

## THE ECONOMIC THEME IN *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*

KATSUMI HASHINUMA\*

In 1701 Lemuel Gulliver returns to England from Lilliput, after being rescued by an English merchantman on its way home from Japan, cruising north-east off Van Diemen's Land (or Tasmania on the modern map). Gulliver takes on board ten thousand *Sprug* coins and a portrait of the king of Lilliput, as well as live animals such as three hundred sheep, six cows, two bulls and as many ewes and rams, intending to "propagate the Breed." (*GT*, 66)<sup>1</sup> He also wanted to take a dozen native Lilliputians but was unable to do so because of the king's injunction against their export. In less than ten months, before setting off on another voyage, he makes "a considerable Profit by showing [his] Cattle to many Persons of Quality, and others" and finally sells them for six hundred pounds (*GT*, 67). Later, returning from his final voyage, to the Houyhnhnm Land, Gulliver finds that "the Breed is considerably increased, especially the Sheep; which [he hopes] will prove much to the Advantage of the Woolen Manufacture, by the Fineness of the Fleeces" (*GT*, 68). His account of his Lilliputian sheep seems casual and irrelevant but it illustrates a point I wish to make in this article: that certain passages in *Gulliver's Travels*, especially those in Part III, become meaningful if looked at against the contemporary economic background. It is hardly surprising that Swift has something to say about economics, or "political economy" in the parlance of his age, in his most wide-ranging satire on European culture. The economic theme in *Gulliver's Travels* has not been fully appreciated in modern criticism of the work. Critics have tended to emphasise the themes of politics and science, perhaps rightly, but most of them treat these two strands of satire separately without any attempt to interrelate them. The economic theme is, I think, a possible link between the two.

In Gulliver's account of Lilliputian sheep one may find an echo from *A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture*, the first of a series of Swift's pamphlets on the Irish problems, published in 1720. What Swift proposed in the pamphlet was to boycott all foreign-made (including English) clothes and to use only Irish-made woolen products in order to protect the Irish woolen industry.<sup>2</sup> Gulliver as an Englishman is optimistic about the possibility of his Lilliputian sheep becoming a new industry for England. The irony here is that Gulliver's optimism is in sharp contrast to Swift's own stance in the Anglo-Irish trade issues. I shall return to the question of the Anglo-Irish relationship later. Let us consider, here, the

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<sup>1</sup> References to *Gulliver's Travels* are to the edition by Paul Turner (1971; rpt. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) and indicated in the text as (*GT*, 66).

<sup>2</sup> Harold Williams, *et al*, eds., *The Prose Writings of Jonathan Swift*, 16 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939-74), IX, pp.13-22. Subsequent references to this edition are abbreviated as *PW*.

often-discussed parallels between *Gulliver's Travels* and *Robinson Crusoe* in order to see the ways in which the economic contents of Defoe's masterpiece are incorporated into Swift's great satire.

That Gulliver is no stranger to financial matters is indicated in the opening paragraphs, in which his origins and career previous to going on the four voyages are presented. Lemuel Gulliver is the third son of a father who has a small estate in Nottinghamshire. He studied at Cambridge for three years but left without taking a degree because "the Charge of maintaining [him] (although [he] had a very scanty Allowance) [was] too great for a narrow Fortune." Then he was apprenticed to Mr. Bates, an eminent surgeon in London. During the four years in which he worked under this master he took lessons in navigation and mathematics for the "small Sums of Money" which his father occasionally sent him, knowing that those sciences would be useful for someone who intended to go to sea. After an interval in which he came home and got "Forty Pounds" by the assistance of his father and his uncle, Gulliver resumed his study, this time at Leiden, where he took courses in medicine for two years and seven months, also knowing that this would help him on long voyages. Returning to London, Gulliver, on the recommendation of his master, became surgeon to a ship going to the Levant and some other parts. After three and a half years' voyage he started a surgical practice in London and married the second daughter of a London hosier with a portion of "four Hundred Pounds". Gulliver's practice, however, began to fail with the death of his master, which made him determine to go to sea again. Several voyages on two ships as surgeon to the East and West Indies gave him "some Addition to [his] Fortune". But the last of these voyages not being very successful, he grew weary of the sea and thought of settling down at home. He moved to Wapping, "hoping to get Business among Sailors; but it would not turn to account." Three years later, when things did not seem to mend, he accepted "an advantageous Offer" from the captain of a ship bound for the South Sea, which was to make the voyage to Lilliput (*GT*, 3-4).

Apparently, Gulliver and Crusoe have certain features in common, mainly in two respects: that they are each the third son of a middle class family, and that they have an incessant desire to go to sea. These features in the characterisation of Crusoe and of Gulliver are, I think, rather superficial, as a careful comparison of their careers does not bear out their apparent similarities. Crusoe is not of pure English blood because his father, now a retired merchant of York, came from Bremen. The name Robinson is from a relative on his mother's side and the surname is an English corruption of the original Kreutznaer. Of Crusoe's two older brothers one became a soldier and died in Flanders, and the other has gone missing (*RC*, 27).<sup>3</sup> Gulliver's genealogy suggests that he is a true-born Englishman. He was born in Nottinghamshire but according to Richard Sympson, the purported editor of the *Travels* and a friend and kinsman of Gulliver, the Gullivers originally came from Oxfordshire (*GT*, xl : "The Publisher to the Reader"). We have no idea, though, what the occupation of Gulliver's father was, nor who his mother or his two older brothers were.

The difference between Crusoe and Gulliver is most conspicuous in their education. Crusoe is taught by his father and at a local free school without taking any higher education. His strong desire to see the world makes him disobey his father's advice to study law or trade.

<sup>3</sup> References to *Robinson Crusoe* are to the edition by Angus Ross (1965; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976) and indicated in the text as (*RC*, 38).

He learns to be a sailor and a merchant chiefly through friendship with a captain who took him to his first voyage. Under him, Crusoe says, "I got a competent knowledge of the mathematicks and the rules of navigation, learned how to keep an account of the ship's course, take an observation, and in short, to understand some things that were needful to be understood by a sailor" (*RC*, 40). By contrast, Gulliver receives higher education at two of the most prestigious universities in Europe at the time. He, like Crusoe, has a desire to go to sea but his future plan is much more clear-sighted than Crusoe's; he is apprenticed to a master surgeon and learn navigation and mathematics (perhaps through reading books) *before* going to sea. These patterns of education are reflected in the later lives of Crusoe and Gulliver; the former is a man of resources or a self-taught type, whereas the latter is a man of observation with a keen eye acquired from formal training. One example of the difference in their life styles as a traveler is their attitudes to language. Gulliver says: "My Hours of Leisure I spent in reading the best Authors, ancient and modern; being always provided with a good Number of Books; and when I was ashore, in observing the Manners and Dispositions of the People, as well as learning their Language; wherein I had a great Facility by the Strength of my Memory." (*GT*, 4) In any remote country he visits he quickly learns the language of the natives, even that of the speaking horses. None of this happens to Crusoe; the only book he reads is a Bible which he happened to find among the things he recovered from the wrecked ship. When he escapes from his state of slavery to the Moors, he is rescued by a Portuguese ship. The sailors on board address him in French, Spanish and Portuguese but he cannot understand any of these foreign languages, though he later learns little Portuguese in Brazil (*RC*, 53, 59). Having little interest in language, Crusoe can teach his Man Friday his own native language (and religion), instead of learn from him. On the whole, Gulliver is more open-minded to the culture of the lands he visits, while Crusoe is much less so. What occupies Crusoe's mind is the desire to see the world but he sees the world, it seems, in terms of "fortune" in both senses of the word. *Robinson Crusoe* is usually understood as a story of survival on an isolated island for twenty-eight years. But it is more than this. Critics have argued that *Robinson Crusoe* is about Crusoe's spiritual progress or his economic success, or a combination of both.<sup>4</sup> My concern here is with the latter type of interpretation.

On his first voyage Crusoe goes to Guinea on the advice of a captain who has made a fortune by trading on the coast there. The trade consists of exchanging "toys and trifles" brought from England for the local gold dust (*RC*, 39). To provide for the toys and trifles Crusoe collects forty pounds from his relatives—the same sum of money which Gulliver is provided with by his father and his uncle and which is used for his tuition at Leiden! Crusoe obtains five pounds nine ounces of Guinea gold and makes some three hundred pounds by selling it in London. His sojourn on the West African coasts, largely as a slave, turns out to be

<sup>4</sup> For interpretations of *Robinson Crusoe* see J. Paul Hunter, *The Reluctant Pilgrim* (Baltimore, Ma.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966); Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (1957; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979), pp. 66-103; Maximilian E. Novak, *Economics and the Fiction of Daniel Defoe* (Berkeley, Ca.: University of California Press, 1962), chs.2, 3; ditto, *Realism, Myth, and History in Defoe's Fiction* (Lincoln, Nebr.: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), pp.23-46; ditto, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions* (London: Oxford University Press, 2001), ch.23; Bram Dijkstra, *Defoe and Economics: The Fortunes of Roxana in the History of Interpretation* (London: Macmillan, 1987), pp.160-65. The modern critical history of *Robinson Crusoe* is conveniently summarised in Pat Rogers, *Robinson Crusoe* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1976), pp.146-54 and Roger D. Lund, ed., *Critical Essays on Daniel Defoe* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1997), pp.1-14.

fortunate for him, for he makes money with what he possesses: eighty pieces of eight for a boat, sixty pieces of eight for selling Xury to the Portuguese captain on condition that he is to be set free in ten years if converted to a Christian, some two hundred and twenty pieces of eight for the leopard's skin, the lion's skin, a case of bottles, two guns, and a lump of beeswax (*RC*, 54-55). Immediately before going to the South Seas for slave trading Crusoe resides in Brazil where he learns with his English-Portuguese neighbour to run a plantation for tobacco and sugarcane. The success of his plantation is due to the capital he made by investing part of the three hundred pounds in purchasing English textiles and selling them in Brazil for four times the price he bought them for. Crusoe could have stayed on and managed his plantation at this point in time but he accepts the more attractive deal of slave trading offered by local merchants and planters, which, as he regrets later, is to have such unfortunate consequences for him. Yet, the long absence from his plantation, forced on him by the misfortune of being cast away on a desert island, does not affect Crusoe's private fortune. This is largely because he took precautions, despite his self-confessed fancifulness and rambling thought. He entrusted the management of his plantation to his merchant friends by "writings and covenants"; he also made a will in case of his death in which he made his Portuguese captain-friend the sole heir to his plantation and effects, and halved the produce of the farm between the captain and his own English executrix (the widow of the dead English captain) (*RC*, 60). Near the end of the novel there is a long and detailed account of how Crusoe's Brazilian plantation has improved during his absence, how well his partner, his trustees and his heir have performed their respective duties, and how he retains the claim to his assets (*RC*, 275-82). In short, as Crusoe says: "I was now master, all on a sudden, of above 5,000 *l.* sterling in money, and had an estate, as I might well call it, in the Brasils, of above a thousand pounds a year, as sure an estate of lands in England ...." (*RC*, 280). Seen in this light, *Robinson Crusoe* represents "the rise of economic individualism."<sup>5</sup>

Now we turn to *Gulliver's Travels*, which is a parody of *Robinson Crusoe*. Swift uses the same literary devices as Defoe: the form of travel literature told by the traveler-narrator in first person in the style of scientific realism. No one, to my knowledge, has seriously suggested that the pattern of Crusoe's economic success is parodied in the references to Gulliver's financial circumstances.<sup>6</sup> The Lilliputian sheep are not an isolated example of Gulliver's involvement with and interest in economic affairs. After his voyage to Lilliput Gulliver is financially secure enough to give his wife fifteen hundred pounds and carry the "remaining Stock" with himself "Part in Money, and Part in Goods, in Hopes to improve [his] Fortunes" for a voyage on a merchant ship bound for Surat (*GT*, 68). On his arrival at the Downs at the end of Part II Gulliver offers to leave his goods "in Security for Payment of [his] Freight" to the English captain who has saved him from of the box which the Brodingnagian eagle carried and dropped onto the sea. The captain refuses to take "one Farthing" from Gulliver, just as the Portuguese captain does in *Robinson Crusoe* (*GT*, 144; *RC*, 54). The plan for a third voyage is suggested by a Cornish captain with whom Gulliver has been to the Levant as a surgeon. The destination, this time, is the East Indies and the offer the captain makes to Gulliver is that

<sup>5</sup> Watt, *The Rise of the Novel*, p.70.

<sup>6</sup> Novak, who is the chief proponent of the economic interpretation of *Robinson Crusoe*, has little to say on the economic aspects in his article on Swift and Defoe. See Maximillian E. Novak, "Swift and Defoe: Or, How Contempt Breeds Familiarity and a Degree of Influence" in Hermann J. Real and Heinz J. Vienken, eds., *Proceedings of the First Munster Symposium on Jonathan Swift* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1985), pp.157-173.

"[his] Salary should be double to the usual Pay" (*GT*, 149). The advantageous offer from an honest friend is as irresistible to Gulliver as it is to Crusoe (*RC*, 59). The purpose and destination of Gulliver's final voyage is not clearly stated at the outset but it is very likely that he is going to the South Seas for trading purposes. This time Gulliver accepts an offer to make him captain, instead of surgeon, of "the *Adventure*, a stout Merchant-man of 350 Tuns". Four days after setting sail from Portsmouth Gulliver meets at Tenerife Captain Pocock of Bristol, "who [is] going to the Bay of *Campeachy*, to cut Logwood." (*GT*, 223) The Bay of Campeachy, at the foot of Ucatan on the side of the Bay of Mexico, was one of the places in the Central America where the British settled to cut and load logwood, a reddish-colored dye wood, which made a remunerative trade.<sup>7</sup> Here, Swift undoubtedly has in mind William Dampier, whom Gulliver calls "Cousin Dampier" and whose *New Voyage round the World* (1697) he mentions in his "Letter to Cousin Sympson" (*GT*, iiiv). There is good reason to consider Dampier as the model on which Gulliver is based. Dampier was not only a circumnavigator in the tradition of Francis Drake but also an author-traveller with a knowledge of navigation, keen observation and a matter-of-fact style. His several voyages to remote regions of the world became known through three books of his own: *A New Voyage round the World, Voyages and Descriptions* (1699) and *A Voyage to New Holland* (1703-1709). Dampier's travel accounts, especially *A New Voyage round the World*, became so popular that it is no wonder that later writers of books of travel, real or fictitious, regarded them as their model. There is evidence that both Swift and Defoe knew their Dampier.<sup>8</sup> Gulliver's reference to Captain Pocock and logwood cutting is specific to Dampier's first book.<sup>9</sup> Dampier set sail in 1679 in a merchant ship as a passenger bound for Jamaica, "designing ... to go from thence to the Bay of *Campeachy*, in the Gulph of *Mexico*, to cut Log-wood."<sup>10</sup> But this is a minor example of Dampier's influence on particular descriptions in *Gulliver's Travels*. More important is the significance of Dampier's voyages on the minds of his contemporaries.

*A New Voyage round the World* covers the period 1679-1691, during which he joined the buccaneers attacking Port Bello, crossed the Isthmus of Darien on foot, cruised round the Horn and along the coast of Peru, Chile and Mexico, sailed across the Pacific to the Phillipines, Formosa and Australia, and finally returned to England via Cape Horn. His second book is a supplement to his first. His third book, *A Voyage to New Holland*, recounts his discoveries of New Ireland and New Britain, islands off the east coast of New Guinea. In 1703 Dampier was appointed captain of a privateering expedition to the South Seas. It was on this voyage that Alexander Selkirk, the reputed model of Robinson Crusoe, was marooned on Juan Fernandez. An account of the voyage was published in 1712 by Woodes Rogers as *A Cruising Voyage round the World*. In the age of Defoe and Swift Dampier was the chief influence on the renewed interest in the Pacific and the Indian Oceans as areas for British overseas expansion. The four voyages by Lemuel Gulliver are set in these areas; Lilliput is situated in the Indian

<sup>7</sup> William Hallam Bonner, *Captain William Dampier: Buccaneer-Author* (Stanford, Ca.: Stanford University Press, 1934), pp.8-10.

<sup>8</sup> For Defoe's knowledge of Dampier see Rogers, *Robinson Crusoe*, pp.30-32. Swift owned a copy of the third edition of the *New Voyage round the World*. See T. P. Le Fanu, "Catalogue of Dean Swift's Library in 1715," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 37, Sec. C (1927), 273.

<sup>9</sup> Bonner, *Captain William Dampier*, p.165. Bonner gives erroneously the name of Gulliver's captain as "Peacock".

<sup>10</sup> William Dampier, *A New Voyage round the World*, 2nd? ed. (1698), "The Introduction," p. ii.

Ocean, Brobdingnag in the huge peninsula sticking out from California, Laputa, Barnibarbi and Lagnag in the seas off the east coast of Japan, and the Houyhnhnm Land off the southern coast of Australia. Although the geography in *Gulliver's Travels* is defective, intentionally or otherwise, the basic idea is that the story is set in little known parts of the world.<sup>11</sup>

The South Sea Bubble of 1720 was a phenomenon which combined the growing interest in the South Seas and the aspiration for wealth through newly-devised financial methods. People always delighted in hearing news about unknown worlds such as the Brave New World, El Dorado or *Terra Australis Incognita*. The South Seas were growing more important for British foreign policy in the age of struggle for hegemony among European powers. In the former periods the New World and the West Indies were the areas of Britain's main concern as the nation colonized Pennsylvania, Carolina, Jamaica, Barbados, and so on. From the last couple of decades of the seventeenth century there had been a shift of attention to other areas of the Americas. In the period between 1689 and the 1720's Britain was almost continuously engaged in war with France and Spain. Rivalry on the continent was reflected in the Americas. Except for the Caribbean and the eastern seaboard of North America, where Britain, France and the Netherlands had built their respective colonies, Spain had dominance over the Americas. Britain had several economic reasons to be jealous of the Spanish colonies. First, Spain had the advantage of being able to obtain as much money as she liked, whether in the form of bullion or coins, from the gold and silver mines in Mexico, Peru and Chile, which enabled her to finance European wars. Second, she had established plantations in areas with a mild climate, and the export of products from these greatly facilitated her commerce in Europe. This was also made possible by the fact that Spanish colonies had good ports, which were necessary for the triangular trade: that is, the import of slaves from West Africa as cheap labour on the plantations and of European goods, and the export to Europe of plantation products such as cotton, tobacco and sugar. By 1710 France was gaining ground in the Spanish territories in South America, and Britain was following in France's steps.

British privateers in Swift's age engaged in plundering Spanish (and sometimes French) ships and raiding Spanish or native Indian settlements. There was only a fine line between the pirate who engaged in illegal activities and the privateer whose activities were authorised by the government by "the so-called letters of marque entitling the holder to carry out harassing operations against the ships of a hostile nation."<sup>12</sup> The situation was favourable to privateers since, as Glyndwr Williams puts it, "[the] expedition [by Woddes Rogers in 1708-11] was one of the first to benefit from the Act of Parliament passed in March 1708 that encouraged privateers by relinquishing the right of the Crown to keep a proportion of the value of prizes."<sup>13</sup> There were ideas for less antagonistic ways of making inroads into Spanish dominance in South America. One was the establishment of British settlements in places out of Spanish reach. Defoe was among those who proposed such plans. From 1701 to 1728 he continued to insist on establishing a British settlement in Guiana, taking the idea from his hero Sir Walter Raleigh. He published *A Historical Account of the Voyages and Adventures of Sir Walter Raleigh* months before *Robinson Crusoe*. Crusoe's island off the mouth of the River

<sup>11</sup> J. R. Moore, "The Geography of *Gulliver's Travels*," *JEGP*, 40 (1941), 214-28; Bonner, *Captain William Dampier*, pp.166-7, 175-7.

<sup>12</sup> Rogers, *Robinson Crusoe*, p.34.

<sup>13</sup> Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea: English Voyages and Encounters 1570-1750* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1997), pp.143-4.

Orinoco is as close geographically as it is in its economic essence to Defoe's proposal.<sup>14</sup> Another way of taking part in the South American trade was through getting concessions from Spain as terms of a peace treaty. By the time *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* were published, Britain had obtained the *Asiento* from Spain as a clause of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The clause stipulated that the *Asiento*, the agreement allowing the importing of slaves to ports in the Spanish colonies, be transferred from France to Britain for thirty years. This part of the Peace had been being prepared through secret negotiations with France when Robert Harley made a proposal in the House of Commons for setting up the Company for Trading to the South Seas and for Encouragement of Fishery two years earlier.

What Harley aimed in the establishment of the South Sea Company was to pay off the huge national debt, about 30 million pounds in 1711, by converting it with stocks of the Company.<sup>15</sup> It is interesting to note that both Defoe and Swift worked as journalists under Harley, who was responsible for forming the Tory ministry in 1710 as well as establishing the South Sea Company in 1711. The original plan of the Company is said to have been proposed by Defoe. Defoe was an experienced, though unofficial, advisor for trade for the government, and Swift was needed for his literary merits and his knowledge of religious matters. There are a great many differences between Defoe and Swift. The former was a dissenter without university education, while the latter was a professional Churchman with degrees from Trinity College, Dublin and from Oxford. They have different opinions about military heroes like John Churchill, later Duke of Marlborough, and William of Orange, later William III of England. In his younger days Defoe was a soldier and fought, like Churchill, for the Duke of Monmouth in 1685. He was also an ardent supporter of William III. In his early life he was a merchant and his strength lay in his knowledge of trade and commerce. Swift, on the other hand, did not have a high opinion of military heroes. His denunciation of Marlborough as a war magnate in the *Examiner* achieved success over opposing views in periodicals like Defoe's *Review* and Mainwaring's *Medley*. Swift's basic notion of Britain's political economy is that the landed interest should be preferred over the moneyed interest. The idea of a fund of debt, with a national bank, was introduced at the time of the Revolution, Swift repeatedly points out, by Whigs in order to support the precarious government through the power of money in the hands of bankers and merchants of the City.<sup>16</sup> In the *Conduct of the Allies* and the *Examiner* papers Swift reminds country gentlemen that it is they that suffer most from the former Whig government's policy. The country's true interest has been damaged, Swift says, through the continuation of the war against France, which is the cause of high taxation and national debt. The burden of war is thrown on the shoulders of the land-owning class in the interests of the City men. But if this was true to the sentiments of Tories, Harley's Tory government was moderate enough to include in its financial policy the South Sea scheme, which was basically

<sup>14</sup> J. A. Downie, "Defoe, Imperialism, and the Travel Books Reconsidered," *Yearbook of English Studies*, 13 (1983), 87 and "Robinson Crusoe's Eighteenth-Century Contexts" in *Robinson Crusoe: Myths and Metamorphoses* ed. Lieve Spaas and Brian Stimpson (London: Macmillan, 1996), pp.23-24; Novak, *Realism, Myth and History in Defoe's fiction*, p.26.

<sup>15</sup> John Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble* (London: The Cresset Press, 1960), pp. For Swift's account of Harley's proposal see *PW*, VII, p.77.

<sup>16</sup> Frank H. Ellis, ed., *Swift vs. Mainwaring: The Examiner and The Medley* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), pp.4-5; *PW*, VI, pp.10, 16, 41, 53-59; Harold Williams, ed., *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963-5), II, pp.372-3.

Whig in inspiration, with Tory personnel. One historian writes: “[Harley] founded a company with a directorate he could pack with those Tory merchants, financiers and politicians who were excluded from the Whig-dominated Bank of England and East India Company; and sure of support from the Tory country gentry and the mercantile community for his move away from endless continental campaigns towards the more alluring prospect of war or trade, or both, in Spanish America.”<sup>17</sup> The choice of the area, the South Seas, for trade was in a sense inevitable, for the South Seas was almost the only part of the known (or half-known) world which had not been held for monopoly of trade by other English companies of long-standing history: the Royal African, the Levant, the Hudson Bay and the East India Company. The South Sea Company was, however, more in line with the recently founded government-oriented financial institutions. The Bank of England, the Bank of Scotland and the Company of Scotland for Trading to Africa and the Indies were all of them founded in the short period between 1694 and 1696.

Swift gives a rather favourable account of Harley’s proposal for setting up the South Sea Company in the *History of the Four Last Years of Queen Anne*, a work never published in his lifetime.<sup>18</sup> It was a pose in deference to Harley, not to be taken as an expression of Swift’s genuine attitude. Swift did not have as much interest in, and knowledge of, trade and commerce as Defoe. It must be admitted that he knew the importance of manufacture, commerce and trade for a nation’s prosperity, but he was reluctant to approve of the power struggle between European nations in the name of commercial enterprise. Commenting on a plan for an expedition by which Britain tried to get hegemony over Acadia (Nova Scotia), Swift wrote in 1711:

Our Expedition under Mr. Hill is said to be towards the South-Seas, but nothing is known: I told a great Man [Henry St. John], who is deepest in the Project of it, that I had no good Opinion of these Expeditions, which hitherto never succeeded with us. He said, he would venture ten to one upon the Success of it, provided no ill Accident happened by Storms; and that it was concerted with three or four great Princes Abroad.<sup>19</sup>

One of “these Expeditions” which Swift probably had in mind was the Darien scheme of 1698-1700. The Company of Scotland was founded by William Paterson, who was also responsible for the establishment of the Bank of England and the Bank of Scotland. The Darien scheme was a Scottish plan to colonise part of the Isthmus of Darien (or Panama) for commercial purposes. The choice of the place for settlement owed much to the information of the seamen who had been to that area, Dampier and Lionel Wafer. The assumed merits of the Isthmus of Darien were the groves of logwood and gold-mines. In 1697 Wafer, author of *A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America* (1699) and one-time Dampier’s fellow-seaman (as a ship-surgeon like Gulliver) to the South Seas, was asked by a committee of the Scottish Company to give information on the Isthmus with an offer of reward on condition that he postpone the publication of his book. The Council for Trade and Plantations of England, getting wind of the Scottish project, summoned Wafer, and Dampier later, to ask what they knew about the Isthmus. There was a trade competition between the two countries as a

<sup>17</sup> Williams, *The Great South Sea*, p.163.

<sup>18</sup> *PW*, VII, p.77.

<sup>19</sup> Harold Williams, ed., *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963-5), I, p. 238 (Swift’s letter to Archbishop King, 12 July, 1711).



background of those actions behind the scenes. The English government tried to prevent the implementation of the Darien scheme in vain but the three expeditions by the Scottish Company resulted in a spectacular failure. A great number of the settlers died and only one ship was able to return, without achieving the purpose of finding either groves of logwood or gold-mines. In the preface to the second edition of his book Wafer, having been disappointed by the Scottish scheme, could still claim for a similar scheme by England in these words:

I shall only desire all Men of Sense and Judgement to consider how much the Interest of England would be advanced in Europe by the Addition of the Spanish West-Indies, to their other Acquisitions in America; since thereby the Common Enemies would be deprived of the most certain fund they have for carrying on the War. In a Word; the Difficulty and Expence are not at all, by any reasonable Man, to be brought in Competition with the Glory and Advantage of such an Expedition.<sup>20</sup>

In writing the *History of the Four Last Years of Queen Anne*, which was an endless effort of many years, Swift consulted John Blunt about the part relating to the fiscal conditions of Britain shortly before and during Harley's Tory government. Blunt was one of the leading Tory financiers; he was secretary of the Sword Blade Company, director of the East India company in 1710-1711 and director of the South Sea Company in 1711-1721. Among other directors of the South Sea Company was Francis Stratford, whom Swift recommended to Harley. Stratford was an old friend of Swift's from Kilkenny School and Trinity College, Dublin. But he was dismissed from the directorate in 1712 because of bankruptcy. Carswell judges that "he overextended himself buying for a rise on insider information. He landed in the Queen's Bench Prison for a time, and then had to go abroad—a first casualty which might have been a warning."<sup>21</sup> Swift might have been one of the victims of Stratford's failure, as he speculated 380 pounds in the South Sea stock through Stratford, but he recovered it safely.<sup>22</sup> Swift's closeness to the early South Sea Company proved to be unprofitable to him in other ways. In 1729 he wrote to a friend about his narrow circumstances: "... I believe there are hardly three men of any figure in Ireland, whose affairs are as bad as mine, who now pay interest for a thousand pounds of other people's money which I undertook to manage, without receiving one farthing my self, but engaged seven years in a lawsuit to recover it."<sup>23</sup> Seeing the disaster of the South Sea Bubble in 1720 Swift perhaps thought that he had been right in discounting the "moneyed interest". A year later in a letter to Pope he observed:

I ever abominated that scheme of politics, (now about thirty years old) of setting up a mony'd Interest in opposition to the landed. For I conceived there could not be a truer maxim in our government than this, That the possessors of the soil are the best judges of what is for the advantage of the kingdom: If others had thought the same way, Funds of Credit and South-sea

<sup>20</sup> Lionel Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America* (1699), ed. L. E. Elliott Joyce (London: Hakluyt Society, 1934), p.lxx ["Preface" to the second edition of 1704]. For an account of Wafer's involvement in the Darien scheme see pp.1-1xii. For Swift's reference to the scheme see *Correspondence*, I, p.63. A copy of the first edition of Wafer's book was among Swift's library. See T. P. Le Fanu, "Catalogue of Dean Swift's Library in 1715," 273 and Harold Williams, *Dean Swift's Library* (1932; rpt.: Norwood, Pa.: Norwood Press, 1974), No. 442.

<sup>21</sup> Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble*, p.63.

<sup>22</sup> *Journal to Stella* in *PW*, XVI, pp.411, 463; *Correspondence*, III, 86; V, p.223 [Appendix IV].

<sup>23</sup> *Correspondence*, III, pp.333-4 (Swift's letter to Chetwode, 17 may, 1729).

[sic] Projects would neither have been felt nor heard of.<sup>24</sup>

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The theme of political economy is dominant in Part III of *Gulliver's Travels*. In Laputa, the flying island, mathematics and music have a great importance at the cost of other more practical areas of pursuit. Laputans are, however, so strongly disposed to politics and news that they always enquire into public affairs and dispute passionately every inch of a party opinion. The King of Laputa wants absolute power over Barnibarbi, its dominion below, but those having their estates below "would never consent to the enslaving their Country" (*GT*, 168). The ruling principle of Laputa is the loadstone, which is the engine of the flying island and placed deep in its center. The King has two methods of subduing rebellions in Barnibarbi, each involving operating the loadstone so that Laputa comes directly over Barnibarbi. The milder way is to keep the island hovering over a rebellious town in order to deprive it of the benefit of the sun and rain, and thereby afflict the inhabitants with dearth and diseases. The more severe way is to letting the island drop directly on the land, causing destruction of both people and houses. But this is an extreme method seldom used by the King. There is an episode of the King using the second method three years before Gulliver's visit. This portion was omitted from editions of *Gulliver's Travels* until 1896 because it was considered too dangerous a satire against George I. In that rebellion the inhabitants of Lindalino, the second city in the kingdom (representing Dublin), protected themselves by building four towers at the corners of the city, on top of each of which they fastened a great loadstone, and by storing a great quantity of combustible fuel. The King's attempt to suppress the rebellion by lowering the flying island failed because, finding the descent uncontrollable, the operators of the loadstone begged royal permission to raise the island again.

On the level of particular satire the Laputa-Barnibarbi relationship represents the England-Ireland relationship, and the rebellion three years earlier is a specific allusion to the Irish opposition to Wood's halfpence. Swift's contribution to the opposition is well-known through his *Drapier's Letters* (1724). The issue was at the same time economic and constitutional. From the English viewpoint there was nothing wrong about the Royal patent granted to William Wood, a Wolverhampton ironmonger, to coin copper halfpence and farthings to the value of 100,800 pounds for use in Ireland, given the widely recognized shortage of small coins there. The problem, however, was, on the economic side, the possible harmful effects on the Irish economy of the introduction of Wood's coins to Ireland. If the value of Wood's coins had been debased by eleven twelfths against the standard set in the patent, as Drapier alleges it was, the bad effects on Ireland's economy would have been beyond question.<sup>25</sup> But the English authorities, in the form of a special committee in the Privy Council, considered the matter, summoning Wood and his witnesses and letting the Royal Mint examine sample coins, and concluded that the terms of the patent had been duly observed. The other side of the problem was constitutional. The Irish parliaments were not consulted at all in the initial stages of the Wood project. A recently enacted English Act in

<sup>24</sup> *Correspondence*, II, pp.372-3 (10 January, 1721).

<sup>25</sup> Herbert Davis, ed., *The Drapier's Letters to the people of Ireland against receiving Wood's Halfpence by Jonathan Swift* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), p.

1720 had guaranteed that the Irish House of Lords had no veto over any act passed in the English House of Lords. This made many Irishmen feel their situation to be much worse than before. In a letter to Charles Ford Swift expressed his feeling in these words: "the Question is whether People ought to be Slaves or no."<sup>26</sup>

During the period from the Restoration to 1720 Ireland's economy suffered severely because of a series of prohibitive English laws. In 1663 the Navigation Act was applied to Ireland, forbidding overseas trade, especially with the American colony. In the same year was enacted the Cattle Act, which banned the export of Irish cattle and meat to England. In 1699 the export of Irish woolen manufacture other than to England was prohibited by an act of the English Parliament. This virtually meant an embargo on Irish woolen goods because of the high duties already imposed on them. The question of Ireland's right to free trade occasioned William Molyneux's *A Case of Ireland Bound by Law Stated* in 1698, a book Swift refers to in *Drapier's Letters*. Finally, in 1720, the *Sixth of George the First* was passed, "confirming the right of the English Parliament to bind Ireland by legislation."<sup>27</sup> Although the 1720 Act was not strictly a trade act, its implications for the Irish economy were all too clear. It is significant that Swift began writing the *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* soon after the enactment of this law. His primary concern in the *Proposal* is the protection of a main industry in Ireland but he also broaches a constitutional issue, expressing doubt about the force of a law which has not been approved by the Irish Parliament. Thus, in Swift's age the Anglo-Irish relationship had the combined problem of trade and constitution, with, needless to say, religious problems as well.

In the engine room of the flying island is "a Loadstone of a prodigious Size, in Shape resembling a Weaver's Shuttle" (*GT*, 165). A contemporary reader of *Gulliver's Travels* interpreted the weaver's shuttle as alluding to the British linen and woolen manufactures.<sup>28</sup> I support this reading because it elucidates the common context within which Swift wrote the satire on the Anglo-Irish relationship in Part III and the *Proposal for Universal Use of Irish Manufacture*. Moreover, I would suggest that the loadstone symbolizes Wood's project. Wood's coins and the loadstone have the common property of being mineral. When the King of Laputa took the more extreme measure to suppress the Lindalinian rebellion, one of the oldest and most expert officers of the loadstone tried an experiment:

He took a strong Line of an hundred Yards, and the Island being raised over the Town above the attractive Power they had felt, He fastened a Peace of Adamant to the End of his Line which had in it a Mixture of Iron mineral, of the same Nature with that whereof the Bottom or lower Surface of the Island is composed, and from the Gallery let it down slowly towards the Top of the Towers. The Adamant was not descended four Yards, before the Officer felt it drawn so strongly downwards, that he could hardly pull it back. (*GT*, 171)

If the King's measure represents Wood's project, the experiment by the chief officer of the loadstone may refer to the assaying of sample coins by the Mint. The Master of the Mint, Sir Isaac Newton, was responsible for the technical part of the report of the committee in the Privy Council. "Mixture of Iron" was the worst method of coining counterfeits. "[T]he Officer

<sup>26</sup> *Correspondence*, II, p.342.

<sup>27</sup> L. M. Cullen, *An Economic History of Ireland since 1660* (London: Batsford, 1972), p.35.

<sup>28</sup> *GT*, p.344, n.8.

felt it drawn so strongly downwards, that he could hardly pull it back” may mean that even Newton, the most famous contemporary scientist known for his Law of Attraction, could not control the Irish opposition to Wood’s project as an officer even though he could theoretically command the movement of the universe. Most of the mathematicians in Europe, Gulliver says, suppose “that because the smallest Circle hath as many Degrees as the largest, therefore the Regulation and Management of the World require no more Abilities than the handling and turning of a Globe” (*GT*, 160).

In chapter four of Part III there is an episode about Lord Munodi. Munodi shows Gulliver around Lagado, the metropolis of Barnibarbi, and its suburbs. Gulliver observes:

We passed through one of the Town Gates, and went about three Miles into the Country, where I saw many Labourers working with several Sorts of Tools in the Ground, but he was not able to conjecture what they were about; neither did I observe any Expectation of Corn or Grass, although the Soil appeared to be excellent.... I made bold to desire my Conductor, that he would be pleased to explain to me what could be meant by so many busy Heads, Hands and Faces, both in the Streets and the Fields, because I did not discover any good Effects they produced; but on the contrary, I never knew a Soil so unhappily cultivated, Houses so ill contrived and so ruinous, or a People whose Countenances and Habit expressed so much Misery and Want.

This is a description of a country with rich soil gone to ruin not through idleness but through wrong methods of cultivation, much as Swift saw Ireland in the 1720’s.<sup>29</sup> Gulliver’s Munodi is “a Person of the first Rank, and had been some Years Governor of *Lagado*; but by a Cabal of Ministers was discharged for Insufficiency. However the King treated him with Tenderness, as a well-meaning Man, but of a low contemptible Understanding.” When Gulliver makes a critical remark on the country and the people, Munodi replies that it is too soon to form a judgment and that “the different Nations of the World had different Customs.” (*GT*, 174)

On his way to Munodi’s country estate Gulliver notices the strange ways of farmers managing their lands and comments: “... except in some very few Places, I could not discover one Ear of Corn, or Blade of Grass.” But his impression changes for the better when he arrives at Munodi’s estate:

... the Scene was wholly altered; we came into a most beautiful Country; Farmers Houses at small Distances, neatly built, the Fields enclosed, containing Vinyards, Corngrounds and Meadows. Neither do I remember to have seen a more delightful Prospect.

Here is a rare moment when Gulliver (or Swift) enthuses, almost romantically, about the beauty of the scenery. From our point of view, however, it is important to note that what Gulliver admires is the way in which the land is put to use: cultivation and the farming of cattle are in balance. This is a feature of the estate of a country gentleman. But Munodi tells Gulliver that “his Country-men ridiculed and despised him for managing his Affairs no better, and for

<sup>29</sup> In a pamphlet written in 1728 Swift criticises the Irish farmers’ method of cultivation: “It was indeed the shameful Practice of too many *Irish* Farmers, to wear out their Ground with Plowing; while, either through Poverty, Laziness, or Ignorance, they neither took Care to manure it as they ought; nor gave Time to any Part of the Land to recover itself ....” (*PW*, XII, p.17) On the poor condition of tillage in Ireland in the early eighteenth century see George O’Brien, *The Economic History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Maunsel, 1918), pp.128-30.

setting so ill an Example to the Kingdom; which however was followed by very few, such as were old and wilful, and weak like himself." Munodi's house is "a noble Structure, built according to the best Rules of ancient Architecture. The Fountains, Gardens, Walks, Avenues, and Groves were all disposed with exact Judgment and Taste." In spite of this Munodi tells Gulliver "with a very melancholy Air, that he doubted he must throw down his Houses in Town and Country, to rebuild them after the present Mode; destroy all his Plantations, and cast others into such a Form as modern Usage required ... unless he would submit to incur the Censure of Pride, Singularity, Affectation, Ignorance, Caprice; and perhaps encrease his Majesty's Displeasure" (*GT*, 175).

This is Munodi's account of how the "present Mode" came in:

... about Forty Years ago, certain Persons went up to Laputa, either upon Business or Diversion; and after five Months Continuance, came back with a very little Smattering in Mathematicks, but full of Volatile Spirits acquired in that Airy Region.... These Persons upon their Return, began to dislike the Management of every Thing below; and fell into Schemes of putting all Arts, Sciences, Languages, and Mechanicks upon a new Foot. To this End they procured a Royal Patent for erecting an Academy of PROJECTORS in *Lagado* : And the Humour prevailed so strongly among the People, that there is not a Town of any Consequence in the Kingdom without such an Academy. In these Colleges, the Professors contrive new Rules and Methods of Agriculture and Building, and new Instruments and Tools for all Trades and Manufactures, whereby, as they undertake, one Man shall do the Work of Ten ... (*GT*, 176)

The Academy of Lagado is customarily identified as the Royal Society which obtained the royal patent in 1662, forty-five years before Gulliver's visit there in 1707. One critic, however, maintains that the passage alludes to more recent events in the 1690's, when all sorts of projects, particularly those of mechanical sciences and engineering, came into vogue.<sup>30</sup> The key to perceiving the atmosphere of the period is the word "projector/project" which recurs in chapters 4 to 6 in Part III. What sort of people were the projectors in the age of Defoe and Swift? Defoe in his *Essay upon Projects* (1694) distinguishes good projects from bad ones:

<sup>30</sup> Pat Rogers, "Gulliver and the Engineers," *Modern Language Review*, 70 (1975), 260-70. This is a major revision of Nicolson and Mohler's thesis that Swift's description of the Academy of Lagado and its various projects can be traced almost entirely on the pages of the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society. See Marjorie Nicolson and Nora Nohler, "The Scientific Background of Swift's 'Voyage to Laputa' (1936) reprinted in D. W. Jeffareson, ed., *Fair Liberty Was All His Cry: A Tercentenary Tribute to Jonathan Swift 1667-1745* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp.226-69. In this connection it would not be irrelevant to suggest that in writing those chapters on projectors Swift also might have had in mind the activities of the Dublin Philosophical Society, of which Nicolson and Mohler never mention. The society was formed in 1683 (forty-three years before the publication of the *Travels*) chiefly through the efforts of William Molyneux. A large majority of its founding members had connections with TCD, where meetings were held. There is an overlap in membership between the Royal and the Dublin societies. It is highly probable that Swift knew, as a resident at TCD at the inception and in the early stage of the Dublin Philosophical Society, the activities of the members, among whom were St. George Ashe, his tutor, and Narcissus Marsh, the then Provost. For study of the Dublin Philosophical society see *Irvin Ehrenpreis, Swift: The Man, His Work, and the Times*, 3 vols. (London: Methuen, 1962-83), I, pp.78-88; K. T. Hoppen, *The Common Scientist in the Seventeenth Century: A Study of the Dublin Philosophical Society 1683-1708* (The University Press of Virginia, 1970; rpt. UMI, 1989); ditto, *The Papers of the Dublin Philosophical Society 1683-1708: Introductory Material and Index in Analecta Hibernica*, 30 (1982), 151-247.

There is, 'tis true, a great difference between *New Inventions* and *Projects*, between Improvement of Manufactures or Lands, which tend to the immediate Benefit of the Publick, and Employing of the Poor; and Projects fram'd by subtle Heads, with a sort of a *Deceptio Visus*, and *Legerdemain*, to bring People to run needless and unusual hazards ....<sup>31</sup>

Defoe dates "the Original of the Projecting Humour that now reigns"<sup>32</sup> no further back than 1680. In fact, there were 236 projects given patents between 1660 and 1700, more than a quarter of these in 1691-3.<sup>33</sup> Defoes says that projects are in general scorn because those done out of good will are far fewer than those with dubious intentions. Charles Davenant, a Tory economic theorist, published *A True Picture of a Modern Whig* in 1701, a popularizing work of political economy, written in the form of a dialogue between Tom Double and Whiglove. Tom Double is a cunning, wily upstart who has made a fortune from his inventions of public credit, tallies, stocks, lotteries and so on. "Project" is one of his favorite words. Davenant uses the word with its bad connotations in order to criticise the Whig financial policy of the 1690's through the character of Tom Double.<sup>34</sup>

It becomes clear, now, that Swift in *Gulliver's Travels* points to the bad connotations of "project" that had accreted in the preceding decades. In the *Conduct of the Allies* Swift says that soon after the Glorious Revolution:

the Custom first began among [the British] of borrowing Millions upon Funds of Interest: It was pretended, That the War could not possibly last above two or more Campaigns; and that the Debts contracted might be easily paid in a few Years, by a gentle Tax, without burthening the Subject. But the true Reason for embracing this Expedient, was the Security of a new Prince, not firmly settled on the Throne: People were tempted to lend, by great Premiums and large Interest, and it concerned them nearly to preserve that Government, which they trusted with their Money.

As Swift perceived, the last decade of the seventeenth century was an important phase in the development of the modern financial system.<sup>35</sup> Swift continues:

The Person said to have been Author of so detestable a Project, is still living, and lives to see some of its fatal Consequences, whereof his Grand-Children will not see an end. And this pernicious Counsel closed very well with the Posture of Affairs at that time: For, a Set of Upstarts, who had little or no part in the *Revolution*, but valued themselves by the Noise and pretended Zeal when the Work was over, were got into Credit at Court, by the Merit of becoming Undertakers and Projectors of Loans and Funds: These, finding that the Gentlemen of Estates were not willing to come into their Measures, fell upon those new Schemes of raising

<sup>31</sup> Daniel Defoe, *An Essay upon Projects* [1694], eds. Joyce D. Kennedy, Michael Seidel and Maximilian E. Novak (New York: AMS, 1999), p.11.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p.14.

<sup>33</sup> Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble*, p.15. According to another historian "the companies founded between 1688 and 1695 constitute upwards of 85 per cent. of the total at the later date"[William Robert Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720*. 3 vols. (1912; rpt. Peter Smith, 1951), I, p.328].

<sup>34</sup> Charles Davenant, *The True Picture of a Modern Whig* in *The Political and Commercial Works of Charles D'Avenant, LL. D.*, ed. Charles Whitworth (London, 1771), 5 vols., IV, pp.145, 146, 212. A copy of Davenant's book was among Swift's library. See Williams, *Dean Swift's Library*, No.288.

<sup>35</sup> P. G. M. Dickson, *The Financial Revolution in England* (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 15-16, 39-75.

Mony [sic], in order to create a Mony'd-Interest, that might in time vie with the Landed, and of which they hoped to be at the Head.<sup>36</sup>

Later in the *History of the Four Last Years of the Queen* Swift identifies the "Person said to have been Author of so detestable a Project" as Gilbert Burnet, later Bishop of Salisbury. Here, Swift refers to the new method of borrowing money on public credit, which he alleges Burnet learned in Holland, using phrases such as "that Expedient" and "this Project".<sup>37</sup> Burnet, in Swift's eye, was an archetypical modern Whig whose Latitudinarian principles and progressivist economic views were anathema.

Here is an episode told by Gulliver in which Munodi has been involved with projectors:

He [Munodi] only desired me to observe a ruined Building upon the side of a Mountain about three Miles distant, of which he gave me this Account. That he had a very convenient Mill within Half a Mile of his House, turned by a Current from a large River, and sufficient for his own Family as well as a great Number of his Tenants. That, about seven Years ago, a Club of those Projectors came to him with Proposals to destroy this Mill, and build another on the Side of that Mountain, on the long Ridge whereof a long Canal must be cut for a Repository of Water, to be conveyed up by Pipes and Engines to supply the Mill: Because the Wind and Air upon a Height agitated the Water, and thereby made it fitter for Motion: And because the Water descending down a Declivity would turn the Mill with half the Current of a River whose Course is more upon a Level. He said, that being then not well with the Court, and pressed by many of his Friends, he complied with the Proposal; and after employing an Hundred Men for two Years, the Work miscarried, the Projectors went off, laying the Blame intirely upon him; railing at him ever since, and putting others upon the same Experiment, with equal Assurance of Success, as well as equal Disappointment. (*GT*, 177)

One example of projects of bad type which Defoe cites in the *Essay upon Projects* resembles very much the one by which Munodi is duped: "... the Engineers Build Models and Windmills to draw Water, till Funds are rais'd to carry it on, by Men who have more Money than their Brains, and then good *right Patent and Invention*; the Projector has done his business and is gone."<sup>38</sup> Water-supply projects in and around London were not new in the 1690's but what was novel at the time was the method of "forcing up Thames water by means of pumping devices"<sup>39</sup> in stead of the traditional method of supplying water through gravitation.

Let us consider the significance of the Lord Munodi episodes as a whole. Munodi has variously been identified as Harley, Bolingbroke and Lord Middleton.<sup>40</sup> None of these

<sup>36</sup> *PW*, VI, p.10.

<sup>37</sup> *PW*, VII, p.68.

<sup>38</sup> Defoe, *An Essay upon Projects*, p.18.

<sup>39</sup> Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of Joint-Stock Companies*, I, p.333. On the possible sources for Swift's description of new hydraulic inventions in the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society see Marjorie Nicolson and Nora Nohler, "The Scientific Background of Swift's 'Voyage to Laputa'," pp.265-6

<sup>40</sup> A. E. Case, *Four Essays on Gulliver's Travels*, pp. ; J. A. Downie, "Political Characterization in 'Gulliver's Travels,'" *Yearbook of English Studies* 7 (1977), 108-20; J. M. Treadwell, "Jonathan Swift: The Satirist as Projector," *TSL* 17 (1975), 440-60; F. P. Lock, *The Politics of Gulliver's Travels* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp.102-3; Carole Fabricant, *Swift's Landscape* (Baltimore, Ma.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp.62-3, 95-6; Ian Higgins, *Swift's Politics: A Study in Disaffection* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.178-9. I agree with Lock, who condemns too particular interpretations which try to identify characters and episodes in *Gulliver's Travels* with real persons and events.

arguments are, in my view, conclusive. It is not necessary to identify Munodi with one historical person to appreciate the significance of the episodes, which may be summarised in three points. First, Barnibarbi is systematically transformed by the introduction of foreign methods which are scientific in nature. Second, the transformation is emphatically for the worse. The point is made through the contrast between the old ways of Munodi which Gulliver admires and the new ways which have resulted in unproductiveness. Third, the cause of Barnibarbi's ruin is ultimately derived from the principles of Laputa where the governing court resides. From our economic point of view, the first two points are in accord with Swift's criticism of the new trends in financial practice in his works as a Tory journalist in 1710-1711. The third point becomes understandable in the light of his anti-English pamphlets in the 1720's. I said earlier that it is not necessary to identify Munodi with one historical person. However, if it were necessary I would put forward Sir William Temple as the most likely candidate.<sup>41</sup> There are several reasons but the space of this paper does not allow full argument. I shall just suggest a few points. Munodi's character as "a Person of the first Rank" and "Governor of *Lagado* for some years" but discharged "by a Cabal of Ministers" roughly matches Temple's career. Temple was a baronet and ambassador to Brussels and the Hague. He was a member of the Privy Council under Charles II but was dismissed because of his opposition to Anthony Ashley Cooper, the first Earl of Shaftesbury, one of the names from which the very word "cabal" was coined. Temple, like Munodi, was unpopular with the Royal Society (the Academy of Lagado) because of his low opinion of it expressed in works like the *Essay upon Ancient and Modern Learning* (1690) and its sequel, *Some Thoughts upon Reviewing the Essay* (1701). The ancient-modern controversy was more than thirty years old when Swift posited it in Part III, especially in the chapter on Glubbudrib, but it was Temple on whose behalf Swift wrote *A Tale of a Tub* and the *Battle of the Books* in his early days, when he resided in Temple's house at Moor Park in Surrey. Temple's interest in gardening and architecture is well-known. Gulliver's description of Munodi's estate may be Swift's reminiscence of Temple's estate at Moor Park, Surrey, or an echo of Temple's praise of Moor Park in Hertfordshire in his *Upon the Garden of Epicurus* written in 1685. Moreover, there is an aspect in Temple as political economist, who gave consideration to England's interest in relation to other countries, particularly the Netherlands in his *Observations upon the United Provinces* (1673), and Ireland in the two pamphlets written in 1668 and 1673 respectively. It is arguable that Swift's contra-Dutch and pro-Irish perspective on economic questions was formed, at least in part, through his acquaintance with the writings of Temple, who had a first-hand knowledge of both countries through the experience of having resided there. No other candidates for the original of Munodi have the features described above in common, enough to give an adequate historical perspective to the episodes. Swift's aversion to modernity is temperamental and not to be ascribed solely to Temple's influence but it finds expression in the passages in Part III of *Gulliver's Travels* with variations and innovations of Swift's own invention.

The satire on the Dutch in chapter 11 of Part III is based on Swift's antipathy towards them in terms of religious and commercial practices. The drift of the satire is predominantly on the religious side, focusing on the Japanese ceremony of trampling upon the Crucifix, or

<sup>41</sup> For a view close to mine see Robert C. Steensma, "Swift's Model for Lord Munodi," *Notes and Queries*, N.S., (June 1965), 216-7. I differ from Steensma in my emphasis on the economic aspects of the Munodi episodes.



*fumie*, which the Hollanders accept but Gulliver tries to evade. To Swift, a High Churchman, the Dutch policy of religious toleration seemed susceptible to irreligion, a threat to Anglicanism probably greater than fanaticism or Popery. More latent in the satire is the Anglo-Dutch rivalry in East Asian trade in the seventeenth century, symbolized in the choice of the name *Amboyna* for the ship whose crew Gulliver becomes acquainted with at Nagasaki. The memory of the massacre of the British at the Dutch factory at Ambon was a century old when *Gulliver's Travels* was published. It is suggested, however, that Swift based his anti-Dutch satire on the literature of the Anglo-Dutch Wars in the 1670's.<sup>42</sup> The Ambon incident was an old cause but could be revived. In 1711 Swift, as a Tory propagandist, wrote the *Conduct of the Allies*. The purpose of the pamphlet was to form a national consensus that the continuation of the War of Spanish Succession would only impoverish Britain for the benefit of her allies, especially the Dutch. Swift represents the Dutch as a cunning, treacherous people who are ready to betray their allies for material profit. The problem is not just one of diplomacy because what Swift asserts is essentially a conspiracy theory that the Whig ministry, in conjunction with the military executive and the City, has been pumping the nation's wealth into the pockets of themselves and the Dutch.

In the final chapter of *Gulliver's Travels* Gulliver says:

I confess, it was whispered to me, that I was bound in Duty as a Subject of *England*, to have given in a Memorial to a secretary of State, at my first coming over; because, whatever Lands are discovered by a Subject, belong to the Crown. But I doubt, whether our conquests in the Countries I treat of, would be as easy as those of *Ferdinando Cortez* over naked *Americans*.<sup>43</sup>

Gulliver is averse to doing his duties as a subject of England because he has "a few Scruples with relation to the distributive Justice of Princes" over the territories which they have just acquired through the discoveries of the explorers of their country. When a land is discovered and taken possession of by a king, Gulliver continues:

Ships are sent with the first Opportunity; the Natives driven out or destroyed, their Princes tortured to discover their Gold; a free Licence 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. (*GT*, 301)

Gulliver exempts Britain from the cruelty of other European nations', especially the Spanish, way of colonization as "an Example to the whole World for their Wisdom, Care, and Justice in planting Colonies." Because those countries Gulliver discovered "do not appear to have a Desire of being conquered, and enslaved, murdered or driven out of colonies; nor abound either in Gold, Silver, sugar or Tobacco," he thinks that they are by no means proper objects of the zeal, valour and interest of his countrymen. This is a great departure from the views of any contemporary traveler-authors, Dampier or Crusoe, even from Gulliver himself prior to his visit to the Houyhnhnm Land. In Gulliver's attitude to colonization is reflected Swift's

<sup>42</sup> Anne Barbeau Gardiner, "Swift on the Dutch East India Merchants: The Context of 1672-73 War Literature," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 54 (1991), 235-52. For Swift's general attitude towards the Dutch see J. Kent Clark, "Swift and the Dutch," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 17 (1954), 345-56.

<sup>43</sup> For a version of this idea see Charles Kerby-Miller, ed., *The Memoirs of the Extraordinary Life, Works, and Discoveries of Martinus Scribbleus* (1950; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), p.165.

views on colonization in general and on the British way of ruling Ireland in particular (*GT*, 303).

England, as Gulliver describes it to the Master Houyhnhnm, is a tiered, money-ruling society where “the rich Man enjoy[s] the Fruit of the poor Man’s Labour, and the latter [are] a Thousand to One in Proportion to the former” and where “the Bulk of [the] People [is] forced to live miserably, by labouring every Day for small Wages to make a few live plentifully” (*GT*, 255). Trade, in Gulliver’s opinion, is a necessary evil by which is maintained the inequality in the distribution of wealth:

... England (the dear Place of my Nativity) was computed to produce three Times the Quantity of Food, more than its Inhabitants are able to consume, as well as Liquors extracted from Grain, or pressed out of the Fruit of certain Trees, which made excellent Drink; and the same Proportion in every other Convenience of Life. But, in order to feed the Luxury and Intemperance of the Males, and the Vanity of the Females, we sent away the greatest Part of our necessary Things to other Countries, from whence in Return we brought the Materials of Diseases, Folly, and Vice, to spend among ourselves. (*GT*, 256)<sup>44</sup>

The Houyhnhnm Land would be Gulliver’s ideal society where the economy is self-sufficient with no notions of money, wealth or diseases, except for the Yahoos, who are prototype Europeans with every quality necessary for the vices of more civilized humans, including greed and avarice for the “*shining Stones*” (*GT*, 265-6). Europeans are worse than Yahoos because their vices are amplified by the use of art. As Temple, the champion of the “ancients”, admits, the art of navigation was greatly improved by the modern invention of the “loadstone” or the compass. But the widening of the world as a consequence of the improvement of navigation, he cautions, does not as much mean the increase of knowledge as that of riches and vices.<sup>45</sup> Starting off as a traveler much in the fashion of contemporary counterparts, Gulliver finally finds himself holding views totally different from theirs and very much like Swift’s little Englishman and anti-expansionist views.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Compare Addison’s optimistic views on world-wide trade in *The Spectator*, No.69 [*Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*, ed. Angus Ross (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982), pp.437-40].

<sup>45</sup> *The Works of Sir William Temple, Bart.*, 2 vols. (London, 1731). I, pp.163, 168, 303.

<sup>46</sup> For a ‘post-colonial’ reading of *Gulliver’s Travels* see Thomas McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland: Irish Voices against England in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), pp.77-85. Despite his remark that “travel, be it ... ‘to get riches’ or to explore, had an underlying political agenda which was to expand the empire” (p.83), he tends to downplay the economic motives of contemporary travellers as against those of the colonisers.