The Ways of Fiction

The Ways of Fiction:

New Essays on the Literary Cultures of the Eighteenth Century

Edited by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introducing the "Ways of Fiction": Cultures and Contexts

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This book is designed to capture fresh perspectives on the literary environments and cultural modes of the eighteenth century. It aspires to do so by taking a sounding of stimulating and provocative scholarship, oriented to animate our understanding of the contexts of familiar, fading, or forgotten authors and their works, to suggest new avenues or connections, and to revisit *idées reçues*.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century the opportunity has arisen for a re-engagement with the imaginative writing of the eighteenth— particularly but not exclusively in its prose genres—which brings the gamut of theoretical and historiographical resources now at our disposal to bear on fiction, broadly understood. As the Table of Contents shows, this collection relishes that challenge by reading fiction as a dynamic, non-systematic fascination with the world, and in the process evincing a significant interpenetration of concerns between the two centuries. Essayists were invited to undertake this task by tracing the new "ways" of fiction which emerged in the period. That may be interpreted to point the routes or paths fiction found itself taking. Equally, it may conjure the ways or means by which the fiction-writer became a new cultural entity, alert to the possibilities of the nascent craft as a novel form of art, even as s/he nudged and shaped its evolution. In response to such ideas contributions attest collectively, and in kind, to the ebullient *inventio* of eighteenth-century literary cultures in the exercise of ingenuity, wit, and creativity. Such efflorescence continues to suggest an even wider ambit, in terms of what makes fiction, and what fiction has then made, than had been assumed in the twentieth century, implying in turn that one of the tasks of the twenty-first is to recognize this.

Cultures are in this spirit "literary" to the extent of their informing influence on the reactions, attitudes, and manners of writers: the people who are writing about them or those who are, as it were, written by them.[1] In their relationship with identity, cultures will include gender, disability,

age, religion, nationhood, politics; and the socio-economics of mercantilism, and of science. Assimilating parts of all of them, fiction-authorship (and thence fiction-authorhood as a state of being) starts asserting itself as a culture.[2] So too does the symbiotic practice of critical response.[3] In their varifocal scrutiny, essays therefore show the ways of fiction taking any number of liberties with the presumptions of the age—a period in which fiction-writing begins making visible the memetic percolation of cultural intelligence as much as signalling the oblique pathways of mimetic endeavour.

The enquiry entails primary questions about genre, and what continues to be meant by the canon, particularly in those penumbral regions where the metaphors of Enlightenment still endure in regard of purpose and worth. Consideration of the essential or sufficient properties of genre leads quickly to a refreshed discussion of authenticity, which as a moral datum will implicate writers as persons in their works and oblige readers to assess what they can justifiably expect from them.[4] The porosity of fictional forms in communication with identity must also relate to the nature, as well as the fact, of authors' coexistence with their readers.[5] In consequence essayists return regularly to the matter of boundaries, conceived in multiple categories. These include adherence to or departure from generic convention; beginnings and endings (of genres, and structurally within genres); and the delineation of the writer or character as a moral being vis-à-vis individual others, groups, or constituencies: a fluctuating parity with the cultures in question.[6] Essays approach them from several invigorating angles: historicity, verisimilitude, authority, surrogacy, proxy, the vicarious and the direct. They raise questions which cannot be pondered in the absence of an immemorial distinction between ostensible and genuine, natural and unnatural. In more than one essay this broaches speculation about the nature of truth itself—what is false, what is true, and what legitimizes any mediation between these things.[7] Decisions made by fiction-writers contoured the integrity of all the news fit to print, from Grub Street to the plantations. Contributions urge that if this point mattered in the eighteenth century, there are reasons why it should make waves, and perhaps more disturbingly, at the start of the twenty-first.[8]

The confluence of fiction is recalled here in its spate, and in colloquy with biography, poetry, drama, romance, travelogue, journalism, polemic, history, philosophy, religious writing, science, and technology. Such an inclusive undertaking inevitably supposes a comparative dimension with other national literatures or climates of opinion: the literatures of Ireland and Scotland are considered here alongside English literature, as are cross-currents with Europe. The fissiparous controversialism of the era also

impels a pluralist approach.[9] Essays cover the span of the "long" century, from the Popish Plot in the closing decades of the seventeenth century up to Edgeworth and Scott at the dawn of the nineteenth. In aggregate they observe an equilibrium of contemporary vantage-points: theoretical, historical, thematic, ideological, and textual, modified as need be to the analytic task. Among the keynotes are the relationships between theme and genre; class and social role; and historical impetus and individual agency.[10]

As John Gibson has put it, the "cognitive value" of critical practice is in its yield of "'cultural' understanding: […] how we give meaning to various regions of human circumstance."[11] The following introductions show where contributors have opted to place the emphases of that process. Each essay speaks directly to a particular area of expertise, engaging suggestive erudition within dedicated and adjacent fields. The notes to each, and the final bibliography, as well as the arguments and contentions themselves, all bespeak essayists' productive roles as authors of monographs, chapters, and contributions to the many journals, guides, and large companions which modern scholarship within these spheres now comprises. The barometric intentions of this collection necessarily determine its own scope and dimensions. Yet they may also, it is hoped, lead on further to parallel or similar investigations—into other cultures and the theoretical positions most likely to allow us to re-read them meaningfully—assembled within ever-widening perspectives of analogy, comparison, and discovery.

Invention resonates in the context of generic incipience, and the recognition of boundaries seems inseparable from genre even before any thematic or structural work is done. Further, the process of apprehending margins might appear, logically enough, to involve marginalization and therefore priority; posing in the process an acute question about whether incipience is to us what the eighteenth century took it to be. The disaggregation of essential from ancillary, in keeping one genre functionally distinct from another, is a mediated procedure in which retrospective scholarship is one factor; but the weight we attach to selfhood may be another, if self is an object of the concerns claimed by genre. The arresting corollary of this inhabitation of the texts one is writing is an appeal to "secular autothanatography". Regina Janes analyzes these topics in an essay which begins with the notion of a genre—the novel—distinguishing itself by (rather than despite) evolving a seeming antipathy to one of its own originators.

Janes reads Henry Fielding's classicizing of his texts both as authorial empowerment and harbinger of the predomination of the novel over the classical genres thus re-mastered. Fielding is seen meshing comedy, epic, and so on in their classical coloration (treating ordinary sublunary mortals), with the contemporary psychologies of middling types on eventful journeys. For his own part, self-realization, evolving through earlier writings, moves toward self-assertion; and in tracking the shift scholarship might do well to re-think the wonted but misplaced resort to "omniscience". In its place, a yen for self-discovery shapes Fielding's invention of what is now being called autothanatography: at a time when religion is no longer the incontrovertible core of the self, identity is most loudly proclaimed in the face of its imminent worldly extinction. The satirically angled reflections on mortality of Pope and Swift are remembered, as is Fielding's own back-list of sardonic pseudo-travelogues (*Jonathan Wild* and some *Champion* essays, for example). Janes's study culminates with *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, where the process is elaborated into a genre, a new form of prose journal, redefining travel writing through a mock classicizing of its conventions. The manifesto of elevated public resolutions set forth in the "Preface" is systematically ignored in the "Journal" section, which as a means of narrative is no more a travelogue than Lisbon is its end. The work shuns a formal valediction, concluding with a postprandial meditation which draws the *Aeneid* and Horace's "Journey to Brundisium" into an autothanatographical gathering-in of tangible details. At the eleventh hour the marginalia are moved centre-page in a way that, to us, seems intuitive: the demotic, full-disclosure culture of the twenty-first century may eschew the Latinity, but the self-inscription (*in articulo mortis*) is normative in blogs, books, and journalism, and in some cases a mandatory component of the now ubiquitous "journey" metaphor.

The spirited overhaul of standard narratives which energizes Shane Herron's examination of "fake news" tackles another trope of the twenty-first century in calling to the eighteenth. Here the case of Roger L'Estrange is reopened amid the partisan stridor of his time. L'Estrange problematizes the legitimacy of the received account of the Glorious Revolution, and in his operations of the 1670s and 1680s generates a paradox all-too recognizable in the present day, given the prominence of "fake news" in the lexicon of the socio-political commentariat. Herron posits that on that account L'Estrange was arguably a pioneer of liberal discourse in its modern form, and particularly in its agonistic habit of pre- and proscriptive regulation. Modern observers of the public sphere know that fixing the parameters of free speech—setting its generic margins—

poses acute problems. A liberal politics whose latitudes are subject to recursive readjustment will instance degrees of reflexive hypocrisy (via criticism of bogus news, criticism of the criticism, and so forth). These increments matter in respect of their benignity, from the offensive to the defensive and, at their least pernicious, merely aerate the "puffery of politics". Now as then, Herron argues, liberalism is no ideological free-for-all, but an agglomerated code whose injunctions are conventional, rather than legal, and none the less binding for that. L'Estrange was an early fomenter of awkward questions adumbrating a central idea: that a liberalism unable to accommodate the illiberal is as meaningless as it is troubling to liberals.

L'Estrange was satirized as Janus-faced, and his denunciation of Titus Oates and the Popish Plot—however needful that may have been—as self-serving. In *A Tale of a Tub* Swift canonized the ever-ready charge of hypocrisy; skits and vignettes ridiculed L'Estrange as an unhinged conspiracy-theorist. But Herron describes how high-profile skewering, no less than L'Estrange's own predilection for self-aggrandisement, usefully attaches him to a continuum which includes the concerns of the early novel and other discourses responding to public events polemically, or as entertainment, or both. Three levels of fakery are discerned: wilful deception; Defoean satire (which does not advertise itself as satire); and Swiftian satire (which does). All are in the best of health in the modern performance of current affairs. A writer negotiating between them is judging which kind of tale-telling is best fitted to telling the truth.

Philip Smallwood's evaluation of truth and "undisputed history" in Samuel Johnson addresses a pressing issue in the light of recent (sometimes fraught) arguments about literary fakery. Here, also, the degree of probity of authorial practice is seen to depend on an unwillingness to deceive, rather than on the ambivalence of fictiveness as a category. In Johnson's case an apparently polarizing distinction between historical and fictional forms is elucidated, more subtly and plausibly, as an attachment to the demonstrable truths of lived human experience, reworked through the imaginative crucible of the mind. Truth is a foundation-stone of Johnson's criticism, underlying a fictionality which must be dependent on the recuperably real. To that extent may be explained his aversion to the fabulistic dimension of *Lycidas*, and to those Virgilian pastorals which too easily drift from rural to "rustic". In comparative assessments of the St Cecilia's Day odes of Pope and Dryden, grounding in historical sources is preferred over detached fabrication.

Nonetheless, even within specific modes—such as the "exotic"— Johnson's own practice ranges from historical derivation (*Irene*) to

fabulism (*Rasselas*); and there is no ranking of Shakespeare's histories over the tragedies and comedies. Johnson's use of fictions, and his appreciation of fictionalized historical scenarios (such as those envisioned in Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard*) to convey truth militate against an animus toward fiction as such. Yet he did remain contemptuous of indulgence in freewheeling fantasy divorced from any obligation to the actual. Smallwood conjectures an interpretation of this principle which situates it within a theoretical recovery of the process by which literary meaning is transmitted. The fruits of the imagination will profit by approximation to a reality retrievable from sources more verifiably objective than the scenarios playing out among the hermetic mental landscapes of an author. Historical truth, then, supplies for Johnson a triangulated reference-point which poet and reader can share. The position is a philosophical one, of the kind which Isaiah Berlin would ascribe to Tolstoy's conception of history in *War and Peace*, and an artistic stratagem calculated to address the ethical soundness—as something to believe in as well as believe—of that which is offered us.

The titration of the imaginary against the imaginative is therefore shown to be supremely relevant as a tactical procedure. In his analysis of *The Life of Mr Richard Savage*, Lance Wilcox explores Johnson's treatment of Savage—beyond dispute a flesh-and-blood creature—in point of "novelizing" influences. A comparative interpretation of Bakhtin, Watt, and McKeon would identify the romance, the novel, and the antiromance as the three modes with which biography would predictably align in its development, the last of these mediating the other two.

Telling his late acquaintance's "life" confronted Johnson with technical, if not ontological difficulties. Savage had claimed to be the illegitimate, unacknowledged son of the fourth Earl Rivers and Lady Macclesfield. Johnson's (commonly shared) belief in the truth of this claim meant that credible documentation must be paramount. Problematically, the main sources for Savage's birth were ultimately traceable only to Savage himself, and not independently verifiable, although the romance archetype of the aristocrat done out of his due still lay wide open before the biographer when it came to retelling the early years. The props were in place: Savage purported to have found his noble origins revealed in papers hidden by the statutorily evil Lady Macclesfield; and there was even a plan to pack the problem-son off to the American colonies—which never happened, Savage being left to work his unstoppable way downhill, unaided, in London and Bristol.

What rings true throughout Johnson's account is the humane sympathy of his diagnostic labour in laying bare the motivations of a man who

appeared unable to help himself. Here a historical transition from facticity to verisimilitude in the formation of the novel is, in parallel, evinced in the *Life*: the antic presence of Savage as an objective part of Johnson's world, corroborated by the persuasive rhetoric of testimony, anecdotes and recollections rather than judicial-historical records. Wilcox characterizes this modal development within the Bakhtinian theory of polyphonic orchestration; Johnson collects allusions, quotations from contemporaries, and interpolations from Savage's own writings to enable this many-hued personality to "speak" itself.

In an "antiromantic" inflection Johnson may have bought the tale of Savage's august antecedence while never stinting in depictions of his ignoble conduct: he deplored Savage's affectation of idleness, and unfeigned shirking of honest work. Antiromance as conjured by progressive ideology deconstructs a hitherto aristocratic belief-system by segregating nobility of birth from nobility of deeds, and dragging heroic elevation repeatedly back down to earth. But Wilcox shows this biography moving beyond even antiromance. Johnson's own ideology approximated to McKeon's designation of the "conservative": denying—both and equally—the progressivism which conflated wealth with worth, and the patrician vaunting of pedigree which it had apparently supplanted. The biographer's purchase on the perspectival and tonal shifts required to do justice to his subject's complexities enables us to read the *Life* as a novelization with implications for biography and fiction alike as those modes gathered strength.

Taxonomical reconstitution draws, too, from the morally freighted culture of mercantilism. Kelly Malone introduces *Colonel Jack* (1722) as Defoe's last word on "gentility". His re-packing of that battered conceptual portmanteau of social status and moral respectability was, however, subversive. In the ways that it thwarted expectations of how novels of its kind should end, it caused, and continues to cause, readerly consternation. As a foundling of opaque background, but bidden ever to remember that he "was a gentleman", Defoe's Jack seems generically programmed to inscribe a known arc—precisely that to which Richard Savage would strive to bend the trajectory of his life. It had been dinned into the reading public that a quasi-picaresque pursuit of origins must be crowned by the revelation of aristocratic breeding: a consummation of the hero's birth-right and their rights as readers. This venerable tradition was still spawning chivalric and neo-chivalric romances in countless iterations well into the eighteenth century. Translations and digests of European "wandering themes", home-grown recensions, and variants of the doings of Guy of Warwick, Bevis of Southampton, Tom a Lincoln, and St George, all went on reintegrating configurations of fond memory.

Moreover, seventeenth-century versions were beginning to replace the nobility-topos with goals more congruent with middle-class aspiration. Honest trade, venture capitalism and entrepreneurship were ways into an appealing new *carrière ouverte aux talents*; and precedent was on hand to underwrite the verisimilitude with which "fortune" was de-coupled from Providence and realigned with the Royal Exchange. For example, Thomas Heywood's story of Dick Whittington struck Defoe by recasting neo-chivalric motifs as believed-in historical episodes. Accordingly, rather than vatic tokens, his Colonel Jack is in need of a useful surrogate father, and he does not find one until relocating to the Virginia plantations as an indentured servant. Despite some success, Jack is as restless in his demesnes as Defoe, chafing at the peripheries of fictive convention. Malone illustrates how "honest" affluence is itself no longer sufficient: without his side-line in illegal South Seas trading Jack could never have become the merchant-prince that he does. Criminality is hardly lauded, but a shrewd understanding of acceptable limits—of boundaries, again—does no harm. Indeed an acquired facility with the fuzziness of margins (or the means of making them fuzzy) is handsomely remunerated within the ideology which McKeon called "progressive". The ending of the novel has no time for coronets. Wealth defines Jack, and it is busy existential invention that earns him a place in the new gallery of instructive types.

The "sense of an ending", in relation to the pragmatics of genre, informs Elizabeth Kraft's essay on literary Jacobitism in mid-century. Closing the chapter on the viability of the Jacobite cause (a motive which readers may well attribute to *Waverley* a few decades on) was then impossible, while the issues were still very much alive. Hume's *History of England*, which began appearing in 1754, demonstrated—albeit contentiously—that a pro-Hanoverian perspective need not suppose the categorical dismissal of all counter-arguments. Smollett was equally no Jacobite but keenly responsive, nonetheless, to the pathos of the Jacobites' tribulations, especially in the Highlands where reparations imposed after the failed 1745 rising had bitten deepest. The careful reading of his "Tears of Scotland" and key passages in *Peregrine Pickle* which Kraft provides shows that sympathetic extension on the human level is not coterminous with commitment to a cause.

Kraft's deft construal of the socio-political odds thrown up by 1750s factionalism south of the border includes a treatment of Bolingbroke's *Patriot King* as well as the leverage of religion: concern at an anti-Catholic upsurge after the '45 factored into the inception of literary Jacobitism. For instance William Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants* (1638), much reprinted in the 1750s and thematically instrumental in Charlotte Lennox's

Life of Harriot Stuart, argued a connection between rational autonomy of mind as an ethical imperative, liberty of conscience, and religious toleration. In writers such as Lennox and Henry Fielding, a nuanced prelude to equanimity became possible at a level beneath the overt expediencies of public persona. In that spirit (and recalling the *Patriot King*), Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753) may be read as a novelistic negotiation of both Hanoverian and Stuart sympathies. Its parti-coloured fabric aligns the affective dimension of dissonant loyalties with the moral verities, conjuring Biblical echoes, whose outward expression they are. Kraft draws out the latency of the "divided heart" as a central metaphor, riven as Sir Charles is by his love for both Clementina (Catholic) and Harriet (Protestant). Eventual marriage to the latter brings a satisfying structural conclusion, although whether it also gives closure to the moral dilemma is an unresolved matter. Grandison's earlier love, and lasting affection, for Clementina remain salient facts in his life.

The questions asked by the essay remind us that ambiguity need not mean prevarication or equivocation, so much as a level-headed triage of competing tensions in which the whole of the self is implicated. If, then, the assemblage of the moral self occurs inseparably from the drama of big events—political events at those times when they loom large—a series of provocative parallels unfolds. As earlier, public commitment and private sympathy are mutually informing but still discrete. Ways in which their interrelation might be conveyed are part of Susan Kubica Howard's sorting of Anglo-Irish and Anglo-Scottish attitudes in terms of "narrative surrogacy"—itself a concept entailing a reinterpretation of genuineness. Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent* (1800) and Scott's *Waverley* (1814) enable surrogacy to take place between characters in the main text, and via the meta-commentary of the paratext. The co-dependence of these two textual forms then suggests a differential reading of England's "fosterage" of each nation in the context of political union. In Edgeworth's novel, Thady Quirk's mentoring of Sir Condy Rackrent produces deeply ambiguous outcomes. Thady's biological son, Jason, grows into an unscrupulous operator while Sir Condy's assumption of entitlement is one factor in his financial unravelling and eventual ruin. There is also "history" between the Quirk and Rackrent families, stewards and landowners respectively. Actions of Thady's may imply betrayal of his foster-son Sir Condy at some level, while allegiance to blood-kinship remains tacitly unshaken.

Edgeworth's influence was acknowledged by Scott as he sifted his responses to the 1707 Union of England and Scotland. Edward Waverley experiences the surrogacy of various father-figures allied with the Jacobite cause, including Charles Edward Stuart himself. But as Howard reminds

us, this surrogacy "does not take", Waverley's English identity having been tempered rather than attenuated by it. His emergence from fosterage into maturity and thence marriage may appear—again, at the level of plots and endings—to figure the viability of a stable Anglo-Scottish union, but the paratextual voice-over complicates this reading. The introduction, prefaces and notes to the 1829 "Magnum Opus" reissue of the novel imported ambivalence. What Howard deems Scott's "pragmatically pro-union stance" required a disinterested, conciliatory tone sceptical of romanticising events and persons: at the same time, his personal misgivings over the union sow suspicions of authorial unreliability, compelling readers to attend with caution to what they are reading. On the other hand the (English) editorial persona in *Castle Rackrent* had undertaken to "explain" Ireland, striking a balance between English and Irish identities as the 1800 vote on union neared. This paratextual surrogacy is flawed, making an assessment of motive based on face values only, in contrast to the probing acuity fostered by the Scott persona. Both novels do aspire to endorse feasible co-existence with the "foster-nation". However, Scott's awareness of boundaries—(para-) textual and national—is not reflected in the indeterminacy of the equivalent structures in *Castle Rackrent*. Readers are invited to consider how far the greater volatility of the Anglo-Irish form of union is metaphorically present in this disparity between narrative surrogacies.

The respective rhetorics of genre and public affairs may in such ways be put to use by writers attuned to the suasion of both. In this light Geremy Carnes argues that the critically assumed fosterage of eighteenth-century Gothic literature by Protestantism is a truism in need of revaluation. The default narrative identifies Gothic modes with—particularly—an anti-Catholic refraction of Protestantism in which nefarious ideologies reaching back into a monk-ridden past almost invariably wither before the "enlightened" gaze of the rising middle class. But, as Carnes maintains, this glosses over the contribution of English Catholics themselves to the Gothic. The heroic epistle was to become one avenue: Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard* summoned over a dozen *Abelard to Eloisa* poems in response, eventually producing samples of English Catholic writing as a conscious form.

As his layered creation of Eloisa shows, Pope's Catholicism did not preclude critique of medieval infamies. Her turmoil is also quickened by Pope's interiorization of contemporary travails, these—again—pertaining to Jacobitism. The poem was written two years after the suppressed 1715 rising, in whose aftermath English Catholics were obliged to weather not only punitive sanctions but fears of internal dissension. The sub-genre

thereby initiated was moulded by Protestant respondents up to the 1770s as neither overtly anti-Catholic nor anti-monastic, one which in fact tapped the vogue for medievalism. But in the four *Abelard to Eloisa* poems written by Thomas Warwick from 1782 to 1785, Catholicism is explicitly associated with pre-modern barbarism. An unholy nexus of superstition and unbending doctrine is imputed to the Church itself which—rather than the vulnerabilities of individual Catholics—is held accountable for the correspondents' trials.

A little later, Edward Jerningham's *Abelard to Eloisa* (1792) was the first response by an English Catholic and, as Carnes illuminatingly demonstrates, the first avowedly Gothic iteration of the form: both facts are germane. Though the desolate monastic setting is infused by eroticism, sublimity, and supernaturalism, the poem is a medium for the contemplation of discomfiting realities: the Catholic Relief Act of 1791, drafted to loosen the grip of the restrictions, was stoking a popular backlash against its intended beneficiaries, the English Catholic community. In this environment Jerningham pointedly turned to Joseph Berington's 1787 translation of the Abelard-Eloisa correspondence. Berington's rationally-oriented advocacy of faith envisaged a re-normalization of Catholic lives within mainstream English culture. Integration could become viable once earlier enormities were honestly owned: concomitantly Jerningham's Abelard writes from the standpoint of maturity, ruing the grotesque forfeit exacted by the Church. Carnes here shows how the "historical" Gothic is reclaimed through the agency of its literary efflorescence in the 1790s—the appurtenances of the mode undergirding the inheritance of a beleaguered culture of faith.

In mediating identity with the cultures or orthodoxies of the age, the refinement of genre—or indeed the emergence of new genres—may take a number of routes. And when the constituents of the self are antithetical on public and private levels, satire or burlesque may seem irresistible. Charles Gildon's prose narratives home in on imposture by throwing person and persona into stark relief. Gildon tried his hand as a poet, critic, playwright, and polemicist, but it is in the fictions that the censorious spotlight shines brightest. Here, as Scott Nowka explains, hypocrisy is garishly underlit in ways less concerned with character-development than the immediacy of moral dereliction and its repercussions. Gildon's rational scepticism was incubated in the Deist cenacles of figures such as Charles Blount. Under this aegis his early non-fiction condemns the tendency within spiritual communities (including the established Church) to occlude the "light of reason" with monolithic doctrine or casuistry. These convictions outlived Gildon's subsequent rejection of systematic Deism and irradiated the

episodic fiction he wrote—while never intending it as his legacy—from the start of the eighteenth century on.

These tales incorporate startling devices which make readers privy to the crooked motivations of protagonists' inner selves. Nowka connects those devices, importantly, to the ongoing story of generic incipience. *The Post-Boy Robb'd of his Mail* (1692-93) is a "club-narrative", presenting itself as a collaboration, in which the agency of revelation is a cache of self-incriminating letters. *The Golden Spy* (1709) initiates another sub-genre—the object-narrative—which would in time become prominent. In *The New Metamorphosis* the central character is transformed into a "Bologna lapdog" who noses candidly around shameful secrets, not excluding the trespasses of the Catholic Church and its whited sepulchres—an unseen witness to catalogues of sexual hypocrisy. All such impostures of behaviour, as elsewhere in Gildon, betray existential inauthenticity. In *The Golden Spy* the "spies" are coins, curiously endowed with voice, betokening centuries' worth of immoral transactions and chicanery. The salutary refrain is that ancient paganism and modern irreligion alike can be countered only by effulgent reason. Like Gildon's other fictions, the work distils a literary erudition tuned to fabulistic and picaresque accents, the epistolary genres, even the philosophical dialogue. Voice becomes an agency of moral impetus, when spiritual morbidity is able to be characterized ventriloquially.

At the crossing of mercantile and technological cultures, the object-narrative also serves Sylvia Brown's discussion of those properties, including voice, perceived as innate in personhood. The automaton, notably, embodies a fixation with natural and mechanical wonders in a consumer-driven world, where volition cannot fully be understood in isolation from market forces. Brown breaks new ground in categorizing in detail the sub-generic by-products engineered by those forces. Swift's Gulliver, for instance, is objectified both as animal and machine in Brobdingnag: a bi-conditional graft of contrivance and authenticity. Gulliver's responses to the hortatory pull of Enlightenment are so automatic as to seem like reversions to factory-settings. However, these may also be the "correct" answers, ironically reached through fashioning a cod travel-narrative as a sounding-board in which the defining qualities of the "natural" are modulated.

Virtuoso automatons such as those built by Jacques Vaucanson were feted for their display of ostensibly independent agency. Later, pseudo-automatons like the "Talking Figure" and "Automaton Chess-Player" shown in London in 1783 were exemplars not merely of prestidigitation but *sui generis* marvels where a human component was deliberately

hidden. The exposure of both as fraudulent by Philip Thicknesse is replete with irony. The underhand use of speaking-tubes and concealed confederates was to him a typically continental outrage: a ploy paradoxically witnessing that all-too credible duplicity (hence falseness) of humans which was so egregious on the political scene.

The "it-narrative" offers a literary parallel. In Dorothy Kilner's *Adventures of a Hackney Coach* (1781) the writer subsumes her own voice into the coach's, to forge, as Brown puts it, a human "pretending to be a machine simulating human feeling": the author, like the real chess-player guiding a pseudo-mechanical hand, is partially concealed. This recalls the degrees of reflexive mimesis encountered earlier in assaying the genuine. And again not for the first time, we confront the problem of locating the authentic in a "commodity" culture where bespoke, interactive realities are readily manufactured. Furthermore, the place of deaf people within that culture, especially the voiced deaf, extends the problematism. Distinctions between prelingual and postlingual deafness mapped a spectrum not only of sentience but of moral being. Although Kant held that language may replicate rather than demonstrate the use of reason, major educationalists such as Sicard heard, in language-use, the awakening soul of prelingual "deaf-mutes". The debate was at the time open-ended. One disturbing outcome, on which Brown concludes, is that the figuration of contrivance in all these cases opened the way for a final destabilization of the human. The metonymic affinities of voiceless humans, automatons, and non-humanoid contrivances confuse boundaries between humans and their simulacra: in turn the discursive "genre" of the human, liable to the full moral and aesthetic costs of replication, is unsettled.

The human narrative, in which meaning accrues through reading and speaking one's place in the world, is addressed by Amy Watkin, whose discussion of *Rasselas* and one of its afterlives spans the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The concern is the transition of the conscious self into purposive agency. The starting-point is the question of why that book should have been the chosen reading of Helen Burns, from her first introduction to Jane Eyre in Charlotte Brontë's novel, onwards. The intertextuality of *Jane Eyre* implicates author, reader, and the canon, necessitating "utterance" as constituent as well as facilitator of the "choice of life" toward which the actors in both centuries move. Jane is a Victorian woman who grows in response to Helen's embodiment of particular eighteenth-century stances, and her maturation owes much to the means by which the connective filaments of sequential response (Jane "reading" Helen reading Johnson) are threaded into unique identity.

Watkin's contrapuntal analysis shows that while Prince Rasselas's "Happy Valley" is enclosed and sequestered, like the school where Helen and Jane meet, it is a bona fide utopia in comparison with the emphatically un-utopian Lowood. Both Helen and Rasselas (and his co-traveller Imlac) are given to reverie. Helen's dreams cannot encompass flight, but she does hope in another way, sensing that Jane's world must one day be a wider one than hers can ever be. The attitude suggests a sympathetic investment which never quite coalesces into comprehension, along the lines—configured here as, previously, in eighteenth-century fiction—which demarcate fellow-feeling off from moral equivalence. Analogously Jane admires, without fully crediting, Helen's endurance of ill-treatment, intuiting her behaviour to be more stoic than passive. All the same, the "end" of life is not for Helen a term which can realistically benefit from a dual meaning: her life has drawn a virtuous circle in preparation for its ending. (Charlotte Brontë's older sister Maria had died in 1825 at the age of 11.) Lessons imbibed by Helen from her appropriation, at varying levels of consciousness, of exchanges between Imlac and Rasselas on the synthetic dialogue of destiny and free-will are thereby made part of Jane's own formation, their voices resonant with her inner conversation. So too is the prince's centrifugal wanderlust, and the terms in which he and his sister Nekayah weigh up the merits and demerits of marriage: Jane's control of her destiny was always going to be couched in the matrimonial context, and is at last precipitated as she considers St. John Rivers and wonders about Rochester. Ambiguity persists: another structurally satisfying denouement has been brought about as a condition of an independence which can never be independent of the sway of cultural information.

Notes

[1] These cultures coincide with the "aesthetic worlds" surveyed by Eric Hayot: "social and conceptual constructs, as well as formal and affective ones", in creative coherence with the "sympathetic revolution" of the eighteenth century. See Hayot, *On Literary Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 44-45, 141.

[2] The novelty of this cultural transaction exhibits "a new hierarchy of literary endeavour, underscored [by] the special relationship that the author bore to his text." John Brewer, *The Pleasures of the Imagination: English Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New edition, London: Routledge, 2013), 129. As Lennard J. Davis has argued, the involvement of readers in the special relationship then permits interpretation of the writing-reading process as always ideological. Fiction, he maintains, offers cognitive resistance to overwhelming cultural tides by developing a particular integrity of its own, in turn becoming theorized within

culture: it "becomes … one of the ways culture teaches itself about itself"; and does so by supplying "controlled ideological locations, a sense of community and belonging through identification." *Resisting Novels: Ideology and Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1987), 25, 16.

[3] The sense in which this is understood culturally is addressed by Michael Gavin's discussion of the "fictionalized world of critical exchange", where the public persona of an editor, publisher or commentator might meld with his person—the two being "incompatible and inextricable": *The Invention of English Criticism, 1650-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 92. Analogous is the different point made by Clive James: "The idea that the professional student of culture is some kind of creative collaborator easily grows into an assumption that the professional understanding of culture is part of culture's driving force." See *Cultural Amnesia: Necessary Memories from History and the Arts* (New York: Norton, 2007), 156.

[4] Although "interpretation was in the mind of the reader, learned or not, male or female, of any age", expectation could of course be jarringly subverted: see Thomas Munck, "Enlightened Thought, its Critics and Competitors," in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe*, ed. Peter H. Wilson (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014), 151. Boundary-crossing topoi recur, in different guises, in several essays in the present collection. Expectation relates to the rhetorician Kenneth Burke's theory of genres as "frames of acceptance", as modified by Heather Dubrow in *Genre* (London: Methuen, 1982), 32; and John Mullan defines the genre of the novel—a set of conventions that "may be altered or flouted"—as far less forceful as a concept than novelistic sub-genres: *How Novels Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 105-06. Sub-genre, too, is importantly treated here.

[5] Ronald Paulson's construction of the eighteenth-century fictive "life" not merely as a meaning-loaded vector, but a dramatic interchange with ambient cultures remains fruitful: "Life as Pilgrimage and as Theater," in *Modern Essays on Eighteenth-Century Literature*, ed. Leopold Damrosch, Jr. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 181-200. Jon Mee observes the novel responding to "values emerging from intersubjective exchanges by developing an idiom that drew its paradoxical authority from their proximity to the everyday world of conversation." See *Conversable Worlds: Literature, Contention, and Community, 1762 to 1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4. The everyday world in question comprises the "manners, the appearances of social custom; behavior, the appearances of habitual action; [and] attitudes, the expressed appearances of formed opinion" with which Albert Cook introduces *The Meaning of Fiction* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960), 1. Essays here probe more deeply what "everyday" may actually mean, pausing in many cases on voice—as well as conversation—within the total semantic milieu.

[6] The immediacy of the connective jolt is a factor: the Nobel-Laureate novelist Orhan Pamuk believes that for a novel-reader, affect precedes ideology. See *The Naïve and the Sentimental Novelist* (London: Faber & Faber, 2011), 69. Specificity is another factor: "Nowhere had the nominalist stress on the particular in contrast

to classical universalism been more visible than in the eighteenth-century English novel." Louis Dupré, *The Enlightenment and the Intellectual Foundations of Modern Culture* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 81. In terms of "recognition" of this writer-reader compact, whenever and at whatever level it occurs, the contours of a mutually imaginative endeavour are received from the known world (however exotic the locale or characterization): the recognisability of surfaces and spaces "contribute[d] over the eighteenth century to the gradual absorption of detailed description in literature, particularly in prose narrative." Cynthia Sundberg Wall, *The Prose of Things: Transformations of Description in the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 42-43.

[7] "Imagination is the residence of truth for the audience because it is the residence of truth for the artist": James Sambrook, *The Eighteenth Century: The Intellectual and Cultural Context of English Literature, 1700-1789* (Second edition, Harlow: Longman, 1997), 236. Beginning with a study of graphic novels and moving outward, Simon Grennan has recently attempted a re-formulation of the mimetic dialectic which aims at general application: "Three functions can … be said to structure fiction: (a) point of view, (b) the distinction between the adjudication of truth in the world of the subject … and the adjudication of truth in the fictional world, and (c) the relationship between the inhibitions and opportunities constituting the general potential resources of the body, and the inhibitions and opportunities constituting the ontological horizon of the imagination." *A Theory of Narrative Drawing* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 99. The interpretive field, as implied, remains rich.

[8] Eighteenth-century ideological legacies "made possible the naturalization of certain kinds of identities—social, sexual, political, racial, and national—whose traces refuse to disappear." Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003), 31.

[9] As Shaun Regan reminds us (with considerable restraint), "literary culture during [the mid-century] was by no means always a locus of artistic excellence, or indeed of creative harmony." "Introduction," in *Reading 1759: Literary Culture in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain and France*, ed. Shaun Regan (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2013), 5.

[10] Karl Miller has described the "public sphere" in which literary cultures become relevant as a place where "literature is more political, and the politics of imaginative writers less irrelevant, than … the principles of literary criticism have made out. Literature and politics … are intelligible both as companion texts and as the same text, with politics exhibiting no less than literature does a tension between public and private, collectivism and individualism." *Authors* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 175.

[11] *Fiction and the Weave of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 144.

CONJURING VOICE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: INTERSECTIONS OF NARRATIVE EXPERIMENTATION AND MECHANICAL CONTRIVANCE

SYLVIA A. BROWN

> The King . . . when he observed my shape exactly, and saw me walk erect, before I began to speak, conceived I might be a piece of clockwork . . . contrived by some ingenious artist. But when he heard my voice, and found what I delivered to be regular and rational, he could not conceal his astonishment. He was by no means satisfied with the relation I gave him of the manner I came into his kingdom; but thought it a story concerted between Glumdalclitch and her father, who had taught me a set of words to make me sell at a higher price. Upon this imagination he put several other questions to me, and still received rational answers . . . [1]

The epigraph to this essay, from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), elucidates Gulliver's treatment in Brobdingnag, a land of giants, as both a curiosity exhibited to paying customers in public and an intellectual puzzle worthy of scholarly examination by the King and his own natural philosophers in a more private setting. The juxtaposition of Gulliver's roles indicates how natural and synthetic wonders were becoming products in a growing consumer-driven popular culture as well as objects, outcomes, or instruments of serious scientific inquiry and philosophical debate regarding the relationship between life and machine during the eighteenth century. However jaundiced a view Swift and others may have taken of this trend toward what they viewed as degrading commodification, the King's initial perception of Gulliver, like the reaction of Frances Burney's titular, epistolary heroine Evelina to James Cox's museum of automata or the allusions to the mechanical properties of men of feeling in Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* or Tobias Smollett's *Humphry Clinker*, reminds us that such literary works were as much products of, and participants in, discourses of empirical investigation and mechanical

philosophy as the strange and surprising contrivances that they might allude to, parody, critique, parallel, or even aspire to be in some way.[2]

The mechanical contrivance, more specifically the automaton, indeed permeated multiple discourses during the eighteenth century and had a powerful impact on Enlightenment thinking, as the age puzzled over the ramifications of the closeness of the human to the automaton, an invention that simultaneously demonstrated and questioned the prospects for humankind's enlightenment.[3] Given its pervasive influence, the figure of the automaton, not surprisingly, has at times assumed a central role in scholarly assessments of the early novel and the literary marketplace. Julie Park makes the connection between evolving realist narrative and mechanical wonders explicit in observing: "Much like the automaton, the eighteenth-century novel attempts to replicate the dimensions of human being-ness … "[4] Thus, the automaton and the novel, along with a range of fictional and semi-fictional narratives associated with this relatively unstable genre, have been perceived as engaging in parallel acts of duplication, conflating boundaries between the original and the copy, the natural and the human-made, the authentic and the inauthentic. Eighteenth-century automata have also been linked to literary depictions of both men of feeling and young women conforming to the rules of conduct books as well as to the demands of a literary marketplace that threatened to turn novels and novelists alike into soulless replicants.[5] In sum, during the Enlightenment, a philosophy envisioning the universe, society, and humans as machines at times demonstrably permeated, on multiple levels, fiction affiliated with the novel, and informed perceptions of authorship and literary production.

Taking Swift's Gulliver as its starting point, this essay, counter to previous scholarship on intersections of mechanical and literary innovation, will distinguish between types of automatons and their aims to get at degrees of hybridity that have thus far been relatively unexamined in automatons and fiction of the period. Noting differences in automatons reveals potentially overlooked parallels in sub-genres of mechanical and textual contrivances as well as heightened degrees of fascination and suspicion elicited by them, particularly through their shared efforts to generate "voice"—defined broadly here as verbal, gestural, or written signs indicating intelligence, point of view, and a sense of identity. As I will demonstrate, the most hybrid forms of narrative and mechanical contrivances of the period mutually provoke and have a special capacity to illuminate the destabilization of the categories of genre and humanity. More specifically, the feature of voice deepens both the extent of their hybridity and their capacity for undermining boundaries separating the

human from the machine, the animal, and, more broadly, the object. The metonymic relationship during the period between the automaton and the deaf, or those without voice, I contend, fosters such genre and boundary confusion in narrative and mechanical contrivances alike. By examining analogies between, and integrations of, these contrivances within the context of cultural constructions of voice and deafness, this essay illuminates how together genre and the category of the human—along with categories such as truth, morality, and aesthetics—become destabilized discursive constructions. If the genres of the automaton and the fictional narrative can be construed as unsettling, fascinating stories about humans, then so can the genre of the human be revealed as an evolving story within fiction.

    To get at underexplored levels of hybridity in narrative and mechanical contrivances and the corresponding elevated levels of mesmerizing suspicion evoked by both, I focus on fictional narratives like Swift's that unite the magical with a secular empirical epistemology. For in such works of fantasy, the human most overtly merges with the non-human animal or the machine, especially through the generation of voice in the latter. The questions and paradoxes evoked by attempts to produce artificial life in textual and mechanical contrivances become only more vexing if the voice proceeds from an object—a couch, a coin, a coach, for example—and not just from a humanoid treated or conceived of as an object, as is the case with Gulliver. In the latter part of this essay, therefore, I focus on mechanical and literary contrivances aiming to replicate the most sophisticated capacities of the human while foregrounding their status as objects and thereby provoking fascination and skepticism: "The Talking Figure" and "The Automaton Chess-Player," exhibited in London in 1783, and Dorothy Kilner's object-narrative entitled *The Adventures of a Hackney Coach*, published in 1781.[6] An analysis of the King of Brobdingnag's reaction to Gulliver, within the context of evolving eighteenth-century constructions of the automaton and the human, will set the stage for revealing suggestive parallels between two sub-genres: 1) "pseudo-automatons", or deceptive contrivances that are not fully mechanical but try to pass as such; and 2) it-narratives, a form of experimental fiction and a sub-genre of the novel in which objects or animals frequently narrate their own experiences. This early formula-fiction became a fad during the later eighteenth century when not only were the most human-like automatons being produced, but the relationship of voice to the category of the human was also under revision and intense consideration both in the production of automata or pseudo-automata, and

in discourse about the education of the deaf, or those lacking a conventional form of voice.

I. Morphology and *Gulliver's Travels*: the Hybridity of Automatons, Humans, and Fiction

Seeing Gulliver resting in the palm of the Queen's hand, the King initially dismissively identifies him as a "splacknuck", or an animal. When Gulliver stands up, the King classifies him as a species of "clockwork", or an inorganic machine resembling miniature "real" people. Whether mistaken or not, the King's interpretation suggests machinelike qualities of the human body that inspired efforts to regulate human labor or replace it with machinery. Moreover, for the King, the unresolved question of whether Gulliver has offered a faithful, original "relation" of the events leading up to his arrival in the kingdom or has merely repeated or "copied" a "set of words" taught to him goes hand in hand with unresolved questions about the genre of his being. The King shifts quickly from considering the "ingenious artist" who might have made Gulliver to the author who might have made Gulliver's story. Both Gulliver and his story—along with Swift's work itself—rest on the boundary between deception and truth, copy and original, the wondrous and the hackneyed. In this reading, dilemmas regarding human/machine identity and literary genre are rendered parallel and arise when an invention strives to seem as "real," "natural," or "true" as possible.

Because Gulliver looks and moves like a tiny Brobdingnagian human— is indeed advertised by Glumdalclitch's father as "in every part of the body resembling an human creature"[7]—he might be labeled an "automaton", or a "self-acting figure",[8] or more specifically an "androïd", as Diderot's *Encyclopédie* would suggest.[9] Gulliver in Brobdingnag straddles the line between two types of automatons exhibited in the eighteenth century. According to Richard Altick, the first incorporated "miniature figures, representing both living beings and inanimate objects" joined into a single work and driven by a clockwork.[10] With precursors in fifteenth-century clockwork figures and in forms of mechanical theater such as seventeenth-century puppet-theater, this first type is also related to mechanical pictures with painted scenes and moving figures debuting in the early eighteenth century.[11] The second type of automatons was designed to "give the illusion of life", as they were nearly life-sized "independent figures" whose "actions were less repetitive, more 'realistic'".[12] This astonishing group includes Jacques Vaucanson's Flute-player, Pipe-and-Tabor player, and defecating Duck exhibited in Paris in

1738 and in London in 1742.[13] Possessing a "supple tongue" and flexible lips as well as fingers covered in "soft leather", Vaucanson's flute player used three bellows and produced "three different blowing pressures", and the inventor's mechanical duck moved, ate, and drank like a real duck, seeming to digest its food and to defecate.[14] Consider as well the Writer, the Draughtsman, and the "Lady-musician" constructed in the 1770s by the Jaquet-Droz family of Swiss horologists, displayed in Covent Garden in 1776,[15] and housed in the Musée d'art et d'histoire at Neuchâtel, Switzerland today.[16] The Draughtsman's breath removes "charcoal dust from his paper", and the astonishing rhythmic sighs of Jaquet-Droz's "Lady-musician" suggest emotional responsiveness to music, her eyes tracking her hands as she plays the organ.[17]

   Jessica Riskin notes that these forms of "artificial life" aspiring to "[p]hysiological correctness" were developed from the 1730s through the 1790s by inventors philosophically more grounded in materialism than in Cartesian thinking. In classifying them, Riskin employs the term "simulation" in its modern sense to denote "an experimental model from which one can discover properties of the natural subject" rather than in its eighteenth-century sense to denote "artifice" or "fakery".[18] Going beyond surface "verisimilitude" to replicate internal workings, these simulations, Riskin argues, were designed to "test the limits of resemblance between synthetic and natural life." Since such internal processes might include feeling, imagining, and thinking, complex simulations could provoke disbelief as well as wonder, raising questions about whether human passion and creativity stemmed from mechanical processes.[19] Thus, the nature and implications of such forms of artificial life could be murky. For example, to what extent was Vaucanson's duck a "simulation" if part of its mechanism was fake? It replicated a duck's movements and method of eating, but the grain that it ate was not really digested and excreted; rather, it was loaded with "fake excrement" prior to exhibition, while a hidden "reservoir" in its throat captured the ingested grain.[20] Riskin argues that "this hybrid animal", like other Vaucanson automatons, both supports and rejects the idea that "living creatures were essentially machines . . ."; thus, it illustrates "an intervening moment of profound uncertainty about the validity of philosophical mechanism" between its ascendance in the seventeenth century and its general refutation in the nineteenth century.[21]

   Swift's Gulliver prefigures automatons of the mid- to later eighteenth century and, like them, possesses an ambiguous status. He arouses the King's suspicion with a replication of life beyond surface verisimilitude. Is Gulliver the "real" thing or a "simulation", in either an eighteenth-century or a modern sense? Is he "an experimental model" illuminating characteristics

of a "natural subject" and linking animal and machine together in a "literal way"?[22] Does he simulate the structure/behavior of the human/animal or of the machine imitating organic life? Or is he part of a plot to pass off the fraudulent as genuine?

These questions are not easily settled, especially considering the paradoxes of Gulliver's life as a performing oddity and courtier. The King's admiration of the artistry behind Gulliver's varied, articulate movements credibly suggests that he is a "simulation" in the modern sense of the word. Certainly, Gulliver's movements while on exhibition before his sale to the Queen are likely both varied (natural, "realistic") and repetitious (machinelike, "artificial"), involving reiterations of such actions as greeting his audience, drinking their health from a thimble, giving set speeches, and answering set questions. Gulliver has functioned as a wind-up, de-humanized human, imitating "real" Brobdingnagian humans to produce wonder, laughs, and profit. He arrives at court a mere shell of his former self, having led a rather "unnatural" life of replicating "natural" life. He then becomes an instrument for intellectual exercise and a riddle. His proximity to the "real" causes the King to look for trickery or "simulation" in an eighteenth-century sense. If Gulliver is narrating by rote a story taught to him, he resembles a trained parrot, a literary character, or, from the neck up, a talking head built during the latter part of the century and possessing an artificial larynx and glottis and a limited vocabulary.[23]

Adding to Gulliver's and humanity's hybrid status, the King exposes Gulliver's nonsensical, naïve representation of English society and politics, particularly stressing the inhumanity and irrationality of the "enlightenment" that Gulliver offers him in the form of gunpowder. In his knee-jerk response to the King's contempt for his "noble country . . . the seat of virtue, piety, honour and truth"[24] Gulliver sounds like the Abbé Mical's two talking heads, which, in 1778, exchanged hyperbolic "praise of Louis XVI."[25] Part automaton at court, Gulliver winds up his rhetoric to gain clout with the King and English readers, throughout the story doing things mechanically and compulsively: restlessly and almost addictively traveling, marrying out of a sense of duty, amassing a fortune, defending his mother country, and shrinking from other humans in his vain quest for "enlightenment". Perhaps a simulation revealing humanity's capacity for degradation and irrationality, Gulliver as "loyal" English subject in Brobdingnag and Gulliver as defiant, anti-social cynic and worshipper of "reason" in subjugation to Houyhnhnm ideology both represent machine-like, pseudo-reflective behavior. His falling apart physically, morally, and mentally in his automaton-like behavior suggests that humans are and are

not machines. Swift's work thus portrays Gulliver as a destabilized (Lockean) self, programmed by external stimuli and paradoxically subjugated in both his social and individualistic impulses to the mechanical and the irrational.[26]

Gulliver's Travels as a whole, along with the passage in which the Brobdingnagian King interrogates Gulliver, also depicts the emerging novel, and those fictional and semi-fictional works often allied with the travelogue, as unstable genres, paradoxically subjugated in their bid for originality, newness, and truthfulness to the hackney, the copy, and the deceptive. Whether or not Gulliver is a "real boy" as well as the degree to which "real boys" can be rational and enlightened can be as easily answered in a sense as the question of whether Gulliver's story is "true"; whether *Gulliver's Travels* is a genuine travel narrative or a "simulation" of one; whether it is a novel, or a parody of a novel (an anti-novel); whether, as a parody of a novel, it is a simulation of a novel, in either an eighteenth-century or a modern sense. If Gulliver might be viewed as a parody of the "realistic" automaton, of "middling fictional subjects" in novels,[27] and of the human machine as construed by Enlightenment savants, Swift's satire, with its prefatory declarations of authenticity and its appeals to authoritative testimony and empirical evidence, parodies the "genuine" travel narrative and many fictional or semi-fictional novelistic texts of the early eighteenth century—all prone to exaggeration, deceptions, and conventional (repetitive) rhetorical moves. Swift's creative mimicry makes his work a "simulation" in two senses: it is a "fake" travel narrative and a narrative contrivance illuminating properties of the "natural"/ "real" object. Furthermore, in intertwining questions about human/machine identity and genre identity, *Gulliver's Travels*, however fantastical, aspires to a kind of realism and authenticity.

To Altick's observation that Swift offered "a base of realistic detail" in "authentic particulars . . . of show-business practices"[28] I would add that the element of "voice" creates playful boundary confusion regarding the genres of Swift's work, Gulliver, humans, and artificial machines. "Voice" here can, of course, encompass the ironic tone of the entire work, including Richard Sympson's preface, as well as Gulliver's apparent ability to talk and talk sense to the King. "Voice" also calls attention to and makes supremely important the seams between the genuine and the artificial. On the one hand, the "copy", or the mimetic work, tries to come as close to the "original" as possible, in part to "pass" as the "original". On the other, perfect seamlessness between the original and the copy was not necessarily the ultimate goal of mechanical contrivances, popular fictional texts and novels, or parodies of such texts. Indeed, the realism or the ingenuity of the illusion could emerge only if seams showed. If their

visibility allows Vaucanson to explore the limits of congruity between the artificial and the natural, it also promotes Swift's agenda of unveiling deception as well as the limits of humanity and of the truth-claims of certain genres. The reader's awareness of "voice" makes the seams visible. The King's perception of Gulliver as clockwork stems from his presumed lack of voice, not just his diminutive size. Only Gulliver's speaking voice draws him overly close to a "real" human, necessitating the search for seams and deception, just as Swift's layered, ironic narrative voice compels readers to draw and re-draw the somewhat shifting lines between the actual author and the character who is at times clueless and at other times apparently manifesting Swift's own anger or misanthropy. Seams, in other words, matter more when the copy tries to be as close to the original as possible. Ironically, a wondrous copy appears in danger of losing its originality at the moment when it could seemingly most claim it.

Why would "voice" be the tipping point in the eighteenth century? Since Gulliver's voice seems to proceed from what initially appears to be an irrational, voiceless animal and what then seems to be and should be a deaf and mute object, and deafness and muteness often go hand in hand, we might find answers in conceptions of the deaf-mute.

II. The Automaton and the Deaf/Mute

The King's initial perceptions of Gulliver as animal and clockwork engage Enlightenment debates about the relationship among humans, animals, and automata. By foregrounding a conventional connection between voice and rationality in constructions of the human, the King makes it possible to detect a subtext of ingrained assumptions about the deaf/mute and persistent metonymic links among the deaf, automatons, and animals. The King's shifting, ambivalent perception of Gulliver might be construed as parallel to shifting and contradictory views of deaf-mutes during the Enlightenment, when long-standing, even ancient constructions of deafness persisted but were (re-) negotiated in relation to views of the voice and speech, and to a growing preoccupation with language and the boundaries of the human.[29]

Given a traditional association between muteness and intellectual inferiority, and between voice and soul, it is not surprising that, as Nicholas Mirzoeff points out, "Many Enlightenment thinkers regarded the deaf as machines, incapable of independent thought".[30] In discussing the development of schools for the deaf in England, Mary Wilson Carpenter affirms that those who were called "deaf and dumb"—that is, who lost their hearing early enough not to have learned to speak or to have kept this