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JONATHAN SWIFT AND THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BOOK

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*Swift's Tale of a Tub and the mock book**Marcus Walsh*

Jonathan Swift had no general objection to books and texts. He believed in, and wrote that he believed in, the possibility of plain meanings, embodying 'the Author's Intentions', and worthy of 'candid Interpretation'. He approved of texts that, like the Father's Will that is the New Testament, consisted of 'certain plain, easy Directions'. His sermons in particular exemplify the clear text, embodying and communicating a plain meaning. He did not, however, value endless controversions of dangerous matters, and deeply resented a merely commercial proliferation of writing, agreeing with the humanist King of Brobdingnag, as Paddy Bullard has suggested in his chapter, that a library of a thousand volumes was sufficient to represent the curriculum of worthwhile knowledge. Swift abominated obscure writings, including allegories and hermetica, all texts so dark as to require and invite commentary, the *impedimenta literarum* of commentary itself, and the jargons of pedantry, law and scholasticism. He objected fiercely to the deliberate wresting of the words of Holy Scripture, and indeed to the forcing of any texts to 'Interpretations which never once entered into the Writer's Head'. These positions and values were wholly natural to an English or an Irish churchman and man of letters in the opening decades of the eighteenth century. They are positions and values shared too with many a literary humanist before Swift, before the new professionalizing philological humanism that he so abhorred was ushered in by Richard Bentley, and Bentley's continental forebears and contemporaries.¹

Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, however, like so many of his published writings, is by no means a plain and straightforward text. If it presents, as Swift asserted in his Apology, 'the Author's Intentions', it does so in indirect and ironic ways. It is a commented text, and explicitly and repeatedly invites and requires commentary. It is full of dark matter. To many contemporaries of Swift, and to many modern critics, it has seemed a dangerously unstable, wrestable text. Swift desiderated in his Apology, however,

knowledgeable and well-intentioned readers who would regard the *Tale* as rather less polysemous. Swift insisted the *Tale* was intended as a satire on 'the numerous and gross Corruptions in Religion and Learning', rather than on learning and religion themselves, and repudiated as unnecessary and 'ill-placed' the 'Cavils of the Sour, the Envious, the Stupid, and the Tastless'. As he is at pains to make clear in the Apology, among his main satiric devices in the *Tale* are 'Parodies, where the Author personates the Style and Manner of other Writers, whom he has a mind to expose'; this hint, Swift claimed, was sufficient 'to direct those who may have over-look'd the Authors Intention' (*CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. 5, 6, 7).²

The *Tale of a Tub*, as published with the 'Battel of the Books' and 'Mechanical Operation of the Spirit', did not merely contain or speak through parodies, but presented itself in many different ways as a parodic book. Its formal as well as generic parodies take in title pages, prefaces, authors' dedications, the letter as learned report, the recipes of hermetic writings, digressions, accounts of Royal Society experiments, 'full and true accounts' of any number of historical events and lurid crimes, 'modern excuses' and much else.³ In this essay I shall discuss some of those parodies in which Swift interrogates the ways in which modern books present evidence, and organize and make claims to knowledge. I shall be particularly concerned with Swift's experiments in and burlesques of learned referencing, in the forms of marginalia and footnotes; with his exploiting of two related and favourite resources of the new scientific and philological book, the catalogue and the list, especially catalogues and lists of books themselves; with his uses and representations of the blank, in which claims of knowledge are not met, and evidence evaporates; and with his applications of the conventional evidential tags and phrases of both old and new scholasticism.

The first edition of the *Tale of a Tub* has marginalia, providing references for, and occasional brief quotations from, passages alluded to in the text. The fifth edition is endowed, in addition to the existing marginalia, with footnotes. Some of the footnotes are written, no doubt by Swift himself, in a personated editorial voice, identifying references, correcting bibliographical information, translating foreign language quotations, clarifying the allegory, providing historical context. Many of the footnotes, in the narrative or allegorical sections of the *Tale*, are transcribed verbatim from William Wotton's *Observations upon The Tale of a Tub*, published in 1705 as part of his *Defense of the Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*. These transcriptions turn Wotton into a leaden commentator, while profiting from his (mostly sensible and straightforward) explanations of the

Tale's allegory. Some of the notes, to more or less dubious passages in the *Tale*, provide more or less careful but for the most part ironizing learned references: Ctesias is cited as authorizing source for a suggestive passage about pigmies ('Vide excerpta ex eo apud Photium'), Pausanias for the dedication of temples to Sleep and the Muses by 'a very Polite Nation in Greece' ('Trezonii Pausan. l. 2'). At the beginning of the 'Battel of the Books' the careful and circumspect reader is invited to consult the '*Annual Records of Time*', a reference to Wing's *Almanack*, then printed by Mary Clark; a marginal note quotes the *Almanack's* sententious English motto, and provides in Latin the inappropriate and improbable bibliographical information 'Vid. Ephem. de *Mary Clarke*, opt. Edit.' Here the pedantic carefulness of Richard Bentley is the satiric mark.⁴ These elements of the *Tale's* apparatus are significant in its parodic refunctionings of scholarly method, and more especially of modern scholarly method.

The development of old and the appearance of new methods and forms of referencing were closely associated with the development of a professional historiography and philology at the beginning of the long eighteenth century. Marginalia and footnotes were important elements among a large set of newly prominent scholarly apparatuses: contents lists, catalogues, commentaries, bibliographies, glossaries, indexes, all of them list-like, divisible, more or less Ramist.⁵ In discursive learned texts, the marginal note had made its historical appearance long before the footnote. Formally, spatially and functionally, the marginalium in the printed book had grown from an ancient tradition of the manuscript codex. Footnotes became truly practicable and consistent only with print. As a major formal outcome of this development, the footnote spread beyond the scholarly edition, where it had already found a home, into a whole new range of genres, including biblical criticism, literary scholarship and the encyclopaedia. The shift from marginalia to footnotes in discursive learned writing has been dated by a number of commentators with some precision to the turn of the eighteenth century: just the historical moment at which Swift was writing *A Tale of a Tub*.⁶

The rather abrupt transition from marginalia to footnotes in discursive scholarly books is exemplified and confirmed by a striking moment in the publishing career of Richard Simon, a French Oratorian priest and the leading biblical historian and textual critic of his time. Simon's learned and innovative *Histoire critique du vieux testament* (1682) and *Histoire critique du texte du nouveau testament* (Rotterdam, 1689) were both at once translated into English.⁷ They were widely read, and became significant texts for the energetic 1680s English debate about the nature, reliability and

interpretation of the Bible, a matter of some concern to Swift, and some centrality in the *Tale*.⁸ In his earlier work Simon described his policy of documentation. His supporting quotations are provided 'in Abridgment onely and according to the sense'. References are given in the form of marginal notes, which identify quoted scriptural passages, as well as the authors and often the titles of his secondary sources. Bibliographical citations for his references are provided not at the point of quotation, but as a 'Catalogue' of quoted authors, placed 'at the end of the Book'.⁹ In his later *Histoire critique du texte du nouveau testament*, however, Simon's page looks rather different, and his Preface gives an account of highly significant methodological changes. Though the 'numerous Quotations' from printed sources are again given in brief in Simon's text, now those quotations are given 'at large' in footnotes, providing the key words quoted in the text with their meaning-defining context.¹⁰ As before there are marginal notes, providing references for citations (normally repeated in the footnotes), but now the references are fuller and more precise, identifying author, work, chapter or book number, and sometimes page number. The effect on the page, aesthetic and functional, is much in keeping with the evidential foundations and interlinking precision of his own scholarship. Simon's use of the footnote in his *New Testament* provided a model frequently followed, in England as well as in France, in discursive scholarly writing. It may be found, to cite an example known to Swift, in the published work of Joseph Bingham, in whose *Origines Ecclesiasticae: or, the Antiquities of the Christian Church* (2 volumes, 1708) footnotes provide references, occasional brief validating quotations and brief suggestions of supporting citations ('*Vid. Pearson Vindic. Ignat. Praef. Ad Lector*').¹¹

In late seventeenth-century England, one of the more significant arguments about the methodology of scholarship took place between Dr Richard Bentley and the Christ Church mentors of the young aristocrat Charles Boyle. This argument of course figures large among the cultural and intellectual contexts of Swift's *Tale*. Christ Church claimed, and in some respects exemplified, a rather uneasy affiliation with an older gentlemanly humanism. Bentley uncompromisingly represented the new philology. Sir William Temple, in his 'Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning',¹² had praised the epistles of the sixth-century BC Sicilian tyrant Phalaris as a genuine example of the superiority of the ancients. Bentley, in his 'Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris' appended to the second edition of William Wotton's *Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning* (London, 1697), demonstrated, with much detailed evidence from classical and more particularly Greek literature, history and philosophy, that the

extant epistles were a much later production. Christ Church responded in the multiply-authored *Dr Bentley's Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris ... Examined by the Honourable Charles Boyle, Esq.* (London, 1698), generally referred to as Boyle's 'Examination'; and Bentley replied in a much expanded version of the *Dissertation* (1699).

Bentley's *Dissertation* and Boyle's *Examination* both present themselves as heavily documented scholarly works. 'Boyle', however, is more squeamish about the methodologies of 'pedantry' and their apparatuses, in particular extensive and untranslated local quotation. 'Boyle' pronounces himself 'so far from valuing my self upon a multitude of quotations, that I wish there had been no occasion for those few I have produc'd'. He cites La Bruyère and St Evremond, for Bentley's instruction, as examples of 'Writers ... who think well, and speak Justly, and quote little' (p. 228). He regularly breaks out of the drudgery of scholarly quotation to pursue an extended and elaborate discourse of anti-pedantic satire, during which there is little occasion for learned apparatus. We are here at some distance from the strengthening early Enlightenment concern for the substantiation of argument with primary evidence, and the explicit validation of the provenance of the evidence.

For Bentley, by contrast, scholarly documentation is a matter neither of routine nor of distaste. Despite its title, the *Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris* is not so much a continuous thesis as a series of detailed interpretative interventions, addressing highly specific passages in a long work. His cases are made from learning, both familiar and first-hand, in metrics, chronology, geography, numismatics, biography, literature, history. Each point in the argument is supported by the analysis of apposite contextual evidence.¹³ Notes, in the form of marginalia, certify and validate this apparatus, with references, demonstrations, parallels, original language quotations (in Latin and Greek) for translations provided within the text.¹⁴ Bentley frequently excoriates 'Boyle' for his failures adequately to understand and identify his sources, joshing him in particular as one who knows his materials only at second hand, as an Oxford scholar unfamiliar with books even 'in the publick Library at Oxon', as a man who does not know how to use a catalogue, dependent on 'his Assistant ... *that consulted Books for him*'.¹⁵

It is not the move in works of scholarship to footnotes as such that is consequential for Swift. Commentary both brief and extended had already appeared in printed marginalia in edited texts of all kind. The discursive writings of Bentley and Wotton, to whom Swift was most directly responding in the *Tale*, used marginal notes rather than footnotes. There

is no reason to think that Swift invested with any special significance the positioning of notes at the foot of the page in *A Tale of a Tub*; it was his bookseller Tooke, not Swift himself, who argued for the new materials of the 1710 *Tale* appearing at the foot of the page rather than at the end of the volume.¹⁶ What matters, rather, was Swift's reaction to a new methodology, based on a scholarly (or, to such observers as Swift, pedantic) emphasis on particular evidence, and to the forms and methods of detailed and local adduction, and complete and accurate reference, which that new emphasis made necessary. The marginalium and the footnote are both characterizing elements of the new methodology. The parodic marginalia and footnotes of the fifth edition of the *Tale*, cluttering the page and the narrative with the heavy footfall of referencing and quotation, restating the obvious or problematizing the plain, take Bentley and Wotton as their immediate cause, but they are, more broadly, part of an old humanism's anxious response to a new one.

If Swift's marginalia and footnotes respond to Bentley and to English and European developments in scholarly method, they are by no means the only formal features of the *Tale* that do so. It is one of the chief satiric jokes of the *Tale* that the moderns have laboured, to their own satisfaction, in the categorizing of every kind of knowledge, in many different organizing forms. To Swift, unimpressed by number, proliferation and taxonomies, such lists are delusive or abusive or both. The text and associated paratexts of the *Tale* feature a huge variety and number of parodic lists and catalogues. Modern systems and thinkers, and their characteristics and products, are preserved throughout in various forms of the catalogue or list, their proper rhetorical amber. Criticism is defined through her children, 'Noise and Impudence, Dullness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-Manners'; every true modern critic is defined by his genealogy, 'descending in a direct Line from ... Momus and Hybris, who begat Zoilus, ... who begat *Etcetera* the Elder, who begat *B[en]tly*, ... and *W[ot]tton* ...'. There are lists of fanatics and fanatic sciences, of modern madmen and of the schools of the modern academy: 'the *Spelling School* ... The school of *Swearing*; the School of *Criticks* ... with many others too tedious to recount' (CWJS, vol. 1, pp. 82, 154, 61, 26).

Certainly late seventeenth-century England teemed with every kind of list, including catalogues, indexes, tables of contents, gazettes, glossaries, chronologies. Of the astonishing number and variety of 'catalogues', for instance, the great majority are of books (in libraries or for sale), followed at some distance by the nobility or the clergy. There are catalogues too, however, of saints and contented cuckolds, of doctors and of simples, of

wits and of town beaus, of lawyers and of notorious and villainous lies, of Billingsgate and heads of Balliol.¹⁷ Such catalogues are variously professional, informative, polemic, demotic and parodic. They indicate an overwhelming listing and categorizing tendency of the time, which is fully reflected in this major rhetorical mode of the *Tale*.

Swift responds to catalogue and list as pervasive and popular forms, but they are most important objects of his satire as manifestations both of the new science and of the new philology. If Wotton was particularly in Swift's mind, the many catalogues produced by members of the Royal Society represented a more general target. On the title pages of these new taxonomies the authors regularly 'shine' (as Pope would later put it) 'in the dignity of F.R.S.'¹⁸ A *Catalogus plantarum Angliae et insularum adjacentium* (1670) is proudly described as the work of 'Joannis Raii ... Societatis Regiae Sodalis', and as the imprint of 'J. Martynj, Regalis Societatis Typographi'. Other works by John Ray FRS include *A Collection of English Words not generally used ... in two alphabetical catalogues ... With Catalogues of English Birds and Fishes* (1674). 'Nehemiah Grew, M.D. Fellow of the Royal Society, and of the Colledge of Physitians', wrote a *Catalogue and Description of the Natural and Artificial Rarities belonging to the Royal Society and preserved at Gresham Colledge* (1685), with a 'Prospect of the Whole Work' set out on two facing leaves, a complete classified landscape of its subject.

Above all, the *Tale* provides us with catalogues of the unBrobdingnagian proliferation of publications by modern authors, inventing, listing and caricaturing modern texts offensive because scholastic, or self-commentating, or allegorical, or dark, or foolish in other ways. The first element of the *Tale*'s elaborate paratextuality, after the title page, is a parodic version of the bookseller's standard in-book form of advertisement, a list of 'Treatises wrote by the same Author, most of them mentioned in the following Discourses; which will be speedily published':

A Dissertation upon the principal Productions of Grub-street.
Lectures upon a Dissection of Human Nature.

...

An Analytical Discourse upon Zeal, Histori-theo-physi-logically considered.

...

A Critical Essay upon the Art of Canting, Philosophically, Physically, and Musically considered.

(CWJS, vol. 1, p. [4])

Here the inclusiveness and the terminology of Wotton's *Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning*, the experimental dissections of the

Royal Society and the publications of dissent are all lampooned. In the Introduction to the *Tale*, a disparate selection of productions of Grub Street are subjected to a process of metamorphic enumerative bibliography, with both general and particular targets: a chapbook *Dr Faustus* as a work of alchemy, written by Artephius, the mythic and wondrously long-lived *Adeptus*; 'Whittington and his Cat', described as a work of Talmudic commentary (here the voice is recognizably Bentleian, turning the great classical philologist into a critic of chapbooks); the Catholic convert John Dryden's *The Hind and the Panther* as 'a compleat Abstract of sixteen thousand Schoolmen from *Scotus* to *Bellarmin*'; the chapbook tale of 'The *Wise Men of Gotham, cum Appendice*' as 'a just Defence of the Modern Learning and Wit', referring to the second edition of Wotton's *Reflections* (1697) with Bentley's *Dissertation* printed as an appendix, and applying the 'immense Erudition' of the Reverend William Wotton, FRS, to a fool's tale (*CWJS*, vol. 1, p. 43).

Catalogues, like all forms of the list, are highly susceptible to parodic and imaginative reorderings, imitations and revaluations, and Swift had a few possible parodic predecessors. One, with which he was certainly familiar, was Rabelais's catalogue of the library of St Victor. All Rabelais's lists are powered (and supercharged in Sir Thomas Urquhart's translation) by an almost endless poetic fertility. Here five pages of inventive titles pilory (mostly) the ancient learned professions:

The Codpiece of the Law.
Cacatorium medicorum.
The Chimney-sweeper of Astrology.
The Kissbreach of Chirurgery.

'Of which library', we are told, 'some books are already printed, and the rest are now at the Presse'.¹⁹ Thomas Browne's *Musaeum clausum or Bibliotheca Abscondita* (posthumously published in 1684), not demonstrably known to Swift, listed among other fictitious curiosities 'remarkable Books ... of several kinds, scarce or never seen by any man now living'.

At least two parodic bibliographies of the post-Restoration period are not only closer in time to Swift, but closer to Swift's methods, and certainly closer to his political and religious principles. The anonymous *Bibliotheca fanatica: or, The phanatique library being a catalogue of such books as have been lately made and by the authors presented to the collidge of Bedlam* (1660) invented dozens of book titles, and helpfully provided brief summaries of them, to mock or allege the doings of a wide cast of sectarians and parliamentarians:

De antiquitate Typographia, to shew, that Printing or Pressing was as antient as Grandfather *Adams*, learnedly put home by *Henry Hills* Printer, to the Taylors wife in Black-Friers.

At this date Henry Hills was a member of a Particular Baptist church, already printer to the council of state, and notoriously living with the wife of Thomas Hams, a Blackfriars tailor.²⁰ 'Pressing' and 'put[ting] home' have appropriate plural senses here.

Animadversions and Corrections of St. *Paul's* Epistles, and specially of that sentence, *Godliness is great gain*; whereas it should be, *Gain is great godliness*; as is clearly proved by *William Kiffin*, Broaker of the Word.

Kiffin was a Particular Baptist minister, a hugely wealthy merchant in leather and cloth, and energetic sponsor of the parliamentary cause. He celebrated his material success as evidence of divine favour: 'it pleased God so to bless our endeavours, that, from scores of pounds, he brought it to many hundreds and thousands of pound: giving me more of this world than ever I could have thought to have enjoyed'.²¹ The compact ironies of the characterizing phrase 'Broaker of the Word' anticipate Swift's exploitations of the links of 'trade' and dissent. A later mock bibliography attacked William Sherlock and other senior juring clergymen, with the form and title of *A Catalogue of books of the newest fashion to be sold by auction at the Whiggs Coffee-House ... near the deanry of St. Paul's* (1691). Its items provide a framework for a series of satiric portraits:

6. *Non magna loquimur sed, &c.* By the pious Author and religious Practiser of the Letter to the dying Lord *Russ—l*, addressed chiefly to his Arch-Brother and *quondam* Pupil Dr. *Sh[erlock]*, as an Antidote against Shame and Remorse.

...
9. *Dux femina facti*: Conquest the best Title to Body and Conscience, by Dr. *Sh—k's* Wife, dedicated to her Humble Servant her Husband ...

The 'pious Author' is John Tillotson, who had argued, in his letter to the condemned Lord Russell in 1683, 'the unlawfulness of taking arms against the king in any case'. Early in 1691 Tillotson was appointed to the see of Canterbury by King William, who had come to the throne through revolution. William Sherlock, one of the leading Anglican controversialists of the time, dramatically turned his coat from public and determined nonjuring to take the oath in August 1690, under the influence, many believed at the time, of his Xanthippean wife. Swift had, then, one or two forerunners in the satiric exploitation of the form of the bookseller's

or library catalogue, not much less inventive than his own, and yet more contemporary and urgent.

Swift's satire draws too upon book conventions at the typographical level. The *Tale of a Tub* and its associated texts are frequently interrupted by blanks, characteristically and almost invariably marked by multiple lines of asterisks.²² The Apology is followed by a Postscript, which claims that 'The Gentleman who gave the Copy to the Bookseller' was 'a Friend of the Author', and used 'no other Liberties besides that of expunging certain Passages where now the Chasms appear under the Name of *Desiderata*'. The existence and identity of that Gentleman, and indeed of the passages alleged to have been expunged, are of course uncertain; the Postscript's claim is more likely to be fiction than fact. The first block of asterisks frustrates our expectation that the adequacy of 'the *Ladder*' as 'an adequate Symbol of *Faction*' will be explained, the second supplants the Hack's promised explanation of the uniform effect of different vapours. A particularly substantial block of asterisks, in the 'Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit', stands for the intended deduction and explanation of 'the whole Scheme of spiritual Mechanism' – 'but it was thought neither safe nor convenient to print it'. Briefer sequences of asterisks politely avoid stipulating that ecclesiastical, as well as civil and military, offices might be appropriately staffed by recruits from the madhouse, and politely avoid saying that the spiritual ecstasies of the Quakers are frequently accompanied by a matching physical ecstasy:

in the Height and *Orgasmus* of their Spiritual exercise it has been frequent with them * * * * *; immediately after which, they found the *Spirit* to relax and flag of a sudden with the Nerves, and they were forced to hasten to a Conclusion.

Blanks and asterisks enable in fact a multitude of prevarications, parodically enacting scholarly inadequacy, mendacity, prudishness and bad faith.²³ They are represented in the *Tale* as enabling devices for a variety of abuses of learning.

In the seventeenth-century book multiple asterisks were not infrequently used as Swift would use them in *A Tale of a Tub*, as graphic markers of gaps in the text, indicative often of professional scholarly scrupulosity. Lines or multiple lines of asterisks are used from time to time to indicate lacunae in transcriptions and editions and translations of classical texts, of Longinus and Manilius for instance.²⁴ In a very few such works asterisks are used with significantly greater frequency. In Philemon Holland's

translation of Plutarch's *Moralia* (1603), for example, substantial blocks of asterisks in some places denote innocent lacunae in the copy:

* * * * *

In this place a great defect and breach there is in the Greeke originall, which can not be made up and supplied without the helpe of some ancient copie, not yet extant.²⁵

In other places in this book asterisks are made to stand for obscuranda: 'And yet peradventure it were not amisse in this place to resound and pronounce aloud those verses of *Empedocles*, * * *'. For under covert tearmes he doth allegorize ...'; in yet others, asterisks are a device to avoid the writer's duty of clarification: 'these Philosophers onely have perceived this duplicity, this composition and ambiguity; whereby every one of us are two subjects, the one being substance, the other * *'.²⁶ Thus tacitly in this text, as in Swift's *Tale*, the knotty Point is unravelled, and the clear Solution reached.²⁷

If the use of asterisks in classical texts and translations is limited, the parody-editorial use of asterisks is much rarer. It may be found, however, in one seventeenth-century book at least, an anonymously published piece of university wit, *Naps upon Parnassus* (London, 1658), attributed to the royalist painter and poet, and (from 1668) FRS, Thomas Flatman. Here the satirical poem titled 'The Common Fire', addressed to the poet's muse, is presented as a found and incomplete text. Editorial explanations, in a second voice, accompany the piece. The lines on certain poets who 'shake off their *Mam's* old clothes, as fetters | But **petticoat themselves with different Letters*', for example, are marginally glossed: 'I think he means [effeminated], a difficult place this!' The poem ends in asterisks and emptiness, the Ghost of Wit, delighting to walk after the Death of its Body:

I may not bless Him, as I've blest the rest;
For he holds nought in Common with the rest.
* * * * *
* * * Caetera desiderantur.
* * *²⁸

As in this instance from Flatman, the *Tale of a Tub's* gaps, and their asterisks, are regularly glossed by tags in learned Latin. The '*Ladder*', or gallows, is 'an adequate Symbol ... of *Faction* because' – and here the promised, and dangerous, explanation is silenced by five lines of asterisks and the marginalium '*Hiatus in MS.*' Jack's tatters are briefly described as offering 'to the first View a ridiculous Flanting', which serves only to make him resemble his enemy and opposite Peter, but the point, so far from being

developed, evaporates into asterisks, and the marginal remark '*Desunt nonnulla*'. In the 'Battel', the fight among the books in the King's library is punctuated by lacunae: '*Hic pauca desunt*', '*Desunt non-nulla*', '*Ingens hiatus hic in MS.*', '*Alter hiatus in MS.*' The physical book of Cowley's *Mistress* is metamorphosed into a dove harnessed to Venus's chariot, but this modern myth breaks off into asterisks: '*Hiatus valdè deflendus in MS.*' The 'Battel' itself concludes, following the transformation of Bentley and Wotton into a brace of skewered woodcocks, with four lines of asterisks and a *Desunt cætera*.²⁹

Nor are these various marks of absence the only learned verbal tags in the *Tale*. A plethora of such phrases, borrowed from medieval and modern scholastic, theological and legal uses, pepper the arguments of Peter, the brother 'that was the Scholar', or are used in connection with his text-wresting arguments, which are abuses of learning as well as of religion. Peter finds authority for adding shoulder knots to the brothers' coats by reading the Father's Will '*totidem verbis*', '*totidem syllabis*' and finally '*totidem literis*', phrases used in scholastic scriptural interpretation. The 'k' in 'Shoulder-knots' is found from the word '*Calendæ*', which, we are told by Peter, 'hath in *Q. V. C.* been sometimes writ with a *K*'; the marginalium explains the three-letter acronym as '**Quibusdam Veteribus Codicibus*', and the footnote translates the marginalium: 'Some antient Manuscripts' (*CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. 54–5, 56). Here Swift aims specifically at Richard Bentley's allegedly unprincipled methods of textual reference, though the phrase, and similar phrases, were in common scholarly use.³⁰ Martin and Jack liberate the Will from the strongbox that is the Vulgate, by making a '*Copia vera*', a legal phrase written (now as then) at the top of copies of legal instruments to certify a true copy or duplicate. 'Flame-colour'd Sattin', or the doctrine of purgatory, Peter justifies by the addition to the Father's Will of 'a Codicil annexed', a lawyer's phrase.³¹

The tags that mark the *Tale's* lacunae were often used, as we might expect, as standard notations for missing or abrupted passages in classical editions, and in learned histories. A letter in *Disertissimi viri Rogeri Aschami* (1576) ends in a *Desunt cætera*; John Weever's *Ancient Funerall Monuments ... of Great Britaine* (1631) quotes, from 'a Manuscript in Sir Robert Cottons Libraire', a set of Latin rhyming hexameters against the Monks, which have to end in the same familiar phrase (p. 78); more than one section in two careful examinations of the politics and rights and wrongs of the civil war by 'P.D.' (that is, by Francis Nethersole) concludes with a *Desunt nonnulla*, or *Reliqua desiderantur*.³²

Such phrases, however, had a far wider and more catholic currency. They were regularly used in printed editions of vernacular poetry, in Joseph Hall's *Virgidemiarum* (1602; p. 59) for example; at the end of the texts of 'To the Countesse of Bedford' and of 'Resurrection, Imperfect' in John Donne's *Poems* of 1633 (2nd edn, pp. 111, 162); and at the beginning of the text of Robert Herrick's 'The Apparition of his Mistresse' in the 1648 edition of *Hesperides* (p. 240).³³ Indeed, such phrases were so familiar as to be capable of being turned to various figurative applications. 'J.C.M.D.' exploits the doubleness of the Latin in a modesty topos, apologizing for pretensions to learning by one 'in a rural retirement, having no book but one of an imperfect edition, forc'd to read my self, *ubi multa desiderantur & à desunt nonnulla*'.³⁴ Henry Petowe justifies his writing a sequel to *Hero and Leander*, comparing Marlowe's unfinished poem to 'a heade seperated from the body, with this harsh sentence, *Desunt nonnulla*'.³⁵

More significantly, certainly more significantly for Swift, the tags that he uses in the *Tale* are all, along with their other uses, part of the discourse of debate between Rome and the protestant churches concerning the reliability and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures as a rule of belief. Central to the *Tale* is the conviction that the Father's Will – Scripture, or rather the New Testament – consists of 'certain plain easy directions' for the conduct of the Christian religion. The brothers go astray initially when Peter, 'he that was the Scholar' (*CWJS*, vol. 1, p. 56), applies a variety of kinds of misreading in order to justify additions to the coats against the terms of the Father's Will: the devotional ornaments of shoulder knots, the materialism of gold lace, the false doctrine of purgatory represented by linings of flame-coloured satin, the pomps of silver fringe and the iconography of '*Indian Figures*'. An essential part of Peter's argument, applied in favour of gold lace, is the resort beyond the written ('scriptory') will, to Church tradition (the 'nuncupatory' will). It is just this demoting of the authority of the text of Scripture, and the strategic wresting of its meaning, that protestant divines imputed, in a thousand places, to the Church of Rome.³⁶ In many such places Anglican divines used phrases familiar to us from the *Tale* to accuse the Romanists of distortions and dismissals of written scripture. Thomas Beard, Oliver Cromwell's schoolmaster, found the Jesuit apologist Francis Coster, in his *Enchiridion* (1585), guilty of treating the scriptures like a pedant dismissing defective manuscripts:

His words are these, *Omnia fidei mysteria, caeteraq; credita & scitu necessaria, ex corde Ecclesiae sunt clarissimè exarata, in membranis tamen tam noui quam veteris Testamenti multa desiderantur*: that is, *all the mysteries of faith, and other things necessary to bee beleueed and known, are most clearly engrauen*

*in the heart of the Church, but in the leaues of the Olde and New Testament, many things are wanting. What can be more plaine?*³⁷

Thomas Bell, Romanist priest turned protestant controversialist, in the course of demonstrating in his *Catholique Triumph* (1610) that the Donation of Constantine was forged, quoted the words of a Romanist against the Roman position:

Quoniam absq; dubio, si non fuisset illud dictamen apocryphum, Gratianus in veteribus codicibus... inuenisset; et quia non inuenit, non posuit... For without doubt, if that report were not apocryphall, *Gratianus* would haue found it in the old Bookes ... but because he did not finde it, he did not set downe the same.³⁸

Much later in the century, the royalist clergyman Francis Gregory, in his *Grand Presumption of the Roman Church in Equalling their own Traditions to the Written Word of God* (1675), repeated the regular accusation that the Romanists have falsified and forged the writings of the Church Fathers (second only in authority, in Anglican orthodoxy, to the holy scriptures themselves). Specifically, Gregory accuses Cardinal Bellarmine of censoring Chrysostom:

St. *Chrysostom* left upon record an Expression which the *Roman Church* doth no way like, and that was this; *In times of Heresie there is no means to find out the Truth, save onely the reading of the Scriptures.* Bellarmine confesseth, *Totus hic locus è quibusdam codicibus nuper emendatis sublatus est;* This whole Passage is left out of some Editions newly set forth and corrected. But how comes St. *Chrysostom* thus to deserve the *Spunge?* (p. 115)

On such evidence it is possible to argue that Swift's use of such tags as *desunt nonnulla* and *quibusdam veteribus codicibus* are not merely parodies of neutral scholarly conventions, but are a part of his response to a century of argument between England and Rome about the reading of the text of scripture.

The *Tale of a Tub* is not a mock book in the same way or to the same degree as Pope's *Dunciad Variorum* of 1729. Swift's first great satire is by no means so predominantly based in form on a single, heroic, scholarly model, nor does it have a particular, identified mock hero. If Wotton and Bentley are the main scholarly targets of the 'Tale', as of the 'Battel of the Books', the formal and verbal methods of that notorious pair of moderns are personated in often fragmented and opportunistic ways. If worthy their parts in Swift's satiric play, they are nevertheless only the most prominent of a substantially larger cast of modern practitioners of dubious bookish typographies and paratexts. Even a partial examination

shows how conscious Swift was in the *Tale* of the manifold conventions of the book, more especially of the learned book, and how alive he was to the rich possibilities they offered to a satiric pen. His exploitations of the possibilities of marginal and footnote reference and explication, his numerous parodies of list and catalogue, his mocking echoes of the scrupulous or deceitful *lacuna*, his scattering of the verbal or acronymic jargon of the scholarly tag, are all weapons he brings to the battle of the books. They are parts of his defence of an older literary humanism against the modern, evidence-based, authenticating humanist scholarship of Bentley, Wotton and such predecessors as Richard Simon, and against the more disparate and demotic textual devices of a newly commercial world of print.

Notes

- 1 *CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. 6, 123, 10. All references to the *Tale of a Tub*, 'Battel of the Books' and 'Mechanical Operation of the Spirit' are to this edition. The dramatic widening in Swift and Bentley's time of the breach between two kinds of humanism – rhetorical, literary, evaluative on the one hand, forensic, scholarly, judicial on the other – is explored in John F. Tinkler's important essay, 'The Splitting of Humanism: Bentley, Swift, and the English Battle of the Books', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 49 (1988), 453–72. I have argued at length for the basis in Anglican hermeneutics of Swift's preferences in texts and textual interpretation in 'Text, "Text", and Swift's *Tale of a Tub*', *Modern Language Review*, 85 (1990), 290–303.
- 2 For the debate among modern commentators concerning the credibility and reliability of Swift's professions in the *Apology*, see *CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. liii–liv and footnotes.
- 3 I have discussed these methods of parody in my Annotations to the 'Tale', 'Battel' and 'Mechanical Operation of the Spirit' in *CWJS*, vol. 1.
- 4 *CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. 62, 97, 135, 143.
- 5 Cf. Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1997), pp. 23–4.
- 6 See Lawrence Lipking, 'The Marginal Gloss', *Critical Inquiry*, 3 (1976–7), 609–55 (pp. 621–2); Frank Palmeri, 'The Satiric Footnotes of Swift and Gibbon', *The Eighteenth Century*, 31 (1990), 245–62 (pp. 245, 252–3, 259, 260); Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, tr. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 320.
- 7 Dirk F. Passmann and Heinz J. Vienken record Swift's ownership of Simon's *Vieux testament* (Rotterdam, 1685), but not of any copy of the *Nouveau testament*, in French or English (*Library and Reading, Part 1*, vol. III, 1696–7).
- 8 See my 'Text, "Text", and Swift's *Tale of a Tub*'.
- 9 *A Critical History of the Old Testament* (London, 1682), Author's Preface, b4^{r-v}.

- 10 *A Critical History of the Text of the New Testament* (London, 1689), Preface, A4^v.
- 11 Swift owned the second edition of volumes I and II (1710) and the first edition of volume III (1711).
- 12 Printed in Temple's *Miscellanea, the Second Part* (1690).
- 13 For example, in support of his insistence that Thericles was a potter, not a magistrate, Bentley lists and quotes 'no fewer than ten witnesses' (Richard Bentley, *A Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris with an Answer to the Objections of the Honourable Charles Boyle* (London, 1699), pp. 109–10, 127).
- 14 In the 1697 edition, quotations in the Greek and Latin had been made within the text.
- 15 Bentley, *Dissertation*, pp. 408, 410, 378.
- 16 See *CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. xxxiv–xxxv, 213–14, 279–80.
- 17 For instance: Henry Savage, *Balliofergus, or, A Commentary upon the Foundation, Founders and Affaires of Balliol Colledge ... Whereunto is Added, an Exact Catalogue of all the Heads of the Same Colledge* (Oxford, 1668); *The Catalogue of Contented Cuckolds: or, A Loving Society of Confessing Brethren* (London, [1685?]); *A Catalogue of the Bowes, of the Town ... to be Set by Auction* (London, 1691); Thomas Ouldman, *An Out-cry of Poets; or, a Catalogue of Wits to be Sold by Inch of Candle* (London, 1691); *A Catalogue of the Fellows and other Members of the Royal Colledge of Physicians, London* (London, 1694); *Explanatory Notes upon a Mendacious Libel called Concubinage and Poligamy Disproved ... as being a Scurrilous Libel ... As may Appear, by a Catalogue of Notorious and Villainous Lies, and Billingsgate Raileries ... to be Shewed Therein. By J.B.B.D.* (London, 1698).
- 18 *Dunciad*, book IV, line 570, *TE*, vol. v, p. 398.
- 19 François Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, bk 2, ch. 7, tr. Sir Thomas Urquhart and Pierre Le Motteux (New York, London and Toronto: Everyman's Library, 1994), p. 193.
- 20 See *ODNB*, s.v. Henry Hills, senior (c. 1625–1688/9). Hills would later conform to the Church of England, and in 1685 convert to Catholicism, rising at last to become master of the Stationers' Company in 1687.
- 21 See *ODNB*, s.v. William Kiffin (1616–1701).
- 22 The asterisk, or *Asterism*, together with its uses, is discussed by John Smith, in his *Printer's Grammar* (London, 1755). In particular, 'Asterisms ... denote an omission, or an hiatus; by loss of original Copy; in which case the number of Asterisms is multiplied according to the largeness of the chasm; and not only whole lines, but sometimes whole pages are left blank, and mark'd with some lines of Stars' (pp. 79–80). Swift's use of asterisks in *A Tale of a Tub* has been analyzed in Christopher Flint, *The Appearance of Print in Eighteenth-Century Fiction* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 113–26.
- 23 *CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. 15, 40, 110, 113, 129, 156, 157, 158, 160, 164, 179, 186.
- 24 [*Peri Hypsous*], or *Dionysius Longinus of the Height of Eloquence, Rendered out of the Originall. By J. H. Esq;* (London, 1652), p. lxxx; Thomas Stanley, *The*

- History of Philosophy in Eight Parts* (London, 1656), p. 137; *Lucretius his Six Books of Epicurean Philosophy: and Manilius his Five Books*, tr. Thomas Creech (London, 1700) (*Manilius*, p. 82).
- 25 *The Philosophie, Commonlie Called, The Morals*, tr. Philemon Holland (London, 1603), p. 958; cf. pp. 1035, 1045, 1152, 1053, 1171. For further examples see Livy, *The Romane Historie*, tr. Philemon Holland (London, 1600), pp. 847, 1114, 1214; *Velleius Paterculius his Romane Historie*, tr. Robert Le Grys (London, 1632), pp. 19–20.
- 26 Plutarch, *Philosophie*, pp. 575, 1106; cf. pp. 713, 890. Asterisks used thus are not wholly confined to the learned classics: cf. Katherine Philips, *Poems. By the Incomparable, Mrs. K. P.* (London, 1664), p. 30.
- 27 See *CWJS*, vol. 1, p. 110.
- 28 *Naps upon Parnassus. ... Such Voluntary and Jovial Copies of Verses, as were lately receiv'd from some of the WITS of the Universities* (London, 1658), pp. 30, 31. The satiric use of the lacuna is more explicit and developed in Thomas D'Urfey's burlesque *An Essay towards the Theory of the Intelligible World ... The Archetypally Second Edition* (London, [1705?]), a parody of John Norris, *An Essay towards the Theory of the Ideal or Intelligible World* (two parts, London, 1701, 1704). Here D'Urfey considers 'The Method of making a Chasm, or Hiatus, judiciously', in a short chapter in which a fragmented quotation from *Aeneid*, 4. 335, 549, itself broken up by dashes, is followed by a page made up wholly of dashes, with a marginal note: 'The Author very well understands that a good sizable Hiatus discovers a very great Genius, there being no wit in the World more Ideal, and consequently more refined, than what is display'd in those elaborate Pages, that have ne're a Syllable written on them' (pp. 162–3). In this D'Urfey no doubt learned from Swift's *Tub* as well as from Norris.
- 29 *CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. 40, 129, 156–8, 160, 164.
- 30 See for example *CWJS*, vol. 1, p. 66, and note 40, pp. 385–6.
- 31 See *CWJS*, vol. 1, pp. 78, 396, 56, 375.
- 32 *Problemes Necessary to be Determined by All that Have, or Have Not Taken Part ... in the Late Unnatural Warre* (1648), p. 22; and *A Strong Motive to a General Pardon* (1648), p. 8.
- 33 Cf. John Weever, *Epigrammes in the Oldest Cut and Newest Fashion* (1599), B8^v (where *Desunt nunnulla* intervenes after only one line of the epigram 'In Titum'); Francis Hubert, *The Deplorable Life and Death of Edward the Second ... Storied in an Excellent Poem* (1628), p. 91; Robert Heath, *Clarastella* (1650), p. 20.
- 34 [John Collop,] *Charity Commended, or, A Catholick Christian Soberly Instructed* (1667), Br^r. Cf. John Wilson, *A Good and Seasonable Caveat for Christians* (1646), A4^r.
- 35 'Epistle Dedicatorie', *The Second Part of Hero and Leander Conteyning Their Further Fortunes* (1598), Aiii^v.
- 36 For fuller discussion, see my 'Text, "Text", and Swift's *Tale of a Tub*'.
- 37 Beard, *A Retractive from the Romish Religion* (1616), pp. 156–7.

- 38 *The Catholique Triumph: ... Wherein is evidently prooued, that Poperie and the Doctrine now professed in the Romish Church, is the New Religion; And that the Fayth which the Church of England now mayntaineth, is the ancient romane Religion* (1610), p. 35. The tag is used in a more scholarly context by William Perkins, *Problema de Romanae Fidei Ementitio Catholicismo* (Cambridge, 1604), p. 54.