, or have been, plainly existent in the world of reality; they must, that is, possess genuine historic identity. The reader must be capable of pointing to the world of reality, past or present, and identifying the individual or group, institution, custom, belief, or idea which is under attack by the satirist. (Rosenheim 25)

This reference to reality is dependent on the reader’s cognition of the critical references to the real context veiled within a fantastical fiction. In its context these references would have been glaringly obvious to readers but removed from its setting the association of the satire to historical particulars can be overlooked.

So, for example, in Gulliver’s description of Flimnap, the treasurer of Lilliput, the reader of the early eighteenth century would recognise Robert Walpole, the leader of the Whigs:

Flimnap, the Treasurer, is allowed to cut a Caper on the straight Rope, at least an Inch higher than any other Lord in the whole Empire. I have seen him do the Summerset several times together upon a Trencher fixed on a Rope... (Swift, *Travels* 53)

In this description the reader of the early eighteenth-century: “already convinced that the Lord Treasurer was a slippery opportunist” (Rosenheim 15), recognizes Swift’s satire of Robert Walpole: “it has always been agreed that Gulliver’s account of the rope-dancing agility of Flimnap, the Lilliputian Treasurer in *Gulliver’s Travels*, is a satiric thrust against Sir Robert Walpole” (Rosenheim 15). The satiric fiction is based around constructing a caricature of a real historical figure. To readers of Swift’s context this reference would be clear and poignant in its disparagement. For the reader of the twenty-first century however, a more active role must be taken to recognise the place of the real in the fiction.

*Gulliver’s Travels* also blends fact and fiction as a side effect of the referentiality of the satiric subtext. Beneath the façade of fantastic voyages, creatures, and events the *Travels* is rooted in reality for Swift and the readership of 1726. The plot follows a fictional character on an imagined journey visiting fantasy lands and people but there is a subtext of relevance to a particular social reality, as this fictional narrative is used to relate a social commentary and critique on a real time and place. Griffin considers that referentiality varies significantly from satire to satire and “can be used to suggest several different relationships between satire and the external world” (Griffin 120). But this variation does not minimise that the relationship between satire and the external world is present, to whatever degree. Indeed, referentiality varies greatly just within *Gulliver’s Travels*.

Scholars of Jonathan Swift’s work spend a lot of time working to identify points of referentiality in his satiric fictions, particularly in *Gulliver’s Travels*. The *Travels* interpolates a plethora of references to its real-life context and Swift’s attack of these particulars can only be appreciated by the modern-day reader through research into the milieu of Britain in the early eighteenth-century. This is exemplified in the citizens of Laputa and their fear of astronomy. Swift’s

Laputians are overcome with fear of an approaching comet: “they are so perpetually alarmed with the apprehensions of these, and the like impending dangers, that they can neither sleep quietly in their beds, nor have any relish for the common pleasures and amusements of life” (Swift, *Travels* 183). Here Swift is making a reference to Halley’s comet “as every reader of his day must have realised” (Nicolson and Mohler 312). Halley’s comet was highly anticipated in the early eighteenth century and scientists feared it crashing into the Earth and ending all life (Nicolson and Mohler 312). Sentiments echoed by the Laputan scientists:

For if, in its perihelion, it should approach within a certain degree of the sun (as by their calculations they have reason to dread) it will receive a degree of heat ten thousand times more intense than that of red hot glowing iron, and in its absence from the sun, carry a blazing tail ten hundred thousand and fourteen miles long, through which, if the earth should pass at the distance of one hundred thousand miles from the nucleus, or main body of the comet, it must in its passage be set on fire, and reduced to ashes: that the sun, daily spending its rays without any nutriment to supply them, will at last be wholly consumed and annihilated; which must be attended with the destruction of this earth, and of all the planets that receive their light from it. (Swift, *Travels* 182)

As Nicolson and Mohler note, such passages are reminiscent of fears vocalised by scientists, and even poets, in Swift’s period:

Lo! From the dread immensity of space  
  
Returning with accelerated course,  
  
The rushing comet to the sun descends... (313)

The reference to Halley’s comet is further supported by the Laputans calculating “the return of their comet in “one and thirty years” ...for: “one and thirty years after 1726 – the date of the first publication of *Gulliver’s Travels* – English laymen expected the return of Halley’s comet” (Nicolson

and Mohler 313). The Laputian's fears appear as exaggerations but they are reflections of real fears, based off real lines of scientific inquiry present in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

A pursuit to identify these links to the external world enlightens modern-day readers and critics to the breadth of the satire as it would have been understood by its contextual readership. It reaffirms the relationship of the satire to the external world by identifying the 'real' disguised in the satiric fiction. Nicolson and Mohler suggest that:

Swift himself would have been the last to object to the attempts of 'later travellers' to recognize the specific sources of his satire. He, who delighted in the setting of riddles, wrote with some regret: 'Though the present age may understand well enough the little hints we give, the parallels we draw, and the characters we describe, yet this will all be lost to the next' ... 'However, if these papers should happen to live to our grandchildren are men, I hope they may have curiosity enough to consult annals and compare dates, in order to find out'. (333)

Investigation into the context in which Swift lived and wrote reveals the extent to which reality is converged into fiction. For that is the nature of the satiric mode, to merge contextual references into a fiction. In analysing and identifying the references to real-world particulars we as modern readers can attempt to improve our recognition of the satiric critiques to understand the full extent of the satire in the *Travels*.

The fundamental role of satire in delivering commentary on a particular social reality through a fictional performance works in subversion of early eighteenth-century epistemologies that believed reality should be related through discourses utilizing codes of fact and reality and separated from the fictive. Satire's "reality" is dependent on an active reader able to recognize for themselves what is "real" while readers of modern discourses assumed reality, facticity, or truth due to the codes present in the language. *Gulliver's Travels* further confuses the dynamic of reality and fiction

by using the language of modern discourse to describe fantasies and framing real historical particulars as incredible fictions. This forces the reader to autonomously decipher reality from fantasy as the narrator cannot be trusted and the author works to obscure the reality, so much so that it can at times be difficult to discern Swift's true meaning. This ambiguity necessitating the reader to decide for themselves what is real and what is fiction is another satiric critique awaiting the reader's recognition, as a criticism of readers of modern discourses who accepted these writings as fact or "real" without question. The satire of *Gulliver's Travels* knocks the reader out of a passive role and prompts them to recognise the need for scepticism in literature.

This criticism is particularly poignant in Part III of *Gulliver's Travels*. The "Voyage to Laputa" is a cornucopia of references to Swift's social reality, the reader has a mammoth task to discern the many satiric targets and critiques. Part III has been the most problematic for critics and readers alike for it is a dramatic departure from the first two voyages. Part III was written last "he composed the voyage to the Houyhnhnms before the voyage to Laputa" (Ehrenpreis, "English Statesmanship" 7), which perhaps accounts for its contrast to the previous voyages.

"The Voyage to Laputa" has been most criticized and least understood. There is general agreement that in interest and literary merit it falls short of the first two voyages [...] it lacks the philosophic intuition of the voyages to Lilliput and Brobdingnag and the power of the violent and savage attacks upon mankind in the voyage to the Houyhnhnms. (Nicolson and Mohler 299)

While the "Voyage to Laputa" "generally is considered the least successful, [it] is the most thoroughly and genuinely satiric of the four" (Rosenheim 97). The references to the social reality are so numerous that "when historical victims have been identified and the satiric chapter of the book established, there is very little in the way of comic plot, situation, or characterization which can be said to function independently" (Rosenheim 97), for Rosenheim it is this which accounts for the

discontent with Part III. However, despite any literary dissatisfaction with the fictional performance, Part III is a compelling satiric parody on the epistemologies and discourses of new science.

The parody in *Gulliver's Travels* melds social realities into fiction by constructing imaginative caricatures of real historical particulars. Robert Phiddian in his book *Swift's Parody* approaches parody as a mode of deconstruction: "parody does not repudiate the texts on which it operates, but rather animates them in order to distort them, point out their limitations, and divide them against themselves" (2). Swift does not explicitly state his critical thoughts, such as those on new science and politics, but creates an exaggerated fictional representation of them which demonstrates their deficiencies. The use of parody in *Gulliver's Travels* is prolific. The book as a whole is a parody of a travel book, in moments it parodies particular texts such as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Utopia*, *New Atlantis*, as well as parodies of specific historical figures and people from Swift's context: "to read Swiftian parody is to range over textual space without piercing it, to disentangle threads of quotation, allusion, and suggestion which, in turn, entangle us" (Phiddian 7). Parody mocks the real through an imagined representation. In analysing the parody in *Gulliver's Travels* this thesis is concerned with how a particular social reality can be discussed through an exorbitant fiction.

Where satire delivers its critiques through a persona (an unreliable narrator such as Gulliver) parody centres around an imitation, a carnival mirror reflection of its target:

where satiric fiction consists largely in the posture assumed by the satiric writer, whether as a totally fictional *persona* or in the less extreme degrees of dissimulation, we are not so likely to find a purely punitive form of assault. Effective parody, for example, is ordinarily a genuine type of satiric exposure in which, by *reductio ad absurdum* or some form of distortion, the satirist seeks to heighten our awareness of the victim's infirmities. Merely to reproduce in exaggerated form, for the sake of amusement, weaknesses which are already quite evident is, as a rule, a rather puerile form of punitive derision. (Rosenheim 135)

The weaknesses Swift attempts to call attention to in Part III are copious but his parody particularly focuses on distorting aspects of new science and its scientists to an absurd and extreme level, exposing their modern perspective and vanity for derision. For instance, the Laputians are a parody of the new scientists in Swift's society: "I have not seen a more clumsy, awkward and unhandy People, nor so slow and perplexed in their Conceptions upon all other Subjects, except those of Mathematicks and Musick" (Swift, *Travels* 181). The Laputian caricatures demonstrate the weaknesses of the new scientists for Swift to then satirise through Gulliver:

They are very bad Reasoners, and vehemently given to Opposition, unless when they happen to be of the right Opinion, which is seldom their Case. Imagination, Fancy, and Invention, they are wholly strangers to, nor have any Words in their Language by which those Ideas can be expressed; the whole Compass of their Thoughts and Mind, being shut up within the two forementioned Sciences. (Swift, *Travels* 181)

The use of parody in *Gulliver's Travels* contributes to the subversion of dominant epistemologies in the early eighteenth-century which understood the knowledge and discourse of science to be the way of representing truth and 'reality'; for Swift's caricature challenges this epistemological theory that reality could only be related through plain language.

The realities parodied in the *Travels* are certainly anything but plain. Satire necessitates an object of attack and in *Gulliver's Travels* a core satirical object is the epistemology of the new science of the early eighteenth-century. In "A Voyage to Laputa", Swift's satiric fiction is overtaken by the assault on the new science. On the floating island of Laputa the Laputians are a parodic caricature of academics in the early eighteenth century: "their Heads were all reclined to the Right, or the Left; one of their Eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the Zenith" (Swift, *Travels* 176). Swift manifests the preoccupation of his contemporaries with the modern academia and astrology in physical characteristics. The Laputians require the aid of a Flapper to remind them of the realities of the world around them: "It seems, the Minds of these People are so taken up with intense

Speculations, that they neither can speak, or attend the Discourses of others without being roused by some external Traction upon the Organs of Speech and Hearing” (Swift, *Travels* 177). The Flappers carry a bladder filled with stones attached to a stick to flail around the mouths and ears of the Laputians to remind them to speak or listen. Or even to remind them not to walk off the edge of the floating island: “upon Occasion to give him a soft Flap on his Eyes; because he is always so wrapped up in Cogitation, that he is in manifest Danger of falling down every Precipice” (Swift, *Travels* 177). As Gulliver states, it is “a very common Infirmity of human Nature, inclining us to be more curious and conceited in Matters where we have least Concern, and for which we are least adapted by Study or Nature” (Swift, *Travels* 182). In a fashion, Swift himself is the real flapper verbally striking the modern scientists and academics about the head with the *Travels* to bring them back to reality. In the previous civilizations the satirical targets were varied, and the construction of the fantastic satiric fiction was predominant. In Part III the gusto with which the object of science is attacked results in a higher concentration of referential recognition and the fictional construct takes second place to a profuse satire of science.

In the “Voyage to Laputa” Swift’s imitations become more specific and more blatant, centring on new science, mathematics, and modernist academics. The “Voyage to Laputa” is riddled with parody, the real continually intrudes on the fiction. Ironically, the experiments of the Grand Academy of Lagado have impressed some literary historians: “by their apparent exaggeration and have been dismissed as so obviously impossible that they become grotesque rather than humorous. Swift, the critics say, “simply tortured his memory and his fancy to invent or recall grotesque illustrations of scientific pedantry”” (Nicolson and Mohler 321). However, to Swift’s contemporaries and the readers in his context the real targets that were being parodied would have been all too obvious. For instance, Dr Arbuthnot “recognizing the satire upon his colleagues in the Royal Society, wrote critically to Swift: “I tell you freely, the part of the projectors is the least brilliant” (Nicolson and Mohler 333), to which Swift allegedly replied: “it is ten thousand pities he had not known it, he could have added such abundance of things upon every subject” (Nicolson and Mohler 333).

Through the responses of those from Swift's context it is evident that the Grand Academy of Lagado was teeming with references to British society in the early eighteenth-century and inextricably linked to that particular context regardless of a façade of fiction. The Earl of Cork and Orrery stated: "However wild the descriptions of ... the manners, and various projects of the philosophers of Lagado may appear, yet it is a real picture" (Nicolson and Mohler 334). In Part III of *Gulliver's Travels* the veil between the fantastic fiction and the satiric motive is especially thin as the parodic imitations of real scientists and scientific experiments overtake the performance of the satiric fiction.

The parodic representation of real people from Swift's context is fictional in its hyperbole but there is an element of "reality" behind the fictional distortion, for the parody is rooted in the real setting and society of Swift's context. Part III of *Gulliver's Travels* is startlingly specific in its references to real historical particulars from the early eighteenth century and through these parodies Swift satirises the role of the modernist's 'new science' in his society. In his visit to Balnibarbi Gulliver tours The Grand Academy of Lagado, a society of natural philosophers conducting bizarre scientific experiments; just as Swift himself toured The Royal Society of London in 1710. "A Voyage to Laputa" employs *reductio ad absurdum*, a method "frequently employed by modern satirists who reduce to nonsense scientific papers and doctoral dissertations, not by inventing unreal subjects of research, but—more devastatingly—by quoting actual titles of papers and theses" (Nicolson and Mohler 322). For, Dr Marjorie Nicolson and Dr Nora Mohler in their article "The Scientific Background of Swift's *Voyage to Laputa*" argue that "the sources for nearly all the theories of the Laputians and the Balnibarians are to be found in the work of Swift's contemporary scientists and particularly in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*" (301). Swift takes real scientific experiments from the natural philosophers of his context and makes them appear as nonsense through his parodic imitation. The satire is all the more cutting in the fact that the "satiric fiction" is actually not far removed from 'reality':

experiments actually performed by members of the Royal Society, more preposterous to the layman than anything imagination could invent and more devastating in their satire because of their essential truth to source [...] Removed from its context, read by laymen instead of scientists, the real serves often as a more powerful weapon against scientific research than can anything invented by fancy. (Nicolson and Mohler 322)

Truth is indeed stranger than fiction. The imagined scientific experiments in Part III are very similar to the real historical particulars that they mock but in convincing a reader that what Gulliver describes is a ludicrous fancy Swift makes another strike against his satiric target. Swift distorts the reality to make it appear as fictional on one hand to satirise the vanity and ridiculousness of these experimenters and experiments; and on the other to confuse the representation of reality and truth. In presenting real experiments through a lens of fiction the reader struggles to recognise what is real. Here Swift is flipping his use of discourse, while his satire largely uses the language of eighteenth-century discourses and reportage to make the fantastic appear “real”; in his parodies he exaggerates and distorts the “real” to make it appear fictional. Demonstrating to the reader the vital need for cynicism to avoid falling into the trap of believing what they read.

A parodic experiment in the Grand Academy of Lagado which presents the ‘real’ as fictional is the scientist working to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers so as to have a supply of sunshine for the governor’s gardens. Nicolson and Mohler theorise that this attempt to pull sunlight from cucumbers could be linked to several experiments:

The ‘cucumber projector’ may have been an assiduous student of Grew, Boyle, Hooke and Newton ... But it is more likely that he was a follower of Hales who, working upon principles laid down for him by these predecessors, made the final experiments which were imitated in the Grand Academy of Lagado. (328)

Stephen Hales was a clergyman and scientist who conducted research and experimentation in the field of botany, as well as pneumatic chemistry and physiology. Relevant to Gulliver’s “cucumber

projector” is Hales’s work on the respiration of plants and animals. Indeed, “Hales had been particularly impressed by the great quantities of air generated from certain fruits and vegetables, most of all, apples” (Nicolson and Mohler 329). Whilst Swift may have changed the fruit in question, his bizarre and ridiculous fictional experiment is clearly based on specific scientists and particular scientific theories. Hales also researched the “effect of sunbeams upon the earth and with the principles by which these sunbeams were alleged to enter into plants” (Nicolson and Mohler 329). Whilst Hales studied the absorption of sunlight into plants and Swift’s projector looked at extracting sunlight from plants, both scientists stored their sunbeams in hermetically sealed vials (Nicolson and Mohler 329): “He has been eight years upon a project for extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers, which were to be put in phials hermetically sealed, and let out to warm the air in raw inclement summers” (Swift, *Travels* 197). Swift recreates a scientific theory and changes nothing but the type of fruit and the direction of the sunbeams but, to the layman, the experiment appears to be a ludicrous fiction.

In the Grand Academy of Lagado Swift also converges parodies, delivering multiple satirical critiques in a single satiric fiction. During his tour of the Academy Gulliver complains of a “small Fit of the Cholick” (Swift, *Travels* 199) and is shown to a renowned physician:

He had a large Pair of Bellows, with a long slender Muzzle of Ivory. This he conveyed eight Inches up the Anus, and drawing in the Wind, he affirmed he could make the Guts as lank as a dried Bladder. But when the Disease was more stubborn and violent, he let in the Muzzle while the Bellows was full of Wind, which he discharged into the Body of the Patient; then withdrew the Instrument to replenish it, clapping his Thumb strongly against the Orifice of the Fundament; and this being repeated three or four Times, the adventitious Wind would rush out, bringing the noxious along with it, (like Water put into a Pump), and the Patient recovers. (Swift, *Travels* 199)

This description does not entice Gulliver to try it and the physician demonstrates the process on an unfortunate dog, which “died on the Spot, and we left the Doctor endeavouring to recover him, by the same Operation” (Swift, *Travels* 200). In this passage Swift is referencing a series of experiments on respiration conducted by members of the Royal Society, such as Swammerdam, Hooke, and Boyle (Nicolson and Mohler 325) of which Hooke’s were indeed conducted with a dog and a pair of bellows: “a Dog was dissected and by means of a Pair of Bellows, and a certain Pipe thrust into the Wind-pipe of the Creature” (Hooke, “Account of a Dog dissected” 305). In addition, through changing the purpose of the experiment from respiration to digestion Swift parodies Mr. St Andre and his work “An extraordinary Effect of the Cholick”, in which Mr St Andre had also recommended curing colic through “contrary Operations” (Swift, *Travels* 199): “an Inversion of it ... shou’d force the *Ailments, Bile, pancreatic Juices*, and lastly the *Faeces* to ascend towards the Mouth” (St.Andre 306). In his parody of these two areas of scientific experimentation Swift adds nothing that is original, rather he blends two existing experiments as a technique of his parody. Aspects of the experiment that seem outlandish were actually taken directly from real scientific experiments and papers. Swift converges scatology, exaggeration, and two specific parodies into one passage of satiric fiction. In addition, the experiment is framed as something that may be conducted upon the protagonist, making the parody’s satire more shocking to the reader as they are confronted by the prospect of having a pair of bellows inserted eight inches up the anus. Combining these parodies in one passage further complicates the readers attempts to recognise the references to ‘reality’ amongst layers of intertextuality and satire.

The “Voyage to Laputa” demonstrates parody’s ability to converge multiple epistemologies and discourses while criticising them through exaggeration, simultaneously emulating them and undermining them. Swift’s parody appropriates the discourses of the new science through constructing these caricatures from the Royal Society’s publication *Philosophical Transactions*. Swift plagiarises the subjects of this journal and retells them hyperbolically to subvert the epistemologies behind them. Additionally, the practice of parody itself demonstrates a symbiotic dynamic between

reality and fiction which contributes to Swift's argument that these modern discourses are mistaken in claiming reality can only be understood through codes of fact and realism. Thus, the parody is another facet of the satire against early eighteenth-century methods for viewing and describing the world.

The parodic mode is intertextual as 'outside' people, ideas, texts are recreated within the satiric discourse: "parody is, after all, the enactment of the negotiability of discourses" (Phiddian 198). *Gulliver's Travels* demonstrates this as it subsumes aspects of the discourses of *Robinson Crusoe* and the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* in its process of satirising them. The interaction of parody with outside texts or particulars is to affect a deconstruction of the original material, idea, or perspective. The layered and enmeshed discourses in parody can result in an indeterminate satiric discourse, with a satiric motive difficult to discern amongst the tangled pieces of outside rhetoric: parody "canvasses the multiplication of their meanings and the uncertainty of their origins" (Phiddian 198). For example, Chlöe Houston in her article "Utopia, Dystopia or Anti-Utopia? Gulliver's Travels and the Utopian Mode of Discourse" identifies the very passages that Nicolson and Mohler identified as parodies of the *Philosophical Transactions* as parodies of Francis Bacon's book *New Atlantis*, published nearly a hundred years before the *Travels* in 1627. Both are correct, for as Houston notes: "The Academy of Lagado clearly draws upon that other storehouse of scientific wonders, the idealised research institute of Salomon's House" (Houston 4). Salomon's House, like the Academy of Lagado and the Royal Society of London, is a "research institution which is run by several 'Fathers,' whose purpose is 'the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human Empire'" (Houston 4). Links can even be seen in the specific experiments to both texts, the cucumber projector was clearly identified in the *Philosophical Transactions* by Nicolson and Mohler, yet it is also linked to *New Atlantis* by Houston:

whilst the Academy boasts an experimenter dedicated to 'extracting Sun-Beams out of Cucumbers' (170), Salomon's House contains 'perspective-houses, where we make

demonstrations of all lights and radiations’ and ‘find also divers means, yet unknown to you, of producing light originally from divers bodies’ (484). (Houston 5)

The parody of *New Atlantis* is enmeshed with the parody of the Royal Society’s *Philosophical Transactions* and the satire on new science. The Grand Academy of Lagado references multiple discourses simultaneously, exposing and criticising them all. This results in an indeterminate literary atmosphere which embraces “the iconic status of language [and] creates a space where Swift plays many games” (Phiddian 199). As Phiddian argues, by problematising its sources and goals, parody “uncovers the illegitimacy in a discourse’s structure, to engage with it deconstructively and not always with a clear set of aims” (Phiddian 198). The satiric techniques of constructing an attack through unreliable narration, irony, referentiality, and parody all work to disguise Swift’s meaning within the satiric fiction; but in this ambiguity the *Travels* is able to utter outrageous propositions (Phiddian 199) and draw the readers “into the satiric complications as active agents, making them discover the absurdities of the targets parodied rather than merely hearing them denounced” (Phiddian 199). The techniques of the satire’s rhetoric force the reader to engage with the text to decipher the ‘meaning’ of the *Travels*, thereby creating the active reader that Swift argues for in readings of early eighteenth-century discourses.

Of course, not all readers put in this engagement to decode the satirist’s motive or commentary. Such readers do not recognise the satire or make the connections to the social reality within the fiction, they do not get the joke. A particularly gullible Irish Bishop epitomized this reader as, upon reading *Gulliver’s Travels*, he declared that the book was full of improbable lies and he hardly believed a word of it (Rawson 486) implying that the author expects the text to be perceived as ‘true’. This Bishop was duped by the satiric fiction and the imitation of the factual realistic discourse in even believing that the book intended to be believed. Although perhaps the Bishop’s ignorance can be somewhat forgiven considering the effort Swift dedicates to disguise his ‘truth’ in the satiric rhetoric.

In the Enlightenment era: “public opinion grew enormously in its influence on public concerns, and the writers of the time took advantage of what was then a new relationship between writer and reader” (Rembert 2). Swift’s rhetoric in the *Travels* attempts to battle this relationship between reader and writer; for, “there is nothing so extravagant and irrational which some Philosophers have not maintained for Truth” (Swift, *Travels* 205). Rather than trying to convince the reader, Swift encourages them to remain unconvinced. Satiric discourse, particularly in the *Travels*, constructs a persuasive rhetoric to attack historical particulars through techniques which provoke the reader into a position of autonomy. Readers need to engage with the rhetoric to recognise the references to the ‘real’ context and the criticisms the satirist makes of them.

This interaction of the satiric rhetoric with the early eighteenth-century’s dominant epistemologies is demonstrated by Swift’s use of the scientific method in *Gulliver’s Travels*. The rise of the scientific method was considered in the first chapter of this thesis where it was discussed that a number of notable scientists (Bacon, Aristotle, Galileo) had each contributed to constructing a method of setting and proving hypotheses. Each of these methods required a careful collection of facts prior to forming a hypothesis: “it begins [...] with the observation of particulars, for this always is and must be the first step” (Bacon 200). As with the ‘bare’ language of the Royal Society, the practice of the scientific method of observation permeated into other areas of Swift’s society. The scientific method, in particular the first step of observation, became part of the epistemology of new science and was interpolated into the discourses of the context.

The same method of collecting facts that was present in new science also emerged in the discourse of the early eighteenth-century. In literature, both fiction and ‘nonfiction’, narrators began to observe the world around them through the lens of the scientific method, specifically through the first step of factual observation. In Bacon’s scientific method: “when we are dealing with Nature, sound judgements, and therefore, sound notions can only be gained by observation of facts” (Bacon 199). The growing influence of this idea in literature is seen in *Robinson Crusoe* in which we can

again see the discourses and epistemologies that aggravate Swift. In the passage where Crusoe is considering how to bring his boat to the shore of the island he relies on the scientific method to form a plan; I “resolved to spend some time in the observing it ... the tide of ebb setting from the west and joining with the current waters from some great river on the shore must be the occasion of this current; and that according as the wind blew more forcibly from the west or from the north, this current came near, or went farther from the shore” (Defoe, *Crusoe* 149). Crusoe carefully notes what he can see of the weather, direction, and movement of the sea and these facts help him to create a hypothesis: “This observation convinced me that I had nothing to do but to observe the ebbing and the flowing of the tide, and I might easily bring my boat about the island again” (Defoe, *Crusoe* 149). Facts are carefully observed and collected an effort to understand or reach some truth about the world around them. The discourse in *Robinson Crusoe* is almost an embodiment of what Swift is arguing against, a literature that presents ‘truth’ as fact and reality and makes claims to that ‘truth’ through verisimilitude and codes of fact and science.

Meanwhile, in *Gulliver’s Travels* this epistemology of the scientific method and the importance of observation is exaggerated and caricatured in the Laputian philosophers with their eyes going in different directions: “their Heads were all reclined to the Right, or the Left; one of their Eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the Zenith” (Swift, *Travels* 176). The Laputians were primarily astronomers, thus one eye is focused on observing the sky and one eye looks to the mind where hypotheses are being theorized. So focused are they on observing the facts of the world around them and forming their philosophies that they forget the reality of where they are: “while we were ascending they forgot several Times what they were about, and left me to myself, till their Memories were again roused by their Flappers” (Swift, *Travels* 177). In the characters of the Laputians Swift satirises the perspective of the scientific method as nonsensical by representing it physically. This mockery suggests that for Swift this epistemology of the new scientific method was again a regression from the natural view of the ancients. Swift lampoons yet another scientific

perspective, particularly satirising it as a way of seeing the world and as a method for arriving at truth.

The method of observation as a method for discovering truth is undermined in *Gulliver's Travels* as Swift again uses the 'factual' in convergence with the imaginary, or the fictional. This method of observation most clearly and affluently satirised as Gulliver first sees the floating island of Laputa:

I turned back, and perceived a vast Opaque Body between me and the Sun, moving forwards towards the Island: It seemed to be about two Miles high, and hid the Sun six or seven Minutes, but I did not observe the Air to be much colder, or the Sky more darkened, than if I had stood under the Shade of a Mountain. As it approached nearer over the Place where I was, it appeared to be a firm Substance, the Bottom flat, smooth, and shining very bright from the Reflexion of the Sea below. I stood upon a Height about two Hundred Yards from the Shoar, and saw this vast Body descending almost to a Parallel with me, at less than an English Mile Distance. I took out my Pocket-Perspective, and could plainly discover Numbers of People moving up and down the Sides of it... (Swift, *Travels* 174)

Gulliver creates a record of the facts he can deduce through observation, height, movement, climate, texture. He uses visual language such as "observe" and "saw", even taking out his "pocket-perspective" (or magnifying glass) for a closer look. This observation of fact became a way of viewing the world through scientific observation rather than the natural human perspective and it entered into literary discourses, such as *Robinson Crusoe*. Even the most fantastical sights, like an island of people floating in the sky, were reduced to empirical data by the scientific lens.

Bacon argued that the systems of knowledge in new science were the quintessential truth: "science is but an image of the truth" (Bacon, Goodreads 1). Swift satirises this belief that truth lies in scientific epistemologies through Gulliver's encounter with the most renowned scientists in Brobdingnag. As Gulliver joins the Royal court in Brobdingnag the King sends for the most

accomplished scientists to deduce what form of creature Gulliver is. The Brobdingnagian scientists practice the scientific method on Gulliver, carefully collecting factual observations and coming to the wrong conclusion:

His Majesty sent for three great Scholars ... These Gentlemen, after they had a while examined my Shape with much Nicety, were all of a different Opinion concerning me. They all agreed that I could not be produced according to the regular Laws of Nature; because I was not framed with a Capacity of preserving my Lift, either by Swiftness, or climbing of Trees, or digging Holes in the Earth. They observed by my Teeth, which they viewed with great Exactness, that I was a carnivorous Animal; yet most Quadrupeds being an Overmatch for me; and Field-Mice, with some others, too nimble, they could not imagine how I should be able to support my self, unless I fed upon Snails and other Insects; which they offered by many learned Arguments to evince that I could not possibly do. (Swift, *Travels* 120)

Part of the joke here is the fact that these scientists devoted so much energy in commitment to their scientific perspective that they forget they could have just asked Gulliver what he was and where he came from:

One of them seemed to think that I might be an Embrio, or abortive Birth. But this opinion was rejected by the other two, who observed my Limbs to be perfect and finished; and that I had lived several Years, as it was manifested from my Beard; the Stumps whereof they plainly discovered through a Magnifying-Glass. (Swift, *Travels* 120)

Again, there is a reference to closer observation through the use of a magnifying glass, altering the natural view to find scientific truth through observation of empirical data. The Brobdingnagian scientists observe Gulliver impartially and collect facts and information by observation and attempt to follow reason to reach a conclusion. However, the hypotheses the scientists reach is to label Gulliver as something nonsensical:

After much Debate, they concluded unanimously that I was only Relplum Scalcath, which is interpreted literally Lusus Naturae; a Determination exactly agreeable to the Modern Philosophy of Europe... (Swift, *Travels* 120)

The terms Relplum Scalcath and Lusus Naturae are meaningless, invented phrases to pretend some knowledge of truth. In this passage Swift is inferring that despite claims to the commitment of fact and truth new scientists' vanity is such that they make things up to hide their ignorance, they: "have invented this wonderful Solution of all Difficulties, to the unspeakable Advancement of human Knowledge. (Swift, *Travels* 120). The King of Brobdingnag is not taken in by this posturing scientific method and retains a natural perspective: "the King, who had a much better Understanding, dismissing his learned Men" (Swift, *Travels* 121). The King simply talks to Gulliver and the farmer who discovered him to reach the truth of what he is. Thus, Bacon's empirical method and its method for perceiving truth is shown to be flawed. Facticity is not the only way to approach or understand the truth of the world.

The satire of the scientific method in *Gulliver's Travels*, particularly of the first step of observation, critiques the epistemology of new science that argued the 'truth' of the natural world was to be discovered and discussed through fact, reality, reason, and impartiality. When the scientific method is used to view the world in the *Travels* it forgets 'reality' and misses the point, or the truth of the world around it. The Laputians forget to eat, drink, converse and are in danger of falling to their deaths because they have no awareness of the world around them. Gulliver's tone does not match the action when a flying island appears before him, he focuses on observing the minute details such as the surface of the rocks underneath and misses the bigger picture of a floating civilization. The Brobdingnagian scientists are so focused on following a supposedly rational approach that they miss the most rational avenue of just asking Gulliver what sort of creature he is. The participants of this scientific epistemology of so-called truth are in fact missing out on the 'truth' due to their lack of awareness of the bigger picture.

In *Gulliver's Travels* Swift argues against the epistemologies of new science which presented fact as synonymous with truth as he constructs "a satire on mindless empiricism" (Kenner 89). Facts themselves are not representative of 'truth'. People, and readers, must think for themselves in the pursuit of truth. *Gulliver's Travels* questions how truth is perceived in the early eighteenth-century, epistemologically and in discourse. The book destabilises the assumed connection between fact and truth, in demonstrating how this system of knowledge falls short. It is Swift's expert use of the ambiguity of meaning in satire that enables the *Travels* to deliver a derisive attack on these modern epistemologies and discourses of truth, whilst simultaneously telling his story with them.

The criticism of the epistemologies of new science and their influence on society is aided by the techniques of the satiric rhetoric. The methods of the satiric mode not only work to construct a criticism of historical particulars, but (like the *Travels'* satire and parody) they "complicate linguistic representation" (Rembert 185). Verbal irony, for instance, is a form of "speaking by contraries ... for the author says the opposite of what they mean" (Rembert 185). This is often delivered through sarcasm in satire, as the satirist says what they do not believe in an exaggerated fashion in an effort to mock a particular target. When Gulliver observes the Professor in the Grand Academy attempting to eliminate language he states: "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" (Swift, *Travels* 203). As Gulliver is an unreliable narrator, perhaps he does believe this but for Swift this is a sarcastic dig at the plain language of the Royal Academy. He inflates their need for minimalist language by over exaggerating its importance. What Swift really means is the opposite, that the number of words in a discourse is unimportant, it will not kill us. Thus, the verbal irony means the opposite of what it says and satirises the value placed on plain language by new science and Swift's society in the early eighteenth-century.

Another satiric technique which "derives from distortion of the true meaning of words" (Rembert 190) is that of wit. Wit is recognisable as words or ideas are put in new and unexpected

ways: “and one is surprised by the new conjunctions or divisions of ideas or images suggested by the invented remark, passage or account” (Rembert 190). A passage exemplifying wit in *Gulliver’s* description of colonization in the final chapter, as he defends his lack of action in attempting to secure these lands for the British Empire:

For Instance, 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 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. (Swift, *Travels* 314)

As Gulliver begins his description, the use of the words Pirate, rob and plunder, murder and the description of slavery paints a brutal picture of a band of immoral brigands being received with hospitality and returning it by raping, pillaging, and enslaving the indigenous people. There are hints that Swift is discussing the British colonisers through his mention of the King and receiving pardons, but it is in the following passage that more formal language is juxtaposed with the brutal language to reveal to the reader that it is the English that are the pirates:

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. (Swift, *Travels* 314)

In this passage language is used creatively to shock the reader. By using different language to describe the acts of colonization the reader is forced to re-examine exactly who are the “barbarous

People" (Swift, *Travels* 314). Wit manipulated the readers response through its use of language to deliver its satiric commentary.

Paradox too, manipulates the reader through language by juxtaposing contrary truths. *Gulliver's Travels* is rife with paradoxes, that of truth and lies is one which is examined closely in this thesis. In the "Land of the Houyhnhnms" the term used to mean lies, "the Thing which was not" (Swift, *Travels* 278), is a linguistic inversion of truth and lies, the very phrase presents a "paradox, simultaneously denying and asserting the same thing" (Rodino 14). Just as early eighteenth-century writers of modern discourse with the epistemological values of new science presented a paradox in their use of a language of fact, reality, and truth to lie. Initially what Gulliver says seems true, yet its contradiction reveals another truth, perhaps Swift's truth, that the opposite is true. Swift puts contrasting 'truths' together in order to provoke a "reader to inspect more closely the 'truths' by which he or she lives" (191). The linguistic inversions of these satiric techniques support Swift's satire of the connection between language and meaning, namely that of factual or realistic language and truth.

Throughout Gulliver's many travels, texts exert a different pressure on each of the societies he visits (Castle 249). Language is a vehicle and a subject of satire in Swift's book as he works to illustrate the potential disconnection between signifier and signified. Satire, parody, irony, wit, and paradox disrupt simple readings of text by destabilising the correlation between what is said and what is meant. Phiddian says of Swift's satire in *A Tale of a Tub* that its "authenticities multiply and escape into irony, and parody makes the language of authority into the thing which is not" (Phiddian 203). This is also true of the *Travels*, the meanings are multiplied by the indeterminacy that the satiric fiction creates and the prevalent discourse Swift is employing, that of fact and reason, is shown to lack authority or validity as truth. The satiric rhetoric plays "ironically on the surfaces of language, making assertions and reflecting selves, but deconstructing positions too freely to come to rest on any single ideological authority or discursive authenticity" (Phiddian 203). *Gulliver's Travels* is

enmeshed in the 'reality' and discourses of its period, but it retains ambiguity in meaning through its equivocal use of language. Thus, it demonstrates the inability of language itself to possess any innate meaning, in particular meaning as truth.

The epistemologies of new science in the early eighteenth-century claimed authority over truth. Their discourses, experiments, perspectives, and methods were all aimed at discovering or relating 'truth' through techniques and values of fact, reason, objectivity. And it was through these modes that new science presented the 'truth' of the world. However, new science was in vogue in the Britain of Swift's lifetime and these ways of forming knowledge rose to popularity. As a result, they permeated society beyond the bounds of scientific knowledge and these new epistemologies were adopted into politics, philosophy, and literature. Thus, in multiple facets of Swift's context the epistemologies of new science and their factual, reasonable, and objective 'truths' were being disseminated through society and manipulating readers perceptions of 'truth'. In *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift constructs a satire that engages with these modern views of truth, impersonating them and turning them inside out to undermine their actual relationship to truth.

It is evident why the satire in *Gulliver's Travels* is so successful in acting in subversion of the dominant discourses of reality and facticity in Swift's setting, the book's core satiric techniques are ones which manipulate the meanings of language:

In a sense Swift's distinctive style both in his witty dialectic against a historically authentic opponent and in his satiric masterpieces is the result of a metalanguage in which his wit (invention) distorts the true meaning of words in order to draw the reader's attention more sharply to what he is saying and to shock the reader out of complacency, using falsehood or distortion to illuminate truth, nonsense to find sense and paradox to raise doubts in order to force reinspection of old 'truths'. (Rembert 192)

The satiric rhetoric aids Swift's subversion of the early eighteenth-century discourses as its techniques work to distort the relationship between language and meaning. The satiric discourse

reveals how language is able to manipulate and undermine perceived representations. This linguistic performance is in pursuit of a critique of the modern epistemologies behind them and their literary ways of viewing and explaining the 'truth' of the world.

## Conclusion

The satire of *Gulliver's Travels* is multi-faceted, as Rosenheim states its accomplishments are varied and diverse (102). Straightforward approaches to label or categorise the book do not do it justice. In analysing the *Travels*, it must be remembered that no one element of the story is sufficient to describe the tale on its own. The *Travels* is an allegory of a travel narrative, but it uses this framework ironically and undermines the genre even as it follows its rules. The genre is commandeered by Swift to serve the construction of his satiric fiction and simultaneously inverted through Swift's imitation. This is true of each genre, discourse, and rhetoric the *Travels* imitates. Thus, it is insufficient to describe *Gulliver's Travels* as a travel book, or any one form of discourse. As Rosenheim argues:

In the absence of a label which can successfully account for hugely diverting imaginative fiction, savagely pointed punitive satire, and a profound and challenging myth which embodies fundamental assertions about the state of man, it becomes all the more important to recognize that no one of these elements subsumes or "accounts for" all the others. In the last analysis, it is the very diversity of these elements, together with the brilliant independence with which each of these asserts itself, that constitutes the triumphant uniqueness of *Gulliver's Travels*. (Rosenheim 102)

It is this very indeterminable nature of the *Travels* that enables its satire to be so diverse and address many areas of early eighteenth-century society that Swift felt needed to be critiqued. While the satiric targets, fictions, and discourses are varied they are united by a consistent overarching satiric motive of delivering a moral truth.

Swift's satires address what he observes as the failings in society: pride, cruelty, violence, stupidity, liars, sell-outs, gluttony, greed, vanity, and immorality, to name a few. Overall, Swift attempts to deliver moral lessons for his readers through satirically eviscerating those who he perceives to be transgressing the bounds of moral decency. He himself describes his satiric motives

as driven by morality in the epitaph he writes for himself in *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*,

*D.S.P.D.:*

As 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.

(38)

Satire has long been linked to philosophical truths, its role in society has always been to tell unpleasant truths. The mode has a motive of moral reform, perhaps not for those who it verbally cuts to pieces, but for the wider society of its setting that has the potential to recognise its failings and act to remedy them.

The overall generic direction of this book-that of satire-is one that itself entails a paradoxical relationship between reality, fantasy, and truth. *Gulliver's Travels* is set in several fantastical lands, with an imagined protagonist and a make-believe plot. However, the *Travels* is also rich in satire, a mode which is rooted in a real time and place through the critiques it constructs of historical particulars; be they public figures, societal ideals, or events. Satire fundamentally melds fiction and reality by critiquing historical particulars through a manifested fiction. However, it relies on the reader's recognition of these particulars to function. Without the recognition of the specific truths behind the fiction the *Travels* is nothing more than a twisted fantasy story. This is where satire is distinct from other fictions and their links to reality, for it relies on the reader for its relevance to a real time and place.

Swift's Britain had been through a long period of conflict, experiencing turbulence in religion, civil war, the monarchy, and a newly powerful parliament. By the time the *Travels* was published in 1726 a period of stability had been reached but society was undergoing an

epistemological enlightenment as the pursuit of knowledge through reason and fact became a cultural phenomenon thanks to the revolutionary discoveries made in new science. Science was gaining authority as the most dominant form of knowledge about the natural world and its methods and discourses were emulated across fields such as philosophy, politics, journalism, and literature. In philosophy moderns and ancients clashed as they argued over approaches of reason and impartiality versus that of emotion and feeling. In politics 'rational' arguments were made for bills through the use of statistics and claims to impartiality. Journalism developed as an increasingly influential medium and emulated many of the new science's impartial and linguistic codes for relating fact. While in literature there was a shift to a rhetoric of inquiry and the discourse of reportage developed, which embodied the values of science through a commitment to describing facts with scientific codes such as observation, measurement, mathematics, peer review and without any interference from personal opinions. With the simultaneous growth of literary theory and criticism, these discourses became reified into genres. The discourses of this new factual, realistic, and impartial literature were prevalent, and society interpreted these narratives as true because they used the same language as science.

Society in the early eighteenth century had new ways for viewing and making sense of the world. Modern epistemologies of science had a huge impact on Swift's context and his society developed new perspectives through which to understand the natural world. However, these new perspectives went beyond science and were used to view and interpret many facets of life and a particular discourse developed which mirrored the codes of new science in its way of representing and explaining life. Particular discourses arose that emulated these systems of knowledge through a commitment to fact and 'reality' which was represented through certain codes which signified the telling of fact or truth, such as: mathematics, eyewitnesses, measurements, impartial narration, peer-review, scientific observation, and a commitment to detail. The mode of language that incorporated these signifiers of fact became known as reportage and was prolific in early eighteenth-century literature, both fictional and nonfictional. It became hard to distinguish truth from fiction, at

least when both were presented in the same narrative style and language, as “plain Matter of Fact” (Swift, *Travels* 310). This confusion is demonstrated as both *Robinson Crusoe* and, more loosely, *Gulliver’s Travels* were at times mistaken for ‘true’ or ‘real’ accounts, or at least in the *Travels’* case an account that thought it would be taken as ‘true’ or ‘real’. Swift’s satire in *Gulliver’s Travels* is criticising the use of this language and these codes of fact to infer or claim ‘truth’ in works of fiction.

Swift constructs this criticism in parodying various discourses that represented the values of early eighteenth-century epistemology of fact, reason, and reality. In *Gulliver’s Travels* Swift appropriates multiple genres and their discourses to demonstrate that these rhetorics of fact, reality, and impartiality do not automatically guarantee access to truth. Swift makes this argument through juxtaposing the factual, realistic discourse of modern epistemologies with a drastically fantastic imaginary fiction; thereby creating a paradoxical mix of fact and fiction and illustrating that the privileged Enlightenment modes of discourse are not infallibly representative of truth.

Travel writing is one of the genres that Swift parodies to reveal its complex relationship with truth. The travel genre was established long before the Enlightenment, when understanding of the natural world and the geography of the globe was limited, therefore gaps in knowledge were filled with fantasy. Books like *Mandeville’s Travels*, *Marco Polo*, and the journals of Pigafetta blended fantasy with fact. While the travel writing of Swift’s time took on the discourse of facticity and reality of new science it continued to fill gaps in knowledge with fiction, earning authors of travel writing the title of “travel liars”. Travel liars aimed to convince their readers that their fictions were true through narrating their stories with new science’s codes of relating fact. The *Travels* takes this to the extreme, with Gulliver telling a tale of radical fantasy and applying the same codes of facticity in attempting to convince his readers. Regardless of the statistics, measurements, and detail Gulliver gives of the Lilliputians the fact remains that they do not exist. Fiction, even when presented through forms of authoritative discourse, with its eyewitnesses, numerical codes of fact, and objectivity, is still fiction. Whilst Gulliver is certainly a travel liar, Swift has no intention of deceiving

his audience but creates an exaggerated version of the travel lies in an attempt to provoke a more suspicious, critical attitude to the forms by which the impression of facticity was being created. Swift's appropriation of this discourse demonstrated to his early eighteenth-century audience why they should not believe everything they read.

Swift also constructs a specific parody of the travel fiction *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe's book was the first to use a novelistic form of realism in which a fictional narrative is presented through a narration that is committed to relating fine detail to construct a convincing verisimilitude. Swift mocks Defoe's discourse of realism relentlessly reminding readers of errors in Defoe's verisimilitude and exaggerating the commitment to realism by detailing Gulliver's bowel movements under the pretence of a dedication to 'reality'. Defoe's discourse in *Robinson Crusoe* exemplified the impact the new epistemologies had on literature, with his rhetoric of verisimilitude constructed by a focus on the details of everyday life. In the *Travels* this is again recreated in the setting of a fantastical fiction. Realism is juxtaposed with fantasy as Swift mimics Defoe's narration of ordinary detail applying it to a purely fictional subject, such as a group of naked frolicking giantesses. *Gulliver's Travels* satirises Defoe's novelistic realism to point out how these new forms, and the epistemologies they embody, are capable of dominating people's perceptions and beliefs about the world through rhetorical means designed to hide their rhetorical status and give instead the impression of plain facticity.

Another of the new discourse that emerged in Swift's time to reflect and embody the new epistemologies of reality, facticity and objectivity was reportage. Reportage involved rhetoric that persuaded readers of its value as fact or truth through applying a tone of impartiality and using certain codes of language which imply facticity. Swift applies this language of fact to what is clearly fiction, demonstrating how this language itself is not representative of truth. The descriptions of the strange lands Gulliver visits are made through a narrative tone of reportage as Gulliver borrows its codes of representing fact. The lands of Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa, and the Houyhnhnms are

depicted through 'facts' as Gulliver relates geographical observations, measurements, mathematical equations, and peer-review. Yet, despite the rhetoric of fact, the audience remains unconvinced of the existence of these lands as their position as fiction remains evident through their radical fantasies of pygmies, giants, a floating community of physically stunted scientists, and talking horses. The fantasy is so radical to ensure that no readers are convinced by the discourse of 'fact', the aim is not to pull the wool over the readers eyes but for them to recognise that this rhetoric can be used to manipulate them into believing fiction as fact. Swift constructs this drastic paradox of a discourse of fact and fantasy fiction to illustrate the potential for this language to deceive. In the *Travels* this language of reportage is appropriated and applied to fantastic fiction, undermining perceptions of its intrinsic ability to represent truth as Swift attempts to challenge the simplistic truth claims of these discourses.

Historiography too was a discourse that was established well before the Enlightenment but changed to reflect the epistemological shift of the early eighteenth-century. The former partisan exemplary historiography with its moral truths gave way to the modern critical historiography with its focus on presenting facts for the reader to interpret as they will. Swift engages with both forms of historiography, juxtaposing them through his unreliable narrator to satirise the claims to moral truth present in the modern critical historiography; as well as satirising further lies in the critical historiography. For Swift, these modern values missed the point of the human condition. Some of these, as they initially emerged through the new science, involved the removal of emotion, opinion, and morality from scientific knowledge; but the popularity of this epistemology resulted in attempts to remove emotion, opinion, and morality from many areas of culture. In politics, philosophy, journalism, and literature these modern values were gaining dominance and being used to justify what was, in Swift's view, immorality. Jonathan Swift's satire in *Gulliver's Travels* engages with the popular epistemologies of the early eighteenth-century and criticises their lack of moral principle:

It is in Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels*, entitled "Voyage to the Land of the Houyhnhnms", that Swift questions the connection between discourse and truth most radically. The Houyhnhnms have no need for language to act as a medium for truth as they have no world for lying and rely on their own reason to inform them as to what is true. Through the Houyhnhnms Swift questions the ability of language to be a representative of truth. In his satires of the prevalent discourses of the early eighteenth-century Swift reveals that despite a narrator claiming impartiality and quantifying his report with codes of fact, readers should remain sceptical. The use of a certain language, with its signifiers of fact and a tone of reason and objectivity, does not automatically represent truth. Swift imitates the language and tones of discourses and genres which use this discourse of new science and reportage and applies them to a radical fantasy, inverting the value of these discourses by undermining their relationship to fact and 'truth'.

The parody of science further confuses the roles of fantasy and reality in satire as Swift makes the real appear fantastic and the fictional appear real, confusing the readers ability to recognise what is reality and what is fiction. The experiments of the Royal Society of London are reanimated in Gulliver's Grand Academy of Lagado, and Swift uses his satiric tone to present the scientific enquiries of the new scientists as ridiculous. To the reader these experiments sound fantastical but they were real theses taken from the *Philosophical Transactions*. Swift presents them as fiction by changing one small detail or converging two different experiments. Distinctions between the real and the fictional are muddled as the reader can no longer rely on their recognition alone to decode the satiric truth. However, to readers in the early eighteenth-century this reality would have been much clearer as this audience would have the contextual knowledge to identify the real experiments, theses, and scientists that Swift parodies. Though, the tone of fantasy remains to present these scientific epistemologies as bizarre.

As well as satirising discourses and experiments of science, the *Travels* at times parrots the scientific method of observation. The scientific method of observation attempted to discover truths about nature through careful attention to data and a noting of facts. Gulliver practices this method on the many un-natural phenomenon he encounters and attempts to make deductions on their presence in nature through a careful observation of the facts; he makes notes on measurements, geology, geometry, and even weather in attempts to fit the fantastical into the scientific laws of nature, as they were known in the early eighteenth-century. In this, the epistemology of new science is parodied as its method is shown to be flawed. If its discourse can rationalise the fantastic it is not a reliable system for discerning truth. The method of observation as an epistemology of facticity and science is converged with the imaginary, or the fictional. Swift turns the tools of satire to undermining the Enlightenment epistemology and discourse in his efforts to satirise the intrusion of scientific epistemology into literature and subvert his contexts rhetoric of truth as facticity.

In his final chapter Gulliver makes claims to the truth of his adventures and despairs at those writers who embellish their accounts:

I could perhaps like others have astonished thee with strange improbable Tales; but I rather chose to relate plain Matter of Fact in the simplest Manner and Style; because my principal Design was to inform, and not to amuse thee. (Swift, *Travels* 310)

Beneath Gulliver's ironic discussion of travel writers embellishing tales with fantasy Swift is almost arguing the opposite, he is satirising his contemporary writers of the early eighteenth-century and their use of the discourse of 'fact' to mislead readers. If the aim of this epistemology and its discourses is to relate fact and represent reality, its writers should tell the truth. Unlike Gulliver and the writers of the modern discourses, in the *Travels* Swift chooses to inform thee through strange and improbable tales. It is through fiction rather than fact that Swift educates his readers on the relationship of truth to language and discourse.

The satiric criticism in *Gulliver's Travels* is constructed through parodies of the Enlightenment epistemologies and discourses that rose to be popular practice in literature through their prevalence in new science. As they developed through new science, these discourses valued fact, reason, reality, and impartiality; and their language signified these values through particular codes which gave readers the impression that it was truth. However, language itself does not have an intrinsic ability to denote truth, regardless of the presence of the values of new science. *Gulliver's Travels* appropriates these discourses and parodies their values and codes of relating 'fact' or 'reality' critiquing their claims of automatically telling truth. This satire is related through not only using these discourses in an ironic and mocking way but by juxtaposing the languages of science and fact with an extreme performative fantasy. Fiction enters into the realm of new science and turns its epistemologies of truth inside out. Paired with satire's fundamental convergence of fiction and reality and the use of several different Enlightenment discourses, *Gulliver's Travels* becomes a paradoxical melting pot of fact and fiction. Demonstrating that these discourses and epistemological values are not inevitably tellers of truth. Jonathan Swift's satire in *Gulliver's Travels* artfully turns the language of early eighteenth-century discourse on itself, using its own rhetorics to thrash it for its hubris in representing itself as a discourse of irrefutable fact, reality, and truth.

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