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FIGURES OF APPETITE AND SLAVERY FROM MILTON TO SWIFT

by

Maja-Lisa von Sneidern

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SIGNED: Maj. Risa von Sneiden

## DEDICATION

For my mother and father.

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## ABSTRACT

Here, employing materialist and colonial discourse theory, I contend that the reality of the "new world," so tightly bound to new appetites and new servitudes, pervasively informed literary works which have been traditionally immune to interpretations asserting their complicity with and critique of English, later British, colonialism. While scholars have always known that Milton was Secretary of Foreign Languages for an English ruler with an aggressive colonial policy, and they have identified Samuel Purchas and Peter Heylyn, churchmen turned geographers, as sources for Milton's geography, and have even argued that Satan is a colonizer, my work addresses the colonial situation at the center of Paradise Lost. Positing that England experienced "culture wars" (epistemic and ideological, as well as political and social, instability) during the period between the beheading of Charles I (1648/9) and the publication of Linnaeus' Systema Naturæ (1735), in subsequent chapters I address a group of interrelated paradoxes: How was it that acquisitiveness and consumerism expanded among the middling sort who concurrently cultivated the pleasures of deferred gratification and the "paradise within"? How was it that God's Englishmen could pride themselves as defenders of "Liberty herself" while they aggressively enslaved millions? How was it that the

Augustan age so concerned with decorum and taste could produce literary works so obsessed with deformity and excrement? By placing non-literary texts (travel accounts, geographies, natural histories, dictionaries, dispensatories, philosophical transactions) alongside Miltonic texts and later literary texts, we can partially account for what have been vexing interpretive problems: Raphael's astronomy, Samson's misogyny, the "coarseness" of the Restoration stage, the eighteenth-century "taste" for "monsters," Swift's scatology. We can recognize a historically specific strategy for containing the oddities and commodities issuing from the "American experience." Relying on Scripture for justification, early agents of the First Empire appropriated land and controlled bodies; relying on Science, the Second Empire sought to appropriate and control hearts and minds. This study addresses the mechanisms and literature of that shift.

### Introduction: The Tyrant Within

in Spirit perhaps he also saw  
 Rich Mexico the seat of Montezume,  
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat  
 Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd  
Guiana whose great City Geryon's Sons  
 Call El Dorado: but to nobler sights . . .

--Milton, Paradise Lost, 1667--

So geographers, in Afric maps  
 With savage pictures fill their gaps,  
 And o'er unhabitable downs  
 Place elephants for want of towns.

--Jonathan Swift, "On Poetry, a Rhapsody," 1733--

The two poems separated by over a half century have very different visions of uncharted continents. Milton's surveyor, Adam, fills the gaps in geographical knowledge with fabled cities of legendary wealth while Swift's anonymous "geographers" draw "savage pictures" and see elephants. Curiously, Milton and Swift might have been looking at the same set of maps published by Henrici Seile and included in Peter Heylyn's massive Cosmographie: In Four Bookes (1652). In the emptiness of Brazil, south and east of Guiana, is a drawing that could signify El Dorado, and sure enough we find elephants south and east of Guinea. Both Milton and Swift were religious men, as was Heylyn, who with excruciating detail carefully plants Noah's descendants in the four parts of the earth to account for seventeenth-century human populations. In

the year of Swift's birth, the non-conformist Milton adjusted the reality of the New World to the authority of divine words, those "nobler sights" the poet extracts from the Bible, while the Anglican dean conforms to a secular geography. We cannot, I believe, attribute the differences solely to different temperaments and poetic intentions. To do so is to underestimate the impact of geographical discoveries in the middle centuries of the second millennium on the European imagination. Furthermore, we cannot dismiss a fundamental distinction between a "new world" discovered "to" Europeans and Europeans discovering new worlds. The former essentially adheres to a conception of "divine geography"--the previously unknown has been revealed--and the latter capitulates to "secular geography"--discoverers have found what was previously unknown. We need also to understand that Europeans had no knowledge of the material reality of nearly three-quarters of the earth (everything south of the equator and the entire western hemisphere) prior to 1450; indeed, for the educated European, the Mediterranean Sea was the geographical and ideological cradle of human existence, and to a remarkable extent that understanding has survived. Milton and Swift, I will argue, challenged that construction by representing "new worlds" as locations "unspoiled" by Europeans, educated or otherwise. I will consider the New World and literary representations of those who have ventured, voluntarily and involuntarily, to it, and how those travels affected and

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effected English/British colonialism during what might be termed the most frenetic, unstable, expansionist period of the first empire. With their fabulous cities and elephants' teeth, the material reality of newly discovered worlds insinuates itself into literary works that have been traditionally immune to interpretations asserting their complicity with and critique of colonialism.

The two authors who mark the boundaries of this study also persistently and vigorously addressed the two events that delimit its historical parameters—the execution of Charles I and the publication of Linneaus's Systema Naturæ. The beheading of England's monarch in 1649 irrevocably ended the possibility of an English "divine polity," a theoretical marriage of church and state, while the scientific schema validated a de facto "secular polity" theoretically unencumbered with a meddling church. The established church and its titular head had been severed from a body of orthodoxy and the Law; religious discourses could no longer speak with compelling authority to divine will, which was variously articulated by dissenting groups. Heresy was a designator with no agreed upon referent, and the polity had no method of arbitration. What results is a crisis of authority, "culture wars" if you will, marked by epistemic and ideological, as well as political and social, instability. The emergence of millenarianism and latitudinarianism at mid-century suggests the fragmenting rather than strengthening of religious belief.

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Gone, but not forgotten, was the authority of "divine geography," "divine medicine," "divine economics," "divine law," "divine philosophy": those theories of knowledge that Michel Foucault argues characterize a "renaissance episteme" based on divinely designed degrees of resemblance. Bereft of inspired authentication, scientific, legal, political, artistic and religious discourses became objects of extraordinarily vicious and, to later sensibilities, vulgar attack and ridicule. That the Augustan age so concerned with decorum and taste could produce literary works so unabashedly crammed with deformity and excrement is one of the paradoxes of the period. Science would, toward the middle of the eighteenth century, come to take the place of Divinity as the "objective" arbiter of authenticity; empirical method and the understandings that are circumscribed by it would reinstate discursive protocol, replacing the divine postulates that had stabilized an earlier period. In the meantime acquisitiveness and consumerism expanded among the middling sort who concurrently cultivated the pleasures of deferred gratification and the "paradise within," while the oddities and commodities that poured into the Motherland from the colonies were discursive properties up for grabs. By placing non-literary texts alongside the literary, we can partially account for what have been vexing interpretive problems: Raphael's astronomy, Michael's "consolation," Samson's misogyny, the "coarseness" of the Restoration stage, the eighteenth-century "taste" for "monsters,"

Swift's scatology. We can recognize a historically specific strategy for containing the massive injections of new wealth issuing from the "American experience."

\* \* \*

I came to Milton late and unschooled, so throughout my virgin encounter with Paradise Lost, I was surprised by sin, or at least astonished into an unremitting string of speculations tainted with religious and aesthetic blasphemies. For example, when in Book II Satan first proposes venturing to "this new world" in order to corrupt God's "darling Sons," it never occurred to me that the poem was not alluding to the "New World"--the Americas, that fabulously rich and as yet "unspoiled" wilderness of abundant fruitfulness suddenly exposed to England's insular imagination. How, I wondered, could Archangel Michael's catalog of human cruelty and depravity, only momentarily interrupted by the Incarnation and Resurrection, possibly console Adam, much less justify God's ways to his English subjects? It could do neither, I thought, unless that "new world" (the secreted existence of nearly three-quarters of the earth only recently discovered to western Europeans) offered one more new opportunity to manifest God's will, one last best chance to get planting right.

Over the past few years, I have discovered kindred heretics, most recently J. Martin Evans whose Milton's Imperial Epic was published

after I defended this dissertation. Evans' book authorizes much of what I have to say about the Archangels Raphael and Michael, but because we have approached the colonial situation at the center of Pardise Lost independently, the sorts of things we have to say about that situation differ. Milton's Imperial Epic facilitates my argument: that Milton's Adam never acts on the knowledge that Michael gives him ought to be held against him, were it designed for him. But, I believe, it is not; instead, I contend, it is designed for Milton's contemporaries to render them inexcusable should they choose to ignore the lessons of human history and make a "yet unspoil'd Guiana" the "receptacle" for "Spirits foul." It would lighten my burden of proof to resort exclusively to a "new historicist" or "cultural materialist" argument that relies on the inexorable weight of contemporary discourses that ineluctably inform texts produced at a specific historical moment. But, I want provisionally at least to press the speculation that Milton's late poetry consciously addresses undisciplined expansionist colonialism driven by foreign competition with "Geryon's Sons," the three-bodied Geryoneo (Spain, Portugal and the Low Countries), who named the capital city of "unspoil'd Guiana" El Dorado. Michael remarks to Adam that "All th' Earth" is "No despicable gift," notes that Adam has through disobedience lost his "preëminence" and "dwell[s] on even ground now with [his] Sons," but assures Adam that God is as much present in the wilderness, the "nether



world," as he is in Paradise; I think it takes a hardness of heart to not recognize the parallels between the biblical moment and England's historical moment when "The World was all before them, where to choose . . ." (11.327-47; 12.646).

It has taken a relentless and concerted effort to wipe the jowls and groom the coat of this republican pit-bull, to make him presentable to polite company; in the process while his enemies jeered his blindness, his champions have portrayed him as brain-damaged—inexplicably his right hand had no clue to what his left hand had been up to for decades. Much of Milton's adult life was devoted to public service in which he persisted even as his eyesight failed. No great English poet had been, nor in the future would be, so prominently, actively, and enthusiastically involved with government as Milton. Surely Paradise Lost reveals itself to be a domestic comedy, but it is equally a public tragedy as Michael points out and expanding the epic from ten to twelve books emphasizes. To ignore Milton's dedication to the betterment of the common-weal, or to limit the "paradise within" to a conception of individual salvation and modern subjectivity, or to admire his poetry but abhor his politics is, I believe, fundamentally perverse. Despite an aphorism to the contrary, human charity is not primarily a domestic practice; in fact, Milton consistently argues in prose and poetry that the failure of secular and ecclesiastical governments to practice charity affects domestic relations and

jeopardizes the happiness and freedom God designed humans to have. To charity--the soul of Christian faith, virtue, patience, temperance and love--humans must "add deeds to [their] knowledge answerable": that is, act ethically and righteously in response to the promise of God's grace and to the geography and history Michael has revealed, an earth and a past as the seventeenth-century English poet knew it.

In the 1654 Second Defense of the English People Milton boasted, "it is the renewed cultivation of freedom and civic life that I disseminate throughout cities, kingdoms, and nations" (CPW 4.1: 556). As he wrote, English merchants were cultivating an expanding empire, and English ships were disseminating "Englands excrements" and "the Purges of [her] Prisons" throughout her American colonies, turning the New World into a "Receptacle," a "Close-stool," a "Dunghill" of human refuse; as he wrote, English planters, starved for labor, were developing an insatiable appetite for slaves. A year later a colleague of Milton's in Cromwell's government, John Thurloe, was entertaining a scheme promoted by Henry Cromwell to transport a thousand Irish boys and a thousand Irish girls aged fourteen or under to populate newly acquired Jamaica (Smith 169-70). That God's Englishmen could pride themselves as defenders of "Liberty herself" while they aggressively transported thousands and enslaved millions is an irony so vexed that it demanded new formulations of "appetite" and "slavery" to contain it. Milton constructed liberty as a

contrary to the tyranny of appetite on one hand and of slavery to appetite on the other, setting up the terms of a dialectic that would be appropriated and rearticulated throughout the first half of the "long eighteenth century." By the end of that century, like the coat in Swift's A Tale of a Tub, the terms of the Miltonic dialectic would be so embellished and so dismembered that their identity is one only "in consciousness." "Appetite" would be converted into "appreciation," and "slavery" would shift from a ransomable political status to an economic condition of perpetual and self-perpetuating servitude. Caught up in this sea change, the biological essentialism attached to "race" would be transformed. What designated a caste, the "Quality," with a genealogical tale of generations quite suddenly became a signifier of genetic inferiority ascribed to the quantities of peoples located in "new worlds." Finally, the colonial "dunghill," which was first exclusively associated with excremental colonists, would be cathected onto the colonized.

Although Milton begins the Second Defense with a ringing defense of the English Revolution, he closes it with cautionary lectures to Cromwell and his countrymen pointedly warning the former: "he who attacks the liberty of others is himself the first of all to lose his own liberty and learns that he is first of all to become a slave" (673); the latter he threatens: "Unless you expel avarice, ambition, and luxury from your minds . . . you will find at home and within that tyrant who, you believed,

was to be sought abroad and in the field—now even more stubborn" (680). Appetite and slavery are the two sides of a coin that can corrupt very vulnerable revolutionary republican, but also conservative royalist, ideals—a coin, I will suggest, that was forged from the wealth of the New World, minted by emerging secular discourses, and pocketed with abandon.

\* \* \*

The inaugural chapter uses geographies and travel accounts to reveal a colonial situation implicit in Paradise Lost and the extent to which Milton's most famous poem justifies, indeed instructs, "this Western design," as an officer in Cromwell's government termed English expansion in the Americas. Having created a "new world," Heaven is faced with the problem of how best to deal with the natives. God's emissaries, Raphael and Michael, display typical colonialist behaviors. While he feasts his eyes on Eve, eats lunch, and discourses at length, Raphael explains to Adam how the sex, food, and conversation are far superior in heaven. But, what Raphael brings new to the natives of Eden is exactly what Europeans saw as superior about their culture: their consciousness of history and their knowledge of astronomy, or its most immediate practical application—navigation. Michael, dealing with a corrupted Adam, teaches analysis, a tool essential to establishing dominion. Michael focuses on the vicious character of planters, a commonplace

worry about the most profitable of the colonies. The ethical challenge to be found in the "fortunate fall" is buoyed to a central fiction of colonialism—the just punishment for "native ingratitude" is deferred death, the traditional definition of slavery.

The next chapter theorizes and exemplifies sources of pleasure and their relationship to freedom and bondage on one hand, and spirit and matter on the other. One of the central ironies of Paradise Lost is: although God designs that "body up to spirit work," his pleasures are derived from substantial bodies, and the direction of the poem suggests proliferation of more and coarser matter—the "new world," Man, the Incarnation, Hell-hounds that glut themselves on offal. Milton's Almighty rewards disobedience, recently repented, by offering domain over the wilderness and possession of a "paradise within." This paradox is reflected in the emergence of philosophical materialism that occurs concurrently with a theory of pleasure that rejects the material other as its source and locates itself in the realm of the spiritual subject—aesthetic response (neo-Classicism) and emotional cultivation (sentimentality). Some sixty years later Jonathan Swift, another political activist morphed "into a respectable, conservative Anglican dean" (Fabricant 6), recasts and complicates Milton's colonial vision. From his ambiguous position as both colonizer and colonized, Swift creates a wilderness populated by slavemasters at once alien and familiar, both sentient individuals and

passionless brutes, and neither loving service nor strict obedience protects Gulliver from expulsion. Using John Schroder's dispensatory, I show how Gulliver's obsessions with food and filth have diverted us from Swift's attack on English appetites, pleasures and colonial policy.

Next I address how "race" and "quality," synonyms for "noble birth" in the 17th and early 18th centuries, came to signify masses and merit, respectively. Employing dictionaries, I show that the biological essentialism we attach to "race" was once a function of "quality," high social rank determined by birth. Captivity and the "slavery" it entailed did not affect hereditary rank or legal privilege; theoretically, one might be brutalized but not reduced. Republicanism, colonial wealth, and institutionalized slavery pressured this "natural" boundary, making it increasingly more visible and artificial. The "royal slave" became an ideological figure to police the border between noblemen and the ignoble. In Samson Agonistes, the republican Milton defines "race" not by blood but by cultural separation and ritual mark, circumcision. What we fret over as misogyny can also be articulated as the horror of miscegenation in its most threatening form: aristocratic female and racially other male, the values of which he predictably inverts.

The Miltonic challenge to a status society is met by Behn's defenses of the "aristocratic particularities of blood." Here Abdelazer, a character of tremendous sexual attraction played by Betterton in

blackface and paired with three aristocratic Spanish women, falls victim to internecine sabotage among a nobility unwilling to recognize and protect their own. This lack of solidarity among a noble race, corrupted by competing economic and political interests, likewise accounts for the multiple dismemberments, including the hero and the empire itself, in her Oroonoko. In Southerne's Oroonoko the hero has impregnated his French colonial wife and been enslaved not by war but through "an honest way of trade." The problems of colonization and its challenges to cultural purity are now figured in the threat of "white slavery": the "priceless" white woman's body assigned a quantified economic value. It is not primarily rape that threatens, but production of the "laquer-fac'd"-Imoinda's mulatto child and, in Gay's Polly, a sunburnt heroine forced into the fields. Although Gay's characters "pass"-female for male, white for black, freeborn for slave-it is an impasse between nature and civility figured in the "royal slave" that Gay and his predecessors cannot negotiate. The symbolics of blood which once underwrote civil society are located in the "state of nature." Not until past mid-century would a modern concept of race, capable of inverting and replacing the fetishistic values of both the royal slave and white slavery, be invented out of ancient fictions and a new mathematics of blood.

In the early eighteenth century, nothing could be more symbolic or representative of imported material excess or epistemic and ideological

instability than discourses competing to speak with authority about the bodies of "monsters" exhibited during the period. The lusus naturae, a fluke or joke of nature, becomes the historically specific site where discourses are at liberty to rehearse emergent and reiterate threatened epistemic principles, a place where nothing (the "monster" exhibited for amusement) or everything (the symbolic order and the master-signifiers designed to organize and account for the material world) is at stake. In the "Double Mistress" episode of the Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus the discourse of property values is reconfigured in a language of refined sentiment and tenderness, which in turn is appropriated by legal, medical and philosophic discourses. What emerges is an uncharacteristic glimpse of the proprietary interests involved. Conjoined twins, both historical and literary, materialize the problem of managing the quantity and variety of the fruits of the expanding British Empire. Human anomalies also serve as the location where the "person" lapses into "property" at a historical juncture when the concept of "contract" is just beginning to force discourses to articulate distinctions between servant and slave, employer and master, labor and service, and to decide whether infractions of labor law should be prosecuted in criminal or civil court. By importing by the shipload, classifying with new taxonomies, displaying on the streets, in private cabinets and public museums, and discoursing about (in Latin and the vernacular) the variety and profusion of nature and culture as freaks,



oddities and monstrosities, the British toward the end of the eighteenth century could establish themselves at the center of normality. They could reserve the blessings bestowed by God or Nature for themselves while they cast the curses of Scripture and Science upon others. They made "duty" of "trespass," but the Scriblerian episode exposes such attempts at discrimination and cohabitation "as proceeding upon a natural, as well as legal Absurdity."

We have, of course, made such "absurdities" legal and pretended that they are at least quasi-natural. Let me return to Seile's maps in Heylyn's Cosmographie; they are geo-political, that is they represent land masses, mountain ranges, oceans, seas, lakes and rivers as well as towns, cities, regions and countries. But, there are no borders--no boundary line separates one polity from another. The same is true in map after map throughout the period. Surveying for the purposes of facilitating cohabitation and delineating trespass and duty is the product of a later time, and those straight lines that demark legal realities such as citizenship have very material impacts on individual bodies. While the practice of enclosure preceded John Locke's theory, its graphic representation post-dated it.

The argument that follows hinges on our recognition of spacial and temporal difference to which we have been capaciously indifferent at best and captiously perverse at worst. From the beginning, Europeans

minimized and diminished the material bulk of their discoveries, and as exploration continued, conceptually the earth expanded like an inflating bladder. A relatively early map (1596) depicts an oversized "baja California" peninsula firmly attached to the North American continent, but by 1652 "California" had fallen off the west coast and was depicted as an island in the Pacific. "A New Map of North America" (1716) persists in depicting a "Gulf of California" that severs the prodigious island from the continent as does Swift's map of Brobdingnag, a fantastical polyp protruding from the neighborhood of Coos Bay. Although study after study of domestic English/British culture gestures toward the impact of the New World, even in concert they discursively reduce it in size, like a spacial joke: how do you get six elephants in a Volkswagen—three in the front, three in the back. While conceptions of the earth's size and the oceans' and continents' magnitudes ballooned in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we have somehow managed to diminish the immensity of the globe and the ventures initiated to explore and exploit. Yet the world was not small, but huge and expanding, after all. Domestic uncertainty was not merely troubled, it was driven, by global discoveries, and a new economy was fueled by materials from the new world. To even begin to imagine the impact, we would have to reimagine our planet and question the authority (in our case, science) that has described it.

Thus, our insensitivities are not only spacial; they are temporal as well. British studies have long acknowledged the event of the "scientific revolution" marked most prominently by Isaac Newton, but including Bacon, Harvey, Halley, Boyle, etc. Once established, science has generally been a self-policed discipline, immune from "contextual inquiry."

Furthermore, "history of science" has constructed an evolutionary model that curiously relies on a typology and thus has been limited to narratives that trace a direct ascent of scientific successes defined as "what we now believe to be fact," discarding the infelicities pointed out by fellow scientists. While individual studies, or scientists, might prove to be in error, scientific method was by definition objective. Recently, that scenario has been called into question and scholars have disclosed how western science and its methodologies served the "western design." However, there are two points to keep in mind in considering this critique of science: 1) "Science" or the scientific method had not established itself as arbiter of fact during Swift's lifetime, and 2) the terms which "natural scientists" of the late eighteenth century would use to articulate their science, hinge their arguments, were in flux and signified quite different referents in the earlier period.

Hans Sloane's map in his Natural History of Jamaica (1707), which features the Atlantic Ocean in the center with Europe, Africa and the Americas around the margins, graphically represents the ideological and

imaginative challenge the colonial enterprise posed to forces with an investment in the centrality, stability and virtue of an English insular experience. That challenge appears to be our birthright, a variety of recessive gene whose traits are periodically manifested: the abolition movement at the end of the eighteenth century, the anti-colonialism of Joseph Conrad a century later, and our present "post"-colonial anxieties. Recently John Patrick Diggins rhetorically queried: "How will it benefit the masses of humanity to be told that their ancestors were slaves, indentured servants, desperate farmers, harassed grandmothers, abused children, exploited uncles, failed merchants, drunken sots, and other species of flesh?" (499). Here Professor Diggins is impugning the value of Gary Nash's proposal for "National History Standards," but he could have been attacking Milton's "Divine Historian," Raphael, who is indeed hesitant about telling the history of the "War in Heaven," or the Almighty's other emissary to the "new World," Michael, who solemnly catalogs instances of human backsliding, exploitation and errors in judgment. Probably unwittingly, Diggins raises precisely the ethical concerns that the English of the period from Milton to Swift fretted over and their descendants, with great sustained effort, dustbinned. Carole Fabricant has written that "capacious minds are saddened by the failure of revolution" while "lesser minds gloat" and are "left with a crabbed and cranky conservatism capable only of accommodating itself to the status

quo, no matter how corrupt or oppressive it may be" (xxv). Not all the texts I consider in what follows were produced by "capacious minds," but each unflinchingly recognizes that the problems posed by the New World called for ethical, not aesthetic, nor sentimental, and certainly not academic, responses. It is to be wished that we could exert less moral muscularity and more ethical rigor to the legacy that is ours.

## Chapter 1: "Geographie Is Better than Divinitie"

### John Milton and the Colonial Project

The West is not in the West. It is a project, not a place.

Edouard Glissant, Caribbean Discourse

We begin to understand what Glissant means when we consider suspect the "new world" narratives that cast seafaring hyjackers as heroes and Native Americans as guests at the English colonists' Thanksgiving fete. The sixteenth and seventeenth-century texts that provided the raw materials for these narratives were far more obviously ambivalent and polyvocal than what emerged from them. Newly discovered territories were both forbidding and Edenic, the native inhabitants, first innocent, generous, and timid, turned savage, cunning, ungrateful and treacherous, and the early settlers were both brave adventurers and idle, vicious scum. For those promoting and participating in the colonial project, a major imperative presented itself: produce discourses that could make sense of the wildly mixed messages apparent in these early narratives. I contend that one of the texts that serves to sort out and reconfigure elements of the colonial challenge is John Milton's Paradise Lost, which articulates a justification, a philosophy and a strategy for the colonial enterprise.

Milton himself became the object of mythmaking that has lasted centuries. From the time of the Restoration, men of sense and sensibility attempted to divorce Milton's "left-handed" prose from the great poems: they admired his poetry while they abhorred his politics. One story goes that when Cromwell died and the Good Old Cause was compromised by "neuters," a disillusioned Milton laid aside his mission, returned to poetry, and realized that paradise was to be found within.<sup>1</sup> It is a tidy story, a poignant bourgeois romance: Milton answered the call to serve the public, but then retired to the private sphere where a truer, less contaminated self could be expressed in great poetry. This narrative serves the purposes of those who would distance the poetry from the prose, a canon of emergent Whig ideology that unrelentingly looks forward to the "freedom and civic life" of the eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries. Perhaps Milton's "radical republicanism" was so clear-sighted that its vision was largely realized, and Western history seems to have transcended it. The prelates, the monarchs, and the catholic threat were pragmatically reduced to cyphers; the law was secularized; citizens did wrest political and moral power from a gentried elite; the ideology of merit did supersede one of blooded birthright,<sup>2</sup> and an ethic based on inner individual and domestic discipline rather than external coercion became the dominant ideology.<sup>3</sup> It is this narrative which warrants Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse's assertion that Milton

"existed [for two or three centuries of readers] as a unity amid discontinuities, a spot of stillness in a flux, the principle of constancy in a field of change . . . the eye of a storm" (Imaginary Puritan 47). Milton's poetry may be the last, perhaps only, "great" British literary oeuvre that English speakers of modest means and moral righteousness have placed on their bookshelves without the niggling suspicion that it may be surreptitiously corrupting.

Christopher Hill mounted the most recent sustained assault on this myth of the political innocence of Milton's later poetry: "The picture of Milton subsiding into a genial and pacifist old age, in which all conflicts are mental only, is a piece of twentieth-century sentimentalism which the seventeenth-century texts do not justify" (477). I would trespass even further in questioning the apolitical virtue of Milton's later poetry; I go so far as to assert that Paradise Lost ethically underwrites and poetically articulates the nature of the English colonial project. Paradise Lost sutures the discontinuity that emerged when a technologically advanced culture confronted one with the material earmarks of "unfallen" humanity: nakedness without shame, childbirth without pain, brilliant and varied fruitfulness, and a bounty of precious metals that could upset the economy of the Christian world. That Paradise Lost has largely been interpreted in terms of the bible and classical texts is understandable, but it is one of literary history's "blood-curdling jokes."<sup>4</sup>



A revised vision of Milton has made some inroads into the territory of Milton studies by insisting that the poet existed within a historical context far broader than the literary tradition that most "Miltonists" acknowledge.<sup>5</sup> With rare and generally marginalized exceptions, these studies have limited themselves to considerations of Milton's domestic context, focusing on the "English Revolution" as a phenomenon bound to political and ideological locations in the British Isles.<sup>6</sup> Frederic Jameson, for instance, would read the war in heaven as a conflict between "feudal castes" (333), while Armstrong and Tennenhouse take the argument a step further, asserting that "readers join Milton in lamenting the fact that the world has grown gray with the fall of aristocratic culture" (Imaginary Puritan 44). This parochialism is astounding. If we resist reading Paradise Lost as a "divine history" and examine its "secular plot," we have the story of two superpowers (or two factions of one superpower) squabbling over a "new world," a virgin territory and its indigenous people. After explaining the motivations of the two opposed colonizing powers, most of the substance of the poem treats how best to communicate with, and influence the behavior of, those "new world" inhabitants, who are told they may remain in their paradise if they are obedient. When, out of surprise, perversity or misinterpretation, the "new Race . . . like to us" (2.348-49) disobey or show ingratitude, they are punished with labor, pain and death, relocated, and

offered a narrative and an interpretation of their history. This admittedly simplified summary of Paradise Lost is quite congruent with a narrative of conquest as it was produced by Western colonial powers from the journals, logs and "natural histories" of travellers and adventurers preceding, contemporary with and, most significantly, following Milton.

It may be objected that such an approach to Paradise Lost completely misreads the poem, which is fundamentally a sublime epic rendition of events surrounding the original sin and an articulation of Milton's theodicy, a justification of the ways of God to man; its purpose is to offer spiritual consolation and moral challenge to the reader; its geography is firmly rooted in Classicism and a Judeo-Christian past. I do not intend to engage in a discussion of aesthetics, but rather to point to certain pervasive elements of the poem that may explain why it was so popularly embraced even among Milton's political and religious adversaries. How is it that conservative voices of orthodoxy let slide Milton's radical departure from Genesis, his Arianism, his mortalism, his parting shot at the church in Book 12, the republicanism of the archangels? I want to explore possibilities for the source of that "spiritual consolation" and "moral challenge" for Restoration and early eighteenth-century readers. What financed the "Paradise within"? It may be merely coincidental that the Romantics' elevation of Satan to

"hero" of the poem coincided with the fall of the "first" British empire and that the twentieth-century challenge to Milton's place in the canon spearheaded by F.R. Leavis coincided with the dissolution of the "second" British empire, but then it may not. Indeed it may be important that Adam's first view of the world outside of Paradise is not biblical territory, but largely non-European sixteenth-century earth (11.385-411), locations Milton gleaned from Samuel Purchas and Peter Heylyn, not the classics or the bible. Our last image in the poem is of Adam and Eve picking their way out of Eden, and "The World was all before them, where to choose" (12.646). Deprived of immortality, at least as a material reality, they are consoled and challenged with Providence's gift of the world, there for the taking.

Both Purchas and Heylyn, accepted sources for Milton's geography in *Paradise Lost*,<sup>7</sup> were churchmen turned geographers, the former though his connection with Richard Hakluyt and the latter by political misfortunes. In his letter "To the Reader," Heylyn explains that "not alone my private fortunes, but the publick Patrimony of the Church was destroyed and dissipated." Deprived of his living by the new English regime, he is advised to reconsider his calling; a thug who accosted him in a dark street "said in an hoarse voyce these words, 'Geographie is better than Divinitie'"[2].<sup>8</sup> This admonition he took to heart, and it informs this reading of Milton. After the death of Charles I, Heylyn

began his Cosmographie In Four Bookes noting, "though Truth be the best Mistress which a man can serve . . . yet it is well observed withall, that if a man follow her too close at the heels, she many chance to kick out his teeth for his labour" [vi], a lesson I doubt was lost some years later on Milton who himself admitted that loyalty "after captivating me with her fair-sounding name, has almost left me without a country" (CPW 8, 3-4). Even so, "as a church-man" Heylyn rails against the "Heterodoxies" that have "dismembered" the Anglican church, attacks the "Smectymnuans" specifically, "and some others in Ages since; who have driven on their private projects under the colour and pretence of Reformation." He charges that the new government "did either prostitute the Church to the lust and tyranny of that proud Usurper, or expose the Patrimoine thereof unto spoyl and rapine; or finally subject it to the Anarchy and licentiousness of Hetrodoxies and confused Opinions" [iv]. Surely Milton was numbered among the "others" with "their private projects," given his publishing record in the "Ages since" (the 1640's).

Heylyn identifies his diatribe as a digression and presents himself in the work to follow "as a Geographer" determined to present landmarks and maps of the whole world to "none but men of judgement and understanding" (due to the price) and "as an Historian" intent on tracing "the affairs of each several Countrey" and settling "all the first Adventurers (after the proud attempt at Babel) in their right plantations"

(iv-v). He wants to correct errors by "recording the heroick Acts of my native Soil, and filing on the Registers of perpetuall Fame the Gallantrie and brave Atchievements of the People of England," and to "assert the Rights of the English Nation . . . vouching the legal Interest of the English Nation, in the Right of the first Discovery" (iii).<sup>9</sup> Heylyn's turn to "Geographie" and "History" following the end of the church and government as he knew and supported them, like Milton's turn to poetry a dozen years later, represents a shift to a major project more bipartisan, but no less political. Like Purchas before him, Heylyn promotes the colonial project:

But nothing more sets forth the Power and Wisdom of Almighty God, as it relates to these particulars [the earth's geographical variety], than that most admirable intermixture of Want and Plenty, whereby he hath united all the parts of the World in a continuall Traffique and Commerce with one another. (5)

Both catalog the riches of the world's countries and regions with an eye on their abundant resources and potential profitability. Both deplore the cruelty of the Spanish conquest as unchristian.<sup>10</sup> By their very nature, the works of Purchas and Heylyn acted as promotional literature for British colonial expansion at the expense of those who had already established footholds in the new world, be they indigenous populations or

competing colonial powers.

We need not limit our consideration of Milton's attitude toward colonial expansion to the possible influence of the literary sources he probably used. He was an active member of the government that enacted the first of the Navigation Laws (1651), which articulated a mercantile policy that strictly limited foreign shippers' access to the lucrative English (later British) colonial trade and was to continue for two centuries (Harper 34). The immediate effect of the legislation was the quick about-face of foreign governments in their attitude toward the de facto government in London. Milton had already published three defenses of the regicide, Tenure (1649), Eikonoklastes (1650), and Defense (1651), in an attempt to legitimate the actions of the revolutionaries for his countrymen (the two former) and win diplomatic recognition from abroad (the latter written in Latin). Law accomplished what argument could not; foreign nations that had refused to meet with delegations from the Commonwealth in early 1651 dispatched emissaries who streamed to London in autumn to gain relief from the government's restrictive commercial policy. At about this point, when as Robert Thomas Fallon notes, "he was the Secretary of Foreign Languages" (69), Milton's eyesight failed him; the government had to redistribute his duties, and "his activities were limited to the preparation of official documents, but he was no less busy in his office" (71). One of those duties would be the

preparation of a hard-nosed treaty with the Spanish in late 1652 which in substance rearticulated the commercial policy, "requiring that all goods imported into England be carried on English vessels or those from the cargo's country of origin," set forth in the Navigation Act of 1651 (27).<sup>11</sup>

In 1654 he published the Second Defense, a document that ranges from the Commonwealth's place as the expression of God's will on earth and its duty to evangelize "throughout cities, kingdoms, and nations," to an eloquent declaration of individual liberty, to moral cautions addressed to Cromwell and the English people, to scurrilous personal attacks aimed at the supposed author of The Cry of the Royal Blood. In 1655 he was involved in Cromwell's official response to the "Piedmont Massacre," a brutal destruction of a well established protestant enclave in Savoy; Sonnet XVIII is his poetic response. This incident was co-incident with General Venables and William Penn's ill-fated attempt on Hispanola. Like Jackie DiSalvo, who notes Milton's tutorial relationship with Roger Williams of Rhode Island, author of Key to the Language of the Indians (21), and William Spengemann, who points out that news of America was "the source of the genre called 'newes'" (97), I question any theory proposing that Milton was unaware of or unaffected by ventures to the "new World." Indeed, such a position, as Spengemann implies, is perverse.<sup>12</sup> It is impossible to believe that Milton as a member of General Secretary John Thurloe's staff would not have been privy to news of the

West Indian debacle which so enraged Cromwell that he imprisoned Venables and Penn in the Tower (Fallon 140-141, 129). A year later one of the nephews Milton educated, John Phillips, published a translation of Bartholomeo de las Casas' Brevissima Relación entitled The Tears of the Indians: Being An Historical and true Account of the Cruel Massacres and Slaughters of above Twenty Millions of innocent People, a work he dedicated to Cromwell in a short letter with very large type calling for the continuance of colonial ventures against "the Bloudy and Popish Nation of the Spaniards" (v sig.A4). Hill notes: "This piece of anti-Spanish propaganda must have been entirely to his uncle's liking" (489). Like Hill, I am very suspicious of a narrative that posits the theory that Milton turned his back on a political world to search for some "paradise within" figured as a psychological or spiritual location, what Jameson calls, "this inward turn—a displacement from politics to psychology and ethics" (316). Instead, I am inclined to agree with Empson's paraphrase of Tillyard: "if Milton had been in the Garden, he would have eaten the apple at once and written a pamphlet to prove that it was his duty" (172). The fortunate fall offers not just individuals, but humanity, yet one more opportunity to be redeemed, to fail or succeed in manifesting God's will. Through example, Paradise Lost offers historicity to the colonial enterprise, sanctions the project, and instructs and cautions those who must implement it on how to best proceed.



Milton departs from the story in Genesis in two fundamental ways. First, the creation is not the originary act in Paradise Lost; the begetting of the Son initiates the action, which is quickly followed by the war in heaven and the fallen angels' plotting in hell. All precede the Eternal Father's announcement:

in a moment [I] will create  
 Another World, out of one man a Race  
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell  
 Not here[.] (7.154-157)

Pain (although not death), the engines and horrors of war, the glories of military conquest, the ignominy and resentment of the conquered, all pre-date the origin of the material universe. In fact, to identify God's concern that Satan might gloat over Heaven's loss of a third of its angels as the proximate cause for the creation, as Milton explicitly does,<sup>13</sup> locates the origin of Paradise in conflict and the struggle for domination. What we find "at the historical beginning of things" in Paradise Lost "is not the inviolable identity of their origin" as in Genesis; "it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity."<sup>14</sup> Milton's ontology, what might be called the will to growth, is generally interpreted in positive terms and linked to both Platonic and Aristotelian thought. Raphael's imagery in a key passage in Book 5 focuses on growth as a process of refinement, while Milton's description of "Truth" in Areopagitica makes clear that truth is a

product of "exercise," of purification through movement. We are invited to project the antithesis as stagnation, but we are also forced to consider the reverse or backside of this positive construction: The peace and prosperity of Eden are not the natural nor the original conditions of the Miltonic cosmos; disequilibrium, rebellion and struggle for power are ante- rather than anti-Paradisical.

In fact by 1654 Milton recognized that the Commonwealthsmen could be destroyed by the peace they had accomplished; he warned his countrymen about the dangers of peace in Second Defence: "Many men has war made great whom peace makes small. . . . Peace itself will be by far your hardest war, and what you thought liberty will prove to be your servitude" (CPW 4.1: 680). Peace is, for Milton, "the warfare of peace" (681) and for Foucault, "a form of unspoken warfare" (Power/Knowledge 90). For neither author is peace a panacea that offers liberty and the end to the violence of war. Peace corrupts no less than war wastes (PL 11.784). The laws that establish civil society,<sup>15</sup> in heaven the order to obey the Son, in Paradise the food taboo, provide "a calculated and relentless pleasure, delight in promised blood, which permits the perpetual instigation of new dominations and the staging of meticulously repeated scenes of violence" ("NGH" 151), or as Adam notes, "So many Laws argue so many sins" (12.283). From God's preference of Abel's blood sacrifice, to the ensuing fratricide, to the carnage of the flood, to the

plagues visited upon the Egyptians and the drowning of Pharaoh's army in the Red Sea, to the destruction of the Ammonites, to the Babylonian captivity, to the crucifixion, to the perversion of "Spiritual Laws by carnal power" (12.521), Michael's narrative in the last two books progresses from one domination to the next effected by the trespasses and transgressions of backsliders in "meticulously repeated scenes of violence." God's "sole complacency" (3.276) is the anticipation of the Son's bloody self-sacrifice; his merit is his complicity with the divine design that announces as its central event the crucifixion. Paradise Lost begins with violence and ends with the promise of its spread throughout "all th' Earth," God's gift to humankind (11.339).

The second major departure Milton makes from Genesis is introducing archangels to frequent Eden and discourse with its inhabitants; in Genesis God does not delegate authority as he does in Paradise Lost. To his credit, Milton presents us with an anthropological dilemma from the beginning: how does one study humans, who have been made "Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" (3.99), without corrupting the study? The problem is of course complicated by the fact that the competition is intent on disrupting the project; that is Satan's raison d'être. The first strategy is to interfere with the daily goings-on as little as possible. In Book 8 we learn that Raphael was dispatched to guard the gates of Hell to prevent spies from contaminating the work of

the Creation (229-36), and in Book 4 the "sovrän Planter" (691) posts sentries headed by Gabriel to discourage the expected intruder--though with very little positive effect. Adam and Eve are aware that "Millions of spiritual Creatures walk the Earth / Unseen" (677-78), presumably because they can hear them singing. Thus, there is not a strict quarantine, and Satan is, in effect, presented to us as a "natural" predator. There is great reluctance to do more than offer threatening gestures in a vague and vain hope of discouraging him. The decision to actively intrude is taken in Book 5: "God to render Man inexcusable sends Raphael to admonish him" (Argument). The "sociable," "gentle," "affable" archangel offers us a case study in the inherent pitfalls and dangers of conversing with those one intends to colonize.

We must remember that Milton was working with a plot already enunciated in the Scriptures. There are certain elements of the story that cannot be fudged or reversed: Adam and Eve must eat the fruit; they must be punished by expulsion from Paradise, and, in the Christian schema, the Son must be made flesh and die on the cross to atone for original sin. As Milton shows us, circumstances surrounding those central events may be invented, elaborated, embellished, and serve to mitigate the effects of "justice," but, fall they, or the story must. So, when Empson complains that Raphael "never once says the practical thing which would be really likely to prevent the Fall, that Satan is

known to have reached the Garden and spoken to Eve in her sleep, and will probably soon address them again in disguise" (151), he is grouching about Raphael's ineptitude as an emissary to communicate vital information to Adam and Eve, not that Milton ought to have made him more diplomatically adept. Why the failure occurs is bound to the story--what God and we foresee.

Interestingly, Empson illustrates the effects of the failure by pointing to a Calvinist interpretation that "clears up the apparent injustice of God toward the Red Indians" (153); he continues his argument by commenting that "Eve is twice positively told, that for her it [God's plan for human progress] is a straightforward matter of space-travel, rather like improving the ships till they could discover America" (154), and he concludes by attacking C.S. Lewis's reading, that Eve "has at last become "primitive" in the popular sense" because she "now worships a vegetable" (155). It is not accidental that these two scholars, who have contributed criticism at polar ends of the religious controversy in Milton Studies, both resort to images firmly located in the seventeenth century colonial project--the status of "Red Indians," ships improved to "discover America," and "primitives" worshipping vegetables; at some level both sense that the poem engages with problems surrounding what General Venables calls "this Western design" (1). We need to consider how rather than why the affable Raphael, the archangel with a reputation of

compassion for wedded lovers, falters.

In fact, Raphael's compassion and sociability contribute to disaster; the afternoon parley would have been much different had the Almighty commissioned Abdiel, a "logical" choice, the archangel with first hand experience in resisting Satan's temptations. Armstrong and Tennenhouse argue that Paradise Lost is "an early version of what Renato Rosaldo calls 'imperialist nostalgia,'" suggesting that "when critics join the poet in lamenting their isolation within the world of work, they are actually positioning themselves as authors and intellectuals outside and above that world—from where, like Gabriel [sic], they can tell people how to cope with it" (Imaginary Puritan 44-45). They imply a wistfulness in the poet, and an intellectual location of the poem that is simply not warranted by what we know of Milton nor can it be substantiated by the text. Unlike Dante's God, who is both subject and object of the beatific vision located in a stable paradiso, Milton's God resembles a besieged CEO responding to one crisis after another, and his heaven is a very busy place. However, Rosaldo's argument—that colonizers tend to romanticize and regret the loss of the "primitive" cultures and the habitats they destroy "innocently"—seems very relevant to Paradise Lost in general, and Raphael's behavior in particular. Furthermore, and I believe this point is central to readers' ambivalent responses to the archangels, "[n]ostalgia at play with domination . . . uses compelling tenderness to draw attention

away from the relation's fundamental inequality . . . ideological discourses work more through selective attention than outright suppression" (87).

Milton's Satan may have anticipated Rosaldo's argument by several centuries. "O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold," says Satan in soliloquy, "Creatures . . . Little inferior . . . League with you I seek" (4.358-62, 375). He recognizes and accepts the damage he intends while still regretting the "necessity" (393):

And should I at your harmless innocence  
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,  
Honor and Empire with revenge enlarg'd,  
By conquering this new World compels me now  
To do what else though damn'd I should abhor. (388-92)

Honor and Empire were heady words for a seventeenth- or eighteenth-century Englishman, especially those capable of reading Milton's poetry. Empire could offset whatever loss of honor might accompany the erosion of an aristocratic code. At the same time God's loyal angels manifest rather than enunciate "imperialist nostalgia" with their affability, gentility, sociability, solemnity, mildness, sadness and pity that "violated not their bliss" (10.25). Innocence and "compelling tenderness" drip from them as they "draw attention away from the relation's fundamental inequality" with the tease of refinement and the promise of redemption.

The central books, five through eight, offer a narrative of

Raphael's diplomatic mission to earth. God commissions him and provides the following instructions: (1) spend a half day with Adam in friendly conversation, (2) advise him of his "happy state" that can change because he has "free Will," (3) warn him not to be too smug, and (4) tell him that he is in danger from an enemy that will attempt to destroy him "by deceit and lies," not "violence" (5.229-243). Like Cromwell's instructions to General Venables, these are strategic rather than tactical, and they imply latitude much as Cromwell made explicit to Venables: "You are therefore upon all such accidents relateing to your charge to use your best circumspection" (115). From the moment of his arrival in Paradise, Raphael has to employ his "best circumspection." He could offer Adam and Eve the information "which would be really likely to prevent the Fall," the information with which "Heav'n's high King" prefaced the archangel's commission:

Raphael, said hee, thou hear'st what stir on Earth  
Satan from Hell scap't through the darksome Gulf  
 Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd  
 This night the human pair, how he designs  
 In them at once to ruin all mankind. (5.224-28)

Instead Raphael discourses on other things; the afternoon's conversation can be divided into four major topics: food, history, astronomy and sex. Suffice it to say at this point that Raphael's initial discourse on the



angelic digestive system and his version of God's plan for humanity (5.468-505) prove to be as immediately counter-productive for prelapsarian humans as the European appetite for natural resources and the Spanish Requerimiento were for Amerindians. Furthermore, Adam's curiosity about the nature of angelic copulation mirrors the fascination seventeenth-century Europeans had with the sexual behaviors among the peoples of Africa and the Americas.<sup>16</sup> In Milton's Paradise, Adam and Eve ate food, reaped the bounty of the garden, trimming here and there, and made love, a lifestyle much like one popular European image of new world "natives."<sup>17</sup> But, what Raphael brings new to Adam and Eve's attention during his visit is exactly what Europeans saw as superior about their culture: consciousness of history particularly as enunciated in the scriptures, and knowledge of astronomy as manifested in trans-Atlantic navigation. Significantly, they are to learn by example from the former, and dismiss the value of the latter.

Perhaps Las Casas' Tears of the Indians most transparently represents the historical hubris:

This infinite multitude of people was so created by God, as they were without fraud, without subtilty or malice, to their natural Governours most faithful and obedient . . . . They are of very apprehensive and docible wit, and capable of all good learning, and very apt to receive our Religion, . . . so that I

have heard divers Spaniards confesse that they had nothing else to hinder them from enjoying heaven, but the ignorance of the true God. (2-3)

Ignorance of the Gospels condemned an "infinite multitude" of otherwise "faithful and obedient" souls to exclusion from heaven. The similarity between Milton's prelapsarian Adam and Eve and Las Casas' characterization of "this infinite multitude" is so striking that Milton, consciously I assume, explicitly makes a distinction, comparing them to the newly fallen Adam and Eve: "O how unlike / To that first naked Glory. Such of late / Columbus found th' American so girt / With feather'd Cincture, naked else and wild / Among the Trees on Isles and woody Shores" (9.1114-17). Las Casas' judgment about who is to blame for the Aztec's perversion is explicit:

the Indians neevr gave them the least cause to offer them violence, but received them as Angels sent from heaven, till their excessive cruelties, the torments and slaughters of their Countreymen mov'd them to take Armes against the Spaniards. (6)

Milton was a rabid anti-catholic, equating the Pope with the anti-Christ and Catholicism with apostasy, and although he admired the Italians, he held the Spanish in contempt. It is not difficult to imagine that when he conceived of Satan, Milton envisioned a proud, arrogant younger son of a

Spanish grandee induced by a decadent system of inheritance to treacherously extract wealth from innocents in order to finance a despicable lifestyle.<sup>18</sup>

The "history" of the scriptures traces a process that emerges from original sin, a concept which explains flaws in human character and the source of human suffering and death. It also exonerated the depredations Europeans visited upon indigenous populations in the New World, whose most telling mark of their fallen condition was their ignorance of a history by which they did not appear to be markedly touched.

"Multitudes" died, of course, and it is that phenomenon, that proof of their complicity with original sin, that the Spanish conquistadors seem to have been obsessively, repeatedly, compelled to demonstrate by the millions of instances. Native Americans presented a flaw in the fabric of scriptural history. Elaine Scarry in The Body in Pain posits that the systemized infliction of pain manifested in torture and warfare (and I would add massacre) serves to "lend an aura of material reality to the winning construct . . . until there is time for the world participants to provide more legitimate [read: more discursive] means for substantiation" (21). In other words, pain, as an experience that escapes enunciative representation, temporarily stands in for a history that must be invented. Furthermore, as Foucault insists, the spectacle of suffering also served the substantive purpose of the discourse that would replace it. When

events emerge in discursive representations that cannot be adequately accommodated by history, they tend to be ignored. Despite longstanding enmity for the Spanish, Hakluyt did not include Las Casas' narrative in Principal Navigations although the text was available to him. The "black legend" of Spanish cruelty was not incorporated into the English canon of colonial adventures until Purchas. After the 1622 "massacre" of Virginia settlers, the Algonquins, whose savagery was now documented, could be separated from Las Casas' multitudes who were "without fraud, without subtilty or malice." As Peter Hulme has shown, a new history could be invented that judiciously deploys biblical narrative to legitimate the expulsion of the indigenous populations from new world territories (145), most perniciously by projecting European duplicity and treachery onto them while attempting to maintain the fiction of possessing an all encompassing technological superiority (167-68).<sup>19</sup> The English could both justify taking a firm hand with the natives in their own colonies and condemn "the Bloudy and Popish Nation of Spaniards, whose Superstitions have exceeded those of Canaan, and whose Abominations have excell'd those of Ahab, who spilt the Blood of innocent Naboth, to obtain his Vineyard" (Phillips, v. sig.A4). The innocent Naboths had been exterminated in their own Vineyards, the West Indies, and it was the righteous duty of the English to deprive the Spanish Ahab of his ill-gotten spoils "lest his heart exalt him in the harm / Already done to

have dispeopled Heav'n" (PL 7.150-51), or in the immediate case, New Spain.

The history of origins that the "Divine Historian" (8.6-7), Raphael, narrates has the opposite effect from its putative intent as articulated after the story is told—to warn Adam by example (7.909-11, 8.41-45). Raphael is far less sure about the lawfulness of relating the story before he begins than after he finishes; as with the imperialist evangelism of colonial discourse, its legitimacy emerges in the telling. Clearly, at the beginning of the afternoon, Adam's curiosity is limited to his celestial neighbors, most specifically questions about their diet (5.464-67); he already knows that his will and actions are free (548-49). However, disobedience is an entirely new concept to him (512-518), and he suffers further doubt once Raphael tells him "some" have fallen from heaven to hell because of it (553-54, 541-43). At this point Raphael has already begun to invent history, and at Adam's naive suggestion of a "full relation," he chooses to transform "Sacred silence," the intuitive language of angels, into discourse that can be "heard" (556-57); he elects to relate the history of Satan's fall rather than emphasize the imminent threat to the stability of Paradise. One wonders what was left to be known about the knowledge of good and evil once the story of the war in heaven was told. Raphael's inadequacy that Empson identifies could be viewed as the affable archangel's over-adequacy: Raphael both tells too much and not enough. Perhaps eating the flesh of the fruit made knowledge of good

and evil material, where previously it had been limited to intuition and then discursive representation. In any event, by the end of Book 9, whatever blame might lie with Raphael's loquaciousness combined with his editorial omissions migrates from him and is cathected onto Eve and then Adam.

Raphael's narrative "lends the aura of material reality" to "th' invisible exploits / Of warring Spirits" (PL 5.565-66) in order to legitimate the "winning construct." Like all colonial narratives, its medicinal or prophalactic value serves the health and well being of Heaven (the Fatherland), not Paradise (the colony). That value for the "winning construct," of course, is exactly what Milton announces the purpose of the poem and the narrative to be—to "assert Eternal Providence / And justify the ways of God to men" (1.25-26) and "to render [unfallen/primitive] Man inexcusable." Only in retrospect does the need to tell become projected as a need to know. As Stanley Fish argues in Surprised by Sin, the rhetorical strategy of the poem rests on a retrospective, a position that I argue attempts to cloak itself in piety while it reaffirms the perspective of the colonizing agent. As the Romantic interpretations that propose that Milton was of the Devil's Party and argue for Satan's ethical superiority testify, this strategy is a gamble, one Milton is willing to risk because he has hedged the bet: (1) he can rely on the referent text, the scriptures, to suture any disclosures

Paradise Lost may reveal, and, (2) he can rely on the bipartisan desire of his Restoration readers to legitimate the "Western design"--this is not Cromwell's, but God's plan. Although the narrative of Satan's rebellion does not benefit Adam and Eve and may well have contributed to their perversion, it serves the purposes of both Heaven and English colonial expansion in ways that more pervasively pious discourses could not.<sup>20</sup> It offers a history, or as Michel Foucault names it, a "genealogy" of:

the accidents, the minute deviations--or conversely, the complete reversals--the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us. ("NGH" 146)

Those who would save Paradise Lost for religious orthodoxy have made an industry of exposing Satan's "errors," "false appraisals" and "faulty calculations" that initiated "those things that continue to exist and have value for us": pride, ambition, self-reliance, leadership, strength, will and liberty. Likewise, those who lean toward Empson, entertaining the premise that Milton's God is "wicked," tend to focus on Eve's and to a lesser extent Adam's "errors," "false appraisals" and "faulty calculations" that stem from other things that also have value for us: growth, curiosity, discovery, inquiry, initiative, industry, advancement, power and love.

The poem offers historicity to the colonial project by inventing and

then validating a Euro-centered pre-history for the "primitive" in ways Genesis cannot. However, as Foucault notes, "every origin of morality"--and surely Raphael's preface, "freely we serve, / Because we freely love" (5.537-38) and conclusion, "to love is to obey" (8.634), to his discourses are intended to be original to morality--"every origin of morality from the moment it stops being pious . . . has value as a critique" ("NGH" 146).

Because of its rhetorical structure, the traps for misreading that Fish argues are built-in, Paradise Lost must continually "stop being pious" in order to reaffirm piety. In these interstices the poem articulates its own critique of the proposed moral origin of the colonial project. We can sense this when we examine the history of the poem's criticism in broad terms. As long as all went well for English investors in the colonies, the critique remained well masked, but as soon as the colonial enterprise soured, the critics of piety emerged, most notably, the "Romantics" after the American and French/Haitian Revolutions and the "Moderns" during the Great Depression. Scholarly industry of the last half-century recapitulates the same pattern. New Criticism, the re-aestheticizing of Milton and every other "great book," emerged in the '50s when it seemed (after the loss of India and the establishment of protectorships) that English-speaking colonial powers had nothing else to lose. Only a few decades later, economic pressures from the "third-world" and demands of "second-class citizens" have made it abundantly clear that the "first-world"



possesses a great deal more to lose, and "post-modern" (deconstructionist, feminist, new historicist, post-colonialist) scholars are retilling ancient fields with impious theoretical plows. It is not Milton's place in the canon, but the canon itself that is under siege.

Raphael's colonialist behavior is not difficult to detect. While he ogles Eve, he repeatedly asserts the superiority of the angelic realm with pompous arrogance—the food, the conversation, the love-making are all better and more refined in heaven; then he condescendingly advises Adam: "Meanwhile enjoy / Your fill what happiness this happy state / Can comprehend, incapable of more" (5.503-505). Adam's world, his wife, the very sources of his gratification and the very nature of his happiness—in short, the satisfaction he derives from life—are inferior and "incapable of more." Moreover, the archangel clearly relishes his material lunch which he addresses "with keen dispatch / Of real hunger" (5.435-436) and his role as raconteur with the novelty of employing discourse, the more common mode of earthly intellect, rather than intuition, the speech of angels (488-89). Raphael is obviously enjoying the benefits of both worlds while he disparages the value of Adam's. Despite, or more probably because of, his affability, his gentility and his sociability, Raphael manifests all the earmarks of privilege, the legitimated disparity that ideologically finances colonialism.<sup>21</sup> Raphael's diplomatic failings, those personality traits that contribute to rather than

prevent disaster, also have value for us: affability, gentility, sociability, privilege, refinement, self-righteousness, and physical, mental and spiritual superiority.

Once Raphael concludes his history of the war in heaven, which includes the extensive use of artillery, unknown and presumably impressive to both Adam and American "multitudes," he pauses. At Adam's prompting, "How first began this Heav'n[?]" (7.86); "what cause / Mov'd the Creator . . . to build / In Chaos[?]" (90-93), he broaches new subject matter, a discourse on the Creation and astronomy. Again Raphael is both tentative and condescending; he's not sure how well a Seraph can put into words God's works, or if Adam's ability to comprehend is sufficient, but his "Commission from above" includes providing Adam with "knowledge within bounds"; however, he warns, "beyond abstain / To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope / Things not reveal'd" (7.112-122). We should remember that Adam is familiar with Paradise and knows that nature was born "from the unapparent Deep" (103); indeed he named the creatures of his habitat, and Eve named the vegetation (11.277). He wants to know only what he needs to know in order to "magnify" the works of God (7.97), or as Raphael restates it somewhat more quantitatively, to "multiply a Race of Worshipers" (630). From the beginning the "Divine Interpreter" (73) designs a narrative that serves to impress, rather than enlighten Adam. According to the

archangel, the Son (the expression of God's will) circumscribed the circumference of the material universe, separating it from chaos, with "golden Compasses, prepar'd / In God's Eternal store" (225-226). Harinder Singh Marjara says of the passage, "Whether Milton's God actually uses 'the golden Compasses' prepared in 'God's Eternal Store' is less important than the symbolism of the image, which is obviously mathematical" (204). The image is also obviously an embellishment on Genesis, and the tool is a European one, albeit appropriated from the Middle East. The symbolism need not be limited to the theoretical discipline of mathematics, but can clearly extend to practical applications, specifically navigation where not only the compass, and instruments derived from the compass like the astrolabe, but the magnetic compass offered scientific proof of the European mariner's superiority over new world inhabitants. As Empson implies when he asserts that Eve's goal to become a god is specifically linked to doing "space-travel" (154), the most manifest proof of angelic (whether faithful or fallen) superiority is the ability to navigate between different realms; angels are not land-locked.

It is imperative that we acknowledge the seventeenth-century ambivalence surrounding "this Western design." First, the American continents should not, according to a feudal Christian epistemology, have existed. In "orthodox geography," to venture beyond the Pillars of Hercules (beyond the known, or biblically identifiable world) invited

divine wrath, but the discoveries and the consequent wealth of the Iberian countries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries challenged traditional assumptions. The material reality of new worlds eroded the theory that terrestrial life existed solely for the greater glory of God and established "humanism's poetics of propter nos—that is, the thesis that the earth had been created for us" and all but guaranteed "the gradual development of a science of geography [to replace] the sacred geography of feudal-Christian Ideology" (Wynter 254). In a slim but highly insightful monograph, Hakluytus Posthumus: Samuel Purchas and the Promotion of English Overseas Expansion, Loren E. Pennington notes that "[o]ne of the chief contributions of Purchas to the English colonial movement was to provide it with a philosophical statement of purpose." In the opening volume of Hakluytus Posthumus, Purchas goes to great length to establish biblical precedent and divine sanction for the colonial project. Pennington summarizes: "Purchas made use of the voyages of Solomon, and the later ones of Christ and the Apostles, to prove that trade and navigation could be squared with the law of God, and indeed were approved and commanded by Him." Furthermore, navigation was God's gift to Christians; proof could be found in the fact that "[t]he great land powers of history, all of them heathen, had lacked the learning for navigation and to Purchas this was evidence of God's will in preserving its secrets for Christians" (11-12). Heylyn explains that unlike other

creatures which "are naturally armed and clothed," humans are born naked and helpless so that they are forced to develop "inward faculties" that are manifested in the arts and sciences and ultimately in the necessity for travel and trade (4-5). The assurance that cultures more naked and less technologically advanced manifest God's will to a lesser degree than those with breeches and compasses is implicit in Heylyn's narrative of the Creation that significantly has no reference to the Fall, which might impugn the "preëminence" of Europeans and raise doubts about the righteousness of the colonial project. The fact remained that Europeans had sailed across vast stretches of ocean out of sight of land for weeks to discover new worlds. Furthermore, for the seventeenth-century mariner it really didn't matter "whether Heav'n move or Earth," if he "reck'n[ed] right" (PL 70-71). Columbus, Cabot, Magellan, Drake and many others had successfully completed trans-oceanic voyages without the benefit of a Copernican heliocentric theory.

Navigation was, and perhaps still is, the most practical use of astronomy. Even now when a secular science enjoys the position of providing authoritative discourse addressing the physical world, theoretical pursuits garner little popular regard and are often deemed suspect. On the other hand, practical applications can engender considerable popular enthusiasm. During the seventeenth century conditions were far more hostile to the heresies of a lay science that

appeared to challenge orthodox understandings of the celestial and terrestrial realms. We might as well admit that Raphael has a point: disputes over theory "perhaps" provoke God to "laughter at thir quaint Opinion wide" (8.77-78). Even so, Milton has been accused of medieval, even obscurantist, science. Marjara's argument questions this view asserting that:

like most philosophers and men of letters of his time, he had a much more comprehensive interest in the knowledge of his time than is expected of poets today. . . . He lived in an age of ferment and turmoil in science, and it is inconceivable that he shut his eyes and ears to the scientific controversies of his time, or that he failed completely to understand their importance. (11)

The mere existence of Raphael's discourse on astronomy would appear to substantiate those points. However, rather than emphasize the "ferment and turmoil in science," I would point out that the epistemological compass that circumscribed "science" or "natural philosophy" as it was known then had longer arms: a half century before the Commonwealth, Kepler was casting horoscopes and a few decades after, Newton was dabbling in alchemy and proposing that "moderns" were merely rediscovering scientific and mathematical principles well-known to ancient Egyptians. But more importantly, Raphael has a rhetorical

relationship with Adam that is not necessarily congruent with Milton's to his audience; it would be a mistake to conflate the content of Raphael's lecture to Adam with Milton's understanding of science. Another way to view what appears at best to be Raphael's mixed, at worst his anachronistic, message about astronomy is to remember that he is an emissary commissioned to admonish and exhort obedience, not to teach Adam the secrets of heaven that "import not." Unlike the Spanish Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún who established the seminary of Tlateloco where he taught the Aztec elite Latin and collaborated with them on a history written in Nahuatl (Todorov 220-23), the English colonizers were not interested in educating the "multitudes"; they were in the business of subduing them to advance their own profit margins.

Heaven, too, has profit margins to maximize, and limiting Adam and Eve's education, as we shall see in the next chapter, serves that purpose. As a celestial traveller, Raphael advises Adam:

Heav'n is for thee too high  
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise  
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being;  
 Dream not of other Worlds, what Creatures there  
 Live, in what state, condition or degree[.] (8.172-76)

As one of the colonized, Adam should eschew scientific speculation and leave those matters "to God above, him serve and fear" (168). Accurate or

not, and Raphael makes a point of noting that "the great Architect" (8.72) has concealed the mechanisms of the universe from the angels as well as men, Raphael's reckoning is superior to Adam's; he can navigate while Adam cannot. Adam ought not to attempt it, or even speculate about it, but rather he should "serve and fear" the "Architect." Navigational lore is power that is closely guarded in Paradise Lost and was interpreted as evidence of superiority and a mark of divine blessing in seventeenth-century England.

The archangels' voyages between realms are not pleasure excursions. However, Heaven's archangels have smoother sailing than Satan, and their skills are clearly designed to be the object of admiration. Raphael and Uriel have the advantage of what we would now call weather forecasts and conditions that allow for VFR (visual flight rules) navigation. Uriel glides in and out of Paradise on his mission from Heaven via a sunbeam, a direct line of sight "which shows the Mariner / From what point of his Compass to beware / Impetuous winds" (4.555-560, 590). Raphael's venture is even more impressive, so much so that twice John Dennis (1704, 1721) identified "the Description of the Descent of Raphael" as a sublime moment in the poem (221):

From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,  
Star interpos'd, however small he sees,  
Not unconform to other shining Globes,



.....

Down thither prone in flight

He speeds, and through the vast Ethereal Sky

Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing

Now on the polar winds, then with quick Fan

Winnows the buxom Air[.] (5.257-59, 266-270)

With this sort of expertise, astronomical position and fair weather, it is little wonder that Raphael has a high opinion of himself and is condescending towards Adam's naive questioning.

Satan's journey from Hell to Earth offers a different kind of narrative, one more familiar to seventeenth-century mariners and readers. Like travellers' journals of the period which repeatedly document the terrors of hurricanes, waterspouts, shipwreck, shortages of food and water, and hairbreadth escapes from disaster and death, Satan's journey from Hell through Chaos to the new World is fraught with danger. On his trip from Pandemonium to the Gates of Hell, he hugs the shore like Renaissance merchants and the classical mariners of Greek epic and myth: "sometimes / He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left" (2.632-33). But that leg of the flight is far less challenging than what is to come. He meets and escapes Death at the gate, and when the gate opens:

Before thir eyes in sudden view appear

The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark  
 Illimitable dimension, where length, breath, and highth,  
 And time and place are lost

.....

Into this wild Abyss the wary fiend  
 Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,  
 Pondering his Voyage: for no narrow frith  
 He had to cross. (2.890-93, 917-920)

Here Satan is faced with a problem analogous to that of the seventeenth-century mariner who proposed a trans-Atlantic crossing. Although latitude could be determined, longitude could not because of the earth's rotation; there is a "direct relationship between time measurement and longitude determination," and measuring time at sea proved a difficult problem. Both the Royal Society, sponsored by Charles II, and the Académie des Sciences, supported by Louis XIV, were challenged with the pursuit of longitude after Milton's death, although the value of such knowledge had been recognized by mariners prior to Columbus (Williams 85-89). Thus, Satan's task, to navigate an "Illimitable Ocean" where both latitude ("length, breath, and highth") and longitude ("time and place") "are lost," is a challenge with no analog for us. Satan's theory-less, rudderless voyage to the throne of Chaos (2.927-959) is replete with all the images we might expect of lost-at-sea narratives.

He ascends "Audacious"; "plumb down he drops"; he founders "half on foot,  
Half flying," employing "both Oar and Sail":

So eagerly the fiend  
O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,  
With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,  
And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps or flies[.] 2.947-950

He continues until he encounters "friendly natives"—Chaos, Night, Chance, Discord, et. al.—whom he asks for directions, assuring them that his is a temporary stop. Like the indigenous populations that the Spanish encountered in their search for gold, Chaos enthusiastically points Satan away from his territory and toward his frontier with Heaven and Earth (2.1007-9). In comparison to Heaven's archangels, by the time Satan reaches the walls of Paradise, he is both courageous and "ridiculous," as Arnold Stein characterizes "the indirect view of his leaping into Paradise like a wolf or a thief" (22). He, like so many travellers to the new world, struggles ashore.

Satan journeys to the "new World" with the express intent of corrupting its inhabitants. Raphael, even without his pompous attitude and diplomatic failings, is simply no match for Satan's moral turpitude. The quality of mariners and colonists travelling to the new world was a continual concern in seventeenth-century England. In 1610 William Strachy complained that the mariners of Virginia were "that scumme of

men" given to "idelnesse," "Treasons," "Piracie," and telling tales that were elaborated "into diversitie of false colours, which hold no likeness and proportion" (Purchas, 19.68-69). In 1625 Purchas places such problems in the past: "A long time Virginia was thought to be much encombered with Englands excrements, some vicious persons . . . that Colony made a Port Exquiline for such as by ordure or vomit were by good order and physicke worthy to be evacuated from This Body . . . lazie drones . . . wicked Wasps with sharking, and the worst, that is beggerly tyrants, [who] frustrated and supplanted the labours of others" (19. 236). But three decades later colonials do not seem much improved when Henry Whistler commented of Jamaica in his journal: "This Illand is the Dunghill wharone England doth cast forth its rubdg: Rodgs and hors and such like peopel are those which are gennerally Broght heare. A rodge in England will hardly make a cheater heare: a Baud brought ouer puts one a demuor comportment, a whore if hansume makes a wife for sume rich planter" (146). If anything, the colonial condition had gotten worse and/or writers more cosmically metaphorical and flamboyant when Ned Ward wrote of Jamaica in 1695:

The Dunghill of the Universe, the Refuse of the whole  
Creation, the Clippings of the Elements, a shapeless Pile of  
Rubbish confusd'ly jumbl'd into an Emblem of the Chaos,  
neglected by Omnipotence when he form'd the World into its

admirable Order.<sup>22</sup> The Nursery of Heavens Judgments, where the Malignant Seeds of all Pestilence were first gather'd and scatter'd thro' the Regions of the Earth, to Punish Mankind for their Offences. The Place where Pandora fill'd her Box, where Vulcan Forg'd Joves Thunderbolts, and that Phaeton, by his rash misguidance of the Sun, scorched into a Cinder. The Receptacle of Vagabonds, the Sanctuary of Bankrupts, and a Close-stool for the Purges of our Prisons. (13)

The Eden that early explorers had described had been debauched.<sup>23</sup> "Affable," "gentle," "sociable" colonialism had been foiled, and sterner measures needed to be taken.

After the Son is dispatched to render judgment and pass sentence, the "solemn and sublime" Michael is sent to foreclose on Paradise and evict the pair "Lest Paradise a receptacle prove / To Spirits foul" (11.235, 124-25). In this instance we can infer that God's instructions to the emissary are far more particular about what is to be said than with Raphael:

Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal  
To Adam what shall come in future days,  
As I shall thee enlighten, intermix  
My Cov'nant in the woman's seed renewed[,] (113-116)

Although no longer innocent, Adam is a naif, as in a sense was Raphael, who needs instruction and the courage to face a dangerous life in the wilderness after having enjoyed "preëminence" in Paradise. He needs the moral righteousness to perform the "many deeds well done" to "cover" the debt he has incurred (which in Christian doctrine can only be satisfied by the Son's crucifixion), appease God, and thus "Redeem [him] quite from Death's rapacious claim" (346, 256-258). One can only wonder what sense an imaginative, adventurous Eve might have made had she been privy to the conversation, but she is drugged and given "gentle Dreams" that portend "good" and will render her "To meek submission" (12.595-97). The role of the imagination and the tension between free will and necessity so central to the earlier books are anesthetized in the last two. Instead, Michael presents Adam with waking visions, and when his eyesight fails him (12.9-10), a discursive narration, each with a running commentary and a critique of Adam's interpretations. Unlike Raphael, Michael does not indulge in ontology or inventing history, but reveals "future days."

The "history" that the "Teacher" (11.450) or "Enlight'ner" (12.271) offers is ostensibly designed to offer Adam consolation even though there is no indication that any action he might take could materially mitigate the horrors and terrors he sees or hears about. Here Milton is at his most orthodox: salvation comes through faith in Christ; without it

the soul is impotent and actions are futile. However, the books also offer practical advice about the seventeenth-century colonizing project: temperance, when confronted with the temptations of license, wealth and power, is the most redeeming of virtues, and avoid miscegenation, which leads to "effeminate slackness" (11.634), at all costs; such "ill-mated Marriages . . . by imprudence mixt, / Produce prodigious [unnatural] births" (11.684-87).<sup>24</sup> Of course, the scriptures, particularly the Old Testament, are rife with these two admonitions and offer a plentitude of narratives to exemplify them, but it is surprising that Milton relied so little on the gospels to formulate Michael's narrative of consolation; they comprise some eighty lines out of books 11 and 12, about 1550 lines. One possible explanation is that the gospels emerged from a colonized people, and the texts of the Sermon on the Mount and the parables do not serve the interests of the colonizer in the ways that many of the Old Testament books can. Instead, Michael offers a Christian spin on the Old Testament stories. For example, the lesson Michael extracts from Cain's murder of Abel is not about fratricide, or even the relative merits of sacrifices and the need for sincerity, but about "Intemperance" (11. 472) and "inabstinence" (476), "till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess" (498) and Adam was prepared to listen to Michael's lecture on "The rule of not too much" (531), which is quite different from the threats to property in the parables and the resistance to the legal system in the Sermon on the

Mount.

From the "luxury and riot" (715) and "civil Broils" (718) before the Flood, to usurpation of power by Nimrod, from the "factious" squabbling that threatens Christ's "Throne hereditary" (12.352, 370), to the "grievous Wolves" who for "lucre and ambition" (511) abandon the welfare of parishioners, the catalog of disasters that Michael relates has its nearly contemporary analogs. In Purchas, William Strachy itemizes the problems of Virginia in 1610: "sloth, riot and vanity," "privy factionaries" (19. 46), "habitually impieties" (47), "dissension," "negligence and improvidence," "idleness," "treasons," "covetousnesse" and "folly" (67-70). He sums up:

want of government, store of idlenesse, their expectations frustrated by Traytors, their market spoyled by the Mariners, our Nets broken, the Deere chased, our Boats lost, our Hogs killed, our trade with the Indians forbidden, some of our men fled, some murthered . . . [and] Above all, haveing neither Ruler, nor Preacher, they neither feared God, nor man which provoked the wrath of the Lord of Hosts[,] (70-71)

In 1625 Purchas himself is more hopeful about the prospects for successful colonization in Verginias Verger:

whatsoever faults happened by ignorance in the beginnings, neglect of seasons, riot, sloath, occasionall wants of or in



Governours or Government, abuses of Mariners, treachery of Fugitives, and Savages; and other diseases, which have in part attended all new Plantations, and consumed many: experience I hope by this time hath taught to prevent or remedy. (237)

To read Pardise Lost alongside Purchas and Heylyn gives us the sense that Milton, too, had hope that future planters would add "Charity" to the "knowledge answerable" Michael's "history" provides, thus preventing or remedying past mistakes.

Michael's history of the colonization of the earth is only one of many generated after the discovery of the new world. The work of Purchas and Heylyn were theoretically informed by the same text that Milton drew upon—the bible. It is hardly surprising that the language of one should echo in another. Each validates the colonial project as God's will while regretting the "errors," "false appraisals" and "faulty calculations" of those who initiated it. Adam's pity for and displeasure with those who executed the colonization of the territory east of Eden is irrelevant; complicity with the project represents the ultimate submission to the will of God.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>"Disillusioned" is an adjective used ubiquitously to describe the later Milton. I object on two grounds: the word implies that he suffered from illusions in the first place and it attempts to separate the ideological Milton of the Restoration from that of the Commonwealth/Protectorate. I do not believe there is sufficient warrant for either implication.

<sup>2</sup>See J. Douglas Canfield, Word As Bond, and Michael McKeon, Origins of the English Novel.

<sup>3</sup>See Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish; Nancy Armstrong, Desire and Domestic Fiction, and Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, The Imaginary Puritan.

<sup>4</sup>The phrase, of course, comes from William Empson in Milton's God, who refers to "God's blood-curdling jokes" (29).

<sup>5</sup>Although "Miltonists" have long recognized a "historical" Milton and have argued his place in the history of the Reformation and the "Puritan revolution," they have focused on the definition and development of Milton's doctrinal views as they relate to seventeenth-century protestantism. Even Christopher Hill's magnificent study, Milton and the English Revolution, limits itself to situating Milton in the context of political factions defined by their religious doctrine. There is good reason for this vision: materially, politics and religion were inseparable during the period, and Milton's work is clearly not just informed but driven by his faith in and interpretation of the bible. However, the facts that Milton for decades argued for the separation of church and state, was not a church goer, and repeatedly objected to the proliferation of civil laws designed to mandate moral virtue, I believe offer us warrant to inquire into the ideology of his poems unencumbered by deferential interpretations stemming from our presuppositions based on his privately or publically enunciated religious beliefs or his proposed situation in the context of mid-century politico-religious factions.

<sup>6</sup>Spengemann explicitly articulates the marginalization of DiSalvo's argument that proposes an American influence on Paradise Lost, particularly in the colonizing behaviors of Satan. Spengemann asks, "why did the respondent, Jon S. Lawry, greet her paper with a flurry of quibbles and irrelevancies whose purpose seems less to confront the argument than to wish it away?" and suggests "repression" rather than "oversight" in Marjorie Hope Nicholson's otherwise exemplary

scholarship on Milton and scientific discovery when she fails to engage with Raphael's cautions not to meddle in speculations about other worlds (99, 101). I have my own anecdotal evidence of such marginalization: in the margins of the collection in which DiSalvo's paper appears, which I had to procure on inter-library loan, someone had lightly penciled marks by salient points; only one comment appears—"WAY OUT OF CONTEXT!" (25). Evans' meticulously argued book-length study of a colonial context mirroring a biblical context for Paradise Lost will be much more difficult to dismiss. Evans recognized "the Fall . . . as an act of imperial conquest" twenty years ago, when such an argument "would have been almost unimaginable" (1-2). Now such a reading is not only imaginable and theoretically supportable, but embarrassingly obvious.

<sup>7</sup>See Allan Gilbert's A Geographical Dictionary of Milton, Robert Ralston Cawley's Milton and the Literature of Travel, and the standard anthology, Merritt Y. Hughes' John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose for examples.

<sup>8</sup>I have modernized the stylistic use of italics and romans in the letter "To the Reader." No page numbers or printer's marks appear on the letter. I have inserted arabic numerals in brackets to indicate the page location of quotation.

<sup>9</sup>The right of first discovery, based on John Cabot's ventures (1497-98) becomes a jingoistic call to oust the Spanish from New Spain in John Phillip's epistle dedicatory for The Tears of the Indians (1656).

<sup>10</sup>Donald A. Roberts, editor of the Second Defense for the Yale edition, notes that Milton "scorned the Spanish because of their treachery and their barbarity toward the Englishmen and Indians in overseas disputes (Litterae Pseudo-Senatus Anglicani, 1676, #21, #41, #42)" (fn. 555).

<sup>11</sup>In one sense the point is moot; the treaty had no lasting impact. By the mid-fifties Cromwell repudiated Spain in the Spanish Declaration of 1655, "a compendium of Spanish abuses against the English and the Indians in the New World, a subject that" Fallon asserts, "had no apparent impact upon his [Milton's] imagination." Although eighteenth-century editors attributed the Declaration to him based on "the peculiar Elegance of the Stile," Fallon argues it was not his work, and notes, "I can bring to mind no reference in Milton's poetry or prose to this barbarous destruction of an entire race" (99, emphasis added). Is not genocide precisely what is at stake in Paradise Lost? There Milton is attempting to justify the death of every human who ever has or ever will live. Exactly what was Samson's handiwork (armed with the jawbone of an

ass and poised between pillars at the Temple of Dagon) designed to do if not effect "a Holocaust" (1702)? Whether or not Milton wrote the Declaration seems far less important than whether or not he was aware of it and the circumstances surrounding its composition, as surely he must have been. No one would suggest that because he didn't write the bible, it had no apparent impact on Milton's imagination, but his repeated references to a "new world" or "another world" have rarely be interpreted as the New World's impact on his imagination.

<sup>12</sup>For example, "For reasons that only a complete history of our English departments could explain, Milton's literary value seems to depend on his perceived detachment from America" (116)--"our own ineluctable sense that America is at once the historical occasion for the poem . . . and the thing that must be denied, expunged, if that history is to be redeemed" (117). "Americans find a spiritual ally in Paradise Lost, which, by simultaneously addressing and denying the history that has produced them, permits them, for as long as the spell lasts, to feel superior to themselves" (117).

<sup>13</sup>See Book 7, lines 150-155:

But lest his heart exalt him in the harm  
Already done, to have dispeopl'd Heav'n,  
Any damage fondly deem'd, I can repair  
That detriment, if such it be to lose  
Self-lost, and in a moment will create  
Another World . . . .

<sup>14</sup>Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" in Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, 142. Subsequent citations of this much reprinted essay will be abbreviated "NGH."

<sup>15</sup>I do not mean to imply that Milton is somehow reproaching God for creating the tree and then mandating the prohibition. However, Milton was highly critical of both civil and ecclesiastical law. In Second Defense he advises Cromwell to strip the church of its civil power: "Then may you propose fewer new laws than you repeal old ones . . . the greater the number, the worse in general is the quality of the laws, which become, not precautions, but pitfalls" (678).

<sup>16</sup>Evans notes that Adam's question about angelic sexuality rearticulates the curiosity indigenous peoples entertained about their conquerors: how did this apparently all male population sustain itself? (73-74). While not disputing the logical analogy, I would argue that the concern of the poem, like the curiosity of the "civilized," is around "native"

or "primitive" sexuality that was projected as sometimes "innocent" and at others, bestial.

<sup>17</sup>For example, Heylyn says of Guiana: "in all places so adorned with Natures Tapestry, the boughs and branches of the Trees never unclothed or left naked, (fruit either ripe or green growing still upon them) that no Country in the world could be better qualified" (169). "A People which eat of nothing that is set or sown: the children of Dame Nature and therefore will not be beholding for the lively-hood unto Art, or Industry" (172). "The women of such easie child birth, that they are delivered without help" (170).

<sup>18</sup>Expanding on DiSalvo's work, Spengemann asserts: "Intended or not, the association in Paradise Lost between Satan's project and the American adventure is rhetorically unmistakable." Cataloging Satan's qualities, Spengemann notes that "Satan, the seeker after this undiscovered land, bears all the traits that readers of Hakluyt and Purchas had come to associate with New World voyagers" (107), but he retreats from the brink, asking the wrong question: "Why would Milton have chosen to associate his composition, whose purpose is to justify God's punishment of excessive appetite, with the actions of Eve, Sin, and Satan, the main exemplars of that appetite and its baneful consequences, rather than with the cautionary, anti-adventurous spirit of God, the Son, Abdiel, Raphael, and Michael, who speak the lessons that the poem aims to teach?" Spengemann mixes categories; God, the Son, Satan, Raphael and Michael each ventures to the new world; Eve never leaves it (although she would like to); Sin does not arrive until after the poem is over, and Abdiel is the only "anti-adventurous" homebody in the narrative. Spengemann's answer to the question, therefore, turns predictably orthodox: Milton redirects human desire "from improper, human objects abroad in time and space to its proper, divine object in eternity" (112). But, Satan is not the only colonialist in Paradise Lost, he's just the most obviously pernicious of them.

<sup>19</sup>Hulme's Colonial Encounters, which surveys both "historical" and "literary" discourses over a period of three centuries beginning in 1492, leap-frogs Milton, one more instance of the author's "eye of the storm" position in post-colonial studies.

<sup>20</sup>Winstanley comes to mind.

<sup>21</sup>On the nature and role of privilege, see Albert Memmi, The Colonizer and the Colonized, 7-12, 45-76.

<sup>22</sup>It may be a reach to saddle Milton with Ward's rhetoric of hyperbole, but the deployment of epic simile and echoes of images in Paradise Lost cannot be lost on any reader familiar with both texts.

<sup>23</sup>Cawley reviews the literature that attempts to find the sources for Milton's geographical location of Paradise in Book 2 which indicates a site in Africa. I would point to a different echo. Milton describes Paradise in an epic simile following Raphael's arrival:

A Wilderness of sweets; for Nature here  
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will  
Her Virgin Fancies, pouring forth more sweet,  
Wild above Rule or Art, enormous bliss. (5.294-97)

Pennington quotes from Purchas' selection of Captain John Smith's description of Virginia:

The countrie is not mountainous nor yet low, but such  
pleasant plaine Hills and fertile Vallies, one pretily crossing  
another, and watered so conveniently with their sweet  
Brookes and Cristall Springs as if Arte itself had devised  
them. (33)

Later, again from Purchas this time selecting from George Percy, Pennington quotes:

. . . . faire meddowes and goodly tall Trees, with such Fresh-  
waters running through the woods, as I was almost ravished  
at the first sight thereof. (34)

My point is not to identify a source for the geography of Eden, but to note that travellers to the new world including Strachy, Whistler, and Ward repeatedly described the beauty and fertility of the places they visited, even as they disparaged the character of the colonists and colonized alike.

<sup>24</sup>Anxiety about the "half-breed" or "mulatto" would not reach fever pitch until the next century after a more modern conception of race emerged. But clearly we can see why Adam's second and third visions in Book 11 would have appealed to elements of colonial society in the new world. Miscegenation will be treated more fully in the chapters 3 and 4.

## Chapter 2: The Spirit of Pleasure and Matters of Waste

"God save me from Love and Purges."

–Pinguister, All Mistaken, 1672–

How did the medical officer's obsession with . . . wastes  
render invisible the contributions of economic exploitation  
and social disruption . . . to the spread of disease?

–Warwick Anderson, "Excremental Colonialism," 1995–

The three archangels who alight in the "new World" bring three styles of colonialism and three justifications that could salve whatever misgivings might sting the consciences of God's Englishmen concerning their colonial venture. The Restoration may have restored the monarchy, the prelaty, the theaters, some banished peers and other pre-revolutionary institutions, but the restored political order did not reject Cromwellian aggressive colonial expansion, as a series of wars with the Dutch in the 1660s and '70s testify. The reinstated government could not have contained the economic pressures brought to bear by colonial wealth on a traditional, agrarian-based, domestic polity had it wanted to. Maintaining the insular integrity and innocence of "this other Eden, demi-paradise . . . this England" was impossible.<sup>1</sup> So, Milton's poem offers consolation not only to Adam expelled from Eden by God, but also to that "happy breed of men" forced by historical necessity from their fortress to confront the wilderness, and while Adam's future lies in colonizing "all th'

Earth," his happiness will emerge from possessing "paradise within." Material exploitation and ethereal pleasures permeate Paradise Lost, and Milton's negotiation of paradoxes—surrounding the relationships between foreknowledge and free choice, grosser bodies and vital spirits, internal and external sources of pleasure—could be appropriated to serve other incongruities—the concurrent emergence of Puritan asceticism and conspicuous consumption, sentimentality and modern science, institutionalized slavery and the concept of individual liberty.

### The Spirit of Pleasure

Michael's narrative of human history in the final two books of Paradise Lost outlines the process of colonialization in the wilderness, placing the world's peoples in their plantations and tracing the progress of disease and apostasy. Human depravity accounts for individual catastrophe and mass disasters, but such corruption can only partially contribute to Milton's justification of God's ways to man. It does not address the motivation for creating Adam "sufficient to have stood though free to fall" (3.99). For that we must turn to the highly problematic speech in Book III. There we find that free choice is inextricably bound to the Almighty Father's appetite for loving service. "What pleasure I from such obedience paid," he asks rhetorically, and without pause makes explicit that without free choice human "will" and "reason" would have "serv'd necessity, / Not mee" (107-11). Milton's God



desires sincere "proof," unblemished and untainted by a hint of coercion, "Of true allegiance, constant Faith or Love" (104-5), and nothing less will provide pleasure. Raphael reiterates the central economy: "freely we serve, / Because we freely love" (5.538-39) and "to love is to obey" (8.634). However, it is neither the loyal angels nor Adam, the "youngest Son" (3.151), but the first begotten (or "only" as Raphael reports in Book V [604]), who will provide "the great Creator" with his "chief delight" and "sole complacence" by producing proof of "Filial obedience" (151, 167, 168, 276, 269). Yet, from the new world the Son brings the "Father" a novel source of pleasure made possible only through disobedience:

I thy Priest before thee bring,  
Fruits of more pleasing savor from thy seed  
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those  
Which his own hand manuring all the Trees  
Of Paradise could have produc't, ere fall'n  
From innocence. (11.24-29)

In Milton's version of Genesis only fallen humans are capable of the "contrition" that produces fruits more pleasure-provoking to the Almighty, at least as the Son articulates the situation, than anything Adam and Eve could have farmed in their innocent obedience. Without human disobedience and consequent contrition, God's "mercy" and the Son's "merit" could not be expressed or manifested, nor their "glory excel"

(3.131-34, 290, 309). While Milton's God persistently posits that obedience from his subordinates is the source of his pleasure, something quite different appears to be the case. Obedience is the instrument of exchange, merely the coin, but value is located elsewhere—in loving service, in contrition, in mercy and merit, in glory and ultimately in the mind of Milton's God himself. Immediate appetitive commerce (desire-gratification) offers less "savor," and is in fact unsavory compared to a mediated, dialectical economy. Indeed, in the course of the poem this Sovereign goes to considerable lengths to shed the trappings of sovereignty—omniscience and omnipotence, faculties that paradoxically impede rather than assure pleasure.

This economy of pleasure reflects the dialectical process at work in the central paradox of the poem: the fortunate fall. As others have noted the action of the poem repeatedly documents the fall of those who rise up and the rise of those who submit; it is a tight model that has been rendered in a precise geometrical form. While the model portrays the actions of Satan, Humankind and the Son and the conceptual movement of the poem, in which good is perverted and evil is converted to good, it does not account for God's increasingly sophisticated understanding of his own pleasure. The non-chronological structure of the poem and the believer's presupposition that God reveals an immutable self, rather than a dialectically developing consciousness, serve to mask God's changing

tastes. The despot we find at the originary moment in Book 5 is not the same pleasure-seeking totalitarian we see in Book 3, and both are radically different from the "modern hedonist" who can extract superior pleasure from inferior fruits and who appears at the beginning of Book 11.<sup>2</sup> Possessing the paradise within may be Adam's reward, but its discovery is God's.

To discover unlimited pleasure, Milton's God rejects the notion of necessity by proposing that omniscience is not bound to agency, that agency is not bound to omnipotence, and that neither omniscience nor omnipotence is bound to a linear concept of time. Thus God insists that "if I foreknew, / Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault, / Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown" (3.117-19), lines which simultaneously suggest a teleology and not only disavow the influence of omniscience on specific instances but preclude any intervention: "free they must remain . . . I else must change / Thir nature" (124-26). Here the Almighty is divesting himself of the "necessity" implicit in notions of omniscience and omnipotence; in "emancipating" humans he is in fact freeing himself from the limitations tyranny imposes on the tyrant.<sup>3</sup> For Milton, human "nature" exercises "will" and "reason" by making choices, predicated on the future, which effect the past; without "their fault" there could be no "Word," a decidedly New Testament term, to bring Adam into existence.<sup>4</sup> The poem "always includes a retroactive movement: the final

Goal is not inscribed in the beginning; things receive their meaning afterwards; the sudden creation of an Order confers backward signification to the preceding Chaos" (Žižek 144).<sup>5</sup> Thus the plan to corrupt the "new World" (Book 2) appears before its creation (Book 7); the exaltation of Satan (Book 2) precedes the Exaltation of the Son (Books 3, 5 and 6); the prophesy of the Incarnation (Book 3) precedes the begetting of the Son (Book 5); the plan to redeem humankind (Book 3) precedes the Fall (Book 9). In each of these instances what appears discursively first contaminates its chronological predecessor.<sup>6</sup> Retroactivity is latent in the typological method of biblical interpretation: the types of Christ presage the Incarnation; however, the Incarnation "confers backward signification to the preceding" types of Christ. By rejecting both Calvin's theory of predestination and Pascal's wager and solution through ritual to a crisis of faith, Milton moved beyond typological interpretation and the Renaissance figure of paradox to invent the modern dialectic articulated more than a century later by Kant, Hegel and Marx.

The "evolutionary idealism" that Raphael theorizes as an unproblematic movement from matter to spirit ("body up to spirit work") by which "substance" and "nourishment" "by gradual scale sublim'd / To vital spirits aspire" (5.478, 474, 483-84), is radically disrupted by disobedience, the "fault" which retroactively begets essential being, ontology, the "Word." To use Žižek's contemporary philosophical terms:

"the subjective 'mistake', 'fault', 'error', misrecognition, arrives paradoxically before the truth in relation to which we are designating it as 'error', because this 'truth' itself becomes true only through-or, to use a Hegelian term, by mediation of-the error" (59). Adam enthuses about the effect of the dialectic, going so far as to wonder if he should indeed repent his sin or celebrate it (12.470-478), and for once Michael neither cautions nor corrects him. A truth, according to Milton, left in stasis "mudd[ies]" and "sicken[s]," while "our faith and knowledge thrives by exercise"; "[a] man may be a heretick in the truth; and if he beleieve things only because . . . [he is told to] without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds, becomes his heresy" (*Areopagitica*, CPW 2: 543).

Milton and Žižek, separated by over three centuries of "history" that has witnessed the ascendancy of empiricism, secularism, and capitalism, both focus on the question of human agency and are remarkably congruent in their insistence that "exercise" or "activity" is essential, not merely to individual well-being, but to the human condition (and in Milton's case, cosmic pre-condition). Furthermore, conditional to that exercise is the "fault"-the exception that "proves" (makes work, as sugar and warmth "prove" yeast) the rule, the truth, or the "Word." Žižek argues that an ideology "by structural necessity, never fully succeeds, that there is always a residue, a leftover, a stain of traumatic

irrationality and senselessness sticking to it, and that this leftover, far from hindering the full submission of the subject to the ideological command, is the very condition of it: it is precisely this non-integrated surplus of senseless traumatism which confers on the Law its unconditional authority" (43). In Paradise Lost, which posits the omniscience and omnipotence of the Almighty, the "non-integrated surplus" is the "freedom" conferred on Adam and Eve by "the high Decree / Unchangeable, Eternal" (3.126-28). The political order implied by omniscience and omnipotence is retroactively, that is always already, disrupted by the "Unchangeable, Eternal" mandate that created prelapsarian humans free. This freedom is a continual source of concern and no little defensive truculence for the Almighty, for whom Žižek's "ideological command" stands in.

Human freedom is carefully distinguished from angelic will. The fallen archangels are "self-tempted" and "self-deprav'd" (3.130). Logically then, loyalist angels are self-withstanding, and the narrative bears out such a conclusion. Other than the case of Abdiel, it is impossible to determine how much the loyalists knew of Satan's plot. We know that angels were awakened from their sleep to dissent from the newly imposed social order, and that Satan "Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's Host" (5. 673-710), and among those who left was Abdiel. One likely possibility is that the conspirators only roused those angels

already in Satan's legion: "all obey'd / The wonted signal" (704-05). In that case the loyalist angels never really "stood" (3. 101), they slept; they made no choice and their virtue is untested, what Milton calls "blank vertue . . . an excrementall whitenesse" (*Areopagitica*, CPW 2: 515-16). Satan implies that after a day of feasting and song, the loyalists were too lazy to get up (6. 166-67). Abdiel himself raises a third possibility: he was not alone; the loyalists were "to [Satan] not visible, when [Abdiel] alone / Seem'd in [Satan's] World erroneous to dissent" (6. 143-46). What is indisputable is that no angel raised an alarm when the rebels headed north, and Abdiel "single . . . maintain'd / Against revolted multitudes the Cause / Of Truth" (6. 30-32). Raphael admits to Adam that it seemed "strange . . . At first, that Angel should with Angel war" (6. 91-92), and Satan appears to be genuinely surprised by the notion that angels were created by the Son and then rejects it, arguing that because they have no memory of being children, they must be "self-begot, self-raisd" and thus "equal" to, not the handiwork of, the Son (5. 853-69). He is an empiricist lacking "right reason."

Raphael says that Satan's revolt is originary in his "envy" and "pride" (5.662, 665); at the same time Satan and his legions are held fully responsible for the fiendishness that is essential, necessary to their nature.<sup>7</sup> Satan is the "Author of evil," "Misery," and "Rebellion" (6.262, 268, 269). Milton's theodicy is a Kantian solution to the problem of evil, or

more accurately, Kant's is a Miltonic one. Satan's decision to rebel, like God's to beget the Son, is "an atemporal, a priori, transcendental act . . . which never took place in temporal reality but none the less constitutes the very frame . . . of his practical activity" (Žižek 166-67).<sup>8</sup> Even his "former name" is effaced (5.659). In contrast, that Adam is "just and right" and capable of exercising "Good reason" is evident from his desire and request, which God approves, for "Collateral love, and dearest amity" (3.98; 8.443, 426). Adam has at this point made the "right choice." But, with the creation of Eve there is no residue or leftover to offer free choice significance in Eden, nor is Eve's frightening dream sufficient to provide the "traumatic irrationality and senselessness" to "the high Decree" that they be free. Adam and Eve are not "free to fall" unless "disobedience" is a signifier with a referent; therefore, Raphael is dispatched "to render Man inexcusable" (Argument, bk 5). Their subsequent fault again reconfigures freedom: it is the proximate cause of the Son's voluntary suicide mission and the involuntary free fall in which Adam's seed find themselves. From the moment of birth, humans wait on death row confronted with freedom. In the poem's ideological schema, to find grace the individual must freely choose with "sincere intent" "To pray, repent, and bring obedience" (3.192, 190). Here "sincere intent" signifies "true allegiance" or "constant Faith or [constant] Love"; it is not a well-intentioned conscious strategy to gain favor. Clearly the individual



cannot be ordered to love God anymore than he or she could be ordered to love anyone or anything else; in that sense to love must be an effect of freedom, and there the necessity implied by Calvinist predestination falters. However, it is equally clear that the individual, who recognizes that the loved one must be freely chosen, cannot simply line up the options, like debutantes in a receiving line, and freely choose one or more. In Žižek's words, "that . . . is not 'real love,'" the failing of Pascal's remedy through ritual. "The paradox of love," Žižek explains, "is that it is a free choice, but a choice that never happens in the present—it is always already made" (166), and neither foreknowledge nor hindsight can effect or affect it. It is equally temporal and atemporal; all those retrospectives ("I remember the moment I fell in love with . . .") are narrative sutures, rationalizations. Finally, it is not love that is traumatically irrational as Renaissance and earlier poets imply, but the freedom attendant to love that is senseless; indeed, "it [traumatically irrational freedom] is the very condition of it [love]" and the source of pleasure—for both humans and Milton's God.

This has been a tortured and perhaps "senseless" route to get to what is a critical commonplace: Milton advocated the regulation and discipline of freedom, not by an external "unconditional authority" that imposes limits, but by "Good reason" or right choices. I trust, however, that the preceding discussion mediates the antithetical characters of

"foreknowledge" and "free will" and thus diminishes the tyrannical property of omniscience.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, Milton's God is not figured primarily as "the subject presumed to know," although clearly he does have foreknowledge, "but the subject presumed to enjoy," although apparently Satan's rebellion and Adam and Eve's ingratitude mar his pleasure.<sup>10</sup> Following the lead of Shelley, William Empson questions this appearance by "think[ing] the traditional God of Christianity very wicked" and proposing that Milton struggled and "succeed[ed] in making him noticeably less wicked" (10-11).<sup>11</sup> To support his position Empson points out a series of "God's blood-curdling jokes" (29), and sums up God's character:

The picture of God in the poem, including perhaps even the high moments when he speaks of the end, is astonishingly like Uncle Joe Stalin; the same patience under an appearance of roughness, the same flashes of joviality, the same thorough unscrupulousness, the same real bad temper. (146)

Certainly God experiences a sort of malicious glee in prolonging the war in heaven and presents himself as positively coy in asking who will volunteer to save "man"; Milton's God, like the character presented in Jonah (who knows God will not uncreate his children) and Job (who knows he will torment them for no earthly reason), manipulates and gloats; undoubtedly there are elements that we could term sadistic had

de Sade preceded Milton. Knowing, for example, that Eve would be deceived by Satan, that she in turn would confront Adam with the choice between life and wife, that he would opt for the latter, and that there would be hell to pay, God seems too "pleas'd" with Adam's request for a "fit and meet" companion (8.437-451). The angels are treated even more shabbily; after Satan is allowed to go free, they are tasked to patrol the boundaries of Paradise to prevent the Fiend's incursion. When they fail, largely by God's interference, God tells them not to feel bad, he's quite pleased with their vain efforts, and he'd known all along that they weren't up to the job. Given Heaven's know-it-all government, it is not surprising that the loyalist angels demonstrate a marked lack of initiative and curiosity; theirs is not to learn, but to express love through obedience. It is not God's knowledge, but his pleasure that is to be courted, and those who have questioned authority have been declared enemies of the state. There are two points to be made: Stalinist totalitarianism is decidedly different from despotism, and the nature of pleasure in the poem emerges from the dialectic of freedom and servitude that the poem narrates.

The traditional despot can be figured as the absolutely free master in a social order in which every other individual is absolutely subservient and whose very life is prolonged at the pleasure of the despot—one master demanding strict obedience from a multitude of slaves. In contrast, in a

Stalinist or Cromwellian regime, it is the people who are posited as "free" and the ruler who is figured as the one who labors under the burden of governing in accordance with a goal imbued with a historical imperative. Heavenly social order is constructed on despotic principles, at least as Raphael discursively renders the originary moment: "This day I have begot whom I declare / My only Son . . . your Head I him appoint . . . to him shall bow / All knees in Heav'n . . . him who disobeys / Mee disobeys" (5.604-612). The Almighty acts with complete freedom in begetting a surrogate and companion to wield power, the Son who will prove to be the Father's "chief delight." The angels serve a second master by fiat, and the rebellion in Heaven is a slave revolt—that is the "self-tempt'd, self-deprav'd" revolt which retroactively discloses Satan's essential slavishness. Empson has pointed out this aspect of Heaven's social order, accusing Raphael of having "a timid slavish mind" and citing Gabriel's spiteful taunts aimed at Satan (111):

And thou sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem  
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou  
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd  
 Heav'n's awful Monarch? (4.957-60)

Empson concludes that "this quotation seems to me quite enough to prove that God had already produced a very unattractive Heaven before Satan

fell" (111)–"unattractive," that is, to the individual who finds politic behavior in response to raw power cowardly and unsatisfying.

Herein lies the problem of omnipotence for the despot. Posited as the absolutely free master with unlimited access to objects of desire, the trick is not getting objects but stimulating appetite for them in order to derive pleasure from them. Thus, as Colin Campbell has noted, pleasure is not a quality inherent in the object which produces pleasure but rather a function of the subject who has the capacity to enjoy (61),<sup>12</sup> and the despot relies on "skilful manipulation of sensations associated with appetites so as to maximize their stimulative impact, and it is in this context that such 'arts' as those practiced by the cook and the concubine develop" (66).<sup>13</sup> Milton naturalizes mastery of these "arts" in prelapsarian Eve, as evidenced by Raphael's appreciation of Eve's beauty, sexuality, fecundity and the lunch she prepares for him in Eden. However, despotism can provide only limited enjoyment; it is still bound to the exterior object as a source of pleasure. There is always, as Gabriel discloses, the niggling doubt (or in Milton's God's situation, foreknowledge) that an obedient slave like the pre-revolutionary Satan is fawning, cringing, and serving up "palaver" rather than "true allegiance, constant Faith or Love." But, as "Monk" Lewis, another "sovereign" from a later time, notes, even "palaver" can please the slavemaster:

certainly [slaves] at least play their part with such an air of truth, and warmth, and enthusiasm, that, after the cold hearts and repulsive manners of England . . . I find it quite impossible to resist the fascination of the conscious pleasure of pleasing; and my own heart, which I have so long been obliged to keep closed, seems to expand itself in the sunshine of the kind looks and words which meet me at every turn, and seem to wait for mine as anxiously as if they were so many diamonds. (90)

Here slavery softens rather than hardens Pharaoh's heart. What Lewis finds irresistibly fascinating is his conscious pleasure in his slaves' apparently conscious pleasure in making him pleased.<sup>14</sup> Joan Dayan in "Romance and Race" articulates a basis for this phenomenon: "Out of the ground of bondage, the curse of slavery, and the fear of 'servile war' came a twisted sentimentality, a cruel analytic of 'love' in the New World: a conceit of counterfeit intimacy" (90). We have a glimpse of such an intimacy in Adam's recollection of his creation and relationship with God in Book 8. Just as God knows that Adam will disobey, Lewis does not allow the probability that his slaves may be "play[ing] their part" to ruin sufficiently his enjoyment, and the ruse may indeed enhance his fascination, particularly with his expanding heart. It is Milton's God's worst moment, a point when he toys with Adam solely to cultivate a

moment of pleasure out of "counterfeit intimacy." Adam, while clearly grateful for the world he inhabits and the animals he commands, asks, "Among unequals what society / Can sort, what harmony or true delight" (8.383-84). Of course, God has already provided himself with a "fit" companion who is his "chief delight" and "sole complacence," but he proposes to Adam that he is in himself "sufficiently possess / Of happiness . . . alone / From all Eternity, for none I know / Second to mee or like, equal much less" (8.404-07). That assertion is patently false; the Son is so "second," "like," and "equal" that it is unclear whether Adam is speaking with him or the Almighty.<sup>15</sup> Despotism has over-stepped its limits and become something quite different. In a perverse moment Milton's God appropriates Adam's lack of companionship, not his desire for it! Pleasure is not derived from gratification of desire, but its frustration. What follows, God's good humor and disclosure that he knew all along that it is "not good for Man to be alone" (4.45), is the closest the poem gets to sentimentality (God's cultivation of emotional response), but his creation of Eve who will pervert Adam, cruelly twists the concepts of love and freedom.

Chronologically, this incident precedes the problematic speech in Book 3 when the Almighty enunciates the "high Decree . . . which ordain'd / Thir freedom," which we are to presume preceded the creation, but in effect is a bit of post hoc law-making. Suspending for the time

being the nature of Satan's choice to revolt, I want to trace the progress of the concept of freedom in the poem. Within the temporal framework of the poem, Adam's request for "Collateral love, and dearest amity" is the originary act of free will; it is the first time anybody (any subjectivity) has had the impudence, the shamelessness intrinsic to his prelapsarian existence, to ask for anything. There can be no doubt that Adam couches the request in fawning, cringing, servile rhetoric: "how may I / Adore thee, Author of this Universe, / And all this good to man, for whose well being / So amply, and with hands so liberal / Thou hast provided all things . . . . Let not my words offend thee, Heav'nly Power, / My Maker, be propitious while I speak. . . . He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd" (8.359-63, 379-80, 412). God finds "it quite impossible to resist the fascination of the conscious pleasure of pleasing" and his own magnanimity expands when confronted with Adam's "kind looks and words" that wait for God's generosity and "Word" "as anxiously as if they were so many diamonds." Satan consistently errs in political situations, but he is an astute judge of emotions. Noting that humans are inferior "In power and excellence" to angels, he is quick to admit that they are "favor'd more / Of him who rules above" (2.350-51).

When God returns to a realm of "cold hearts and repulsive manners" populated by angels where "sincere intent" is construed as "strict obedience" which in turn "passes" in the unattractive heavenly



social order for loving service, he cannot equate human fault with angelic revolt, nor what will emerge as human contrition with angelic loyalty. Resuming his rightful place as Heaven's despot, he foretells the Fall, terms Adam an "ingrate" (3.97) and proclaims "Die hee or Justice must; unless . . ." (3.210). Others have suggested that power, not "Justice," is at stake. Neither power nor justice is significant to the desire implicit in the imperative, and the Son is quick to pick up on Adam's lead and asks to be accounted man. Pleasure, specifically the Almighty's, is at stake. On the one hand the despot tires of the endless search for appetite, the wringing of pleasure from exterior objects regardless of how exotically deferential or obnoxiously resistant to authority. The war in heaven, though mythical in scale, is as much a staged production as a Robert May banquet; the spectacle is cooked up. On the other hand, a retreat into a self-pleasuring, onanistic strategy of un-creating, is a possibility raised but rejected (3.162-182). Instead, Milton's God "recreates" (reforms and diverts) himself.<sup>16</sup> The Son, the anointed heir apparent to despotism, recognizes that Adam's understanding of God's self-sufficiency is flawed. Adam is wrong when he tells his creator: "Thou in thy secrecy although alone, / Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not / Social communication" (8.427-29). God is not "best with [him]self accompanied," and with that understanding the Son generates "delight" and "complacence" for the Father by emulating Adam and seeking "Social

communication," even though it entails "Humiliation" (3.313).

Furthermore, in the inverse of Raphael's prescription, the Son will work from spirit to body. While the Almighty finds pleasure in the "recreation" of despotism--inventing freedom retroactively, experiencing "the conscious pleasure of pleasing" and anticipating the Incarnation--we arrive at the "truth" of freedom through the mediation of "social communication."

What Milton's God through the mediation of the Son comes to know, but Satan fails to recognize, is that "free choice" exists only insofar as individuals make the right choice (to obey); as soon as they make the wrong choice (to revolt) "they enthrall themselves" (3.125) or "lose the freedom of choice itself" (Žižek 165). Making the right choice for Milton is the exercise of right reason; Satan's wrong choice simply revealed his essentially fiendish/slavish nature and should not be construed as an exercise of reason or choice. Žižek expands on the concept of the choix forcé which has a particular resonance with the situation in Paradise Lost.<sup>17</sup>

the situation of the forced choice consists in the fact that the subject must freely choose the community to which he already belongs, independent of choice--he must choose what is already given to him.

The point is that he is never actually in a position to choose: he is always treated as if he had already chosen. Moreover, contrary to the first impression that such a forced choice is a trap by means of which totalitarian Power catches its subjects, we must stress that there is nothing 'totalitarian' about it. The subject who thinks he can avoid this paradox and really have a free choice is a psychotic subject, one who retains a kind of distance from the symbolic order—who is not really caught in the signifying network. The 'totalitarian' subject is closer to this psychotic position: the proof would be the status of the 'enemy' in totalitarian discourse (the Jew in Fascism, the traitor in Stalinism [Satan in Paradise Lost])—precisely the subject supposed to have made a free choice and to have freely chosen the wrong side. (165-166)

While Satan may be a "psychotic subject," the Almighty comes dangerously close to assuming the position of the "totalitarian subject" when he asserts that "all th' Ethereal Powers . . . Freely . . . stood who stood, and fell who fell," "by thir own suggestion fell / Self-tempted, self-deprav'd" (3.100, 102, 129-30). He is not fully "caught in the signifying network" of his own design. Not until he grants Adam's request, forms Eve, articulates the role of deceit in the Fall and accepts the Son's

mediation is he fully capable of enjoyment different from that of a despot or a totalitarian. By abdicating power over life and death, first by enunciating the "Eternal Decree" and proclaiming "Die hee or Justice must" and then by accepting the Son's mediation, Milton's God suspends his disbelief in human obedience; his pleasure is no longer limited by objects, individuals or events because he is complicit with the symbolic order—he controls their meanings.<sup>18</sup> In circumventing foreknowledge by reducing it to a body of facts with no essential meanings, Milton's God now has scope for his imagination. Once he accepts the Son's proposition that fruits "sown with contrition" have a "more pleasing savor" than those "manured" in innocence, before him lies a virtual Serengeti of pleasures, and as he and Michael so pointedly remark, while what humans do may be of interest, it is of no consequence (3.181-82; 12.410). His paradise is truly within: he has discovered a discursive means of uncreating the corruption of the new world by recreating its significations and by occupying himself with the pleasure that is a potential of all experience.

In Milton's poem, Raphael's and Michael's visits to the new world present Adam with history: a narrative of past violence and a vision of future struggle, the first designed to render him inexcusable and the latter to console him. Just before ushering him out of Paradise, Michael cautions Adam to "add / Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add Faith, / Add Virtue, Patience, Temperance, add Love, / By name to come call'd

Charity, the soul / Of all the rest: then wilt thou . . . possess / A paradise within thee, happier far" (12.581-87). It is that "paradise within" that some dissenters sought to possess with such enthusiasm that the word "enthusiast" became synonymous with religious fanatic and the practice of canting. While human reason may be flawed, for Milton it offers us our best shot at performing God's will as long as we temper it with charity, "the soul" of all human capacity for goodness and the human version of divine grace. However, "ethusiasts" converted the rigorous and patient physical, intellectual and ethical discipline that the Son and Michael prescribe from guidelines to beelines to salvation. Both enthusiasms, eighteenth-century Pietistic sentimentalism and Calvinist self-abasement and exaltation, are lifestyles devoted to (or hell-bent for) possessing and cultivating Milton's Almighty's pleasures, not the "paradise within" proper to humankind.

The title of Colin Campbell's supplement, The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism, to Max Weber's classic, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, conceals his work's significance for students of the Restoration and early eighteenth century. Patiently, Campbell convinces readers that delayed gratification and artificially imposed deprivation associated with Puritan asceticism produce the "day-dreaming and suppressed passion" (222) so essential the "Romantic" subject who cultivates and grooms inspiration. Practicing

Libertines such as Rochester and his court cronies went about exercising their "liberty," attempting to extract pleasure from objects at hand—drinking, "swiving," vandalizing, murdering—only to conclude that appetite could not be sustained and the intense pleasure they sought could not be wrung from "objects," generally women, but even in bizarre construals of Cartesian dismemberment, their own objectified body parts, which they blamed for their "imperfect enjoyments."<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, Enthusiasts, equally complicit with Cartesian constructions, sought individual pleasures not limited by reliance on external objects or "social communication." Although they congregated in conventicles, such meetings were designed to facilitate individual, not communal, salvation; God's grace, when it was detected, visited the person, not the group. The irony, of course, is that the individualism implicit in "aristocratic," nihilistic, existential Libertinism, was manifested in fundamentally non-aristocratic, theocratic, religious practices designed to experience a "paradise within." What should not be forgotten is that both Libertine and Enthusiast sought pleasure.<sup>20</sup> While the former preyed unapologetically, the latter prayed, feeding off the delicious offal of their imagined sins and the material fruits of their worldly tyrannies. The behavior and qualities essential to "social communication"—deeds, faith, virtue, patience, temperance, love, and above all charity—that Michael commended to Adam as an avenue to recreate Paradise, turned

perversely, retroactively, and literally inward for many dissenters (Ferguson 221-240). Social responsibility converted to personal (enthusiastic) quests for the pleasures of salvation.

Subsequently, these same groups pressured for public works to separate themselves from material reminders of the filth their appetites and bodies produced, and Michael's promise of a "paradise within" has numbed us to the reality of human waste for which Milton's God has provided

[His] Hell-hounds to lick up the draff and filth,  
Which man's polluting Sin with taint hath shed  
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst  
With suckt and glutted offal . . . . (10.630-33)

Waste management is one of the poem's central concerns—Raphael's narration of the heavenly purgation, God's easement for a cosmic close-stool, Satan's begetting of Sin and Death, his construction of Pandemonium and the causeway over Chaos, a sewerline to a toxic landfill called hell, Michael's analytical instructions to Adam outlining how to separate valuables from unredeemable trash. An obsession with the consolation of the "paradise within" has detoured many readers not only from the dynamics of heavenly government and angelic instruction, but more importantly away from the sight of social evils without—Milton's catalog of human failures to practice charity, the soul of human

virtue. It is here I turn to the scatological Swift, the Anglican and satirist, as Milton's non-commissioned heir unapparent, and to Gulliver, the enthusiast, whose aspirations to what is "more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure" (5.475), lead to his madness and whose "constant faith and love" is not sufficient to prevent his expulsion from paradise.

### Matters of Waste

[S]uch persons as invented or drew up the rules for themselves and the world . . . divide every beauty of matter or of style from the corruption that apes it . . . with the caution of a man . . . who is indeed as careful as he can to watch diligently and spy out the filth in his way; not that he is curious to observe the colour and complexion of the ordure, or take its dimensions, much less to be paddling in or tasting it, but only with a design to come out as cleanly as he may.

—Jonathan Swift, A Tale of a Tub, 1704—

Like Milton, Swift has proven a controversial figure. Both men were close to power and later exiled; both were outspoken, contentious writers quick to heap scorn and ridicule on abuse of power and human folly. Both were religious men who shared a contempt for the Roman Catholic church and those ministers they felt exploited their flocks, turning believers away from God's plan. There are "hard" and "soft" interpretations of both men's works, proposed by readers who attempt to locate the authors in relation to an orthodox Christian doctrine that posits human depravity. The harder the school, the less generous God is with grace, the less he values "social Communication" in favor of



individual loving service, and the less apparent is the homology between divine grace and human charity. On the other hand, the softer the school, the more philosophically ethical Satan becomes and the more Don Pedro emerges as the human ethical ideal. What should strike us immediately is that both schools focus on the the individual, not the community. The hard school draws on a construction of the bourgeois individual--the person of singular merit who "earns" salvation through vigilance and by the grace of god--while, paradoxically, the soft school thinly veils a nostalgia for a status society in which an aristocratic individual acts nobly, heroically, generously. Either way, at the center of both interpretations is a commitment to an elect, who are individually saved, or an elite, who conform to the traditional values of a noble (aristocratic) ideology. However, one can practice neither religiously informed charity nor secularly informed ethics individually; the charitable or ethical life addresses communal concerns. For both writers, ignoring "the rule of not too much" (11.531) in favor of unlimited individual accumulation of wealth and unjustly distributing the fruits of human labor causes human misery, both individual and global.<sup>21</sup> Although each human is supplied with "conscience," neither Milton nor Swift believed that conscience was "individual."<sup>22</sup>

Much recent work treating colonialism and colonial discourse theory has focused on eighteenth-century Pharisees who drew up rules

and taxonomies assuring that the blessings bestowed by God or Natural Law were reserved for those who could properly cultivate them while the curses of the Bible and secular Philosophy were cast upon those who in their estimation could not. Indeed, the Foucault oeuvre argues that modernism is marked by the will to reshuffle, realign and demark the parameters of "the Human Sciences" by constructing physical facilities and discursive apparatuses of disease—prisons, asylums, hospitals, clinics, delinquency, madness and sexuality—in order, in Swift's terms, to separate "matter . . . from the corruption that apes it." Peter Hulme and Mary Louise Pratt have persuasively disclosed how this process served the ends of colonialism, and Stallybrass and White, instancing a portion of the Swift epigraph above, have argued that Augustan literary efforts "took the grotesque within itself so as to reject it . . . [as] representations associated with avoidance and with others" (108-09). While clearly empiricism, with its commitment to observation of and experimentation on "matter," emerged in the West as the dominant methodology employed to divide valuables from wastes, Jonathan Swift resisted the method because he rejected as arbitrary and false its "models of value."<sup>23</sup> Instead, he reconstrued the divisions and rules into economies of waste.

Rather than dividing "matter" from its "corruption," Swift conflates in a digestive process two significations of "waste": (1) the putrefying leftovers of indiscriminate appetite, and (2) the excremental product of

consumption. The greediness implied by the former contributes to the nastiness of the latter. As a result, loud noises and bad smells emit from both ends of the adult alimentary canal, and the more pernicious ones spew from the mouth; reverse peristalsis is the instrumental cause of an epistemology of and pedagogy by "eructation."<sup>24</sup> In a remarkably gutsy essay Ashraf H. A. Rushdy notes that "Swift represents a body in which the alimentary canal is indeed open-ended and [the direction of] material movement indeterminate," and he argues that if writing is excremental, then "reading must be the ingestion of fecal matter. . . . In either case—the reception of reading or the production of writing—there is shit afoot" (3, 4). Citing Montaigne and Swift, he concludes, "the world will be . . . a healthier place not when shit is made invisible but when it is confronted as the other we produce" (29). However, Rushdy's therapeutic "emetic aesthetic" fails to maintain the carefully constructed digestive economy; it vents the very "fullness" (3) of Swift's alimentary analogy, a conceit that persistently insists that shit is not only "the other we produce," but the other we seek out to ingest.

Rushdy does loosen up the impacted criticism of one of Swift's more benign scatological poems, the epithalamic "Strephon and Chloë," and his deployment of Bakhtinian theories of the grotesque body and the carnivalesque serve a cathartic function. But what of Swift's more aggressive scatology, particularly in A Tale of a Tub and Gulliver's

Travels? "Ignorant readers" are apt to stare themselves into a sweat, while "superficial readers" are "provoked to laughter" which is, according to the Tale's persona, "sovereign against the spleen [self-indulgence manifested in affected hypochondria], and the most innocent of all diuretics" (150).<sup>25</sup> While "superficial" and "ignorant" readers, Strephon and Chloe, and "harmless northern swains" can find excretory relief in natural body functions, the critic, the *Æolist*, the "learned" reader, and the vicious or depraved among us require sterner physic.<sup>26</sup> For them, the alimentary canal is a blind alley, and nothing spells relief. However useful Bakhtin's work is, it does not adequately address the tight, enclosed economy of waste that Swift constructs for societies plagued with digestive ailments, an economy that reveals a conservative, or more properly, a conservationist impulse to recycle and to cultivate cure from corruption;<sup>27</sup> unlike Milton, Swift provides no "Hell-hounds" to serve as sewers disposing of filth and offal conveniently. And while many contemporary theories of discourse are useful in reading out the complexity and intellectual rigor of Milton's work, those same strategies tend to totalize, trivialize and reduce the caustic wit, redemptive irony, and "savage indignation" that marks Swift. If Milton's jokes are bloodcurdlers for the thoughtful, Swift's provoke belly-laughs. The problem for Milton's reader lies in identifying the joke; the one for Swift's is "getting" it.

Our twentieth-century urban, American, bourgeois, and I would argue peculiarly gendered, attitudes toward excrement exacerbate the problem of getting Swift's jokes in an appropriate cultural context.<sup>28</sup>

Alain Corbin notes that in Britain and France "[f]rom about the middle of the eighteenth-century, odors simply began to be more keenly smelled," and that this olfactory revolution markedly lowered a tolerance for excrement (56). In contrast to our squeamishness, "[i]n the late seventeenth century . . . excrement was endowed with vital fire and so had a therapeutic property; there was therefore nothing aberrant in using it in aromatic preparations" (Corbin 67). Stench was not associated with smoke or excrement, the by-products of energy consumption, but putrefaction, the wasting of energy sources.

Perhaps even more alien to our sensibilities are the medicinal uses of "things taken from the [human] Body living" as William Rowland's 1669 "Englished" version of John Schroder's 1641/42 Pharmacœpia lists them: "1. The Hair, 2. the Nails, 3. the Spittle, 4. the Ear-wax, 5. the Sweat, 6. Milk, 7. Terms, 8. Secundines [umbilical cord] 9. Urine, 10. Dung, 11. Seed, 12. Blood, 13. Stones, 14. the Cawl from Childrens Heads" (516).<sup>29</sup> While these bodily effluvia could be applied topically, much of it was prepared for ingestion. The longest section explicates and directs the use of urine, a multi-purpose substance useful in treating a variety of

maladies as well as rendering silver and gold from base ores. Schroder introduces section nine:

Urine is hot, dry, dissolving, cleansing, discussing [repellent], resists Putrefaction: Used inwardly against obstructions of the Liver, Spleen, Gall, and against the Plague, Dropsie, Jaundies; and if a Woman drinks her Husbands urine, she hath easie Travel.

Outwardly it dryes the Itch, abates Tumors, cleanseth Wounds, though venomous, cures Gangrenes, loosens the Belly, (in a Clyster) cures Dandriff (with Sal Nitre,) and Fevers (laid to the Pulses,) . . . [Boy's urine applied in drops] cures sore Ears, and red Eyes, and by washing, the trembling of the body, (and in a Gargle,) . . . (517)

The passage continues on to describe six preparations including a "magistery" that produces "a fine Salt of Urine very pleasant to behold" and an "oyl" derived "of the tartarus matter that sticks to the Chamber-pot" which "is rare to dissolve the Stone"; it cautions the pharmacist about the "stink" to be expected and recommends dosages for various illnesses, some of which we would recognize as primarily physical, others mental, and still others metaphysical (ailments resulting from witchcraft and enchantment) (517-518).

The section on dung is considerably shorter, but the substance's medicinal qualities no less wide-ranging. Human fecal matter:

mollifies, maturates, is anodyne; good to take off pains caused by Witchcraft, and to ripen Plague-sores, and the Quinzy (dried, and powdered, and mixed with Honey,) and to cure inflamed Wounds. It is given inwardly by some in the Quinzy, (burnt and put into drink,) and in Ague-fits (two drams) in Epilepsies, (they say the first Dung of an Infant dried and powdered, and given many days, cures them perfectly).

Topically applied, oil of dung can cure sore eyes, gives the face good color, make hair grow and "cures corroding Ulcers and Fistulaes"; ingested "it cures Epilepsies and Dropsies, and expels the stone from the Kidneys and Bladder, cures the bitings of mad Dogs, and of venomous Beasts" (518). This is but a small sampling of the Pharmacœpia translated as The Compleat Chymical Dispensatory in Five Books: Treating of All Sorts of Metals, Precious Stones, and Minerals, of all Vegetables and Animals, and things that are taken from them, as Musk, Civet, &c. Trust me, the Chymical Dispensatory outlines the therapeutic use of almost every sort of matter known or imaginable to the Restoration mind, including "modern mummy," a highly prized substance

derived from the flesh of a twenty-four year old, red-headed man who has died a violent death (520).<sup>30</sup>

While the book has provoked me to laugh like a superficial reader and stare like an ignorant one, I am not about to embark on a project of "scholastic midwifery" to deliver meanings neither Schroder nor Rowland intended (Tale 150-51). I am assuming that it is what it advertises itself to be—a compendium of Galenical and Paracelsian practices designed to popularize them by making them accessible for "all ingenious Druggists, Chirurgions, Apothecaries, and all such as study Philosophy or Physick in their Mother-Tongue" (sig. A), who in turn could supply an increasing market demand.<sup>31</sup> As we peruse the ailments for which preparations of excrement are prescribed, it seems clear that many were devised for digestive diseases linked to over-indulgence or a rich diet (colic, dropsies, gout, stone, obstructions) and conditions such as baldness and poor complexion that reflect anxieties about appearance, not health.

In the context of the Chymical Dispensatory, Swift's scatology is not so much an "excremental vision" that dwells on the evacuation of waste, but a closed system of alimentary recycling that is set in motion by the appetite, not the bowels. Gulliver offers a sustained and detailed explication of this economy in conversations with his Houyhnhnm master.<sup>32</sup> He first asserts that England domestically produces threefold the amount of food and drink required at home, but exports "the greatest



Part of our necessary Things" in order to import "the Materials of Diseases, Folly and Vice" (219). An essentially prodigal national economy results in a wasted populace—the poor are undernourished and the wealthy, overindulged. Gulliver expands:

I told him, we fed on a Thousand Things which operated contrary to each other; that we eat when we were not hungry, and drank without the Provocation of Thirst: That we sat whole Nights drinking strong Liquors without eating a Bit; which disposed us to Sloth, enflamed our Bodies, and precipitated or prevented Digestion. (220)

Then he summarizes: "[The physicians] Fundamental is, that all Diseases arise from Repletion" (ibid.), a condition of being engorged, the retention of liquid and solid "wastes." Having been trained by Master Bates and professors at Leyden, and speaking with the authority of a ship's surgeon, Gulliver expounds on "the whole Mystery and Method" of emetics and purges that reverse the normal flow of alimentary matter (220-21). In the beginning of what amounts to an ethnography of the Yahoos, Dr. Gulliver reports that nothing "rendered the Yahoos more odious, than their undistinguished Appetite to devour every thing that came in their Way, whether Herbs, Roots, Berries, corrupted Flesh of Animals, or all mingled together" (227), and he opines:

I did indeed observe, that the Yahoos were the only Animals in this Country subject to any diseases . . . . Neither has their Language any more than a general Appellation for those Maladies; which is borrowed from the Name of the Beast, and called Hnea Yahoo or the Yahoo's-Evil; and the Cure prescribed is a Mixture of their own Dung and Urine, forcibly put down the Yahoo's Throat. This I have since often known to have been taken with Success: And do here freely recommend it to my Countrymen, for the publick Good, as an admirable Specifick against all Diseases produced by Repletion. (228)

Significantly, the grotesque prescription is recommended for English digestive ailments, and while Gulliver's "dispensatory" employs the same substances found in Schroder, it offers none of the niceties--no preparation, no distilling, no rarefication, no essences. Much critical concern has focused on the content of Celia's close-stool and the Augustan will to reject the grotesque by associating it with "avoidance and others"; however, I would argue that Swift's abhorrence of waste is not about rejection or excrement, but about the social consequences of appetite, diet and ingestion. Rather than treating individual illness, the "mixture" remedies social ills; it is recommended "for the publick Good." We need only quickly skim his political tracts to recognize that Swift

identifies a trade deficit and squarely locates the problem with an illogical, not to mention perverse, economic policy: emulating their English colonizers, the Irish export valuable commodities and import shit, "the Materials of Diseases, Folly, and Vice."<sup>33</sup>

Underlying Swift's scatology, then, is a defense of use-value and an attack on commodity fetishism through a critique of consumer practices that have reversed the body's natural economy: the nation evacuates what is nutritious and ingests the excremental.<sup>34</sup> It is just such reversals that produce the theories that the Professors at the Academy of Lagado have set out to demonstrate: extracting sunlight from cucumbers, breeding sheep without wool, reducing "human Excrement to its original Food," and replacing language with an unwieldy system of non-verbal communication, an attack on the symbolic order itself (153-58). In contrast to an emerging bourgeois strategy, Swift's theory of waste focuses on the oral regulation, rather than cultural containment, of excrement. Corbin speculates that the retentiveness of the "bourgeois mentality" abhorred "waste" signified by the ephemeral nature of scents (69), but the resulting antithetical impulses to deodorize and to contain waste produced cures (ventilation, sewers and cesspools) more unmanageable and deadly than the situations they were designed to remedy. The Tale's author explicates a homologous problem—"true critics," whom he likens to ancient heroes, "[are] in their own persons a

greater nuisance to mankind than any of those monsters they subdued"--and proposes a drastic solution: "every true critic, as soon as he ha[s] finished his task assigned should immediately deliver himself up to ratsbane, or hemp, or from some convenient altitude" (105-06). Here, too, Swift's alimentary economy obtains: the "true critic" is "a discoverer and collector of writers' faults" and a member of "a race of men who delighted to nibble at the superfluities and excrescencies of books"; that "their imaginations are so entirely possessed and replete with the defects of other pens that the very quintessence of what is bad, does of necessity distil into their very own" (106-107). Like the professor at the Academy determined to grow crops by planting chaff, the true critic seeks out error, "nibbles" on "excrescencies," and produces the distilled quintessence of excrement to be consumed by a "learned reader" who provides "fruitful ground" for words "scattered at random" (151). What is nutritious for the body or mind is evacuated, what is foul is consumed and made fouler. These men serve as their own "Hell-Hounds," controlling meanings and pleasures.

Swift's theory of waste was not commended nor his plan for public health adopted. That is not to imply, however, that ingestion of feces fell into disuse or that "learned readers" ceased making their reputations and salaries by feeding on fecal matter. The "bourgeois mentality" managed

the problem in much the same way as the Houyhnhnms, that is by projecting the "evil" onto the other. "Thus," Gulliver tells us:

they denote the Folly of a Servant, an Omission of a Child, a Stone that cuts their Feet, a Continuance of foul or unseasonable Weather, and the like, by adding the Epithet of Yahoo. For instance, Hhnm Yahoo, Whnaholm Yahoo, Ynlhmndwihlma Yahoo, and an ill contrived House, Ynholmhnmrohlnw Yahoo. (240)

While urban planners in the West embarked on massive projects to construct underground sewers and an infrastructure of paved roads channeling and sealing off filth, travellers, scientists and colonialists were busily writing about the filthiness of native peoples. Using Rushdy's materials, Warwick Anderson discloses how Filipino practices fed the ideology that insists that vilest waste is anal, but should not be wasted. At the turn of the twentieth century American public health policies reflected this strategy of containment. Under the standard of disease control, the Army launched a "crusade against filth" and instituted a "pail system" to manage the "grotesque, defecating Filipino body" and collect the "poisonous" fecal matter it produced (646, 647, 660-63). Like the Houyhnhnms' linguistic management of the problem of "evil," the Army ascribed any outbreak of tropical disease to the filthy Filipino, despite "bacteriological evidence" to the contrary (650-51).

Furthermore, the experience in the Philippines recapitulates Swift's enclosed alimentary economy:

American scientists . . . obsessively collected any specimens of Filipino feces they could lay their gloved hands on. . . . [and] smear[ed] the pulverized, reduced material on their microscope slides and agar plates with abandon. Thus when Ernest L. Walker and Andrew W. Sellards conducted their investigations into the etiology of dysentery, they did not hesitate to feed their Filipino "clinical material" with organisms cultured from the stools of acute cases and carriers of the disease and to analyze their subjects' feces for the answer to the problem . . . . On the resulting abstractions and inscriptions did the colonial scientists' reputations and career prospects depend. (669)

These "persons [who] invented or drew up rules for themselves and the world" did indeed "spy out the filth . . . to observe the colour and complexion . . . [and] take its dimensions" and, furthermore, induced others to "paddle" in and "taste" it. Perhaps they came out "cleanly"; certainly they emerged with fame and some fortune. Anderson notes that Richard P. Strong's work in Manila on the dysentery bacillus "propelled" him "to the first chair of tropical medicine at Harvard" (669). Twentieth-century colonialists literally adopted the strategies Swift invented to satirize and

ridicule his contemporaries. I think I am safe in presuming that Swift would have provided laboratory space for Mssrs. Walker, Sellards, and Strong at the Academy of Lagado and a generous "weekly allowance" of dung (153), but, I suspect, with the proviso that they serve as their own "clinical material" and once finished they proceed to the nearest "convenient altitude."

In establishing the parameters of his inquiry, Anderson poses a question that appears to have peculiar resonance with our ship's surgeon's scatological fixations: "How did the medical officer's obsession with Filipino wastes render invisible the contributions of economic exploitation and social disruption . . . to the spread of disease?" (644). As an eyewitness to the ravages of colonialism, Swift offered a modest response to the problems the question implies. Pat Gill, a self-professed subscriber to "the hard school approach," suggests "that women, class, and filth are often in metonymical relation to one another" in Swift's satires, "and that while this relation excites horror and disapproval, it affords a certain comfort and distance as well" (334, 337). The argument is systematic and convincing as long as we assume that conscience and ethics are individual, but as soon as we entertain the notion that conscience and ethics are communal, which is not to say that they are universal, then seepages occur and the metonymic string includes Swift's

narrators and readers as well in the closed economy of waste, dislocation and exploitation.

In Book 1, by being profusely apologetic about mentioning the "Necessities of Nature" (12), Gulliver draws attention to them, and in the process offers glimpses of his social position: he is a brute in bondage. His first relatively "free" act is to produce a "Torrent" of urine once his initial bonds are "relaxed" (9). There are certainly enough indications that Gulliver was enslaved by the Lilliputians—the "treaty" stipulating that in his "Leisure" time he will perform hard labor, what Gulliver chooses to characterize as "Proofs of my prodigious Strength" (26, 35), the plan to make a blind Samson of him (50), and the repeated allusions to his "service." However, the most compelling image of his social degradation is both exposed and eclipsed by his obsession. Hobbled by chains and lodged in a "polluted" temple, trapped "between Urgency and Shame," Gulliver defecates inside his house out of view of "ten thousand" curious onlookers. Ever after, he tells us, he goes with morning regularity to the end of his chain "to discharge" his "uneasy Load," which two men with wheelbarrows cart off (11-12). Gulliver is the "grotesque, defecating body" that shifts the balance of power between Lilliput and Blefuscu, and ironically, what he renders as a civic service, dowsing the palace fire with urine, is interpreted as an affront. The colonial ideology should be far too familiar to us; it was certainly transparent to Swift:



exploitation (of Gulliver's labor) and disruption (of Gulliver's "native" excretory customs) are inverted—Gulliver is the "other" depleting Lilliput of its resources and offending civilized sensibilities.<sup>35</sup>

Our medical officer's obsession with excrement is more complex in Book 4 where institutionalized slavery disrupts affinities between exploited members of the same species. There Gulliver offers extensive descriptions documenting the perverse and filthy nature of the Yahoos, who fight over rotten meat and are kept in "kennels" (sewers/gutters), contrasted to a catalog of Houyhnhnm virtues that include a temperate diet and cleanliness.<sup>36</sup> Gulliver "freely confess[es]" that any valuable knowledge he possesses has come from his "master," whom he holds in "highest Veneration" "mingled with a respectful Love and Gratitude" (243). In a grotesque model of Freudian transference Gulliver places his master in the role of "the subject presumed to know," more specifically the one "presumed to know how to organize [his] desire" (Žižek 185-87), and in that process, as artists have so graphically illustrated, both master and acolyte are unnaturally contorted into grotesque bodies. Gulliver's desire to establish a counterfeit identity with the "superior" Houyhnhnms impels him to idealize bestial bodies and bestialize human ones. However, our ship's surgeon relates legends that disclose the dominant culture's tactical use of genocide and strategic institution of slavery.<sup>37</sup> Of all Gulliver tells them, the single practice the Houyhnhnms consider

worth emulating is castrating "younger Yahoos" to render them more "tractable and fitter for Use" and to "put an End to the whole Species without destroying Life" (238). What has been made most nearly invisible is the Houyhnhnm anxiety over a slave revolt. Gulliver, having both "Rudiments of Reason" and "natural Pravity," is banished because "it was feared [he] might be able to seduce [other Yahoos] into the woody and mountainous Parts of the Country, and bring them in Troops by Night to destroy the Houyhnhnms Cattle, as being naturally of the ravenous Kind, and averse from Labour" (244). The notion in the context of Gulliver's hagiographical depiction of the Houyhnhnms is laughable; this is a cause without a rebel. But, it is a cause Swift championed in 1720 when he attacked land use laws that privileged pasturage over planting and encouraged Ireland's beef and butter export industry.<sup>38</sup>

While it is understandable that some "learned readers" would sympathize with Gulliver's admiration of the Houyhnhnms, it is perverse to argue that the hysteric medical officer's obsessions are consistent, much less that they are Swift's. Just before Gulliver takes "final Leave" of his readers he describes the English colonizing process that is worth quoting at length because it as odds with the misanthropy so often attributed to him and his author:

A Crew of Pyrates . . . discovers Land . . . they go on Shore to rob and plunder; they see an harmless People, are entertained

with Kindness, they give the Country a new Name, they take formal Possession of it for the King, they set up a rotten Plank or a Stone for a Memorial, they murder two or three Dozen of the Natives, bring away a Couple more by force for a Sample, return home, and get their Pardon. Here commences a new Dominion acquired with a Title by Divine Right. Ships are sent with the first Opportunity; the Natives driven out or destroyed, their Princes tortured to discover their Gold; a free 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. (258)

Colonized natives are "an harmless people" whose uninvited yet welcomed guests recompense their hospitality with slaughter and torture, but are dubbed by their "Butchers" "an idolatrous and barbarous People." Given the momentum of British colonization, it is predictable that its agents would appropriate the Yahoo as a synecdoche for subjugated peoples, but it is telling how that trope was first deployed. William Snelgrave, a British slaver who traded in west Africa, recounts the predations and iniquities of his nemesis, the King of Dahomè. There he tells us that the king "marched far Inland against a Nation called Yahoos. These People

valiantly defended themselves for many Months, having retired amongst their Mountains and Woods." Threatened by mutiny of his own troops, the king "resolved to make one grand Effort on the Yahoos, in which he prevailed; but tho' he beat them out of their Fastnesses, he gain'd little by it, they making a brave Retreat, in which his wearied Soldiers could not pursue them" (148-49). "Valiant" and "brave" are not characteristics that we immediately associate with Yahoos, but treachery and villainy are certainly part of the "restless ambitious Prince" from Dahomè.

Although a strategy of projection is already deployed, in 1734 the vicious traits of Swift's Yahoos were clearly linked to a culture that imitates Western vices and the name to one which did not, but rather displayed classic Houyhnhnm "virtues." Swift's enclosed economy of waste was still visibly stuck to "ambition" rendering it a dirty word; "Yahoo" still retained enough association with "civilized" aberrant behavior that it could be applied to a native "harmless People" who resisted conquest valiantly and bravely. After mid-century such a discursive strategy would be impossible. After two centuries, it appears to be generally invisible and nearly indecipherable.<sup>39</sup>

From the beginning, Swift recognized the limitations of his genre of choice: "Satire," he wrote in the Battle of the Books, "is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own" (1). It is quite probable that Swift winced when he beheld his own image

in his own work, that "savage indignation" trapped in an ideological landscape that afforded no woody or mountainous regions for retreat. Like Pogo, he had seen the enemy and they is us. Our own fantasies, not his, have compelled some to speculate that the reflective qualities were "associated with avoidance and with others." Satiric wit, Swift continues, "once scummed away [will leave what] . . . will be fit for nothing but to be thrown to the hogs" (2), and indeed later critics performed prodigious "scholastic midwifery" delivering slop of his satires. There can be no doubt that theorists, such as Buffon, and colonial planters, such as Edward Long, suckled the sow's butt, appropriating illiberally and indiscriminately the images in Swift's "glass" to draw up and invent the rules of a modern concept of race, a perverse justification for global exploitation. Slavoj Žižek notes that "an ideology really succeeds when even the facts which at first sight contradict it start to function as arguments in its favour" (49). Thus has Gulliver's Travels been forced into the service of the ideology that underwrote the colonial project. Despite the facts that Swift clearly identifies Yahoos as synonymous with human beings (the worst of which are "civilized") and repeatedly condemns colonialism as wasteful for both colonizer and colonized, writers since the second half of the eighteenth century have persistently attempted to relegate Yahoos to the not merely primitive or degenerate, but to a biologically sub-human category, and they argue that Swift

intended for his readers to emulate a beast that enslaves humankind. But no one calls the kind Don Pedro, stylish, genteel agent of colonialism, a Yahoo—except of course Gulliver. While such responses make ideological sense, they are as revolting as they are absurd. Swift did not intend that his reader "come out cleanly," and shit is not only "afoot"—we'd do well to suspect our dinner platter and reading matter. Quoting Ecclesiastes, Swift notes, "oppression makes a wise man mad" and therefore it follows that "the reason some men are not mad is because they are not wise. However, it were to be wished that oppression would in time teach a little wisdom to fools."<sup>40</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Quotation of course from Shakespeare's conservative John of Gaunt in Richard II, 2.1.40ff.

<sup>2</sup>"Modern hedonism is marked . . . by a preoccupation with 'pleasure', envisaged as a potential quality of all experience" (Campbell 203, but see also 76). One could turn the argument on its head, saving it for orthodoxy, by asserting that Milton's God is immutable and reveals himself over time, thus giving the reader merely the appearance of change. To do so, however, would conflate God and Necessity which are explicitly distinct in the poem.

<sup>3</sup>Milton develops this point in Second Defence: "For a tyrant is not something great (let him not be puffed up by the very name), but something utterly base. And to the degree that he is the greatest of all tyrants, to that same degree is he the meanest of all and most a slave. Other men willingly serve only their own vices; he is forced even against

his will, to be a slave, not only to his own crimes, but also to the most grievous crimes of his servants and attendants, and he must yield a certain share of his despotism to all his most abandoned followers. Tyrants then are the meanest of slaves; they are slaves even to their own slaves" (CPW 4.1: 562-63).

<sup>4</sup>By "Word" I want to identify the expression of the Son that is accounted man so that humans are not wholly lost, the creative and redemptive agency of the "Son" as I believe Milton had in mind, not an abstraction—a gesture to the "symbolic order" or "Logos."

<sup>5</sup>Here in considering the Hegelian dialectic, Žižek privileges what he calls "creationist materialism" over "evolutionary idealism"; the former implies active engagement and recognition of moments of "absolute negativity," what Milton touts as the benefit of "exercise" and the "contrary," which occasions the purifying action of "trial" (Areopagitica, CPW 4.1, 739, 728); the latter posits "a continuous course of transformations by which the old dies and the new is born, in which all beckon in incessant movement" (Žižek 144-45), what Milton would scorn as "excremental whiteness" (CPW 4.1, 725), and, paradoxically, Eve's attempt to shortcut the progress from matter to spirit.

<sup>6</sup>Technically, Milton negotiates a tricky bit of doctrine by having, as Empson points out, three distinct exaltations (Book 3 when he volunteers to be accounted man, Book 5 when he is begotten, and Book 7 after his victory over Satan), thereby preserving both Calvin's pronouncement that the Incarnation was not necessary before the Fall and a tradition that identified the Exaltation as the stimulus for Satan's rebellion (98). However, doctrinal synthesis is not all that is accomplished by dividing the Exaltation into thirds. The Son's "merit," as evidenced by his willingness to be accounted man (Book 3 after Satan has breached the wall surrounding Paradise), is retroactively inscribed in his "begetting" (the initial action of the poem in Book 5); it mediates what otherwise would be as crusty a piece of raw despotism as I can imagine.

<sup>7</sup>Milton's God is totalitarian rather than circumspect: "I created all th' Ethereal Powers/ And Spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd; / Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell" (3.100-102). The angels are either members or enemies of the state.

<sup>8</sup>Here Žižek notes "that with Kant, for the first time, Evil as such acquired a proper ethical status. That is to say . . . Evil becomes an affair of principle, an ethical attitude . . . an affair of the eternal and autonomous character of a person pertaining to his original, atemporal

choice." Satan, of course, uses "public reason just" to justify corrupting Adam and Eve though he privately "abhor[s]" the job; Milton dismisses the excuse as the typical tyrant's plea of "necessity" (4.389-94). The Romantic recuperation of Satan as hero of the poem is logically predictable in context with German idealism. A knottier problem emerges when we consider just how "free" the angels were in choosing sides. There is a variety of unattractive herd mentality combined with an elitist attitude among them that suggests a lack of vigorous, manly activity associated with the exercise of free choice and reason as Milton constructs "freedom," "choice" and "reason" in his prose tracts.

<sup>9</sup>At the risk of trivializing Milton's theodicy or being reductive, I suggest that Milton's God of Paradise Lost is rendered in the poem like a parent who knows for certain that an unscrupulous competitor is going to offer a younger son and daughter-in-law a deal that they will not refuse despite his and his associate's warnings; like any savvy businessman, he mitigates disaster and by means of the "Word" turns defeat into victory. Empson uses a similar analogy and concludes that Milton's God is "neurotic if nothing worse" (116).

<sup>10</sup>For "The Subject Presumed To . . .," see Žižek 185-87.

<sup>11</sup>Empson quotes Shelley's Defense of Poetry: "Milton's Devil as a moral being is as far superior to his God, as one who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent, in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with alleged design of exasperating him to new torments" (21).

<sup>12</sup>See also Ruth Nevo who argues that the comic hero is the character who has the "capacity for human happiness" (332).

<sup>13</sup>I think it telling that Charlotte Brontë offered this bit of dialog to Shirley Keeldar: "Milton tried to see the first woman but, Cary, he saw her not . . . . It was his cook he saw; . . . puzzled, 'what choice to choose for delicacy best; what order so contrived as not to mix tastes, not well-joined, inelegant; but bring taste after taste, upheld with kindest change'" (Shirley 320). Quotation from PL 5.333-36. However, Eve's insistence to work apart from Adam is what separates her status from a concubine whose sole vocation is to make herself desirable and who curries favor by whatever means available.



<sup>14</sup>Foucault speculates: "If interpretation were the slow exposure of the meaning hidden in an origin, then only metaphysics could interpret the development of humanity. But if interpretation is the violent or surreptitious appropriation of a system of rules, which in itself has no essential meaning, in order to . . . force its participation in a different game, . . . then the development of humanity is a series of interpretations." Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" 151. Subsequent citations of this essay will be abbreviated NGH. The scrimmage and gamesmanship is uncharacteristically transparent in Lewis' Journals, and I would argue implicit in Paradise Lost.

<sup>15</sup>Here we are confronting Milton's Arianism, and the configuration of the Trinity. I think that the theological issue serves as a red herring in the poem. There the son is spirit of God's spirit as Eve is flesh of Adam's flesh. And as Eve's fall differs from Adam's, the Son's merit and rise to glory differs from God's. But, of course, both God and Adam accept fruits of vexed value from their favorites.

<sup>16</sup>Omnipotence and omniscience's "recreation" is probably most materially and cynically represented in John Dryden's Amphitryon (1690). In a travesty of Genesis 18:30 and PL 8.377, Jupiter tells Mercury, who will shortly be transformed into the slave Sosia, "I read your thoughts; / Therefore you may as safely speak as think." Mercury responds, "Mine was a very homely thought" (cf: "[with] humble deprecation thus [I] replied" [PL 8.378]) "—I was considering into what form your almightyship would be pleased to transform yourself tonight; whether you would fornicate in the shape of a bull, or a ram, or an eagle, or a swan; what bird or beast you would please to honour, by transgressing your own laws, in his likeness; or, in short, whether you would recreate yourself in feathers, or in leather?" (italics mine, 1.1.18). See Canfield, Tricksters and Estates, Chapter 12.

<sup>17</sup>Zižek uses the example of signing a conscription paper, but a more familiar instance of the choix forcé may be the the situation of the judicial oath. A person can be ordered to appear in court and to testify, but theoretically at least, one must take the oath freely. We cannot be ordered to say "yes" to the oath of truthfulness. Saying "no," however, would certainly result in a citation for contempt of court as a failure to testify.

<sup>18</sup>See Campbell 74-76. There the author addresses the "crucial part played by Puritanism in the evolution of modern hedonism" by

cultivating and "manipulating belief, and thus granting or denying symbols their power."

<sup>19</sup>Pat Gill has argued that both Rochester and Swift disclose the threat of the intimate mixing of classes. In the context of my argument the threat Gill identifies is the result of indiscriminate appetite and undisciplined "social communication." My gesture to Rochester here is far more traditional and obvious than Gill's reading.

<sup>20</sup>At this point I urge on the reader Jonathan Edwards' works. There can be no doubt that Edwards sought and indeed possessed a "paradise within" and that he experienced exquisite pleasure in both abasing himself and savoring the "sweetness" of his beliefs. He also "cared deeply about his creaturely comforts and his salary" according to the editors of the Yale Jonathan Edwards Reader (xxxiv), and he was a slave owner.

<sup>21</sup>See also Comus 767-773 in which the Lady proposes a redistribution of wealth so that "Nature's full blessings would be well dispens't / In unsuperfluous even proportion." As we shall see, in sermons and Gulliver, Swift likewise attacks an economic system that does not fairly distribute nature and labor's bounty.

<sup>22</sup>See PL 3.194-197 and "On the Testimony of Conscience." As practicing Christians both attribute conscience, the ability to distinguish right from wrong, to God. Thus it is a choix forcé; one has individual conscience only as long as one makes the right choices. As soon one makes the wrong choice, one loses conscience itself and is hardened and blinded, or in contemporary secular terms, outside the symbolic order and signifying network. Although Milton advocated legally protected opportunities for the individual to make "wrong" choices, it is highly unlikely that he would have approved of the manner such liberty was exercised in the early eighteenth century, and it is probable that he would have agreed with Swift's critique of "Liberty of Conscience" as a euphemism for "no more than a Liberty of knowing our own Thoughts" (9.151). Milton's much touted "tolerance" did not extend to papists or atheists, individuals clearly lacking the guidance of God's "Umpire Conscience" (3.195).

<sup>23</sup>James Thompson argues that Swift's attack on the Wood's half-pence demonstrates his essentially conservative definition of value based on "weight" (the physical presence of a specified amount of a specific substance) rather than "tale" (the authoritative stamp establishing a specific value) (65). While Thompson is technically correct, Swift's

Drapier Letters are less concerned with monetary theory and more concerned with Ireland's colonial status. For Swift the British imposition of the Wood's half-pence was a tactic in a strategy of exploitation which resulted in wide-spread social disruption in Ireland.

<sup>24</sup>A Tale of a Tub in Jonathan Swift, 133-138. All subsequent citations to Swift's prose other than Gulliver's Travels will be parenthetical and to this edition. In his book length treatment of the Mary Toft/Rabbit Woman hoax (1726), Dennis Todd offers an extensive summary of Restoration and early 18<sup>th</sup> century theories of the mechanisms that link the corporeal to the spiritual components of the individual, a complex network of fluids, humours, and spirits (Chapter 2, 38-62), and he outlines the contemporary critique of "Enthusiasm," identified as a condition in which the individual has confused body function for spiritual calling (Chapter 3, 64-105). Clearly Swift is working within the debate and discourses Todd identifies, particularly prior to his return to Ireland in 1714. Todd's book focuses on theories of individual development and on how imbalances account for monstrosities. But, Swift's theory of waste (or Enthusiasm for that matter) is not primarily concerned with the individual ailments, but with the social consequences of specific forms of political and economic behavior. Campbell details how Calvinist asceticism could be converted into "self-illusory" consumer behavior, which conflates commercial exploitation and cultivated emotional response.

<sup>25</sup>Of course, laughter's therapeutic value, along with prayer's, has been the object of recent study and is currently being lauded.

<sup>26</sup>For Swift's classification of readers, see Tale 150-151. For "Strephon and Chloe" see Jonathan Swift: The Complete Poems, 455-453. For "harmless northern swains" see "A Panegyric on the Dean," line 300 in Rogers, 436-444. For critic, see Tale, Section 3, "A Digression concerning Critics, 104-111, and for Æolists, see Section 8, 133-138.

<sup>27</sup>The notion has an antecedent in the Platonic pharmakon, the substance that is both poison and remedy. It also has a genealogy that documents its capacity to adapt and mutate; our commitment to sewage treatment, cultivated vaccines for diseases, and harvested body parts for transplants and transfusions instance the notion's persistence; even jokes that hinge on the interchangeability of surgeons and plumbers are underwritten by a circulatory economy.

<sup>28</sup>"Mother," who is associated with sweet smell and charged with instructing and monitoring the family's personal hygiene, ironically is imbued with a high tolerance for excrement. While boys and men revel in dirt, they cannot cope with "filth." Thus in Mr. Mom Michael Keaton suits up in a gasmask and gloves to change a diaper, and Jeff Foxworthy, best known for his red-neck jokes, testifies with a sense of awe that mom's "spit has the same chemical make-up as Formula 409," and moms good-naturedly clean up "sewer blow-ups" and what "the cat drug in."

<sup>29</sup>Schroder's Pharmacoeopia went through no fewer than twenty-one printings, most in Latin, from 1641 to 1705. The book was also translated into German (1685, 1693) and French (1697-98). It's popularity appears to have ceased abruptly; no editions after 1705 are noted in either the BLC or the NUC.

<sup>30</sup>Schroder actually lists five sorts of mummy, three produced by embalming methods and two by desiccation. While he commends "The Arabian, which is a Liquor that sweats from the Tombs of the Carcasses that were embalmed with Aloes, Mirrh, and Balsam," he admits that dried mummy circumvents the problem "that our Shop-Mummy is the Juyce of a rotten Carcass inspissated and dangerous" (520, italics omitted).

<sup>31</sup>The Rowland translation filled a market gap between the "receipt" books by authors such as Hannah Wolley, which include home remedies relying primarily on vegetable nostrums, and Latin texts like Schroder's marketed for a more elite professional audience. What I want to suggest is that England produced a growing market for more sophisticated preparations, drugs that could not be safely concocted in the kitchen and had to be purchased from a specialist skilled in procedures that rarefied and distilled base substances into essences "very pleasant to behold." That such a market existed is born out in the dispute between physicians and apothecaries over the control of pharmaceuticals at the end of the seventeenth century. Although the theories designed to explain the functioning of the body, diseases, and their remedies are no longer current, the competitive economy surrounding medical practices certainly is.

<sup>32</sup>See also Swift's sermon, "Causes of the Wretched Condition of Ireland." There he laments "that such a Country as ours, which is capable of producing all Things necessary, and most Things convenient for Life, sufficient for the Support of four Times the Number of its Inhabitants, should yet lye under the heaviest Load of Misery and Want

(9. 199). Swift then enumerates causes of Ireland's poverty, unsparingly laying blame on English colonizers and Irish colonialists. His proposal to address the problem sounds remarkably modern: fund education for the poor and a welfare reform plan that returns responsibility (and recipients) to the parishes.

<sup>33</sup>I have in mind "A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture," the Drapier Letters, and "A Modest Proposal." Swift's concerns would appear to be born out by economic history. In touting the expansion of the Irish economy, Thomas M. Truxes notes that Irish commerce was dependent on "English intermediaries" and Irish expatriates serving in London, that colonial America "provided the largest foreign market for low-priced linens, the nation's chief industrial output," and that the "Irish provisions industry was, likewise, stimulated by Atlantic trade, in both the victualing of ships and the export of goods to the British plantations as well as to the French and Spanish islands of the Caribbean" (252).

<sup>34</sup>The matter of use-value and commodity fetishism is raised by Gulliver's Houyhnhnm master who "went upon the Supposition that all Animals had a Title to their Share in the Productions of the Earth" and who seeks to know "what these costly Meats were, and how any of us happened to want them." Gulliver enumerates "many Sorts" and assures the master "that this whole Globe of the Earth must be at least three Times gone round, before one of our better Female Yahoos could get her Breakfast, or a Cup to put it in" (218-19).

<sup>35</sup>That Swift recognized this colonialist gambit is clear from his sneering characterization of "POOR England" that "grievously . . . suffers by the impositions of Ireland." See "A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture" 402-03.

<sup>36</sup>We know that Swift liked horses and liked to ride. However, anyone who has spent considerable time around horses knows that they are both dangerous and perverse. Given the opportunity they will take a malicious nip at each other and the hand that feeds them. Black Beauty, Trigger, Silver, Flicka, and the Black Stallion serve sentimental fiction, which in more obvious ways makes "economic exploitation and social disruption" invisible. Ironically, the fantastical Mr. Ed's mean streak is more representative of the species. Of course, early eighteenth-century readers would have been far more familiar with both the dispositions and excretory habits of horses than we are, and absolutely incredulous of our imaginative cult of equine ethical excellence.

<sup>37</sup>The oral tradition was "that Yahoos had not been always in their Country; But, that many Ages ago, two of these Brutes appeared together upon a Mountain whether produced by the Heat of the Sun upon corrupted Mud and Slime, or from the Ooze and Froth of the Sea, was never known. That these Yahoos engendered, and their Brood in a short time grew so numerous as to over-run and infest the whole Nation. That the Houyhnhnms to get rid of this Evil, made a general Hunting, and at last inclosed the whole Herd; and destroying the Older, every Houyhnhnm kept two young Ones in a Kennel, and brought them to such a Degree of Tameness, as an Animal so savage by Nature can be capable of acquiring; using them for Draught and Carriage" (236-37).

<sup>38</sup>See "A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture" 400, and 664-65n.

<sup>39</sup>During Swift's lifetime the notion of "the slave" was shifting from the political perception of a hostage held in ransom (a P.O.W.) to the economic conception that the slave was property to be exploited. Slavers, like Snelgrave, justified their business by claiming they purchased their slaves from "princes" who legitimately sold captives of war, though they distanced themselves from the captors by accusing them most prominently of cannibalism and unfair trade practices. Swift, no apologist for princes, identified the discursive "cheat" and wrote against a strategy that would enslave and cannibalize Ireland. A quarter century after his death "science" would propose a theory of biological race with hierarchies diametrically opposed to Swift's.

<sup>40</sup>"A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture" 402.

### Chapter 3: Royal Slaves: Unnatural Oppression and the Nature of Race

"... the new concept of race tended to obliterate the aristocratic particularities of blood . . . ."

–Michel Foucault, History of Sexuality

"Racism in the modern sense first arose in a 'democratic' society, a mass society whose expressed ideals were fraternal and egalitarian, one in which individualism was becoming accepted, cultural difference was no longer a hindrance to citizenship, and different forms of popular nationalism were attaining almost religious status."

–Colette Guillaumin, "The Specific Characteristics of Racist Ideology"

Swift's lament—that while oppression makes the wise mad, it were to be wished that oppression would give a little wisdom to fools—was a barb aimed directly at an Anglo-Irish gentry who were complicit with the British exploitation of Ireland in order to maintain other social and economic privileges. Rather than resisting their oppressors, affluent Irish aped them. For this bit of insight, Swift has long been labeled a misanthrope and misogynist, and more recently, and specifically, a racist. While it is true that "racialist" characterizations of Africans written in the second half of the eighteenth century bear a resemblance to Swift's Yahoos, that fact says more about the nature of the later eighteenth-century imagination than it does Swift's.<sup>1</sup> No doubt "oppression" and "race" have been in an embrace for a very long time, and the "nature" of "oppression" has continually been an object of inquiry in the West since

Moses led his people out of Egyptian bondage. Tribute, taxes, slavery, servitude, impressment, law, inquisition and privilege are some of the many faces of various oppressions that haunt the pages of Western literature—Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Creon, Pilate, Nero, John, Torquemado, Charles, George, Louis, Stalin—as do the tales and documents of resistance—Exodus, Judges, Antigone, Gospels, Epistles, Magna Carta, Tenure, Declarations of Independence and Rights of Man, and manifestos of Workers', Women's, Civil and Human Rights. Renditions of oppression's conflict with "natural" freedom dominate our literary heritage. But, until recently few have questioned the "nature" of "race."

One rather obvious explanation for our obsession with oppression is that we have conceived it as fundamentally, essentially, unnatural. Droughts, freezes, floods, tornados, hurricanes and plagues of locusts are "natural disasters" with real economic, political and social impacts, but they are not "oppressive." Yet, when we call the weather, perhaps the prime synecdoche for Nature, "oppressive," we imply an unnatural condition—a mindless grinding tyranny of heat and humidity or damp and darkness—that will "break" and restore Nature to a "natural" state more amenable to human well-being. That "oppressive weather" is more frequent and predictable than "natural disaster" makes it no less "unnatural." Race, on the other hand, has persistently been linked to



Nature; even more than sex, it has been bound to what is innate, inherent, inherited-natural. Oppression is abstract, ephemeral, idiosyncratic; race is determined, inescapable, communal. To oppose oppression is to call unnatural situations to attention; merely to address race is to demand redress of "natural order."

Retrieving "race" from the natural order, that is from the "non-discursive social" order, and displaying it as a cultural artifact of colonialism has been, of course, the major business of the "post-colonial project."<sup>2</sup> The sweet fruit of the project has been an awareness for both colonizer and colonized that the "new concept of race" is as unnatural as the oppression it legitimated. Fanon, Bhabha, and Spivak along with others can thus join the pantheon of voices who have struggled against "unnatural" oppression—Moses, Antigone, Jesus, Robin Hood, Paine, Jefferson, Wollstonecraft, Marx, Douglass, Friedan, King, Walesa. Oppression, however, stubbornly remains abstract, ephemeral, idiosyncratic and unnatural while race is submerged into a protean soup ready to reappear as a newly formed full-blown natural entity. The paradox is that oppression is the constant while race has historically been the variable.

#### "Race" : The Variable

Colette Guillaumin (1972), Michel Foucault (1976), and Nicholas Hudson (1996) have each noted that "race" neither denoted nor connoted

in English or in French a classificatory system for humanity in the seventeenth century. There "race," when it referred to human reproduction, referred to a pedigree, a traceable lineage of "begats" passing from father to son. It was genealogical rather than genetic, and as Guillaumin argues and the others imply, "auto-referential" rather than "altero-referential"; it was legal and temporal, rather than "geneticist" and "spatial" (29). In English its closest synonym was another unstable signifier, "quality," then referring to a caste of gentry or nobility whose dominant political, economic and social position was established by a patronym and accompanying patrimony. Thus, "race" was authenticated by "tale" (written records) rather than "weight" (physical evidence). Theoretically in such a system, birth--the extrinsic verified tale--should naturally coincide with worth--intrinsic superior value. Of course, the Renaissance literary record is littered with accidents, disruptions of the "natural order," in which the "perdita" and the "usurper" are located in the wrong legal and geographical place, resulting in threats of incest or miscegnation (often initiated by "superior" supernatural beings or mortals with supernatural powers). In comedy the perdita is found and restored to his or her legitimate place; in tragedy the perdita's value is recognized too late, but the usurper is destroyed. However, in both cases, the "mistake," the legal and geographic dislocation, is essential to the "truth" of the birth=worth tautology that is retroactively revealed and restored.

While the story of inner worth may be as old as the sermon on the mount, the parables and the "be-attitudes," variously essentialized "tales" of race are even older. Michael McKeon has masterfully argued in Origins of the English Novel that an "aristocratic" understanding of worth gave way to a "bourgeois" construction of "merit," and that, as James Thompson recently argued, the novel emerged as the literary form best suited to effect the shift from authentication by "tale" to "weight." Anyone who has lifted Clarissa would be inclined to agree. And while there can be little doubt that a bourgeoisie invented the concepts of "ability, aptitude, merit" to outweigh such signifiers of worth as "arms, titles, great houses" (Guillaumin 55), it would be a mistake to ignore that they maintained a commitment to "natural," blooded birth-right. Indeed, "race" as a "traumatic irrationality" sticking to the new ideology of merit was structurally necessary for the emerging bourgeoisie—this "leftover" tale "far from hindering the full submission of the [bourgeois] subject to the ideological command, [was] the very condition of it" (Žižek 43). "Race" was a lever that could both denature and naturalize justifications of oppression. For example, claiming the "weight" of innate "ability, aptitude, merit" did not preclude, indeed it inspired, an emergent bourgeoisie to aspire to the material advantages of the "tale"—genealogy, positions of power, real estate—and to project the "weight" of incompetence, intemperance, and degeneracy first onto the "Quality" and

later to project the "tale" of those "qualities" onto whole peoples regardless of rank, that is a "new concept of race." The "tale" was epistemologically rearticulated in the secular language of a new "natural history" in the middle decades of the eighteenth century, not before. Subsequently, the new "tale" would be reinscribed with the same "traumatic irrationality" as the old; the Law as established by Scripture would confer "unconditional authority" on the newly dominant ideology. The rearticulation was so sudden and revolutionary that scholars continue to mistake elements of the old "tale" (quality=race) for the new one (quality≠race); "weight" itself shifts from an objective measure of fineness (quality) to one of quantity--unrefined, adulterated, crude masses, which a new "tale" of race theorizes and documents. While conflating the two "tales" has served to disclose the reality of perennial, "unnatural" oppression, it has camouflaged a century-long "race war" in which the "natural" qualities of race were continually in question and exposed as artificial, cultural constructions.

In The History of Sexuality, Michel Foucault argues that "new procedures of power that were devised during the classical age . . . caused our societies to go [away] from a symbolics of blood" (148). Tampering with blood--forensically by means of public executions or the "spectacle of the scaffold," medically with bleedings, and ritually through the sacrament of Eucharist--was authorized treatment for social, corporeal and spiritual ills. "[P]ower spoke through blood . . . it was a reality with a

symbolic function" (147),<sup>3</sup> serving a system of "caste distinction; for the aristocracy had also asserted the special character of its body, . . . in the form of blood, that is, in the form of the antiquity of its ancestry and of the value of its alliances" (124). Prying the symbolic function from the reality of blood, questioning the "special character" of bodies defined by their blood, and proposing the egalitarian nature of blood mark a signal shift in the deployment of power and its symbolics.

The seventeenth-century English kinship system, based on blood, and the mechanism by which political, economic and social power was distributed among a nobility, was increasingly an object of discourse, at least for those at the top and those who aspired to the upper ranks. Conservative voices claimed that "noble blood . . . was the bearer of physical qualities, courage, vertu, energy" (P/K 223) to be authenticated by the "tale": ancestry and alliances. Radicals, on the other hand, proposed valuation by "weight": blood is blood subject to transfusion, not transubstantiation. By proclaiming the racial superiority of "royal blood," claiming the "divine right" of kings, the early Stuarts opened their courts to the accusation of being unnaturally oppressive.<sup>4</sup> From about the time Charles I lost his head until Linneaus located humans within a "natural system" in the mid-1750s, "race" was a both a highly specific signifier denoting family and lineage and a very protean term employed to identify any group of persons with a "natural" affinity: occupation,

ethnicity, gender and species, among other things, as well as color. Although "race" may have always been associated with the concept we would identify as biological essentialism, the historical referents during the Restoration and early eighteenth century are varied, and they militate against any recognizably modern construal of the term. Pope, for example, defined "Poets" as "a Race long unconfin'd and free, / Still fond and proud of Savage Liberty" in "Essay on Criticism" (649-50); Swift refers to the "female race" in "Cassinus and Peter" (69). Elkanah Settle refers to the threatened Moroccan royalty as the "Imperial Race" (5.1, 57), and Aphra Behn identifies Imoinda and Oroonoko as the last of their "Race" (9, 26); here she uses the word to designate familial consanguinity, in Oroonoko's case, royal family.<sup>5</sup> For Behn and Settle, "race" was the preferred designation used to enunciate, rather than "obliterate," the "aristocratic particularities of blood," to offer signification to a concept that royalty still ran in the blood and was hereditary through blood; it indicated an unpolluted, legitimate pedigree that could cut horizontally across cultural, national, ethnic, gender and color lines to separate the noble from the ignoble as determined by birth. Race might also indicate any one of those arbitrary groupings. Race is a term that indicates a "biological object" insofar as it naturalizes kinship and attempts to locate it within an institution, that is, "the non-discursive social."

There can be no doubt that the "special character" and "natural"

right of a "blooded" king and nobility to rule England was challenged in the seventeenth century; even the need to assert divine sanction indicates that an institution that emerged from the middle ages was no longer secure in the "non-discursive social" and had become an object of discourse. Control of the "discursive apparatus" was a highly contested field.<sup>6</sup> The indictment, trial and execution of Charles I offers a political marker where the "symbolics of blood" were separated from the "law" and the "sovereign" as surely as the king's head was severed from his body. One eye-witness noted at the moment of the execution that the crowd groaned, "such a groan as I've never heard before, and desire I may never hear again" (qtd. Willson 411). It was an act that would be condemned again and again over centuries, but unlike the French experience a century and a half later, England's monarch henceforth would never be the absolute Sovereign or the primary, much less sole, source of the Law.

#### Milton on Unnatural Oppression

I begin again with Milton because his was the radical voice to be reckoned with during the decades when royalists were attempting to restore the Sovereign with racist arguments to sanctify oppression. His Interregnum prose works dismiss the "cry of royal blood" as summarily as he does "the papistical doctrine of transubstantiation, or rather anthropophagy, for it deserves no better name" (Works 16. 199). Instead he is more concerned with the unnatural oppression this form of

racism has wrought, and as the Commonwealth invents its own oppressions, the dialectical relationship between tyranny and slavery. He returns to the question of race in Samson Agonistes where he emphatically rejects the notion that blood has any positive correspondence to "physical qualities, courage, vertu, energy" or any value, other than political advantage, whatsoever.

The staunch opponent of "aristocratic particularities of blood" and the oppression the "tale" of racial superiority legitimated was both the official and self-appointed apologist of the regicide, defending it against three print attacks.<sup>7</sup> Eikonoklastes (1649) disputes the authenticity and veracity of Eikon Basilike, subtitled "The Portraiture of His Sacred Majesty in His Solitudes and Sufferings," a tract purportedly penned by the king and designed to assure him martyrdom. In Defensio Populi Anglicani (1651) Milton, whom his nephew Edward Phillips characterized as a "little English David," took on the "great French Goliath," Salmasius, point by point (Complete Poems 1033). In the process Milton resorted to vicious aspersions upon the person and family of his adversary. When the counterattack, The Cry of Royal Blood to Heaven, appeared in 1652 it responded in kind, disparaging Milton's physique, academic record, and blindness. The ad hominem attacks in Milton's Latin texts tend to be a source of embarrassment, and when addressed by scholars, they are justified as an unfortunate but typical rhetorical strategy, an inheritance



from classical orators. However, the mudslinging, regardless of the source, serves to question and debase (most is scatological, sexual or emasculating) the concept of the "special character" of any body. Given what was at stake—the privilege of noble blood—all references to common bodily functions and submission to base appetites and influences served Milton's purposes, that is, to separate reality from symbolic function.

At this historical moment (1652), Cromwell's government was firmly entrenched and recognized by foreign nations; there was no pressing need for an officially sanctioned response to Cry of Royal Blood. Without political urgency,<sup>8</sup> the Second Defense was slow in appearing, and as something of a freelance operation, it was not limited by the immediate interests of the revolutionary government. Each of the three condemnations of the regicide defends the "aristocratic particularities of blood," the "special character" of the monarch's body, either by depicting the execution as analogous to the crucifixion or claiming that the king had been anointed and thus his rule was divinely sanctioned. The Second Defense differs from Milton's earlier republican tracts in that it moves beyond refuting the claims and cries of royal blood, asserting a kingship-tyranny tautology, and defending the right to revolt. Instead it addresses the notion and nature of liberty in relation to its contrary, slavery.

On the whole, Milton's object of analysis had been oppression: "tyranny" of the church, of the state, of the law, in short, of the minions

of custom intent on preserving their privileges based on racialist presuppositions. Although he asserts freedom is the original condition of "men," he constructs an idea of liberty from its contrary, tyranny. Thus, in Tenure of Kings and Magistrates he argues personal sovereignty and a contract theory of government:

No man who knows ought, can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were borne free . . . . they agreed by common league to bind each other from mutual injury [and] . . . . they saw it needfull to ordaine som authority . . . . [n]ot to be thir Lords and Maisters . . . . but, to be thir Deputies and Commissioners . . . . (CPW 3: 198-99)

Tyranny results when the king or magistrates usurp power which is the people's "natural birthright" (202). Milton presses his argument further:

It follows lastly, that since the King or Magistrate holds his authoritie of the people, both originally and naturally for their good in the first place, . . . then the people, as oft as they shall judge it for the best, either choose him or reject him, retaine him or depose him though no Tyrant, meerly by the liberty and right of free born Men to be govern'd as seems to them best. (206)

The people, then, have the right to choose, and implicitly to revolt, to "reject" or "depose." But what if they choose to submit to tyranny? Milton

explains:

Although generally the people of Asia, and with them the Jews also, especially since the time they chose a King against the advice and counsel of God, are noted by wise Authors much inclinable to slavery. (202-03)

To choose to submit to absolute authority is a failure of character and the selling cheap a "natural birthright," but it is not the irrevocable choice for Milton that it is for Hobbes.<sup>9</sup>

In Second Defense Milton's concern had shifted as did the tautology. Without a mediating function of "discipline" (CPW 4.1: 622), both "tyranny" (562-63) and "liberty" (680) are merely synonyms for "slavery." Milton warns throughout the text: "Tyrants then are the meanest slaves; they are slaves even to their own slaves" (563); "what you thought liberty will prove to be your servitude" (680); and most pointedly "men who are unworthy of liberty . . . [h]owever loudly they shout and boast about liberty, slaves they are at home and abroad"; "[t]hey can perhaps change their servitude; they cannot cast it off" (683). For Milton then, the particularities and "weight" of discipline can supplant the "tale" of blood in anticipation of Foucault's theory.<sup>10</sup>

An ideology rooted in the "symbolics of blood" did not retire graciously; two romance figures, the perdita and the lordless knight (eardstapa), were refurbished for the Restoration stage where they

served to naturalize the ranked kinship system. The "royal slave" tends to be a manifestation of the *perdita*; while the "noble savage," at least as Dryden uses it to refer to Almanzor, tends to be a variety of lordless knight.<sup>11</sup> "Royal slave" and "noble savage" are terms for concepts often collapsed, but worthy of at least provisional distinction. By the former, I mean an individual who is the beneficiary of and schooled in an ideology committed to privilege and then brought low by the vagaries of war; by the latter, I mean an individual with a "natural," that is unschooled, affinity for an ideology of privilege. Lurking behind both constructions lies a code that prizes such "noble" virtues as courage, honesty, magnanimity and gratitude over more "plebian" approaches to effect social intercourse: compromise, subtlety, cleverness, thrift and self-interest. According to C. B. Macpherson, England in the seventeenth century had already shifted from a "customary or status society," in which work and privilege were in theory authoritatively allocated based on birthright ("tale") and where there was a market in neither labor nor land, to a "possessive market society," in which theoretically all possessions including labor are commodities and value is identical to market assessment ("weight") (56).<sup>12</sup> The value of noble virtues was falling in relation to the market assessment of the strategic success of a market morality, and privilege had a purchase price.

The figure of the "noble savage," a phrase coined by John Dryden

in The Conquest of Granada (1670), serves to naturalize noble values (physical qualities, courage, vertu and energy) by positing that they are or were innate in well-born humans not hitherto incorporated into a corrupt social order. The figure itself was not invented by Dryden, but is a staple of "golden age" literature reaching back into antiquity. As constructed by Milton, Adam, who "falls deceiv'd" rather than "self-deprav'd" (PL 3.130), and who is explicitly compared to Amerindians after the Fall (9.1099-1118), is the original in the Judeo-Christian tradition. The discovery of the New World provided a new source of raw materials from which examples could be gleaned or invented;<sup>13</sup> those who were not discursively represented as conforming to the code, remained what they appeared--essentially savages.<sup>14</sup> It does seem clear that the construction of the noble savage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is an example of what Renato Rosaldo calls "imperialist nostalgia"--"the curious phenomenon of people's longing for what they themselves have destroyed" (87), and later as Hayden White notes, "a concept with which to belabor nobility, not to redeem the savage" (192). The figure of the royal slave raises different issues.

The royal slave acts as a site where blood is "de-racialized" and then reinscribed with its special biological character; the figure comes to act as a virgule between feudally antipathetic but increasingly commensurate concepts: "status" and "class." Figures of miscegenation in

its most threatening form ("white" gentried female-racially other male) become the vehicle by which power migrates from status to class while the first British empire enriches its citizens by means of institutionalized slavery that it attempts to naturalize and locate within the "non-discursive social." As might be expected, the drama of the period both resists and is complicit with the emerging socio-economic order.

### Samson Agonistes and "Race"

The aristocratic girl, we gather, married the nihilist in the belief that she could quiet him and save him from crime; but as soon as they were married he said, "Now you must help me to murder all your relations; that's the only thing I married you for, you fool."

—William Empson, Milton's God—

Although never intended for production, Samson Agonistes is self-consciously a tragedy conforming to Aristotelian stage theory and the unities recently re-articulated by Corneille (1660). By specifically citing Aristotle and identifying the Greek tragic poets "unequall'd yet by any" as the standard by which tragedy should be judged (Complete Poems 549-50), Milton invites a parallel with precisely a concept of "race" that he vehemently rejects—race as a synonym for "royal house," of Atreus, Laius, or Stuart—and a theory of moral superiority inherited through blood. Unlike Paradise Lost with some three dozen instances most referring to humankind, Milton uses the term only twice in Samson Agonistes to surprising effect; "race" is primarily a function of "weight," not "tale."

Race indicates a cultural marker rather than a biological object. In part, that construction is an effect of the biblical source of the story.

The Book of Judges is an Old Testament narrative depicting the colonial situation in what Mary Louise Pratt calls a "contact zone," Homi Bhabha terms "hybridization," and bible scholars identify as "apostasy" and "confusion."<sup>15</sup> Historically, it was a period of tribal conflict among groups of "Abraham's race" (29) and fluctuating cycles of dominion over other peoples and slavery to them. The repeated verses, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (17.6; 21.25) and "the children of Isreal did evil again in the sight of the Lord" (3.12; 4.1; 6.1; 10.6; 13.1) disclose how absent an authenticating tale, how tenuous Isreal's hold on its authenticity and how great the threat of backsliding especially into idolatry. Each is an instance in which "the children of Isreal" made "league with the inhabitants" (2.2) in violation of their "covenant" with "the Lord" (2.1-2). Critical to both the Samson of Judges 13-16 and Milton's version are concepts of separateness and miscegenation, both concerns for groups actively engaged in a "contact zone."<sup>16</sup>

In selecting the story of Samson, Milton choses a preternaturally strong, "Herculean" hero, an "ancient huge half-comic figure," as Empson calls him (225), with no blooded birthright other than his general genealogy as a child of Abraham. The chorus notes: "For him I reckon

not in high estate / Whom long descent of birth / . . . raises (170-72). Yet Samson is no "son of an harlot" like Jephthah (Judges 11.1), and his upbringing, his "breeding[, was] order'd and prescrib'd / As of a person separate to God" (SA 30-31), his "birth from Heav'n foretold" (525), "Promis'd by Heavenly message twice descending" (635). Although chosen by God, as a Nazarite Samson is a member of a voluntary sect pledging to abstain from wine, strong spirits, any product of the vine, haircuts, and contact with corpses, even those of close family members.<sup>17</sup> The slippage here clearly suits Milton's purposes: Samson is and is not royalty; his status is a divine mandate as a member of a class, that is, his work is not determined by rules of inheritance based on blood; he is "a citizen of the better stamp" (CPW 4.1, 674), whose value should be judged by physical evidence. He is also a stubborn, uncharitable oaf given to lunatic urges, half-baked ideas and rash actions.<sup>18</sup> Empson typifies him: "What is briefly told about him in the Bible makes clear that his name attracted demigod-rogue legends, a type to be found as I gather in most of the surviving literatures, and in Negro, Red Indian and South Sea Island oral tradition" (212). He is that excessive, cunning creature, both of and not of "us" who both transgresses and patrols the boundary between "ideological commands," "intimate impulses" (223), "divine impulsions" (422), "rousing motions"(1382) and the "traumatic irrationality" or inscrutibility conditional to them. The iconoclast, the "demigod-rogue,"



is a natural or national disaster who is both destroyer and deliverer. But, "Milton's genius" is not, as Empson implies, "that he alleged no moral superiority for Jehovah's religion over Dagon's" (221); rather, the tragedy suggests that the Isrealites have no claim to moral superiority over the Philistines. Indeed, the boundary between them is artificial, one Samson himself erects, transgresses and ultimately, if unwittingly, demolishes. As Milton well knew, deliverance from the "choice nobility and flower" of the Philistines leaving only "The vulgar" (1654, 1659) exacerbated Isreal's perennial problem of making "league with the inhabitants"--of pervasive and systemic "hybridization" in the biblical "contact zone," in which silver could be cast into "a graven image and a molten image . . . In those days . . . [when] every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:3-4, 6). While a Christian reading--essentially an ideological success story where "even the facts which at first sight contradict it start to function as arguments in its favour" (Žižek 49)--yields a tragi-comedy as Ulreich has "for the sake of argument" convincingly argued ("Beyond the Fifth Act" 282, 307-11); a secular reading of the drama offers a satiric ending--"All is best" (1745)--worthy of Voltaire. Within the context of Judges and within the context of Milton's commitment to discipline, nothing much has changed, and what has changed has gone from bad to worse. The chirpy semi-chorus, Manoa's bustling funeral arrangements, and his last lines that could nearly as well refer to the death of Hercules

as Samson ("The Virgins also shall on feastful days / Visit his Tomb with flowers, only bewailing / His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice / From whence captivity and loss of eyes" [1741-44, emphasis added]), likewise trivialize and secularize in ways proper to satire. Empson's nutshell interpretation—"The whole point of the story is that the common judgements of the world are wrong" (212)—also points us toward satire. So, let us assume a different ideological position and suppose for the sake of argument that Samson Agonistes is not a Christian drama, but a political satire that exposes the artifice and cultural authorship of racial boundaries, promulgated by an elite and accepted by "the common judgements of the world" as natural. What has traditionally been called the tribes of Isreal's "backsliding" is a process of "creolization," the inability to separate the "pure" elements from the "bastard," the "righteous" from the "abomination," the "clean" from the "unclean."<sup>19</sup>

Rather than dwelling on Samson's lapses in the niceties of dietary ritual, Milton focuses on Samson's unfortunate taste for the exotic in women. What has been taken as evidence for Milton's misogyny is his concern about miscegenation. In Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce Milton rails against "interracial" marriage, unfit matches devised for political reasons in which subsequently spouses hazard their "natural birthright," their right reason, their ability to obey God's will, and perversely "grind in the mill of undelighted and servil copulation" (CPW

2: 258). From beginning to end, Samson's choice of brides is second-guessed and regretted, by his father, the chorus and Samson himself.

The chorus first poses the question:

I oft have heard men wonder  
Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather  
Than of thine own Tribe fairer, or as fair,  
At least of thy own Nation, and as noble. (215-19)

The query is clearly couched in ethnic, if not racist terms.<sup>20</sup> Samson responds that his choice was God's will and what he "knew / From intimate impulse" to be the method by which he "might begin Israel's Deliverance" (222-25). Manoa confirms and explicates the plan; the marriages were designed to "infest [their] foes," a plan that backfired as he pointedly notes: "this I am sure; our Foes / Found soon occasion thereby to make thee / Thir Captive" (423-26). What we have is a strategy of ethnic erasure; on the one hand enemy armies are slain by the thousands and on the other the foe can be defeated by breeding with "his" women, by bastardizing "his" blood. This genealogical threat of contamination and pollution assaults racial identity grounded in the concept of "aristocratic particularities of blood" so tightly bound to a purity of pedigree. However, hybridization works both ways; thus Samson, "this Heroic Nazarite," was prompted:

Against his vow of strictest purity,

To seek in marriage that fallacious Bride,

Unclean, unchaste.

Down Reason then, at least vain reasonings down[.]

(318-22)

It was a reasonable plan that didn't work the first time and produced oppressive results in the subsequent marriage. Instead of infesting the foe, "foul effeminacy" and "shameful garrulity" "Effeminately vanquish't" Samson, reducing him to a "burdensome drone," and a "servitude, ignoble, / Unmanly, ignominious, infamous, / True slavery" (410, 491, 562, 567, 416-18). Here we can see that miscegenation threatens not only the logic of genealogy, but gender distinctions and liberty as well. The threat of oppression resulting from miscegenation—intimate geographical, legal, social, economic dislocations—is a synchronic theme we will find throughout the dramas considered in the next chapter, but the referents for racial incompatibility shift with the fortunes of competing ideologies.

While the error of miscegenation, the "hybridization" of "races," is crucial to Samson Agonistes, the definition of "race" is anything but naturalized; the "special nature" of the body is not articulated by blood. In the tragedy racial distinction rests on a ritual mark: circumcision. Milton uses the term "race" to refer to people twice: "Abraham's race" (29) and "the unforeskinn'd race" (1100). And while we can identify the first instance as a reference to genealogical tale, we should remember that the

seal of God's covenant with Abraham was circumcision and that Milton reasoned in Christian Doctrine that circumcision was "a seal of righteousness of faith . . . only to Abraham" and his "yet uncircumcised" adult followers; "in the case of infants it was a thing of entirely different import, namely, an outward and merely national consecration to the external service of God" (Works 16: 181). Thus racial distinction is merely outward show, signifying nothing essential. But, it is used repeatedly to distinguish the rival factions. Samson is delivered up to "the uncircumcis'd" by "Israel's Governors" (260, 242); Heaven had designated him to battle "th'uncircumcis'd" but abandoned him (640); as slave Samson serves the "Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean" (1364). Perhaps the most degrading synecdoche and appalling image in English poetry is Milton's version of Samson's slaughter of Philistines with the jawbone of an ass: "A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine" (144), like so many petals of human flesh. The Philistines, likewise, discriminate based on the Hebrew ritual. Dalila, frustrated in her attempt to reconcile with him, admits that she will be vilified by "the Circumcis'd"(975); although "less openly contemptuous than Samson's earlier racial slur upon 'the uncircumcis'd,'" it is "nastier" as Ulreich notes (note 16, 208). Harapha's sneering reference to "the unforeskinn'd race" matches in explicit viciousness the chorus's insulting figure of speech (1100, 144). Race and the value it signifies is not validated by the "tale" of

noble blood, or even blood nobly spilt on the battlefield; it measured by the "weight" of foreskins. The significance of the mark was reversed before Milton's time—Othello in his dying speech could boast that at Aleppo he smote "a turban'd Turk . . . a circumcised dog" (5.2.352,355)—from "Abraham's race" of Old Testament heroes to the Jews, Moors, and Turks of seventeenth-century Europe. As we have seen, Milton himself accorded little value to the sacrament even for pre-Christian Hebrews.

While England institutionalized slavery in the New World, English letters tended to figure slavery as marriage and sexual domination. Orlando Patterson in Slavery and Social Death identifies three elements in slavery: violence, social death and dishonor. The slave, taken by violence and subject to absolute power, has slavery "substitute[d] for death, usually violent death" (5) and is humiliated, I would argue, by perceived beastliness and effeminization. Samson in his opening soliloquy articulates his social death: "To live a life half dead, a living death . . . Life in captivity / Among inhuman foes. / . . . Put to the labor of a Beast, debas't / Lower than a bondslave!" (100, 108-9, 37-38). But, "True slavery" is being "bondslave" to "foul effeminacy," to be "effeminately vanquish't." Samson's own weaknesses, his "shameful garrulity" in his not "her height / Of Nuptial Love" (384-85), and his "lust" (837), are projected onto the women. At the same time, Samson seems to derive a proud, perverse pleasure in his slavery, brushing off both

Manoa's and Dalila's efforts to gain his release. Empson argues that Samson's "moral problem" is also political, and that "Milton goes out of his way to suggest that Samson acts for an underprivileged class or minority group rather than a separate nation, and makes plain that only Samson is still fighting" (213). Given the tokenism associated with the mark of racial difference between Israelite and Philistine, Empson's claim makes sense; Manoa "is lobbying among the Philistine lords to have his son's imprisonment converted to a fine, and this makes the whole society feel more settled" (*ibid.*). However, that is not exactly what Manoa is doing; he is not attempting to shift Samson's case from criminal to civil court. Instead, in contrast to Empson's claim, he is attempting to have Samson declared a hostage for whom a "ransom" can be paid (482-83). He is appealing to a code of conduct that crosses "national" boundaries that for "honor's sake" exempts a nobility from "foul indignities" of slavery (371-72). Samson will have none of it—"Spare that proposal, Father" (487). Milton's hero prefers debasement, and a deeper cut, emasculation, to complicity with a system that circumvents the admittedly "merely national consecration to external service" signified by circumcision.

Yet, manly heroism (and Milton studiously avoids referring to Samson's superiority as "noble") is linked to "physical qualities, courage, vertu, and energy" and contrasted to brutishness and effeminacy, neither of which is biologized. Instead, Samson slides from "the Heroic Nazarite"

(318) into beastliness and uxoriousness by transgressing culturally imposed separations by means of culturally invented practices (language and haircuts). Neither status nor sex is naturalized, that is, represented as biological objects signaling the "special character of [the] body"; instead, they are "gendered" and "racialized" as a discursive tactic to enunciate Samson's relative strength and agency at any particular moment in the drama. However, in its particularity Samson's, like Hercules's, body does have a "special character" endowed by God with superhuman strength and the potential to rejuvenate, but unlike Hercules's, Samson's body does not speak to "the antiquity of its ancestry" while it does reconfirm "the value of its alliances." Regretting his degenerate service (419), Samson's alliance with God is revalidated (1719-20) and "Samson hath quit himself / Like Samson, and heroically hath finish'd / A life Heroic" (1709-11). Samson Agonistes is a remarkable achievement in that it may be not only the first, but the only tragedy in English that manages to negotiate between the Aristotelian Scylla (an imperative that noble families are the sole suitable topic for tragedy) and the Republican Charybdis (the demand that nobility be pried from pedigree). Samson's "status" as a scriptural hero and a "type" of Christ help finance this negotiation, but so also do Samson's slippages into gender and racial "otherness" at the very historical and literary moments that gender and race are exposed as cultural and arbitrary distinctions.<sup>21</sup>



That Samson would prefer to play the effeminate or cuckolded "fool" and "bondslave," rather than ransomed hostage, may well indicate his, and Milton's antipathy to backsliding into "tales" of racial superiority. Like Milton's critique of colonialism and radical construction of the mechanisms of pleasure, his insistence that discipline hinges the articulation between "liberty" and "slavery" and that "race" is nothing more than a cultural mark "delivered"--that is, it theorized--the shift from a feudal-Christian ideology to one much more hospitable to early modern secularism. Milton, who saw papists and atheists as modern fiends intent on perverting whatever was redeemable in humans, would probably be bemused and appalled at what dissident Christians made of "the renewed cultivation of freedom and civic life" he wished to "disseminate throughout cities, kingdoms, and nations" (CPW 4.1, 556), but I doubt that he would be surprised at the actual regression in which "hatred is more actively morbid than apathy" (Ulreich, "Tragedy" 200), given his Commonwealth experience. But, at this point, we need to consider other writers' reactions to and developments of the slippages and transferences that Milton articulated.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>See in particular Brown's Ends of Empire 188-200. There consistently and persistently the argument hinges on either a post hoc fallacy or outright compression of almost an entire century into "this period" as if it were monolithic (196). The lapse is egregious, and even more problematical because it appears at the close of the book. An example that I shall not pursue: "Neither Swift's contemporaries nor Swift himself would have been able to move, as I have done here, from the misogynist attack on women to an understanding of its historical basis in commodification and trade" (198). I wonder exactly how much more transparent than A Modest Proposal the link between a "misogynistic attack" and "commodification and trade" needs to be before the writer recognizes Swift's move from one to the other.

<sup>2</sup>For "non-discursive social" see Foucault, Power/Knowledge 197-98. "The field of the non-discursive social" is identified with "institutions" which he defines as "every kind of more-or-less constrained, learned behavior," all that "functions in a society as a system of constraint and which isn't an utterance."

<sup>3</sup>In the late twentieth century, blood has again attained a privileged place. It is both dangerous and the medium capable of revealing the secrets of our individual pasts and futures; the polluting properties of blood have gained a new prestige, and it is handled with ritualized care. In the decade since Foucault's death, the forensic and the medical disciplines have again merged, now in an "analytics of blood." New procedures, blood typing and genetic fingerprinting, have invested the fluid with a rejuvenated symbolic power.

<sup>4</sup>In the last section of History of Sexuality Foucault asserts, "the new concept of race tended to obliterate the aristocratic particularities of blood" (148). In a 1977 interview, Alain Grossrichard questions Foucault's position that racism is a product of the nineteenth century by noting that the French nobility in the 17th century had already developed "a veritable theory of heredity by blood . . . a biological racism" (P/K 223). Foucault's defense of his position parallels my argument, and the interview itself, which ranges into the degeneracy of the nobility and "tales" of cannibalism and vampirism, makes for a fascinating read about how a "noble race" lapsed into degeneracy (222-28).

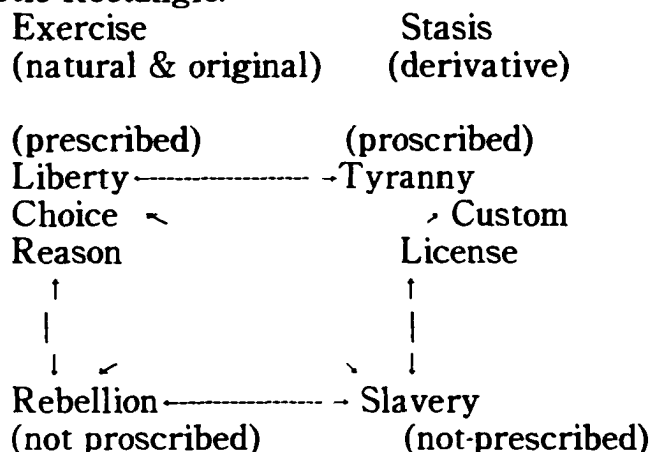
<sup>5</sup>Obviously, Oroonoko and Imoinda were not the last black people in Africa.

<sup>6</sup>Foucault marks the seventeenth century as the location where the West shifted from the Renaissance episteme based on resemblances to the the Classical episteme concerned with representation.

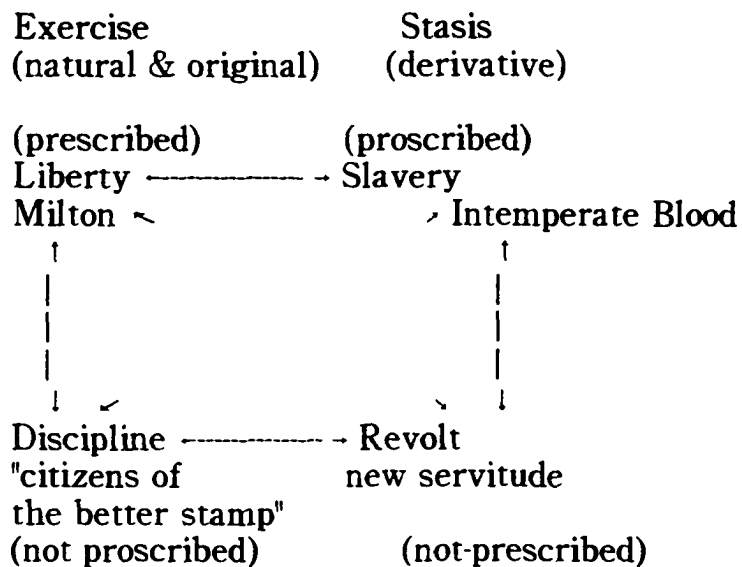
<sup>7</sup>The Council commissioned him to respond to Eikon Basilike and Salmasius's Defensio Regia; Milton's Second Defense of the English People appears to have been self-motivated, as were Tenure and Ready and Easie Way.

<sup>8</sup>Milton's blindness has regularly been used as an explanation for the delay between the appearance of Cry of Royal Blood and the Second Defense. Considering his productivity later, the rapidity with which he produced Ready and Easie Way, the evidence that Fallon produces for Milton's governmental activities, and the state of his eyesight when he composed the first Defense, I cannot concur. Had Cromwell needed a second defense, it would have been commissioned and produced, post haste.

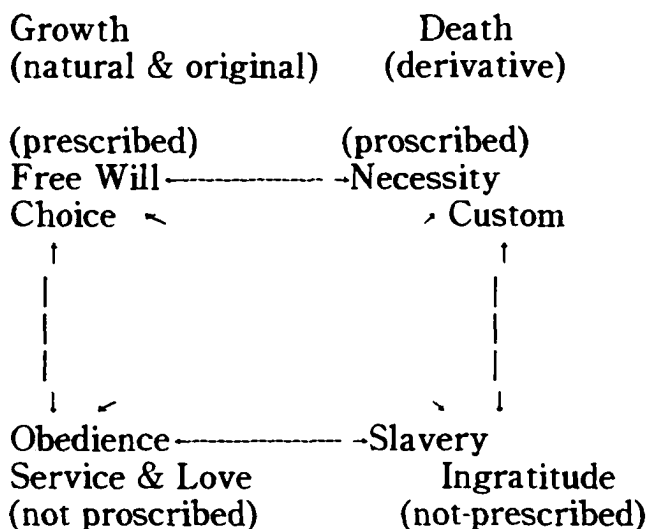
<sup>9</sup>For Milton prior to 1654 individual liberty was original and natural, the prescribed state of man. Tyranny is that which is contrary to liberty and is both unoriginal and unnatural; tyranny is manifested in the public sphere by "custom," and in the private sphere it fosters "blind affection" and "license" (750). Tyranny is the proscribed state of man. Liberty and tyranny are contraries, and they each have their negations, which are not implicitly or explicitly the same as their contrary. The relationship might best be represented by an adaptation of a Greimas Semiotic Rectangle:



<sup>10</sup>Milton asserts in the Second Defense: "I perceived that men were following the true path to liberty, . . . making the most direct progress toward the liberation of all human life from slavery—provided that the discipline arising from religion should overflow into the morals and institutions of the state" (622). Schematically, we can represent the shift:



A dozen years later in Paradise Lost the terms have again shifted:



As I have already argued above, in prying servitude from slavery Paradise Lost served the purposes of the British colonial enterprise. "Ingratitude" replaces "revolt" (natives do not respond as they ought to the benefits of colonization) as the enunciative possibility when

instituted slavery becomes the "non-discursive social."

<sup>11</sup>For discussions of Almanzor's discovery of his proper liege-lord, his "socialization," see Canfield, Word as Bond 39-41, and Hughes 80-84.

<sup>12</sup>Macpherson's model has been challenged and amended. Compulsory work laws, wage-rates and the special legal status of the master-servant relationship complicate the concept of a "free" market in labor. Runaway servants still could face criminal prosecution in eighteenth-century England. See Steinfeld, pp.3-9, 14, 17. There is little to suggest that the theoretical stability of a status society based on birth, implied by feudal and manorial systems and sanctioned by the church, was ever more than locally and temporarily an historical actuality. The colonial wealth flowing into the English domestic economy during the seventeenth century exacerbated assaults on status boundaries and pressured enunciation of the principles of a status society, which were not only threatened but clearly already past recuperation. The discourses, like Magna Carta, that enunciate the principles of a status-society-that-never-was serve as a hinge articulating its institutions with those of its successor. For example, only after the Tudor monarchs reject the authority of the papacy and erradicate transubstantiation from church doctrine do the Stuart monarchs deploy those now historically compromised principles as a theory of "divine right" and the 17th century construal of "race," that is, a biologically essentialized understanding of "the aristocratic particularities of blood." Historically, the "priceless" value of "noble blood" as "the bearer of physical qualities, courage, vertu, energy" is articulated in conjunction with the emergence of colonial wealth that financed class fluidity and the erosion of status boundaries. The very mechanisms--strict settlement, guardianship practices, purchased peerages--instituted to caulk the leaks between the gentry and those not born to "quality," actually guaranteed dilution and contamination of "noble blood." The attempt to consolidate estates through strict settlement forced heirs to mortgage land to provide for portions (see Bonfield, Chapt. 6); attempting to protect orphans from an unscrupulous court left wards at the mercy of guardians intent on increasing their own estates (see Nixon), and attempting to assure the monarchy a measure of independence through the sale of titles invited the monarch to privilege financial worth over birth (see Hill, Century of Revolution Chapt. 4).

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Las Casas' Mexicans, Montaigne's Cannibals, Sir Walter Raleigh's Topiawari, Capt. John Smith's Pocohantas, Behn's Semernia and Richard Steele's (via Richard Ligon) Yariko.

<sup>14</sup>I do not mean to imply that the figure can be interpreted unproblematically; however, a great deal of highly insightful and theoretically sophisticated work has already been accomplished. In Hayden White's words: "The theme of the Noble Savage may be one of the few historical topics about which there is nothing more to say" (*Tropics of Discourse*, 183). It is not mere coincidence that the "fetishistic" trope as White discloses it is contemporaneous with the emergence of "new concept of race." On "historical" noble savages see Hulme, and Dudley and Novak.

<sup>15</sup>See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, for "contact zone": "the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (6). For "hybridization," see Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," pp. 153-158.

<sup>16</sup>The analogies between Milton's biography and situations in *Samson Agonistes* (the marriage to Mary Powell and the "apostasy" of the Reformation) are well tilled soils that will lie fallow here.

<sup>17</sup>See Numbers 6.

<sup>18</sup>For Samson's lack of charity, see Ulreich, "The Tragedy of Dalila."

<sup>19</sup>Milton merely alludes to Samson's riddle of the lion carcass with the beehive inside (128,382-83). The incident is a clear act of defilement. "Whatsoever goes upon his paws . . . those are unclean to you: whoso toucheth their carcase shall be unclean until even" (Lev 11.27); Nazarites were to avoid all dead bodies (Num 6.6). That Samson killed a lion with his bare hands without telling his parents and later that "he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcase of the lion" (Judges 14.8), signals a multiple lapse in ritual cleanness, his "creolization."

<sup>20</sup>In Judges, Manoah asks the question and characterizes the Philistines by their lack of a ritualized mark, "uncircumcized" (14.3).

<sup>21</sup>See Laqueur and McKeon.

#### Chapter 4: Royal Slaves: Of Blood and Bondage

Altho my Skin be black, within my Veins  
Runs Blood as red, and royal as the best.  
-Aphra Behn, Abdelazer-

John Ulreich has asked us, "for the sake of argument" to "call Samson a Christian play" (282); I entertained the notion that the ending is satiric, and William Empson has suggested that Milton's play "in a sense completed the great series of Elizabethan Revenge Plays . . . deal[ing] with a moral problem which was also a political problem" (213). Now, in the spirit of tolerance, let us suppose that each of us has a point: it would be not only stupid, but perverse, to suggest that Milton did not intend his play for an audience informed by, indeed committed to, Christianity as he defined it (no Roman Catholics). Secondly, parabolic or not, Samson ends with earmarks of satire--a "Holocaust" (1702) trivialized with tributes to "a secular bird" (1707) offered by celebrating "Virgins" (1741). Finally, although Milton complies with classical decorum, keeping the sex and violence off-stage, a relationship between revenge tragedy and Samson Agonistes is supported by Manoa's image of Samson's heroism and his corpse: "Let us go find the body where it lies / Soak't in his enemies' blood, and from the stream / With lavers pure and cleansing herbs wash off / The clotted gore" (1725-28). Samson does cynically wed two women and savagely take more than a thousand Philistine foreskins even before

his "dearly bought revenge" (1660) that ravaged an entire "spacious Theater" (1605). We have in Samson "a wild flood of butchery and sex" as Robert D. Hume characterizes Aphra Behn's Abdelazer; or, The Moor's Revenge (1676), a revenge tragedy proper (311).

To place Milton's closet drama next to Behn's staged production risks trivializing the seriousness of the former and inflating the magnitude of the latter. Yet to do so has the advantage of drawing the "non-discursive social" into the realm of discourse. I have argued that Milton discloses the cultural construction of "race"; for him the cut that marks God's chosen has no essential value, thus the genealogical tales that verify that cut transmit no essential meaning. Blood is blood. Behn, the most elitist of the writers I consider, adamantly rejects that equation. For her, blood bears "particularities" like royalty and other vulnerable qualities not immediately apparent to the naked eye, but essential to a transcendentally approved social order. To press her point, Behn uses the same argument Milton does: outward marks are unreliable in evaluating worth. Of course, that observation was a cliché long before the seventeenth century, but what makes Behn's argument useful to us is that she chose skin color, a biological inheritance, to demonstrate her conservatism. She discounts the very property (blackness) and geographic origin (Africa) later racialist theory would pitch upon as evidence of inferiority. Thus, like Milton, Behn is concerned with a



cultural definition and valuation of "race" incompatible with a modern construal. My aim here is to show how incompatible--not just in Behn but with other dramatists whose plays presented the "problem" of the royal slave.

### Royal Slave: The Villain

In contrast to the "Holocaust" Milton evokes, Behn's effort in Abdelazer is of trifling magnitude; true, the body count is respectable by Elizabethan standards, seven or eight if we include King Philip's death by poison announced in the first act, and the stabbings would indicate a good bit of spilt blood, though the "butchery" pales in comparison to Samson or to Elkanah Settle's Empress of Morocco three years earlier and Edward Ravenscroft's revision of Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus three years later. The "sex" is limited to unsuccessful seductions and an attempted rape, which is rendered explicitly as a crime motivated by "Anger," not sexual desire (5.2, 464-5). However, Hume is correct in identifying a wildness in the play. Although set in Spain with court infighting, intrigues and banquets, the final speeches would indicate a different ideological landscape, a "contact zone":

Leon[ora]. Come, my dear Brother, to that glorious business,  
Our Birth and Fortunes call us, let us haste,  
For here methinks we are in danger still.  
Phillip. So after Storms, the joyful Mariner

Beholds the distant wish'd-for Shore afar,  
 And longs to bring the rich-fraight Vessel in,  
 Fearing to trust the faithless Seas again.

The anxiety both characters articulate obliquely represents the royalist (Tory) task: to maintain the "symbolics of blood," "that glorious business," rooted in "Birth and Fortunes" while garnering the wealth of "the rich-fraight Vessel[s]," presumably those engaged in the various European colonial ventures.

Cultural contamination is a central concern of the play, raising the fear of miscegenation and questioning the nature of nobility and rights of royal blood, problems which are never satisfactorily resolved. Made captive as a child, Abdelazer was "old enough to grieve, / Tho not revenge, or to defy [his] Fetters: / For then began [his] Slavery." Forced to see his father's crown worn by his conqueror and to suffer insults, "a Moor! a Devil / a Slave of Barbary," he counters, "Altho my Skin be black, within my Veins / Runs Blood as red, and royal as the best" and asserts his right to the "Diadem" (1.1, 390). The legitimacy of Abdelazer's claim to a crown is never refuted, and his claim to nobility is questioned and validated:

King . . . How came thy Father so bewitch'd to Valour,  
 (For Abdelazer has no other Virtue)

.....

Alon[zo]. Sir, he has many Virtues, more than Courage,  
Royally born, serv'd well his King, and Country

...

Besides, he was your Royal Father's Favourite. (2.2, 409)

It is quite clear that Behn's conception of royal bondage is different from Milton's depiction. For him, Samson's bondage affects his social status as a warrior; Harapha's frustration in his encounter with Samson stems not from cowardice, but from the conjunction of Samson's heroic reputation and his degraded status. It is a mistake to stereotype Harapha as a miles gloriosus and dismiss his position: that Samson is "no worthy match," and that a "noble Warrior" would "stain his honor" by engaging in swordplay with a slave (1164-66). Harapha discloses even more explicitly the bind he is in: "With thee a Man condemn'd, a Slave enrolled, / Due by the Law to capital punishment? / To fight with thee no man of arms will deign" (1224-26).<sup>1</sup> Samson and the chorus's jeering notwithstanding, were Samson not a slave, Harapha could have been a contender, though, in deference to Judaic historiography and Christian conceptions of typology and Grace, not a champion. But, erasing the "tale" effected by the social death of the slave suits Milton's purposes because it highlights by dramatic irony Samson's "weight." Milton makes the cultural constructions that offer meaning to degrees of honor and dishonor transparent at the same moment he reinscribes value to honor and the

heroism that serves as its mark.

For Behn, slavery is a political condition that cannot affect one's status as defined by "aristocratic particularities of blood"; Abdelazer is a king by "Birth" deprived of his throne by "Fortune" (2.1, 405). He is a hostage of the old king's court, and the mark of his degradation is his military service to him, while the king enhances his honor, and his personal and genealogical risk, by providing the royal slave with a sword. Old Philip creates a situation of rivalry among the heir apparent and two younger brothers, one "natural" and one a "Favourite," the hostage son of his dead adversary, Abdella. Here, liberty and freedom are not concepts with positive value for Behn; instead she is primarily concerned with sacrosanctity of kings, the reality of anointment, and the royal succession of power.<sup>2</sup> A royalist, as Behn was, needed the play to demonstrate the "natural" superiority—"physical qualities, courage, vertu, energy"—of royal blood. She created a nobleman whose reduced station compels him to villainy without debasing his claim to natural superiority and adherence to a code that recognized the "antiquity of his ancestry."

In creating a noble villain, Behn may have succeeded too well. John Harold Wilson admits that Abdelazer "is a better than average villain play," but complains that although it conforms to unity of action, "the persons are great only in the technical sense that they are kings and princes; only the villain has any superior qualities" (emphasis added, 63).

Wilson is absolutely correct; of all the characters in this heroic tragedy (with the possible exception of the villain's wife, Florella) the Moor is the most focused on and conscious of his responsibility to his position as defined by his birth. The "tragedy" develops ineluctably from the villain's victims' ambivalence toward his claims to nobility, his "antiquity of ancestry," and relying too heavily on "the value of [their] alliances" which shift with perceived political advantage. Old Philip creates a volatile situation by offering Abdelazer the bride coveted by the heir apparent, Ferdinand, and the opportunity to make a military reputation overshadowing that of the second in line, Philip. Instead of securing his throne and guaranteeing an orderly succession by marrying, Ferdinand pursues an adulterous and, as it turns out, fatal courtship of Florella. Young Philip, the younger brother, is rash, vindictive, and jealous, and he lacks the filial loyalty so essential to a system of nobility defined by blood. The Queen/queen mother is driven to adultery and regicide by her sexual appetite, while her daughter, Leonora, is both haughty and willing to stoop below her rank in marriage to Alonzo, a courtier who while adhering to the code, consistently misjudges character and situation. He is quick to suspect his sister Florella's virtue, believing she has committed adultery with the young king from whom will issue a "Race of Bastards" to wear the "Crown" (3.2, 423). Abdelazer capitalizes on these failings in an attempt to regain what is rightly his by birth but

has been denied by fortune.

We can see the concerns of Behn's play emerge by briefly comparing with Elkanah Settle's The Empress of Morocco (1673), a controversial drama heavily implicated in the situation and focus of Abdelazer. Like Abdelazer, a queen's treachery, betraying her husband (adultery) and king (regicide), and then her sons is a central source of mischief; also like Abdelazer, the elder son is "besotted" (1.1, 6) by love while the younger brother is an accomplished soldier. Both plays end with the legitimate succession of a younger brother to the throne despite the queen mother's sexual transgressions and her willingness to destroy the soldier son with false sexual accusations (in Settle, Muly Hamet is accused of attempting to rape his mother; in Behn, Philip is accused of being the bastard issue of a rape). The Empress's correspondent and agent is Crimalhaz, played by Thomas Betterton, who also took the role of Abdelazer. Indeed each of the Duke's Company's male actors assumed major roles in Abdelazer with antecedents in Empress of Morocco that would certainly have been obvious to a Restoration audience and should invite our curiosity: the young king (Muly Labas, Ferdinand) by Henry Harris; his younger brother (Muly Hamet, Philip) by William Smith; the ultimately loyal but gullible retainer (Abdelcador, Alonzo) by John Crosby. Sexual access to the queen and her "unnatural" treachery are clearly central to both plays, and the casting serves to emphasize the

similarities, but the effect is quite different.

In *Settle*, the Empress's treason is the sole source of mischief, and the threat is usurpation by a man of less than royal blood. Her henchman, Crimalhaz, who makes no claim to nobility in the biological sense, articulates a Republican theory of government in a villain's soliloquy:

Let Cowards to their Fathers Thrones advance,  
 Be Great and Powerful by Inheritance.  
 No Laurels by descent my Brow adorn;  
 But what gains Crowns. I am to Courage born,  
 Ambition is the rise of Souls, like mine.  
 Those Wreaths my Birth does want, my Brain shall win.  
 They in advance to Greatness glorious prove,  
 Who out of the dull track of Birth-right move.  
 Birth-right, the Prop of an unpurchas'd Name,  
 A weak Alliance to an elder Fame.  
 No Glory by Descent is never worn;  
 Men are to Worth and Honour Rais'd, not born. (21, 12-13)<sup>3</sup>

With the exception of the ambitious unchaste empress, noblemen and noblewomen adhere to noble values, falling victim to intrigues with no psychological depth. The play is an unrelenting celebration of Royalist propaganda and cavalier claptrap that even cavaliers laughed at—what

Cibber would call "a Laugh of Approbation" (Novak vi); the Empress sexually betrayed by Crimalhaz delivers a villainess's death rant wishing she had more sons to kill, and in the final scene "Crimalhaz appears cast down on the Gaunches, being hung on a Wall set with spikes of Iron" while Abdelcador and Muly Hamet conclude with bifurcated morals: Usurpers die and go to hell, but "Kings are immortal" relinquishing an earthly throne "to wear new Crowns above," and "An Age in Empire's but an Hour in Love" (5.2, 70). In short, a legitimate king's first earthly care may be to govern well, but his "natural" raison d'être is to love well. Although the sentiment might be predictably popular, the vehicle provoked laughter at its performance and lent itself to parody. Within months the King's company staged a Thomas Duffett travesty of Empress with an all male cast, William Harris playing Morena, the virtuous young queen in Settle's original, in blackface.<sup>4</sup>

Using the same materials clearly recognizable to her Dorset Garden Theatre (Duke's Company) 1670's audience, Behn creates a far more complex and vexed drama that actively engages the internal threats posed by the "royal slave" within a theory that biologizes "royal blood." John Harold Wilson errs when he asserts that "Mrs. Behn's characters are crudely simple" and her "method is largely characterization by epithet" (63), particularly when we read the play alongside Empress of Morocco; Robert Hume nods when he recommends



Wilson's analysis and terms Abdelazer "a non-political example of the blood and villainy mode" (201). No play that confronts the problematics of the "aristocratic particularities of blood" and the relative values of its ancestry and alliances produced during this period—of a restored monarchy where succession apparently will move laterally to a suspected papist rather than through direct descent, and when peerages with their privileges are being peddled to finance the court—deserves to be dismissed as "non-political." Whatever flaws the play may have, failing to address complicated political issues in Carolean England is not among them.

Betterton performed the role of Abdelazer in blackface, make-up used by Anne, James I's queen, and her ladies-in-waiting when they performed Ben Jonson's masques of Beauty and Blackness. Traditionally, blackface might identify a vice character, but it also had been used as a disguise, which when removed would reveal the light of innate nobility.<sup>5</sup> The similarity in characters' names, Abdelcador (the loyal royalist) and Abdelazer, leads to a further source of confusion. Speculating that Abdelazer is not merely an unfaithful queen's ambitious paramour, but potentially her victim, a very distinct possibility offered initially in the opening scene, Behn's audience would have had no way of knowing how they should interpret Betterton's make-up. At the end of the first scene in a villain's soliloquy, Abdelazer declares his intent to exact "noble

Vengeance" (1.1, 390), but by that time the damage is done; his motivation has been established, if not approved, and he moves into that category of villains, like Milton's Satan, Brontë's Heathcliff, and Faulkner's Thomas Sutpen, who evoke an ambivalent audience response.<sup>6</sup>

Betterton's make-up and his costume are signs of "otherness," but like Samson's circumcision, within the ideology of the play, they are cultural more than biological markers. Unlike Empress of Morocco where the source of corruption is unambiguously located in republican theory and projected onto and represented by an object of "unnatural" female desire which can be identified, rooted out, displayed "on spikes of iron," and succinctly moralized, Abdelazer posits that the threat to "natural" order emanates from the failure of the nobility to recognize its own and to insist on "racial" solidarity. By studiously avoiding elements characteristic of Behn's other plays--the threats of forced marriage, religious enthusiasm with its politically suspect conventicles, and parvenu social climbing--Abdelazer is able to explore the challenges posed to an international nobility by nationalistic rivalry. Such internecine struggles weaken noble births and fortunes. Old Philip's failure not only to adequately compensate Abdelazer for his service to Spain, but more importantly to recognize his royal birth-right, are far more originary to the impoverished and precarious position of royal blood at the close of the play, than the queen's sexual transgressions.

Like Samson, Abdelazer gains sexual access to two aristocratic white women (his wife Florella and the Queen of Spain) to further his political ends, and he attempts rape on a third, Leonora, daughter and sister to the Spanish kings. Also like Samson he fears effeminacy and steels himself against "all Softness" (1.1, 385) and "lazy softness" (1.2.399). In contrast to Samson, Abdelazer sacrifices "Love and Pleasure" to his ambition to regain his crown and avenge himself on his tormentors (1.2, 397), and it is not that he is insensitive to the sacrifice. Angry over Ferdinand's attentions to his wife and her success in having the Cardinal's decree of banishment revoked, Abdelazer snaps at Florella and orders her to leave. She responds, "Still out of humour . . . what have I done?" and he softens:

You cannot do amiss you are so beautiful.

So very fair-Go, get you in I say--

[Turns her in roughly.]

She has the art of dallying with my Soul,

Teaching it lazy softness from her Looks. (1.2, 399)

Later, when the Queen demands that Florella must die, Abdelazer responds in an aside: "Florella! Oh, I cou'd gnaw my Chains / That humble me so low as to adore her: / But the fond Blaze must out" (2.1, 406). In contrast to what we might expect of a lascivious Moor, a type well represented in both literary and non-literary discourses, Abdelazer

expends considerable time and energy rejecting the sexual overtures of both his wife and his paramour. Indeed, the first scene of the play is dedicated to developing the conflict that emerges between the Queen's sexual appetite and Abdelazer's distaste. Throughout the play the Queen iterates and reiterates her desire to sacrifice all for love, arguing for a pastoral vision of "shady Groves, and humble Cottages" (2.1, 405), while Abdelazer repeatedly rejects her.

This pattern of behavior offers significance to the fifth act confrontation between Abdelazer and Leonora. Having neutralized his enemies, Abdelazer has the power to place the crown where he will. Rather than claiming the throne of Spain his own, as Old Philip did the throne of Fez, Abdelazer bestows it on Leonora with the intent of marrying her (5.1, 453-4). The proposed marriage has political merit, and had the old king implemented it, the tragedy, the spilling of royal blood, might have been avoided. Abdelazer explains the logic to Leonora:

You're but the Daughter of the King of Spain,

And I am Heir to great Abdela, Madam;

I can command this Kingdom you possess,

(Of which my Passion only made you Queen)

And re-assume that which your Father took

From mine--a Crown as bright as that of Spain. (5.2, 463)

Within the ethical boundaries of heroic tragedy, the scheme is doomed;

he already is morally compromised. However, Behn does not even gesture toward developing a noble love binding Leonora and Alonzo, and rather than raising the issue of Abdelazer's villainy, Leonora voices her preference for Alonzo for what the audience has come to recognize in the queen's fondness as dangerous and superficial reasons—public opinion and beauty. Abdelazer challenges, "His birth! his glorious Actions! are they like mine?" Leonora admits that Alonzo falls short based on those criteria of nobility: "Perhaps his Birth wants those Advantages, / Which Nature has laid out in Beauty on his Person." The spurned suitor explodes:

Ay! there's your Cause of Hate! Curst be my Birth,  
 And curst be Nature that has dy'd my Skin  
 With this ungrateful Colour! cou'd not the Gods  
 Have given me equal Beauty with Alonzo!  
 -Yet as I am, I've been in vain ador'd  
 And Beauties great as thine have languish'd for me.

(5.2, 463)

Given the evidence laid out in the previous acts of Florella's virtuous loyalty and love and the Queen's self-destructive desire, we must admit that Abdelazer's claim that he is "meant for Love" (5.2, 465) is no vain boast, while Leonora's rejection appears shallow and tainted with unsavory peevishness.

Like so many of Behn's cavaliers, Abdelazer is endowed with tremendous "natural" sexual energy; in fact, this unsuccessful seduction scene may be the most wildly erotic, violently rendered scene of sexual aggression on the Restoration stage. In the control of the expert talent of a powerful actor, a reputation Betterton clearly enjoys, this seduction/rape scene must have been breathtaking. Abdelazer alternately woos with erotic language charged with the lore that the black man is the consummate lover, and violent language that threatens rape, which likewise panders to the prejudicial belief that a moor's civility is but a veneer masking a raging appetite. Abdelazer tempts:

The Lights put out, thou in thy naked Arms  
Will find me soft and smooth as polish'd Ebony;  
And all my Kisses on thy balmy Lips as sweet,  
As are the Breezes, breath'd amidst the Groves  
Of ripening Spices in the height of Day:  
As vigorous too,  
As if each Night were the first happy Moment  
I laid thy panting Body to my Bosom. (5.2, 464)

Rather than cataloging Leonora's beauties thus representing her as an object of desire, Abdelazer portrays himself as an object of female desire. He will provide her with sexual pleasure. Behn exposes the hostility and self-gratification implicit in flattering portrayals of female beauty and

innocence. Only after he has been rejected does Abdelazer enunciate those qualities and then as "Spoils" to be "rifled" out of anger (5.2, 465).

He responds to rebuff with confusion:

But you are deaf, and in your Eyes I read

[Rises with Anger.

A Scorn which animates my Love and Anger;

Nor know I which I should dismiss or cherish. (5.2, 464)

The stage directions underscore Abdelazer's shifting wills to submit and to dominate: "Kneels," "Rises with Anger," "Kneels," "Rises," "Offers to go," and "Returns" (5.2, 464). His final speeches in this confrontation make explicit that the threatened rape emerges from an aggressive desire to escape effeminate bondage and reassert dominance: "-Gods! I shall turn Woman . . . awake, my Soul, from out this drousy Fit, . . . scorn thy Fetters . . . Begone, my dull Submission!" He is determined to "wanton in the rifled Spoils" of Leonora's "Innocence and Beauty" (5.2, 465). The violence is diverted when Osmin arrives with bad news and is stabbed in the arm for his intrusion. The scene establishes Abdelazer as a potent sexually generative force that when frustrated converts to destructive violence.

The next and final scene of the play inscribes the villain's claim to superior courage and energy. His death comes from a "Base Coward Prince! / Whom the admiring World mistakes for Brave" who can only

with the aid of "treacherous Swords, / Take but a single Life; but such a Life" (5.3, 470). After cataloging his crimes and appropriating at least one which was not his, Abdelazer warns Philip, momentarily to be announced king, to "Stand off," and they exchange parting verbal shots:

Phil. Poor angry Slave, how I condemn thee now!

Abd. As humble Huntsmen do the generous Lion;

Now thou darst see me lash my Sides, and roar,

And bite my Snare in vain; who with one Look

(Had I been free) hadst shrunk into the Earth,

For shelter from my Rage:

And like that noble Beast, though thus betray'd,

I've yet an awful Fierceness in my Looks,

Which makes thee fear t'approach; and 'tis at distance

That thou dar'st kill me; for come but in my reach,

And with one Grasp I wou'd confound thy Hopes.

Phil. I'll let thee see how vain thy Boastings are,

And unassisted, by one single Rage,

Thus—make an easy Passage to thy Heart.

[Runs on him, all the rest do the like the same Minute.]

Throughout the play, Philip has disparaged Abdelazer's birth and character by calling him a dog and a cur, dwelling on his beastliness.

But, instead of being dispatched by an approved hero, Abdelazer is



attacked on all sides, a lion fallen prey to a pack of hunting dogs, an image unambiguously evoked in the dialogue and the stage direction. Philip is anything but "unassisted," and the stage direction indicates that Abdelazer "falls dead himself" with no agent assigned. A patched up ending ensues; Alonso is made a Duke, thus fit to marry Leonora, the perfidious Cardinal is forgiven, and the survivors head for shore, "Fearing to trust the faithless Sea again" (5.3, 472-73).

In a sense Behn tells a Philistine story, though she is far more generous to the enemy and far more critical of the dominant culture than either the bible or Milton. Abdelazer's death is inevitable, but regrettable. His exterior blackness and Betterton's blackface have mistakenly marked him as racially other while his "blood runs red and royal as the best," and the purity of a "noble race" has been compromised by this error. The princess's consort, Alonzo, has been ennobled by fiat, not nature, as Leonora admits: "my Brother now has made us equal" (5.3, 473). Philip may marry, although the play introduces no likely bride, and produce an heir thereby maintaining the purity of royal blood; however, within this dramatic world it appears that succession will again move laterally to the issue of the Leonora-Alonzo marriage. Winthrop Jordan points out that even tremendous ideological pressures--created by increased class fluidity and resulting in "racial" intermarriage, propelled by an as yet unarticulated "new concept of race" which militated for a

color heirarchy--were strongly resisted:

If both individuals and groups were to be ranked, it was going to be necessary to say that the Indian and African kings (who occasionally showed up in London) occupied a lower rank than the most cloddish Scottish peasant. Given eighteenth-century admiration for royalty, this was simply not a possibility. (224)

The figure of the "royal slave," which would become increasingly popular and pathetic, emerges as the literary locus of this resistance. In late spring of 1688 when it was clear that the most direct line of royal descent was to be obviated, Behn hurriedly wrote Oroonoko; Or The Royal Slave: A True History. In contrast to Abdelazer, the threat of internecine conflict (although clearly contributory)<sup>7</sup> is eclipsed by the economic power of the vulgar and base who are bent on obliterating not only the "aristocratic particularites of blood," but also the "value of its alliances" and the code of honor upon which those alliances are maintained. On the political landscape of England, wealth, title and power were "bloodlessly" set adrift from a genealogical institution and the biological essentialism which underwrote it. Subsequently, Thomas Southerne's extremely popular stage adaptation (1695) likewise capitalized on a British "admiration for royalty."

### Royal Slave: The Victim

who for the shame  
 Done to his Father, heard this heavy curse  
Servant of Servants, on his vicious Race.  
 -John Milton, Paradise Lost-

As we have seen, Milton constructed a complex dialectic over a period of years in which successively revolt, discipline, and obedience acted to mediate and disrupt a tyranny=slavery tautology. "Tyrants," we were told, "are the meanest of slaves; they are slaves even to their own slaves"; that is, "Servant[s] of Servants," and a "vicious Race" from whom, Michael asserts, God "withdraw[s] / His presence" and leaves "to thir own polluted ways" (PL 12.102-110). The curse of Ham (Cham), to which these lines in Paradise Lost allude, justifies the existence of slavery as "some fatal curse annexed" to slavery's "other" in Milton's tautology: "Tyranny must be, / Though to the Tyrant thereby no excuse" (95-96). Meanwhile, the biblical curse was also employed to account for black skin, a theory that Jordan notes "was probably denied more often than affirmed" in the seventeenth century (19). Historical event, the institutionalization of black slavery in the eighteenth century marked most prominently by the acquisition of the Spanish asiento in 1713, has produced an anachronistic equation (black African=slavery) that masks the complex "racialist" concerns of the Oroonoko texts.<sup>8</sup>

When we set essentializing color and ethnic difference aside, as

Behn and Southerne instruct their audiences to do, we discover a variation and extension of the Miltonic dialectical progression and a reiteration of Old Testament anxieties and warnings concerning "apostasy" and "confusion." Although the Oroonoko story would be revised in the eighteenth century to serve the voices of the abolitionists, Behn's and Southerne's versions are not anti-slavery.<sup>9</sup> Indeed both sound very Miltonic ("men who are unworthy of liberty . . . slaves they are") in accepting slavery "as some fatal curse." Behn's Oroonoko admits: "he was ashamed of what he had done, in endeavouring to make those free, who were by Nature Slaves" (66), and Southerne follows Behn closely:

[I] must blush

Quite thro' this Vail of Night, a whitely Shame,

To think I cou'd design to make those free,

Who were by Nature Slaves . . . . (4.2.58-61)

Slavery may be regrettable, but it is "natural" on the margins of empire, be they the outskirts of Eden or West Indian colonies. Blanford, Oroonoko's impotent champion in Southerne's tragic high plot, justifies slavery to Lucy, one of a pair of husband hunting female adventurers in the comic subplot: "Most of 'em know no better; they were born so, and only change their Masters. But a Prince, born only to Command, betray'd and sold! My heart drops blood for him" (1.2.172-74, emphasis added). He offers a biologized version of Miltonic observation: slaves "can perhaps

change their servitude; they cannot cast it off." However, Behn and Southerne both reinscribe the beleaguered birth=worth tautology and the prestige of pure noble blood that Milton for decades had attacked. It is not that slavery is wrong, but the wrong individuals are enslaved for the wrong reasons in the wrong manner. Furthermore, the black "Wretches" "sold, they and their Posterity" hardly appear to be the tyrants who are Milton's "meanest of slaves . . . slaves even to their own slaves."

We need to return to the anxieties that Milton, his contemporaries and his predecessors expressed generations earlier in order to recognize the authors' continuing common preoccupation with the quality of colonists. Michael offers Adam a litany of colonial failures in Books 11 and 12 and places the blame squarely on the colonists in the "contact zone" who backslide, breaking one covenant after the next with the Almighty. Purchas notes that Virginia was long thought "to be much encombered with Englands excrements, vicious persons, . . . [who were] by good order and physicke worthy to be evacuated from This Body," and "the worst" were "beggerly tyrants" (19.236). Henry Whistler in 1655 called Jamaica "the Dunghill wharone England doth cast forth its rubidg: Rodgs and hors and such like peopel" (146). Ned Ward (1698) reiterated and expanded Whistler's metaphor for Jamaica: "The Dunghill of the Universe, the Refuse of the whole Creation, the Clippings of the Elements, a shapeless Pile of Rubbish . . . neglected by Omnipotence" (13).

Significantly, he returns some pages later to expand on the appearance of the colonials:

The generality of the Men look as if they had just knock'd off their Fetters, and by an unexpected Providence, escap'd the danger of a near Mis-fortune; the dread of which, hath imprinted that in their Looks, which they can no more alter than an Ethiopian can his Colour. (16)

The colonists are as permanently marked by their cast off chains and excremental natures as Africans are by their blackness. Ward continues: "They regard nothing but Money, and value not how they get it; there being no other Felicity to be enjoy'd but purely Riches," and he concludes: "In short, Virtue is so Dispis'd, and all sorts of Vice Encourag'd by both Sexes, that the Town of Port-Royal is the very Sodom of the Universe" (16).

For both Behn and Southerne the "vicious Race" cursed to be "Servant[s] of Servants" are the planters and slavers, the petty tyrants who "regard nothing but money" and whom God has left to "thir own polluted ways." In opposition to this apostasy, an uneasy and ultimately incommensurate alliance emerges among white women, cavaliers, and the royal slave and his faithful retinue. Their "race" is marked by adherence to a code that values "physical qualities, courage, vertu, energy" and above all, covenants fulfilled and promises kept—what Milton recasts as

"obedience" and what J. Douglas Canfield terms "word as bond." In both novel and play, Oroonoko is invested with these qualities, a mark of his birth and breeding, while other "exemplary" characters possess only some and in lesser degree. Both novel and play attempt to identify noble virtues with the heathen Oroonoko and contrast them to the degenerate, polluted form of Christianity practiced by planters and other human excrement involved in the dirty work of empire building. Behn's story reflects the crisis that Albert Memmi posits for the would-be colonial who cannot avoid being a colonizer (17), and Orlando Patterson identifies as "something approaching Hegel's crisis of honor and recognition among the master class" (99). For Behn, the establishment of a timocracy, in which honor is naturalized and identified with divine will, appears to be the approved resolution (although, as we shall see presently, it fails in the novel); Southerne's version considerably complicates that device.

In a purely two-class society (according to Patterson, master and slave, and to Memmi, colonizer and colonized), masters or colonizers have only two choices: to comply or to escape. Memmi tells us the "colonial," the individual from the colonizing culture who would reject the privileges of his birth, "does not exist" because the "colonial" has no agency in matters of privilege; whether immigrant or creole, "he is received as a privileged person by the institutions, customs and people" (17); he is located within the "non-discursive social." Furthermore, "[a]

colonizer who rejects colonialism does not find a solution for his anguish in revolt. If he does not eliminate himself as a colonizer [by leaving or dying], he resigns himself to a position of ambiguity [silence]" (45). It is a Foucaultian bind; the colonial has no discursive apparatus within which to enunciate statements recognized by either colonizer or colonized. If the colonial is an enunciative impossibility, the non-slave-owning free man is essential to avoid the Hegelian crisis for the master class.<sup>10</sup>

Without this mediating group to confirm the master's prestige, slaveowners either "dropped all pretensions to culture and civilization and simply indulged their appetites," or they would, after making their fortunes, "pack up and flee the degraded source of [their] wealth" (Patterson 99-100) and return to the cleansing civilities of the motherland where putatively the air was "too pure" "for slaves to dwell in" (qtd. Steinfeld 96). Patterson concludes: "slave-based timocractic cultures . . . are possible only where slavery does not totally dominate the society. A truly vibrant slave culture, if it is to avoid the crisis of honor and recognition, must have a substantial free population" (100). We can see the elements of both Memmi's and Patterson's theories in the Oroonoko stories; however, the royal slave is paradoxically and temporarily enlisted to provide honor and recognition to the masters as well as a critique of a "degenerate Race" of colonialists (Behn 61). Meanwhile both authors attempt to image a fit group of free persons to finance the establishment



of a timocracy.

Behn's characterization of Surinam's colonialists is scathing, echoing the indictments and concerns of Purchas, Whistler and Ward. With a faint disclaimer that she does not mean "to disgrace them, or burlesque the Government there," she asserts that the members of the governor's "Council":

consisted of such notorious Villains as Newgate never transported; and, possibly, originally were such[;] who understood neither the Laws of God or Man, and had no sort of Principles to make them worthy the Name of Men; but at the very Council-Table wou'd contradict and fight with one another, and swear so bloodily, that 'twas terrible to hear and see 'em. (69-70)

Oroonoko calls them "Rogues and Runagades, that have abandoned their own Countries for Rapine, Murders, Theft and Villainies"; they are "Cowards" and the dregs of "a degenerate Race" who "upbraid each other with Infamy of Life, below the wildest Salvages" (61, italics omitted).

The narrator notes that the white indentured servants ("Slaves for four years") made Sunday "their Day of debauch," while their presumably freed counterparts made a "comical" army who had "but rusty Swords, that no Strength could draw from a Scabbard" and guns that "would do no good or harm" (59-63). The slavers and planters then are a class of

unprincipled former convicts who lie, swear and are incapable of mustering a respectable military force; in short, they are the inverse of a timocracy with its code of honor, courtesy, and militarism. Stanmore, the comic "hero" of Southerne's subplot sarcastically sums up the colonial situation at the close of the first act:

Enquire into the great Estates, and you will find most of 'em  
depend upon the same Title of Honesty: The men who raise  
'em first are much of the Captain's Principles. (1.2.262-264)

Wealth and the power that accompanies riches have contaminated and reversed a "natural," indeed divinely mandated, social hierarchy most obviously and materially at the limits of civilization.

In contrast to this "vicious Race," Oroonoko stands as the "natural" spokesperson for the approved order; he is the heathen eironeia determined to expose the Christian apostasy. The central concern of the text is the threat that honor (and by implication racial distinction) is being emptied of any essential meaning, and it attempts desperately to imply that the greatest ethical failure and source of apostasy is to act dishonorably. "Honour," Oroonoko proclaims, "was the first Principle in Nature that was to be obey'd," and comprises "Acts of Vertue, Compassion, Charity, Love, Justice, and Reason" and a willingness to stake one's life (61, italics omitted). Those who exploit their Christianity as an instrument of privilege and an excuse for duplicity, betrayal and treachery are roundly

and repeatedly condemned. The captain who kidnapped Oroonoko claims he cannot "trust a Heathen" who does not understand that "a great God" would punish a violation of an oath with "eternal Torment." Oroonoko counters:

Is that all the Obligation he has to be just to his Oath? . . . . I swear by my Honour . . . . [P]unishments hereafter are suffer'd by one's self; and the World takes no Cognizance whether this GOD have reveng'd 'em, or not, 'tis done so secretly, and deferr'd so long: while the Man of no Honour suffers every moment the Scorn and Contempt of the honestest World, and dies every day ignominiously in his Fame, which is more valuable than Life. . . . how you mistake, when you imagine, That he who will violate his Honour, will keep his Word with his Gods. (35)

Southerne's Oroonoko likewise repudiates any God that would condone a breach of trust: "If you have any God that teaches you / To break your Word, I need not curse you more: / Let him cheat you, as you are false to me" (1.2.180-82). The implications are multiple: false men worship false gods, false men worship gods in their own image, false men cannot worship a true god, who has withdrawn his presence and left them in their own pollution and excrement. Honor as it is manifested within the human community marks the just man who is in allegiance with Nature

and a just God, while "Nature abhors . . . Breach of Faith. / Men live and prosper but in Mutual Trust, / A Confidence of one another's Truth."

The treacherous captain scoffs, "I have the Money. Let the world speak and be damn'd, I care not" (1.2.195, 197-99, 210-11); his wealth, not his word, will underwrite his privileged place in colonial society.

For Behn and Southerne, mutual recognition of honor becomes the mediating element in a slavery=tyranny dialectic. Like Milton, Behn would separate slavery from obedience to transcendent authority, but unlike Milton she does not construct slavery as the result of individual ethical failings and transgressions that have political and economic consequences. Neither Abdelazer's nor Oroonoko's enslavement stems from a lack of character. Instead, Behn would separate slaves along racist lines; slaves of "quality," that is noble birth, might be more appropriately be considered prisoners of war, who suffer "no more of the Slave but the Name" (40, variations 31, 47), while "common" slaves would enter the political-economic system as commodities. She posits there is nothing inherently degrading or dishonorable from this construction of slavery. Oroonoko makes this distinction in his call to revolt:

And why . . . should we be Slaves to an unknown people?

Have they vanquished us nobly in Fight? Have they won us  
in Honourable Battle? And are we by the Chance of War  
become their Slaves? This wou'd not anger a noble Heart;

this would not animate a Soldier's Soul . . . . (61, italics omitted)<sup>11</sup>

In this construction there is a natural affinity between men and women of quality that supersedes the accidents of combat. Trefrey, the agent in charge of the governor's plantation, first suspects nobility in the modest Oroonoko and then:

began to conceive so vast an Esteem for him, that he ever after lov'd him as his dearest Brother, and shew'd him all the Civilities due so great a Man. (38)

Trefrey respects feminine virtue, resisting the impulse to make Imoinda "oblige" him, and once he discovers that she is Oroonoko's wife quits his pursuit and takes pleasure from the "Novel," that is, the fiction or discursive apparatus that girds this cult of racial affinity. Blanford, Trefrey's counterpart in Southerne's play, is likewise deferential in addressing Oroonoko: "you are fall'n into Honourable Hands: You are the Lord Governor's Slave, who will use you nobly: In his absence it shall be my care to serve you . . . . I'll wait upon you, attend, and serve you" (1.2.203-206, 255). The crisis of recognition is obviated when master and slave exchange places; the slave will be "used" nobly and the master will "serve" him.

The "royal slave" is the location where Behn and Southerne attempt to produce the "colonial" by revising the symbolics of bondage.

The reality of Oroonoko's slavery is transformed into symbolic gestures and diversionary exploits. He is assigned his garden plot, his quarters and his task according to "Custom," but is seldom permitted to visit the area where slaves live and labor, and then only with a coterie of attendants, honor/body/prison-guards of ambiguous signification (40, 48). Instead, he performs a series of heroic feats which serve to entertain and amuse the masters in general and women specifically (48-59). Behn persistently attempts to ennoble what is essentially ignoble by couching the narrative in the language of a code of honor and elitism.<sup>12</sup>

Southerne, on the other hand, explicitly projects the dehumanizing element of slavery onto the planters. When they gather around "pulling and staring at Oroonoko" in a parody of the stereotypical Indian response to whites, Blanford intercedes, "You stare as if you never saw a Man before. Stand further off" (stage direction; 1.2.218-19). The dialogue implies a distinction between planters and men, a classification to which Oroonoko and Blanford belong. Southerne attempts to negate the slave=thing tautology fundamental to the institution: to refer to a slave as "a Man" without the possessive "my" is an oxymoron.

For his part, the royal slave protests "that even Fetters and Slavery were soft and easy" and swears "he distained the Empire of the World," that the little cottage, "That little Inch of the World," he shares with Imoinda "would give him more Happiness than all the Universe

could do" (Behn 44). Southerne adapts:

This little spot of Earth you stand upon,  
Is more to me, than the extended Plains  
Of my great Father's Kingdom. Here I reign  
In full delights, in Joys to Pow'r unknown;  
Your Love my Empire, and your Heart my Throne.

(2.4.169-73)

Uncomfortably reminiscent of the close of Settle's Empress, royal slavery is provisionally posited as honorific and a true expression of the "empire of the heart." The effect is not simply to attack planters as less than men, or to establish Oroonoko as a member of a race of the elite, but to naturalize what Memmi claims is impossible, the colonial.

This model of Oroonoko's slavery as a pastime presumes static relationships and disregards the generative aspect of the institution. Imoinda's pregnancy disrupts the idyllic fiction and exposes the fragility of a discourse that privileges the pricelessness of royalty over the very real exchange value of the slave. The anticipation of this child radically revises the concept of time in the narrative; the ephemeral and the perpetual are reversed. Royal servitude which was posited as temporary and purely a discursive expedient--Oroonoko is a slave in "Name" only (40, 47)--awaiting the arrival of the governor's justice, is exposed as perpetual and to be visited upon Oroonoko's progeny (45). In contrast, honor that

was proposed as an eternal virtue binding men to each other and God is disclosed as particular and evanescent, directly linked to political accident, not "blood," and dependent not merely on good will, but an interpretive strategy that attempts to make an honored guest of captive property. The slave may act with dignity and valor, but not honor. This reality makes Oroonoko "uneasy," "though all Endeavours were us'd to exercise himself in such Actions and Sports as this World afforded, as Running, Wrestling, Pitching the Bar, Hunting and Fishing, Chasing and Killing Tygers of monstrous size" (47). These diversions, which are recounted in the lengthy digression in the center of the book, temporarily suspend the threat of rebellion that discursively surrounds them and mask the impossibility of the "colonial gentleman."

The tenuous, fearful position of the European in the colony repeatedly erupts in the text. The narrator explains of the indigenous Amerindians: "we find it absolutely necessary to caress 'em as Friends, and not to treat 'em as Slaves, nor dare we do other, their numbers so far surpassing ours in that Continent" (5). Imported slaves posed a second threat of "Mutiny (which is very fatal sometimes in those Colonies that abound so with Slaves, that they exceed the Whites in vast numbers)" (46). However, the enemy of the ideology that both Behn and Southerne defend is not those who threaten massacre of whites, but the planters; authorial antipathy is focused on them. What results is a disturbing



abdication of responsibility, not unrelated to Harapha's bind. The colonial gentry are not powerless, but ideological constraints offer them no viable course of action, while their inaction is equally suspect. The planters allow their swords to rust in their scabbards, while "the People of particular Quality . . . [take] care to oil 'em, and keep 'em in good order" (60). But, "Men of any Fashion would not concern themselves" with the "comical" colonial militia of planters, "tho it were almost a Common Cause; for such Revoltings are very ill Examples, and have very fatal Consequences oftentimes, in many Colonies" (63). Trained and prepared for military exploit, the gentry is unwilling to cross "racial" lines to protect political and financial interests they share in common with the planters; at the same time they are not willing to publicly defend "racial" solidarity. They, like Oroonoko, are reduced to diversions. When Oroonoko does revolt, the narrator speculates: "'tis not impossible but some of the best in the Country was of his Council in this Flight, and depriving us of all the Slaves; so that they of the better sort wou'd not mettle in the matter" (63). Conflicting ideological and economic interests converge, silencing and depriving agency to the members of a potential timocracy Behn would seem to approve. The construction of the "royal slave" produces the very ambiguity and impotence it was designed to remedy.<sup>13</sup>

The impasse is resolved through multi-layered images of

dismemberment, much of it self-mutilation, that is visited upon all segments of Surinam's inhabitants. Chronologically, the first reference is to the execution of Charles I, figured as an act of lawlessness the hero unequivocally condemns "and wou'd discourse of it with all the Sense and Abhorrence of the Injustice imaginable" (7). The next is the Amerindians' test of merit. To prove themselves worthy of leadership, two warriors take turns in acts of self-mutilation and "so they slash on till one gives out" (58). The narrator says that it is "a passive Valour . . . too brutal to be applauded by our Black Hero" (58), thus for "Valour" to have value it must be actively employed for an approved cause; it has no meaning in itself.<sup>14</sup> In the next instance, Oroonoko decapitates Imoinda, motivated by the fear of her rape and torture (72). Faced with capture, he "cut a piece of Flesh from his own Throat" and "rip'd up his own Belly, and took his Bowels and pull'd 'em out" (75). Recovered from his self-inflicted wounds, Oroonoko is methodically dismembered, the parts thrown on a fire—genitals, ears, nose, an arm, the other arm—until he dies. He is then butchered and the quarters sent to "several of the chief Plantations" (77). Shortly after the incident, the narrator left Surinam and the Amerindians attacked and "cut in pieces all they could take . . . hanging up the Mother, and all her Children about her; and cut a Footman, I left behind me, all in Joints, and nail'd him to Trees" (54). What of the planters? "Some of 'em were afterwards hanged when the

Dutch took possession of the Place, others sent off in Chains" (70). Behn regrets the loss of Surinam and speculates that had Charles II "but seen and known what a vast and charming World he had been Master of in that Continent, he would never have parted so easily with it" (48). So, the fledgling empire, too, is dismembered. The colonists of "Quality" flee the site of degradation, the narrator returning to England shortly thereafter, and Colonel Martin, "a Man of great Gallantry, Wit, and Goodness," turns up in Behn's posthumously produced comedy, The Younger Brother (68).

This resolution, however, only serves to disclose how unstable the spectacle of dismemberment is and how incapable it is of offering determinate signification. In Discipline and Punish Foucault argues that the French "spectacle of the scaffold" was:

a policy of terror: to make everyone aware, through the body of the criminal, of the unrestrained presence of the sovereign. The public execution did not re-establish justice; it reactivated power. . . . Nothing was to be hidden of this triumph of the law. (49)

The English experience in the seventeenth century considerably complicates Foucault's reading of the event. The public execution of Charles I did not inscribe "the unrestrained presence of the sovereign," but his absence; sovereign power was exposed as ephemeral and "the law"

did not "triumph" but was revealed as a mutable servant of military power that could be revised and rearticulated by any "demigod [demagogue]-rogue." The law could be instituted by such as Cromwell and authored by such as Milton. Behn's conservative position is clear, and, as Laura Brown has argued, Oroonoko's dismembered body serves as analog to that other "frightful Spectacle of a mangled King" (77), the beheading of Charles I.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, like the accounts of Christ and Charles Stuart, Behn's Oroonoko blesses his executioners. However, the homology or typology is not so tidy. In ferocity and brutality, Oroonoko's death resembles the spectacles of 1660.<sup>16</sup> The Restoration of Charles II heralded judicial vengeance on the regicides "[n]ever the like was seen before at any tyme in the Cittie of London" (qtd. Knoppers 44). Peter Mundy, an eyewitness, narrates the procedure:

They hang near half quarter of an houre while the hangman strips them starcke naked and cutts them downe, and then presently, while they are hott, (I say not alive), cutts off[f] their privities, casts them first into the fire, the[n] opens them [and] disembowells them, casting their entrails into the fire allsoe, lastly holding up their hearts in hand one after another, cries to the people--"See the heart of a traitor." It is don alike to all. (qtd. Knoppers 43)

The dispersal of Oroonoko's body parts is anticipated by the fate of

Thomas Scot, who:

was half-hang'd, cut down, his Members cut off and burnt in  
his sight, his quarters were convey'd back upon the Hurdle  
that brought him to be dispos'd so far asunder, that they'll  
scarce ever meet together in one Tomb. (qtd. Knoppers 44)

To further complicate matters, many of the regicides refused to confess their crime; rather they exalted in their martyrdom, ascending the scaffold not only unrepentant and courageous, but with "cheerfulness, even merriment in the face of death" (47). The executions designed to avenge the regicide and reactivate sovereign power instead served to mimic and mock the crime and the punishment, and ultimately the law and the special character of the king's blood they were supposed to underwrite. Sheer numbers tended to destabilize the use-value of the spectacle. As Gilbert Burnet noted at the time, "the odiousness of the crime [regicide] grew at last to be so much flattened by the frequent executions, and most of those who suffered dying with such firmness and shew of piety, justifying all they had done . . . that the king was advised not to proceed farther" (qtd. Knoppers 50).<sup>17</sup> The criminal and the legitimate become confused and indistinguishable.

Foucault gestures to this misreading of the intentionality of such spectacles: "public execution allowed the luxury of these momentary saturnalia, when nothing remained to prohibit or to punish," and it could

assume the "aspect of the carnival, in which rules were inverted, authority mocked and criminals transformed into heroes." Indeed, "executions could easily lead to the beginning of social disturbances" (60-61).<sup>18</sup> However, during the Restoration challenges to the special character of the nobility and the sovereign were not merely "momentary saturnalia" with the "aspect of the carnival," but a theorized alternative inscribed in the non-particular blood of the regicides and disseminated by various dissenting groups. The Test Act of 1673 required all office holders to publically accept Anglican sacraments and reject transubstantiation, a belief that most materially enunciated the special character of blood and served to theorize the "aristocratic particularities of blood." By 1688 there was nothing momentary and little carnivalesque about the "bloodless revolution."

Oroonoko's fate then is a conflation of the "mangled king" and the regicide—of lawful and lawless spectacle. His final praise of Banister, "a Fellow of absolute Barbarity, and fit to execute any Villany, but rich," as "the only Man, of all the Whites, that ever he heard speak Truth," is a scornful reproach of the paralyzed, voiceless colonials. The implication is that the better armed, better trained men of quality lack not the material, but the discursive means, to act significantly. Any positive act is mutinous, self-mutilating and dismembering, while inaction exposes impotence. As a result, government and control of the spectacle has

been reduced to ochlocracy, rule by the "rude and wild" "Rabble" (76-77). However, in contrast to both Memmi and Patterson, escape to the motherland cannot succeed in resolving the colonial's dilemma; in the seventeenth century, the source of contagion is the homeland. It is England that has spewed forth its excrements and polluted the colonies, and it is England that has welcomed home the prodigals—not the wasted and chastened, but the engorged and insolent—and allowed their cash to pass for quality. Behn turns Milton's dialectic on its head. God may have turned his eyes away from this "vicious Race," but God's Englishmen have not. The tyrant is not converted to the "meanest of slaves," but the inverse: "The generality of the Men look as if they had just knock'd off their Fetters" and have become tyrants even to their own tyrants, "the dread of which, hath imprinted that in their Looks, which they can no more alter than an Ethiopian can his Colour." The "banished cavaliers" have become eardstapa even in their homeland while an alien usurper has been awarded the trappings of sovereignty and the military might to maintain it.

#### Priceless Possessions

"Love stops at nothing but possession."

—Blanford, Oroonoko—

"I have the Money. Let the world speak and be damn'd, I care not."

—Captain Driver, Oroonoko—

Behn's concern appears to be focused on the disorder that results when spectacles can no longer be interpreted and turn self-destructively on the bodies that legitimately should operate the mechanisms of power. There is nothing left but dismembered parts and the history. In contrast, Thomas Southerne and John Gay attempt to contain the breakdown through rearticulating the threat of racial disorder by exploiting the anxiety over "white slavery" cast as color-coded sexual tyranny. The vulnerability of a code of honor to corruption by money, deceit, conquest, and hybridization, is masked and transferred from a masculinized conception of virtue and relocated, not in virginity, but womanly marital chastity.<sup>19</sup> Harking back to Homer, the neo-classicists retrieve the distressed wife or mother to invest her with special qualities and value threatened by ruptures in the social (in contrast to the domestic) order. As a result, issues surrounding definitions and distributions of labor, production and reproduction, and the mutability and commodification of the physical body emerge in the texts.

Although Southerne follows Behn closely in articulating a code of honor, he makes several dramatic departures from Behn's plot. First, he adds a comic sub-plot that transparently exposes the congruence of the slave market and marriage market. Second, he retreats from the final scene of dismemberment, employing the more conservative tragic convention of "poetic justice" achieved through multiple stabbings.



Finally, in an unhistorical revision, Imoinda is presented as a white slave woman. Each shift serves to sexualize and eroticize slavery while it clearly locates bondage as a primarily economic rather than either a domestic or political condition.<sup>20</sup> Ransom, an arbitrarily established figure of use-value that can only approximate the pricelessness of the prestigious captive, is replaced by exchange-value in a market economy. Thus, while Behn's *Oroonoko* justifies slavery as a legitimate consequence of a "Chance of War" that would not "anger a noble heart," he rejects the market, complaining that "we are bought and sold like Apes or Monkeys" (61). In contrast, Southerne's *Oroonoko* appears to have capitulated to the economic construction:

If we are Slaves, they did not make us Slaves;  
 But bought us in an honest way of trade:  
 As we have done before 'em, bought and sold  
 Many a wretch, and never thought it wrong.  
 They paid our Price for us, and we are now  
 Their Property. (3.2.108-113)

We are invited to read these lines ironically. Oroonoko is wrong, and Aboan, his friend and vassal rapidly convinces him that his royal duty is to reject the implied contract theory and assume his princely responsibilities by obtaining his freedom and that of his unborn child. However, the threat reaches beyond the disruption of a status society

with its authoritatively distributed labors and privileges; a market economy assigns exchange-value to all that is priceless, signified here at this historical moment as white women threatened with commodification.

Southerne even more than Behn seems to be particularly aware of market forces that persistently militated for the commodification of the female person—portions, prostitution, adultery and slavery.<sup>21</sup> He recognized that even marriage did not remove women from a vicious struggle for their virtue and valuation. To combat this shift to quantification, Southerne redefines reputation from a socially constructed discourse surrounding an individual to an attribute possessed and manipulated by the subject. Thus, Mrs. Friendall of The Wive's Excuse (1692), though admittedly attracted to her would-be lover, refuses him without peevish recourse to a masculine construction of wifely virtue, but to please and satisfy her own construction of her individual worth. She covers up her husband's cowardice "for [her] own sake" (1:4.1.136-37) and suggests that it is her "heaviness" that prevents her from being "transported into the Woman" that Lovemore would have her be (5.3.80-81). The lines assign a materiality, substance, even stubbornness, to the female body that resists surrender to the ephemeral and mutable, in short, market forces. Mrs. Friendall explicitly retrieves her reputation from the realm of the public economy of words:

I cannot think

The worse of you for thinking well of me:  
 Nay, I don't blame you for designing upon me,  
 Custome has fashion'd it  
 Into the way of living among the men;  
 And you may be i'th right to all the Town:  
 But let me be i'th' right too to my Sex  
 And to my self [.] (5.3.84-91)

Entangled by modish fashion and institutionalized custom, she is clearly a sympathetic rather than pathetic or exemplary character. She will retire to a comfortable, non-competitive, but presumably lonely existence in the country with relatives.

The commodification of the white woman in a market manipulated "Into the way of living among the men" is even more explicit in Oroonoko, where the comic plot, which dominates the first half of the play and is not resolved until the fifth act, dwells on the traffic in women, a motif that is then reconfigured as white slavery in the tragic plot. From the opening scene between Charlot and Lucy Welldon, two husband-hunting sisters venturing their dwindling portions in the new world, Southerne locates the source of social instability and corruption in the metropolis, specifically the fashions and customs that attend the marriage market. Charlot, a breeches character, notes: "Women in London are like the Rich Silks, they are out of fashion a great while before they wear out"; indeed,

"they fall upon wearing immediately, lower and lower in their value, till they come to the Broker at last" (1.1.19-20, 23-25). Lucy abandons the simile to make the reality explicit:

Luc. Ay, ay, that's the Merchant they deal with. The Men would have us at their own scandalous Rates: Their Plenty makes 'em wanton; and in a little time, I suppose, they won't know what they would have of the Women themselves.  
(1.1.26-29)

The glutted market, the circulation, and the assigning of exchange value to women not only negate the "pricelessness" of a woman, but efface her use-value: "they won't know what they would have of the Women themselves."<sup>22</sup> Charlot contradicts even more cynically:

Well. O, yes, they know what they would have. They would have a Woman give the Town a Pattern of her Person and Beauty, and not stay in it so long to have the whole Piece worn out. They would have the Good Face only discover'd, and not the Folly that commonly goes along with it. They say there is a vast Stock of Beauty in the Nation, but a great part of it lies in unprofitable hands; therefore for the good of the Publick, they would have a Draught made once a Quarter, send the decaying Beauties for Breeders into the Countrey, to make room for New Faces to appear, to

countenance the Pleasures of the Town. (1.1.30-38)

Value is assigned to novelty that expresses a "Pattern" of the individual "Person and Beauty" of the commodified woman. The live "Stock" is "unprofitable" unless placed in circulation, and "Draught[s]" are made quarterly to replenish the inventory while "decaying Beauties" are returned to the "Countrey" "for Breeders." The female body is figured as both reproductive and financial instrument. It is this London market that the Welldon sisters attempt to escape by venturing to the West Indian "Plantations" where husbands are rumored to grow "as thick as Oranges" (1.1.4-5).

The London social milieu from which Mrs. Friendall withdraws maintains a socially constructed positive value of a woman's reputation. In retreating to the country, taking herself out of circulation, she asserts autonomy over that value. In the London market in women described by the Welldon sisters and in the colonial economy, a woman's reputation was subject to immediate and perpetual devaluation. Maintaining reputation in such an economy, where masculine honor and honesty have been fatally compromised, is impossible. Charlot responds to the challenge by cross-dressing and projecting her reputation onto an imaginary cousin, a "Pattern" represented in a portrait, due to arrive in the colony from England in the near future. Thus, she secures a masculine friendship with her would-be suitor without risking her

female reputation by entering it into circulation. Lucy articulates her own more immediate and therefore vulnerable situation: "I don't know what Confinement Marriage may be to the Men, but I'm sure the Women have no liberty without it. I am for any thing that will deliver me from the care of a Reputation, which I begin to find impossible to preserve" (2.1.66-69).<sup>23</sup> Each woman uses a different strategy to evade market assessment in the control of an unregulated, undisciplined masculine discourse.

Charlot re-articulates the problem in the fourth act after she has married the Widow Lackitt and successfully engineered a bedtrick:

She wou'd have a Husband; and if all be, as he says, she has no reason to complain: but there's no relying on what the Men say upon these occasions: they have the benefit of their bragging, by recommending their abilities to other Women: theirs is a trading Estate, that lives upon credit, and increases by removing it out of one Bank into another. Now poor Women have not these opportunities: we must keep our stocks dead by us, at home, to be ready for a purchase, when it comes, a Husband, let him be never so dear, and be glad of him: or venture our Fortunes abroad on such rotten security, that the principal and interest, nay very often our persons are in danger. (4.1.49-53)

Within the parameters of the town-based Restoration sex-comedies, we are justified in classifying the Widow Lackitt with other well-heeled dowagers who prey on younger men for sexual favors. However, this widow makes explicit that her interest goes beyond personal gratification. When her lot is drawn at the slave market she complains: "Here have I six Slaves in my Lot, and not a Man among 'em; all Women and Children; what can I do with 'em, Captain? Pray consider, I am a Woman my self, and can't get my own Slaves, as some of my Neighbours do" (1.2.9-12). The maldistribution of gender and the commodification of the human being has a material impact not merely on discourse, but on the imperial reproductive economy.

In contrast to the fashionable town which trades and consumes, the country and the colony are at best conservative, productive and reproductive. At worst, as we have seen, the colonies are "dunghills" and the location of slavery, the most transparent institutionalized commodification of humans. Southerne's attack on the dehumanizing effects attendant to commodification of the human being emerges in the rendering of inter-gender relationships in the often maligned comic plot rather than the tragic plot where it might logically be expected. Consequently, the anti-slavery argument avoids lapsing into the rhetorical appeals of classical oratory: the rationalizing language of philosophy or the sermonizing language of ethics or the sentimentalizing

"discourse of the heart." It remains low, coarse, predatory and degraded, reflecting the socio-economic reality of the master-slave relationship. The split-plot structure of Oroonoko emphasizes the resemblance, indeed discursive interchangeability, between the marriage and slave markets that Welldon, the transvestite, makes explicit: "This is your Market for Slaves; my Sister is a Free Woman, and must not be dispos'd of in publick. You shall be welcome to my House" (1.2.13-15). At the same time, issues regarding the theory of honor and freedom are reserved to the tragic "high"-plot, while the mechanics and practicalities of political and economic domination and submission are rendered in the "low"-plot that operates on cunning, deception and expediency—forms of resistance and agency traditionally identified with comic characters, especially women and slaves.

In the colonial world of Oroonoko, honor, as manifested by words that can "be rely'd upon" (5.2.52) and conform to arbitrary rhetorical conventions, has fallen victim to the expediencies of the slave economy. As a slave, Oroonoko is intrinsically dishonored; as a prince, he cannot act dishonorably. In soliloquy Oroonoko considers the alternatives and finally concludes that "Honour's Cause" cannot "be cur'd by Contraries" (5.3.71-72).

Let me but find out

An honest Remedy, I have the Hand,



A ministring Hand, that will apply it home.

As in Behn's version, there are no viable options; Southerne takes recourse in tragic plot conventions. While Behn's Imoinda is indisputably African, not merely black but "carved in fine Flowers and Birds all over her Body" (45), Southerne's is a white infant immigrant to Angola, the daughter of a "Stranger in [Oroonoko's Father's] Court," the first white man he'd ever seen "who chang'd his gods for" his African host's and came to be the commander of the African king's military (2.2.71-84).

Here already we can see why Southerne's play came to be so satisfying to the eighteenth-century incipient bourgeois ideology. Rather than the French tutor hired by a Coramantien chief to teach a grandson that we find in Behn, the white man is a "Stranger" identifiable only as a European possessing superior military prowess and a beautiful daughter worthy of marrying a prince; in short, he represents the nameless, rootless, culturally uncontaminated, individual whose rise and success are attributed to merit unaided by ancestry or alliances. Within literary convention, and in contrast to the historical record, these same characteristics manifested in a white woman do not open opportunity but expose vulnerability, specifically to white slavery such "that the principal and interest, nay very often [their] persons are in danger."

Although there was an alleged instance of kidnapping young women who were sold for wives to the Virginia colony in the early seventeenth

century (Smith 352, n.1), Imoinda's enslavement is patently absurd.<sup>24</sup>

White women might be exhorted, extorted and after 1718 involuntarily transported into colonial indentured servitude, but they were not enslaved; indeed, unless they had independent means, they were not particularly welcome, and merchants found it "especially hard to dispose of [white] women" (Smith 104). While some female servants were needed for domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning, weaving and sewing, the real economic demand was for outdoor laborers, work from which white female servants were generally excluded, especially in the Indies. The anxiety in England was that young white men, not women, were being "spirited" to the colonies (259, 67-86).<sup>25</sup> Imoinda's plight does not represent a topical concern, but serves as an ideological suture for the issues explicitly articulated in Behn and in the comic subplot. The effect of the breakdown of "racial" affinities and alliances is projected, not in the "spectacle of the mangled king," but in the spectacle of the enslaved wife, the husband's priceless possession, threatened with rape and mutilation.<sup>26</sup>

In Oroonoko, the young Mrs. Rogers' white body, displayed on the stage in contrast to Mr. Verbruggen in blackface, emphasizes the projected vulnerability of the white woman and of the code of masculine behavior assigned to protect her. The discursive appropriations that expose the dangerous inequities develop rapidly. The predatory lieutenant governor begins with the conventional inversion: "I come to

offer you your liberty, / And be my self the Slave," but confronted with resistance he displaces his desire by projecting Imoinda's:

You shall be gently forc'd to please your self;  
That you will thank me for.

[She struggles, and gets her hand from him, then he offers  
to kiss her.]

Nay if you struggle with me, I must take-- (2.3.21-23)

Even her pregnancy does not put him off: "if it be so, / I still must love her: and desiring still, / I must enjoy her" (2.3. 41-43). Unable to seduce her, he tries to purchase her, offering Blanford "ten Slaves for her" (2.3.45). Blanford refuses, implying her priceless value and casting the governor's desire to "take" Imoinda as "love": "You are in love with her. / And we all know what your desires wou'd have: / Love stops at nothing but possession" (2.3.49-51). At the very moment Southerne exposes the proprietary imperative of "love," he articulates the breakdown of the masculine code, thereby displacing the victim of the power imbalance with the victimizer: in "loving" Imoinda, the governor would be "tempted" to commit a "violence" he would later "repent" (2.3.53-55). In a line that drips with irony, Oroonoko comments, "'Tis Godlike in you to protect the weak" (2.3.56), referring not to the slave, but the master suffering from the temptations of possession, a conflict brought to climax in the fifth act. Captured, not purchased, by the governor after an abortive rebellion,

Imoinda is in her tormentor's possession:

I'll court no longer for a Happiness  
That is in mine own keeping: you may still  
Refuse to grant, so I have Power to take.

The Man that asks deserves to be deny'd. (5.4.39-42)

Again Blanford thwarts attempted rape and reiterates the victim-victimizer inversion. The concern for the masculine "War of Honesty" has precedence over material violation of the white female body; the rape acts symbolically as the violation of the priceless code of honor. "I know you," Blanford says to the governor, "and will save you from your self" (5.4.53). The investment is in the symbolics of "Honesty" and the internal threat "possession" (that is, owning) and power pose to traditional alliances and birthright, not the conflict initially raised by the Oroonoko texts: that is, the "legitimate" mechanisms of slavery—if the slave must be won in war or can be purchased "in an honest way of trade"; if the dishonor of slavery, like the honor of royalty, is permanently imprinted and reproduced generation after generation, how to contain the contamination identified with the planter class?

Southerne replaces the spectacle of Oroonoko's death and dismemberment that climaxes Behn's story with a "spectacle of Honour," the "gasht and mangled" body of the "faithful Friend," Aboan (5.5.22-23, 28).<sup>27</sup> The scene offers a place to revise very Miltonic distinctions

between colonial slavery (essentially dishonorable) and the conservative construction of loyal obedience and servitude (the legitimate social order). To be a colonial slave is to be complicit with "Ignominious wrongs" (5.5.41) while to be a "faithful Slave" (57) to the sovereign is to act as a "Guardian of [the lord's] Honour" (62). After preferring death to the social death of slavery, Aboan reaffirms his servitude to Oroonoko:

If there is

A Being after this, I shall be yours

In the next World, your faithful Slave agen. (5.5.55-57)

There is a second "spectacle of Honour," the besieged white body of Imoinda, emblem of chastity and pricelessness threatened with devaluation and sent to the colony for a "Breeder" (1.1.37) of "Princes, the Heirs of Empire . . . to be born / To pamper up [planters'] Pride, and be their Slaves" (3.2.151-153). The visually explicit figure of color miscegenation is refuted by the discursive formulation of appropriate "racial" mixture: "O! that we could incorporate, be one, / One Body, as we have been long one Mind: / That blended so, we might together mix" (5.5.212-214). Indeed, Imoinda's death is the result of such a mixture, a murder-suicide in which both Imoinda and Oroonoko are simultaneously agents. This "incorporation" conflates the white female body with the "spectacle of a mangled king" and invites us to speculate on Southerne's revision of Behn's story of dismemberment. It is, of course, Behn's

Imoinda who is "honorably" decapitated, as was Charles I, rather than subjected to torture, quartering, and dispersal, as were Oroonoko and the regicides. It is Behn's, not Southerne's royal slave who, immobilized by the death, lies impotently by the rotting corpse, and is incapable of avenging the "Ignominious wrongs" visited upon royalty. Paradoxically, the playwright, in contrast to the novelist, attempts to reinscribe the distinctions between rightful possessions and purchased property. Consequently, Southerne's drama seeks to sort out the terms of Behn's conflated iconographic representations of victim and agent of regicide. In working within tragic conventions, Southerne is no less conservative and considerably more cautionary than Behn in his representation of the costs of capitalizing the human being and capitulation to the market forces affected and effected by colonization.

"Lacker-Fac'd Creoleans"

One Unfortunate Lady was in pursuit of a Stray'd Husband, who, in Jamaica, had Feloniously taken to Wife (for the sake of a Plantation) a Lacker-Fac'd Creolean, to the great dissatisfaction of his Original Spouse. . . .

—Ned Ward, A Trip to Jamaica, 1698—

And so, to be plain with you, you obstinate slut, you shall either contribute to my pleasure or my profit; and if you refuse play in the bed-chamber, you shall go work in the fields among the planters.

—Ducat, Polly, 1729—

The little more than a century that elapsed between the 1626

edition of Purchas' Hakuytus Postumus and Gay's Polly produced little to mitigate the anxiety over the quality and contaminating influence of colonists in the new world. If anything, they were represented as even more dangerous and polluting because of their economic power that could purchase the accoutrements of respectability. The 1717 act of Parliament that provided for the involuntary transportation of convicts qualified to plead benefit of clergy only exacerbated the bound immigrant's already seamy reputation. The flurry of colonial statutes designed to assure tracking the custody of transported criminals suggests that the private contractors responsible for shipping the effluent of the British court system were less than fastidious about informing the receiving colonial authorities and potential purchasers of indentures of the newcomers' backgrounds. Although colonists continued to be suspect, the conservative call to return to a status-based social order exclusively defined by the "natural" superiority of noble blood and birthright is modified to accommodate a bourgeois appropriation of honor divorced from such biologism during the decades that separate the versions of Oroonoko and Gay's Polly. However, rather than naturalizing arbitrary cultural boundaries as, for example, Addison does in Cato (1713), Gay renders them as explicitly deceptive, falacious and reliant on fictions, which nonetheless generate imbalances that produce discursive formations capable of exercising real power.

In Polly the criminal sub-culture from The Beggar's Opera is relocated in the West Indies, but Gay complicates Whistler's and Ward's colony = toxic landfill analogy. The charm and bravado that imbue Macheath with the aura of the well-born highwayman and his rake's mystique, which underwrites the generic convention justifying his reprieve at the close of Beggar's Opera, do not survive the trans-Atlantic crossing. Before his initial stage entry, the audience is invited to anticipate the "essential" Macheath—"in manners and conversation, tho' he is black, no body has more the air of a great man" (2.2.65-66); however, Gay dissappoints those expectations. It is the metropolitan, not colonial, culture that finds it "difficult to determine whether . . . the fine Gentlemen imitate the Gentlemen of the Road, or the Gentlemen of the Road the fine Gentlemen" (BO, 3.16.19-22). Rather than setting himself up as a beguiling rogue and patriarch of a plantation cultivating a crop of admiring beauties as might be reasonably expected, Macheath drops all pretensions to the tastes, fashions, customs and rights of a town rake. Indeed, he appears as Morano, a maroon, a disguise designed to "skreen" him from desiring women (2.3.32-35), and thereby abdicating his most obvious claim to "natural" superiority—his sexual energy and desirability. Furthermore, his marriage to Jenny Diver, if not technically monogamous (Macheath "now and then lay[s] claim to other women"), has earmarks of a cit marriage: a husband subservient to his wife's



unvarnished bourgeois pragmatism and "too safe, too secure, to think of pleasuring" a sexually dissatisfied wife enamoured with cavalier manners (2.2.50-59, 2.7.37-38).<sup>28</sup> His disguise is so convincing that even Polly Peachum, his faithful, honest, true-loving wife, is incapable of penetrating it.

In contrast to the heroic topos that insists that quality will shine through disguise or rough exterior, Gay suggests that there is nothing beyond pretense and the discourse that creates it. Macheath's execution, off-stage and anti-climatic, exposes how ephemeral and vulnerable to appropriation reputation and even ideology can be. In pretending to be less than we would want him, Macheath earns our scorn, and Polly's pathetic appeal for "a decent time" to grieve his death seems, if not entirely insincere, then pointless (3.15.45). Macheath has crossed the "racial" line, visually signified here by blackface, but it would be a mistake to interpret his degradation as transgressing a color or ethnic line. Like Samson, his loss of virility and honor emerge from geographical dislocation and miscegenation with "an arrant Cleopatra," who explicitly articulates the colonial strategy: "Rob the crew, and steal off to England. Believe me, Captain, you will be rich enough to be respected by your neighbours" (2.2.68-69, 2.3.50-52). Macheath resists, insisting that his treachery has always been limited to women, a transgression no gentleman would fault; yet he capitulates to creolization,

the new "customs of the times" that have made "snug fortunes" at the expense of a code of honor among men (2.3.56-59).<sup>29</sup> Without the support of the town-based culture to bolster his pretense to quality, his reputation and source of power are dissipated.

Gay clearly owes a debt to Oroonoko, which continued to be performed regularly throughout the first half of the eighteenth century. Indeed, Polly is a hybrid, as much an updated revision of Behn's novel and Southerne's play as a sequel to Beggar's Opera. The departures from the earlier works indicate how much progress a bourgeois appropriation of an aristocratic code had made. Behn's "old world" conservative romance that discloses the threat to domestic tranquility posed by internecine treachery and conflict is reconfigured as economic competition and critiqued in the radical Beggar's Opera; located in London, the ballad opera makes transparent the discursive congruence of a criminal underworld, an emergent bourgeois ideology and a decadent status-based social order.<sup>30</sup> Southerne attempts to manage the "old" and "new" world materials by employing the split-plot design in which anxiety over the breakdown of a masculine discourse of honor, figured as individual weakness, is enunciated in the tragic plot, while the pragmatics of slavery, figured as institutionalized economic predation, are exposed in the comic. Using the same discursive materials, in Polly Gay eradicates the old world status/racial boundaries that Behn so

carefully constructs; there are no persons of "quality" in the colonies.<sup>31</sup> Instead the West Indies are infested with those who use "luxury . . . [to] distinguish [themselves] from the vulgar" (1.1.10-11). There is no arrival to anticipate, no legitimate governor to re-establish justice and defend the civilities and honor of the motherland.

Gay conflates the Southerne female characters-Imoinda, the white wife threatened with sexual slavery, and Charlot Welldon, the cross-dressed husband hunter-and renders them in Polly Peachum Macheath, the daughter of a couple of tricksters in a disreputable bourgeois success story. What serves as the catalyst for the high moment of tragic catastrophe, the (lieutenant) Governor's attempted rape of Imoinda, is transformed into the initial conflict in Polly. In search of her "strayed husband," Polly arrives in the West Indies destitute, her money having been stolen during the voyage. She immediately learns from Trapes, a baud turned white slaver, that Macheath has "turn'd pyrate" and "married a transported slave, one Jenny Diver" (1.5.51-53). Naively believing that Trapes has procured an honest situation for her, Polly soon discovers that she has been sold to Ducat for "a hundred pistoles," a bargain for "a fine handsome christian" (1.6.27-28) and one fifth the ransom Moluza demands for the "handsome" Mariana in Money the Mistress (3.1.65). The difference, of course, is that one is a ransom extorted from a father for a "priceless" daughter (and even that relationship is compromised as

Davila, the father, is a Jew, a character stereotyped as one capable of placing a price on the priceless), and the other is the market value of a victim without "racial" ties. The antiquity of Polly's ancestry and the value of her associations are not merely negligible but negative.

Ducat makes the material reality of her condition explicit, by first articulating the identity of marriage and slavery: you are "as legally my property, as any woman is her husband's, who sells her self in marriage," but then disclosing distinguishing characteristics: if Polly does not service him in bed, she will be forced to serve him in the cane fields (1.1.58-60, 81-85). The threat here is that "white slavery," a luxury good that serves to confer prestige on the master and a condition of sexual subservience on the slave and understood to be limited to women and boys or young men, can be converted immediately (that is without the mediating condition of the household servant whose labor provides both prestige and economic value) to "black slavery" proposed to be labor exploited solely for its economic value. Both Polly and Imoinda are valued for their sexual desirability, enhanced by the perception of their purity and chastity (though not virginity); however, they each are assigned an economic value calculated by the worth of their productivity and reproductivity, respectively. Should Polly refuse to compromise her virtue, she will be sent to labor in the fields, while Imoinda's labor will "get young Princes" born into slavery. Both plays explicitly equate

marriage with slavery on the basis that the master, whether husband or slaveowner, has property in female bodies sanctioned by legal institutions. Unsolvable ruptures occur when the two institutions are located in geographical proximity and the economic terms are revealed. Rather than signifying what is ideologically central to a belief in inestimable worth, the "priceless" white woman becomes a liminal figure of institutional miscegenation whose labors produce the lacquer-faced: Polly will be sunburt; Imoinda, the mother of a mulatto slave. The fact that neither of these plots has much, if any, historical merit demonstrates how they serve to disclose the irony and the perceived cultural threat of "smuglers [kidnappers] in love [labor], that ruin us fair traders in matrimony [slavery]" (Polly, 1.14.5-6).

\* \* \*

Each of the stories I have considered in the royal slave chapters has produced increasingly sophisticated, that is corrupted or hybridized, resolutions to the problems associated with colonization and its challenges to cultural purity and hegemony. After experimenting with ethnic erasure, Milton's Samson takes recourse in catastrophic self-destruction and genocide, a solution that Behn recasts in multiple figures of dismemberment including the colonial project itself. For her, the corruption of a social order based on a biologically essentialized equation of noble birth and behavior, the internecine conflicts, and the consequent

"racial" mobility created by colonization, is too high a price to pay for even the economic and political advantages of Empire. No less resistant to but stuck with the new order established by the departure of James II and the ascension of William and Mary, Southerne capitulates to a reality that he discloses as fraught with contradictions and ambiguities--the heiresses to the wealth generated by slave labor are the victims of a market that commodifies and degrades the "priceless." The Welldon sisters will live in a political economy that unrelentingly threatens a corrupted code of honor that has forced them to the margins of the inhabitable world, which in turn is always threatened by illegalities--duplicity, fraud, slave revolt and Indian attack.

Polly ends even more problematically. There stewardship of nobility and of the code of honor and virtue that articulates a theory of "natural" superiority has migrated to the low-born Polly and Cawwawkee, the indigenous prince. But this discursive appropriation is not allowed to resolve the ideological conflicts that have emerged. Polly's plea for "a decent time" to grieve combined with the couple's exit prior to the final celebratory dance and air hold in suspense any possible resolution. What had been the central foundation of "civil society" has been relocated in the "state of nature," where propriety subsumes property. Yet, propriety has no essential meaning without claim to "titles" and "treasures," what Cawwawkee is reduced to offering Polly in his final words (3.15.35-36),

and the symbolic and real claim to properties. Although his characters "pass"--female for male, white for black, respectable for disreputable--it is this impasse between nature and civility figured in the "royal slave" that Gay and his predecessors cannot negotiate. It would take natural science and historical events nearly a half century (as long as it would take Polly to reach the stage) to create the discourse capable of supporting the figure of the Noble Savage and inverting and replacing the fetishistic values of both the Royal Slave and "white" slavery. In contrast to the Royal Slave and the priceless, white, potentially reproductive woman, the Noble Savage less problematically serves the bourgeois attack on the idea of nobility as a birth-right and a "system of privilege, inherited power, and political oppression" (White 191). An emerging understanding of class "denatured" race, removing it from the legal and temporal restraints of the older definition. Concurrently, it masked the colonial source of its own emerging civility, privilege, power and oppression, a source of dominance these dramas expose as uncivil, excremental, barbaric and savage. The old concept of race, "the aristocratic particularities of blood" are not so much "obliterated" as recast and reinvented out of ancient fictions and a new mathematics of blood.<sup>32</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>William D. Phillips, Jr. argues that slavery as it emerges in the Americas is not derived from Aristotle's conception of slaves as "possessions with souls," but from Roman slave law. He quotes the Roman jurist Florentius:

(1) Slavery is an institution of the common law of peoples (ius gentium) by which a person is put into ownership (dominium) of somebody else, contrary to natural law. (2) Slaves (servi) are so called because commanders generally sell the people they capture and therefore save (servare) them instead of killing them. (3) The word for property in slaves (mancipia) is derived from the fact that they are captured from the enemy by force of arms (manu capiantur). (17)

A millenium later, John Locke reiterates both Florentius and Harapha; slavery is contrary to natural law and it is an alternative to a death sentence (17). See also, Patterson pp. 5, 77-101.

<sup>2</sup>Abdelazer, Florella, and Alonzo each enunciate the theory that although the King, Ferdinand, might be the sexual aggressor, his life is sacrosanct because he is annointed; therefore, to preserve the majesty of divinely sanctioned office, the entire institution and its "non-discursive social" function, Florella, the innocent object of his desire, ought to be the victim of judicial vengeance (2.1, 406; 3.2, 421; 3.2, 423-4); die she or justice must.

<sup>3</sup>An ironic rearticulation of the Son's merit.

<sup>4</sup>See The Empress of Morocco and Its Critics, Intro. Maximillian E. Novak, for the literary controversy surrounding Settle's play and the genre of heroic drama.

<sup>5</sup>See Barthelemy's Black Face, Maligned Race.

<sup>6</sup>J. H. Wilson claims that Abdelazer "needs no motivation" because he is a "natural villain" (61). That assertion is absolutely astounding. Twice in the first scene Abdelazer suffers public ridicule and humiliation, and we know that his father has been killed and his crown claimed by the victor; by the end of the first act, his birth and religion have been impugned; he's been banished from the court and the young king has made it clear that he intends to cuckold him. One wonders exactly what indignity is egregious enough to provide motivation for



revenge.

<sup>7</sup>For a review of contemporary political events see Laura Brown, Ends of Empire, 51-55.

<sup>8</sup>Briefly, in the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), the British acquired a monopoly over supplying Spanish America with black African slaves (el pacto del asiento de negros) for thirty years. They also gained the right to purchase land in Spanish America to construct facilities for slaves to recuperate after the middle passage (Willson 464, 482; Langer 432).

<sup>9</sup>Critics since Wylie Sypher have noted that Oroonoko is a European nobleman in blackface, and that Behn explicitly assigns him "white" physical and cultural characteristics. Brown, adapting Todorov, argues that this is evidence that Behn can only conceive of Oroonoko as same or alien. I suggest that Behn's representation is designed to call attention to different "racial" markers than we normally recognize.

<sup>10</sup>In Hegel's construction, consciousness seeks recognition in a fight to the death that results in either the "death," the destruction of the adversary, or its consumption, its slavery. In either case, consciousness does not achieve what it desires, that is, recognition. Such a crisis is what Milton's God obviates by articulating "the high Decree / Unchangeable, Eternal, which ordain'd / Thir freedom (3.126-26). It is also the crisis that Harapha confronts: he cannot gain recognition from a "consumed," socially-dead individual whatever his "weight." In Hegel's schema, the slave emerges from the impasse as an "unhappy" (or unlucky) consciousness by working on things, by working through the dialectic. The master is left, like Campbell's despot, with a rapacious appetite and ever diminishing pleasure.

<sup>11</sup>This is, of course, one of the stipulations of the Geneva Convention-P.O.W.s are not to be used as slave labor. Such degradation occasions howls of protest and righteous indignation because the authors and signers of the international agreement attempted to make the very distinction about the primacy of honor that Behn does. There is likewise a second distinction between appropriate duties for officers (formerly presumed gentlemen) and enlisted personnel, but neither class is to be forced into dishonorable slavery. Indeed, to submit, to offer aid and comfort to the enemy, is "dishonorable."

<sup>12</sup>Patterson argues persuasively that dishonor is an essential element of slavery, while labor is not; "most slaves in most precapitalist societies were not enslaved in order to be made over into workers" (99).

Like concubines and household servants, slaves, particularly "royal slaves," are expensive to maintain and their value rests with the prestige they provide the master rather than direct economic benefit.

<sup>13</sup>This circumstance is reiterated in Oroonoko's inability to act after he has killed Imoinda.

<sup>14</sup>We can also recognize this ritual as a variation of Hegel's "fight to the death" and resolution to the crisis of recognition.

<sup>15</sup>See Brown, Ends of Empire, pp.55-58. Brown makes the identification specific: "'The Spectacle' . . . when Oroonoko is quartered and his remains are distributed around the colony, evokes with surprising vividness the tragic drama of Charles Stuart's violent death" (57-58).

<sup>16</sup>Here I am indebted to Laura Lunger Knoppers, who in Historicizing Milton quotes extensively from contemporary accounts of the executions of the regicides (42-51).

<sup>17</sup>Nearly two centuries later these executions continued to have a profound impact on the British imagination. Charles Dickens in his A Child's History of England savages the "Merry Monarch," Charles II:

These executions were so extremely merry, that every horrible circumstance which Cromwell had abandoned was revived with appalling cruelty. The hearts of the sufferers were torn out of their living bodies; their bowels were burned before their faces; the executioner cut jokes to the next victim, as he rubbed his filthy hands together, that were reeking with the blood of the last . . . Still, even so merry a monarch could not force one of these dying men to say that he was sorry for what he had done. (496-97)

Dickens continues for pages with his attack and delivers a final jab in his two-page Conclusion: "A number of charming stories and delightful songs arose out of the Jacobite feelings, and belong to the Jacobite times. Otherwise I think the Stuarts were a public nuisance altogether" (531).

<sup>18</sup>Knoppers argues the instance: "[Thomas] Venner's uprising marked the display of the executed regicides as a site of struggle that could generate defiance as well as consent" (131). She also traces how "civil and ecclesiastical authorities extended their domain" by exaggerating the magnitude of the threat and implicating less radical groups than the fifth monarchists in this challenge to sovereign

authority (130-32).

<sup>19</sup>Stephanie Athey and Daniel Cooper Alarcón have cogently argued that "Imoinda's pregnant [and ultimately dismembered] body becomes the site of critical linkage between the aristocratic code of honor and the codes of honor and dishonor that govern colonization" (436). They note that "Behn eventually marks certain feminine qualities [literary production] as white and English and transfers them to the female narrator, while other feminine qualities [reproduction and the material body] are marked as alien and African and come to dominate Imoinda's character" (431). There is a dual transference; the impoverished "Female Pen" produces a priceless narrative of the degradation and devaluation of priceless royal blood.

<sup>20</sup>Money the Mistress, Southerne's much disparaged last play (1726), is painfully and repeatedly explicit on this point, employing the threat of white slavery in Tangier, a geographical location with some historical claim to the practice. Mariana substitutes herself for Mourville, a prisoner of war being held for ransom by Moluza, a moor. Moluza explains that if Davila, Mariana's father, cannot meet his ransom demands, "I shan't sink with him . . . I can fit her out for a Voyage to the Golden Coast; she'll make a tight Smugler, to run away with the Profit of the fair Trader: Her Goods will come Custome free" (3.1.87-89). He tells Davila to redeem Mariana in twenty-four hours or "I have a Chapman ready, who will give me double the Price I set on her to you. . . . I will present her to the Alcade of Alcazor, who has bespoke the first handsome Spanish Woman that came to my Hands" (3.1.127-28, 131-32).

<sup>21</sup>See Hughes (348-49) and particularly his conclusion (456-57), for Southerne's sensitivity to "women's issues."

<sup>22</sup>This is, of course, Marx's central critique of capitalism.

<sup>23</sup>There is no textual evidence to suspect that Lucy desires to enter into sexual circulation; within this economy it simply does not matter whether or not she is chaste; mere existence places her reputation in a circulation that cannot enhance her value.

<sup>24</sup>See Jordan, Chapter 2.

<sup>25</sup>For the fear that young men were being kidnapped and "spirited" out of England, see Smith, Chapter 4.

<sup>26</sup>Mutilation of black female slaves, if not common, was certainly a real and legal possibility; rape and the resulting issue were probabilities that led to the elaborate "racial" classifications of the late-eighteenth century in the West Indies.

<sup>27</sup>See Athey and Cooper-Alarcón for a reading of the complex "codes of honor/horror" and "black/white female sexuality" in the Oroonoko stories. The authors convincingly articulate "the (at least) three-way mediation of racial exploitation in the Americas" (417), presupposing a modern construal of "race" that comes to be constructed particularly in Behn's text. As I have argued, such a presupposition is problematic; the biological essentialism that accompanies the notion of race cannot be arbitrarily delineated by color or geographic origin at the end of the 17th century without ignoring the more conservative, and anxiety producing, conception of "race."

<sup>28</sup>See Canfield, *Tricksters and Estates*, Chapter 5, for an ideological reading of this trope in the period's drama.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. Southerne's *Oroonoko*, 1.2.262-64: "Enquire into the great Estates, and you will find most of 'em depend upon the same Title of Honesty: The men who raise 'em first are much of the Captain's principles."

<sup>30</sup>See Canfield, "Critique."

<sup>31</sup>John Fuller, editor of the Clarendon edition of Gay's *Dramatic Works*, asserts that Gay had Oroonoko in mind in creating the character of Cawwawkee, the Indian prince held captive by Morano and his party of pirates and maroons (2:386). Fuller cites the parallel between Oroonoko's lines: "But there's another, Nobler Part of Me, / Out of your reach, which you can never tame" (1.2.234-35), and Cawwawkee's: "But the noble soul is unshaken, / For that still is in our power" (2.8.30-31). The two scenes have even more in common; Gay inverts for satirical purposes Southerne's concern over the devalued word. Oroonoko berates Captain Driver, asserting that "Nature" will drive him from "Society / And Commerce of Mankind" and concluding that "Men live and prosper but in Mutual Trust, / A Confidence of one another's Truth" (1.2.196-99). However, when Cawwawkee articulates the code of honor, Morano scoffs: "Meer downright Barbarians . . . They have our notional honour still in practice among 'em," and his henchman Vanderbluff erupts in disgust: "What, neither cheat nor be cheated! There is no having either commerce or correspondence with these creatures" (2.8.36-37, 57-59).

<sup>32</sup>For the fetishistic value of the Noble Savage in the late eighteenth century, see Hayden White, Tropics of Discourse 183-196. For the mathematics of blood in the late eighteenth century, see Joan Dayan, "Taxonomies of Enlightenment" in Haiti, History and the Gods, 219-237.

## Chapter 5: Joined at the Hip

### A Monster, Colonialism, and the Scriblerian Project

Anyone who does not grasp the close juxtaposition of the vulgar and the scholarly has either too refined or too compartmentalized a view of life. Abstract and visceral fascination are equally valid and not so far apart.

—Stephen Jay Gould, "Living with Connections," 1985—

I have to this point suggested that a modern concept of race has prevented scholars from launching vigorous inquiries into an older understanding that used different, although equally biologized, criteria to distinguish between noble and vulgar. The reluctance is historically explicable; beginning with a theory of "divine right," the notion of "aristocratic particularities of blood" was a tale of family values opposed to the weighty pressures of nationalism, republicanism, democracy, free markets in land, labor and marriage, and finally, the individual of merit—a Polly Peachum or a Clarence Thomas—whose person belies an elitist notion of natural nobility but whose discourse re-inscribes it. Second, so long as "aristocratic particularities of blood" were given deference, a theory of non-aristocratic particularities (a modern concept of race) was impossible. The "tale" of blood as the carrier of "quality" to the "tale" of blood with the burden of "qualities" had to travel a metonymic progression: blood—plasma—blood, from a race of natural rulers to races of

natural slaves. Mediating or facilitating that shift is a "race-less" individual bearing cultural marks of superiority (Locke identifies education, land, money), who agitates for personal religious, political and social freedom and at the same time insists that proprietary rights supersede others' claims to common "birthrights." Or, as Orlando Patterson asserts: "The joint rise of slavery and the cultivation of freedom was no accident. It was . . . a sociohistorical necessity (ix). The older construal of race could never have born the weight of modern institutionalized slavery in the West. As tidy as the equation might appear, "natural/racial rulers" cannot successfully possess "natural/racial slaves"; therefore, the former have historically had systems of ransom and manumission logically impossible to a theory that posits the existence of the latter. And, as we have seen, the posited existence of the latter (natural slaves) precludes, at least logically, the possibility of the sustained existence of the former (natural rulers). Finally, the twentieth-century revival of the older theory combined with nineteenth-century racial science has, quite rightly, soured us on the concept of a "master race."

Unfortunately, as a result, we have failed to take seriously a more than century-long concern that a "western design" was polluting virgin lands and corrupting the homeland. In Paradise Lost Michael prefaces his lecture of Books 11 and 12 with: "All th' Earth he gave thee to possess

and rule, / No despicable gift" (11.339-40), and Adam's first vision is a panorama of the non-western world. The history that follows, however, takes the form of a dialogue between "abstract and visceral fascination." Like Raphael, Michael repeatedly cautions Adam against his intuitive, visceral responses, informed as they are by his grosser, imperfect senses. Instead, Adam is cautioned to rely on his discursive reason which is "oftest" and more naturally his while intuitive reason is the preferred discourse of angels (5.478-90). To further complicate matters, we know that "the great Creator" (3.166) has placed within fallen humans "as a guide / [His] Umpire Conscience," a voice that cannot be construed as other than intuitive discourse, a mode of communication if not unnatural at least uncommon to humans, and one that relies upon both the abstract and the visceral.

At this point I want to leave Milton and the possible impact the "new world" may have had on his imagination and the impact his work may have had on the "western design." To this point I have considered the "new world" and literary representations of those who have ventured to it voluntarily and involuntarily, and how those travels affected and effected British colonialism during what might be termed the most frenetic, unstable, expansionist period of the first empire. Now I want to explore the "discursive reason," discourse most proper to humans according to Raphael, surrounding the imports from "new worlds"



vomited onto England. I am not concerned here with what and how much found its way to the Motherland, but how imaginatively "citizens of a better stamp" coped with the excess. Out of that discursive struggle emerged the justifications of new dominations.

### Anamorphosis

For the desire of colonial discourse is a splitting of hybridity that is less than one and double.

--Homi K. Bhabha, "Signs Taken for Wonders," 1985--

They have not their feeling common any where but in the place of their conjunction.

--William Burnet to Hans Sloane, May 9, 1708--

On 12 May 1708, Secretary Hans Sloane had William Burnet's letter from the Hague, describing the "wonderful union of two sisters," read to the Royal Society. This early report of Hungarian twins joined at the hip, accompanied by illustrations, is first concerned with the twins' anatomy, specifically the configuration of "the urinal passage" and the "anus," speculating "that their parts are distinct"; secondly, it assures the Society that there is no hint of "a cheat," and finally it enthuses about the youngsters' health and linguistic prowess.<sup>1</sup> Observations of "physic" rapidly turn to matters of social and aesthetic concern. Within the month the six year old sisters, advertised as "one of the greatest Wonders of Nature," were on display at "Mr. John Pratt's at the Angel in Cornhil" (Ashton 210). By June 10th, Jonathan Swift is writing to a friend: "Here is

a sight of two girls joined together at the back, which, in the news-monger's phrase, causes a great many speculations; and raises abundance of questions in divinity, law and physic." He classifies the exhibit with a much anticipated beheading and an impudent "publically printed" parody; scornfully, he sums up: "These are effects of our liberty of the press"(Ball 90-91). From early summer to mid-fall, The British Apollo ran a series of letters, querying the configuration of the twins' souls and the legal status of their persons that echoed the "scientific" conjectures about their bodies.<sup>2</sup> Although Helena and Judith, the twins in question, may have had no feeling in common except at the "place of their conjunction," their conjunction certainly caused a sensation throughout London.

Such "wonderful unions" have long been the object of both "abstract and visceral fascination" (Gould, "Living with Connections" 66); they generate terminology and discourses that range from vulgar freak show lingo to scholarly Latinized argot, while their exhibition rapidly draws a wide and socially diverse audience to a common location. Five hundred years ago the monstrous birth was an event of public importance recorded in ballads, broadsheets, sermons, and scholarly tomes; it was a demonstration of God's power, perhaps displeasure, and a reminder of the vulnerability of not merely the individual body, but human form itself.<sup>3</sup> Within contemporary Western ideology, the lusus naturae, nature's "freak," "fluke" or "joke," is a problem for medical science guided by

concerns for privacy and individuality. The surgical solution to the "duplicity" posed by conjoined twins has not, however, reduced the demand for monsters. Deprived of access to "the real thing" (even our "natural museums" increasingly rely on grossly distorted plastic models of "the wonders of nature"), popular public culture forges surrogates--technically produced films and photos--which, despite the fraud that "everyone" recognizes, continue to enervate discourses of "divinity, law, and physic" and serve as a place to exercise our intellectual and moral muscularity.<sup>4</sup>

Although "monsters" clearly transgress morphological and police imaginary boundaries, I want to set aside convincing arguments that employ the monstrous body to speak to concerns about human creativity, individuality, subjectivity, physical and mental deviations, and the role of the imagination as the unreliable medium through which body and soul communicate. Instead I will argue that Helena-Judith, the conjoined twins who generated so much interest in 1708 London, were "wonders taken for signs," or more accurately, wonders overwhelmed with signs at a time when the metropolis was overwhelmed with wonders from around the world. Their body invited laymen and professionals alike to rehearse and stretch diverse moral, legal, and scientific principles and theories, during a period when there was little professional recognition, and even less courtesy, among practitioners of "divinity, law, and physic." Neither

theologians nor scientists could gesture to an authoritative law while Mother England experienced both epistemic instability and a proliferation of novel and weird imports. Such wonders, I will suggest, served as a practice field upon which competing discourses could scrimmage in an effort to produce an authoritative, if textually unstable, edition of "the English book--'signs taken for wonders,'" as Homi Bhabha characterizes post-Enlightenment publications designed for colonial consumption (144).

Bhabha argues that ambivalence and authority are mutually dependent and act symbiotically in post-Enlightenment colonial discourses, and he is scrupulous in limiting his theory to Britain's Second Empire. For Bhabha, hybridity is not biologically or genetically informed; instead it is a discursive event that occurs when a "symbol of national authority"--the 'English' Bible--is revalued "as the sign of colonial difference"--the 'English' Bible translated into native languages--and then replicated and misread by the native with mocking, gleefully casuistic attention to detail (156-57). The frustration emerging from mutual misunderstanding is not evidence of failure, but of "a wonderful union" that allows for the appearance of a text in common, when in fact both parties are occupied with different objects of discourse. But, I stress that Bhabha's hybridity was not a phenomenon of the First Empire; indeed literacy and conversion to Christianity were actively suppressed

particularly in colonies reliant on slave labor. The translations were not disseminated until after Westerners had turned from the Bible to the sciences for authoritative justifications of imperialism and after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807.<sup>5</sup> Relying on Scripture, agents of the First Empire appropriated land and controlled bodies; relying on theories of matter, the Second Empire sought to appropriate and control hearts and minds.

Homologous to Bhabha's hybrid, Judith-Helena is the material manifestation of "less than one and double" (158, 161, 162), both incomplete and incorporating duplicate body parts; however, she is not a discursive event or even a text, but a body—a wonder like many others that were exhibited in London and throughout Europe.<sup>6</sup> If the conjoined versions of the bible produce hybridity, the conjoined bodies of the twins produce anamorphosis, a corporeal condition of being not without form.

Anamorphosis is a genre of visual art that was more well-known in the early-eighteenth century than today. Emerging from experiments in perspective and operating on the same optical principle employed in traffic warnings painted on our streets, the most common form of anamorphosis was a painting that viewed from the front appears to be mere or deformed content—splashes of color chaotically applied—but when the viewer moves to the edge and looks longways, a representational image emerges. Restoration and eighteenth-century

anamorphic art frequently required different shapes of reflective surfaces upon which the highly distorted images (often faces and bodies) would leap up as "natural," identifiable forms.<sup>7</sup> Chaotic confusion is revalued as a challenge to perspective.

Beyond emphasizing a distinction between signs (texts) and wonders (bodies), anamorphosis has other conceptual advantages: it conflates the visceral and intellectual, the sensual and cerebral, flux and stability. It proliferates content and offers it an authorized place to be exhibited while it graphically represents form imposed on content. Furthermore, its value does not rest with the object, but in operations performed by the maker and the viewer. As a result of being consciously a-perspectival and rigorously perspectival, anamorphic art demands that both maker and viewer submit to a specific, artificial, peculiar perspective.<sup>8</sup> Certainly, specificity, peculiarity and artifice have aptly characterized Augustan vulgar and abstract fascinations. If the early-eighteenth-century West was in ideological flux as Marx argues, and suffered epistemic instability as Foucault suggests, and if, as I suspect, the explosion of oddities and commodities from around the world contributed significantly to flux and instability, then anamorphosis can be useful to focus on operations attempting to establish ideological and epistemic order.

### A Taste for Monsters

The twins faced stiff competition in a market rich with strange acquisitions from around the globe. Not only human oddities but exotic rarities were on display—dwarfs, giants, tattooed men, bearded ladies, feral children, hermaphrodites, mummies, whales, elephants, camels, lions, tigers, leopards, polar bears, all varieties of tropical birds and primates, this last generally trained to smoke tobacco and drink ale "like a Christian" (Ashton 204-205). What couldn't be brought back alive was stuffed or pickled for exhibit. "Monster-mongers" like Pratt, who promoted the Helena-Judith exhibit, aggressively competed with the virtuosi and Royal Society members for collectibles. In 1708 the organizing principles of such exhibits were suspended between conflicting theories about the significance of their content. The Renaissance impulse to ascribe the existence of the lusus naturae to providential sign and subsequently decode the portent is reflected in what Gould describes as: "the seventeenth-century baroque passion for displaying odd, deformed, and 'prize' . . . specimens" ("Cabinet Museums" 16). Hans Sloane, the recipient of Burnet's letter and President of the Royal Society after Isaac Newton, was already committed to a scientific system similar to Linnaeus's taxonomies to which he contributed. However, even when Sloane's "incomparable museum"—Linnaeus's characterization (qtd. de Beer 112)—was offered for sale at his death in

1753, his collection with specimens numbering in the tens of thousands was viewed as an oddball's legacy. Horace Walpole wrote to Horace Mann:

You will scarce guess how I employ my time; chiefly at present in the guardianship of embryos and cockle-shells. Sir Hans Sloane is dead and has made me one of the trustees to his museum, which is to be offered for twenty thousand pounds to the King, the Parliament, the Royal Academy of Petersburgh, Berlin, and Madrid. He valued it at fourscore thousand; and so would anybody who loves hippopotamuses, sharks with one ear, and spiders as big as geese! It is a rent-charge to keep the foetuses in spirit! You may believe that those who think money the most valuable of curiosities, will not be purchasers. (qtd. de Beer 144-45).

Walpole was wrong, of course; Parliament bought the Sloane collection to which was added Robert Cotton's manuscripts, then languishing with Arthur Onslow after the Ashburnham fire, and the Scriblerian Robert Harley's library. Together the three collections began the British Museum, an institution which would come to be prized a century later by "Victorians, who viewed their museums as microcosms for national goals of territorial expansion and faith in progress fueled by increasing knowledge." (Gould, "Cabinet Museums" 16). The £20,000 collection of



"curiosities" would become "priceless" tokens of the immense wealth the colonies generated for the motherland and "those who think money the most valuable of curiosities." Without a dominant discursive perspective to offer it coherence, this rapacious appetite for the monstrous and exotic, which in 1708 was thoroughly secularized but not yet justified by newly emerging scientific discourses, was unmanageable.<sup>9</sup>

In 1859 we find Henry Morley still attempting to account for the eighteenth-century "visceral fascination": "The taste for Monsters became a disease," and the "very natural" "thirst for marvels" during Elizabeth's reign turned, after the Restoration, "frivol[ous]," "indolent," and "trifling." From his historical vantage point as a citizen and scholar of "the nation destined for a world-wide rule," he wrote, "the taste of all classes for men who could dance without legs, dwarfs, giants, hermaphrodites, or scaly boys" only "lingers among uncultivated people," and fortunately "the nation has . . . recovered [from its 'disease'] with a wonderful rapidity." Morley diagnoses the late-Stuart and Georgian "taste" for monsters as a social pathology infecting "nearly the whole mind of Europe" with a "strange stagnation" (245-46). Surely Morley was a bit hasty in presuming that his countrymen had recovered from their "disease"; three years after he wrote, the "Baboon Lady, Miss Julia Pastrana," was embalmed and on display at the Burlington Gallery, 191 Piccadilly, so tastefully placed that the exhibition could not "offend or disturb the

sensibility of even the most fastidious lady" according to the Illustrated London News (Altick 266-67). However, the physical and discursive proximity of the monstrous and the non-monstrous, the common and the exotic, seems always to have been close. John Merrick, the Elephant Man, had only to cross a street to move from the sideshow to respectable lodgings, from beast to a man of feeling.<sup>10</sup> The proliferation and distortion embodied in the monster or exotically diseased body require the proper perspective or reflective surface for its coherent representation to appear. However, the "joke" of nature, or computer generation, can represent the absurd which simultaneously underscores and undercuts the authority of disciplined discourse.

As anomalous objects of discourse, monsters are "jokes" that in Freud's terms attack "the certainty of our knowledge itself, one of our speculative possessions" (137-38). The monster is a place where discourses are at liberty to rehearse emergent and reiterate threatened epistemic principles; it is the site of anamorphosis (with its privileging of matter), and only later hybridity (a discursive event). Thus Morley can defend the Elizabethan "thirst for marvels" as the "very natural," healthy, juvenile curiosity of a culture recently exposed to a new world, and attack the Restoration and eighteenth-century appetite for those same marvels as decadent and diseased. Concurrently of course, Victorian cabinet museums were importing "marvels," not by the specimen, but the

ton.<sup>11</sup> Sheer volume and variety blur the distinction between a virtuoso's curiosity and a scientist's specimen. Yet, to identify Morley's position as hypocritical fails to recognize the historically specific position of the monster in the early-eighteenth century. Prior to the Restoration, religious and increasingly apocalyptic explanations for the appearance of monsters and other prodigious "natural" anomalies retained authority. When Linnaeus published the 1758 edition of Systema Naturae, science could speak with authority to Sapiens monstrosus, be they Hottentots, Chinese, or Canadians.<sup>12</sup> No longer satisfactorily justified by metaphysical explication as it was a century earlier, and not yet adequately appropriated by scientific discourse as it would be a century later, the monster in the early decades of the eighteenth century was a discursive property up for grabs. Of course, monsters were not the only objects of discourse undergoing secularization; divine sanction and religious authority over other institutions—learning, labor and the monarchy itself—had been eroded. Given what was at stake—nothing and everything—discourses of sentiment, philosophy, law and science each competed to retrieve the monster as its own, to lay claim to the authorized perspective, to act as the reflective instrument capable of offering coherence.

### Monstrous Authorship

A decade after Helena and Judith's appearance in London, John Arbuthnot and Alexander Pope collaborated on the "Double Mistress" episode of the Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus, thereby drawing the street attraction and object of learned inquiry into the realm of the literary.<sup>13</sup> The brain child of a half-dozen talented Tories (Swift, Pope, Gay, Arbuthnot, Parnell and Harley, future Earl of Oxford) with ample time and (in their minds) too little cultural influence, Martinus Scriblerus is something of a monster in his own right, a collection of limbs and organs never quite assembled until most of his progenitors were dead, and even then there appear to be spare and missing parts.<sup>14</sup> The fictitious character, a learned fool who would publish commentary and his own works, was designed to make mischief in the world of contemporary letters. Given the practices of anonymous, pseudonymous, pirated, unauthorized, and maliciously misattributed publication, the fool's works had viral potential. The print culture was highly interactive, the ink barely dry on controversial materials before Edmund Curll or some other "Grub Street hack" would publish a "key" purporting to expose identities and explicate allusions. Furthermore, this was a discourse community in which the distinction between author and audience was by no means apparent; Charles Kerby-Miller speculates that Arbuthnot both posed questions and offered responses about the Hungarian twins in The British Apollo (295-96). Indeed, the subtitle of

that periodical, Curious Amusements for the Ingenious, supplements the subtitle of the Philosophical Transactions: Giving Some Account of the Present Undertakings, Studies, and Labours, of the Ingenious, in Considerable Parts of the World, which published one of the varieties of discourse Scriblerian productions were designed to impersonate. The Scriblerian project calls into question not only issues of "legitimate" authorship, discursive methodologies, and subject matter as it supposedly was intended to do, but also demonstrates how inextricably complicit it becomes with the discourses it seeks to destabilize. In short, Scriblerus cannot function simply as a carrier; to spread infection, he must be infected.<sup>15</sup>

The Memoirs chronicle the progress of a pedant and casuist from his birth on April Fool's day to his flight from England in 1699 after a disastrous marriage to conjoined twins. The "Double Mistress" episode and its sequel, "A Process at Law," the chapters that tell the story of Martin's unfortunate brush with love and matrimony, have a special anamorphic resonance in that they render (in both the literary and culinary sense) a number of discourses into essences of materiality and absurdity. Religious discourse is marginalized; metaphysical aspects of Christian doctrine are portrayed in a burlesque of materialist philosophy, and the affective or pathetic appeal of Christianity is appropriated by an exaggerated language of romantic love. Like the more explicit and less

subtly confrontational Dunciad, this rendering exposes a competition of discourses as both an amusement with nothing at stake, and as a balance that zeroes out authority, producing the specter of apocalypse.

Martin's "memoirs" initially "anamorphize" a contemporary crisis of authority, authorship and authenticity that Foucault in "What is an Author?" identifies with epistemic shift; David Shumway succinctly summarizes: "Sometime in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries . . . . [s]cientific writing became validated on the basis of a system of truths and methods of verification, but literary works were required to bear the name of an author or be classified as subliterate" (4). This reversal did not occur without resistance and complicity; like many of their contemporaries, both Newton and Pope orchestrated non-anonymous anonymity for their major works. Furthermore, both satire and sentimentality (optics capable of processing any raw content) fed voraciously off publication practices and the convention of the persona.<sup>16</sup> Separately, satire and sentimentality offered challenges to empiricism, but in concert, paradoxically, they would come to underwrite, rather than undercut "scientific inquiry."<sup>17</sup> Ultimately, these distorting "optics" failed: the cynicism of satiric exposure was too coarse, while the idealism of sentimental naïveté was too saccharine. Arbuthnot and Pope recognized the limitations of such discursive optics, and they generated a vomit of Scriblerus's drivel to expose the "cheat."

The "Double Mistress" episode, subtitled "A Novel," is prefaced with the following warning:

N. B. The style of this Chapter in the Original Memoirs is so singularly different from the rest, that it is hard to conceive by whom it was penn'd. But if we consider the particular Regard which our Philosopher had for it . . . it will be natural to suspect that it was written by himself, at the Time when Love (ever delighting in Romances) had somewhat tinctur'd his Style . . . . (143, italics reversed)

In this "novel," the language of love or "discourse of the heart" has stained the philosopher's prose, and we are ironically urged to recognize this as a mark of authenticity: "it will be natural to suspect that it was written by himself." In consequence, the authorship of the preceding "philosophical" chapters is destabilized; "regard" rather than style or methodology validates authenticity. An emergent ideology was translating romantic love into a refined sentiment of tenderness that could be learned and should be cultivated, and simultaneously an epistemic shift was displacing divine order with the concept of natural law which could assert both original equality among men (thereby assailing a status society) and justify economic and political inequalities between them.<sup>18</sup> It would be a mistake to term the Scriblerian project a wholesale rejection of sentiment and empiricism, but its products show how acutely aware

their writers were of discursive competition, the fragile condition of authority, the changing character of authenticity and the proprietary interests involved.<sup>19</sup> These chapters narrate a series of events: the discourse of property values is re-configured in a novelistic language of love that is always threatened by the taint of pornography which in turn is subverted by legal, medical and philosophic discourse and ultimately re-appropriated by the language of property.

### Monstrous Property

Scriblerus, the virtuoso, attends an exhibition of curiosities near Whitehall owned by one Mr. Randal, a "monster-monger" and "retailer of strange sights."<sup>20</sup> After entering, Martin engages Randal in the battle between the ancients and the moderns, Martin listing off at length the wonders recorded by classical Greeks and Romans, Randal countering with a harangue "chiefly upon modern Monsters" imported from the contemporary known world (146). Randal brags: "the whole World cannot match these prodigies; twice I've sail'd round the Globe . . . and I can with conscience affirm, that not all the Deserts of the four Quarters of the Earth furnish out a more complete set of Animals than what are contain'd within these walls" (144). Martin's bookish questioning does not adequately disguise the fact that he is as much a gawker as the "passing multitude" (144). Showmen like Randal with a considerable capital investment recognized that the literati comprised a significant segment



of their paying audience; a handbill written half in English and half in Latin, the language of learning and pornography, advertises a "Hermaphrodite (Lately brought from Angola)" (Altick, 36 n.; D. Wilson, 134). The distinctions among idle, prurient and scientific curiosities are not compelling; admission is still six-pence a head. From the outset, plundering "the four Quarters of the Earth" for curiosities to furnish such amusements is rendered as vulgar and opportunistic, nor is the scholar's "abstract" interest validated. Indeed, they are "not so far apart" (Gould, "Living with Connections" 66).<sup>21</sup>

The philosophic/scientific argument, which so thinly masks a commodification of the curiosity, is abruptly terminated by the appearance of Lindamira-Indamora, the prize exhibit:

where not only the Fire of Youth, but the unquenchable  
Curiosity of a Philosopher, pitch'd upon the same object! For  
how much soever our Martin was enamour'd on her as a  
beautiful Woman, he was infinitely more ravish'd with her  
as a charming Monster. What wonder then, if his gentle  
Spirit, already humaniz'd by a polite Education to receive all  
soft impressions, and fired by the sight of those beauties so  
lavishly expos'd to his view, should prove unable to resist at  
once so pleasing a Passion, and so amiable a Phænomenon?  
(146-147)

The libido and scientific curiosity find sensation in common, and a sublimation is the product of Martin's upbringing. His "humaniz'd," "gentle Spirit" has been politely educated to receive "soft impressions"; "though he had been permitted to peruse her most secret charms," his is "no wanton Passion," but a "true," "honourable" and "noble" one. This rhetoric of love has clear antecedents in the heroic romances and high plots of split-plot dramas of an earlier period, where it is represented as a heightened sentiment that marks the individual of noble birth. However, Martin's is an educated, rather than a "natural" response; his appetite has been cultivated so that it is sensitive to "soft impressions." We can see the impression of John Locke's Essay on Human Understanding molding the features of the ridicule.<sup>22</sup> But, the barb bites even deeper as we see how a "discourse of the heart" modifies the language of "science." In answering a query about the mechanisms by which the Hungarian twins came to be conjoined, the writer for The British Apollo explains, "the Bodies of Embrio's may be compared to a soft Wax, being very apt to receive and keep any strong Impressions made on the Mother's Body"; thus, if the mother had seen "two People strike one another Buttock against Buttock, or else receiv'd her self such a hard stroke," the accident could cause the conjunction (No. 36 [11-16 June 1708], 2).<sup>23</sup> This maternal hyper-sensitivity to stimuli is translated directly to equally sensitive and impressionable matter, the embryo. Furthermore, in addressing the capacity of women

to become learned, the Apollo editor asserts that "the Soft, the Tender Sex . . . are cast in too Soft a Mould, are made of too Fine, too Delicate a Composure to endure the severity of Study"( No. 71 [13-15 October 1708], 2).<sup>24</sup> Martin's sensibilities are associated not merely with the diseased as Morley asserts, but with the embryonic and the effeminate.

To underscore their skepticism of a language of heightened sentiment used to enunciate materialist philosophy, the Scriblerians make clear that Martin's response is "fired by the sight of" and attention focused on "those beauties so lavishly expos'd to his view." He blushes knowing that "the object of his flame should be so openly prostituted to vulgar eyes" (147). Because the twins are joined at the hip, the exhibition entails pelvic exposure. That was equally true of the original twins: witness the letters in the Philosophic Transactions. As in the display of hermaphrodites, "the curiosity of the public was in no way inhibited" (D. Wilson, 92).<sup>25</sup> It is suspect enough that we have the "charming Monster" lifting her skirt for the "vulgar" while Martin is smitten by Cupid, but all is justified by the languages of science and property. Martin's "pleasing," "no wanton Passion" is "a flame, that may not only justify itself to the Severity of a Philosopher, but even to the Avarice of a Parent; since she who causes it carries a most plentiful Fortune in the sole Exhibition of her person" (147). All conflate here in the persons of Lindamira-Indamora, the monstrous body: sentiment, scientific inquiry and a

sizeable portion. While separately each discursive strategy might begin to resolve the monster's anamorphic excess into a containable representation, in conjunction they only serve to exaggerate it. Each discourse is under suspicion of being "a cheat," devalued, not enhanced, by the proximity of the others.

The exhibits were designed money-makers, and an underlying theme in Dudley Wilson's argument is the monster business. Despite the emergence of empiricism and the slackening in the belief that monstrous births were harbingers of the immediate future, "it is obvious that we are still in the world of the curiosity rather than in the world of science. The value of the monster as an object of curiosity and as a considerable source of income is not diminished" (133). Indeed, members of the Royal Society had to compete with the "vulgar" in the market. In 1670, Jacomo Grandi, writes: "I could not dissect [conjoined twins] as I would, because they were deliver'd to me to embalm, and the indigent Father of them, who look'd for gain, would not let me have them but for a great Sum of money" (PT 5: 1188). In 1703, Charles Ellis writes from Holland of another set of conjoined sisters: "the father preserves them with the Skin and Muscles, by sponging them with spirit of Wine. He asks 300 Guilders for 'em, too much for a Traveller to expend on one thing" (qtd. D. Wilson 162). Some fifteen years later, Daniel de Superville heard from a midwife of stillborn triplets, one acephalous; he "offered a good Sum of Money to

have all [the mother] was delivered of, but they would not let me have it. I still offered Money to have only Permission to dissect the Monster, but the impertinent Superstition of the Parents deprived me of that Satisfaction" (PT 41: 303). Judging from the number of post-mortems described in the Philosophical Transactions, dissection was virtually a fad, its purpose to publish anatomical findings particularly of conjunctions and anomalies, but nearly always qualified with personal anecdote, thus satisfying the intellectual and affective void created by epistemic instability, and whetting and perpetuating the appetite for monsters.

This "ingenious" class not only generated discourses about monsters, but its members also profited materially from their exhibition. John Whiting writes of a fellow persecuted Quaker, Henry Walrond, and one Sir Edward Phelips who, to recoup financial losses, acquired conjoined twins "to make a Show of them for Money; and kept them until they died" (qtd. D. Wilson 112). From the time they were "infants" until they were nine years old, Helena and Judith were exhibited for money throughout Europe by Doctor Csuszius, a Hungarian who had come to financial terms with their parents (Cardell, PT 50.1: 318).<sup>26</sup> We have a situation in which not only vulgar and scholarly fascination is "pitch'd upon the same object," but financial interests as well. It is little wonder that Randal, "no less covetous than the Guardian of a rich Heiress" and

suspicious of Martin's continuing interest(s) in the twins, takes steps to protect his investment, "issu[ing] out strict Orders, not to admit our Lover on any pretence whatsoever" (148). As senex iratus, Randal patrols the space between the "charming Monster" and Martin's impersonations, pretenses, and conflated discourse. However, after a farcical courtship and elopement, Martin succeeds in wedding the twins in "the Fleet" (153). With this novelistic plot "closure," the affective discourse of heightened sentiment is displaced as the monster's matter becomes increasingly anamorphic.

#### Property in Persons

In the following episode, "Process at Law," legal, philosophic and scientific discourses compete for proprietary authority that insists on material demonstration. Randal responds to the marriage by taking legal action to restore his property. The preliminary posturing of the lawyers focuses on proprietary rights and slave law in England. Randal's lawyer, Dr. Leatherhead, asserts the monster-monger's rights of property as a slaveowner: (1) that the slave cannot marry without the master's permission, (2) that marriage did not preclude continuing servitude; both points "put him in no small hopes of having Martin added to his Show, and acquiring a property in his Bodily issue by the Ladies" (154). Here, we have the rich irony of the virtuoso on display, not as a stock humors character, but this time with other "prodigies" from "remote and

barbarous nations" (144).<sup>27</sup> Martin's conflation of philosophical, sentimental and proprietary interest in possessing the twins has put him at risk of sliding across the boundary between person and property. Dr. Penny-feather, Martin's lawyer, dredges up sixteenth century French precedent which "dash'd" Randal's "joy": "The Children must follow the condition of the Father: or, that indeed, if they were to follow the condition of their Mother, the Case would be the same, there being no slavery in England" (154). Not surprisingly, the Scriblerians rely on the arcane and marginal to address the topical and highly contested fields of concern surrounding property and the nature of servitude in the early-eighteenth century.

Randal's advocate more accurately represents early-eighteenth-century jurisprudence. Although private accommodations might be made, slaves as non-persons could not be party to legal contracts, including marriage.<sup>28</sup> Following the Roman model and in stark contrast to the mechanisms of property inheritance for freemen, British slavery was a legacy which passed from mother to child—legally, offspring followed the condition of the mother (Patterson 139-41). Despite case law dating from Tudor England asserting "England is too pure an air for slaves to dwell in," there was slavery in England. It is true that decisions repeatedly asserted the ingenuous, that is free-born, nature of Englishmen and even those who happened on England's happy shores; however, it is equally

clear that such foreign imports enjoyed nothing of "freedom" but the name. They were not free of the perpetual service any master may have acquired (Steinfeld 95-97).<sup>29</sup> The Yorke-Talbot opinion of 1729 remained the law of the land until the 1772 Mansfield decision.<sup>30</sup> By presenting the very facts of slavery as opposite of what they were claimed to be, the Scriblerians expose the anamorphic optics of the institution and the legal apparatus that articulated its principles and procedures. Perhaps for that reason, editors and publishers from 1791 to 1822, the height of the abolition movement in England, chose to restore the "very coarse" two chapters. The human anomaly who materializes physical deviation from a norm is a body capable of locating a place where person slides into property. In 1810, a "WHITE MAN" would write to the Morning Post to protest the public showing of the Hottentot Venus: "it seems . . . that she has been brought by artifice or force from her own country for this abominable purpose, and is at this moment in a state of slavery in England" (qtd. D. Wilson 185). Monstrosity, and the conjunction it represents, would increasingly serve as the place of common sensation, producing the same slave = monster tautology in both abolitionist and anti-abolitionist discourses.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, the problem of where voluntary contract lapses into perpetual servitude is located at the site of the alien, the exotic, the lusus naturae.



The monster seems to be a special kind of property exempt, like the slave, from the normal rules of commerce and labor; they are human "things" with "portions" exclusively in their bodies whose exchange-value can only be expressed through their ownership by others. Conversely, that value prevents the anomaly or slave from claiming property in its own body, which must be purchased back or redeemed in order to be worth "nothing"--that is, free. Helena and Judith were "bought back" or "released" from their thinghood by Duke Augustus Saxo Cizius "for a price" and then sent to a convent to live out their days (Cardell, PT 50.1: 319). This manumission revised the scientist's access to the twins. Gerard Driesch, a scholar who visited the convent, must rely on the testimony of the twins' governess for his anatomy. He justifies his work by explaining that "these things were not asked by me out of curiosity but duty, and for the public good"; the interview was in private and the results expressed in blushinglly discreet prose. Scientific curiosity is recast as "duty and for the public good," while scientific discourse must defer to a sentiment named "modesty"; writing in 1729 in Latin, Driesch is "ashamed" to name the "parts" which were prominent in Burnet's letter and The British Apollo in 1708, because "good taste forbids" (Cardell, PT 50.1: 319-320).<sup>32</sup> What were records of "Undertakings, Studies and Labours" and "Curious Amusements" become a "duty" of social import. At

the same time, the twins' deformity subjects them to the condition of never-to-be-emancipated wards.

At this point the Scriblerians produce another figure with ambiguous cultural status, Ebn-Hai-Paw-Waw, "the black Prince of Monomotapa," a version of the royal slave (156). Also displayed at Charing Cross, his historical antecedent appeared some three years after the exhibition of Judith and Helena: "a little Black Man, being but 3 Foot high, and 32 Years of Age, strait and proportionable every way, who is distinguished by the Name of the Black Prince, and has been shown before most Kings and Princes in Christendom." The black prince was exhibited with "his Wife, NOT 3 Foot high . . . commonly call'd the Fairy Queen," who at the time was pregnant, and "their little Turkey Horse, being 2 Foot odd Inches High" (qtd. Ashton 205-6). Here appropriate pairing is identified by equality of stature and assigned status, he a "Prince" and she a "Queen," rather than what would come to be understood as racial categories.<sup>33</sup> In Martin's Memoirs the "Negroe Prince" is secretly married to Indamora, the dark twin with "black and piercing" eyes and "locks . . . black and glossy as the Plumes of a Raven," while the blue-eyed, golden-tressed Lindamira slept (146, 155). This poetic license, creating dramatic color distinctions where none could exist between genetically identical twins, would be adapted for "scientific illustrations" in the nineteenth century where even skeletons of co-joined twins were

individuated by color (Gould, "Living with Connections" 68). However, neither the Black Prince nor Indamora is racialized in the ways that later discourses would project lasciviousness and brutish qualities onto indigenous peoples of sub-Saharan Africa. What we have is a sight gag—wart-nosed, tilted-headed, uneven-knotty-legged learned fool (100) bound to a "charming Monster" and "the Lest Man" in the world (Ashton 205-6) in a monstrous ménage à trois/quatre.

Indeed, the ambiguous status and legal condition of Ebn-Hai-Paw-Waw exposes an anamorphic instability surrounding rank and the status of labor. He is first described dressed in a gaudy outfit clearly designed to conform to audience expectations of an exotic prince, but we are then told that although "his stature was of the lowest, yet he behav'd himself with such an Air of Grandeur, as gave evident tokens of his Regal Birth and Education" (146). Imposters with pretensions to "Regal Birth" were a source of concern as economic conditions made class fluidity a reality.<sup>34</sup> However, exposing the Black Prince, or any of Randal's exhibits, as fraudulent is not the object of this satire. In fact, the Scriblerians seem to endeavor to establish the characters and events as genuine oddities enunciated through fraudulent discourses. Penny-feather alleges in his legal argument that "Ebn-Hai-Paw-Waw hath maliciously, forcibly, and unlawfully seiz'd, ravish'd, and detain'd Lindamira-Indamora . . . [and] hath wickedly, leudly, and indecently us'd, handled, and evil entreated" the

body of Martin's wife (156). Leatherhead, the defendant's lawyer in Martin's counter-suit, refutes the allegation: "Prince Ebn-Hai-Paw-Waw, having been lately baptiz'd, hath with singular modesty abstain'd from Consummation with his said Wife, until he shall be satisfied . . . how far in Law and Conscience he may proceed" (162). In this chapter, the prince is repeatedly identified with Monomotapa, an area of South Africa fabled to have once been a great and wealthy empire (Pratt 41, 231 n.5). Peter Heylyn (1652) offers a more extensive description of the inhabitants:

The People are of mean stature, and black complexions; but strong and active, couragious, and of such footmanship, that they out run horses. . . . They may have as many Wives as they will, but the first the principal, and her Children only to be heirs: the women here very much respected (as a second England) the Emperor himself, if he meeteth any of them in the streets, giving them the way. (76)

This variety of comparison, that a black African culture was like "a second England," would not be enunciatively possible in the latter half of the eighteenth century when black characters were essentialized and cast as either villainous brutes or victimized innocents in the controversy over the abolition of institutionalized slavery. The Scriblerian rendering of the Black Prince appears much closer to Heylyn than the later texts where recognition of courteous, even courtly, sensitivity and

condescension was impossible. At the same time, the little Black Prince, like Lindamira-Indamora, has no voice or agency.

While Ebn-Hai-Paw-Waw is allowed to maintain some dignity, unlike Martin who is a fool throughout, he is clearly in reduced circumstances, "a Creature" of Randal's. "Martin was order'd to allow Aliment to both [Lindamira-Indamora], the Black Prince appearing insolvent" (156); that is, he appeared before the court with no means to support the wife he had been coerced into marrying. As with the status of the female captive and dependent, we are confronted with slippages surrounding the nature of servitude and proprietary interests. Robert J. Steinfeld argues that the co-existence of free labor (in which employers can seek recourse in civil, not criminal, court) and unfree labor (in which contracted servants are subject to criminal law) lingered in Great Britain well into the eighteenth century, much longer than it did in the United States, where unfree labor--socially and economically marginalized persons, "alien" indentured servants and "minor" apprentices--came to be understood as "a form of involuntary rather than voluntary servitude and as essentially indistinguishable from slavery" (7).<sup>35</sup> A series of "Run away" ads, appearing in the same issues of The British Apollo in which questions were posed about the anatomical, spiritual, and legal configuration and status of Judith and Helena, bear out Steinfeld's argument.<sup>36</sup> While discourses repeatedly asserted that "service" and

"slavery" had no feeling in common, clearly their practices did. Common to each of the notices is a "Master" who seeks help in repossessing a servant in livery and who is willing to pay a substantial reward. The advertisements also indicate that the line that separates voluntary (contract) and involuntary (slave) servitude is hazily drawn if defined at all.<sup>37</sup> It is fruitless to speculate whether the offered rewards were motivated primarily by the desire for the return of the livery or the servant, to insist that the law be upheld, or a form of self-advertisement.<sup>38</sup> But it is clear that "runaways" were not limited to black slaves. Thin-visaged, roman-nosed, presumably disgruntled servants could be counted among their number. It is equally clear that "Masters" assumed they had proprietary interest in their servants and could insist on their return to servitude should the runaways be apprehended.

In the trial arguments the Scriblerians conflate questions of "divinity," recast as philosophical speculation, with questions of "law" and "physic." Minimizing the duplicate nature of the twins, Martin's lawyer, Penny-feather, asserts that their shared part constitutes a single individual "because the said organ of Generation is the Seat of the Soul," arguing that "the Soul must reside in that place, where she exerts her generative and plastic Powers" (157-58), thus emphasizing mutability and material conjunction as well as articulating the operation of anamorphosis--imposing form on content. The British Apollo, which

rehearses the concerns of this chapter and may also have been penned by Arbuthnot, unequivocally declares the contrary: "Each hath doubtless a separate Soul, since their Passions and Affections, are as different as if they had entirely separte Bodies" (No. 36, 2). The desire for a neat split is clear, but the body is uncooperative.

Penny-feather counters that a "multiplicity of Wills" is not uncommon, "there being in the same Woman great and notorious diversity of Wills" (159), impersonating and feminizing Locke's argument. He further cautions the judge: "let not a few Heads, Legs, or Arms extraordinary, biass your Honour's Judgment, and deprive the Plaintiff of his legal Property" (159). Diversity of optics and profusion of content are naturalized in an imprecise anamorphic process. By the conclusion of the chapter, the basis of divine order, natural law, property rights, individual will and human love all rest on the configuration of a vagina (162). The effect is not carnivalesque, in which power is appropriated and subverted by the grotesque body, but the reverse—authority is enunciated through the grotesque body. The exhibit allows for the practice (both rehearsal and praxis) of pretenders to official discourse. However, in a very Hegelian moment of frustration, not of Aufhebung, what was anticipated as a strategy for anamorphic resolution results in deformity. The conjunction of the competing discourses distorts each so that each emerges with parts of the other absurdly cathected to it. A case that was

designed to define the "constituent Principle and Essence of Individuality" not only fails in that goal, but demonstrates how permeable, impressionable and subject to contamination the discourses themselves are when conjoined.<sup>39</sup> The finding--"that the Parts of Generation in Lindamira and Indamora were distinct"--and the decision--"that both the Marriages are good and valid"--"pleas'd neither Party" (163), nor any of the discourses.

### Cohabitation

The finding responds to the question of "physic," and the decision to matrimonial law, but the judge's order articulates the legal language of joint tenancy:

Therefore I order you, Martinus Scriblerus, Batchelor in Physic, and you, Ebn-Hai-Paw-Waw, Prince of Monomotapa, to cohabit with your wives, and to lie in bed each on the side of his own wife. I hope, Gentlemen, . . . that being, as it were, joint Proprietors of one common Tenement, you will so behave as good fellow lodgers ought to do. . . . Consider also by how small Limits the Duty and the Trespass is divided, lest, while ye discharge the duty of Matrimony, ye heedlessly slide into the sin of Adultery. (162-63)

The order to "cohabit" is a synonym for anamorphosis run amok, an aesthetic practice that has slipped its bonds, and the bounds of its



artistically and scientifically informed principles. Cohabitation, with its threat of an accidental "slide" from "duty" into "trespass" that no tactic of spatial or rhetorical positioning can prevent, exposes the limitations of even a multi-perspectival genre. Upon appeal, a higher court reverses the decision, its reasoning likewise grounded in a legal claim to property: "allowing the manner of Cohabitation enjoin'd to be practicable (though highly inconvenient) yet . . . two persons could not have a Right to the entire possession of the same thing, at the same time" (163).

Significantly, the resolution is mock apocalyptic; Martin is parted not only from his beloved monster, but "quit[s] the Kingdom" (164).<sup>40</sup> The order "dissolv'd both Marriages, as proceeding upon a natural, as well as legal Absurdity" (163). The *lusus naturae* lapses from oddity, an instance of "Variety" and "Profusion," into absurdity when it becomes the object of proprietary discourse, when it becomes the place where the boundary between "duty" and "trespass" is arbitrarily drawn.

Helena and Judith died in February of 1723, and Justo Johanne Torkos, M.D. and member of the Royal Society, reports the results of a post-mortem (PT 50.1: 313-314) that generally vindicated The British Apollo's clinical description of June 1708 (that the parts in question were one) and contradicted Burnet's speculation of a month earlier ("that their parts are distinct"). In choosing to create Lindamira-Indamora's parts distinct and then suggesting that Martin and the little Black Prince were

"joint Proprietors of one common Tenement" and should "behave as good fellow lodgers," the Scriblerians underscore the absurdity of distinguishing "duty" from "trespass" in such close quarters. Authority, authorship and authenticity are impossible to establish as they fluctuate and slide from one expedient reversal and appropriation to another. The scientific, romantic, philosophical, theological and legal discourses are unable to contain either the conjoined (less than one) or excessive (doubled) body of Lindamira-Indamora, and in the attempt become conjoined themselves. It would be the work of later eighteenth-century virtuosi to establish their credentials as natural scientists by constructing the taxonomies and discourses designed to manage the profusion and generosity of nature—that is, to make sense of absurdity and duty of trespass.

It has become nearly commonplace to disclose how complicit the belles lettres were with the emergence of bourgeois capitalism and colonialism, how they focussed on a vulgar fascination with imported trinkets, specimens, luxury items and other trifles and thus abstracted the real economic bonanza resulting from the trade in slaves whose labors cultivated the sugar and cotton upon which vast new wealth depended. That is not what these episodes do, so it is not surprising that Morley found the eighteenth-century "taste of all classes" for monsters diseased, frivolous, indolent and trifling. Nor is it surprising that editors

chose to reincorporate the "coarse" chapters at moments when a dominant ideology supporting Western colonialism was unstable and suffering direct attack (1791, 1807, 1822, and 1950). Rather than mask the trespass as duty, these chapters and the contemporaneous materials that "pitch upon the same object," transparently conjoin "coarse" proprietary discourse with those designed to refine sentiment and explain nature. This Scriblerian technique would be appropriated, enfeebled, refined and re-deployed to contain the material excesses of an expanding empire, to produce full-blown hybridity, and to serve the ends of capital. But, at the beginning of the eighteenth century proprietary discourse and the language of trespass had not yet been converted into the language of duty. Just about anything could be, and was, said-to the "ingenious" reader's wonder, merriment and considerable uneasiness of mind.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Philosophical Transactions 50.1: 315-16. All subsequent references to the Philosophical Transactions are to this edition, and will be parenthetical and abbreviated PT. This particular entry (number 39) in the 1757 Transactions is a collection of documents about the twins spanning nearly a half-century written in English and Latin. I am indebted to Brian George Cardell for the English translations of the Latin texts. All subsequent citations of this entry originally written in Latin will be identified by the translator's name. An anonymously penned note in Latin affixed to a print of the illustrations and bound in a copy of Fortunio Liceti's De Monstris translates: "At London, 14 June 1708. I have seen these twin girls (more than six years old) whose form and vivacity are more elegant and lively than picture and description" (317).

<sup>2</sup>Beyond questions about their history, how they came to be conjoined, and whether they had one or two souls, readers asked if they might marry and if so, would the husband(s) be guilty of incest (June 23); if they conceived, how would the mothers identify their own children (June 16); if one committed a capital crime, could she justly be executed (June 16); would they rise from the dead in one or two bodies (July 7).

<sup>3</sup>See Dudley Wilson, chaps. 1-2, for a survey of monsters prior to the English Restoration.

<sup>4</sup>Recent scholars have reopened the discourse on monsters and their significance since the middle ages. Marie-Hélène Huet argues that the monster has been employed as a figure for containing creative excess; discursively, the monster emerges from a vulnerable substance upon which an undisciplined female imagination has impressed form in utero or the artist-father ex-utero. Dudley Wilson traces the movement of the monster from material evidence of God's plan, however cryptically encoded, to the object of scientific and medical inquiry. Both Huet and Wilson demonstrate how very integral the monster is to our conceptions of creativity, aesthetics, and constructions of normality. Both Dennis Todd and Richard Nash explore the blurred boundaries occasioned by the monster, the former positing that the imagination mediated the gap between mind and body in the early-eighteenth century and the latter arguing that the monster polices the border between human and non-human. Nash's cogent argument focuses on the problematics of genre/genera and the figure of "Satyr/Satire," while I will be more concerned with borders between person and property and the economic

work of the discursive representations. Contemporary popular discourses are equally fascinated with the diseased or monstrous human body. The "crack baby" exhibited in its lucite container and controlled environment is the property of the medical community, but it is also the site of competing concerns and anxieties about the sanctity of life, the need for maternal bonding, who is to pay, how is the "chemically dependent" mother's body to be regulated to prevent further "cost" and "tragedy." The last half century boasts a wealth of examples: the "bubble boy," "thalidomide" babies, invitro fertilization and surrogate and superannuated mothers, all present places where diverse discourses compete to establish a proprietary claim. Furthermore, consider the controversy surrounding Van Halen's album cover for Balance. The computer generated photograph suggests nude conjoined twins of ambiguous sex. K-mart and Walmart have insisted that a sticker be affixed to the "place of their conjunction" which serves to exacerbate rather than efface the illusion of pornography and does little to erase the implied deformity. Sammy Hagar, the lead singer of the heavy metal band, explains that the photograph's intended message is an environmental warning. Each of the competing discourses emerges suspect and disingenuous. The talk show is but another entertainment venue where "freaks," some bonafide and some "cheats," are put on display and brought into conjunction with a "concerned" public and "experts" who can offer authoritative commentary.

<sup>5</sup>Early-seventeenth-century propaganda promoting colonization typically argued that establishing plantations was in accordance with Scripture and God's will. See Pennington 11-13. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, appropriating wasteland was politically theorized by John Locke, and with the institutionalization of slavery, heathen conversion to Christianity was actively suppressed. With the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, policies reversed and literacy and access to the bible were encouraged.

<sup>6</sup>I am neither insensitive to nor unconvinced by arguments that disclose how discourses "inscribe" bodies, but I do want to suggest that with minimal pretense Augustan writers delighted in grafitti, even tattoo, aimed directly at other authors.

<sup>7</sup>For a comprehensive history, see Baltrušaitis. Kevin McIlvoy introduced me to the art form and its discursive possibilities. There is perhaps anamorphic logic that his "collection" of short stories generated out of the principle of anamorphosis has been dismembered and published separately in a variety of literary magazines, but has yet to be

"collected." Slavoj Žižek uses the terms "anamorphic surplus" to designate "a pure being of semblance" and "ideological anamorphosis" as the "error of perspective" in which "pure difference is perceived as Identity" (79, 99). Although there are points of congruence between our deployment of the notion of anamorphosis as a strategy of approaching excess, I am more interested in the anamorphic event, the sorts of distortions and deformities that occur when various discursive "optics" simultaneously contend to resolve the problem of material excess.

<sup>8</sup>The currently popular 3-D illusions of "Magic Eye" graphics demand a similar maker-viewer complicity and engagement.

<sup>9</sup>Walpole's sneering was not unique. The virtuoso was a staple comic butt on the Restoration and early eighteenth-century stage. See Gimcrack in Thomas Shadwell's The Virtuoso, Doctor Fossile in the Scriblerian production, Three Hours after Marriage, and Periwinkle in Susanna Centlivre's A Bold Stroke for a Wife. Gulliver's third voyage likewise portrays empirical inquiry as not only incapable of recognizing wonders, but also as a methodology potentially capable of producing even more distortion and disorder.

<sup>10</sup>For the role of the monster in policing the boundaries between human and animal, and for a consideration of contested discursive and social space regarding monsters, see Nash, "Satyrs and Satire," 99, and "Tyson's Pygmie," 60.

<sup>11</sup>Gould in "Cabinet Museums Revisted" describes Lord Rothchild's collection of zebras and antelopes displayed kneeling and supine from floor to ceiling (16).

<sup>12</sup>Linnaeus's classification of "man" has been frequently reprinted and quoted. I use here Jordan 221.

<sup>13</sup>Fortuitously, we have a manuscript fragment in Arbuthnot's hand with revisions in Pope's, written on the backs of correspondence dated in the fall of 1717. William Fortesque was a lawyer friend who may have contributed his professional expertise to the rendering of the legal proceedings in the following chapter. See Kerby-Miller, "Appendix IV," and pp. 307-308. All subsequent parenthetical references to the Memoirs are to this edition.

<sup>14</sup>In 1892 George Aitken chose to omit the two chapters of the Memoirs in his Life and Works of John Arbuthnot. Aitken justifies the exclusion of the "very coarse" chapters by noting that he is following the

example of "all editors since Warburton, except Bowles" (fn.354). His assertion is not entirely accurate; the publishing history of chapters 14 and 15 (the "Double Mistress" episode and the "Process at Law"), along with references to them in chapters 16 and 17, has been far more uneven than Aitken suggests. Warburton omitted them in 1751, as did Owen Ruffhead in 1769, but Joseph Warton restored them in 1791, as did William Lisle Bowles in 1807; the Warton edition was reprinted in 1822. Beginning with William Roscoe's The Works of Alexander Pope in 1824, all editions omitted the text until Charles Kerby-Miller again restored it in 1950. Furthermore, Pope who by the mid-thirties was in possession of the Scriblerus papers ordered some of them burnt in the years shortly before his death. See Kerby-Miller's "A Bibliography of the Principal Editions," 78-84, and "Appendix III," 362-63. The Scriblerians had more inspiration than time and energy to see the project through; the fall of the Tory government and the death of Queen Anne scattered the club. The Memoirs, which were designed to introduce Martin to the world, were not published until 1741 in The Works of Mr. Alexander Pope. However, bits and related parts of his life and learning appear as Gulliver, the author of Peri Bathous, and one annotator of the Dunciad Variorum. He is implicated in the authorship of A Modest Proposal, and assigned responsibility for some "scientific" theories of the period as well as Bentley's Milton. See Kerby-Miller, 166-171, which includes "Of the Discoveries and Works of the Great Scriblerus, made and to be made, written and to be written, known and unknown" and "PIECES of Scriblerus (written in his Youth) already published." Because of the multiple-personality nature of the club, information on Scriblerian activity is vast and uneven. Kerby-Miller's scholarly introduction and extensive notes draw together an enormous amount of material and are indispensable.

<sup>15</sup>Swift, of course, illustrates this point in the pre-Scriblerian Tale of a Tub, in which the digressions become increasingly central and indistinguishable from the tale while the Lockean principle of identity-in-consciousness is confronted in Swift's parable of the coats. Pope demonstrates another facet of the point with his inclusion of the ponderous critical apparatus with which he surrounds the Dunciads, much of it attributed to Scriblerus, some of it Pope's impersonation of Bentley, and some of it presumably commissioned commentary. The marginalia, which has grown to monstrous proportions in the Twickenham edition, is essential to the "work." Finally, Pope's own collaborative, not to mention "creative," methodology in editing Shakespeare (so pointedly refuted by Theobald that Pope first cast him as crown prince of Dulness) suggests an acceptance of textual instability

and mutability that would leave most contemporary scholars in bemused astonishment. For an alternative version of authorship in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, see Stallybrass and White 27-124. There Stallybrass and White argue that Augustan literary efforts exemplified by Swift and Pope "took the grotesque within itself so as to reject it, but this meant only that the grotesque was now an unpalatable and interiorized phobic set of representations associated with avoidance and with others. It could never be owned. It was always someone else who was possessed by the grotesque, never the self." These discursive phenomena they identify with "the bourgeois public sphere" that was "dependent upon disavowal, denial, projection" (108), strategies that Morley clearly employs. But I will argue that the Scriblerians expose the desire to own the grotesque, in this case the monstrous. In the Memoirs, the desire to possess is not "phobic," but absurd.

<sup>16</sup>For satire as a mode rather than a genre, see Connery and Combe 1-15. There the editors assert that "the definition of satire has become increasingly restrictive. However, in general usage, 'satire' remains less an identifiable genre than a mode, and an astonishingly wide range of vastly varied works have been placed under its rubric" (9). Likewise, the language of sentiment—what Foucault terms a "discourse of the heart," which operates on the "principle of moderation" that is "revolted at the sight or at the imagination of too much cruelty"—concurrently emerges as a "mode" that proves itself adaptable to "an astonishingly wide range of vastly varied work" (Foucault, Discipline and Punish 91).

<sup>17</sup>The satirist's stance as both intellectually and morally superior is combined with a sympathetic concern for human well-being in the persona of the scientist: to wit, Alfred Nobel.

<sup>18</sup>Locke's 1690 Second Treatise is an explicit statement of the argument.

<sup>19</sup>See Iliffe 159-176, for Isaac Newton's "self-fashioning" and strategy of privacy and obscure discursive style. Iliffe argues that Newton's "suppressed 'liber secundus' . . . offers definitive evidence that Newton was at one stage going to publish his belief that the Ancients had once possessed the true (Copernican-Newtonian) philosophy, but that this had become lost through corruption of its meaning" (164). Another Arbuthnot/Scriblerus production, Origin of the Sciences, which has most often been identified as a satire on John Woodward's Remarks upon the Ancient and Present State of London, employs Woodward's methodology



but it argues Newton's thesis. For Woodward as "chief antagonist of the Scriblerians," see Nash, "Tyson's Pygmie" 57.

<sup>20</sup>For the epithets see Jonathan Swift, A Tale of a Tub 124. Randal's monstrous other is Martin and other "news-mongers" and retailers of "strange" theories and hybrid discourses.

<sup>21</sup>We see a similar conflation in Steven Spielberg's version of Jurassic Park. The paleontologists' discourse is a compound of "vulgar fascination" rendered in a "discourse of the heart" and "scholarly fascination" rendered in Latin and bio-chemical terminology. The characters' motivation to "review" the amusement park is explicitly financial-extravagant funding for their scholarly dig. The "monster-monger" of Jurassic Park boasts of a vast modern display of rejuvenated ancient dinosaurs conjoined with a theater that pedagogically uses the thrill of a ride to explain the intricacies of recombinant DNA. In both works the entrepreneurs unsuccessfully attempt to police the border between the human and the monstrous. However, in contrast to Jurassic Park where anamorphic resolution of sentiment and science are approved, the "Double Mistress" episode exposes such conjoined "feeling in common" as absurd.

<sup>22</sup>See Joan Dayan for "Locke's fables of the wandering soul" and his "determination to replace a metaphysical notion of soul with an empirical and verifiable mode of rhetoric" as it is materialized by Poe in "Ligeia," a fable of migrating matter, in Fables of Mind, 177-184. For a book length consideration of the Scriblerians' relationship to John Locke, see Fox. This reading of the two chapters focuses on the implications of Locke's assertion that the "same Man" can be "different Persons" (109-17); Fox astutely points out that in the Double Mistress "we have this Lockean puzzle literalized" (110), and concludes: "personal identity itself is undeniably a legal problem, especially in the light of Locke's theory" (116). Of course, the "legal problem" is problematical because it raises issues of property.

<sup>23</sup>Justo Johanne Torkos assigns blame for the mishap to the fact the pregnant mother saw two dogs unable to separate after copulation (Cardell, PT 50.1: 311). These answers reiterate the explanation that Huet considers throughout Monstrous Imagination. Curiously, Huet does not mention these conjoined twins, nor does Dudley Wilson.

<sup>24</sup>While we can only speculate that Arbuthnot contributed to such entries in The British Apollo, and we have nothing that indicates his considered theory of monstrosity, there is sufficient evidence that

"tender" is hardly a word he would apply universally to the female sex without tongue firmly in cheek. See Todd, 41-42, 85-86. Furthermore, as the subtitle suggests, one goes to the Apollo for "amusement," not enlightenment.

<sup>25</sup>D. Wilson posits that hermaphrodites were exhibited in the manner of an illustration from the collection of James Paris du Plessis, one time servant to Samuel Pepys, collector and recorder of curiosities, and author of one of the entries on the twins in the Philosophical Transactions; du Plessis fell on bad times and turned his writings over to Hans Sloane in hope of charity. In the illustration, the adult hermaphrodite wears shoes, knee high stockings, a long cape and appears fully clothed from the waist to the wig; a flap lifts up to expose the genitals of which du Plessis offers a full description based on "Inspections" (91-93). His description of Helena and Judith is less anatomically exact, and unlike Burnet, he relies on the parents' authority to speak to the specifics of the anomaly, which contradict Burnet. "Their clothes," he tells us, "were fine and neat. They had two bodies [bodices], four sleeves; and one petticoat served to the bodies, and their shifts the same" (PT 317-318). One senses that the twins may have been afforded somewhat more modesty than the hermaphrodite, yet in exhibit the petticoat must have been lifted or opened.

<sup>26</sup>This information on the exact "ownership" of the Hungarian twins was provided in 1729 by Gerard Cornelius Driesch. "Infants," of course, is a relatively non-specific term, but inasmuch as we have an imprecise date for the "apoplectic stupor" Judith suffered "before she was around three years old", and we know the twins spoke French, High German and Low German when they were in London in 1708, we can speculate that Dr. Csuszius had had stewardship of them for some time before they were six years old, but not prior to their third birthday.

<sup>27</sup>The virtuoso, as a comic butt, was commonly ridiculed often in conjunction with other stock alazons--the fop, the cit, the country booby, the beaux, the papist priest, the Protestant dissenter, the continental merchant. Each of these "impostors" posed real threats to a shifting cultural order. Here, however, Martin is imaged, not in conjunction with fools of his own "species" (*Europeanus estupidus*, to coin a term), but classified with various rare specimens from around the world. For the metamorphosis of the virtuoso into the scientist, see D. Wilson. For the impact of the virtuoso turned "seeing man" and his contribution to the British colonial project, see Pratt.

<sup>28</sup>See Patterson 186-190, and Locke on "Slavery" in the Second Treatise, 17-18. The case Kerby-Miller cites (310-311), in which the free "wife" of a slave threatens to become a "parish charge" unless her husband is freed, does not address the legality of slavery or slave marriage, but only orders that the "husband" be given wages to keep her off the parish rolls.

<sup>29</sup>Steinfeld argues that "free labor," as we understand the concept, is a relatively late invention, appearing well after the period here under discussion. His theory is corroborated in the "Runaway" ads in the issues of The British Apollo that speak to issues surrounding the Hungarian twins.

<sup>30</sup>Solicitor-General Yorke and Attorney-General Talbot wrote:  
We are of opinion, that a slave coming from the West Indies to Great Britain or Ireland, with or without his master, doth not become free, and that his master's property or right in him is not thereby determined or varied; and that baptism doth not bestow freedom on him, or make any alteration in his temporal conditions in these kingdoms. (qtd., Walvin 95).

<sup>31</sup>Africa, the "dark continent," was obviously the place of origin of the majority of slaves transported by the British slave trade as well as the exotic great beasts imported for exhibition. It served the interests of slave owners and traders to question not merely the cultural, but the biological, credentials of their human property. "Monster," as a liminal figure poised between human and non-human, suited; anti-abolitionists tended to try to impersonate a scientific discourse in the use of "monstrous." Thus, Edward Long, the most famous British defender of slavery, informs us that Africa is "that parent of every thing that is monstrous in nature" (Long 383). That slavery was a "monstrous" and inhuman institution was an abolitionist commonplace, deployed in the context of a "discourse of the heart."

<sup>32</sup>Cardell notes that there is a "confusing mass of pronouns . . . almost as if the speaker were stumbling over an unsavory subject," but a few lines later when Driess launches into the mechanics of the twins' excretory process, he finds a technical vocabulary, and there is "no explanation for the lack of former shyness." Detaching the function from the person is, of course, a common rhetorical maneuver in both pornography and medical discourse.

<sup>33</sup>Had the "Fairy Queen" been black, an additional exotic characteristic, no doubt her color would have been advertised.

<sup>34</sup>In 1671 the Duke's Theatre produced Wycherley's The Gentleman Dancing-Master, in which a "little Black-a-more" instructs a young Englishman with French affectations to act like a Spanish don for his equally affected prospective father-in-law (4.1.98-221).

<sup>35</sup> A vestige of the distinction remains for members of the military who are subject to the Military Code of Conduct and incarceration for dereliction of duty, desertion and other unauthorized absences.

<sup>36</sup>In Number 36 (June 11-16) the first of these notices reads:

RUN away from his Master on the 2d Instant, David Marat, a Black about seventeen Years of Age, with short wooly Hair. He had on a whitish Cloath Livery, Lin'd with Blew, and Princesmettal Buttons, with a Turbant on his Head: He sounds a Trumpet, whoever secures him and brings him to Edward Talbot, Esq; by Kingstreet near Soho, shall have five Guines Reward. (Reprinted in Nos. 37-42 with some variation)

The second reads:

RUN away from his Master on the 14th Instant, one Tho. Jones, about 24 Years of Age, with Pock-holes in his Face, a dark Brown Wig, in a Grey Cloath Livery lin'd with black, Stammers a little in his Speech, whoever brings him to Mr. Dikes, by the Horse-shoe Tavern in Drury-lane, shall have two Guineas Reward. (Reprinted in No. 37)

A third such notice appears in Number 38:

RUN away from his Master on the 30 of May last, William Jones, in a Green Livery lined with Red, wears a Brown Wig, Pock-holes in his Face, of Middle Stature, 22 Years of Age, of a thin long Visage and Roman Nose, whoever secures him and gives notice to Tho. Talbot, Esq; in Norfolk street in the Strand shall have 5 Guineas Reward. (Reprinted in No. 39)

<sup>37</sup>Folarin Shyllon notes that over a century of court decisions (1596-1706) that appear to reject slavery in England, "Far from clarifying the legal status of black slaves in Britain, these cases confounded the matter" (17).

<sup>38</sup>J. Jean Hecht estimates that beyond board, lodging and livery, the footman earned wages between £4 and £6 per annum, with vails (guests' gratuities) to match (Domestic Servant 144, 160). Thus in comparison, a £2 reward, much less £5, appears extravagant. Hecht notes that "the

chief value of the footman lay [not in his practical services, but with] . . . the efficiency with which he advertised the extent of his master's wealth. All domestics served that end, since their presence in an establishment demonstrated their master's ability to pay and maintain them in return for little or no productive work" (53). Patterson rearticulates this notion in his consideration of slavery's relationship to honor and degradation. First, "most slaves in most precapitalist societies were not enslaved in order to be made over into workers" (99). Second, where "classes and status groups were not well developed," (or as in Restoration and early eighteenth-century England where they suffered permeability and fluidity), "individual competition for honor and prestige was rampant" (83). While "the master's sense of honor was derived directly from the degradation of his slave," his characterization of the slave as "both exasperating and lovable" "is, in fact, an ideological imperative of all systems of slavery" (95-96). We need only read Ehrenpreis's narrative of "Swift's exasperating servant, Patrick" for a contemporary illustration of these affective economics, and to realize how hazy the line between servitude and slavery was in England, at least in terms of symbolic capital (*Dr. Swift* 552-554). Hecht offers the following example of the footman's degradation: forced to wear a "petticoat" rather than given breeches, a footman becomes the subject of "a ribald observer"--"how our Village Maids delight to see the Running Footman fly bare-ars'd o'er the dusty Road" (56).

<sup>39</sup>We might also speculate that the moment is a premonition or precursor to Bhabha's "hybridity," except that it is so exposed, rather than masked, as a discursive ploy.

<sup>40</sup>Here we have the ethical reflection but geographical inverse of colonial flight from the "degraded source of wealth" and too transparent condition of privilege described by Patterson 99-100, and Memmi 17. Also, 1699 was the year of Gulliver's first voyage into remote nations of the world.

### Afterword: Refiguring the Dunghill

[A]s regards the norms of the aesthetic, the presence of fecal and diuretic imagery must often be disguised not because it is "wicked," but because it is unbeautiful or unheroic . . . . Dramatic grandeur here sneaks into the Beauty Clinic, transforming bathos into pathos. . . . Except in works of frankly Rabelaisian, Aristophanic, or Swiftian cast, aesthetic ideals are such that any tendencies towards bathos will, if possible, be so transmuted that they bear the guise of pathos.

—Kenneth Burke, Language as Symbolic Action

Paradoxically, Paradise Lost both illustrates and disputes Burke's observations about the function of the aesthetic impulse. As we have seen, Milton explicitly locates manure in an uncorrupted Paradise and a more effective and aesthetically refined fertilizer (contrition) with fallen humans (11.25-30). Yet, Satan is "wicked" and beautiful and heroic. At the beginning of the poem, he and his legions have been purged from Heaven in a cosmic fart and are trapped in a cosmic close-stool. Satan is both fecal, an "infernal Serpent" (1.34), and anal-proud, parsimonious, and retentive. At the end, Adam and Eve are expelled from Paradise, not primarily because they might eat from the tree of life to become immortal as in Genesis (although the issue is raised), but "lest the Fiend" pretending to act in human behalf "invade / Vacant possession [and] some new trouble raise" (11.101-3), or as the Father revises the threat: "Lest Paradise a receptacle prove / To Spirits foul" (11.123-24) intent on pilfering in his garden and further contributing to the delinquency and

corruption of humans. I trust that the preceding pages have adequately presented a case that the invasion of vacant possessions should be understood as the infection, the cause of corruption, and the source of the dunghill. The imagery of bodily purgation to effect material purity, or bodily and spiritual health for a polity, is whelming if not overwhelming.

That an emetic aesthetic was explicitly at work in Milton, should be obvious. His God, after all, creates a cosmic latrine to house "spirits foul" who busily mine for fecal treasures, and sewer workers, "Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth . . . till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst / With suckt and glutted offal" (10.630, 632-33). And there is a movement in Paradise Lost from spirit to more and coarser matter, which is not figured as "wicked"; indeed it is constructed as the material cause of God's divine alchemy, converting bad to good, and the source of his pleasure. However, what is good for the Almighty should not be inferred as good for humans; the desire to be as gods contributes mightily to "all our woe" (1.3). Nothing in Paradise Lost implies that Milton's God sanctions turning the wilderness or "vacant possession" into a dunghill of human refuse, and the troubling "aesthetic" ending of Samson Agonistes suggests that Manoa's and the chorus's ritualized catharsis and self-congratulation is unearned. We should remember that in the drama's companion piece, Paradise Regained, the Son of God as human rejects exactly those temptations—to turn stones into bread, to

privilege the technologically superior, to present himself as a god—to which European conquerors easily, and self-righteously succumb.

In reading out the implications of the Oresteia trilogy, Kenneth Burke retrieves the image of "the amphisbaena, which we take to be the mythic representation of the ultimate, vegetatively, nonverbally dreaming worm, circling back upon itself in enwrap self-engrossment (somewhat as with the self-love of Aristotle's God, and likewise of many later theologians' Gods)" (136); God is a blind alimentary canal. Such a construction could not be further from Milton's, although the telos, the fulfillment, he foretells ("And Earth be chang'd to Heav'n, and Heav'n to Earth, / One Kingdom, Joy and Union without end" [7.160-61]) gestures towards such a collapsed state. However, his very next word, "Meanwhile," and his order to the loyalist angels to spread out and to defend Heaven, and the creation a material world and a "better Race" (than "Spirits malign") represent a very active, expansionist, and optimistic God (162-190).

Swift, likewise, evokes the figure of the amphisbaena, the circular serpent or worm whose tail/anus curls into its mouth. A societal self-engrossment and aggrandizement has developed creatures who thoughtlessly export their valuables in exchange for trinkets, rapaciously consume their own young, blithely foul their beds and their bodies, and prepare their own feces as an antidote to indigestion. This



auto-referential construction, the reflection produced in the glass of satire, would be inverted, becoming an altero-referential projection onto others. We should remember that none of the exotic peoples Gulliver encounters appear to be even mildly interested in his "Bracelets, Glass Rings, and other Toys," much less think them valuable for barter. The "excremental vision" is by no means limited to Swift and his predecessors that Burke identifies (Aristophanes and Rabelais); scatology was endemic to the period—most notably Dryden and Pope who transparently adapted Milton's image of Satan seated "High on a Throne of Royal State" (2.1) to "erect a 'priestly' edifice atop such a cloaca" (Burke 325) for "McFlecknoe" and the Dunciads respectively. In contrast to Burke's theory that "the aesthetic may automatically vow its practitioner to remain vague as to the basic relation between poetic pathos and bodily bathos" (325), Restoration and early eighteenth century writers seem obsessed with the relationship; the "grotesque defecating body" even finds itself on stage relieving its burden into another sleeping character's open mouth in James Howard's All Mistaken.

What, during the period, was so pressing that the aesthetic itself became "amphisbaenal," filling and fulfilling itself "nigh burst with sucked and glutted offal"? I have attempted to suggest that the "western design," the colonial project intent on filling and, as intended and unintended consequence, fouling "vacant possession," curled back to corrupt and

destabilize the body, the body politic, and the body poetic. Burke deploys the trope to disclose how the judicial shift from blood feud to transcendently sanctioned justice was financed in the Oresteia. Through "an astounding intellectual (or even intellectualistic) feat" Orestes' matricide is pardoned because: "woman is but a nurse for the fetus which descends through the male line only, as with patrilineal descent of property. Hence, Orestes is absolved . . . because, strictly speaking, he had no mother" (130). Even so, "the slain mother must stand for something beyond herself. And Cassandra tells us what; namely: the amphisbaena" (136), a device within the tragedies which were themselves "devices for treating civic tensions (read: class conflicts), and for contributing to social amity by ritual devices" (137). The amphisbaena, the figure of oral-anal ambiguity, emerges in our period to revise the mechanisms of feminine legacy (the maternal is passively responsible for monstrosity and, in respect to slaves, the child follows the condition of the mother). But, even more importantly, the so visible "grotesque defecating body" with an appetite for its own feces ironically has served to obliterate the very distinctions it was initially designed to figure—the errors and oppressions implicit in the shift from a genealogical to a geographical definition of race, from the domestic to the colonial dunghill.

In an amphisbaenal rhetorical maneuver, I end where I began. We

cheapen the richness of Milton's wordhord if we ignore or deny the parallels between Adam and Eve's biblical/poetic moment and England's historical moment when "the World was all before them, where to choose," and if we do so, we limit our own enunciative possibilities. In fact, we have done precisely that: Milton, the outspoken republican, has been consigned to the aesthetic realm of "genius"; Behn, the most unrelentingly elitist of the writers, has been termed an abolitionist and colonialist; Swift, the pamphleteering opponent of British colonialism, has been figured as a mad misanthrope and the father of racism. Both our aestheticism and anti-aestheticism have grotesquely twisted literary artifacts and refitted them for our separate agendas. In our own culture wars, blood has reemerged as a powerful substance containing secrets which medical technology can disclose, revealing a past and foretelling a future of crime, congenital defect, plague, malnutrition, and other human distress. We have the potential to again re-invent the "dunghill" to assure that the blessings bestowed by God or nature are reserved for some, and the curses of the bible and science are cast upon many.

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