Counterfactual Taxonomies: Evolution and Empire in the Work of Edward Lear

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Abstract

This dissertation interrogates the structures and patterns of Edward Lear's (1812-1888) works as reflective of the evolution of nineteenth-century networks of empire and philosophies of the self and humanity's place in nature. His life and works carry inherent contradictions that are emblematic of those that proliferated throughout nineteenth-century culture, art, and literature. These contradictions include an ambivalence towards the taxonomies of empire and natural history that were bound with the expansion of empire and exploitation of colonial resources. They also include associated Romantic inheritances of the inner search for self versus evolving Victorian hierarchical and binary frameworks of sexuality, materialism, and scientific naturalism and the outwardly oriented search for the self via the classification of the 'other'. How does Lear's grappling with his own ideas of self and his place in nature, as well as his own relationship in empire's exploitation of that nature, reflect a similar grappling in the nineteenth century as a whole? Taxonomy and performance were potent tools in Lear's practice of subversion and parody and in the nineteenth century as a whole. Because of my contention that Lear's works are emblematic of nineteenth-century questions of empire, nature, and the self, re-examining Lear's reclassifications of imperial and natural history taxonomical hierarchies assists in the humanities' engagement with the development of an alternative view of Darwinian thought and its literary representations and expressions, as well as an expansion into Victorian ecocritical investigation. Lear's subversion of nineteenth-century hierarchies of nature and empire through what this dissertation coins as 'counterfactual taxonomies' problematised Lear's relationship with the various hierarchies that ruled his life and profoundly influenced his nonsense. Counterfactuality was a prominent trend in nineteenth-century thought. Coupled with the mania for collection, classification, and display, this dissertation posits that the 'counterfactual taxonomies' of his nonsense served as a vehicle for Lear's grappling with ideas of the self and empire's place in nature. Lear's works provide us with a subversive natural history that is resplendent in its chaotic and interrelated web of life on Darwin's bank from *On the Origin of Species* (1859), *and* on the banks of the Jellybolēē.

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Dedication and Acknowledgements

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my children Afton, Darrough, and Brin Tock. They are and always will be my inspiration.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to the Irish Research Council for the funding they provided to complete my research and dissertation. This dissertation would have been impossible without their vital funding.

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I would also like to extend profound gratitude to the Derby/Lear collections and staff at Liverpool Central Library. Their assistance, advice, and professionalism were a vital contributor to a significant part of my research. Visit them and use their collections.

Like Edward Lear, I am a lifelong amateur musician, and I would like to acknowledge the music that became my daily companion during the writing of this dissertation. Very early on in my research, I began listening to a soundtrack that provided daily inspiration to continue this research voyage: the soundtrack to the 2003 film adaptation of Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin series, *Master and Commander*. It is a gorgeous collection of both brilliant original works and inspired selection of modern, baroque, and folk pieces. I am also a devoted fan of the O'Brian series. The world he created – paired with the brilliant soundtrack by artists Iva Davies, Richard Tognetti, and Christopher Gordon – allowed me to steep myself in gorgeous music that was linked in my mind to the exploratory philosophy and time-period that also so influenced Edward Lear. I am eternally grateful to the artists behind this soundtrack, and I listen to its wonderful music obsessively to this day.

Introduction

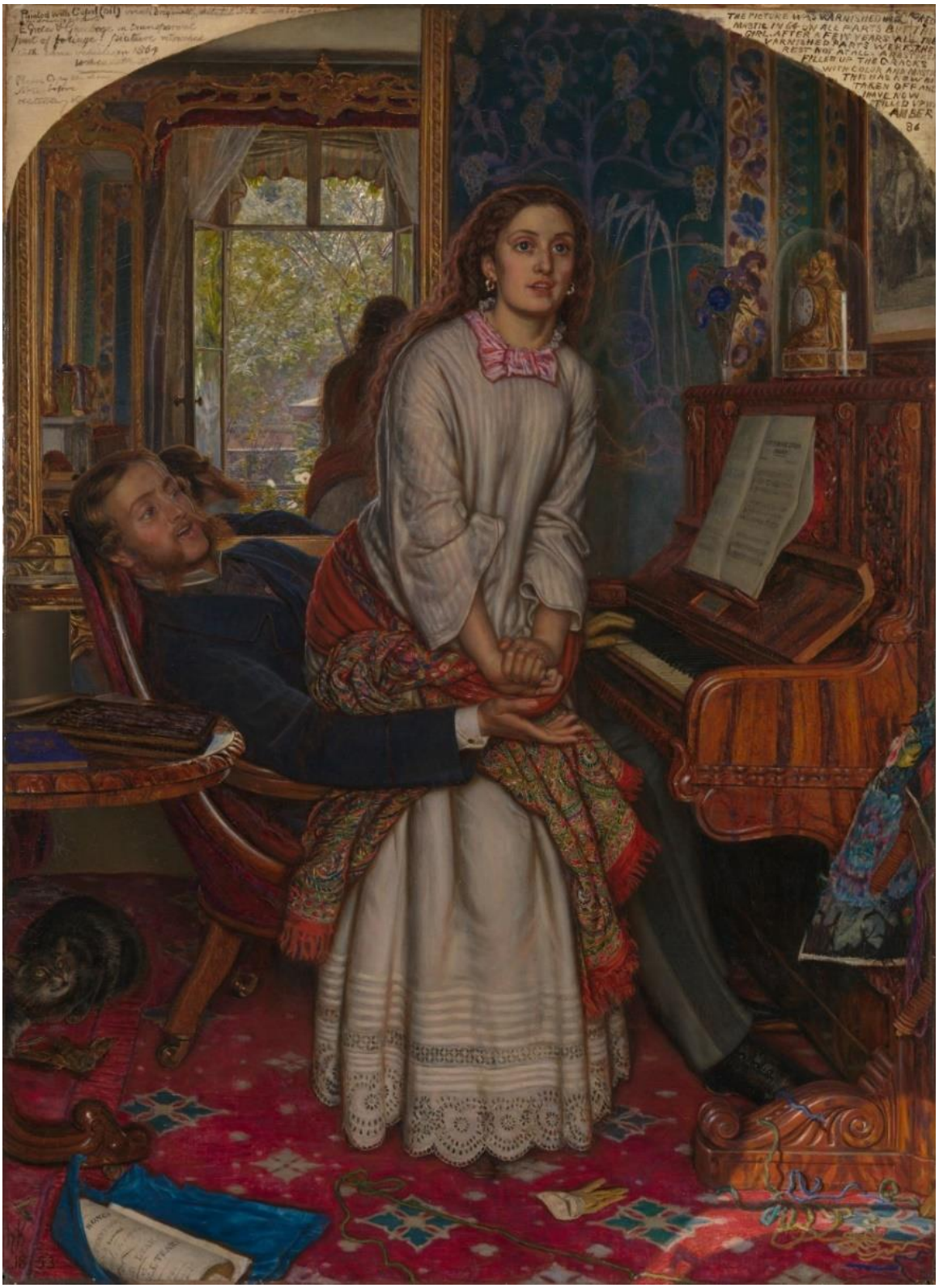

Figure 1 William Holman Hunt. *The Awakening Conscience* (1853).

Introduction

Figure 2 William Holman Hunt. *The Awakening Conscience* (1853) close-up.

Introduction

I begin this dissertation with the above painting by William Holman Hunt as a visual underscore to my contention that Lear and his works were an ingrained element of the nineteenth century.[1] Lear is ever present, yet obscured, in the networks of British imperial culture. This is reflected by the inclusion of Lear's musical setting of Tennyson's "Tears, Idle, Tears" (Figure 2), lying abandoned on the floor in William Holman Hunt's painting of religious epiphany, *The Awakening Conscience* (1853).[2] The painting created a furore in Britain, commanding condemnation at The Royal Academy Exhibition in 1854 for its depiction of sexual debauchery. Yet it garnered written defence from John Ruskin (1819-1900) in a letter to *The Times* and was described in *Punch* as a pictorial sermon.[3] Hunt's inclusion of Lear's published musical setting of Tennyson's verse in the painting attests to the overwhelming prevalence of Lear's work in the nineteenth century. Born in 1812 and dying in 1888, the patterns of Lear's works are reflective of the evolution of nineteenth-century networks of empire and philosophies of the self and humanity's place in nature.

Throughout the research for this dissertation, my mind's eye has been confronted with Lear's ubiquitous presence in nineteenth-century networks of empire, society, art, science, and literature. This presence inevitably manifested itself with the mantra 'Lear was there' during a period of crucial evolution in philosophies of the self and humanity's place in nature. My dissertation probes that mantra of 'Lear was there', placing a microscope on his work in the context of the interplay between empire, the self, and the establishment of the 'other' through the nineteenth-century obsession with the collection, classification, and display of colonial resources that coincided with the expansion of the British Empire. Hunt's fluttered-to-the-floor inclusion of Lear's publication attests to my mantra of 'Lear was there' – an underscore to the understated importance of Lear's works in nineteenth-century culture. Ultimately, I argue that the patterns and functions of Lear's works, which I analyse via what I have coined as his 'counterfactual taxonomies', problematise Lear's ambiguous relationship with the imperial and taxonomical hierarchies that ruled his life and works. With these counterfactual taxonomies, Lear cartwheels those hierarchies with the subversive qualities of

[1] NB I include a table of figures that includes holdings, details, and provenance of the images in the dissertation.
[2] Julia Grella O'Connell, "Of Music, Magdalenes, and Metanoia in *The Awakening Conscience*," *Journal of Musicological Research* 24, no. 2 (n.d.): 124, https://doi.org/10.1080/01411890590950756; Jenny Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* (New York: Faber & Faber, 2017), 211–12. The song on the piano is Thomas Moore's 'Oft in the Stilly Night'. Lear's setting is No. 3 of twelve from his *Poems and Songs by Alfred Tennyson: set to music and inscribed to Mrs. Alfred Tennyson* (1853-1860).
[3] O'Connell, "Of Music, Magdalenes, and Metanoia in *The Awakening Conscience*," 123.

his works just as he cartwheels the tumbling figures of his nonsense, reorienting his audience's gaze on the upending of those hierarchies and taxonomies.

'Hierarchies' is a term used frequently in this dissertation. The framework for the term 'hierarchies' herein is multivalent and interdependent. Firstly, this term applies to the hierarchies that existed in imperial society, placing the white, aristocratic British male at the top of the Great Chain of Being – reflecting the image of an Anglican God – in his dominion over the lower classes, colonial peoples, and colonial natural resources. However, this framework also encompasses the hierarchies at play in the rivalry of the various scientific factions involved in the professionalisation of natural history that occurred in the early nineteenth century. This second aspect at times reflected or contradicted those imperial hierarchies – see my note discussing what I term the taxonomy wars in chapter 2. Finally, the term 'hierarchies' also refers to the taxonomies used in the practice of natural history: that is, the inherent perceived hierarchies at play in the Linnaean system of binomial classification that arranges all life (eventually) into the Five Kingdoms of life on planet Earth. The pursuit of natural history knowledge and its classification in conjunction with the expansion of empire prompted the voyages of discovery that brought back the imperial spoils which so influenced Lear's illustration of his nonsense works.

Voyages of discovery were important underpinnings of both imperial expansion and Lear's nonsense. Similarly, I embarked on my own voyage into Lear's works and their place in nineteenth-century networks of empire, nature, and the self. This journey and the resultant research and findings carry implications and open lines of dialogue in widely divergent academic arenas, from the scientific humanities to Victorian print culture, to the threshold areas in the interplay from Romantic thought legacies to Victorian thought and the classification of the 'other', to Victorian history in toto. For Lear scholarship, this dissertation's journey refocuses the discourse on the role that his and the Victorian obsession with collection, classification, and display – in the curious form of his counterfactual taxonomies of self, natural history, and imperial hierarchies – play in the texts and images of his nonsense verse, alphabets, limericks, and stories that I analyse in this dissertation. Before broaching a discussion on critical literature on Lear, research questions, and my theoretical foundations, however, a short biographical sketch and exploration of Lear's publishing history is in order.

Life and Works:

Edward Lear is most famous for his nonsense verse, such as "The Owl and the Pussy-cat". Yet prior to his nonsense work, Lear was a successful natural history illustrator. His oeuvre of work encompasses a prolific publishing history, beginning with his first nonsense work, *A Book of Nonsense* (1st ed. 1849) and, even earlier, his ornithological masterpiece that he published on subscription, *Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots* (1830) (See Figures 3 and 4 below).[4]

[4] Daniel Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 23; Sara Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2018), 3; Henderson, "Charles Darwin, Edward Lear, and the Royal Society Library | The Repository | Royal Society," August 31, 2012, https://blogs.royalsociety.org/history-of-science/2012/08/31/darwin-and-lear/; "Gould's Book of Toucans," *Royal Society Blog* (blog), January 29, 2019, https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/285696.Royal_Society/blog?page=6. See also Bevis "Edward Lear's Lines of Flight," 43.

Figure 3 Lithographic Plate 2. Edward Lear. *Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots* (1830).

Figure 4 Lithographic Plate 7. Edward Lear. *Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots* (1830).

This publishing phenomenon continued with his travel literature, his musical settings of Tennyson's verse, and the myriad editions of his nonsense during his lifetime and posthumously. Lear's professional illustrations were included in many nineteenth-century natural history monographs because of his genius in detailed scientific illustration, as well as his skill in new print technologies like lithography. Some of these volumes included images in Thomas Bell's *A history of British quadrupeds, including the Cetacea* (1837) and Sir William Jardine's *The Naturalist's Library* (1830-1836). They also included many images in *Gleanings from the menagerie and aviary at Knowsley Hall* (1846 Figure 5 below), and John Gould's *A monograph of the Ramphastidae, or family of Toucans* (1855) (Figures 6 below). The presence of Lear's illustrations in the major natural history publications of the early nineteenth century may have had long-lasting impact: we know that Darwin borrowed some of these volumes from the British Library when he was formulating the theories in *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871).[5]

[5] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 23; Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 3; Henderson, "Charles Darwin, Edward Lear, and the Royal Society Library | The Repository | Royal Society"; "Gould's Book of Toucans."

Figure 5 Lithographic Plate 3. Edward Lear. *Gleanings from the menagerie and aviary at Knowsley* (1846).

Figure 6 Lithographic Plate 2. John Gould. *A monograph of the Ramphastidae, or family of Toucans* (1854).

Besides his volumes of nonsense and natural history, Lear published six illustrated travelogues: *Views in Rome and its environs* (1841), *Illustrated excursions in Italy (1846), Journals of a landscape painter in Albania &c* (1851), *Journals of a landscape painter in Southern Calabria* (1852), *Views in the Seven Ionian Islands* (1863), and *Journals of a landscape painter in Corsica* (1870). Additionally, Lear's landscape paintings were included in Royal Academy exhibitions – *The Mountains of Thermopylae* (Figure 7 below) was included in the 1852 exhibition. Moreover, he was hired by Queen Victoria to provide a series of drawing lessons to the monarch after she saw a copy of his *Views in Rome and its environs* (1841).

Prior to his launch into natural history illustration, Lear experienced a middle-class childhood that was plagued by asthma and epilepsy. Most scholars agree that Lear's sexuality was ambiguous: he appears to have been romantically involved with a series of male companions, and this is the assumption taken in my research.[6] Yet, as was often the case with nineteenth-century queer men, at several times in his life, Lear contemplated the possibility of marriage. However, unlike his friend John Addington Symonds, Lear never committed himself to such a step. Scholars also agree that in Lear's mind, there was some association between his epilepsy and his sexuality and that he equated his Demon, as he called his seizures, with his homosexuality. His seizures were quite severe – he records them with an X in his journals, and more than two or three Xs a day was a common occurrence.[7]

Despite his physical ailments, Lear was able to establish himself at a noticeably young age as an expert in natural history illustration. He not only became proficient in this type of illustration, but he was early on recognised as an expert in natural history and lithography. Lear's genius application of this new technology in *Psittacidae* received huge critical acclaim and spurred his nomination and acceptance into the Linnaean Society. John Gould, author of *The Birds of Europe* (1837) and founder of the nineteenth-century ornithological publishing juggernaut hired Lear to instruct his wife Elizabeth in both illustration and lithography. Lear's extensive illustration work with Gould's publishing empire had lasting consequences

[6] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 127, 129, 235–39; Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 8–9, 55, 188–93, 313, 363–64; Peter Swaab, "'Some Think Him ... Queer': Loners and Love in Edward Lear," in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 89–96; Vivien Noakes, *Edward Lear: The Life of a Wanderer*, revised edition (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton Publishing Limited, 2006), 84, 111, 113,115-116, 189, 202, 237, 281. For a detailed and thorough outline of critical work on Lear's sexuality, see Peter Swaab's account in his chapter in *Play of Poetry*, as above. Short of a miracle, physical evidence of Lear's sexual preferences is unlikely to surface. The preponderance of critical thought falls on the side of at least an ambiguity in Lear's sexuality.

[7] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 16–18.

for Lear and Gould – and for Darwin's formulations on evolutionary theory. It was also during this period that Lear began writing his nonsense works, formal publication beginning with the three editions of *A Book of Nonsense* (1846, 1855, 1861).

Following what he claimed was increasingly deteriorating eyesight, Lear abandoned natural history illustration and proceeded to lead an adventurous existence, travelling and living in the Mediterranean for most of his life. The Mediterranean and Balkan terrain provided Lear with inspiration for his landscape painting and travel writing, as well as his livelihood. Patronage from the Earls of Derby and other aristocratic subscribers to his works earned the funds that made his first and subsequent trips there possible. Additionally, the works he produced on commission remained vital in financing his extended sojourns in the Mediterranean. Interspersed in these travels were frequent trips back to England during which time he studied painting, worked, and socialised with many artists, scientists, politicians, civil servants, and fellow authors. Also interspersed was the publication of his travelogues and various later collections of his nonsense: *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets* (*NSSBA*) (1870), *More Nonsense, Pictures, Rhymes, Botany, Etc.* (*MN*) (1871), *Laughable Lyrics* (*LL*) (1876), *A Fourth Book of Nonsense, Poems, Songs, Botany, Music, &c* (*Fourth Book*) (1876). Additionally, Lear maintained close relationships with the Tennyson family and considered himself a junior member of the Pre-Raphaelites because of his long-term ties with William Holman Hunt. When back in England, Lear was a favourite at house parties and during the London season because of his genius at musical entertainment and parody. Even when he was not resident in England, Lear was a prolific correspondent, establishing and maintaining extensive epistolary networks with people as varied as Ruskin, Emily Tennyson, Richard Owen, Wilkie Collins, and many Derby family friends and relations – in other words, with the movers and shakers of nineteenth-century England.

Given Lear's dates, this dissertation includes a discourse on Lear's images and texts in relation to key nineteenth-century transitions from Romantic patterns of thought. Such transitions include patterns surrounding natural history and nineteenth-century science, thus adding to the research on the ambivalent and ever-evolving Victorian engagement with Romantic concepts of nature, science, and self – as seen in the complicated relationship Tennyson had with evolutionary theory and critical exploration of this phenomenon.[8] My

[8] John Holmes, *Darwin's Bards: British and American Poetry in the Age of Evolution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 62–63.

analyses of Lear's obsession with the power relations in Orientalism and natural history and imperial taxonomies add a further layer to this exploration, especially regarding the evolution of this obsession into one of questioning those very hierarchies via what I term his 'counterfactual taxonomies'. Additionally, my work on Lear's place in Victorian ecology provides a new foray in Lear scholarship. It engages with critical enquiry into the nuances of the transition from the legacies of a Romantic ecocriticism in which 'nature' was viewed as a paradise from which humans not actively engaged in a return to 'nature' are conceived as a separate and potentially threatening entity to an ecocriticism that embraces the idea of the 'oneness' of all entities engaged in a dance on Darwin's proposed entangled bank from the final chapter of *On the Origin of Species*.[9] Moreover, this dissertation explores Lear's subversion of the Malthusian and survival of the fittest taxonomies usually associated with Darwinian thought to what Lear may have found in *On the Origin of Species* – the interconnected web of life that celebrates the chaos of nature on planet Earth. My dissertation also offers a specific analysis of Lear's works that destabilises the taxonomies of empire and the associated exploitation of colonial resources through the analysis of what I term the 'counterfactual taxonomies' of his nonsense texts and images.

Additionally, this dissertation analyses Lear's works in relation to early nineteenth-century evolutionary and speciation theory and later the works of Charles Darwin, specifically as to their place in nineteenth-century networks of empire, society, and natural history. I use four different Darwin works, including: *Geological Observations on the Volcanic Islands, visited during the voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle* (1844), *The Voyage of the Beagle: Journal of researches into the Natural History and Geology of the Countries visited during the Voyage round the World of H.M.S. 'Beagle' under command of Captain Fitz Roy, R.N.* (2nd ed. 1845), *A Monograph on the Sub-Class Círripedia, with Figures of All the Species (1851-1854),* and *On the Origin of Species by means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (2nd ed. 1859). Lear's career as a natural history illustrator, gentleman travel-writer, and his association with the Pre-Raphaelites as a landscape painter informs my research into Lear's place in evolutionary theory's effects on concepts of sexuality, empire, and the self. Examining Lear's works and influence on the poetic genres of nonsense and the absurd in the context of evolutionary theory's influence on society and literature in the nineteenth century elucidates our

[9] Ashton Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), xiii–xxii, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/NUIG/detail.action?docID=678824.

understanding of the impact that evolutionary theory carried on the development of Western society and literature, an impact that continues to this day. Specifically, this dissertation includes analyses of key instances of the counterfactual taxonomies that best illustrate Lear's problematisation of humanity's place in nature and empire: a) "Miss Maniac" written in the late 1820s (unpublished); b) "There was a Young Lady of Wales" (*A Book of Nonsense*); c) "There was a Young Lady of Bute" (*A Book of Nonsense*); d) "W was once a whale" from "A was once an apple pie" in *NSSBA*; e) "The Judicious Jubilant Jay" from "The Absolutely Abstemious Ass" written in 1870 and published in *MN*; f) "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" written in 1876 and published in *LL*; g) "The Jumblies" written in 1870 and published in *NSSBA*; h) "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" written in 1865 and published in *NSSBA*; i) "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" written in 1867 and published in *NSSBA*; and j) "The Scroobious Pip" written in 1871 and 1872 (unpublished). In addition, I include a summary of the analyses of two specimens of Lear's nonsense botanies from my MA thesis, specifically "Phattfacia Stupenda" (*NSSBA*) and "Queerifloria Babyöides" (*LL*).

Darwin's theories of evolution, natural selection, and humanity's place in nature powered a cultural shift in the nineteenth century. My project re-examines Lear's place in that cultural shift in Victorian aesthetics and culture, one that sparked a migration from the patterns of Romantic thought on issues like natural theology to the scientific naturalism associated with the rise of evolutionary theory. This in turn had profound effects on ideas of imperialism, sexuality, and the self that Victorian literature and visual culture attempted to address. A clearer understanding of this shift guides understanding of evolutionary theory's influence on Lear and other Victorian and later writers. Although this dissertation is primarily focused on Lear's images and texts and their symbiotic production of nonsense through counterfactual taxonomies, a certain amount of research and critical work was required examining biographical influences and events that inevitably informed the theoretical framing of my analysis of Lear's work. Maintaining a delicate balance between the focus on his work and his biography has been prevalent in my thoughts during this dissertation's progress, but Lear's work cannot realistically be interrogated without a certain cognizance of his biography. Therefore, a discussion of several aspects of his personal biography, including his relationship with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, is appropriate at this juncture.

Queered examinations of the works of such artists and writers as Tennyson, Bulwer Lytton, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB), Ruskin, Wilkie Collins, etc. carry resonance

for my contention that Lear is a unifying and mirroring emblem of nineteenth-century artistic, literary, and societal grappling with the concepts of the individual's and empire's place in nature. Here I would like to discuss the resonances that I see in these studies on Lear's biography as an apt place to continue my re-examination of Lear. Jean-Jacques Lecercle famously discusses the education-reinforcing aspects of nonsense literature, specifically in relationship to the growth of standardised schools.[10] Similarly, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick discusses the effects of certain types of education on masculinity, as well as other areas of nineteenth-century masculinity in *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1985) (*Between Men*). Kosofsky Sedgwick describes homosexual activity at public schools as a thing of childishness that develops later into homophobia.[11] Thus, we see Lear's origins in the middle class, the son of a gentleman, which should have provided a public-school experience. Economic and health reasons made this impossible, so that he was educated at home, denying him the homosocial, and eventual homophobia-instilling experiences of public-school which Kosofsky Sedgwick discusses. Further setting him apart, he then entered the aristocratic world of Knowsley and the patronage of the Earls of Derby. Although he appeared to have spent his life trying to compensate for the lack of a classical education, he nonetheless attempted to perform the role of a classically educated aristocratic genius, completing a sublime journey through Albania as Byron had, among many other performative roles.

Enlarging on the performative aspects of Judith Butler, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2003) discusses performativity in relation to shame and identity.[12] She highlights work in psychology that links the affect of shame to early infancy when the infant has become able to recognise the face of the primary caregiver. Kosofsky Sedgwick associates this interruption in the child-care-giver-child mirror with the loss of social interaction and loss of feedback in which the infant/child receives cues on, and the recognition of, its social behaviour.[13] She links this early shame affect closely with the development of identity, as follows:

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[10] Jean-Jacques Lecercle, *Philosophy of Nonsense: The Intuitions of Victorian Nonsense Literature*, (London: Routledge, 1994), 4.
[11] Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 176–77.
[12] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2007), https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nuig/detail.action?docID=710077.
[13] Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*, 36. Here she is paraphrasing Michael Franz Basch.

> The conventional way of distinguishing shame from guilt is that shame attaches to and sharpens the sense of what one is, whereas guilt attaches to what one does… In the developmental process, shame is now often considered the affect that most defines the space wherein a sense of self will develop.[14]

She next associates identity to performativity by writing that 'Shame is the affect that mantles the threshold between introversion and extroversion, between absorption and theatricality, between performativity and – performativity'.[15]

Kosofsky Sedgwick discusses the work of Henry James to illustrate her framework in a comparatively hopeful and constructive functionality of shame and its association with performativity.[16] Applying this theory of *constructive* shame to Lear produces a fruitful line of thought. Lear was relegated to the care of his vastly elder sister Ann at a very young age, perhaps because his mother, after 18 or 19 children, was weary with motherhood. This interruption in the relationship with his caregiver may have exacerbated his shame response. Combined with the effects of his sexual orientation and his epilepsy, which was often seen as a side-effect of masturbation, this shame-identity-performativity route offers an avenue for discussing the various roles that Lear reclassified himself into and performed throughout his life and career, as well as his engagement with the rejection of the gender binary expressed in "The Scroobious Pip", which I explore in the final chapter.

Kosofsky Sedgwick places a positive aspect to the performativity associated with 'queer', which I argue is applicable to Lear. In all of the various roles that he performed in a kind of counterfactual taxonomy of himself, Lear was engaging with his true self, his *queer* self – one of those whose 'shame is simply the first, and remains a permanent' part of the self.[17] Lear *performed* himself. He *enjoyed* his metamorphoses and transformations, deliberately pursuing the reclassification of self from natural historian, to landscape painter, to nonsense poet, to travel writer, in a series of counterfactual taxonomies. I mark an important self-transformation in the conclusion to the second chapter in a discussion of Lear's contention that his eyesight has deteriorated so much that he cannot continue as a natural history artist, yet proceeds to include minute details in his landscapes, thus creating a counterfactual reasoning behind his move to landscape. Although his transformations were no doubt related to marketing himself and his art, it is obvious from his diaries and letters, in which he engages with weighty philosophical texts and issues of the day, that he found stimulation in

[14] Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching, Feeling*, 37.
[15] Kosofsky Sedgwick, 38.
[16] Kosofsky Sedgwick, 63.
[17] Kosofsky Sedgwick, 65.

the process of self-growth and transformation and his performances of them in his texts, letters, diaries, and social encounters. Additionally, I think a case could be made that these serial reclassifications of self are part of the transition from the legacies of Romanticism to a more externally directed Victorian search for self-identity. That outward focus also coincided with the vast expansion of empire and the obsession with collection, classification, and display – the identification and placement of 'the other'. Identifying 'the other' to define the self is explored in Michael Cronin's *Translation and Identity* (2006). He writes that:

> it is difficult to see how we can define ourselves except in relationship to what we are not. If everything is the same, there is no difference, and if there is no difference, there is no identity. Consequently, difference is essential to the construction of identity.[18]

Given Lear's obsession with taxonomy – the placing of 'the other', as well as his serial counterfactual taxonomies of self, Cronin's 'construction of identity' as contingent on the relationship of the self to that which it is not is an instructive tool for interrogating Lear's and the Victorians' search for self. Was Lear, privileged as a Western European male, able to don these alternative masculinities and embrace the concept of self as multi-faceted? Did this prompt him towards an exploration of Darwin's suggestion of an intricately connected panoply of life on Earth, or Darwin's bank, or the shores of the Jellybolēē, or a gender-binary rejecting Pip?

Lear at various times in his life played the learned naturalist, the drawing master, the Byronic genius landscape artist of ambiguous sexuality, the adventurous English gentleman-traveller in the empire's wilds, the confidant of long-suffering wives of temperamental poet-laureates, the devoted and nurturing caregiver of ailing lovers. With his serial counterfactual taxonomic presentations of self, Lear took full advantage of the alternative masculine roles that were available to the nineteenth-century Western male discussed by critics like Amelia Yeates and Serena Trowbridge in *Pre-Raphaelite Masculinities: Constructions of Masculinity in Art and Literature* (2014). It is in Lear's 'potentially endless re-dressing' of himself that we encounter the contradictions that seemed to have ruled Lear's life *and* the nineteenth century. Several chapters in Amelia Yeates' and Serena Trowbridge's *Pre-Raphaelite Masculinities: Constructions of Masculinity in Art and Literature* (*PRM)* touch on such contradictions in the presentation of masculinity in the PRB movement. In the third chapter of *PRM*, "The Hallucination of the Real: Pre-Raphaelite Vision as a crisis of Romantic

[18] Michael Cronin, *Translation and Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 50.

Masculinity", Gavin Budge presents a masculinity that directly contradicts the prevailing hierarchical social order. He writes of Pre-Raphaelitism as a

> … pictorial technique, in the analysis of which hostile mid-Victorian reactions and recent critical revaluation show a high degree of consensus, as a manifestation of a mid-nineteenth-century crisis of masculinity.[19]

While traveling in Albania, Lear had a sudden epiphany after which he determined to enrol in the Royal Academy and become a serious landscape artist, rather than a hack churning out kitschy landscapes for tourists. He returned to England, enrolled in an RA prep-school and received instruction from his friend William Holman Hunt in PRB principles of landscape – obsessive attention to minute detail was always a marker of Lear's artistic work, as is evidenced by his natural history illustrations. Discussing what he considers to be Lear's dubious claims to deteriorating eyesight, Sir David Attenborough in his chapter "Edward Lear and the 13th Earl" in *Art, Animals and Politics* (2016) writes:

> This last reason [deteriorating eyesight], at least, may be doubted by anyone who looks at the marvellous and miniscule detail he gives to the drawings he made in Italy in the following years.[20]

[19] Yeates and Trowbridge, *Pre-Raphaelite Masculinities: Constructions of Masculinity in Art and Literature*, (Farnham, Surrey, UK; Burlington, VT, USA: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), 55.
[20] David Attenborough, "Edward Lear and the 13th Earl of Derby," in *Art, Animals and Politics: Knowsley and the Earls of Derby* (Greensboro, NC: Unicorn Press, 2016), 155.

Figure 7 Oil Landscape. Edward Lear. *The Mountains of Thermopylae* (1852). Photo credit Bristol Museums, Gallery, and Archives.

Lear's attention to detail in PRB style is discussed by Julian Treuherz in his article "Edward Lear in Syracuse" regarding four of Lear's oil paintings including *The Mountains of Thermopylae* (1852) (Figure 7 above), as well as *The City of Syracuse from the Ancient Quarries where the Athenians were Imprisoned BC 413* (1853). Treuherz writes:

> One of the most important lessons Lear learned from Hunt is revealed in a letter he wrote about *The mountains of Thermopylae*, completed shortly before the Syracuse: 'The colouring & its mode of being worked out … are solely and wholly the result of Mr. Holman Hunts [*sic*] teaching, without which Mt. Oeta would probably have been done in black & white – the sky & sea grimy grey, and all the rest umber'. It is the bright colour and high key of both the Thermopylae and the Syracuse that represent Hunt's principal contribution to Lear's achievement, in noteworthy contrast to the more restrained palette of Reggio or Venosa.[21]

It should be noted that Lear's presence in Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience* was not an accident of his name being on the cover of the abandoned music on the floor of the painting. Lear had a long and extended relationship with William Holman Hunt and the PRB, calling himself not a brother, but a son, and therefore calling Hunt 'Daddy'.[22] In fact, Hunt and Lear shared lodgings at Clive Vale Farm near Fairlight (Tennyson's home) while Lear worked on the Syracuse painting and PRB techniques, and Hunt worked on *Our English Coasts* (1852) and learned Italian from Lear. At one point, they played hosts to Millais and William Michael Rossetti, who assisted Lear with editing proofs for *Calabria.*[23] Lear indicated a solidarity with the democratising principles of the PRB, and was often incensed on their behalf for the scathing attitude and reviews of the Royal Academy's reception of PRB work and later wrote to thank Ruskin for his defence of the PRB.[24] Yet in another contradiction typical of both Lear and the nineteenth century, the PRB aesthetic and method never sat comfortably with him. In a letter to Hunt while working on a painting of Windsor for the new Lord Derby, he writes of the impossibilities of PRB method:

> Utterly impossible to do this view on a strictly P.R.B. principle, – for supposing a tree is black one minute – the next it's yellow, & the 3rd green: so that were I to finish any one part the whole 8 feet would be all spots – a sort of Leopard landscape.[25]

[21] Julian Treuherz, "Edward Lear in Syracuse," *The Burlington Magazine* 144, no. 1194 (September 2002): 536–37.
[22] Noakes, *Edward Lear: The Life of a Wanderer*, 98.
[23] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of* Art *and Nonsense*, 208.
[24] Lear, *Edward Lear's Letters*, 261.
[25] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 211.

Despite the closeness of their former domestic arrangements, Lear's relationship with Hunt became increasingly strained over the years; he was deeply critical of Hunt's treatment of Annie Miller – the model, and Hunt's mistress, for *The Awakening Conscience* – whose face Hunt later scraped off the painting.[26] Lear wrote in his diary 28 October 1858: 'Much conversation with H.H. on certain subjects – greatly disturbing to myself – thereof I say little to him'.[27] Lear expressed more and more frustration with Holman Hunt's increasingly evangelical religiosity, as well as with the dogmatism of PRB method and other members of the Brotherhood.[28] Lear, with his contradictory attitude to PRB members and methods, was an ambivalent member of the movement. He *attempted* to classify himself as a PRB, but his performance of that role was atypical of the fervour he normally gave to his other roles. What he evidently felt was the dogmatic and immoderate methods and philosophy of the PRB movement were not a natural part of his *self.* After all, Lear had not himself invented this new taxonomy—painting method—of the PRB school. It is possible, too, that Lear was influenced by the hypocrisy inherent to Hunt's relationship with Annie Miller.

Taxonomy and performance were potent tools in Lear's practice of subversion and parody. The alignment of his personal biography and work with Kosofsky Sedgwick's, Yeates', and Trowbridge's alternative and contingent performed masculinity and the turn to a more externally directed Victorian search for self are manifest in his diaries, letters, art, and texts. Because of my contention that Lear and his search for the self are emblematic of nineteenth-century questions of the same, re-examining Lear's reclassifications of self assists in the humanities' engagement with the development of this philosophy and its literary representations and expressions. Lear's reclassification and performance of himself were both contradictory and yet ontologically cohesive. Lear's performance of various iterations of himself mirrors his subversion of nineteenth-century hierarchies of nature and empire through his counterfactual taxonomies in his nonsense works and the iterations of self in his personal biography. Counterfactuality was a prominent trend in nineteenth-century thought. Coupled with the mania for collection, classification, and display, I posit that his increasingly nuanced counterfactual taxonomies served as a vehicle for Lear's problematisation of the self and empire's place in nature. Having outlined Lear's biography and works, I turn now to a discussion of the research questions posed by this dissertation.

[26] Uglow, 271–72.
[27] Uglow, 271.
[28] Uglow, 312, 335.

Discussion of research questions

Lear has often been called the father of modern nonsense literature, a moniker that has obscured his other personas. Indeed, genre specification is a complicated subject in Lear studies because of the vast nature of his body of work, an output that ranges from natural history illustration, to music, watercolour and oil landscapes, travel literature, and nonsense literature. I have addressed two of his works in travel literature in a journal article and a conference paper.[29] However, this dissertation focuses on Lear's work in natural history and nonsense. These include key examples (noted above) of Lear's works that encompass and best represent the classificatory-taxonomic foundations of his nonsense. Because of the consistency in counterfactuality, reclassification, and structural elements across the various forms of Lear's nonsense, I have utilised a catholic approach in choosing these various forms for my analyses.

Additionally, within those analyses, I make frequent reference to Lear's work in natural history, emphasising the link between these two genres via the taxonomical foundations inherent in his nonsense and natural history work. Indeed, some of Lear's titles highlight this taxonomical link, with their emphasis on specific classifications: *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets* (1871). It is easy to imagine Lear's nonsense in a series of limitless taxonomic entries: *Nonsensicus syllabarium*, or *Nonsensicus fabula*, perhaps. Lear would have accompanied any such textual taxonomies with copious illustrations of those creations which were both a product and fuel of and for his fertile taxonomic imagination. Many scholars have discussed the indivisible nature of Lear's texts and images: they enjoy a symbiosis that ground the supposition of the impossible worlds and creatures they propose. The images and texts work in tandem. Akin to a musical score, if an element is removed, the whole collapses. With this concept in mind, the methodology of the analyses in my dissertation explores Lear's nonsense texts-images as inseparable. The elements of each piece – text and image – result in more than just the sum of their parts. At times text and image are diametrically opposed, at others a subtle skewing occurs. The viewer is sometimes sent in lines that are just off-centre yet at other times are in an entirely different

[29] See Emily Tock, "The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo's Journey: Destinations of the Romantic and the Gothic in Edward Lear's Journals of a landscape painter in Albania &c (1851)," *Oxford Research in English* Issue 10 (Autumn 2020); Emily Tock, "Chasing the Monster: Recreating the Gothic in Edward Lear," (British Association for Victorian Studies Annual Conference 2019: Victorian Renewals, University of Dundee, August 2019), https://scvs.ac.uk/index.php/bavs-2019/#:~:text=SCVS%20is%20delighted%20to%20be.

direction – through those parts that sum up to something far more than their whole. I suspect this is why Lear's impossible worlds and creatures continue to astound, intrigue, and garner such analysis. Therefore, when this dissertation analyses a piece of nonsense, there is an assumption of this symbiosis of image and text. This has resulted in an image-heavy dissertation. Considering that even Lear's landscape sketches include completely random *textual* asides having nothing to do with colour, texture, etc., I feel this is the only way to ken the *sense* of Lear's nonsense.

With the analyses of these key nonsense texts and images, my project acts as a reassessment of Lear's role in the cultural debates prompted by the development of evolutionary theory. What role did Edward Lear, as a natural-history illustrator, landscape-artist, travel-writer, and nonsense-poet play in the aesthetic and cultural debate over scientific naturalism and natural theology, the power relationships in Orientalism, Irish Orientalism, and expansion of empire? How does the trajectory of Lear's work as an artist inform the history of scientific illustration and Victorian print culture? As an author and artist who maintained a presence in scientific, artistic, and imperial cultural networks both at home and abroad, how can Lear's work inform us about the relationship between evolutionary theory and networked hierarchies of empire and the self? How do these hierarchies inform discussions of post coloniality and ecocriticism in the nineteenth century, especially the power relationships that resulted in the concomitant expansion of empire and classification of colonial resources? How do Lear's nonsense texts and images inform our conceptions of the development of the self and the individual in Western literature and society in the context of that Victorian history of imperial expansion and acquisition of colony and resources?

With these questions posed, this dissertation now proceeds to a discussion of previous critical work on Lear as an author and artist in the literature review. Subsequently, due to the influence that hierarchies of imperial, colonial, and domestic natural history networks played in Lear's life and works, I position this dissertation's stance on the relationships between imperialism, colonialism, and taxonomy and their relevance to my research. This is then followed by a discussion of the theoretical framework that evolved in my analysis of this nineteenth-century author's texts and images and the key role I see them playing in Victorian concepts of the natural world and *Homo sapiens*' place in that world. Finally, a brief overview of the core chapters of the dissertation concludes this introductory chapter.

Literature review

My thesis is that Lear reclassified the nineteenth century, creating and recreating a series of counterfactual taxonomies of the self, humanity's place in nature, and imperial hierarchies and social networks in his texts and images that problematise questions of empire in nature and the self. In early work like "Miss Maniac", he reclassified some of the legacies of Romantic verse regarding humanity and nature to reflect these changing Victorian attitudes. These attitudes were influenced by a new symbiosis between text and image in print culture, and Lear used his understanding of this emerging culture in his own symbiosis between text and image. He proceeded to reclassify natural history, which mirrored his personal views on questions of humanity's place in nature, the effects of empire on nature, and where the networks of empire and nature placed the individual, in his play with the hierarchies and taxonomies that governed nineteenth-century imperial society. In his later nonsense work, Lear returned to natural history and reclassified again his views on these issues that meshed with the compelling arguments of Darwin's theories on natural and sexual selection to answer these weighty nineteenth-century questions. Through a process of positing impossible creatures in impossible worlds, Lear engages readers of his nonsense with ideas that are counterfactual to reality, highlighting the threshold spaces between his images and texts to challenge the hierarchies of knowledge, society, natural history, and empire.

For the majority of the twentieth century, Lear was often overlooked in favour of nonsense authors like Lewis Carroll and T. S. Eliot, although his role in the development of nonsense literature has recently enjoyed a renaissance in literary criticism. Prior to that renaissance, Vivien Noakes' two editions of *Edward Lear: Life of a Wanderer* (1968, 2006) was the seminal work, or Lear bible. Jean-Jacques Lecercle in *Philosophy of Nonsense* (1994) addressed the mythic and Bakhtinian aspects of nineteenth-century nonsense literature overall, including a direct address of this in Edward Lear's works.[30] In 2015, Daniel Brown's *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense* provided new work on Lear's significance in the arena of the Romantic era's collaboration in literature and science. The true renaissance in Lear criticism began with a 2016 collection of Lear essays, *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*. This collection provided commentary on Lear and Romantic formulations on man and nature, Lear's influence on later authors such as Eliot and Auden,

[30] For background discussion on literary nonsense, see also Elizabeth Sewell, *Field of Nonsense* (Funks Grove, IL: Dalkey Archive Press, 2015); Susan Stewart, *Nonsense: Aspects of Intertextuality in Folklore and Literature* (Baltimore, 1979). Sewell's work was originally published in 1952 by Chatto & Windus. My research engages with the Bakhtinian, subversive elements seen in Lecercle, Minslow, Heyman, etc.

and Lear's curious place in British psychoanalysis. Jenny Uglow's *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* in 2017 drew light on the stifling atmosphere Lear inhabited in a heteronormative nineteenth-century empire, as well as offering exhaustive access to and insight into Lear's correspondence and artistic work. In direct contrast to the foundational and biographical emphasis of Noakes' work, Sara Lodge's *Inventing Edward Lear* (2019) provided a ground-breaking, thematically organised exploration into Lear's work through the analysis of the synaesthesia of his musical and poetic works, as well as the first extended exploration of his association with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Lodge also delighted readers by including links to audio recordings of performances of Lear's musical settings. In the summer of 2020, a special issue of Victorian Poetry featuring new work on Edward Lear covered such topics and food, happiness, and colour in Lear's works. Just a year prior to this special issue journal, James Williams in his *Edward Lear* from the *Writers and their Work* series, wrote that his

> … book is offered as an introductory study of Lear, but even more as a *reintroductory* [author's emphasis] study, an invitation to look again, and more closely, at a poet we might think we know and around whom various easy and comfortable interpretations have come to accrue over time.[31]

My dissertation provides the scrutiny that Williams suggests, and this review of literature commences with critical works on Lear and nonsense literature. Since Lear's place as a transitional actor in the legacies of Romantic Orientalism and his career in natural history are significant aspects of my dissertation, this literature review also addresses several different thematic topics of relevance to my Lear study: science and literature, Romantic literary trends, colonialism, and ecocriticism.

I address these four main thematic topics in the literature review. I begin with works significant to Lear in the realm of science and literature. In her work *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (3rd ed. 2009), Gillian Beer explores the issues of evolutionary science and Darwin's influence on the nineteenth-century novel.[32] In *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* (2006), Jonathan Smith explores the role of Darwin's evolutionary theories and opposing natural theology texts on Victorian visual culture, with detailed analyses of *On the Origin of Species* (1859), *The Descent of Man,* and *Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871), *The Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872) and Darwin's flower and barnacle monographs. Smith's work

[31] James Williams, *Edward Lear*, Writers and Their Work (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018), 2.
[32] Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 3rd edition (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

discusses the history of scientific illustration in natural history which coincide with Brown's work on developmental issues in Lear's illustrations and informed my analyses of the significance of Lear's symbiosis in image and text.

Next, I turn to Thomas Moore's influence on Lear, which has been noted by many critics such as Noakes, Uglow, and Lodge. However, I felt that a deeper exploration of Moore's Irish Orientalism was warranted because of the strong Irish echoes in Lear's early unpublished works, as well as his later Orientalist nonsense and my emphasis on the Irish Orientalism I see at play in works like "Miss Maniac". Hence, I discuss Jeffery W. Vail's *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron & Thomas Moore* (2001), as well as Leith Davis' *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender: The Construction of Irish National Identity*, 1724-1874 (2006) and *Joseph Lennon's Irish Orientalism: Literary and Intellectual History* (2004).

After discussing works on Romantic Orientalism, the third thematic topic I address is colonialism. Though they concentrate on Lear's Indian nonsense, they nevertheless informed my approach to Lear and colonialism. These include Sumanyu Satpathy's chapter from *Children's Literature and the fin de siècle* (2003): "Lear's India and the Politics of Nonsense" (2003), Martin Dubois' "Edward Lear's India and the colonial production of Nonsense" (2018). I also include a short discussion of Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (2007).

Finally, the fourth thematic topic significant to Lear that I explore is ecocriticism. Jesse Oak Taylor's article asks, "Where is Victorian Ecocriticism?" (2015). She addresses the supposed dearth of Victorian ecocriticism, and her work provides signposts to Lear's place in the development of Victorianist ecocriticism. Keeping in mind John Buell's caveat in *The Future of Environmental Criticism* (2005) that distinctions between first and second wave ecocriticism 'should not, however, be taken as implying a tidy, distinct succession', I move on to discuss Jonathan Bate's *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (1991).[33] This work provides a firm basis from which to explore Lear in an ecocritical sense, given the importance of Romantic thinking in the figurations of his nonsense. Ashton Nichols' second-wave *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting* (2011) is another vital work which engendered valuable insight into

[33] John Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 17.

my placement of Lear in the story of ecocriticism and Victorian thought, one which to date has not been addressed by Lear scholars.

Despite the current gulf between the humanities and the hard sciences, previous generations of scholars have enjoyed, even depended symbiotically, on a close collaboration between the natural sciences and the *belles lettres*. Brown in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists* immediately begins re-examining this history of inter-disciplinary collaboration between the great scientists and poets of nineteenth-century Britain with a wide range of revolutionary thinkers in the hard sciences. These men were scientists but were also devoted and life-long writers of verse. Moving from James Clerk Maxwell and Edward Lear, to John Tyndall, and ending with James Joseph Sylvester, Brown provides discussion on the collaboration between these and other nineteenth-century physicists, astronomers, anatomists, and mathematicians and the great Victorian poets. Significantly, Brown's discussion of Edward Lear's work includes not merely natural history but also the discussion of the poetry of two physicists, William Rowan Hamilton and James Clerk Maxwell. Brown presents these two physicist-mathematician-astronomers as professional-classical foils to Lear's 'liminal' work in natural history and nonsense.[34] Pairing Lear with the development of the role of the imagination in theoretical physics is a theme in Brown's work and contributes a great deal to Lear nonsense scholarship, as does his discussion of Lear and ontology and the development of the natural history text.

Brown also discusses Lear's limerick illustrations, which reflected the comparative anatomy of Richard Owen and the 'increasingly minimal and monochromatic, functionalist and diagrammatic' illustrations in Darwin's works.[35] While Brown touches briefly on the research gap in scientific texts and images, he alludes to Jonathan Smith's work in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*.[36] In addition, he explores Lear's 'play' with 'mock social science' in the limericks, as well as his 'mock' natural history in the alphabets and nonsense botany. He next delves into the phenomena of the renaissance of nonsense in nineteenth-century literature and science.[37]

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[34]Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 10. T. S. Eliot later ponders the idea of liminality and gaps in poetry: 'The poem's existence is somewhere between the writer and the reader', in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England* (21).
[35] Brown, 23.
[36] Brown, 11; Jonathan Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 94.
[37] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, 14-15.

Coinciding with Brown's 'play' theory, Williams and Bevis write in the introduction to *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*: 'This is play with, and play as rules: nonsense poetry can be read as playing with the rules of possibility, logic, and sense that order the reality which literature inhabits' and thus provide the overarching theme of the collection of chapters in this work in Lear criticism.[38] Belying the disparate chapters, from fools to food to falls, the volume unites the different topics addressed with the inherent value of Lear's work in the study of English nonsense poetry. It places Lear within the standard of poetry criticism and yet still within the realm of children's literature and its growing place in literary criticism in general. Because this dissertation cannot deal with all aspects of Lear research, I am addressing the chapters of *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* which carry the most resonance in relation to my research goals, that is, topics relating to evolution, patterns of Romantic formulations on man and nature, ontology, gender, and empire.

In "'One of the Dumms': Edward Lear and Romanticism" Michael O'Neill traces Lear's similarities in his longer works to the Romantic poets. O'Neill compares Lear's work to Blake, Byron, Tennyson, and Keats. Indeed, O'Neill provides a thorough and thought-provoking catalogue of the Romantic voices that are to be found in Lear's longer works like "The Owl and the Pussycat" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose". Yet beyond 'subverting' these Romantic voices, the author maintains, Lear 'pierces us with strange relation through rhymes that take a Byronic pleasure in the arbitrary and the contingent'.[39] The Romantic voice in Lear that is explored in this chapter opens up an avenue in Lear criticism that resonates with my research of similar themes in context with the aesthetic and cultural debate spurred by the explosion of both evolutionary theory and visual and print culture in the nineteenth century.

With "Edward Lear and Dissent" Sara Lodge discusses the underexplored basis of Lear's religious underpinnings. Although Lear is quite well-known for having little patience with clerics, Lodge traces this attitude to Lear's upbringing in a dissenter family, caught in a world of Anglican conformity. Connecting Lear's dissenting nature to a home-education, Lodge discusses Lear's 1859 comment in which he mentions reading the autobiography The Life of Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck (1858) and being reminded of his own early

[38] James Williams and Matthew Bevis, eds., *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 3.
[39] Michael O'Neill, "'One of the Dumms': Edward Lear and Romanticism," in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 54, 69.

childhood.[40] Moving on from the dissenter origins of his early career, Lodge explores Lear's refusal to believe in the doctrine of mortal sin and his views on universal salvation as the impetus behind his children's literature being, remarkably for the time, free of 'the evangelism and moral didacticism so prevalent in Victorian literature for children'.[41] Reared in an atmosphere that encouraged critical thinking, Lear was bound to regard the topics of evolution, scholarship on Jewish history and its relation to Christianity, and liberal theological thought as ones to be embraced, Lodge argues. Lodge's chapter provides an enlightening critique on Lear's religious views.

In "Fragments Out of Place: Homology and the Logic of Nonsense" Anna Henchman discusses Lear's work in relation to three sciences which took shape in nineteenth-century Britain: comparative anatomy, the evolution of species, and the evolution of language.[42] Henchman discusses how Lear's nonsense botanies provide 'a glance back to Linnaean structures of taxonomy, and hinting that name-calling need not always clarify things'.[43] "Fragments Out of Place" provides a rich substratum in which to explore further the Victorian pre-occupations with natural history and the evolution of language which Henchman discuses through a Lear lens.

Chapters on Lear aspects in Joyce, Eliot, Auden, Stevie Smith, and John Ashbery speak to the importance of the nonsense genre in recurring generations of English language poets and to Lear's legacy in this genre. The authors of these chapters bring Lear criticism out to a wider sphere, a macrocosm, of the influences in and by Lear in Romanticism, evolution, empire, and sexuality as discussed in the more ontologically and Lear-focused chapters of *Play of Poetry*. The title of this volume, *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, echoes and promotes further research into the importance of the nonsense genre in current poetry criticism and Lear's place in that criticism.

Long before the current flowering of Lear scholarship in volumes like *Play of Poetry*, Jean-Jacques Lercercle's 1994 *A Philosophy of Nonsense* provided a philosophical discussion of nonsense literature, both its roots and its continued trajectory, in the overall criticism of Western literature. Though Lecercle focuses on Carroll's Alice books, he does include Lear

[40] Sara Lodge, "Edward Lear and Dissent," in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 75.
[41] Lodge, 76.
[42] Anna Henchman, "Fragments Out of Place: Homology and the Logic of Nonsense," in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, ed. James Williams and Matthew Bevis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 183.
[43] Henchman, 197.

in some of his discussions of the main thesis of his work. In the introduction, Lecercle states that his thesis is to 'give an account of this mythical power, or force, which the Alice books, and beyond them the works of Victorian nonsense, possess to such a striking extent', that of ubiquitous societal knowledge of these works in an almost infinite variety of forms e.g. Disney's Alice versus the many other film versions.[44] In other words, Lecercle's question is the following: why does nonsense literature continue to have mythical power? Lecercle claims that nonsense has not become dated as has much of Victorian literature because of the predictive aspect of nonsense in the development of linguistics and philosophy.

Lecercle contends that, overall, nonsense is a 'conservative-revolutionary genre', in that it has deep respect for authority that, overall, is aimed at supporting existing power structures. It merely uses different rules to introduce children to those power structures, and it is anti-school while doing so. Victorian nonsense was anti-school in two senses, Lecercle writes.[45] The target audiences for both Lear and Carroll were not targets for Victorian schools (children too young for school and young girls). Additionally, although Carroll went to school (Rugby, then Oxford), he hated it, and did not engage overmuch in teaching when he was at Oxford. And Lear hardly attended school at all.[46] Nineteenth-century nonsense was also anti-textbook in that it did not engage in the typical didacticism of the time. However, no textual analysis is given to show that both Carroll and Lear aimed to uphold existing power structures, except that Alice has learnt to use language as a sophist does by the end of *Through the Looking Glass* or that the 'they' of Lear's limericks are supposedly in danger of becoming as much Heideggerian 'das Man' as they are 'Dasein' in their nonsense. This non-conformist upholding of structures, however, is a logical progression of the 'mythical power' of Lecercle's main thesis, if one assumes that their longevity is due to maintaining those power structures.

Lecercle's arguments that nonsense is an accurately predictive genre and that the importance of its role as a canon of Western literature are well argued via the structural framework through which he presents his argument – the examination of Carroll's work through phonetics, morphology, syntax, and semantics and how these make possible the predictive functions of nonsense literature. In addition, the Bakhtinian aspects of nonsense are thoroughly presented through Carroll's work here by Lecercle; the Bakhtinian theoretical

[44] Lecercle, *Philosophy of Nonsense*, 1.
[45] Lecercle, 217–20.
[46] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 22.

lens which Lecercle discusses provides a natural launch point for Brown's work focusing on Lear's role in the development of nonsense as a genre disruptive of social and political power structures. Lecercle's *Philosophy* builds, too, of the importance on the interplay between language and ontology that influences later nonsense literature. Consequently, Lear's work, as Lecercle writes of Carroll's work, has taken on mythic proportions.

Moving to address biographical works, Jenny Uglow's contribution to Lear scholarship—*Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* (2017)—is a much-needed foray into the increasingly digitised and disparate archives that contain threads of the correspondence, history, and art of Edward Lear. The longest and most detailed of the Lear biographies, this work provides a sympathetic, but honest account of Lear's life, art, writing, and sexuality that is devoid of overly sentimental explanations of his various romantic relationships. Her insight into Lear's less significant relationships, both professional and personal, contains vastly suggestive areas of further research that coincide with and provide a firm basis for my project. An example of one of these avenues includes Lear's relationship with the Hornby family, who were relations of the Earl of Derby and with whom Lear maintained a life-long friendship. Although Lear's preoccupation with his epilepsy has been discussed before, Uglow unites and discusses Lear's fears of passing on his epilepsy and his reading of Darwin, as well as his fear of senility.

Jenny Uglow's work in this newest Lear biography is a long-needed treatment of Lear's life that examines Lear's kind heart, as well as the occasional cruelty he meted out in his life, art, and correspondence. The detailed accounts of Lear's personal and professional relationships, both queered and heteronormative, that Uglow explores in *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* are a vital source for my project on how those relationships figured in Lear's life and work.

Vivien Noakes' earlier biography, *Edward Lear: The Life of a Wanderer* was until recently the most comprehensive and longest biographical treatment of Lear's life. In addition to her critical edition of Lear's works, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse* by Edward Lear (2006 revised edition), and *Edward Lear: Selected Letters* (1988), *Life of a Wanderer*, originally published in 1968, could be described as the foundational text on Lear, a kind of Lear bible. Her sympathetic treatment of Lear's homosexuality (in the 1968 edition) was the first to address explicitly in print the fact of his homosexuality. Moreover, she refused to work in suppositions to make statements as to what extent he pursued physical

intimacies without solid textual evidence, preferring instead to deal with the more cerebral aspects of Lear's various relationships.

Noakes' *Life of a Wanderer* is a tour de-force, and all Lear scholars are indebted to her scholarship. John Batchelor in *The Art of Literary Biography* (1995) argues that biography is an art form, not a science.[47] However, occasionally, Noakes strays into wild supposition, as in the following when speaking of the Stanley family, she writes: 'His exceptionally ugly sister, Lucy, had married the Revd Geoffrey Hornby, an opportunist who accepted his wife's looks, since the marriage gave him the living of Winwic'.[48] Despite such occasional lapses, Vivien Noakes' *Edward Lear: The Life of a Wanderer,* as James Williams and Matthew Bevis write in the introduction to *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, 'has been the standard for the past fifty years' and Noakes herself can be assumed to be the 'founding mother of modern Lear studies'.[49] Her work, like Mt. Athos to Lear himself, is a monument to Lear scholarship.

As potentially foundational as Noakes' work, Sara Lodge's *Inventing Edward Lear* provides a vital scholarly re-examination of Lear's visual and musical work. Her explorations of the influence of Thomas Moore on Lear's musical work echoes as well as informs my chapter on "Miss Maniac". In this chapter, I explore similar Moore themes evident in this early unpublished picture story. Lodge emphasises Moore's influence on Lear's songbook:

> Moore and Haynes Bayly are far more important to Lear's version of Romanticism than Wordsworth, whom he once met but whose poetry he barely knew until late old age.[50]

I also examine Moore as an early influencer of Lear, in conjunction with Moore's similar influence on Byron and the Byronic elements of Lear's early work. However, my work concentrates not just on the Romantic aspects of Moore's influence, but on the radical political element of his effect on Lear's early work. Lodge mentions in a note that Lear writes of running into Moore in 1846 at the office of Moore's publisher Longman's.[51] Discussing Moore's influence on Lear coincides with current work on Moore's influence on nineteenth-century poetry and assists in contextualising Moore's influence on Lear.[52]

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[47] John Batchelor, *The Art of Literary Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 1–8.
[48] Noakes, *Edward Lear: The Life of a Wanderer,* 28.
[49] Williams and Bevis, *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, 13.
[50] *Inventing Edward Lear*, 25.
[51] *Inventing Edward Lear,* 393.
[52] Justin Tonra, *Write My Name: Authorship in the Poetry of Thomas Moore* (Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2020); Justin Tonra, "Of Little Consequence: The Early Career of Thomas Moore," (New Directions in Moore

In addition, Lodge examines ontological questions in Lear's work that echo and support this extremely important question as manifested in Lear's work. Though she does not incorporate the classification and taxonomical issues in the detail with which I discuss them, Lodge also links Lear's work to Darwin and Jonathan Smith's *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* in her discussion of Lear's natural history work with John Gould. Lodge's gargantuan work does not have the room to explore Gillian Beer's works on Darwin; my dissertation will cover this lack.

The penultimate Lear-specific work I examine is James Williams' Lear volume in the Northcote House *Writers and their Work* series from 2018. Earlier in this review, I quoted Williams, that his work was '*reintroductory*' [his emphasis]. This self-appellation for his work on Lear proves apt since he reintroduces the reader to a Lear who is infused in Romantic philosophy, imagery, and linguistic phrasing. Lear uses, reuses, parodies and mimics beloved authors, and Williams analyses the uses, reuses, and parodic re-shapings of Lear's nonsense verse. Williams groups his analyses into four chapters: "Beginnings", "Odd Beasts", "The Scroobious Traveller", and "The Morbids". For the purposes of my dissertation, Williams' chapters on beasts, travellers, and Lear's "Morbids" are the more relevant ones, and I skip over the first chapter on "Beginnings" in favour of these chapters. In "Odd Beasts", Williams speaks of an important difference in Lear's relationship to the animals he draws to the other early nineteenth-century natural history illustrators. He writes of Lear's insistence on drawing from live specimens:

> His sketches and plates from this period show a fascination not only with the problem of how to represent the surfaces of animal bodies, but also with what it meant for them to be fully alive: their personality, behaviour, and oddities.[53]

Williams explores a subject that I explore in my dissertation: the blurring of the lines between species, which points to Darwin's 'web of life'. However, later Williams writes that Lear maintains the gap between the world of humans and the other animals by representing humans as cartoons and animals in realistic mode, as in the preparatory work Lear did during his work on the parrots at the Zoological Gardens in London. I would argue that this gap narrowed even further and explore this in my analysis of the "Young Lady of Wales".

Research, Queen's University Belfast, 2013), http://hdl.handle.net/10379/3422; Francesca Benatti, Sean Ryder, and Justin Tonra, eds., *Thomas Moore: Texts, Contexts, Hypertext*, Imagining Ireland 24 (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2013).

[53] Williams, *Edward Lear*, 48.

The final chapter of Williams' work is "The Morbids", which analyses the various tracings of Tennyson, Moore, and other Romantic poets on Lear's work. In addition, Williams discusses the inherent violence and the suicide theme in the limericks and further expounds on this violence theme in "Mr & Mrs Discobbolos", pointing to similar themes in other Victorian children's verse. His analysis of the "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" notes the similarities to Pope, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, but ultimately maintains that "The Dong" most echoes Moore's "The Lake of the Dismal Swamp" in structure and plot. Williams ends his offering to the Lear altar with a discussion of Lear's last journal entry in December of 1887 in which Lear speaks of ordinary daily habits as well as the fact that 'I have no light or life left in me'.[54] Williams writes that Lear's poetry is:

> is among the most deeply truthful and sensible in the language in its acknowledgement of the irreducible, unfathomable ambivalence of emotional life. Reflected in his poems Lear allows us to see, and to take delight in, the fact that most of the time we do not really know what we feel, not know the half of it … even when we feel we know.[55]

With these words, Williams perhaps underscores the importance of Lear's preoccupation with the ontology of the individual in the text of that ultimate scroobious creature, 'The Scroobious Pip'. I discuss this question of ontology to which Williams points here in the chapter "Darwinian Nonsense", exploring that 'scroobiousness' which preoccupied Lear so much right to the end of his own battle with ontology, not long after this last diary entry and which Williams uses to conclude his book.

Finally, in summer 2020 during the brief summer respite in the course of the pandemic, *Victorian Poetry* issued a special edition devoted to new work on Edward Lear.[56] Edited by Ben Westwood and Jasmine Jagger with an afterword by Jenny Uglow, the issue examined the many pathways that Lear scholarship has taken in the last several years. Issues ranging from happiness, silence, and colour, to food as well as comparative studies with Muldoon and Dickens graced this homage to the work that is nascent in Lear scholarship. For the purposes of this dissertation, in Jagger's introduction and Williams' article "There Was An Old Person of Chroma", there are interesting threads that explored structural aspects which align with my formulations on counterfactual taxonomies. Additionally, Masud's "Lear's Leftovers" provides a discussion on Lear's habit of integrating wildly disparate parts

[54] Williams, *Edward Lear,* 141.
[55] *Edward Lear,* 141–42.
[56] Jasmine Jagger and Westwood, Benjamin, eds., *Victorian Poetry: Special Issue New Work on Edward Lear*, vol. 58 Number 2 (West Virginia University Press, 2020), https://muse.jhu.edu/issue/43110.

into a nonsense whole in regard to food, which provides an interesting expansion on this aspect of Lear's work which is usually confined to natural history. Lodge's exploration of the relationship between symbol and letter in "'One of the Dumms': Lear, Deafness and the Wound of Sound" resonates with the analysis of the phonemic significance of Lear's alphabets that I explore in the chapter on natural history. Although the remaining articles do not directly affect this dissertation, they nevertheless contribute welcome discussion on aspects of Lear scholarship that had not been explored.

Moving on to the first group of thematic works – science and literature – that I examine, Gillian Beer's work underscores the hard-to-fathom effect that evolutionary theory had on Western literature. Beer in *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, uses an analogy to the pre- and post-Freudian world to emphasise the cataclysmic effect that evolutionary theory had on Western society. Just as it is impossible to formulate theories and analyses devoid of Freud in a post-Freudian world, so too it is impossible to do the same with evolution and a post-Darwinian world.[57] She emphasises the world-changing effects of evolutionary theory, but she also emphasises that evolution, even before Darwin's publication of *On the Origin of Species* (1859), was a potent factor in nineteenth-century literature and the natural history networks, which Lear frequented through his illustration work. Beer's research in this area highlights, not unlike Brown's work in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, the potent networking of science and literature throughout the nineteenth century: '… scientists themselves in their texts drew openly upon literary, historical and philosophical material as part of their arguments'.[58]

Beer's discussion of the role of imagination in both science and literature is highlighted in her treatment of Eliot's use of scientific language and thought in *Middlemarch*, and which is echoed by Brown's similar emphasis in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists* in his sections on Lear and Maxwell.[59] Moreover, as a link back to Romantic influences on Lear, Maureen N. McLane in *Romanticism and the Human Sciences: Poetry, Population, and the Discourse of the Species* (2000) discusses the Romantic imagination in her exploration of the term 'species of poetry' used by Coleridge, Shelly, and Wordsworth, and which would have influenced Lear's work.[60] In addition, Beer's discussion of Darwin's theories on variability,

[57] Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 5–6.
[58] Beer, 5.
[59] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 7, 142–45, 153.
[60] Maureen N. McLane, *Romanticism and the Human Sciences: Poetry, Population, and the Discourse of the Species* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 28–35, 114–15,

diversity, and taxonomy are also presented through *Middlemarch* and suggest similar areas of research in Lear's contrary use of places and contrary behaviour showing how diverse people can be, as well as his use of animal parts/behaviours grafted onto people. In *Darwin's Plots*, Beer brings Darwin's writing back to its place of origin in the nineteenth century, a place where literature and science are brother disciplines, a partnership with much to teach us in our post-Freudian and post-Darwinian language and tradition, a tradition that perpetuates a wide-gulf between the humanities and the sciences and which requires the 'extrapolation and translation' of a Stephen J. Gould for 'laymen'.[61] From Beer's seminal work on Darwin, I examine Darwin's work as both literary text and visual text in relation to Lear's work to explore the revolutionary context that evolution wrought in nineteenth-century visual and print culture.

In the foreword to *Darwin's Plots*, George Levine speaks of Beer's work as 'thoroughly multidisciplinary'.[62] This description works well for Jonathan Smith's *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* as well. Smith's monograph on the relationship between Darwin's texts and his illustrations, as well as the relationship of Darwin's works to Victorian visual culture, brings a third element to the idea of 'multidisciplinary' studies, that of image and all that that term implies, from communications studies to art history. Smith explores W. J. T. Mitchell's 'imagetexts' from *Picture Theory*.[63] Additionally, Smith traces the significance of Darwin's chosen images, his manipulation of those images that furthered the argument for his theories, the variety of the different print technologies he utilised, as well as their significance in the debate in Victorian Britain on the aesthetics of literature, art, and culture. Presenting Darwin as a proponent for scientific naturalism in the illustrations of his publications, Smith uses John Ruskin's work and philosophies as an almost single-handed opposing argument for natural theology's rejection of what it saw as the materialist message of scientific naturalism. The multi-disciplinary research into Darwin's texts/images and their place in nineteenth-century literature that Smith presents in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* engenders vast areas for my research into Lear's evolution as an artist in Victorian visual and literary culture in the context of the revolutionary aspects that evolutionary thought wrought on the nineteenth century.

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http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nuig/detail.action?docID=144669. McLane later writes: 'Shelley *imagines* the future; he defines the future as that which must be imagined', 114.

[61] Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 4.

[62] Beer, xi.

[63] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 2.

The next thematic topic I address in this literature review is Lear and Romanticism. As I discuss in the chapter on Lear's Orientalist Romanticism, the influence that both Moore and Byron had on the development of Lear's sense of parody was enormous. Because of the extremely close relationship between Moore's and Byron's Irish-Orientalist leanings, the first work I address in this section is Jeffery Vail's *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron & Thomas Moore*. In the introduction to this work, Vail writes that 'The self-conscious and deliberately artificial qualities of many of Moore's lyric poems exercised a lasting influence upon Byron's own innovative subversions of the conventional Romantic lyric'.[64] Vail also explores Moore's and Byron's political verse which satirised the Prince Regent and his behaviour towards Ireland, Catholic Emancipation, and his mistress Maria Fitzherbert. Vail discusses at length Byron's reaction to and defence of Moore's Little Poems, evidenced in *Hours of Idleness*, including the stanza "To the Earl of [Clare]", which I also analyse in the first chapter.[65]

Also important to the Lear-Moore-Byron explorations of my dissertation is Leith Davis' *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender: The Construction of Irish National Identity, 1724-1874*, as well as Joseph Lennon's *Irish Orientalism: Literary and Intellectual History*. Davis' work provided the world of Moore scholarship with a reawakening to the importance of Moore's *Irish Melodies, and a Melalogue upon National Music* (1820) in the context of their representation of Ireland as a feminised, colonised 'other'. Lennon's work strengthened the link I see between Moore's and Byron's Romantic Orientalism and Irish Nationalism and the subsequent representation of Ireland as an Orientalised other. This Orientalised Irish 'other' in Moore's works like *Lalla Rookh* and some of the *Irish Melodies* are explored in my analyses of "Miss Maniac" and "The Jumblies" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" in the chapter "Sense out of Romantic Nonsense".

Closely linked to Lear's interest in the Orientalised Irish other, is Satpathy's chapter in *Children's literature and the fin de siècle* (2003) "Lear's India and the Politics of Nonsense", which brings me to the theme of colonialism. Satpathy discusses the privileged circumstances in which Lear conducted his Indian travels.[66] Satpathy analyses several of

[64] *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron & Thomas Moore* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 13.
[65] Vail, 35–36; George Gordon Byron, *Byron's Poetical Works*, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge, New, revised, enlarged, with illustrations, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1905), "Hours of Idleness"; "To the Earl of [Clare]" ST 7, 8, https://www-gutenberg-org.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/files/8861/8861-h/8861-h.htm#introduction.
[66] Sumanyu Satpathy, "Lear's India and the Politics of Nonsense," in *Children's Literature and the Fin de Siècle*, ed. Roderick McGillis (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 73.

Lear's Indian nonsense verse and the use of native language that in the end upheld imperial agendas in India, reminiscent of Lecercle's contention that nonsense upholds rather than subverts societal structures and hierarchies.[67] Although Satpathy's comments on the Orientalism of Lear's work are an appropriate critique in his Gramscian framework, I think the issue of timeline is slightly problematic in Satpathy's work vis à vis my research. The vast majority of Lear's nonsense was written before his travels to India; my analysis of Lear's work also relies heavily on the Orientalist aspects of Lear's work, but it is an Orientalism that originates in the Mediterranean and on the Balkan peninsula because Lear's travels in these regions preceded and were vastly more extensive than his time in India.[68]

Another critique of Lear and colonialism is Martin Dubois' "Edward Lear's India and the colonial production of Nonsense" (2018), where he finds instead a satire of Anglo-Indian society in "The Cummerbund" and "The Akond of Swat":

> In this poem, Lear plays off a tradition of writing that drew its laughs from the tendency of Anglo-Indian life and language to appear obscure and even incomprehensible to outsiders. The poem both mocks metropolitan fantasies of Indian exoticism and casts a wry look at the sense of separateness cultivated by Anglo-Indian society.[69]

Dubois also points to the often multi-valent or ambiguous barbs in Lear's nonsense, echoing the critical work of Williams and Bevis in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* (2016):

> In relation to Lear in particular, it seems more accurate to say that "his poetry usually has its eyes on multiple realities at once: both escape into a space with its own nonsense-governed rules, and the tensions, transactions, and counterpoints between that world and the world in which we and the poem live".[70]

Dubois here parallels my theory that Lear's work creates nonsense worlds, a formulation which I discuss further in the theory section of this dissertation.

Mary Louise Pratt in *Imperial Eyes* introduces the term 'contact zones', which informed my reading of one of Lear's works which are analysed in this dissertation: "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World". Pratt writes that 'contact zones' are

> … social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – such as

[67] Lecercle, *Philosophy of Nonsense*, 3–10.
[68] See also Ann C. Colley, "Edward Lear's Anti-Colonial Bestiary," *Victorian Poetry* 30, no. 2 (Summer 1992): 109–20.
[69] Martin Dubois, "Edward Lear's India and the Colonial Production of Nonsense," *Victorian Studies* 61, no. 1 (August 2018): 37.
[70] Dubois, 38. Quoting Williams and Bevis' *Play of Poetry*, 6.

> colonialism and slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today.[71]

These contact zones are evident in the way that Lear moves, and writes, through Albania, but they are also clearly discernible in the relationships that the Four Little Children create in their adventures with the various creatures on their journey, as well as the Victorian aspects of what Lear later terms these 'Four Travellers'.[72] In addition, Pratt's contention of the importance of Linnaeus' *Systema Naturae* (1735) informed the section of my thesis which discusses the transformative infighting in natural history circles regarding classification and taxonomical hierarchies which so affected Lear's satire of natural history and brings me to the final thematic topic of this dissertation.[73]

That topic is ecocriticism, starting appropriately enough with the question Jesse Oak Taylor's article "Where is Victorian Ecocriticism?" asks. Taylor's article answers its own title; her work outlines and discusses in detail the development of Victorianist ecocritical thought. She proposes that Victorian ecocriticism can answer Buell's caveat of the messiness of different waves of ecocriticism by:

> correcting for some of the acknowledged gaps and oversights for which so-called "first wave" ecocriticism has been the celebration of a de-historicized "Nature," idealizing wilderness rather than engaging with urban environments, uncritical and often largely metaphorical absorption of scientific terminology, inadequate attention to race and empire, and, I would add, a fixation and abstractions rather than the dimensions of scale.[74] (877).

Furthermore, she posits that Victorian ecocriticism is absent not in work, but in name, claiming that Victorianists have engaged in a form of unnamed ecocriticism: 'Studies of industrialisation, enclosure, and the relationship between literature and science in the period all have direct bearing on ecocritical concerns'.[75] Taylor admits that her title is an exaggeration, and proceeds to discuss Nichols', Mukharjee's, McDuffie's and Wells' work. However, she does maintain that there is not nearly the corpus in Victorian ecocriticism in

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[71] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London; NY: Routledge, 2007), 7, https://www-taylorfrancis-com.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/chapters/mono/10.4324/9780203932933-7/introduction-criticism-contact-zone-mary-louise-pratt?context=ubx&refId=2a898bf2-058f-4330-95ac-cf2c968febda.
[72] Edward Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, ed. Vivien Noakes (Oxford: Penguin Classics, 2006), 225.
[73] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 15, 24–35.
[74] Jesse Oak Taylor, "Where Is Victorian Ecocriticism?", *Victorian Literature and Culture* 43, no. 4 (December 2015): 877, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1060150315000315.
[75] Taylor, 879.

comparison to Romantic ecocriticism. Additionally, she argues that Victorian concepts of nature are much more closely aligned with the modern concept of nature than are Romantic ones:

> In this regard, the Victorians' conception of nature, society, and their interaction is a far more apt correlate to our own moment than is the more familiar Romantic "Nature." In the Anthropocene, nature is more likely to be an antibiotic resistant microbe, an invasive species, or a superstorm than a harmonious pastoral scene.[76]

This argument, for me, underscored the importance of Lear's influence on post-modern literature, given his alignment with Darwin's stance on the web of life on the entangled bank.

My dissertation includes an exploration of Lear as a transitional figure in the transition from the inheritances of Romantic concepts of nature to materialist concepts prevalent in mid- and late-Victorian thought. However, Lear was steeped in Romantic literature, science, and art by his sisters' tutoring, and these early Romantic influences stayed with him throughout the corpus of his work. Therefore, Romantic ecocriticism must play a major part of any analysis of Lear's place in ecocriticism, Romantic or Victorian. Jonathan Bate's *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* serves as a foundation for exploring Lear and this type of first-wave ecocriticism.

Bate's treatise focuses on Wordsworth's place in Romantic ecocriticism, writing that the book is 'dedicated to the proposition that the way in which William Wordsworth sought to enable his readers better to enjoy or to endure life was by teaching them to look at and dwell in the natural world'.[77] In addition, he argues that 'Wordsworth went before us in some of the steps we are now taking in our thinking about the environment'.[78] Moving through the chapters, Bate compares Wordsworth's version on the importance of finding or identifying with nature to writers like De Quincey, Mill, Clare, and Ruskin. Bate writes that Wordsworth's contribution to early ecocriticism included an exploration of 'the relationship between land and inhabitant' and a consideration of 'the evolving and increasingly disruptive influence of man on his environment'.[79] Although Bate's work was foundational in establishing Wordsworth's place in Romantic ecocriticism, I believe this monograph elides a deeper reading of writers like Erasmus and Charles Darwin, concentrating on the natural history aspects of Erasmus Darwin's *The Loves of the Plants* and his grandson's view that

[76] Taylor, "Where Is Victorian Ecocriticism?", 882.
[77] Jonathan Bate, *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition* (London: Routledge, 1991), 4.
[78] Bate, 5.
[79] 45.

'There is grandeur in this view of life' – his web of life on an entangled bank from the conclusion to *On the Origin of Species*.[80] I explore Lear's interpretation of this theory of Darwin's in my analysis of 'The Scroobious Pip' (1871-1872) analysis in the chapter 'Darwinian Nonsense', but I take a stance more akin to Ashton Nichols' *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting.*

In contrast to Bate's interpretation of Wordsworth's philosophy and echoing Taylor, Nichols traces a transition from first-wave ecocritical thought, writing in the introduction that 'human beings are never cut off from wild nature by human culture. This is the central truth of all ecology. Nothing I can do can take me out of nature'.[81] In addition, he writes that his monograph 'will make clear, the non-human natural house I inhabit is the same place as my fully human, cultural home'.[82] Nichols also traces certain aspects of environmental thought in the Romantics in contrast to that of the Victorians: 'This earlier Romantic version of environmentalism—the one that saw human beings as the problem—revealed serious limitations whenever it was applied to a world in which "nature" and "culture" merged into a unified vision'.[83] Nichols then proposes an ecocriticism that mirrors Victorian evolutionary thought: 'From a Darwinian perspective, human beings are genetically related to every other creature on this shared planet. The human species now needs to roost with its fellow species, no longer to have dominion, no longer to dominate'.[84]

Nichols uses several unique terms in this work beyond 'urbanature' – one of these is the term 'ecomorphism'. On *Romantic Circles Blog* (08/15/2008), Nichols writes that

> Ecomorphism is the antithesis of anthropomorphism. Instead of seeing myself at the center of my world, I can now see my human activity—and yours—in terms of our connectedness to nonhuman life.[85]

In *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism*, he traces the history of this type of thought in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from Blake to Tennyson and the two Darwins. Ranging from homology to the web of life and the subversion of species barriers, Nichols' ecomorphic criticism is an area of Lear scholarship that holds great promise.

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[80] Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, ed. Gillian Beer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 360.
[81] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, xv.
[82] Nichols, xv.
[83] Nichols, xxii.
[84] Nichols, xxii.
[85] Ashton Nichols, "Ecomorphism and Ecoromanticism," blog, Romantic Circles Blog, August 15, 2008, https://romantic-circles.org/blog_rc/ecomorphism-and-ecoromanticism.

Introduction

With the recent publications of *Inventing Edward Lear*, James Williams' Lear volume from *Writers and their Works*, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* (2017), and *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, Lear scholarship is clearly in ascendance. This is due in part to the increase in digitisation projects that have made access to his work and correspondence easier to a wide range of scholars. In addition, an increased awareness of the role that nonsense and the absurd had in the progression of literature and art from the nineteenth century has led to a re-examination of the history of these genres. This has resulted in reawakening interest in Lear's works via the examination of authors such as T.S. Eliot, Joyce, and others, whose clearly stated admiration of Lear has acted as a reminder of Lear's place in Western literature. *Inventing Edward Lear* and *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* are the latest works proposing and engaging in such a re-examination of Lear's works. Daniel Brown's ground-breaking analysis of Lear in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists* expands Lear scholarship beyond the convention of children's literature, the nonsense genre, and the absurd by delineating the clear connection not just between Lear and natural history and physics, but also by the domestic networks of scholarship between literature, the arts, and the hard sciences in the nineteenth century.

To be sure, Gillian Beer and others have discussed these networks since the late 1980s, with the first edition of *Darwin's Plots*. Beer discusses the interdisciplinary networks that created a delta-like environment of lively dialogue between literature and the sciences in the nineteenth century. In *Darwin's Plots* (and in her chapter in *Nature Transfigured* and her monograph *Open Fields: Science in Cultural Encounter* (1999)), Beer urges scholars of literature and science to re-evaluate Darwin as both literary text and as being as heavily influenced by literature as he was as an influencer of literature. Smith's work in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* expands on the interdisciplinary networks at play in the nineteenth century by linking Darwin to the visual and print culture that was revolutionised both by Darwin's work and the proliferation of print technologies in the nineteenth century.

This opens areas of research into the relationship between visual culture and the development of evolutionary theory and its effects on aesthetics, culture, and the arts and sciences in the nineteenth century. Although Darwin as literary text and influencer of print culture and Lear's place in natural history and nonsense literature have been well examined, Lear's role as a transitional figure between Romantic thought patterns on the transcendence of humanity and nature and the ascendance of Darwinian-evolutionary thought in the nineteenth century in the context of visual culture and its relationship with empire, sexuality,

and gender have yet to be explored. In addition, the specific Moore-Byronic political and Orientalist influences which Lennon, Vail, and Davis discuss and which I explore in this dissertation are a new area in Lear studies. The thread of colonialism is a vital connection from natural history to the power relationships in Orientalism, hence the importance of works like Satpathy's, Dubois' and Pratt's to Lear scholarship and specifically this dissertation. Finally, to date, Bate's exploration of Romantic environmental thought and Nichols' work on the transition to ecomorphism have not been explored in relation to Lear and his works. This is where my research on Lear continues the trend of re-examining Lear's work, which Williams proposes in his volume Edward Lear.

The various threads above—natural history, evolution, empire, ecocriticism, Romanticism, ontology, and visual culture—have found a nexus in Lear. Acting as a reassessment of Lear's role in the aesthetic and cultural debates prompted by the development of evolutionary theory, I describe Lear's entire oeuvre as a journey of his reclassifications of self, empire, and nature that problematise Western literature, arts, sciences, and society and the whole-hearted embrace of science and technology; at the same his reclassifications illustrate an unease with how that embrace places humanity, and the individual, outside of nature. Exploring these performative reclassifications or counterfactual taxonomies, then, is the work of this dissertation. However, to place Lear's play with taxonomy in the story of empire, a discussion of my framing of that empire, its colonial possessions, and the classification of those possessions is necessary.

Imperialism, colonialism, and taxonomy in Edward Lear

The nuances of the practical and theoretical differences between imperialism and colonialism share an overarching theme with which I concur. This theme is that these terms are often used synonymously, which can muddy effective analysis. As such, a brief discussion of the nuances of these terms is necessary in grounding the subsequent theoretical framework of the dissertation, as is a short discussion of the roles that natural history and taxonomical classification play as they pertain to the nineteenth-century imperial networks in which Lear was a willing yet questioning member. Basing my discussion on long-established work on imperialism and colonialism from Edward Said to Michael Adas and more recent critics like Amardeep Singh and Walter Mignolo, I point to previous critical work on Lear and imperialism and colonialism before discussing the link between natural history and

empire. Then I address more specifically the links between empire and taxonomy in an ecological imperialism context.

Critics like Said and Adas have established a solid framework for viewing imperialism as the exercise of control by one region's state apparatus over another – subjugated – region's state apparatus, via imposition of colonial populations, economic power, or sovereign power in the acquisition of colonial territories.[86] Thus, colonialism is merely one mechanism in a whole series of the tools of imperial power. This is a foundation that works well in terms of this dissertation's exploration of imperial expansion that emphasised the collection, classification, and display of those resources and people that accompanied territorial acquisition. Singh places the historical trajectory of the modern world in the context of empire's use of colonialism as an expansionist mechanism, be it economic or cultural.[87] Singh points to the fabulous wealth that colonialism provided Western Europe in the nineteenth century, a sentiment echoed by Walter Mignolo's article "Prophets Facing Sidewise: The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference" (2005) in which he writes,

> From the Euro-American perspective (and by that I mean a conceptual structure glued together by a system of beliefs that allowed for the classification, ranking, and knowing of the world) the logic of coloniality is invisible as it is disguised by the lights of modernity's progressive mission. The rhetoric of modernity is based on a logic that is self-justified and self-satisfying; it is to deliver freedom and progress—salvation—to the rest of the world.[88]

Mignolo's linkage to the 'classification, ranking, and knowing of the world' resonates with my research because it recognises the power that classification of knowledge played in the British empire's use of colonialism in its imperial pursuit of power.[89] And classification, of course, is the basis of taxonomy.

Britannica Academic defines taxonomy simply as '… the methodology and principles of systematic botany and zoology and sets up arrangements of the kinds of plants and

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[86] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, 1st ed. (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1978), 123, https://monoskop.org/images/4/4e/Said_Edward_Orientalism_1979.pdf; Michael Adas, "Imperialism and Colonialism in Comparative Perspective," *The International Historical Review* 20 (June 1998): 371.
[87] Amardeep Singh, "Amardeep Singh Syllabus: Syllabus for English 11, Lehigh University," Lehigh University, Autumn 2001, https://www.lehigh.edu/~amsp/eng-11-globalization.htm.
[88] Walter D Mignolo, "Prophets Facing Sidewise: The Geopolitics of Knowledge and the Colonial Difference," *Social Epistemology* 19, no. 1 (January 2005): 111-127, https://doi.org/10.1080/02691720500084325, 112
[89] For an extended discussion of classification and anthropology as a form of colonial knowledge, see Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 3-15, 76-105.

animals in hierarchies of superior and subordinate groups'.[90] The study of the classification of life began in the West with Aristotle's *History of Animals* (4th century BCE). Taxonomy is still a vital discipline in the biological sciences, evidenced by the calls for a return to the study of local taxa in primary and secondary schools, the call to proliferation of taxonomists in proportion to the number of species in the various taxa, and the recent publication of works like Stephen B. Heard's *Charles Darwin's Barnacle and David Bowie's Spiders: How Scientific Names Celebrate Adventurers, Heroes, and Even a Few Scoundrels* in 2020.[91] The *Britannica* definition conspicuously leaves out any mention of the term naming, which is the basic purpose of taxonomy. Taxonomy, in addition to establishing relationships between species, provides a nominal identity to individual species so that scientists may refer to an agreed-upon moniker for a specific species.[92]

Modern taxonomy was established by Carl Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae* (1735). Linnaeus' now-familiar binomial Latin classificatory naming system revolutionised more complicated naming systems like John Ray's (1627-1705), which used long descriptive names that did not reflect the networks of species' relationships as did Linnaeus' system. Linnaeus's system reflected the relationships in hierarchical networks which coincided with the Great Chain of Being, with man perched at the top in God's image. The use of the Latinate naming system was an effort to address the ambiguity that resulted in using vernacular names for species by assigning a definitive name to an organism in a widely understood language.

Linnaeus' hierarchies were adapted by later taxonomists like Georges Cuvier (1769-1832) and Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) in classification systems that were able to accommodate the proliferation of Western knowledge of the natural world resulting from European empires' growing colonial territories. The retention of the hierarchical arrangements of Linnaeus in the classification work of the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries made an obvious and convenient inference, in imperial and therefore also in colonial terms, that the European was the one sitting adroitly atop the Great Chain in

[90] "Taxonomy," in *Britannica Academic*, June 2020, academic-eb-com.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/levels/collegiate/article/taxonomy/110579.
[91] Simon R Leather and Donald L. J. Quicke, "Where Would Darwin Have Been without Taxonomy?", *Bio-Ed Newsletter for Teachers of Biology* 43, no. 2 (December 2010): 51–52; Kevin J. Gaston and Robert M. May, "Taxonomy of Taxonomists," *Nature* 365 (March 1992): 281–82.
[92] For reference, a standard mnemonic device for the correct hierarchy of taxonomy is "King Philip Came Over For Good Soup". See Tony Moore, "King Phillip Came Over for Good Soup" (Dickinson College), worldwide, accessed July 27, 2020 , https://www.dickinson.edu/news/article/552/king_phillip_came_over_for_good_soup.

God's image. This is the foundational relationship of imperialism, colonialism, and taxonomy in my approach to these terms in my dissertation.[93]

Scholars like Sumanyu Satpathy and Martin Dubois have written eloquently on Lear's Indian nonsense, which is an expected inquiry into questions of colonialism and Lear's late nonsense associated with his travels in India.[94] However, because my analyses of Lear's work concentrate on his pre-Indian travel nonsense, I have made the decision to concentrate on his pre-Indian work in my dissertation. I presented work on his Indian nonsense in my paper for the 2019 Dundee BAVS conference, "Chasing the Monster: Retracing the Gothic in Edward Lear".[95] This dissertation, however, contextualises Orientalism as part of an ongoing theme with Lear – he uses a type of Orientalised 'other' throughout his works, from "Miss Maniac" to "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" and "The Jumblies". Orientalism for Lear was coincident with the classification of the 'other'. Like his counterfactual taxonomies, his subversion of the power relationships inherent in Orientalism was developmental, as in its nascent form in "Miss Maniac" to the iterations seen in "The Jumblies" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" and finally to the precise focus on his exploration of Darwinian theories of the interconnectedness of all life on Earth. However, when not using that 'other' in a roughly humanoid form, he cartwheels the agendas of imperial hierarchies. In contrast to those imperial voyages of discovery in search of resources to exploit, Lear problematises the plight of the natural world – plants and the other animals are placed on par, or perhaps above, the plight of the peoples of India, the Balkans, and the Mediterranean, perhaps reinforcing Said's hierarchies of the power relations inherent in colonialism's exploitation of subjugated geographies and peoples he discusses in *Culture and Imperialism* (1994).[96] The research here, then, will present a critique of the nonsense Lear produced before his travel to India, during the mid-century period of expanding Victorian evolutionary thought. His early life in Europe where he was initially immured in the world of natural history and obsessively reading

[93] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York & London: Routledge, 1995), 34, https://www-fulcrum-org.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/epubs/gq67jr33c?locale=en#/6/66[xhtml00000033]!/4/4/1:0.
[94] Satpathy, "Lear's India and the Politics of Nonsense;" Dubois, "Edward Lear's India and the Colonial Production of Nonsense." See a short discussion of Satpathy and Dubois, as well as the darker places Lear's nonsense travelled in chapter 3.
[95] Tock, "Chasing the Monster: Recreating the Gothic in Edward Lear."
[96] Said, *Orientalism*, 7, 132–39, 162–68.

European travel accounts from imperial commissioned voyages in the Pacific and his later travels in the Mediterranean and the Balkan peninsula are where I base my analyses.[97]

Some question the positioning of the Mediterranean and the Balkans in an imperial or colonial framework. However, I contend that this geographical region is a neglected area in imperialist and colonialist discourse. Great Britain maintained colonies in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, including a large community of British nationals on the Greek island of Corfu (part of the British protectorate of the Ionian Isles from 1810 until 1864), and was deeply involved in the Greek rebellion from the Ottoman empire.[98] Alison Games and Sakis Gekas discuss British imperial efforts in the Mediterranean from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries.[99] Maria Todorova, Vesna Goldsworthy and Andrew Hammond have written extensively on the Balkans in a colonial context.[100] Furthermore, Hammond and Goldsworthy both discuss Lear's work in Greece and Albania in the context of the Balkans in a specifically colonial context, highlighting the hierarchies of power inherent in portrayals of Balkan people, literature, art, and politics that are similar to other postcolonial territories, rather than on an extensive presence of a colonial population as seen in India.[101]

Framing the connection between colony, empire, natural history, and taxonomy is necessary for the overall foundation of this dissertation, as well as a vital lens to the correlated relationship between New Zealand, taxonomy, empire, and Lear. James MacKenzie's *Imperialism and the Natural World* (2017) expanded on Alfred Crosby's foundational work in *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900* (1st ed. 1986, 2nd ed. 2015). Both these works provide critical work for my framing of the relationship between empire, colonialism, and taxonomy in this dissertation. In addition,

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[97] Sakis Gekas, "Colonial Migrants and the Making of a British Mediterranean," *European Review of History: Revue Européenne d'histoire* 19, no. 1 (February 1, 2012): 75–92, https://doi.org/10.1080/13507486.2012.643611; Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Empire, 1550-1660* (Oxford: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2008), DOI:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195335545.003.0003.

[98] Andrew Hammond, "The Uses of Balkanism: Representation and Power in British Travel Writing, 1850-1914," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 82, no. 3 (2004): 602–6. Lear was a long-term seasonal resident of Corfu.

[99] Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Empire, 1550-1660*; Gekas, "Colonial Migrants and the Making of a British Mediterranean."

[100] Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, 2009 revised edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Vesna Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania: The Imperialism of the Imagination* (New Haven [Conn.]; London: Yale University Press, 1998); Hammond, "The Uses of Balkanism."

[101] Goldsworthy, *Inventing Ruritania*, 255; Vesna Goldsworthy, "Writing the Balkans," *Wasafiri* 29, no. 2 (April 2014): 1–3, https://doi.org/10.1080/02690055.2014.885284; Hammond, "The Uses of Balkanism," 601–7.

Harriet Ritvo and Ann C. Colley provide critical work on this same relationship, but also provide commentary on Lear's work in this context.

The link between natural history and empire has its roots in the Admiralty's geographical and geological surveys and the economic enterprises of empire. In *Imperialism and the Natural World* (2017 edition), MacKenzie discusses the lack of interdisciplinary work as well as the reflexive Eurocentrism in charting the history of empire and the natural sciences, one which belies the power structures of metropolis and colony. He presents the volume as a way of integrating the work of imperial history and the history of science, marrying commercial concerns with imperial agendas: 'The great scientific achievements of the Cook voyages reflect the interconnections between the pure and the practical, the scientific establishment and the Admiralty'.[102] Additionally, he invokes Darwin's impression of the might of the Royal Navy as a powerful lens on the psychology of imperial feeling in the nineteenth century: 'Charles Darwin wrote that "Seeing, when amongst foreigners, the strength and power of one's own nation, gives a feeling of exultation that is not felt at home"'.[103]

The essays included in the volume review the development of resource conservation as a method of imperial control over colonial holdings and the growth of colonial science and the exploitation of colonial resources that were 'conserved' for imperial use.[104] Encouraging the acquisition of knowledge in the geological and biological sciences, which would materially enhance that exploitation, were direct results of the push for exploration and the expansionist and acquisitive aims of empire as discussed by Said, Singh, and Mignolo. MacKenzie's volume also hints toward the importance that taxonomy would play in the growth of these two sciences. He writes:

> Because of the stress laid on classification, British geology evolved more as a taxonomic exercise than a dynamic science of process, the discipline depended upon graphic representation to convey the array of data with which it dealt. … The emphasis on mapping gave geology a uniquely territorial dimension which accorded well with the interests of both landed property and imperialism.[105]

The critical work of Colley and Ritvo discuss the importance of classification – taxonomy – on empire in the context of nineteenth-century society and literature. In *The*

[102] John M. MacKenzie, *Imperialism and the Natural World* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2017), "Introduction," https://www.manchesterhive.com/view/9781526123671/9781526123671.00005.xml.
[103] MacKenzie, "Introduction."
[104] MacKenzie, Chapter 2 "Colonial Conservation."
[105] MacKenzie, 69.

Platypus and the Mermaid, Ritvo points to the hierarchical aspects of nineteenth-century attitudes towards non-human animals:

> Each of the ways that people imagined, discussed, and treated animals inevitably implied some taxonomic structure. And the categorization of animals reflected the rankings of people both figuratively and literally, as analogy and as continuation.[106]

Similarly, Colley also links the nineteenth-century obsession with the classification of animals with specific reference to Lear: 'He mocks what he was seeing while working with ornithologists, zoologists, collectors, keepers, hunters, breeders, and exhibitors and turns their myth of superiority upside down'.[107] Echoing this link between empire, natural history, and taxonomy, biographies on Lear discuss his avid interest in works by travel writers that mapped lands, plants, and animals of potential and existing colonial possessions: 'Behind these, as he knew from his Knowsley days, ran a lust for possession, labelling, conquest and commerce'.[108] This reinforces Lear's cognizance of the acquisition motivations behind imperial expansion explored in ecological imperialism works like MacKenzie, as well as the work of Crosby.

In *Ecological Imperialism*, Crosby provided groundwork for MacKenzie's stress on the importance of the economic impetus behind imperial expansion, colony, and the growth of the geological and biological sciences. Additionally, Crosby's work establishes the idea of a network of 'Neo-Europes' that replicated climate systems which made it possible for European crops and animals to proliferate in these neo-European colonies.[109] Crosby also emphasises the effect of inadvertent exports from Europe to the colonial holdings – weeds, invasive non-agricultural animals, and bio pathogens.[110] Perhaps more importantly for the purposes of this dissertation, Crosby devotes an entire chapter to the colonial history of New

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[106] Harriet Ritvo, *The Platypus and the Mermaid and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), xii.
[107] Ann C. Colley, *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain: Zoos, Collections, Portraits, and Maps*, 1 edition (Farnham, Surrey, UK England; Burlington, VT, USA: Routledge, 2014), 115.
[108] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 366; Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, Note for 4LC, 506.
[109] Alfred W. Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 6, doi:10.1017/CBO9781316424032.
[110] Crosby, 6–7, 145-94, 217-68; Elizabeth Hope Chang, *Novel Cultivations: Plants in British Literature of the Global Nineteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2019), 11–15, https://search.library.nuigalway.ie/primo-explore/search?query=any,contains,novel%20cultivations&tab=local&search_scope=PRIMO_CENTRAL&vid=353GAL_VUJ&offset=0. Chang discusses the necessary caveat of Crosby's perhaps overemphasis on the uni-directional movement of invasive species, mentioning specifically the rhododendron, which I discuss in chapter 3.

Zealand, which informed my analyses on the importance of New Zealand in Lear's nonsense work "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World".[111]

In the New Zealand chapter, Crosby begins with a quote from Darwin's *The Voyage of the Beagle* (1839):

> The varieties of man seem to act on each other in the same way as different species of animals - the stronger always extirpating the weaker. It was melancholy in New Zealand to hear the fine energetic natives saying, that they knew the land was doomed to pass from their children.[112]

Crosby applies the thesis of his work – that of neo-European colonies with their similarity in climate systems to Europe, which made them ripe for exploitation – specifically to New Zealand. He discusses, as well, another point of his thesis – that the migration of invasive species from region to region almost always followed the course of flow from metropolis to colony, from Europe to the neo-Europes, notating a few exceptions to this predominantly uni-directional flow. This includes the invasion of the Old World house-fly into New Zealand, a creature which was ideally suited to replacing the native blue-bottle fly.[113] These displacements were the reason for Crosby to include the quotation from Darwin at the beginning of the chapter, for he describes correspondence from geologist Julius von Haast which tells of a proverb 'among the Maori that "as the white man's rat has driven away the native rat, so the European fly drives away our own, and the clover kills our fern, so will the Maoris disappear before the white man himself."'.[114] How does Crosby's story of the Old World house-fly invading the native New Zealand blue-bottle fly's territory connect to Lear, taxonomy, and empire? Lear gives this small creature a central role in his nonsense piece "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" (1870), which I explore in detail in the chapter "Imperial nonsense" of this dissertation. The counterfactual taxonomy of Lear's Blue-bottle flies and their interaction with the Four Little Children also provided me an opportunity to explore Satpathy's interrogation of Lear's later racist Indian nonsense, as

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[111] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, Note to 4LC, 506. Many biographers have noted Lear's obsessive reading of travel narratives, both fiction and non-fiction, especially that of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe,* and the logs of Charles Darwin, Henry Walter Bates, John Murray, and William Martin Leak. Vivien Noakes, *Edward Lear: Life of a Wanderer* (London: Sutton Publishing, 2004):10, 37, 291. Jenny Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* (London: Faber & Faber, 2017), 21, 25, 193, 250, 251, 292, 328, 336, 356, 366, 433, 450. Uglow notes that Lear was very interested in New Zealand because of his sister and nephew having emigrated there, and that 'He was still lured by the thought of the South Pacific. At Oatlands he read the new edition of Herman Melville's *Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life,* where savages are noble and Europeans are not' (292), in reference to Lear's nephew's emigration to New Zealand. Joseph Banks was Cook's naturalist on the *Endeavour.*

[112] Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900,* 217.

[113] Crosby, 266.

[114] Crosby, 267.

well as a comparison to Darwin's equally problematic language in *The Beagle* diary. The analysis in this and the other core chapters of my dissertation were conducted via the theoretical formulation of my term 'counterfactual taxonomy'. I define, ground, and discuss this term in the following section.

Theoretical Framework: Performing Counterfactual Taxonomies: Edward Lear and Imperial Collection, Classification, and Display

Recalling Hunt's placement of Lear's setting of "Tears, Idle Tears" in *The Awakening Conscience*, I reiterate my contention that Edward Lear's works carry contradictions that are emblematic of those that proliferated throughout nineteenth-century culture, art, and literature. These contradictions include legacies of Romantic thought on self and sexuality versus rigid hierarchical and binary frameworks of sexuality, materialism, and scientific naturalism. They include, too, natural theology and certainty in an intelligent Creator versus an agenda-less nature. How does Lear's grappling with his own ideas of self and his place in nature, as well as empire's place in nature, reflect a similar grappling in the nineteenth century as a whole? How does this grappling develop over the course of his work? What kind of theoretical framework is best suited to formulating a response to this question?

I approached this theoretical framework of my re-examination of the patterns of Lear's works via a focus on the collection, classification, and display of nature as a foundational mania of the nineteenth century *and* of Lear, reflecting the hierarchical thinking of imperial philosophy and nineteenth-century social thought. Lear, by professional experience and personal preference, was obsessed with collection, classification, and display. Examining his writing in the context of this obsession is paramount to understanding his works in the wider context of nineteenth-century formulations of nature, ontology, and empire.

Given the importance of this serial reclassification in my analyses, I have grappled with a suitable term to use for the expression of these reclassifications and reclassified performances in Lear's work. Initially, I settled on the term 'queering', but the current philosophy associated with this term proved not completely relevant to the scope of what I contend animated Lear's work. In addition, the term 'performativity' also proved inadequate for what I see functioning in Lear's work because of its lack of connection to the re-classificatory nature in Lear's subversion of hierarchies of natural history and empire. I then

moved on to the term 'play', which spurred a second reading of critical works on nonsense literature to settle on a term which adequately describes Lear's animating philosophy.

However, even with these second readings, I was dissatisfied with the terms and concepts already explored by Lear scholars. This is not to say that the ideas and vocabularies discussed in these works are inadequate for Lear, but rather that they are not adequately reflective of *my* analysis of Lear's work. Therefore, after much wrestling with theories from critical works on the philosophy of nonsense and the philosophy of science, I came to the conclusion that I required that which had not been imagined. This is an appropriate situation in which to find myself as a Lear scholar, for the imagining of the impossible is a notion that has enjoyed some discourse from Lear scholars.[115] Harkening forward to the second chapter of this dissertation on the importance of naming in the history of the definition of 'species', I rely on naming as a means of introducing my peculiar compound noun for Lear's approach to his writing. Thus, I name it *counterfactual taxonomy.* However, just as a name proved a mere starting point to taxonomy for many natural historians of the early nineteenth-century, I will also provide a background for my term as well as a discussion of how it describes my vision of the evolution of Lear's re-classificatory performances and writing.

I formulated my term and the theory behind it with two separate prongs of reading: the philosophy of science and literary criticism of nonsense. The first prong was focused on philosophy of science works dealing with counterfactuals. The counterfactual thinking and contrafactum which Daniel Brown in *The Poetry* and Sara Lodge in *Inventing Edward Lear* (2019), respectively, argue were so prevalent in the nineteenth century, were key in focusing my reading and formulating my term. Working backwards from these works on counterfactual thought provided a starting point in exploring the work of David Lewis in his article "Causation" (1973) and monograph *Counterfactuals* (1973, 2001), as well as Alison Gopnik's work in "The Scientist as Child" (1996) and Seawah Kim and Cei Maslen's work in "Counterfactuals as Short Stories" (2006), all of whom Brown references in *The Poetry*. In addition, this research into counterfactuality prompted an exploration into literary criticism surrounding counterfactuality with the work of Elisabeth Wesseling's *Writing history as a prophet: postmodernist innovations of the historical novel* (1991). Finally, recent work in the performative aspects of counterfactuality in Don Weisanen's article "The comic counterfactual: Laughter, affect and civic alternatives" (2018) further refined the conception

[115] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 27–31.

of the term, especially regarding the performative aspects of Lear's authorial persona that I had already identified, linking counterfactual taxonomy and the performance of them to Lear's overall reclassification performativity.

The second prong was centred on re-readings of Michael Heyman's and Lisa Minslow's work regarding the gaps or blanks in meaning in nonsense literature in their respective articles, "A New Defense of Nonsense; Or, Where Then is His Phallus and Other Questions Not to Ask" (1999) and "Challenging the Impossibility of Children's Literature: The Emancipatory Qualities of Edward Lear's Nonsense" (2015).[116] I also explored Ann C. Colley's chapter on the synthesis in Lear's works from her 1990 monograph *The Search for Synthesis in Literature and Art: The Paradox of Space* and her discussion of the blank spaces in Lear's nonsense, how he translates them, and the tendency of his nonsense to 'parody the metaphoric impulse'.[117] However, perhaps in an echo of Lear's tendency toward the circular, I start with Brown's counterfactuals, move on to the gaps in Lear's meanings and the association of these gaps with his sense of parody. Then I circle back to counterfactuals, contrafactum, and taxonomies to arrive at my term for what I see occurring in Lear's reclassifications of self, natural history, and empire.

In the first chapter of *The Poetry,* 'Professionals and amateurs at work and play', Brown discusses the works of both James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879) and Lear, including a section on counterfactual thinking.[118] As a segue into that section on counterfactuals, he provides a discussion of Lear's "The Scroobious Snake" from one of the nonsense alphabets. Brown writes:

> Such neologisms ['scroobious'] highlight Lear's treatment of his subjects as reifications of language and the sole specimens of a class, singular inhabitants of the preposterous taxonomies that compose the huge counterfactual science of his nonsense works.[119]

[116] Williams also discusses these gaps, and conversely, the closeness of species in *Edward Lear,* 46-52.
[117] Colley, *The Search for Synthesis in Literature and Art: The Paradox of Space*, 9.
[118] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 27–31, 231-232; David Sonstroem, "Making Earnest of Game: G. M. Hopkins and Nonsense Poetry," *Modern Language Quarterly* 28, no. 2 (1967): 198–99, https://doi.org/10.1215/00267929-28-2-192. James Clerk Maxwell was a physicist and mathematician who developed the electro-magnetic theory that is the basis of modern physics. Sonstroem in his article explores the links between both Lear and G. M. Hopkins, as well as noting that nonsense poetry's relation to conventional poetry is analogous to mathematics' relationship to physics: 'although it can refer to the world at large, it can also mind its own business and do whatever it please, provided that it is true to itself'. Brown has a discussion of Hopkins' "The Wreck of the *Deutschland"* that explores the exclamatory-respiratory nature of the interjections in the work, 231-232. This is an area that is ripe for further discussion regarding similar in Lear, 195-196.
[119] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 27.

Next he outlines one of the basic tenets of counterfactual thinking, writing that Lewis focuses on:

> the relations that exist between our conceptions of causation and counterfactual thought, imaginary representations of possible situations that do not actually exist in our world. … .[120]

Brown is referring to Lewis' work in *Counterfactuals* and the infamous 'if kangaroos had no tails' postulate where Lewis writes:

> What is meant by the counterfactual is that, things being pretty much as they are—the scarcity of crutches for kangaroos being pretty much as it actually is, the kangaroos' inability to use crutches being pretty much as it actually is, and so on—if kangaroos had no tails they would topple over.[121]

The crux of Lewis' causation theory of counterfactual thinking is outlined in the following entry on counterfactuals by William Starr from *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*:

> The basic idea of counterfactual theories of causation is that the meaning of causal claims can be explained in terms of counterfactual conditionals of the form "If *A* had not occurred, *C* would not have occurred".[122]

Thus, Brown is arguing that Lear, and Maxwell, posit imaginary worlds and the exploration of the possibilities that could be *caused* by those imaginary worlds where *A* is counter to reality, and where *C is conditional on that counter-to-reality A.*

The frequency of Lear's use of causation is noted by Heyman in "A New Defense of Nonsense". He writes of the 'faulty cause-and-effect situations' that cause gaps in meaning, which in turn readers must bridge in Lear's nonsense:

> … I will take an example from The Story of the Four Little Children, when the adventurers are pelted with falling oranges and must flee: "Nevertheless they got safely to the boat, although considerably vexed and hurt; and the Quangle-Wangle's right foot was so knocked about, that he had to sit with his head in his slipper for at least a week".[123]

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[120] Brown, 27.

[121] David Lewis, *Counterfactuals* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 8–9.

[122] William Starr, "Counterfactuals," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2019 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2019), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/counterfactuals/.

[123] Michael Heyman, "A New Defense of Nonsense: Or Where, Then, Is His Phallus? And Other Questions Not to Ask," *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (Winter 1999): 191, https://doi.org/10.1353/chq.0.1108; Dubois, "Edward Lear's India and the Colonial Production of Nonsense," 37; Elizabeth K. Helsinger, *Poetry and the Thought of Song in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2015), 32. In his article, Dubois also discusses gaps in meaning produced by Lear's use of Anglo-Indian vocabulary in "The Cummerbund". Dubois writes: 'Like other Victorian poets who, according to Elizabeth K. Helsinger, share this affinity, Lear turned to verse genres and practices modelled on song, …'. He refers further to Helsinger's argument in *Poetry and the Thought of Song in Nineteenth-Century Britain* that other nineteenth-century writers used "song's non-discursive structures, its power to generate chains

Thus, Brown's and Heyman's discussion of (faulty) causation, or as Brown calls them, 'mock syllogisms', as the driver of Lear's counterfactual nonsense aligns with current work in the philosophy of science and logic, as well as with Heyman's discussion of Lear's faulty causation episodes.[124]

Moving on to critical work in nonsense literature, Heyman in the same article addresses the 'gap' he alludes to above in his discussion of Wim Tigges' definition of nonsense in *An Anatomy of Literary Nonsense* (1988) – 'that nonsense creates a balance between one or more pieces of "sensible" meaning juxtaposed by a "simultaneous absence of meaning"'.[125] Heyman next brings in Iser's reader response theory to nonsense from *The Act of Reading* (1978), writing that 'Each time the reader encounters nonsense words among the sensical ones, he or she is briefly halted and must bridge the gap to continue'.[126] Heyman's discussion of the creation of meaning in nonsense can be linked to Brown's discussion of the need for science to imagine the impossible in *The Poetry*.[127] Heyman writes that the, 'blanks in nonsense evoke imaginative possibilities, only to dash them soon after they are imagined'.[128]

Sara Minslow enlarges upon Heyman's gaps in meaning with which the nonsense reader must grapple, but she also links these gaps with Lear's images. She writes that in the limericks, 'numerous contradictory "voices" can be heard in the spaces where the text and illustration raise questions'.[129] However, Minslow discusses these multiple meanings of Heyman's gaps or spaces in a subversive Bakhtinian and polyphonic context. She connects this to Ann C. Colley's work:

> … Lear uses animals "as emblems of England's dominion over remote territories and nations," and she argues that the illustrations in Lear's limericks "refer, quite explicitly, to certain Victorian imperialistic principles with which Lear seems to have had difficulties".[130]

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of associated figures of speech and sound, metaphor and rhyme, … [Helsinger's 32]'. This in turn aligns with Lodge's discussion of Lear's use of contrafactum and its effect on his nonsense stories and verse.

[124] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 25; Heyman, "A New Defense of Nonsense: Or Where, Then, Is His Phallus? And Other Questions Not to Ask," 191.

[125] Heyman, "A New Defense of Nonsense: Or Where, Then, Is His Phallus? And Other Questions Not to Ask," 190 as quoted from Wimm Tigges' *An Anatomy of Literary Nonsense* (1988), pp. 255-56.

[126] Heyman, 190.

[127] Heyman, 190.

[128] Heyman, 193.

[129] Sarah Minslow, "Challenging the Impossibility of Children's Literature: The Emancipatory Qualities of Edward Lear's Nonsense," *Bookbird: A Journal of International Children's Literature* 53, no. 3 (2015): 48, https://doi.org/10.1353/bkb.2015.0065.

[130] Minslow, 51. Quoting Colley's "Edward Lear's Anti-Colonial bestiary", 298.

She continues:

> the representations and polyphony of Lear's limericks allow the reader to explore the arbitrary frameworks that separate people, cultures, animals, and humans in an attempt to diminish "the anxiety of difference".[131]

Minslow's discussion of these separating taxonomic frameworks conforms with my argument that Lear's work attempted to weaken the lines separating species and man and the other animals. Additionally, it links these gaps in meaning with imperial agendas like taxonomical hierarchies of species and social classes, a nuance I introduced above and which I discuss further in the body chapters. Colley also discusses the spaces or gaps that Lear creates in his limericks and how he uses them to subvert metaphor, that 'serialized, sometimes isolated, images frolic on a frameless page, admitting and displaying the gaps that fall between them.'[132] In addition, Minslow's discussion of Lear's limericks in a polyphonic context reiterates the subversive quality of Lear's limericks, as well as the obsession with ordering and taxonomy, that nevertheless preserve social hierarchies:

> A dialogic reading of Lear's limericks draws attention to the gaps in our experiences, the gaps in our use of language to order and describe the world, and the gaps in our concepts of self and other.[133]

A well-known exercise in drawing calls for the student to turn the image they are drawing upside down to refocus the eye and brain to address missed details. This exercise provides a useful metaphor for how Minslow presents the subversive quality of Lear's work to bring attention to the gaps of meaning between his images and his text. It is also a useful metaphor for the subversive counterfactuality of the taxonomies Lear constructs to refocus his reader's attention to the impossible worlds and taxonomies he posits, as well as his tendency to satirise the attempted imposition of order on a chaotic nature in works like "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" or the nonsense botanies.

Brown also points to Lear's obsession with taxonomy, with order and description, in *The Poetry.* However, Brown's work also includes that discussion of Lear's counterfactual thinking, which I discussed above, and which is reminiscent of Colley's earlier work in *The Search for Synthesis in Literature and Art* when she writes of the contrast between Lear's landscapes and his nonsense, where she writes:

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[131] Minslow, "Challenging the Impossibility of Children's Literature: The Emancipatory Qualities of Edward Lear's Nonsense," 51.
[132] Colley, *The Search for Synthesis in Literature and Art: The Paradox of Space*, 20.
[133] Minslow, "Challenging the Impossibility of Children's Literature: The Emancipatory Qualities of Edward Lear's Nonsense," 52.

> In addition to explicating the implicit, the limericks reverse the paintings and literalize experience by pushing aside associations, eradicating shadows and images, and expelling superfluous dimensions. *They strip fact of its context* (my emphasis).[134]

Brown links Lear's counterfactual thinking with James Clerk Maxwell's thought experiments, which imagine impossible and contrary worlds and the impossibilities those contrary worlds could cause.[135] Moreover, Brown expands his discussion of counterfactual thinking to include Gopnik's work in "The Scientist as Child" (1996). Comparing them to Maxwell's thought experiment, Brown writes that Lear's limericks

> … can be appreciated similarly as an X-ray of the scientific hypothesis, as shorn of any pretence of purpose or sense it presents the raw speculative audacity of imaginative play in a simple causal sequence.[136]

Further, Brown discusses the structure of Lear's limericks in "Being and Nothingness" in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry.* He includes in a note the following: 'Like the Aristotelian syllogism and the Hegelian dialectic, which it also resembles in its original three-line format, Lear's limerick returns to the original terms of its premise with an enhanced understanding'.[137] The structure of counterfactual thinking in nonsense literature is also discussed by Dov Samet in "Counterfactuals in Wonderland" (2005) and by John Roberts in 'Lewis, Carroll, And Seeing Through the Looking Glass' (1986). This return to the first term (the first line, e.g., a "Young Lady of Wales") in the syllogism works as an apt descriptor for the circular nature of Lear's limericks *and* his other nonsense.[138]

Wesseling's work on counterfactual parody in *Writing history as a prophet* (1991) also informed my formulations on structure and the development of Lear's counterfactuality, especially in its nascent stages. She writes that:

> parodied text is not merely repeated, however, but modified by various strategies. An author may change the target by exaggerating some of its features as in a caricature, by turning it upside down, or by inserting it into a strikingly new context which exposes the target in a different light.[139]

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[134] Colley, *The Search for Synthesis in Literature and Art: The Paradox of Space*, 16.
[135] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 27–31.
[136] Brown, 29–30.
[137] Daniel Brown, "Being and Naughtiness," in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, ed. James Williams and Matthew Bevis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 179.
[138] Brown, 26; Rieder, "Edward Lear's Limericks: The Function of Children's Nonsense Poetry," 49.
[139] Elisabeth Wesseling, *Writing History as a Prophet: Postmodernist Innovations of the Historical Novel* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1991), 106, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/nuig/detail.action?docID=829554.

Additionally, given Lear's early unpublished parodic romps with Moore's *Irish Melodies* and *The Fudge Family in Paris*, the following by Wesseling resonated with my tracing of the development of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies from his early parodies like "Miss Maniac", which I later argue is an early stage in the development of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies:

> We may therefore ascribe a parodic aspect to counterfactual fantasies, in the sense that parodic texts incorporate their "target" texts. Some knowledge of the parodied text is indispensable for the recognition of its pendant within the new context of the parodic text.[140]

In Weisanen's article "The comic counterfactual", a similar case for subversion is made regarding the purposes of counterfactuals. He writes that the comedy of the counterfactual:

> … invites audiences to critically reflect upon the political, social, and performative consequences of historical events by bringing affective, sensory weight to alternative visions, moving unaccountable private interests into public culture, targeting the subtle determinisms that can easily creep into communication, and creating plausible ways to reworld the status quo.[141]

However, beyond Minslow's subversion, Weisanen also provides a potent link to the performative aspects inherent in Wesseling's discussion of parodic counterfactuals, which is cogent for the performative aspects of Lear's work and authorial persona. Weisanen links the rhetorical aspects of performativity with that subversion, to arrive at alternative worlds:

> Beyond radical critiques, however, comedy can invite audiences to engage with plausible political alternatives, particularly when working with affect, performativity, and other rhetorical factors. [142]

Thus, Lear's performativity serves as a vehicle for his upending of the taxonomies of imperial hierarchies. If we look at Lear as being both classification- and performativity-driven, his role as an avatar of the nineteenth century becomes visible, explaining his ubiquitous presence on the floor in *The Awakening Conscience*. The classification of peoples, social classes, animals, etc. not only reflected, but bolstered the agenda of empire with the crown at the apex of the hierarchy of life. And it is the nineteenth-century obsession with taxonomies that spurs on the classification process of sexuality and gender, an issue explored in the final body chapter.

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[140] Wesseling, *Writing History as a Prophet*, 105.
[141] Don Waisanen, "The Comic Counterfactual: Laughter, Affect, and Civic Alternatives," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 104, no. 1 (January 2, 2018): 72, https://doi.org/10.1080/00335630.2017.1401224.
[142] Waisanen, 71.

Finally, Brown discusses the prevalence of counterfactual thinking, associating it with the great growth in research science in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, that counterfactual thinking and focus on the imagination were foundational to the modern period.

> Not only does research science develop rapidly at this time, but also, parallel to it, the new social thought experiment of the novel, which by positing a particular set of characters and circumstances generates lines of narrative consequences.[143]

Brown focuses on the novel here, discussing *Villette,* but what are Lear's picture stories, and verses set in the isles of Boshen doing, if not 'positing a particular set of characters and circumstances'? The thought experiment of novels and the return to an enhanced first term in Lear's other work are why I contend that counterfactual thinking can be applied to Lear's work beyond the limericks to include his nonsense botanies, alphabets, songs, and picture stories; my dissertation provides detailed analyses of this counterfactuality in Lear's texts and images. Counterfactual circularity in Lear's nonsense structures, I contend, is bound up with his sense of the parodic – it is the essence behind Lear's nonsense literature, and its evolution in Lear's work can be marked and analysed. Moreover, this counterfactual thinking is also bound inextricably with Lear's and the nineteenth century's obsession with collection, classification, and display as a reflection of imperial hierarchies. Moving from a larval form of this counterfactual thinking in early pastiches and parodies like Lear's "St Kiven and the Gentle Kathleen" and "Miss Maniac" to a highly developed state in the nonsense stories and songs, the returning to an enhanced original is a concept that has been explored, with a different critical approach and vocabulary, by another scholar – Sara Lodge.

Lodge discusses a curious device in nineteenth-century popular music and Lear's experimentation with it in his nonsense songs, which contains parallels to counterfactual thinking. In the section titled "Contrafactum: New Words to Old Music", she writes: … 'he set comic words to two well-known melodies, turning their sentimental nostalgia into something more disruptive'.[144] She describes how Lear set new lyrics to Thomas Haynes Bayly's "Isle of Beauty, Fare Thee Well",

> What would I not give to wander
> Where my old companions dwell;
> Absence makes the heart grow fonder;

[143] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 30. Indeed, perhaps a better discussion of this type of thought experiment should continue with a developmental mind-set, encompassing eighteenth-century natural philosophy and nineteenth-century prose and poetry. This developmental mind-set can be extended to late nineteenth-century works like Kipling's sci-fi short stories, as well as early modernist works like E. M. Forster's "The Machine Stops" (1909).
[144] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 32–33.

Isle of Beauty, 'Fare-thee-well'![145]

This song, she writes,

> allows the singer to linger caressingly on 'friends' and the places where they 'dwell', mimics the intense feeling that a departing traveller might undergo. In an era of mass emigration this song touched many people deeply; the line 'Absences makes the heart grow fonder' remains even now a popular cliché.[146]

Lodge describes how Lear made complete nonsense of the sentimental song by setting lyrics titled "Turkey Discipline" to Haynes Bayly's tune, where his lyrics *do not* allow for such caresses by the singer. On the contrary, she writes that his lyrics describe a 'scene of domestic cacophony':

> 'Bless my heart—nine monstrous turkeys!—
> Gracious!—all the garden's full!—
> And one great one with a jerk has
> Pounced upon my favourite gull!'
> —Through the noise of turkey's calling,
> Now was heard, distinct and well,
> From the Southern window squalling
> Many a long and awful yell.[147]

Lodge writes further:

> Lear has characteristically replaced the 'vesper bell' with an 'awful yell'. That yell will recur in various nonsense poems. One of the features of Lear's nonsense is the way in which it *counterpoints* [emphasis mine] polite and tuneful noises with wild and discordant ones.[148]

These discordant and wild noises are also akin to the polyphonic and carnivalesque aspects which Minslow sees in Lear's work.

Lodge provides another example of Lear's use of contrafactum with his satire of Haynes Bayly's "Oh! No, We never Mention Her", which describes an abandoned woman who cannot forget her lover. She contends that Lear's spoof is a contrafactum of this song, of being unable to escape the kitchen because of the regular recurrence of baking day. Lodge writes that contrafactum mirrors many aspects of parody:

> it involves responding to the form and style of an earlier work in a manner whose familiarity emphasises critical distance. Yet it also differs from parody in that we hear the familiar music identically through the new lyric; in this sense it is like an aria sung with a pianist in another room who doesn't know that they're now playing for a comedian rather than a tragedian. Lear relishes this juxtaposition—

[145] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 33.
[146] Lodge, 33.
[147] Lodge, 33–34.
[148] Lodge, 34.

> the creative friction between what the music is saying and what he is saying to it.[149]

The pattern of an enhanced first term such as in the faulty causation or mock syllogisms of Lear's work is echoed in Lodge's description of the 'creative friction' of his contrafactum.[150] Like Brown, Lodge discusses the prevalence of contrafactum in the nineteenth century, noting that often they were published at the end of the same volume as the 'serious' work, and that contrafactum was 'rife' in the nineteenth century, providing another echo of Brown's description of Lear's limerick structure as repeating an enhanced first term at the close of the structure.[151]

Lodge then discusses how Lear was immured in an environment of multi-genre vocal performance, that 'he learned how to play the same material both *affettuoso* and *prestissimo*, and how to teeter precariously on the edge between the two'.[152] This is another correlation to how Lear erodes the lines between species, and the gaps or blank spaces of meaning in nonsense literature with his impossible taxonomies. Lodge discusses Lear's friend Marianne North's memories of Lear 'that captures his keen awareness of the twilight moment at which deep pathos could spill over into high comedy' and whether 'serious' poetry is indistinguishable from nonsense when treated as sound effect'.[153]

Lodge writes that in examining Lear's early musical repertoire, she shows 'the ways in which his singing and his visual portrayal of music, from the 1820s to the 1850s, form the foundation on which his nonsense songs of the 1870s are built'.[154] However, my argument extends Lear's play with counterfactual thinking, which Brown describes, to inform his play with music and *how that contrafactum/counterfactual thinking* affects his nonsense songs in an evolving manner. By *evolving manner,* I mean a developmental manner, with its early appearance in "Miss Maniac" to its more developed and nuanced form in later works, like "The Dong with a Luminous Nose". Similarly, I analyse picture stories like "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" and "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World", in which Lear creates completely different worlds with

[149] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 35–36. Lodge notes earlier that '(It can equally well be sung by a female complainant as "Oh! No, We Never Mention Him"). It tells the tale of an abandoned lover who can't get their former sweetheart out of their head: …', 34
[150] Lodge, 36.
[151] Lodge, 39.
[152] Lodge, 39.
[153] Lodge, 40.
[154] Lodge, 35–40.

subversive taxonomies that upend the constrictions of the networks of empire, society, and culture in which he moved.

Additionally, I apply concordant ideas to Brown's commentary on the limericks to Lear's counterfactual thinking in "The Scroobious Pip" and his nonsense botanies and alphabets. Re-analysing the original texts that I address in my dissertation, I discovered that this imagining of the impossible with a circling back to an enhanced original term is a constant in Lear's nonsense beyond the limericks. His nonsense presents a counterfactual, *Darwinian* illustration of taxonomy of nature, the individual, and empire in contradiction to the orthodox imperial hierarchies with the crown at the apex, linking to Colley's and Minslow's view of the subversive nature of Lear's overturning of those orthodox imperial hierarchies, yet preserving those structures in an upended form.

Lear's success as a natural history illustrator was grounded in his ability to differentiate minute details of the animals he depicted. In fact, several species of parrot were catalogued and named after him by virtue of this ability.[155] He rescued the unique identities of several species, yet it was his innovative linking of *all* species of one family of birds into a single volume that was the first publication of its kind in England.[156] This, too, is reminiscent of his interrogation of the individual's place in larger hierarchical systems. Indeed, Anna Henchman in "Fragments Out of Place: Homology and the Logic of Nonsense" writes that Victorian taxonomy 'involves two opposing acts: singling something out in the act of categorising it and making links across individuals in the act of grouping'.[157]

Lear's nomination and acceptance into the Linnaean Society were prompted by this unique talent that was so flamboyantly displayed in his *Psittacidae.* Lear lived and breathed taxonomy and classification in all of his work. Similarly, the collection, classification, and display mania that supported and affirmed the agendas of empire were the 'cynosure of every' nineteenth-century eye.[158] And in fact, Lear's early success as a natural history illustrator was contingent on this mania. Thus, by uniting the counterfactual thinking Brown discusses with Colley's and Minslow's subversion *and* my analyses of the taxonomic and

[155] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 71–73.
[156] Matthew Bevis, "Edward Lear's Lines of Flight," *Journal of the British Academy* 1 (2013): 36, https://doi.org/10.5871/jba/001.031; Robert McCracken Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: ACC Art Books Limited, 2016), 60.
[157] Henchman, "Fragments Out of Place: Homology and the Logic of Nonsense in Edward Lear," 197.
[158] William R. Bradshaw, "The Goddess of Atvatabar, by William R. Bradshaw," Project Gutenberg (1892), 100, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/32825/32825-h/32825-h.htm.

reclassificatory nature of Lear's work and its place in nineteenth-century thought, I coined this term – *counterfactual taxonomies*. Lear's nonsense performs counterfactual taxonomies, and through them, he reclassifies the hierarchies of the self, natural history, and imperialism in the circular structures of his nonsense. In addition, through the performance of those counterfactual taxonomies, Lear undermines the borders of the gaps in meaning which are created by his nonsense texts and images, echoing his synthesis of a single bird family into one monograph, yet rescuing the identity of individual species of parrots in that larger taxonomic system.[159]

Thus, Lear networks the blank spaces in his nonsense so his readers can imagine an impossible world that subverts the orthodox hierarchies of empire, nature, and the self, just as he tumbles the figures of his nonsense, like in "The Old Person of Ems", still clad in his Regency sartorial splendour, yet consorting with the fishes in the Thames:[160]

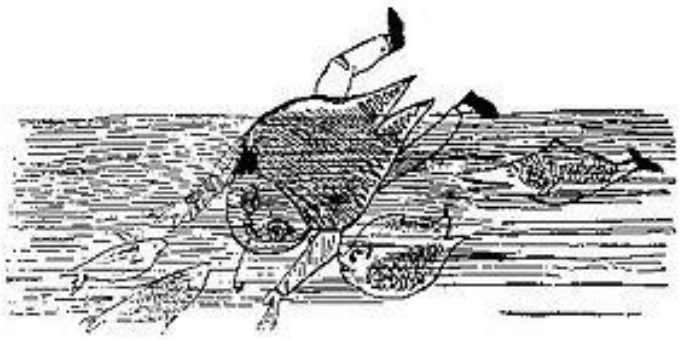

Figure 8 "There was an old person of Ems". *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse.*

Remaining within the playful confines of his nonsense and his imperial networking, Lear tumbles the hierarchies of imperial collection-classification-display while maintaining the networks of natural history and empire, just as he retained the music and political milieu in his contrafactum. Like contrafactum, Lear was an inherent addendum to domestic nineteenth-century networks of natural history, art, literature, and imperial travel – recall his place on the floor of Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience*. Lear enjoyed a great deal of privilege through his participation in those networks, but did he maintain an ambiguous stance, a scepticism to the

[159] Heyman, "A New Defense of Nonsense: Or Where, Then, Is His Phallus? And Other Questions Not to Ask," 190–93; Minslow, "Challenging the Impossibility of Children's Literature: The Emancipatory Qualities of Edward Lear's Nonsense," 49. The thought processes of categorisation and 'linking across individuals' can even be seen in Lear's diary entries where he enumerates to whom and from whom he has included in his letter writing of the day, as well as in his exclusively *rounded* diagrams of seating arrangements from the day's dining sketched out at the top of many entries.
[160] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 104.

long-term goals and effects of imperial agenda?[161] I suggest that this may have prompted him to metaphorically clear his throat – to say 'Ahem, where is this leading us?' by positing his counterfactual worlds and taxonomies as illustrations of Darwin's theories on evolution, sexual selection, the web of life, and the nonsense that can be found in trying to impose human-centred order on the chaos of nature.[162]

The development and refinement of counterfactual taxonomies can be traced from the pastiche of text and image in works like "Miss Maniac" to the incorporation of his knowledge of natural history in his published nonsense in the alphabets, stories, limericks, and verse, and culminating with a creature like the Pip – an impossible creature in an impossible world that upends hierarchies of gender, the self, and the 'other'. Taxonomy and its subversion were potent tools in Lear's practice of subversion and parody. Because of my contention that Lear and his search for the self are emblematic of these nineteenth-century questions, re-examining Lear's reclassifications of self assists in the humanities' engagement with the development of this philosophy and its literary representations and expressions. Lear created various subversions of nineteenth-century hierarchies of nature and empire through his counterfactual taxonomies, structured hermetically with a return to an enhanced first term not just in the mock syllogisms of his limericks, but in the majority of his nonsense works. Counterfactuality and contrafactum, as both Brown and Lodge discuss, were prominent trends in nineteenth-century thought. Coupled with the mania for collection, classification, and display, I posit that his increasingly nuanced counterfactual taxonomies served as a vehicle for Lear's subversion of the hierarchies of empire, taxonomy, and the self.

Overview of Chapters

The early developmental stage of counterfactual taxonomies in Lear's relationship to the legacies of Romantic satire and Orientalism are explored in the first core chapter of this dissertation: "Sense out of Romantic Nonsense: Politics and the Orientalised Other in Thomas Moore, Lord Byron, and Edward Lear". In this chapter, I trace the development of counterfactual taxonomies as parodies/pastiches of Moore's and Byron's works that Lear created in an early unpublished piece titled "Miss Maniac" (late 1820s). Here I outline the

[161] Williams explores ambiguity and Lear extensively in *Edward Lear*, 55–65.
[162] I discuss the idea of nonsense creations in taxidermy like the Fiji mermaid that Lear parodies in "The History of the Seven Families" in chapter 2.

ways in which Moore's and Byron's work, respectively, in *Irish Melodies*, *Fables for the Holy Alliance*, *Loves of the Angels* and "To the Earl of [Clare]", inspired Lear's sense of the parodic, and resulted in the reclassification of Romantic ideas of madness and the self, as well as interrogating nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish relations and the Orientalisation of Ireland. I then analyse two later works – "The Jumblies" (1870) and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" (1876) also in comparison to Moore's and Byron's works – *Lalla Rookh* and *The Turkish Tales*. Analysis of Lear's reclassification of the Orientalised 'other' in these later pieces provide insight into how he refined his initial dive into the parodic and provided counterfactual taxonomies of Romantic Orientalism by contextualising questions of the self versus 'other' through the counterfactual taxonomies he created of the tropes, structures, and vocabulary of Moore's and Byron's works.

Following on chronologically from Romantic tropes in "Miss Maniac", the next chapter is entitled "Edward Lear's Taxonomy". This chapter initially explores the trajectory of Lear's professional work in natural history illustration by contextualising it in the development of the science in the early nineteenth century and the hierarchies of imperial networks, which influenced that development. The chapter then links the experience of Lear's professional illustration work to the further refinement of the counterfactual taxonomies of the species and the individual in his nonsense and provides a summary of the analyses of two specimens of his nonsense botany from my MA dissertation. This linkage is animated by analyses of several limericks, and a nonsense alphabet entry, as well as a deep analysis of the picture story "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" (1870). These analyses trace the development of counterfactual taxonomies as a vehicle for Lear's exploration of individual ontology in a series of singular species, avatars of one, in the limericks and the alphabet. With "the Seven Families" analysis, the patterns of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies of natural history and social hierarchies highlight the ambiguous relationship that Lear maintained with those very hierarchical structures that he questioned with his nonsense. Finally, through the analyses of these pieces, I also establish the necessary framework for my approach to Lear's work through the Darwinian and evolutionary microscope I use in the remaining chapters of the dissertation.[163]

[163] McLane, *Romanticism and the Human Sciences*, 10–42. McLane's chapter "Toward an anthropologic: poetry, literature, and the discourse of the species" contains a useful discussion of Shelley's monster and its struggle to 'become human' through the written word as a type of speciation, which is analogous to Lear's preoccupation with single-member species, as well as the identification of the self through the classification of the 'other'.

Introduction

The penultimate chapter of the dissertation, entitled "Imperial Nonsense: Subverting Taxonomies and Hierarchies of Natural History and Empire", contains a detailed exploration of the ways in which Lear creates counterfactual taxonomies of nineteenth-century science, society, and religion. Here I propose that these counterfactual taxonomies subvert hierarchies of the nineteenth century via three trends in Lear's nonsense: colonialisation via the exploitation of natural resources; society and religion through replacing the Great Chain of Being with a system illustrating Darwin's web of life; and taxonomic classification through biological and linguistic homology. To illustrate this proposition, I provide a critical reading of the picture story "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" (1867, 1870). I ground this piece as a Lear nonsense evolution in process, which questions the philosophies underpinning colonial expansion via an ecocritical framework. In this story, Lear indulges in a parody of the imperial and scientific exploration adventures which formed one of his favourite genres of reading and which may have been influenced by his personal connection with the colonial history of New Zealand. The analysis of "the Four Little Children" further reveals Lear's unease with the effects of imperial exploitation of colonial possessions, as well as his continuing fascination with the taxonomies that, paradoxically, supported that exploitation, mirroring the circular structures of his nonsense that confine themselves to those taxonomies and hierarchies.

Combining Lear's framing of the individual as species and Darwin's web of life from the two previous chapters, the final chapter is entitled "Darwinian Nonsense: Translating Darwin's Entangled Bank in 'The Scroobious Pip'" (1871-1872). Providing a critical reading of "The Scroobious Pip", this chapter proposes that with this verse and the two illustrations created for it, Lear proposed a counterfactual taxonomy of established natural history knowledge. In "The Pip", Lear presents his readers with a counterfactual taxonomy that challenged Victorian orthodox knowledge of the natural history that was integral to imperial hierarchies and agendas. This work illustrated Darwin's great web of life dancing together on the entangled bank in a circle round the Pip, a creature that encompasses all taxonomies, all languages, all genders, all habitats of life on Earth – an impossible taxonomy in the counterfactual world of Lear's imagination. The ways in which a queer nonsense artist was able to resist the powerful insistence on collection, classification, and display that was at the heart of both the expansion of empire and the creation of the self via identification of the other through that same collection, classification and display expands the scope of inquiry into the questions of the self that are revisited in later nonsense and literature of the absurd

and modernism. That classification, collection, and display worked symbiotically with the vast expansion of empire and colonial exploitation and prompted Lear's fascination and unease with those taxonomical hierarchies, both imperial and biological, which ruled his life and so influenced his nonsense. Classification hierarchies and identification of a colonial 'other' and the subversion of those hierarchies and power relationships were themes which Lear explored in early unpublished works. Hence, the first body chapter of this dissertation, "Sense Out of Romantic Nonsense: Parody and the Orientalised Other in Thomas Moore, Lord Byron, and Edward Lear", probes these themes as an early developmental phase in the progression of Lear's reclassificatory nonsense taxonomies of nature, society, and self – his counterfactual taxonomies.

During the course of the research and the write-up of that dissertation, I travelled frequently between Ireland and Western New York because my partner and two of my children were working and attending school in Buffalo and Toronto; the invasive species that Crosby describes in *Ecological Imperialism*, which proliferated in both North America and New Zealand, were everywhere for my eye to behold in Ireland and when I was visiting my family on the border area between Canada and the United States. Yet these species Crosby also discusses as being invasive in the far-off Neverland of New Zealand. The truth is that we can never fully know the flora and fauna that did not survive the importation of invasive species and commodities exploitation, in either direction, because of non-existent records of the variety of life that proliferated in North American meadows, the Australian bush, Pacific coral reefs, or Irish forests.[164] We can, however, chronicle the impact on *Homo sapiens* in those geographies that experienced invasive and destructive colonial practices. I mourned for the lost species that were occasioned by these invasions and which we will never be able to study. As a descendent of those imperial *Homo sapiens* who were the cause of those species' invasions and the power that they exercised over the indigenous populations of North America, I am perhaps in the same awkward position in which Lear found himself as he took full advantage of the networks of empire and colony. Did his discomfort with that awkward positioning lead him to create impossible counterfactual taxonomies of impossible creatures in impossible worlds that questioned the imperialism and colonialism that was at the heart of the nineteenth century? The voyage of discovery that comprises this dissertation explores these questions.

[164] Chang, *Novel Cultivations: Plants in British Literature of the Global Nineteenth Century*, 11–14.

Chapter 1: Sense out of Romantic Nonsense: Parody and the Orientalised Other in Thomas Moore, Lord Byron, and Edward Lear

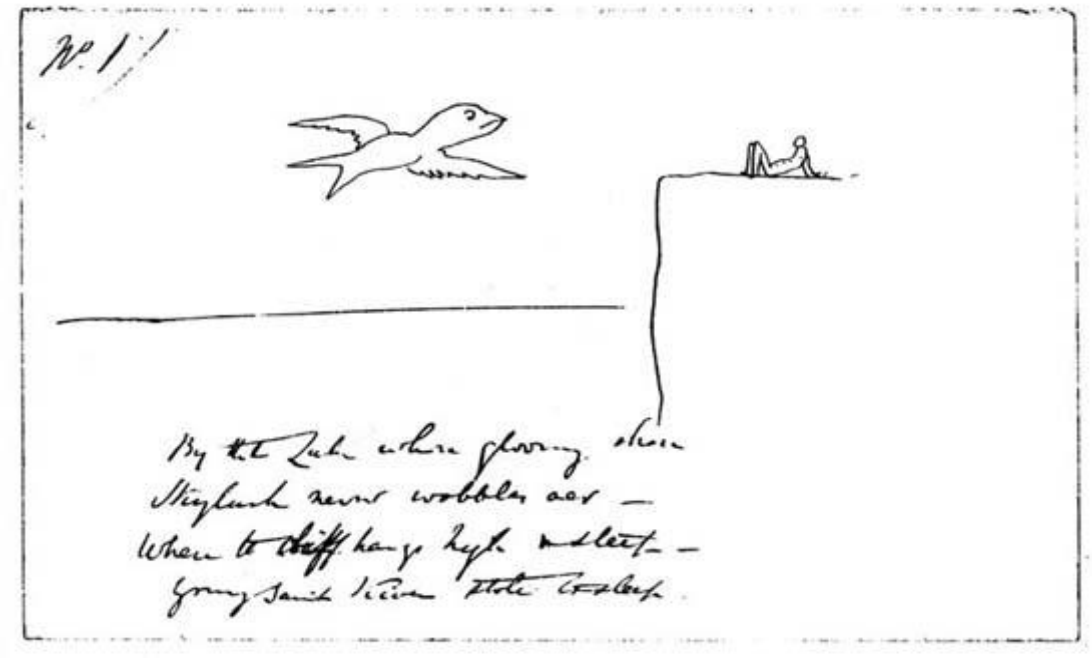

Figure 9 Edward Lear. "St Kiven and the Gentle Kathleen".

By the lake whose gloomy shore
Skylark never wobbles oer—
Where the cliffs hang high & steep—
Young Saint Kiven stole to sleep.

Edward Lear (1812-1888)

With the above, not-quite-faithful, rendering of Thomas Moore's (1779-1852) "By That Lake Whose Gloomy Shore", Edward Lear in the 1820s set down on paper his admiration for Moore's verse in "St Kiven and the Gentle Kathleen".[1] This set the stage for a lifetime of copying, parodying, and performing Moore's lyrics and political satire in an increasingly nuanced series of counterfactual taxonomies, through which Lear posits impossible worlds and potential consequences of those impossible worlds. Biographers of Lear frequently reference his parodies of Moore's songs and satires, including the above verse, "Eveleen's Bower", *The Fudge Family in Paris* (1823), and others. Jenny Uglow writes:

[1] Edward Lear, "St. Kiven and the Gentle Kathleen" from the Edward Lear Archive, ca. 1840, Pen and Ink. (1840), Yale Center for British Art, Gift of Donald C. Gallup, Yale BA 1934, PhD 1939, https://orbis.library.yale.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=13531469.

> The songs of Moore, Byron's friend and first biographer, remained an echo in his head and while he copied the popular ballads, the romantic melancholy of Moore's songs, like 'The Boat' of 1807, settled even deeper in his mind.[2]

Sara Lodge in *Inventing Edward Lear* (2019) writes that

> Thomas Moore is the most consistently spoofed of authors in Lear's songbook. Lear met him around 1846, and Moore's work is probably the single greatest influence on Lear's musical habits. He knew Moore's work so well that it amounts, in his diary, to a kind of code.[3]

Given Lear's performance history in popular music, intimate knowledge of Moore's *Irish Melodies* is not surprising. Additionally, as late as 1867, Lear was reading Moore's journal while planning his tour of India.[4] Lear would most likely have read the biography of George Gordon Bryon, 6th Baron Byron (1788-1824) that Moore wrote, as well as the reviews of the works and exploits of both authors in periodicals like *The London Magazine*.[5] The relationships of the three authors in the title of this chapter have been noted; however, to date little in-depth analysis of the similarities in all three of their works has been conducted. In this chapter, I discuss two literary themes that connect Moore, Byron, and Lear: political satire and the Orientalised 'other'. Lear's subversion of Moore's and Byron's parodies of early nineteenth-century politics and Orientalism take place in a series of reclassifications that map an evolution towards the counterfactual taxonomies I discussed in the theoretical section of this dissertation. These reclassifications pose alternatives to concepts of the self and taxonomic hierarchies in natural history, society, and empire that Lear summoned up for his readers to imagine in the impossible worlds of his nonsense.

Tracing the relationship between Moore and Byron often centres on Moore's influential biography of Byron. However, Jeffery Vail's 2001 *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron and Thomas Moore* analyses the symbiosis in their works when Byron was still alive, highlighting their satirical essays on British politics, as well as the mutual trends in their works. Moore's and Byron's political satire and letters to the periodicals provide an insight into the role that an acclaimed author could play in the social climate of the nineteenth century. The historical dismissal of Moore's *Irish Melodies* has obscured the influence that

[2] Uglow, Jenny. *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* (New York: Faber & Faber, 2017), 23. Moore's verse ends: 'Each wave that we danced on at morning ebbs from us, | And leaves us, at eve, on the bleak shore alone.'

[3] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 54. In addition, see the first chapter's discussion of Lodge's work on Lear and contrafactum in *Inventing Edward Lear*, 32-40.

[4] Uglow, *Mr Lear*, 433.

[5] Uglow, *Mr Lear*, 25.

Moore had on nineteenth-century British literature and society. The works of Jane Moore and Leith Davis rehabilitated Moore's reputation as an influential figure in the nineteenth century and also underscored the linking of Moore's satire and lyricism to that of Byron.[6] Justin Tonra also discusses Irish nationalism in Moore's work in *Write My Name: Authorship in the Poetry of Thomas Moore* (2020).

Equally as potent a link between Byron and Moore is the topic of Romantic Orientalism in Moore's *Lalla Rookh* (1817) and Byron's *Turkish Tales* (1812-1815) and the politics fuelling their focus on the East. Moore and Byron corresponded with each other regarding plans for their 'Oriental' works. Jeffery Vail in *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron & Thomas Moore* discusses the mutual encouragement Byron and Moore gave each other, creating a potent connection between their Oriental works, as well as in their Irish nationalism.[7] Vail distinguishes Byron's efforts to subvert British Orientalism from Moore's by emphasising how Moore problematises imperialism as one in which the 'light-West/dark-East dichotomy' is condemned and where Moore presents 'an all-eastern cast of characters, some of whom are indeed capable of "childishness, cruelty, and profligacy" but some of whom are precisely as capable of reason, honor, consideration, and humanity as any European'.[8] Similarly, Tonra writes that '… Moore's portrayal of characters like the Iranian Gheber, Hafed, represented the colonial subject as heroic, courageous, and romantic'.[9] Where does Edward Lear, then, fit into this triumvirate of satirical politics and subversion of British Orientalism and the Orientalised 'other'?

This chapter discusses these issues in the context of Lear's positioning in his early work, "Miss Maniac" (late 1820s), as well as in the later works "The Jumblies" (1870) and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" (1876). Moore and Byron had a formative effect on Lear's formulations of parody, nonsense, and sense of self and empire and continued to influence his works throughout his career. Analysing the text and images of Lear's "Miss Maniac" illustrates the inception of those formulations of parody and nonsense which Moore's and Byron's verse moulded in Lear and which subsequently inform my analysis of

[6] Leith Davis, *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender: The Construction of Irish National Identity 1724-1874* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006); Jane Moore, *British Satire 1785-1840*, vol. 5. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2003).
[7] Jeffery W Vail. *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron & Thomas Moore*. (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 48, 65-67,77-, 90-92,103-139, 156-157.
[8] Vail, *The Literary Relationship*, 133.
[9] Tonra, *Write My Name: Authorship in the Poetry of Thomas Moore*, 78.

the nonsense in his later texts and images.[10] Their influence on Lear's verse carried through to late work – as I discuss in my analyses of "The Jumblies" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose". Lear embraced the two influences that he received from Moore and Byron – political satire and Orientalism – to inform his authorial voice in the worlds of the counterfactual taxonomies that he created in his personal life and art. Moving beyond Moore's and Byron's satire with his counterfactual taxonomies, Lear posited alternative taxonomies to those which ruled orthodox nineteenth-century concepts of natural history, the self, and empire.

In another early work of Lear's, a mock-diary entry in verse which he sent to his sister Ann in 1829 at the age of seventeen, Uglow notes Lear's mimicry of Moore's *The Fudge Family in Paris* (1818).[11] However, she does not address the following interesting lines, which can be linked to Moore's and Byron's political writing:

> Called at Lyminster—John at home, —
> Looked at the plates of Rogers' Italy, —
> Talked of reform and Chancellor
> Brougham: — [12]

Lear is a referring here to Henry Peter Brougham, First Baron Brougham and Vaux (1778-1868), founder of *The Edinburgh Review* and a Whig reform spokesman and council to Queen Caroline in the annulment case with the then Prince Regent, later George IV (1762-1830).[13] The reference places Lear within the milieu in which Moore and Byron based their political writing, targeting the Tory Parliament and what they saw as the Regent's betrayal of the Whigs, his mistress, the Irish, and Catholic Emancipation.[14] This parody of "The Fudge Family" is definitively dated and shows Lear's youthful engagement with the politics of the early nineteenth century, an engagement which was repeated in "Miss Maniac" and, even

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[10] Edward Lear. "Miss Maniac" manuscript. Harvard University Houghton Library, n.d. Harvard University Houghton Library Edward Lear Collection. https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:48895553$28i.
[11] Uglow. *Mr Lear,* 40.
[12] Edward Lear. *Selected Letters,* 6.
[13] Michael Lobban, Brougham. *Brougham, Henry Peter, First Baron Brougham and Vaux (1778-1868), Chancellor. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[14] Leith Davis, "Irish Bards and English Consumers: Thomas Moore's 'Irish Melodies' and the Colonized Nation," *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 24, no. 2 (1993): 14; John Holmes, "Prometheus Rebound: The Romantic Titan in a Post-Romantic Age," in *Romantic Echoes in the Victorian Era* (London: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008), 210. Holmes discusses two strains of the Prometheus myth that developed in Victorian literature and society. The Christianised/gradual change Prometheus of Arnold versus the radicalised Prometheus of Symonds, William Michael Rossetti, and even a youthful Yeats that had its foundation in Byron, Keats, and Shelley is a useful framework to view Lear's engagement with Romantic transitions and inheritances. Aligned with Moore and Byron in the early works like "Miss Maniac" and this Fudge Family parody, I would argue that Lear continues in the radical tradition with "The Jumblies", "The Dong", as well as his interrogation of natural history, imperial, and societal hierarchies in works like "the Seven Families", and "the Four Little Children". See also my note 99 on page 104.

later, "The Jumblies" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose". Such progressive philosophy is reflected in his later positioning in works like "the Seven Families", and "the Four Little Children" which reflect the enduring legacy of Romantic radicalism in Victorian thought, as well as Lear's role in such transitional legacies. Additionally, it is perhaps the first instance of Lear adopting a performative persona – that of the political satirist engaged with social currents and political events of the day. Furthermore, this could be one of the first instances of Lear's use of a kind of early counterfactual, positing a world in which engaging with political events of the time is another quotidian occurrence for the seventeen-year-old.

Lear penned "Miss Maniac" for one of the Drewitt family in the late 1820s or early 1830s. Uglow discusses the prevalent theme of mania in her discussion of "Miss Maniac" and the similarity of its images with George Cruikshank's (1792-1878) illustrations.[15] She also likens the scansion of Lear's verse to Thomas Hood's (1799-1845) "The Demon Ship", but I will address the images, vocabulary, and structure that present a nascent form of the counterfactual taxonomies of Lear's nonsense in response to Moore's and Byron's political satire, including their exploration of Irish Orientalism.[16] The themes and vocabulary in this analysis include two songs from *Irish Melodies* ("Eveleen's Bower", "When first I met thee"), "Looking Glasses" from *Fables for the Holy Alliance* (1823), *The Loves of the Angels* (1823) and, finally, Byron's verse "To the Earl of [Clare]" from *Hours of Idleness* (1807). The structure of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies, which incorporate a return to a reclassified first term, will also be addressed in the context of "Miss Maniac", as well as in the analyses of "The Jumblies" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose".[17]

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[15] Edward Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript. Harvard University Houghton Library, n.d. Harvard University Houghton Library Edward Lear Collection. The Harvard manuscript of "Miss Maniac" has a dedication to 'Miss Fanny Drewitt', a close friend of Lear 'who married George Coombe in 1829 or 1830' Uglow, 42; 86–88; Lear, Edward. *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse by Edward Lear*. (London: Penguin, 2001); Note to "Miss Maniac" 477. It is not outside the realm of possibility that Lear would have continued to refer to her as 'Miss Drewitt' even after her marriage, but the date of the marriage could argue that "Miss Maniac" had to have been created before the marriage, given the dedication. Noakes in *CN* notes that the verse 'may be a sentimental poem of the day, but if so, has not been traced', 477. Lodge in *Inventing Edward Lear* writes that the '… original on which this storyboard is based has not been discovered …', 53. Without any definitive source for the text beyond Lear's own imagination, I have proceeded with analysis of the text in conjunction with the images; however, my analysis often hinges on the relationship between the text and images – see the brief discussion of methodology in the introduction. Lodge also analyses text from Miss Maniac; I feel we are both safe in doing so, especially considering the precedent set by analysis of the contrafactum in *Inventing Edward Lear.*

[16] Uglow, *Mr Lear*, 86-88.

[17] Leith Davis *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender: The Construction of Irish National Identity, 1724-1874* (2006), *Thomas Moore: Texts, Contexts, Hypertext.* eds. Benatti, Ryder, and Tonra (2013), as well as Vail's *Literary Relationship* and Jane Moore's volume on Moore in *British Satire, 1785-1840*, vol. 5 The Satires of Thomas Moore (2003) all re-examine the subversive nature, often in a dialogic and carnivalesque sense, of Moore's political agenda, frequently in relation to Byron's similar political stance. Critiques like Jean-Jacques Lecercle's *Philosophy of Nonsense* include foundational work on this aspect of nonsense literature, which I

The question of Irish nationalism is addressed in depth by Davis in *Music, Postcolonialism,* where he discusses Moore's presentation of a feminised 'Erin' in the *Irish Melodies*: 'This depiction of an "Erin" that fit into notions of domesticity also encouraged the image of Ireland as feminised, thus further reinforcing the gendered colonial relationship between Ireland and England'.[18] In addition, in his article ''Irish Bards and English Consumers: Thomas Moore's 'Irish Melodies and the Colonized Nation'", Davis describes Moore's representation of Erin not merely as feminised, but as a woman betrayed by England:

> As we saw in "Go Where Glory Waits Thee", there are poems which combine personal and political appeals. "Eveleen's Bower," for instance, can be seen as drawing upon the traditional allegorical image of Ireland as a woman wronged:
>
> Oh! weep for the hour,
> When to Eveleen's bower
> The Lord of the Valley with false vows came;
> The moon hid her light
> From the heavens that night,
> And wept behind her clouds o'er the maiden's shame,[19]

The Lord of the Valley, according to this interpretation, would be England, which has shamed and disregarded Ireland

How do Moore's and Byron's political writing influence Lear's early work specifically in "Miss Maniac"? My argument is grounded in Lear's habit of mimicry as an homage to favourite authors, as well as his parody of the Romantic verse style of those same authors.[20] The themes, and even phrases, that infuse Moore's and Byron's political and lyrical writing are reclassified in a progressively sophisticated set of subversive taxonomies, germinating as a seed in "Miss Maniac" and progressing to a more nuanced form that incorporates his knowledge of natural history in his later nonsense verse and stories. These proto-counterfactual taxonomies that Lear posited in "Miss Maniac" include the woman wronged, the English cad or betrayer, gender- and national-role play, and, finally, the limitations placed on reason and the self through the indulgence of passion.

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discuss in this dissertation regarding Lear's nonsense botany. These dialogic and carnivalesque aspects express the same kind of thought process present in Lear's counterfactual taxonomies, for the carnivalesque is an imagining of worlds and social roles turned upside-down and inside-out, or subverted, as I discussed in the introductory chapter.

[18] Leith Davis, *Music, Postcolonialism, and Gender: The Construction of Irish National Identity 1724-1874.* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006), 153-154.

[19] Davis, "Irish Bards and English Consumers: Thomas Moore's 'Irish Melodies' and the Colonized Nation." *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature.* vol. 24, no. 2 (1993): 19.

[20] O'Neill, "'One of the Dumms': Edward Lear and Romanticism," 51–69.

The lyrics from Moore's "Evaleen's Bower" from *Irish Melodies,* vol. 2 continue:

The clouds past soon
From the chaste cold moon,
And heaven smil'd again with her vestal flame;
But none will see the day
When the clouds shall pass away,
Which that dark hour left upon Eveleen's fame.

The white snow lay
On the narrow path-way,
When the Lord of the Valley crost over the moor;
And many a deep print
On the white snow's tint
Shew'd the track of his foot-step to Eveleen's door.
The next sun's ray
Soon melted away
Every trace on the path where the false Lord came;
But there's a light above,
Which alone can remove
That stain upon the snow of fair Eveleen's fame.[21]

Lear created his own illustrations for "Eveleen's Bower", reproduced in Herman Liebert's *Lear in the Original: Drawings and Limericks* (1975). However, this trope of the wronged woman was an issue that troubled him throughout his life – see Uglow's discussion of his poor opinion of Holman Hunt's treatment of his mistress who sat for *The Awakening Conscience* (1853).[22] Moore's "Eveleen's Bower" was a metaphor for Erin (an innocent woman) ruined by The Lord of the Valley (Britain). Echoes of Moore's heroine are seen in Miss Maniac, and The Lord of the Valley is represented by the cad who debauches Miss Maniac and then abandons her, pregnant and alone, to her fate.[23] Following are images of the cad and Miss Maniac:[24]

[21] Thomas Moore, *Irish Melodies, and a Melalogue upon National Music* (Dublin: William Power, 1820), 40–41, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b000543055;view=1up;seq=167.
[22] Uglow, *Mr Lear*, 271-272.
[23] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, discusses the resemblance that Miss Maniac's baby bears to the cad, being essentially just a '… comic copy of its roguish father's face, not a child's face at all …', 230.
[24] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

Figure 10 Edward Lear. "Miss Maniac".

In Figure 10 (drawings 15 and 16), Lear's text is as follows:

> Oh - who falsely — darkly
> Lured my frail fond heart
> Astray,
> Then left me like a broken flower,
> alone to waste away, — [25]

Like Moore's Eveleen whose snowy innocence was trampled by the Lord of the Valley, Miss Maniac's flowery innocence was broken in both verse and image by Lear's cad. For emphasis, Miss Maniac says:

> For love with all its pleasures
> Came, but ah! Its guilt came too,
> And peace – fair twin to innocence,
> no more my bosom knew.[26]

This could be a repetition of the innocence-betrayed trope, but Lear emphasises the Irish background of Miss Maniac by including the following visual cues of bogs, tumbledown Irish cottages, and stage-Irish depictions of Miss Maniac's father (Figures 11, 12, and 13):

[25] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript. NB I include a table of figures with provenance, holdings, details, etc. of images in Appendix III.
[26] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

Figure 11 “Miss Maniac”.

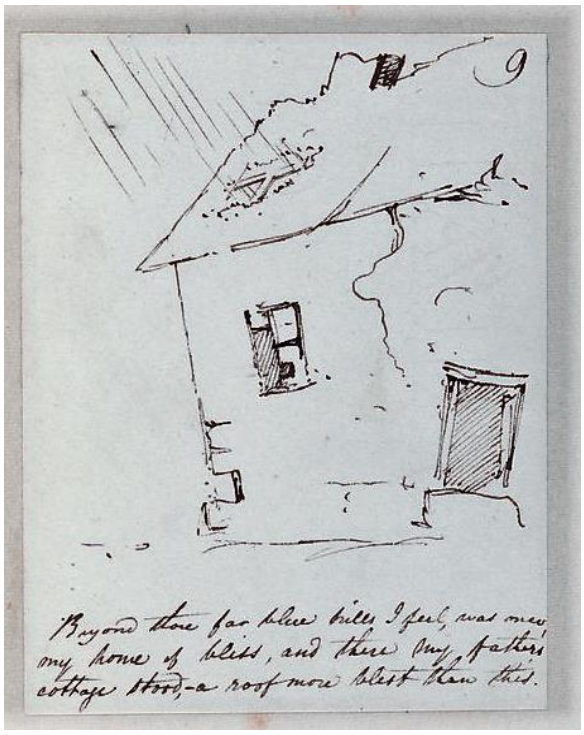

Figure 12 “Miss Maniac”.

Figure 13 "Miss Maniac".

And still I hear my father's
voice – as with a dreadful
Wrath

He cursed me with a bitter curse
and friendless drove me forth![27]

Lear's inclusion of these Irish references begs the question of his intentions with this piece written for Fanny Drewitt – a young Englishwoman who would have been familiar with Moore's *Melodies*. Given his earlier reference in Ann's letter to Earl Brougham and the generally liberal and tolerant views he expressed in his diaries and letters, was Lear purposely parodying Moore's theme of Ireland as the betrayed woman, just as he later created parodic verse mimicking the Romantic poets he so admired?

Further links to Moore's theme of a betrayed Ireland can be seen in the similarities in "Miss Maniac" to stanzas two, three, and four of Moore's "When first I met thee" from *Irish Melodies*, vol. 6:

When every tongue thy follies nam'd,
I fled th' unwelcome story;
Or found, in even the faults they blam'd,
Some gleams of future glory.
I still was true, when nearer friends
Conspir'd to wrong, to slight thee;
The heart, that now thy falsehoods rends,
Would then have bled to right thee.
But go, deceiver! go,–

[27] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

Some day, perhaps, thou'lt waken
From pleasure's dream, to know
The grief of hearts forsaken.

Even now, tho' youth its bloom has shed,
No lights of age adorn thee;
The few, who loved thee once, have fled,
And they who flatter scorn thee,
Thy midnight cup is pledg'd to slaves,
No genial ties enwreathe it;
The smiling there, like light on graves,
Has rank, cold hearts beneath it!
Go – go – tho' worlds were thine,
I would not now surrender
One taintless tear of mine
For all thy guilty splendour!

And days may come, though false one! yet,
When even those ties shall sever;
When thou wilt call, with vain regret,
On her thou'st lost for ever!
On her who, in thy fortunes' fall,
With smiles had still receiv'd thee,
And gladly died to prove the all
Her fancy first believed thee.
Go – go – 'tis vain to curse,
'Tis weakness to upbraid thee;
Hate cannot wish thee worse
Than guilt and shame have made thee.[28]

These stanzas are reminiscent of Miss Maniac's denunciation of the cad section:

Where art thou now? doth ever
thought, thy dark hour rush across,
of me, - forsaken – fallen me, – to
goad thee with remorse? —

Or has thou in the stream
of life, and mid scenes and
forms more sweet,
Forgot these tears that maddening
mourn, my guilt and thy deceit? —

Go – lull more hearts with hopes
of bliss, undreaming of a snare,
Till they awake to shame
and feel – the pangs such bliss
must bear.

[28] Moore, *Irish Melodies, and a Melalogue upon National Music*, 148–50.

> Deceiver! Deceiver! — I loved thee once,
> therefore I will not curse; —
> but if my soul were bared
> to thee — Hell could not wish
> thee worse! — [29]

Lear separates Moore's line 'go, deceiver, go!'' and repeats instead 'Deceiver!', but he uses the exact phrase 'wish thee worse' from Moore's song. Both verses invoke virtuous self-restraint in wishing harm on their betrayer, firm in the faith that retribution will be visited, karma-like, on the false lover.

Ireland is again an innocent girl betrayed by England, a theme which also figured in Byron's *Childe Harold* and to which Lear years later referred in *Journals of a landscape painter in Albania &c* (1852) with his tale of the sad fate of the Suliot women of Parga, who were betrayed by British imperial machinations.[30] Moore had patterned his betrayer in "Eveleen's Bower" on Beau Brummel, and indeed, as Vail argues, on George IV himself. Vail also references Byron's sympathy for the Irish cause in his discussion of Moore's and Byron's political writing.[31] By returning time and again to this theme—England's betrayal of colonised nations, Lear echoes his favourite authors' stances on Britain's colonial actions.

Lear intended to show that Miss Maniac was from Ireland. Her betrayer, in contrast, is depicted as an English dandy with monocle, top-hat and walking stick. In the following image, Lear presents his readers with a Beau Brummel-like character:[32]

[29] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.
[30] George Gordon Byron, *The Works of Lord Byron, Vol. II* (London: John Murray, 1905), Canto I, Stanzas LIV-LIX, https://www-gutenberg-org.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/files/25340/25340-h/25340-h.htm.
[31] Vail, pp. 96-97.
[32] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

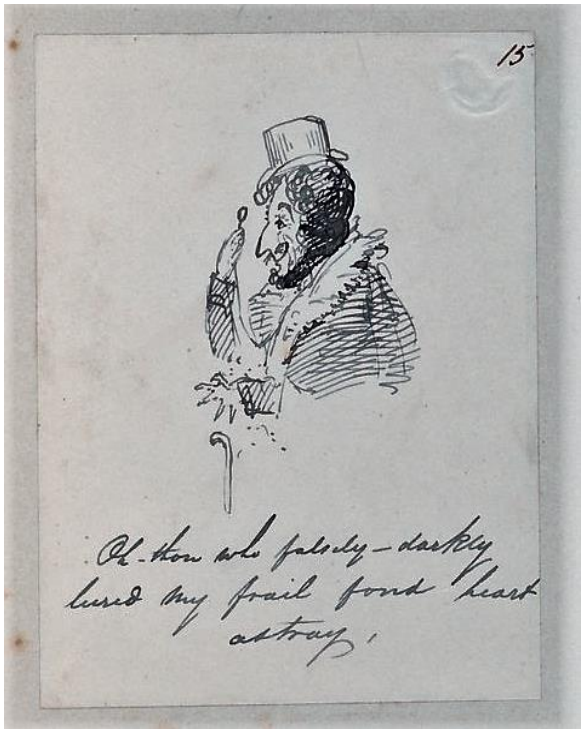

Figure 14 "Miss Maniac".

The deliberate depiction of the betrayer dandy preening himself in front of a mirror is reminiscent of Moore's verse – "The Looking-glasses" from *Fables for a Holy Alliance* (1823). In this verse, Moore creates a kingdom in which the nobles rule by right of their supposed beauty, and the common people are deemed ugly. However, mirrors are outlawed, so that the people cannot know themselves. Moore writes:

> The cause whereof, among all classes,
> Was simply this—these island elves
> Had never yet seen looking-glasses,
> And, therefore, did not *know themselves.*[33]

In the verse, a ship carrying mirrors founders on the coast of the island, and people begin to look at themselves. Their rulers try to outlaw mirrors in vain:

> In vain—their laws might just as well
> Have been paste paper on the shelves;
> That fatal fright had broke the spell,
> People had look'd—and knew themselves.[34]

Eventually, the people become aware of the fallacy of the rulers' beauty and divine right:

> Of all to whom old Time discloses
> A truth they should have sooner known—

[33] Jane Moore, *British Satire, 1789-1840*, vol. 5. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2003), 236-40.
[34] Moore, *British Satire*, 236-40.

That Kings have neither rights nor noses
A whit diviner than their own.[35]

With the scales removed from their eyes, a process of self-revelation begins and a dawning realisation that their rulers are no different than they. The island's people are freed from the tyranny of the rulers. Eventually, the people write political lampoons and satires regarding the rulers and their illegitimate claims of divine right to rule based on their (now disproved) superior beauty.

At the beginning of the piece, Moore writes that the beauty of the rulers had been set down in law:

Of course, if a knave but hinted
That the King's nose was turn'd awry,
Or that the Queen (God save us) squinted—
The judges doom'd that knave to die.[36]

With Moore's above stanza coupled with his predilection for lampooning the Regent, I would like to bring the gaze back to Lear's images of Miss Maniac's betrayer above.[37]

The cad and his generous nose are prominently displayed:[38]

Figure 15 "Miss Maniac".

[35] Moore, *British Satire*, 236-240.
[36] Moore, *British Satire*, 236-40.
[37] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.
[38] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

but in the mirror image and as *he* looks at *himself* in the mirror, his nose is progressively smaller and less hooked, and his torso much slimmer than the cad we as the readers see…

Figure 16 "Miss Maniac".

This self-deception on the part of the cad recalls the nobles in Moore's verse who are deceived about their looks and their divine right to rule. Does Lear engage in an early exploration of self-identity with Miss Maniac, a topic which he explores further throughout his nonsense? In what I contend is a deliberate juxtaposition, Miss Maniac talks about how in her youth and innocence she was as lovely as a flower. Even given changing standards of beauty, it would be difficult to call the below (Figure 17) picture lovely.[39]

[39] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, also notes the absurdity of someone with the 'loveliness' of Miss Maniac being seduced, 230.

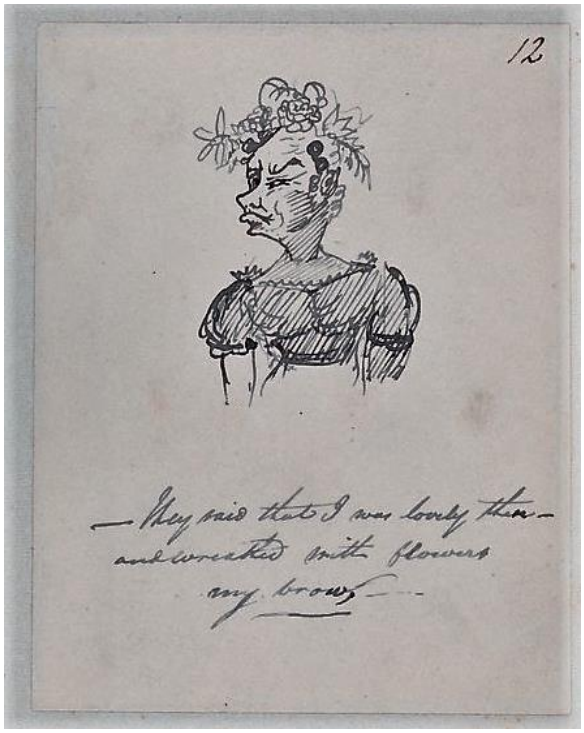

Figure 17 "Miss Maniac".

They said that I was lovely then —
And wreathed with flowers
My brow —— [40]

In "The Looking-glasses", Moore writes,

But so it was—a settled case—
Some Act of Parliament, passed smugly,
Had voted them a beauteous race,
And all their faithful subjects ugly.[41]

Recall that Moore had also written:

The cause whereof, among all classes,
Was simply this—these island elves
Had never yet seen looking-glasses,
And, therefore, did not know themselves.[42]

When Miss Maniac remembers herself, despite what 'they' say, the image we are given is unattractive, in complete contrast to the cad who, like the king in "The Looking-glasses", might say,

And took it on his Royal word
That they were frights, and he was beauteous.[43]

[40] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.
[41] Moore, *British Satire*, 236-40.
[42] Moore, 236-40.
[43] Moore, 236-40.

With this juxtaposition of beauty and ugliness, and Lear's pointedly risible drawings that belie his text, we see how he reclassifies English and Irish physiognomy in a counterfactual taxonomy of the racist images of the Irish that were so rampant in nineteenth-century England. Recall the stage-Irish images that Lear created for Miss Maniac's father:

Figure 18 "Miss Maniac".

Miss Maniac, despite her self-image, is as lovely as a flower, and the Cad, despite *his* self-image, is hideous.[44] We see, too, the effect of those racist images on Miss Maniac's self-image – like in Moore's verse.

Uglow's discussion of "Miss Maniac" refers to this early work as one in which 'Above all Lear showed the terror of madness and disappearance of self'.[45] She also writes that 'Beneath his parodic wit the anxiety showed through'.[46] At the time he created "Miss Maniac", Lear had been suffering for ten years with epilepsy, a disease that includes periods of the loss of self due to seizures. Lear must have felt great sympathy for the common people

[44] The disconnect in Miss Maniac's self-image and the text is an example of the blank space or gap and meaning that characterises Lear's work. The symbiosis between text and images of Miss Maniac and Moore's rulers is typical of Lear's counterfactualities.
[45] Uglow, *Mr Lear*, 88.
[46] Uglow, *Mr Lear*, 88.

of Moore's looking-glass island, who for so long 'did not *know themselves*'.[47] Lear often depicted himself as ugly and clumsy, yet surviving portraits and photographs belie this image he had of himself, mirroring Miss Maniac's poor self-image. It is also easy to imagine Lear harbouring fear of the madness that was often associated with epilepsy, and the final images show Miss Maniac suffering a cold-water treatment to cool both her passions and her mania:[48]

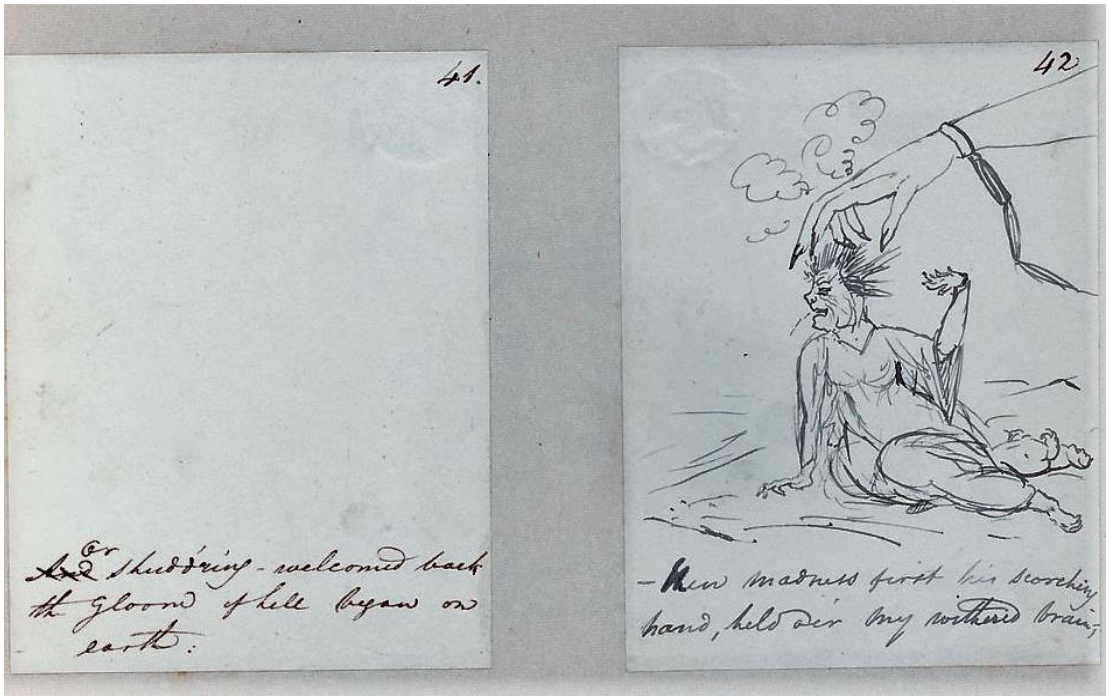

Figure 19 "Miss Maniac".

~~And~~ [or] shuddering – welcomed back
the gloom of hell began on
earth.

— then madness first his scorching
hand, held o'er my withering brain —

[47] Moore, *British Satire 1785-1840*, vol. 5, 236–40; Adrian Paterson, "Yeats & Crazy Jane: Music and Madness," (*School of English and Creative Arts Research Seminar Series*, National University of Ireland Galway: Paterson, 2021). Paterson provides an interesting discussion of the stock character in the grips of madness that was often portrayed in broadsides such as "Crazy Jane: A Favourite Song" and "Julia's Lamentation". The longevity of the trope of the woman betrayed and her portrayal as being of Irish heritage places Lear, through his use of this prevalent trope, in a direct line to twentieth-century poets like Yeats. Paterson connects the idea of madness and loss of sense to wisdom that is akin to Miss Maniac's ability to engage with scientific impossibilities through the loss of her reason. Additionally, Paterson makes the link between Yeats' poetry and sung/performed/printed music similar to what we see in Lear's work, as well as in his contrafactum.

[48] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

Figure 20 "Miss Maniac".

ah - ha! It was a deadly touch —
but it never cooled again!

Another link (pun intended) between Lear's "Miss Maniac" and Moore's verse is chain imagery.[49] Uglow writes that Lear and his sister Ann 'enjoyed the spoofs of Byron's Orientalism, Wordsworth's ballads and Tom Moore's songs in *The London Magazine*, …'.[50] *The London Magazine* reviewed Moore and Byron extensively, including a section titled "The Literary Police" which satirizes Byron and 'his *pal* Tom Moore' and a review of *The Loves of the Angels* in the February 1823 issue.[51] In Moore's 1823 *The Loves of the Angels* in "The First Angel's Story", Moore uses the following lines to describe the constraint 'the angel feels at the sight of the object of his passion:

I pray'd, I wept, but all in vain;
For me the spell had power no more,
There seem'd around me some dark chain
Which still, as I essay'd to soar,
Baffled, alas, each wild endeavour :
Dead lay my wings, as they have lain
Since that sad hour, and will remain—

[49] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, discusses chain imagery, writing that 'The pictures form a comic critique of performance and make the protagonist a bad mime, whose immersion in her own overheated sentimental feelings seems to prefigure, even deserve her final descent into the burning passion of madness', 230.
[50] Uglow, *Mr Lear*, 25.
[51] *The London Magazine*, 7 (February 1823): 157-160. http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=londonmag.

So wills the' offended God – for ever![52]

The angel avers that 'There seem'd around me some dark chain' which 'baffles' or prevents him from action. Compare this to Lear's "Miss Maniac":

Around my brain there is a chain,
and o'er my fevered soul a dark=
=ness like that solemn gloom
which once through Egypt stole;

Sometimes I feel but know not why
a fire within me burns, and visions
fierce and terrible, pursue wheree'r I turn;

Then I forget that earth is earth,
and that myself am life, And
nature seems to die away in
darkness, hell and strife.

But when my phrenzied fit
is o'er, a dreary hour comes
on, ---

A consciousness of unknown things, ---
of reason overthrown.
Cold runs my blood from vein
to vein – all vacant is ~~[?]~~ mine eye
And in my ears a sound of
death, and dread eternity![53]

Miss Maniac also feels a kind of restraint represented by a 'chain'; Lear again separates Moore's line by removing the 'dark' to an adjectival phrase modifying Miss Maniac's chain, as opposed to Moore's simpler adjective/noun pair 'dark chain'. Time becomes an exacerbating factor in both verses, when the imposition of the chain is succeeded by a 'dreary hour' for Miss Maniac as opposed to the angel's 'sad hour', which reinforces the stifling imposed on both by the 'chain'. Each set of verses ends the episode with the forecast of an unending sentence of this chained bondage, Miss Maniac's with 'eternity', the angel's with 'forever'.

Moore's angel is battling the constraints placed on him by the innocence and goodness of the object of his passion, but Miss Maniac is fighting the loss of her reason to the vagaries of the passion she feels for the cad:[54]

[52] Thomas Moore, *The Loves of the Angels, A Poem* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1823), 25, https://archive.org/details/lovesangelsapoe03moorgoog/page/n7.
[53] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.
[54] Lear, "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

Figure 21 "Miss Maniac".

Around my brain there is a chain,
And o'er my fevered soul, a dark=
=ness like that solemn gloom
which once through Egypt stole;

Sometimes I feel but know not why
a fire within me burns, and visions
fierce and terrible, pursue where'ere I turn;

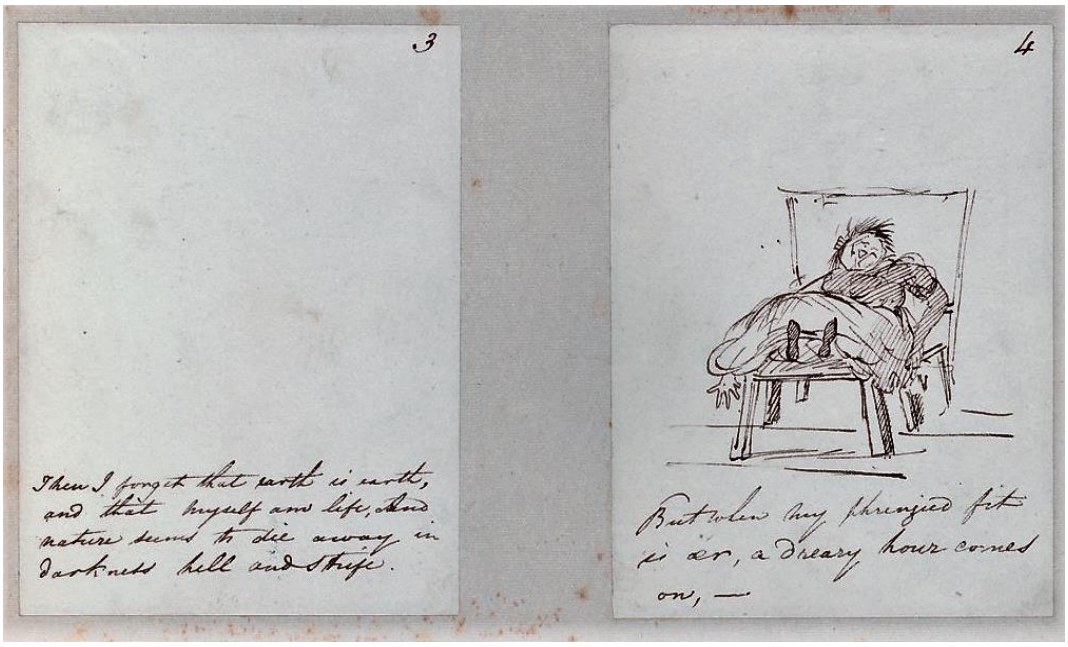

Figure 22 "Miss Maniac".

Then I forget that earth is earth,
and that myself am life, And
nature seems to die away in
darkness hell and strife.

But when my phrenzied fit
is o'er, a dreary hour comes
on, ---

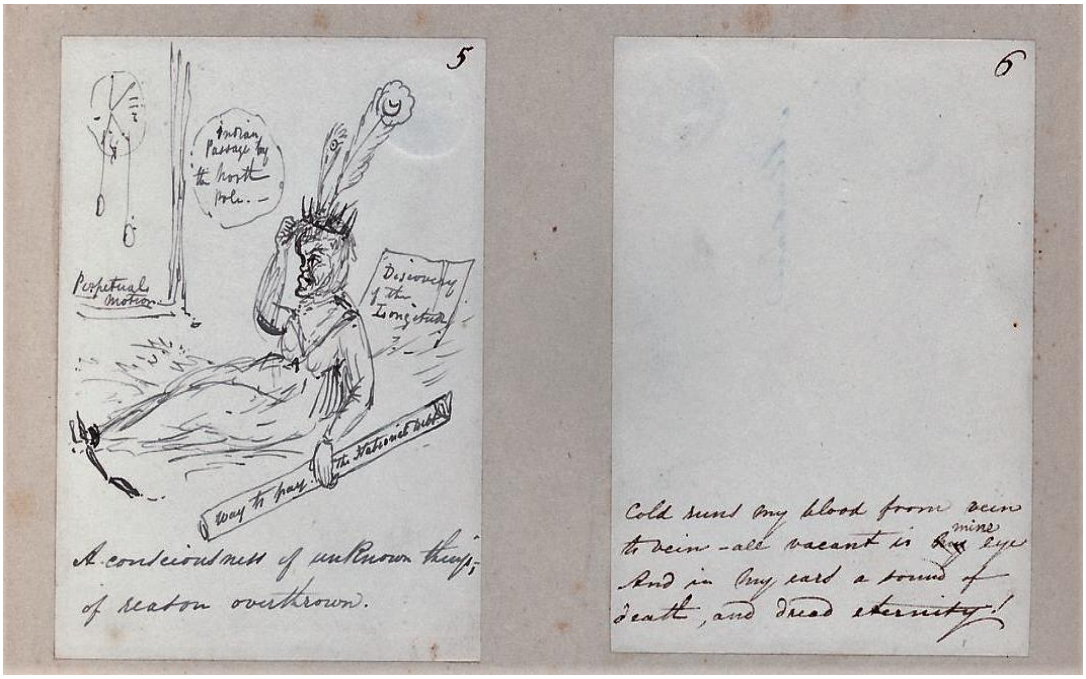

Figure 23 “Miss Maniac”.

A consciousness of unknown things, ---
Of reason overthrown.

Cold runs my blood from vein
To vein – all vacant is ~~[?]~~ mine eye
And in my ears a sound of
death, and dread eternity!

These sets of images and verse may mark the initial stage of Lear’s life-long fascination with finding sense in nonsense. Miss Maniac’s intellect has been chained, as we see with Lear’s first image/text set. In the third set, although her brain has been chained, she still engages with her reason. However, Lear shows that when her reason is ‘overthrown’, she is engaging in scientific discourse with problems that in the early nineteenth century (and some to this day) are impossible to resolve: perpetual motion, a passage to India via the North Pole, accurately calculating longitude, and resolving the national debt. Here are the impossibilities enlarged:[55]

[55] Lear, “Miss Maniac” manuscript.

Figure 24 "Miss Maniac".

Lear's jumble of images attempts to engage with scientifically nonsensical goals, and Miss Maniac speaks of her reason being 'overthrown'. What is Lear trying to convey? That her reason is overthrown *because* she is engaging with impossible scientific conundrums – nonsense? Or that, exactly the opposite, because her reason *is* overthrown by her passion, she is able to solve these impossible scientific problems by embracing the sense of nonsense? It is here, through the nonsense of solving these seemingly impossible questions, that Lear moves from a parody of Moore's Ireland as woman betrayed to referencing Byron's "To the Earl of [Clare]". How do Lear's lines compare to Byron's seventh stanza as follows in this verse from *Hours of Idleness*?

> 'Tis mine to waste on love my time,
> Or vent my reveries in rhyme,
> Without the aid of Reason;
> For Sense and Reason, (Critics know it,)
> Have quitted every amorous Poet,
> Nor left a thought to seize on.[56]

Byron writes that he invents his rhyme 'Without the aid of Reason' and that 'Sense and Reason (Critics know it) | Have quitted every amorous Poet'. Byron seems to be advocating the absence of sense here. Moreover, in the following stanza, Byron defends Moore's verse

[56] George Gordon Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. McGann and Weller, Barry, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 94–98; Vail, 35–36.

and nonsense in the persona of Tom Little from Moore's *The Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Little, Esq.* (1801):

> Poor LITTTLE! sweet, melodious bard!
> Of late esteem'd it monstrous hard
> That he, who sang before all;
> He who the lore of love expanded,
> By dire Reviewers should be branded
> As void of wit and moral.[57]

Did Lear take this notion of nonsense further in "Miss Maniac" with her reason 'overthrown'? Indeed, did his idea of sense in nonsense first awaken its fluttering heart with this type of overturning of reason, which Byron advocates in "To the Earl of [Clare]" and in his defence of Moore? Lear, even with this early work, posits the solving of the scientifically impossible with the loss of reason that Miss Maniac experiences, providing a counterfactual taxonomy – that of finding reason and sense in madness and passion – a notion at complete odds with the world of the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason that are referenced by his images of scientific pursuits like finding a passage to the North Pole. Additionally, the idea of scientific genius associated with madness here point to a trope akin to Shelley's Frankenstein. Was Lear's use of the North Pole a reference to Shelley?

It is useful to recall Vail's discussion of Moore's influence on Byron, when he writes of the irreverent attitude taken in Moore's *The Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Little, Esq.* Vail writes, '"Nonsense" plays with the supernatural romantic lyric in order to undermine its legitimacy, just as the volume as a whole presents itself as a collection of occasional poems in order to discredit the idea of poetic sincerity'.[58] Vail further argues that Byron modelled his own poetic persona on Little.[59] Vail's discussion of the intent to 'undermine its legitimacy' and 'discredit the idea of poetic sincerity' can equally be applied to Lear's verse, recalling the work in this dissertation, as well as O'Neill's chapter in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* and Minslow's work on heteroglossia.

The Bakhtinian carnivalesque is also present in the gender- and national-role play that Lear includes in "Miss Maniac".[60] The images and roles of the English fop that Lear presents to his readers are ones usually reserved for female characters: preening in a mirror (See Figure 16 above) and sitting primly with a group of ladies in a sitting room:

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[57] Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, 1980, 1:96.
[58] Vail, *The Literary Relationship,* 23.
[59] Vail, *The Literary Relationship,* 24.
[60] This aspect of the relationship between Miss Maniac and the cad can be linked to the alternative masculinities I discussed in the theory section. Additionally, Lear revisits the effects of colonialism in "The Story of the Four Little Children Went Round the World", which I discuss in depth in chapter 4.

Figure 25 "Miss Maniac".

Miss Maniac, in contrast, is presented to the readers in both female and male roles. Lear gives us a Miss Maniac as innocent maid, fallen woman, and unwed mother, but also a Miss Maniac in the masculine role of engaging in scientific discourse with the use of her (un)reason. With this role reversal, Lear reclassifies Ireland as a wronged female into a broader whole, capable of encompassing both male and female roles. At the same time, Lear reduces England, represented by the fop, into a set of stereotypical female roles. Lear's play with gender *and* national roles uses the parody of Romantic verse in a counterfactual taxonomy, reclassifying the Irish-English colonial relationship.

As I discussed in the theoretical section of this dissertation, the structure of counterfactual thinking in the philosophy of logic and science and in nonsense literature criticism is a source of robust discussion. In fact, in the philosophy of science and logic, this structural approach is vital to establishing the causality that is an inherent aspect of counterfactuals. Brown in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, addresses the structure of Lear's limericks as follows:

> Lear's limericks each consist of three categorical propositions. The first rhyming couplet, which occupies the opening lines, and the second, contained by the third line, form a pair of premises that yield ostensibly new knowledge through the new

> adverb or adjective that in the conclusion often conditions the formulaic name of its singular species … [61]

Brown goes on to argue that in the limericks, Lear always returns to the original term of his first proposition, but an enhanced, or as I term it, reclassified version of that same term. However, in my analysis of "Miss Maniac", I have determined that this return to a reclassified original in his counterfactual taxonomies is also present in this early work of Lear's, indicating an early engagement with poetic forms and structural devices that carries through to the other works I analyse in this dissertation. Recall that at the beginning of the piece, Lear provides the following images and verse:

Figure 26 "Miss Maniac".

Around my brain there is a chain,
And o'er my fevered soul, a dark=
=ness like that solemn gloom
which once through Egypt stole;

Sometimes I feel but know not why
a fire within me burns, and visions
fierce and terrible, pursue wheree're I turn;

In these images, Miss Maniac is presented with the products seen in many types of Romantic, even Gothic, imagery – chains and monsters. Later Lear shows a Miss Maniac who, though still out of her wits or perhaps because she has abandoned reason, is able to engage with scientific impossibilities:

[61] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 25. Brown uses the term 'hermetic' in relation to Lear's limericks.

Figure 27 "Miss Maniac".

She even appears to be scratching her temple in contemplation. In the final image and verse of "Miss Maniac", Lear presents the readers with an image of Miss Maniac, still in the grips of her mania, but with the knowledge that she has engaged with scientific discourse in that mania, perhaps solving impossibilities *because* she has disengaged her reason to imagine impossible worlds where things like perpetual motion are possible. Notice that in the image below (Figure 28), Miss Maniac, undergoing the latest of treatments, is flanked by two scientific inventions: that of Fahrenheit's mercury thermometer and a fan system labelled with the words 'ventilation in improved systems'. Both pieces of technology were in use at the time, unlike the impossibilities in the image of Miss Maniac that Lear uses in the middle of the piece.[62] Significantly, Miss Maniac is shown with a 'cooling draught' in her hand but appears to be tipping out the contents of the draught, not onto the spoon, but onto the floor. Is Lear suggesting that Miss Maniac is resisting the efforts of mainstream science to cool her passions so that she can continue to engage with the scientific impossibilities from the middle image? Has he reclassified the trope of madness and passion often seen in Romantic verse into the sophisticated counterfactual of this being the state of mind necessary to engage in

[62] M. van der Tempel et al., "Ventilation Techniques in the 19th Century: Learning from the Past," (Vrije Universiteit Brussel: Department of Architectural Engineering, Belgium, 2011), https://doi.org/10.2495/STR110231.

science – the ability to imagine the impossible? Regardless of Lear's intention, the return to a reclassified original term in Lear's counterfactual propositions is present in this early work.

Figure 28 "Miss Maniac".

ah - ha! It was a deadly touch —
but it never cooled again!

Romantic Orientalism unite Moore and Byron with Lear in another example of these serial reclassifications of his authorial self and Romantic themes. The ways in which Moore's *Lalla Rookh* and Byron's *Turkish Tales* influenced Lear's work in "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" and "The Jumblies" comprise the next section of this chapter. Recent discussion of the legacies of Romantic thought seen in "The Dong" include Sara Lodge's discussion of the piece and its sibling work "The Jumblies". Lodge writes that "The Jumblies" is an homage to childhood, that 'Childhood is that Xanadu (which sounds rather like 'Far and few') from which there is no way back', calling on perhaps the most famous of the Orientalist poems of the age.[63] Pointing directly to Moore's influence on "The Dong", Lodge compares it to Moore's ballad "The Lake of the Dismal Swamp" (1806). Michael

[63] Lodge, Sara, *Inventing Edward Lear,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019), 74.

O'Neill in his chapter "'One of the Dumms': Edward Lear and Romanticism" from *Play of Poetry* quotes "The Dong", writing that, 'The shambolic heir to Romantic questers has earned his nonsensical spurs, now that, as he puts it, "What little sense I once possessed | Has quite gone out of my head"'.[64] O'Neill calls this an opposite to Byron, who, O'Neil writes, claims 'more and more sense enters his head as he loses the capacity for surrender to the heart's impulses'.[65] This treatment of sense and madness undergoes a reclassification in "The Dong" as I discuss below. O'Neil closes his chapter in *Play of Poetry*:

> His [Lear's] ability to draw differently on poets as various as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake, Byron, Shelley, and Keats, not to mention Beddoes, Moore, Hood, and later, Tennyson, contributes to his creation of one of the most individualistic poetic voices in English poetry.[66]

I expand O'Neil's stance to contend that Lear was quite capable in one piece of calling successfully upon, not just multiple poets, but multiple works of individual poets, in one poem. I do see in "The Jumblies" and "The Dong" the larger Romantic themes which O'Neil and Lodge discuss and agree with their conclusions. However, my analysis will focus on the echoes of Romantic Orientalist thought that I perceive in Moore's and Byron's influence in "The Dong". I argue that Lear created his own parody of Moore's and Byron's parodic in *Lalla Rookh* and *The Turkish Tales* in a counterfactual taxonomy of societal hierarchies and power relationships. Instead of on a national or East/West level, however, as Moore and Byron were doing, Lear is subverting the status quo on the individual level – the self. In effect, Lear reclassifies Moore's and Byron's parodies of Orientalism to equate the oppression suffered by the East and Ireland with the fate of the self/individual, cementing his role as an active figure in the transition from the legacies of Romanticism on concepts of self and nature a Victorian search for definition of self through the creation of 'the other' that coincided with the expansion of empire in the nineteenth-century, as well as the obsession with collection, classification, and display of colonial resources.

Regarding his Oriental tale, *Lalla Rookh,* in a letter to Mary Godfrey in August of 1813, Moore wrote a lament regarding Byron beating him to the punch.[67] This would prove a true prophecy regarding Moore's work, which was immediately seen by critics as an

[64] O'Neill, "'One of the Dumms': Edward Lear and Romanticism," 68.
[65] O'Neill, 68.
[66] O'Neill, 69.
[67] Vail, *Literary Relationship,* 106.

imitation of Byron's *Turkish Tales.*[68] Despite this comparison, it was positively received by critics and proved enormously popular throughout Europe.[69] Byron himself, although professing a positive reception, nevertheless was uncomfortable with the piece, as Vail discusses in *The Literary Relationship*.[70] It took Moore longer to finish the work than he anticipated, so that by the time of publication (after Byron's *Turkish Tales*), it was celebrated because it 'could probably not help but exhibit some of those qualities of Byron's tales that Moore and the public had found the most appealing and impressive'.[71] Additionally, Vail writes that Byron sent Moore reference works on the Levant, which he had used extensively in the notes of his Oriental works; hence, all the footnotes in *Lalla Rookh* are another point reminiscent of Byron.[72] However, here I would like to return to Vail's discussion of the influences and counterinfluences at work in the shared parodic elements of Moore and Byron in the context of their Orientalist works. Vail writes:

> … but Moore's uniquely sceptical treatment of Romantic self-expression had an even more lasting effect on Byron's lyric in that it impelled Byron toward the development of what McGann calls Byron's "lyrical dandyism": his radical rejection of the criterion of Wordsworthian sincerity and his understanding of the lyric poem as a mask or a pose'.[73]

This is a powerful theme forming the basis of the agendas which Byron and Moore utilised in subverting British Romantic Orientalism and which Lear also found useful for "The Jumblies" and "The Dong".

How does Lear engage Moore's and Byron's parodic and subversive agendas in "The Dong", and its sibling "The Jumblies"? I argue that by alluding to vocabulary, imagery, and Orientalist tropes, Lear creates a parody of the Orientalism in Byron's and Moore's parodies, creating counterfactual taxonomies through which he reclassifies their broader efforts to undermine British imperialist establishment of the 'other' into a critique of society's imperialism over the self or the individual. Similarly, my article "The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo's Journey: Destinations of the Romantic and the Gothic in Edward Lear's Journals of a Landscape Painter in Albania &c (1851)" establishes patterns of allusion to Byron, discussing

[68] Tonra, *Write My Name: Authorship in the Poetry of Thomas Moore*, 79-80. Tonra includes an interesting insight into the role that Byron played in the publication and commercialisation of *Lalla Rookh*, as well as the best-selling status of Moore's *Lalla Rookh*.
[69] Francesca Benatti, Sean Ryder, and Justin Tonra, *Thomas Moore: Texts, Contexts, Hypertexts*, 136.
[70] Vail, *Literary Relationship*, 103-104.
[71] Vail, *Literary Relationship*, 104.
[72] This is a habit which Lear might be said to mimic faithfully in his travel journals; all three authors make copious use footnotes. Justin Tonra discusses Moore's use of notes in *Write My Name: Authorship in the Poetry of Thomas Moore*, 16.
[73] Vail, *Literary Relationship*, 12-13.

how Lear's engagement with Byron's work carried through to his travel literature.[74] With this reclassification, Lear offers an alternative to the orthodox taxonomies that governed nineteenth-century society. My analysis focuses on the physical appearance of the Dong's infamous prosthetic, as well as its treatment in his verse, and the creation of placenames and impossible beings postulated in Lear's impossible worlds, which I argue are references to notes that Moore and Byron included in *Lalla Rookh* and *The Turkish Tales*. The final points of my analysis provide a discussion of the connections between "The Dong" and "The Jumblies" via Byron's Oriental tales, specifically *The Corsair*, *The Giaour*, and *Lara*, as well as the ways in which these two songs conform to the same counterfactual structure as "Miss Maniac".

In his essay "The Luminosity of the Nose", D. Graham Burnett discusses the critic M. H. Abrams' work regarding prevalent metaphors in the early nineteenth century

> grossly speaking, out went the Platonizing image of the mind-as-mirror (which epitomized the aspirations of the mimetic paradigm itself, and with it the dream of an art that could be "true to nature"); in came the Romantic image of the mind as a shining lamp ….[75]

Burnett makes the connection to the Dong's shining nose as being understood to 'participate in, and perhaps even advance, the general privileging of opticality in the domains of sense—a hegemonic philosophical and aesthetic program that only came under real critical scrutiny in the twentieth century'.[76] Yet with a typical reclassification of themes often seen in Romantic verse, Lear moves from a mind mirror to a mind lamp by shifting the mind to his character's

[74] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 25, 83; Tock, "The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo's Journey: Destinations of the Romantic and the Gothic in Edward Lear's Journals of a Landscape Painter in Albania &c (1851)," 4. Lodge writes that 'contemporary reviews alert the modern reader to the range of echoes that nineteenth-century readers heard in Lear's work, and their competing identifications of him as a master of genre fiction, whose pervading melancholy' was Byronic', p 83. Additionally, Lodge writes 'In particular he knew by heart and parodied the songs of Thomas Moore and Thomas Haynes Bayly … Moore and Haynes Bayly are far more important to Lear's version of Romanticism than Wordsworth', p 25. In my article 'The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò's Journey', I write: 'This travel journal, I contend, was a literary experiment for Lear in which he stretches the boundaries of his travel literature and his role as a travel author and artist into a sampler of a Romantic trek through the little-known Balkan peninsula. Combining threads of Romantic travel; a pastiche of the peoples, places, and events in Byron's travels; and Gothic storytelling, Lear weaves these different threads into patterns reflective of his own travels in the Balkans and his complicated relationship with Romantic literature', 4.

[75] D. Graham Burnett, "The Luminosity of the Nose: Edward Lear and the Disco Ball," *Cabinet*, vol. 64 (February, 2017), 90. Although at first glance this shift is complicated by Victorian thought emphasising observation and ocular proof, I maintain that this shift is in fact in keeping with the transition from the Romantic inner search for self (e.g. self-observation in a mirror) to an outward search using the spotlight of the mind. This reiterates, too the developmental progression of Lear's counterfactual taxonomic practice, reflected in the Dong's outward search and especially in the observational and imperial adventures of "the Four Little Children".

[76] Burnett, 87.

nasal appendage.[77] And it is this confluence of lamp/lantern/luminosity that provides an enthralling discussion of the Mooreian influences in Lear's work. Lear writes of the Dong:

> Then, through the vast and gloomy dark,
> There moves what seems a fiery spark,
> A lonely spark with silvery rays
> Piercing the coal-black night, –
> A Meteor strange and bright: –
> Hither and thither the vision strays,
> A single lurid light.
>
> Slowly it wanders, – pauses, – creeps, –
> Anon it sparkles, – flashes and leaps;
> And ever as onward it gleaming goes
> A light on the Bong-tree stems it throws.
> And those who watch at that midnight hour
> From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,
> Cry, as the wild light passes along, –
> 'The Dong! – the Dong!
> The wandering Dong through forest goes!
> The Dong! the Dong!
> The Dong with a luminous Nose!'[78]

and later he reinforces the unique qualities of the light-giving nose, as well as its unique construction:

> He gathered the bark of the Twangum Tree
> On the flowery plain that grows.
> And he wove him a wondrous Nose, –
> A Nose as strange as a Nose could be!
> Of vast proportions and painted red,
> And tied with cords to the back of his head.
> – In a hollow rounded space it ended
> With a luminous Lamp within suspended,
> All fenced about
> With a bandage stout
> To prevent the wind from blowing it out; –
> And with holes all round to send the light,
> In gleaming rays on the dismal night.[79]

Moving beyond the absurdity of a nose-penis 'of vast proportions and painted red', I find these passages to be a trove of references to Moore's *Lalla Rookh*. Moore also invokes the

[77] Although Burnett concedes the general associations of the nose with the penis, he cautions against placing too much emphasis on the meaning of the word 'dong' itself, based on the post-Lear emergence of the current meaning of the word. Although I agree here with Burnett's argument, that *association* between the nose and the penis is nevertheless well-established and relevant, and I proceed hereon accordingly. Laurence Stern's *The life and opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman* (1759) is a case in point.

[78] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 422.

[79] Lear, 424.

terms 'lamp' or 'lantern' frequently in *LR*.[80] For instance, in *The Veiled Prophet of Khorasan* Moore discusses the ruse that Mokanna has played on Zelica:

> Of late none found such favour in his sight
> As the young Priestess; and though, since that night
> When the death-caverns echoed every tone
> Of the dire oath that made her all his own,
> The Imposter, sure of his infatuate prize,
> Had, more than once, thrown off his soul's disguise,
> And utter'd such unheavenly, monstrous things,
> As even across the desperate wanderings
> Of a weak intellect, whose lamp was out,
> Threw startling shadows of dismay and doubt;— [81]

with a clear connection to the trope of the mind as a lamp. Lear too invokes the themes of a loss of sense and lamps, for he writes in "The Dong":

> But when the sun was low in the West,
> The Dong arose and said; –
> – 'What little sense I once possessed
> Has quite gone out of my head!' –

In an instance of counterfactual taxonomy of themes of sense and reason often seen in Romantic verse, the Dong's lamp, unlike Zelica's, is ignited *after* he abandons sense. In the following excerpt from *Paradise and the Peri*, Moore writes:

> …
> "Then turn to me, my own love, turn.
> "Before, like thee, I fade and burn ;
> "Cling to these yet cool lips, and share
> "The last pure life that lingers there !"
> She fails—she sinks—as dies the lamp
> In charnel airs, or cavern-damp,
> So quickly do his baleful sighs
> Quench all the sweet light of her eyes.
> …[82]

Again, the mind or the soul is represented by a lamp that is snuffed out upon death. The lamp and lantern as the mind is an underlying theme throughout not just the text of *Lalla Rookh*. Moore also provides extensive notes regarding socio-cultural references to lamps and lanterns that I argue provided Lear with some useful images, both in his text and his illustration of the

[80] I use the following edition of *Lalla Rookh*: https://archive.org/stream/lallrookhanorien00mooruoft?ref=ol
[81] Thomas Moore, *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1861), 32, https://archive.org/stream/lallrookhanorien00mooruoft?ref=ol#page/n7/mode/2up.
[82] Moore, 142.

Dong's nose. In *Paradise and the Peri*, Moore speaks of the 'Hindoo girl' who sets a lamp floating on the river as a way to divine the fate of her lover. He provides these notes:

> Note 58, p.48.—*Yamtcheou.*— "The feast of Lanterns is celebrated at Yamtcheou with more magnificence than anywhere else : and the report goes, that the illuminations there are so splendid, that an Emperor once, not daring openly to leave his Court to go thither, committed himself with the Queen and several Princesses of his family into the hands of a magician, who promised to transport them thither in a trice. …"[83]

And:

> Note 60. p. 49. .—*Chinese illuminations.*— "The vulgar ascribe it to an accident that happened in the family of a famous mandarin, whose daughter walking one evening upon the shore of a lake, fell in and was drowned ; this afflicted father, with his family, ran thither, and, the better to find her, he caused a great company of lanterns to be lighted. All the inhabitants of the place thronged after him with torches. The year ensuing they made fires upon the shores the same day ; they continued the ceremony every year, every one lighted his lantern, and by degrees it grew into a custom." .—*Present State of China.*[84]

Moore's cultural note caught my attention because the father in Moore's explanation is searching in vain for his daughter who has drowned, using lanterns to light the way. Why did the search need illumination? Were they searching only at night? Mirroring this nocturnal quest, why does the Dong only search at night for his Jumbly girl? Lear writes:

> Playing a pipe with silvery squeaks,
> Since then his Jumbly Girl he seeks,
> And because by night he could not see,
> He gathered the bark of the Twangum Tree
> On the flowery plain that grows.
> And he wove him a wondrous Nose, – [85]

One might also ask why the Dong is not searching for his Jumbly Girl on the sea ('They went to sea in a sieve'), but rather as Lear writes 'And now each night, and all night long, | Over those plains still roams the Dong'.[86] These references to the *Lalla Rookh* text in "The Dong" are enhanced by Lear's illustration, but they are also referencing a different note of Moore's.

Following is Lear's illustration of the Dong:[87]

[83] Moore, *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance*, 339–40.
[84] Moore, 340.
[85] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 424.
[86] Lear, 424.
[87] Lear, 424.

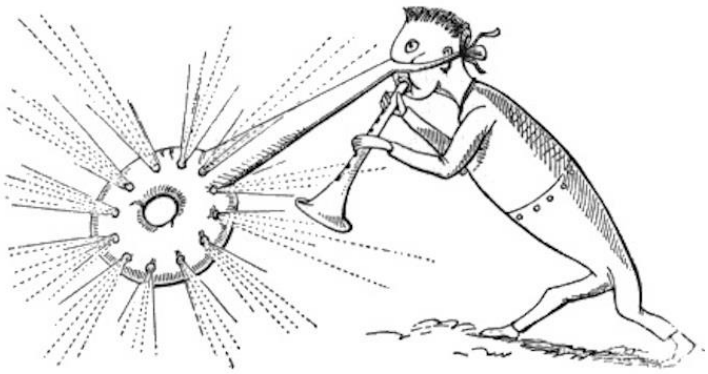

Figure 29 Edward Lear. "The Dong with a Luminous Nose".

Here is a note from *Lalla Rookh*:

> Note 297, p. 275.—*With nought but the sea-star to light up her tomb.*
>
> "One of the greatest curiosities found in the Persian Gulf is a fish which the English call Star-Fish. It is circular, and at night very luminous, resembling the full moon surrounded by rays."—*Mirza Abu Taleb.*[88]

This note addresses the fate of Hinda in *The Fireworshippers* who met a watery grave in the Pearl Islands 'With nought but the sea-star to light up her tomb'.[89] In chapters 2 and 4, "Edward Lear's Taxonomy" and "Darwinian Nonsense", I discuss the level of Lear's knowledge of natural history, as well as the general knowledge of oceanic natural history in the Victorian era, as discussed by Jonathan Smith in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* (2006). Sea-stars or 'star-fish' are a prolific class, Asteroidea, and include this curious creature called the Crown of Thorns (*Acanthaster planci*), which is native to the Red Sea, Indian, and Pacific Oceans:[90]

[88] Moore, *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance*, 370.
[89] Moore, 275.
[90] "Crown-of-Thorns-*Acanther planci*-Sea Stars—Tropical Reefs." *Florent's Guide to the Tropical Reefs.* https://reefguide.org/indopac/crownofthorns.html.

Figure 30 *Acanthaster planci.*

This class also includes the Sun-star (*Crossaster papposus*), native to Europe and the Mediterranean:[91]

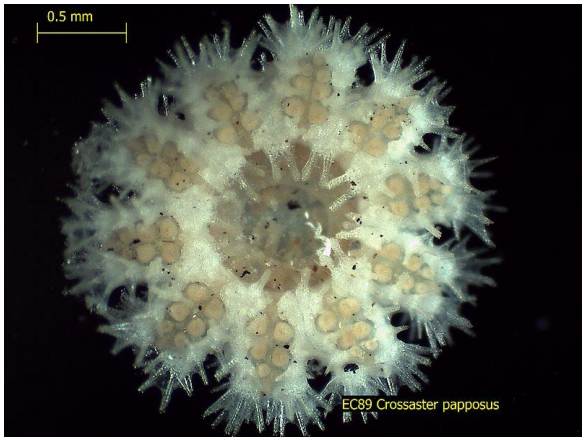

Figure 31 *Crosaster papposus.*

Figure 32 *Crossaster papposus.*

[91] "Common Sun Star" (*Crossaster papposus*). *MarLIN: The Marine Life Information Network*. https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/1192.

The species pictured above contain bio-luminescent properties. They bear a striking resemblance to the bell of the Dong's nose, as well as being an apt depiction of Lear's description, which include attributes like 'In a hollow rounded space it ended' , 'Of vast proportions and painted red', and 'And with holes all round to send the light, | In gleaming rays on the dismal night'.[92] Did Lear, inspired by Moore's note regarding what the English call 'star-fish', combine it with his knowledge of the appearance of such species above to inform his illustration of the Dong as possessing luminosity? Did he then in turn reclassify this in the symbiosis of his verse and image to represent the mind or soul (or in this case, the nose), as well as a means to light the way to finding the heart's desire, no matter how vain?

For that matter, what *is* the Dong's heart's desire? Is it truly the Jumbly Girl, whom he is searching for, perversely it seems, only at night and *not* upon the sea to which she decamped with the rest of her tribe? Or is the Dong searching for 'What little sense' he once possessed, after being led astray by the Jumbly Girl and his nose/phallus, which clearly took control over his mind's lamp? However, I contend that perhaps the most pertinent question is what, overall, is Lear's message in "The Dong"? I return here to "Miss Maniac" and the fear of the loss of self through the madness of the passion that drove Miss Maniac into the arms of the cad. I suggest that the Dong, too, has lost his self and his reason because of his passion for the Jumbly Girl, which resulted in a situation where his nose/phallus takes control of his reason and relocates that lamp from his mind into his nose/phallus. "The Dong", therefore, is a reclassification of the youthful Lear's authorial voice, one which used the loss of reason to engage in those impossible scientific conundrums like perpetual motion and solving the national debt. "The Dong", in contrast, is searching not for scientific answers, but answers to questions of self and happiness. In addition, as often happens in Lear's nonsense, the issue of cross-species love relationships is broached, purposely I suspect, as a means of problematising Byron's explorations of cross-cultural relationships and subversion of an orientalised 'other' in *The Giaour*, which I address further below. However, Lear reclassifies cross-cultural relationships into the counterfactual taxonomy of cross-species relationships. This crossing of the species line is pursued beyond mere romantic relationships in other late nonsense as in "The Scroobious Pip".

Finally, an episode which might have been inspired by *Lalla Rookh* provides the final element in my analysis of Mooreian influences in "The Dong" and its sibling "The Jumblies",

[92] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 424.

as well as acting as a segue to a discussion of Byronic elements in "The Dong" and "The Jumblies". In a dream-sequence of Lalla Rookh, Moore writes:

> Lalla Rookh had, the night before, been visited by a dream which, in spite of the impending fate of poor HAFED, made her heart more than usually cheerful during the morning, and gave her cheeks all the freshened animation of a flower that the Bid-musk had just passed over. She fancied that she was sailing on that Eastern Ocean, where the sea-gipsies, who live forever on the water, enjoy a perpetual summer in wandering from isle to isle, when she saw a small gilded bark approaching her. It was like one of those boats which Maldivian islanders send adrift, at the mercy of winds and waves, loaded with perfumes, flowers and odoriferous wood, as an offering to the Spirit whom they call King of the Sea. At first, this little bark appeared to be empty, but, on coming nearer.——[93]

Lalla Rookh's dream is interrupted, so the reader is tantalised with a potentially quite interesting description of what the bark might have contained, but which is never realised. Moore includes a note to this passage describing 'sea-gipsies' or the 'Biajús'.[94] The 'Biajús', according to Moore, launch small barks loaded with a motley collection of items not unlike the Jumblies, who have an eccentric shopping list:

> They sailed to the Wester Sea, they did,
> To a land all covered with trees,
> And they bought an Owl and a useful Cart,
> And a pound of Rice, and a Cranberry Tart,
> And a hive of silvery Bees.
> And they bought a Pig, and some green Jack-daws,
> And a lovely Monkey with lollipop paws,
> And forty bottles of Ring-Bo-Ree,
> And no end of Stilton Cheese.[95]

This list of random items linked with the conjunction 'and' makes its appearance here and in Lear's "Ribands and Pigs" and provides a transition to Byronic influences on "The Jumblies" and "The Dong".

In Canto I Stanza 15 of *Lara*. Byron writes:

> …
> The waving banner, and the clapping door,
> The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
> The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
> The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze:
> Aught they behold or hear their thought appals
> As evening saddens o'er the dark gray walls.[96]

[93] Moore, *Lalla Rookh: An Oriental Romance*, 215, 366–67.
[94] Moore, 366–67.
[95] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 235.
[96] George Gordon Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome J. McGann and Weller, Barry, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 223.

For comparison, I will repeat the Jumblies' purchases:

> They sailed to the Western Sea, they did,
> To a land all covered with trees,
> And they bought an Owl and a useful Cart,
> And a pound of Rice, and a Cranberry Tart,
> And a hive of silvery Bees.
> And they bought a Pig, and some green Jack-daws,
> And a lovely Monkey with lollipop paws,
> And forty bottles of Ring-Bo-Ree,
> And no end of Stilton Cheese.[97]

The rhyme schemes that Byron and Lear use are dissimilar, but the randomness of the paired, *classified,* items are startlingly reminiscent of one another, as is both authors' strategic placement of single items as a reprieve from the paired ones. Byron has 'The long dim shadows of surrounding trees', while Lear writes 'And a hive of silvery Bees'. In *Inventing Edward Lear*, Lodge writes of Lear's exploration of the 'multiple ways in which things can be unlike and yet similar: visual symmetry, rhyme, pun' in his piece that also invokes a list of seemingly unrelated items, "Ribands and Pigs".[98] I would expand her discussion to include the Jumblies' shopping list and suggest that Byron's list in *Lara* may have planted this seed in the fertile ground of Lear's penchant for pairing the 'unlike' into categories.[99] By examining again Byron's list:

> The waving banner, and the clapping door,
> The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;
> The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
> The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;

we see that Byron himself has created a taxonomy of two different categories: a) objects which provide a *visual* effect (moving banner, moving tapestry, moving bat); and b) objects which create an *aural* effect (clapping door, echoing floor, susurrating breeze). Lear reclassifies his list of random items into another counterfactual taxonomy – but his are food items and animals: rice, a cranberry tart, Stilton cheese, bees, a pig, a monkey, etc. I would suggest that Lear, again, has reclassified the schemes of Romantic Orientalism and harnessed them as parody of Romantic taxonomies, creating an impossible world in which highly idiosyncratic creatures, be they Moore's Biajus or Lear's Jumblies, can successfully sail off

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[97] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 253.
[98] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear,* 99.
[99] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 99; Elizabeth Cheresh Allen, *A Fallen Idol Is Still a God: Lermontov and the Quandaries of Cultural Transition* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2007), 44, 144. Cheresh discusses a similar issue of wholeness and integrity: 'Together with the central Romantic ideas of the self, morality, love, nature, and imagination, I might mention two other telling features of Romanticism that also reflect the Romantic quest for wholeness and integrity: the Romanticists' penchant for fragments and their taste for irony', 144.

in a *sieve* to purchase such an absurd collection of objects as Stilton cheese and jackdaws, *or* Byron's bats and susurrating trees.

These categorised lists are not the only area of congruence between "The Jumblies" and Byron's *Turkish Tales*. In Canto I Stanza 4 of *The Corsair*, Byron writes:

> Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings;
> The sails are furled; and anchoring round she swings;
> And gathering loiterers on the land discern
> Her boat descending from the latticed stern.
> …[100]

Latticed sterns and bows are not uncommon design elements in shipbuilding, but this is a curious word choice, which I could well imagine Lear seizing upon with delight in its sheer nonsense. A lattice is like a *sieve*, which is the underlying and most potent symbol in "The Jumblies", which opens as follows:

> The went to sea in a Sieve, they did,
> In a Sieve they went to sea:
> In spite of all their friends could say,
> On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,
> In a Sieve they went to sea!
> And when the Sieve turned round and round,
> And every one cried, 'You'll all be drowned!'
> They called aloud, 'Our Sieve ain't big,
> But we don't care a button! we don't care a fig!
> In a Sieve we'll go to sea!'
> Far and few, far and few,
> Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
> Their heads are green, and their hands are blue,
> And they went to sea in a Sieve.[101]

That sieve is so potent that Lear capitalises it in every instance of its use in "The Jumblies", emphasising the impossibility of a world in which the Jumblies can successfully and nonsensically sail in a sieve:[102]

[100] Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, 1980, 3:153; Sonstroem, "Making Earnest of Game: G. M. Hopkins and Nonsense Poetry," 194–95. Sonstroem discusses Lear and another Victorian poet – G. M. Hopkins – their predilection for adjectival lists in which 'each word of a series strikes us as a surprise'. Sonstroem notes the 'strong, regular, rhythmic beat' in Lear's and Hopkins' lists; this is akin to Byron, as well, 195.
[101] Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, 1980, 3:153.
[102] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 253.

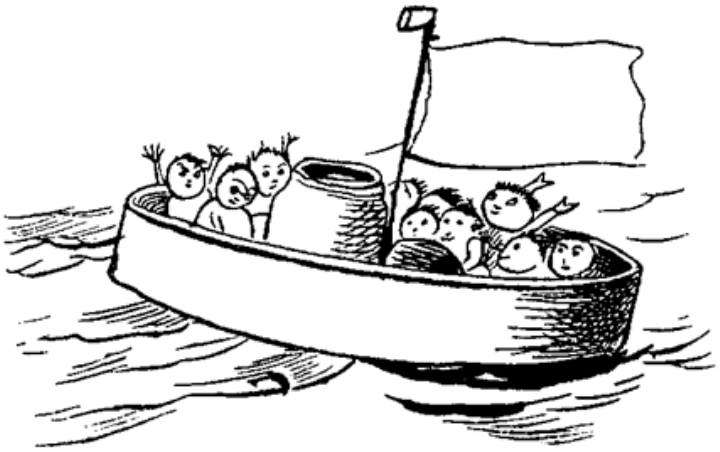


Figure 33 Edward Lear. "The Jumblies".

Sailing in a sieve suggests a non-conformist absurdity. And yet the Jumblies, perversely and impossibly refusing to drown, sail off on many adventures, gathering strange catalogues of possessions and visiting such far-off and fantastical places as the 'great Gromboolian plain' and having dalliances with odd characters. Furthermore, in Canto II Stanza 1 Byron repeats the use of the term 'lattice', this time in conjunction with a lamp, which is also reminiscent of the Dong's prosthetic nose:

> In Coron's bay floats many a Galley light,
> Through Coron's lattices the lamps are bright,
> For Seyd, the Pacha, makes a feast to-night:
> …[103]

Lear describes the lattice- or sieve-like design of the Dong's nose, whose underlying structure is a basket woven from the bark of the Twangum Tree:

> With a luminous Lamp within suspended,
> All fenced about
> With a bandage stout
> To prevent the wind from blowing it out; –
> And with holes all round to send the light,
> In gleaming rays on the dismal night.[104]

Earlier in *The Corsair* (Canto I Stanza 17) Byron writes:

> …
> Then to his boat with haughty gesture sprung.
> Flashed the dipt oars, and sparkling with the stroke,
> Around the waves' phosphoric brightness broke;
> …[105]

[103] Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, 1980, 3:171.
[104] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 424.
[105] Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, 1980, 3:169.

Byron has the following note for 'phosphoric': 'By night, particularly in a warm latitude, every stroke of the oar, every motion of the boat or ship, is followed by a slight flash like sheet lightning from the water'.[106] It must be assumed that he is speaking of bioluminescent plankton. Bioluminescence, as I discussed above, is used textually and in Moore's notes in *Lalla Rookh* to describe the light of a watery tomb in the form of a bioluminescent sea-star. Are Byron's passages above the origin of Moore's sea-star and the Dong's lattice-like woven and luminous nose? All literature is derivative, but my contention in this analysis is that the powerful connection that created Byron and Moore's symbiosis in turn heavily influenced Lear's work, which he then reclassified into his counterfactual taxonomies to explore the plight of the individual non-conformist. In addition, echoes of Byron's *The Giaour* can be found in the temporal structure of "The Dong", as well as both authors' descriptions of the last glimpse of the protagonists' lovers.

Yin Yuan in her article "Invasion and Retreat: Gothic Representations of the Oriental Other in Byron's *The Giaour*", describes the typically Gothic method of introducing a major character to the reader by means of that character's ghost:

> He exists as a ghost in his native dwelling and a stranger in the text, structurally fulfilling the Muslim narrator's lament—"died he by a stranger's hand, / And stranger in his native land" (735-36) before the fact.[107]

Just as Byron introduces the character of Hassan by a description of his ghost as Yuan describes above, so Lear introduces the tragic ghost of the Dong before the reader is given the history of his affair with his Jumbly girl:

> When awful darkness and silence reign
> Over the great Gromboolian plain,
> Through the long, long wintry nights; –
> When the angry breakers roar
> As they beat on the rocky shore; –
> When Storm-clouds brood on the towering heights
> Of the Hills of the Chankly Bore: –
>
> Then, through the vast and gloomy dark,
> There moves what seems a fiery spark,
> A lonely spark with silvery rays
> Piercing the coal-black night, –
> A Meteor strange and bright: –

[106] George Gordon Byron, *The Works of Lord Byron, Vol. III*, ed. Ernest Hartley Coleridge, vol. 3, Canto I ST 17-line 572 note 205 "phosphoric," accessed February 26, 2019, http://www.gutenberg.org/files/21811/21811-h/21811-h.htm#Footnote_205.

[107] Yuan, "Invasion and Retreat," 11. In this ghost interlude, a link to the transition between the Romantic inner versus the Victorian outwardly facing search for self should be noted.

Hither and thither the vision strays,
A single lurid light.[108]

As I discussed previously, the Dong, perversely not searching for the Jumbly Girl on the sea onto which she has sailed, is like a ghost in his native Gromboolian plain, seen only at night as a spectre with a lantern, mimicking Yuan's description of Byron's Hassan as ghost in his own 'native dwelling'.[109]

The Jumbly Girl herself provides another link to Byron's tale, for she too, is 'the other', from a different group than the Dong, just as Leila is from a different culture to the Giaour, an 'Oriental other'. Based on his previous nonsense replete with cross-species couples, Lear has again reclassified the quality of 'the other' even further than Byron in "The Dong" to the counterfactual taxonomy of a cross-species romance. Enhancing the similarity of the Jumbly Girl and Leila is the way the couples are separated. In *The Giaour,* Byron describes the Giaour's last glimpse of Leila:

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,
The calm wave rippled to the bank;
I watch'd it as it sank, methought
Some motion from the current caught
Bestirred it more,—twas but the beam
That chequer'd o'er the living stream—
I gaz'd, till vanishing from view,
Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
Still less and less, a speck of white
That gemm'd the tide, then mock'd the sight;
…[110]

the Dong, like the Giaour watches as all vestiges of his lover disappear:

Till the morning came of that hateful day
When the Jumblies sailed in their sieve away,
And the Dong was left on the cruel shore
Gazing – gazing for evermore, –
Ever keeping his weary eyes on
That pea-green sail on the far horizon, –
Singing the Jumbly Chorus still
As he sate all day on the grassy hill, –
'Far and few, far and few,
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue
And they went to sea in a sieve.' [111]

[108] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 422.
[109] Yuan, "Invasion and Retreat," 11.
[110] Byron, *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, 1980, 3:52.
[111] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 423-24.

Lear and Byron train the 'gaze' of the Dong and the Giaour on the ever-diminishing scrap of fabric – the sail – that has come to represent their lost loves: the white sail as Leila's shroud and the pea-green sail that echoes the colour of the Jumbly Girl's head. Byron gives the reader no doubt regarding Leila's fate, and, similarly, Lear's *readers* know that the Jumblies return to their brethren in time with wild tales and a catalogue of curiosities. However, the Dong's last association of his lover is the vanished sail of his Jumbly Girl and his eternal gaze as he sings the Jumbly Chorus (bold mine):

> *'Far and few, far and few,*
> *Are the lands where the Jumblies live;*
> *Their heads are green, and their hands are blue*
> *And they went to sea in a* ***sieve****.'* [112]

The assumption being that their ship (a sieve) will founder, and they will all be drowned. This is a powerful introduction to this character of the Dong and is reminiscent of Hinda's fate, too, in Moore's *Fireworshippers*, as well as Moore's description of the Chinese lantern festival. Does Lear close the Dong's ghost-like introduction with a return to Moore's *Lalla Rookh* with his image of a drowning and a vain search for that drowned loved-one via lantern-light, as the Dong searches vainly 'for evermore' for his Jumbly girl with his lantern nose? the Dong has no knowledge of the Jumblies, aside from their dancing circles and that '*Their heads are green, and their hands are blue | And they went to sea in a* ***sieve***.'[113] Surely the reader is supposed to believe that, from the Dong's point-of-view, she has gone down with the sieve? But by giving the reader the knowledge that the Jumblies return home from their adventures, Lear creates yet another counterfactual taxonomy to the tragedy of a lover lost to the watery deep as in Byron's verse. Lear's counterfactual taxonomy of the lantern-mind theme, bioluminescence, and disappearing sails and lovers from Byron and Moore in "The Dong" and "The Jumblies" are perhaps subtler than his creation of nonsense in reason and liberal political satire in "Miss Maniac". For Lear, the subversion of politics and empire that he discovered in Moore and Byron proved to be an influence that he would revisit throughout his career in the reclassification nonsense he created in his counterfactual taxonomies.

I would like to return once more to the structure of Lear's nonsense analysed here. As I discuss in my theory section and analysed with "Miss Maniac", Lear adheres to a circular framework in positing his worlds of counterfactual taxonomies, ever returning to a

[112] Lear, 423.
[113] Lear, 423.

reclassified first term. This is no less true for "The Jumblies" and "The Dong" than it is for "Miss Maniac". With one illustration for each piece, Lear relies heavily on text to present us with his counterfactual taxonomic structures, which I have summarised in the following limerick-like number of lines:

"The Dong":

1. Ghost on the Plain
2. Romance
3. Love Lost
4. Ghost on the Plain - searching not for his lover, but for his sense of self.

'Ghost on the Plain' becomes a type of super-ghost, moulded by his romance with the Jumbly Girl. Unlike Miss Maniac, who is a counterfactual taxonomy to the lovelorn madness seen in some Romantic verse, the Dong has been reclassified from a Gothic ghost ever searching for his lover into an earnest Victorian searching for his lost sense of self.

"The Jumblies" present yet a third type of counterfactual taxonomy:

"The Jumblies"

1. Sailing off madly in a sieve
2. Meeting storms at sea (not unlike Byron's storm questing adventures)
3. Engaging in imperial travel, collection, classification, and display
4. Sailing madly home in a sieve, full of adventure, wisdom, and the envy of those who stayed behind.

Notably, Lear not only reclassifies the Jumblies into imperial adventurers, but so *thoroughly* reclassifies them into a counterfactual taxonomy that they even engage in the collection, classification and display of imperial spoils.[114] With both these pieces, Lear returns to the original term of the first proposition of his counterfactuals. Both the Dong and the Jumblies, like Miss Maniac, have been reclassified into a different taxonomy through the narrative of their stories.

The parodic nature of Moore's political satire in *The Fudge Family* and other works was a powerful influence on Byron. This type of parody Byron in turn utilised in his Oriental tales to subvert the British empire's agenda in the East. Then the tables of influence were turned by Moore's mimicry of Byron's Orientalism to a further subversion of British imperialism in his Oriental parody *Lalla Rookh* as a metaphor for British imperialism in Ireland. From these mutually influencing parodies, Lear created a reclassified taxonomy of the Romantic Orientalised 'other'. He reclassified this type of Romantic verse by grappling with the fate of the individual and the non-conformist, reclassifying the self and likening its

[114] Lear explores the idea of the imperial travel and collection, classification, display of colonial resources extensively in "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World".

fate with that of the Orientalised 'other', overwhelmed in the juggernaut of British imperialism

Grappling, too with the question of Britain's foreign and colonial policy, both Moore's and Byron's parodic works and their flights into Romantic Orientalism were a huge presence in Lear's life, authorial personae, and works. From "Miss Maniac" to the mock-Oriental tales of "The Jumblies" and "The Dong", Lear pays homage to the authors who awoke in him an acute sense of the parodic. He pays homage to them, too, with the counterfactual taxonomic nonsense he used in his illustrations and verse to reclassify and posit impossible worlds counterfactual to the taxonomies of self, society, and empire imposed by the world in which he lived and in which he maintained a subtle yet ubiquitous presence, a presence not unlike Thomas Moore's. This presence is embodied by the inclusion of both Lear's and Moore's works in one of the most celebrated paintings of the nineteenth century – Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience.* Because of the strong relationship between Moore and Byron as people *and* as literary personae individually, Lear's counterfactual taxonomies of both authors' works in "Miss Maniac", "The Jumblies" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" is no great surprise, or nonsense. This chapter has analysed an early work and two later pieces of Lear in which the development of his counterfactual taxonomies ground his problematisation of self and empire in nature. Exploring the source of that fascination with nature and its effect on the development of his counterfactual taxonomies and his performative persona is the subject of the next chapter: "Edward Lear's Taxonomy: Species and the singular Avatar in Lear's Limericks, Alphabets, and 'The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple'" (1870).

Chapter 2: Edward Lear's Taxonomy: Species and the Singular Avatar in Lear's Limericks (1846, 1855), Alphabets (1871), and "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" (1870)

As I argue in the last chapter, with "Miss Maniac", Lear reshaped attitudes towards madness, gender, the self, and the 'other' that are associated with much Romantic verse through an evolving engagement with counterfactual taxonomies. In this chapter, I argue that he consequently reclassified natural history into a taxonomy that reflected his personal views on the questions of humanity's place in nature and empire and where this placed the individual – the self – in those networks, adding a natural history nuance to his developing practice of counterfactual taxonomies. These reclassifications of self and the honing of his counterfactual taxonomies may have been prompted by his professional experience in natural history networks in the first half of the nineteenth century and by evolutionary theory's influence on nineteenth-century natural history print culture, one which increasingly relied on a symbiosis between text and simplified scientific illustration.

Using his scientific and print knowledge, Lear broke down the boundaries which separated species—and man from the other animals—by providing his own interpretation of the great web of life that Darwin proposed in *On the Origin of Species* (1859).[1] In this blurring of the lines can be seen the inheritances of Romantic thought on nature, one 'that was characterised by dynamic links among all living things', as Nichols writes in *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism.*[2] This was a developmental stage on the way to Lear's positioning in works like "The Scroobious Pip". However, in an era that pre-dated Darwin's publication of his formulations of evolution, Lear's work in natural history fostered that preoccupation with taxonomy and empire that would prove a fertile ground for Lear's later counterfactual taxonomies after the publication of *On the Origin.* Discussion of four subheadings support the correlated tenet of my thesis in this chapter – that Lear created increasingly effective counterfactual taxonomies of orthodox natural history hierarchies in formulating his own answers to questions of the individual's place in nature and empire. These subheadings include: a) the nineteenth-century development of a definition of species and philosophical debates associated with that development; b) Lear's location and experience in networks of

[1] Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 360.
[2] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, xvi.

natural history; c) Lear's extraordinary contribution to natural history; and d) the creation of a counterfactual taxonomy of the individual, which I animate with analyses of the relationships between the images and texts of single letter entries from two of his alphabets, one limerick, and the picture story "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" (1870).

Before commencing with these subheadings, however, a review of the reclassification theory at the basis of this dissertation would be beneficial to the chapter argumentation. Lear's early career as a natural history illustrator had a long-term effect on his nonsense literature that resulted in his creation of a series of reclassifications of the hierarchies of self, humanity's place in nature, and the imperial agenda. Because of the counterfactual and false causality of these reclassifications, resulting in nonsense- and evolution-in-process-creatures, as well as the obsession with taxonomical hierarchies in both Lear and the nineteenth century, I call these reclassifications counterfactual taxonomies. With his counterfactual taxonomies, Lear proposes impossible worlds with subverted hierarchies of the collection-classification-display mania that acted as both impetus and self-reinforcement in imperial philosophy.

This chapter begins with a discussion of potential reasons for Lear's preoccupations with collection-classification-display and ontology. These are topics I began to explore in my MA thesis, but further research has refined my theory regarding this aspect at play during the formative years of Lear's professional natural history work and his subsequent abandonment of this profession and persona. His preoccupations with classification and ontology were reflective of similar foci of debate that were raging through natural history networks of the 1820s and 1830s. These debates took place against a backdrop of imperial expansion, the professionalisation of natural history as a science, and the proliferation of publishing and print technology, all in a perfect storm that coincided with the expansion of empire and its collection-classification-display mania. This perfect storm resulted in a successful career and an adoption of natural historian and illustrator roles.

Members of the Royal and Linnaean Societies like Sir Richard Owen (1804-1892) and Dr Robert Edmund Grant (1793-1874) were allied in a turf war over the direction of natural history practice, arrayed against elements under the lead of practitioners like John Edward Gray (1800-1875), John Gould (1804-1881), and the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS), founded in 1831. Amidst this storm, the combination of Lear's genius at natural history illustration, his grasp of new print technologies, and his negotiation of natural history networks made it possible for him to revolutionise the natural

history text and carve out a reputation as a scientist and illustrator. He was lauded by members of the Royal and Linnaean Societies, as well as the natural history scientists associated with the BAAS and the Zoology section of the British Museum.

Lear walked a fine line among the factional networks of the natural history world. His livelihood depended on the patronage of aristocrats like the earls of Derby and Sir William Jardine, 7th Baronet of Applegarth (1800-1874), as well as on the work commissioned by professional natural historians.[3] Judging by his diaries, letters, and reading habits, Lear's was an open-minded disposition. Additionally, his reading and journals indicate that he maintained an ambiguous stance regarding the agendas of empire and its effects on nature, exploited by both factions.[4] His texts and images portray his uncertainty with this agenda, as I discuss here and in the analyses of "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" and "The Scroobious Pip" in the third and fourth chapters.

Despite any such misgivings, Lear's negotiation of these networks resulted in stunning early professional success, for his work was included in key natural history publications of the nineteenth century, including Bells' 1837 *A History of British Quadrupeds, including the Cetacea* and this woodblock image (Figure 34) from Jardine's 1853 *The Naturalist's Library* pictured below:

[3] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 58–59, 61–63, 68, 98, 161.
[4] Uglow, 366. See also Lodge's discussion of his choosing to ally himself later with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, 272.

Figure 34 Woodblock plate. Edward Lear. *The Naturalist's Library* (1853).

Studying Lear's meteoric rise in and sudden withdrawal from these natural history networks indicates to me that embroilment in the rivalries between these factions may have affected Lear's perception of the natural history milieu and its hierarchies and prompted the move to the adoption of his next performative persona – landscape artist. Notions of self, humanity's place in nature, and imperial aspirations were for Lear part of the hierarchical structures that he questioned via his nonsense. I propose that his creation of counterfactual taxonomies of nature, the individual, the self, and empire reflected his questioning of what were perceived as legitimate taxonomical and imperial hierarchies. Understanding the nuances in the background of this natural history 'perfect storm', and his adoption of this persona, therefore, is vital to a re-examination of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies. These first two sections of the chapter will discuss the rise of factional rivalries of the network of British institutions that positioned themselves as keepers of the empire's collection of specimens and the philosophy that guided taxonomic classification.

On Hierarchies and Species

In the 1830s, there was a contentious public debate regarding the scientific integrity of the personnel directing the Royal Society and its collection at the British Museum; the Taxonomy Wars would be a suitable appellation for this scientific debate. The professional scientists associated with the Zoological section of the Museum were given the monumental task of reforming the collection's holdings in accordance with current trends in classification, preservation, and display. The standards of practice at the British Museum were questioned by the Botanical and Linnaean Societies' foremost members like Owen and Grant. This rivalry over established practices coincided with the formation of a new scientific society and may have resulted in a large portion of the testimony in the 1836 Parliamentary inquiry into the management of the British Museum being devoted to the Zoological section.[5] These rivalries and the inquiry testimony may have exerted influence on Lear's career as a natural historian.

In his article "Social Sciences and the British Association", Geoffrey K. Nelson describes the frustration the professional scientists felt regarding the quality of scientific pursuit due to the amateur members of the governing board of the Royal Society and British

[5] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum* (House of Commons; Digitized 26 October 2017 Google Books, 1836), https://books.google.ie/books/about/Report_from_the_Select_Committee_on_Brit.html?id=3CZSkRYubcwC&redir_esc=y.

Museum.[6] Nelson explains that because of the dilettantism of those in control, Charles Babbage (1791-1871) and the Yorkshire Philosophical Society invited other provincial societies and Mechanics Institutes to a meeting in York in 1831, which eventually led to the formation of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.[7] Due to the cost of the Napoleonic Wars, government funding for the Royal Society and its collections had been cut, seriously hampering acquisition efforts of the Zoological section in favour of the Antiquities section.[8] Such was the animosity between these various factions that at the 1836 Parliamentary inquiry into the management of the Museum, the natural historians of the Zoology section were made to defend their acquisitions, management, and scientific integrity.

As I wrote earlier, Lear was walking a fine line between these factions. Upon the publication of the first plates of *Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots* (1830), he was elected a member of the Linnaean Society, but was connected professionally with scientists excluded by that society, such as Gray and Gould, through his illustration work for them.[9] Indeed, Lear attended one of the early meetings of the BAAS – the 1835 Dublin meeting. Lear's name appears on the annual subscribers list of the proceedings.[10] In addition, included in the minutes of the 1836 Parliamentary inquiry is the testimony of an uncharacteristically reticent Lear. Following is an excerpt of the text of his testimony printed

[6] Nelson, "Social Sciences and the British Association," 238.

[7] Nelson, 239. It would be easy to consign what I call the 'Taxonomy Wars' to class conflict, but that would be a facile argument, for there were many relationships that were in direct contradiction of such a view. For instance, there was a certain amount of mutual loyalty displayed between the 13th Earl of Derby and the natural historians like Gould, Gray, and Lear in opposition to professional *anatomists* like Owen and Grant. This dichotomy between the natural historians and the anatomists might be the more relevant conflict. This was the infancy, or even gestational, period of the modern biological sciences of zoology, palaeontology, anatomy, and botany. The actors took very seriously the rights of establishing practices and traditions for the different branches. The anatomist faction and the natural history faction each included members of the aristocracy; hence, consigning these taxonomy wars exclusively to class conflict does not provide a holistic picture of the situation. This holistic view notwithstanding, see Harriet Ritvo's discussion of imperial hierarchies from *The Animal Estate: The English and Other creatures in Victorian Age* (1987), 209-212, as well as my discussion in the introductory chapter.

[8] Nelson, 239.

[9] See transcriptions of letters from Gray to 13th Earl of Derby held at Liverpool Library mentioning Lear's work and his presence in nineteenth-century networks of natural history in Appendix I. See also my paper on Lear's nonsense botany "Odd taxonomies: Taxonomy, nomenclature and Lear's nonsense botany". These are my transcriptions of letters residing at Liverpool Central Library in the Earls of Derby Collection.

[10] *Report of the Fifth Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science Held at Dublin 1835* (London: John Murray, 1836), 25, 28. https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/252891#page/1/mode/1up; Charles Nugent, *Edward Lear the Landscape Artist: Tours of Ireland and the English Lakes, 1835 & 1836: With an Essay by Michael Twyman* (Grasmere: The Wordsworth Trust, 2009), 63. Nugent notes that Thomas Moore, whose influence on Lear I discuss in the chapter "Sense out of Romantic Nonsense", was also in attendance at this meeting; his name is on the same register as Lear's. Nugent also notes that apparently, Lear and Darwin may have lived in the same building on Great Marlborough Street in London, 1837, 233.

in the House of Commons' *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum; Together with the Minutes of Evidence* (1836):

> 3199. Will you state what facilities of access you experienced in the British Museum, both absolutely and relatively, as compared with any other collections to which you have had access?—I have met with every possible facility here from all the officers with whom I have come into contact.
>
> 3200. Do those facilities exist in the personal kindness and courtesy of the officers individually to you, or are they, consistently with the general rules and regulations of the establishment, applicable to other individuals as well as to yourself? —I should say the latter, because I received those attentions before I knew some of the officers personally.[11]

This mild questioning and Lear's noncommittal testimony belie the seriousness of the inquiry and the potentially negative effect his testimony could have had on his association with fellow natural historians. Many on the Committee of the inquiry and the witnesses called were leading members of British natural history networks. Lear's patron, Lord Stanley, the 13th Earl of Derby was on the Committee and president of the Zoological Society, and Lear had professional relationships with seven of the witnesses for the Zoology section testimonies.[12] Extended reading of the minutes provides the context for the question in line 3200, for Gray had to defend himself against accusations of obstructing Owen's access to specimens in the Zoological section.[13] Gray's integrity in classification was also attacked by Grant.[14]

Additionally, Gray was questioned regarding the higgledy-piggledy arrangement of specimens and accuracy of the Zoological section's catalogue. Gray and other witnesses countered that staff were forced to maintain the collection in such cramped quarters, with such a dearth of labour and dizzying array of sizes, methods of preservation and classification, that the state of the collection was as good as could be expected.[15] Also during the inquiry, Gray was accused of scientific malpractice – of destroying the classification of earlier keepers of the Zoological section – by his habit of reclassifying older specimens. He had to testify that he had succeeded or maintained the older classifications by inscribing them on the reverse of his own reclassified labels.[16] Moreover, there was infighting within the

[11] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum*, 1836, 261. The full transcript of Lear's portion of the inquiry is provided in Appendix I.
[12] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum*, viii.
[13] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum*, 46.
[14] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum*, 49–50, 132–33. In his testimony, Gray was quick to point out that Owen and Grant were, in fact, comparative anatomists, not natural historians.
[15] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum*, 1836, 208–10.
[16] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum*, 1836, 205.

Zoological Section staff itself, as M. Wilson explains in *The British Museum: A History* (2002).[17] The rivalries that existed between various staff members and keepers at the Museum were well-known in London gossip. Wilson writes that Gray and the Keeper of Mineralogy and Geology, König, 'were also sworn enemies. The unhappy state of staff relationships within the Museum was widely discussed in the world outside and spilled over into the press'.[18]

Such infighting and factional rivalries may have impacted Lear and his nonsense, for the contested hierarchies prevalent in early nineteenth-century scholarship would have represented an appealing target for counterfactual taxonomic reclassification with Lear's parodic wit, as seen in the limericks as well as in the picture stories like "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" and his early political satire.[19] Discord was not confined to the management of the museums and societies. Even within a single sub-discipline, intense competition for the right of naming species was equally, if not more, hierarchical and acrimonious. This pecking-order brawl also found expression in another of Lear's upending of hierarchies – in the satire of botanical classification in his nonsense botanies like "Phattfacia Stupenda" and "Queerifloria Babyöides".[20] This is a topic included in my MA thesis, and I provide here a summary of my analyses of these two specimens which constitute another salvo in what I term the Taxonomy Wars.

The debate over taxonomic classification included a controversy surrounding the right to name a new specimen of lily discovered in the colony of British Guyana in 1835, as outlined in Daniel Opitz's article "'The Sceptre of her Pow'r': Nymphs, Nobility and Nomenclature in Early Victorian Science" (2014), D. Graham Burnett's *Masters of All They Surveyed: Exploration, Geography, and a British El Dorado* (2000), and Tatiana Holway's *The Flower of Empire: An Amazonian Water Lily, the Quest to Make it Bloom, and the World it Created* (2013). In my MA thesis, I suggest that this squabble and others like it may have influenced Lear's creation of satirical nonsense botanies. Opitz begins his article with a poem

[17] Wilson, *The British Museum: A History*, 88.
[18] Wilson, 115.
[19] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 25, 37, 40; Edward Lear, *Edward Lear: Selected Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 6.
[20] For more on the botanies, see Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 32; Daniel Brown, *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, 180; Henchman, *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* 195–99; Colley, *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain*, 119.

by William Cowper, in which two flowers engage in a quarrel about who should be queen.[21] In the poem, a goddess verifies both contenders' worthiness until a third comes along who could supplant them. Opitz uses this image as a foretelling of Queen Victoria's importance in the controversy he relates about authority in scientific taxonomic classification in the early Victorian era.[22] Opitz includes the following lines from Cowper's poem:

> Within the garden's peaceful scene
> Appear'd two lovely foes,
> Aspiring to the rank of queen,
> The Lily and the Rose.[23]

Right to name the lily in Victoria's honour embroiled Lear's colleague John Edward Gray, on behalf of the Botanical Society, into yet another taxonomic debate, this time with the Royal Geographic Society. Gray eventually conceded the right to the RGS, but only after a protracted series of papers, counter-papers, and two different taxonomical epithets for what is now known as *Victoria amazonica*. Opitz also includes in his article the William Clark 1837 image, *Victoria R: The Rose of England* (Figure 35 below), which is later linked to the Victory lily via the controversy over its taxonomic name.[24]

[21] Donald Opitz, "'The Sceptre of Her Pow'r': Nymphs, Nobility and Nomenclature in Early Victorian Science," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 47, no. 1 (March 2014): 67, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007087413000319.
[22] Opitz, 68; D. Graham Burnett, *Masters of All They Surveyed: Exploration, Geography, and a British El Dorado* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 149–55.
[23] William Cowper, "The Works of William Cowper: His Life, Letters, and Poems," Edited by T.S. Grimshawe, Project Gutenberg, accessed February 8, 2022, https://www-gutenberg-org.nuigalway.idm.oclc.org/files/47790/47790-h/47790-h.htm#Page_729.
[24] Opitz, "'The Sceptre of Her Pow'r': Nymphs, Nobility and Nomenclature in Early Victorian Science," 75–79.

Figure 35 William Clark. *Victoria R: The Rose of England* (1837) image held by Trustees of the British Museum.[25]

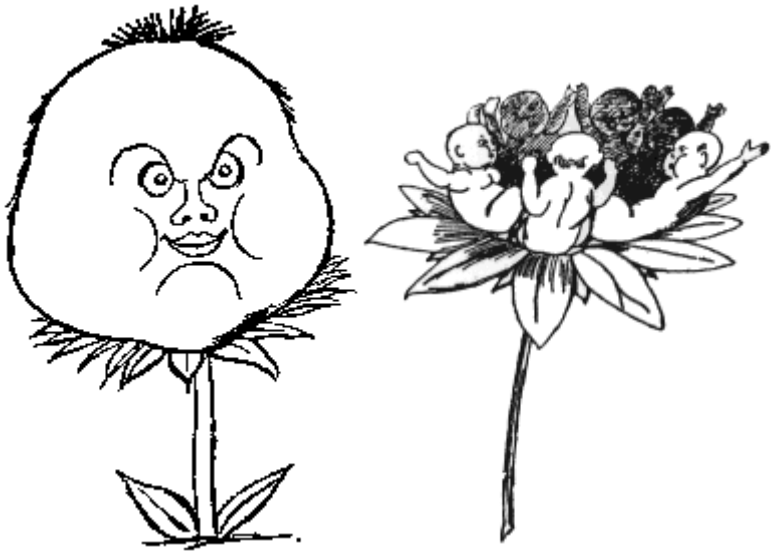
He discusses the various publications that promoted the acquisition of this new emblem of empire, significantly noting the 1851 publication by Sir W. J. Hooker of *Victoria Regia: or, illustrations of the Royal Water-lily, in a series of figures chiefly made from specimens flowering at Syon and at Kew by Walter Finch*.[26] Opitz writes:

> Hooker presented the folio … to the queen with the words, 'To Her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, with the profound & dutiful respect of the Author. / Royal Gardens, / Kew. Jan. 21, 1847.' He also followed his wife Maria's suggestion to include an epitaph consisting of Cowper's lines – 'Aspiring to the rank of Queen, / The Lily and the Rose' – thus making the earliest such allusion.[27]

[25] William Clark, *Victoria R: The Rose of England*, 1837, Lithograph, 236mm X 74mm, 1837, British Museum, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1902-1011-8659.
[26] William Jackson Hooker and Walter Finch, *Victoria Regia: Or, Illustrations of the Royal Water-Lily, in a Series of Figures Chiefly Made from Specimens Flowering at Syon and at Kew* (London: Reeve and Benham, 1851), https://www.rct.uk/collection/1122365/victoria-regia-or-illustrations-of-the-royal-water-lily-in-a-series-of-figures.
[27] Opitz, "'The Sceptre of Her Pow'r': Nymphs, Nobility and Nomenclature in Early Victorian Science," 86.

Thus, Opitz links Victoria as the Rose of England to the Lily of the British Empire. The labyrinthine nature of this contest for the right of naming, of taxonomic classification, may seem trivial to modern readers, but Opitz states that the lily's:

> …veins entered into the very skeleton of the Crystal Palace, itself a symbol of the heights reached within British science and industry under Victoria's reign. As with Cowper's story of the lily and the rose, with which this article opened, the adversaries in this case aspired to sovereignty, marked by royal distinction.[28]



Figures 36 & 37 "Phattfacia Stupenda" *CN* 252*;* "Queerifloria Babyöides" *CN* 419.

Lear's professional work with Gray should be recalled when examining the historical controversy surrounding the taxonomic classification of this lily. The drawings included in two of his specimens (Figures 36 and 37) in "Nonsense Botany" in *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Cookery and Botany* (1871) are noteworthy for the satire of natural history bickering he seems to intend. For comparison, below are side-by-side images of the *Victoria R: The Rose of England* lithograph, Lear's "Phattfacia Stupenda", and Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee photograph.

[28] Opitz, "'The Sceptre of Her Pow'r': Nymphs, Nobility and Nomenclature in Early Victorian Science," 94.

Figures 38, 39, 40 William Clark. *Victoria R: The Rose of England*, image held by Trustees of the British Museum; Edward Lear *Complete Nonsense*; Queen Victoria, (1887 (1882)) by Alexander Bassano National Portrait Gallery.[29]

I placed Lear's "Phattfacia Stupenda" deliberately between the two other images in order to bring attention to the similarities Lear's image bears to them both. In the *Victoria R* image, a beautiful and youthful Victoria's face crowned with a glorious set of tresses is the centre of the lily, perched upon a stalk and with a surround of elliptic shaped leaves. In Lear's drawing, the face is the entire flower, but also with a surround of elliptic shaped leaves perched on a flower stalk. However, the face here is depicted as heavy, with protuberant eyes and almost hair-less. Note, too, the circlet of leaves which seems to mirror the jewelled necklace in the jubilee photo. The face of Lear's flower bears a startling resemblance to the picture of the older Queen Victoria in her jubilee photo with its similar heaviness, protuberant eyes, and the hair almost completely concealed by the veil she wore. Lear claimed that his drawings were not intended as commentary to real personages, but was Lear, in this particular taxonomy, creating a satirical caricature of Victoria's evolution from the fair flower of England into the somewhat unflattering matron of an empire grown fat, or perhaps 'phatt', on the gluttony of conquest and colony?

The texts of the taxonomies paired with drawings like the one above of "Phattfacia Stupenda" carry a subtle satire of no less import. The *Victoria regia* lily of the taxonomic

[29] William Clark, *Victoria R: The Rose of England*, 1837, Lithograph, 236mm X 74mm, 1837, British Museum, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1902-1011-8659; Alexander Bassano, *Queen Victoria*, 1882 1887, albumen cabinet card, 1882 1887, National Portrait Gallery, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/use-this-image/?mkey=mw119713.

controversy that Opitz's article relates became a symbol of the empire and was even woven into the architecture of the structure that housed the Great Exhibition[30]. As Burnett states:

> It is not easy to characterize the full extent of Victorian infatuation with Schomburgk's "vegetable wonder". … a clique of Victorian poets settled on the flower as the very *form* of the royal dedication, titling their collected works after the flower and composing a dedicatory prologue that underlined the romance of the lily's origins.[31]

Victoria amazonica is enormous; its lily pad can reach up to three metres. Lear's taxonomy, "Phattfacia Stupenda", presents several interesting satirical elements in relation to *Victoria amazonica's* taxonomy and the debate surrounding its naming. Remembering the original nomenclature of Victoria's lily as *Victoria regia*, as well as its gargantuan proportions, Lear's use of the nomenclature '*Stupenda*' for the species epithet of his creation could be seen as a direct reference to this huge lily that was such an important symbol of empire. Paired with the resemblance to an older Victoria in the face of his flower, is Lear coupling meaning and image to satirise the enormous and acquisitive British Empire? Is he subverting imperial hierarchies with this counterfactual taxonomy of Victoria Regina, the rose of the British empire?

"Queerifloria Babyoïdes" (Figure 37 above) continues this satire of empire. Queen Victoria, by the time that Lear published the second of his botanies in *Laughable Lyrics* (1877), had given birth to nine children.[32] In addition, she had served as the head of an ever-increasing empire for thirty-nine years, an empire which had grown to encompass vast tracts of the globe. Indeed, she had been proclaimed the empress of India in 1877.[33] Looking at *Queerifloria Babyoïdes,* I think it is difficult not to view this strange conglomeration of infants as fused onto one stem of the British Empire. This specimen bears a marked resemblance in its leaf and flower shape to the original *Victoria R: The Rose of England*

[30] Burnett, *Masters of All They Survey: Exploration, Geography, and a British El Dorado*, 152.
[31] Burnett, 152–53.
[32] H. C. G. Matthew and K. D. Reynolds, "Victoria (1819–1901), Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and Empress of India," (Oxford University Press, May 2012), https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/36652.
[33] Matthew and Reynolds.

image and makes another commentary on the acquisitive nature of the British Empire in its collection of masses of new colonial specimens, as well as the fecundity of its monarch.[34]

The establishment of authorial rights in the naming of those masses of new specimens that exploration and colonisation provided was a highly contentious debate in the establishment of natural history as a profession in the early Victorian era. It pitted the establishment noble and royal patrons, entrenched in their Linnaean taxonomy, against the rising tide of professional scientists largely drawn from the mercantile middle classes. Stuck between these two worlds, Lear used a subtle satire in his "Nonsense Botany" creations and their taxonomic nomenclature to poke fun at both sides of the debate, and against their highest patron, the queen.

Concurrent with the debate regarding the practices of natural history, the philosophy of classification and taxonomy was undergoing a revolution from classification fundamentals of Linnaeus's *Systema Naturae* from 1735, which also may have affected Lear's work. Did this revolution further the development of the counterfactual taxonomies of Lear's nonsense creations? Discussing the change in the philosophical firmament of classification and empire, Harriet Ritvo in *The Platypus and the Mermaid and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination* (1997) writes of Linnaeus's *Naturae*: 'Serious naturalists appreciated this realignment and tended to emphasise the philosophic aspects of their discipline'.[35] This new philosophical approach was foundational to the establishment of the rules of classification that engaged the various practitioners of this new science. In his pieces "Species, Rules and Meaning: The Politics of Language and the Ends of Definition in Nineteenth-Century Natural History" (1996) and "Cataloguing Power: Delineating 'Competent Naturalists' and the Meaning of Species in the British Museum" (2001), Gordon McOuat outlines the debates over classification which led to the formation of a BAAS Committee to formulate guidelines for the naming of species and who had the authority to do so. The Committee eventually produced a document entitled "Rules", but a precise definition of species was not included. Nor was an identification of who had authority to name species.[36] These questions were a knotty matter not merely because the formation of practical guidelines of naming was fraught with Linnaean,

[34] Tock, "Satirising the Nineteenth Century: Lear's Nonsense That Isn't." There is a curious ambiguity in this particular image: is Lear celebrating the colour-blind inclusion of the different ethnicities that are included here, with the implication that Victoria is 'mother' to?

[35] Ritvo, *The Platypus and the Mermaid: And Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination*, 15.

[36] Gordon McOuat, "Cataloguing Power: Delineating 'Competent Naturalists' and the Meaning of Species in the British Museum," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 4, no. 1 (March 2001): 2–3.

Lamarckian, and Cuvierian rivalries, but because the philosophy of language behind the rules was a contentious prospect.[37]

McOuat asserts in his article that 'questions of entities and language are just as much questions of order and hierarchy'.[38] The reference here to 'order and hierarchy' coincides with my argument regarding Lear's subversion of those hierarchical structural orders that were so necessary to the aims of imperial agenda and the taxonomies of its collection-classification-display mania. Additionally, the hierarchical Linnaean binomial classification system and the more contemporary use of it by Cuvier was in direct opposition to the more descriptive systems like that of John Ray (1627-1705), which had advocated for long and hopelessly complex descriptive naming schemes that did not always reflect contemporaneous hierarchies of biology or empire.[39]

Beyond any issues associated with the subversion of imperial, Linnaean, and Cuvierian hierarchies, the philosophy of language and its definition is also explored by Gillian Beer in her chapter 'Darwin and the growth of language theory' in *Nature transfigured: Science and literature, 1700-1900* (1989). She discusses Darwin's reluctance to promote an essentialist definition of species, 'what Darwin later called "the vain search for the undiscovered and undiscoverable essence of the term, *Species*"'.[40] Beer discusses James Burnett, Lord Monboddo's (1714-1799) argument that placed the orang-utan in the same species as man because he was at the dawn of speech, and that after the adoption of speech,

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[37] McOuat, "Species, Rules and Meaning: The Politics of Language and the Ends of Definitions in Nineteenth-Century Natural History," 482-503. Lamarck theorised that physical adaptations in one generation could be passed to the next generation – 'inheritance of acquired characteristics' as well as gradual transmutations of form – both of which carried huge consequences for speciation. Cuvier based his taxonomies on comparative anatomy, which resulted in his rejection of transmutations of form.

[38] McOuat, 476.

[39] Gordon McOuat, 482–503; *The Platypus and the Mermaid and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination,* xiii-xiv.

[40] Gillian Beer, "Darwin and Language Theory," in *Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900,* ed. John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth (Manchester ; New York, N.Y: Manchester University Press, 1989), 155, 165; McOuat, "Species, Rules and Meaning," 478–79. McOaut and Beer both invoke Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), discussing the signification aspects of Locke's views on language. McOuat writes in his article: 'We have come to believe that words and things have at best a rather loose interconnection. Words selected for dubbing natural objects need not reflect that which is dubbed. We inherit this idea from (at least) John Locke. It goes back as far as Hobbes, Descartes, the Port Royal Logic, even the medieval nominalists. We stand on this side of a divide: Names do not reflect the 'inner nature of things. They are nothing but arbitrary signs given as labels to bundles of "ideas".', 478-479. And Beer writes: 'Locke had seen that any enquiry into the origin of language would be an inquiry into "the very origin of the human race," and the point was taken up and quoted by Lord Monboddo in *Of the Origin and Progress of Language* (1773)', 155. I think it can be inferred that Darwin's thoughts on language theory and subsequent view on species, according to Beer, align with Locke, given his scepticism of an essentialist definition of species.

would pursue the invention of other arts. Beer notes that Darwin had been reading Monboddo's work and had rejected the idea that sound, as 'signs', is unique to *Homo sapiens*:

> Darwin claims, that, on the contrary, animals "have this power, at least in a rude and incipient degree." He argues that human language is most probably a result of "the continued use of the mental and vocal organs leading to inherited changes in their structure and functions" – changes which have widened the gap between song, the calls of birds, the imitation of natural sounds, warning cries, and reasoned speech.[41]

I propose that Lear, swimming in the milieu of evolutionary and language theory, was sensitive to the debate around species versus the individual.

Locating Lear in Natural History

It is through language theory and its influences on taxonomy and evolutionary theory that I see a material effect on Lear's preoccupation with the individual, in two different yet equally potent aspects of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies – phonemic signifiers and nominal signifiers. I discuss phonemic signifiers in "Darwinian Nonsense", where I address the phonemic importance of the animal groups' choruses in "The Scroobious Pip". However, this kind of phonemic signifier is also present in the nonsense words incorporated into one of the alphabets – the one beginning with "Aa was once an apple-pie".[42] Below is the verse for the letter "Ww":[43]

[41] Beer, "Darwin and Language Theory," 156. I explore the issue of language theory and Lear's use of it further in the Darwinian Nonsense chapter.
[42] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 279, 520–21. According to Noakes, this alphabet was first published in 1954 in a monograph introduced by Philip Hofer called *Drawing Book Alphabet*, but the date of composition is unknown. Lear was in the habit of creating alphabets for the children of his friends in addition to including several in published works, like "A was an area arch" in *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets* (1871).
[43] Lear, 301.

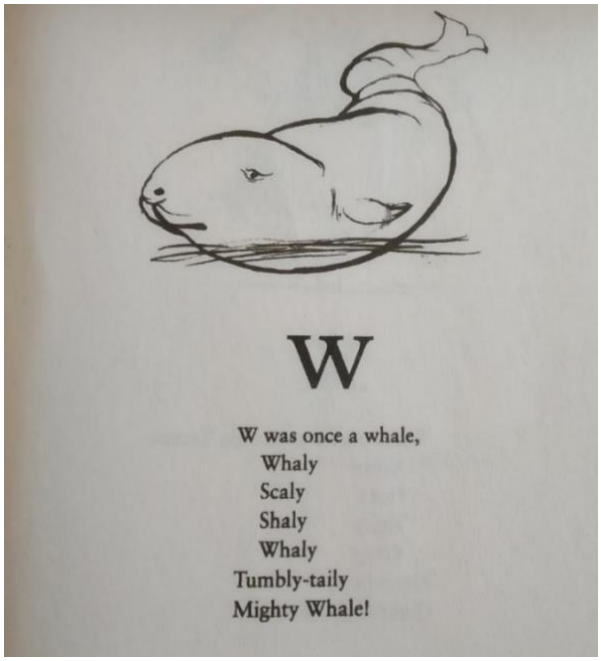

Figure 41 Edward Lear. Image from "A was once an apple pie". *Complete Nonsense.*

The formula for this alphabet is striking because of what Daniel Brown refers to in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists* as Lear's 'nonsense mimetic theory of the origin of the alphabet'.[44] In other words, by stating that a letter 'was once' the thing by which it is signified in the accompanying illustration, followed by a litany of rhyming sounds which define the signifier's precursor or ancestor (the whale), Lear is emphasising a continued linkage of sound or (speech) with the signifier of a building-block of that speech (phoneme). Except Lear subverts the taxonomical hierarchy of *Cetacea* with the "Ww" verse. I chose this letter to analyse because of Lear's proclivity to include whales in the fishes category, which is a flamboyant flouting of taxonomical knowledge at the time, as well as Lear's own experience with *Cetacea* because of his professional involvement in Thomas Bell's *A history of British quadrupeds, including the Cetacea* (1837). In the "Ww" verse the accompanying illustration of the cetacean in question makes complete nonsense of Lear's inclusion of the whale with something which might have scales, as in the third line of the verse – 'Scaly'. This is in direct opposition to the discussion of *Cetacea* in *Quadrupeds.*[45] Moreover, the creature has clearly been given an exaggerated mammalian face – with a snout like a kangaroo. The creature is quite obviously missing scales, which Lear did include for the "Ff

[44] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 13–14. Brown discusses "O was an oyster" and "O was once a little owl".
[45] Thomas Bell, Edward R. Alston, and Robert F. Tomes, *A history of British quadrupeds, including the Cetacea*, 2nd ed. revised and partly re-written by the author, assisted by Robert F. Tomes, and Edward Richard Alston. (London: J. Van Voorst, 1874), 373, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/31208.

was once a little fish" entry. I would note that Lear includes in the fourth line the word 'Shaly', which could be a reference to the expansion of geological science, which provided so many fossilised remains in the study of natural history and that fuelled the debate over issues like punctuated equilibrium and gradual change, as well as the seemingly regressive evolution of the *Cetacea,* who returned to the sea.

This type of ontological and taxonomical satire is also included in the second aspect of Lear's taxonomy affected by language philosophy – nominal signifiers. Recalling the alphabets with their letter 'was once' formula underscores this ontological insistence that name *does* signify essence, another direct flouting of Linnaeus and imperial taxonomical hierarchies. Lear emphasises the mammalian aspects of the *Cetacea* in the image, yet at the same time includes the word 'scaly' in the text, pointing to conservative nineteenth-century thought that might have insisted that Jonah's whale was a fish. Additionally, the internal conflict in meaning between the image and the text in this verse is an apt example of the gaps or blanks in meaning that Lear attempts to bridge by his positing of a counterfactual world of scaly cetaceans.[46] Moreover, the structure here conforms to the circularity of returning to an enhanced first term as I discussed in the theoretical framing of counterfactual taxonomies and which I also highlighted in the structural discussions in "Romantic Nonsense".

The circular structure of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies is easily discernible in this and other verses of this alphabet. Lear presents us with an original term, "W was once a whale", and subsequently shows us an impossible world in which whales and fishes might share the term 'scaly' and therefore be classified together. He also refers to the 'shale' which would have provided the fossil evidence that whales and other *Cetacea* had migrated *back* to the ocean. Finally, he returns to the original term, this time enhanced with the word 'mighty'. Beyond the meaning of 'large', 'mighty' indeed is a whole order of creatures that had given up life on land to return to the sea and is a subversion of the Great Chain of Being.[47]

Daniel Brown also discusses the link between the language theory inherent in taxonomy and the forms of taxonomy (or, rather, the counterfactuality of it) in Lear's limericks and nonsense botanies, extending this link to their ontology. In "Being and Naughtiness", Brown writes that Lear's nonsense contains an ontological plausibility

[46] *Minslow, "*Challenging the Impossibility of Children's Literature: The Emancipatory Qualities of Edward Lear's Nonsense*," 48–51;* Michael Benjamin Heyman. *Isles of Boshen: Edward Lear's Literary Nonsense in Context*.1999. University of Glasgow, PhD.), 218-220.
[47] Colley, "Edward Lear's Anti-Colonial Bestiary," 115. Colley discusses a similar 'inversion' of the Great Chain of Being in Lear's nonsense botany.

reflected in 'Samuel Beckett's *Unnamable*, who concludes that being is "all words, there's nothing else"'.[48] This question of ontology is a consistent theme throughout Lear's work. It can be traced back to "Miss Maniac", who struggles with retaining her sense of self, her being, during a descent into madness. Furthermore, aligning with my argument regarding the questions around language theory and ontology, Brown discusses a Schopenhauer-like will to being through the speech-centric aspects of Lear's texts, that Lear 'radicalizes speech into elementary word-sounds, a more forthright, visceral, embodiment of will'.[49]

Language theory's influence on taxonomical theory as reflected in Lear's alphabets and nonsense like "the Seven Families" are just half the story of the potency of Lear's work. The second half of the story is the symbiosis between text and image that Lear was able to exploit. The relationship of Lear's texts and images is paramount to an accurate analysis of his influence on later nonsense and literature of the absurd. The interplay between the image and the text in 'W was once a whale' is a prime example. Linking this relationship further to questions of natural history, I invoke here Jonathan Smith's work in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*. Smith discusses the importance of the relationship between image and text which emerged with the proliferation of the natural history text:

> They [science studies scholars] read illustrations through the eyes of the scientists producing them, seeking a stable meaning or meanings, and thus they treat the relationship between image and text in terms of reinforcement, reciprocity, and symbiosis.[50]

I would argue that because of Lear's scientific knowledge *and* his artistic talent, a similar approach to analysing the relationship between Lear's images and texts might prove to be a useful tool. In Lear's nonsense works, there is no physical boundary between image and text. He intended that the text beneath his images be read as an integral part of (or subversion of, as in "W was once a whale" and also in Miss Maniac's self-image) the image that is the focus of the reader's eye.[51] He utilised a similar dependence on the interplay between image and text that Darwin strove to establish with the help of many different artists and print artisans. Unlike Darwin, however, Lear was able to create this interplay himself without an intermediary, for not only was Lear an artist and natural historian, he was also an expert in those print technologies which revolutionised scientific illustration in the nineteenth

[48] Brown, "Being and Naughtiness," 163.
[49] Brown, 177.
[50] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 34.
[51] Ann C. Colley, "Edward Lear's Limericks and the Reversals of Nonsense," *Victorian Poetry* 26, no. 3 (October 1988), 289.

century.[52] Using this symbiosis of scientific image and text proves useful in analysing one of Lear's later nonsense stories: "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple". Additionally, in what ways does Lear play with his lived experience of the natural history wars in "the Seven Families"?

"The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple" was created in 1865 for the Fitzwilliam children in Nice and published in *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany and Alphabets* in 1871. It is a nonsense story outlining the extinction of seven 'families' or species of creatures.[53] Jenny Uglow writes that "the Seven Families" was a retelling of the Fall, but that Lear frames his version of the Fall as a topsy-turvy Darwinian '"On the Termination of Species"'.[54] Lodge also discusses "the Seven Families" as a retelling of Adam and Eve and likens it to morality tales. She also notes the extinction aspects of this nonsense song.[55] Similarly, Anna Henchman claims that "the Seven Families" is a reflection of Lear's fear of the loss of individuality, recalling Tennyson's reabsorption into '"the general soul"'.[56] Earlier in 2015, Brown, zeroing in on Lear's obvious holotypes and allotypes left at the end of the story, connects this more directly with Lear's ontology preoccupation.

However, I would expand on this work by using the symbiosis of scientific text and illustration. Note the following image and text:

CHAPTER XII
OF WHAT OCCURRED SUBSEQUENTLY

After it was known that the

Seven young Parrots,
and the Seven young Storks,
and the Seven young Geese,
and the Seven young Owls,
and the Seven young Guinea Pigs,

[52] Lear attained early success in his use of wood engravings in the various illustrations he provided for Edward T. Bennet. Additionally, he had learned the complicated process of lithography from the London artisan Hullmandel and applied it to great success in the plates for *Psittacidae*, which brought him nomination and approval for membership in the Linnaean Society. See McCracken Peck's discussion in *The Natural History of Edward* Lear, 39-41; 51-59.
[53] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 502.
[54] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 364.
[55] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 101, 183–84, 405. In Note 28 on p. 405, Lodge points to Jardine's *The Naturalist's Library* (1833) as a possible inspiration for Lear's use of parrots and cherries and discusses the use of the word 'family' in a taxonomical framework. Lear contributed parrot illustrations to *The Naturalist's Library*.
[56] Henchman, "Fragments Out of Place: Homology and the Logic of Nonsense in Edward Lear," 190.

and the Seven young Cats,
and the Seven young Fishes,

were all dead, then the Frog, and the Plum-pudding Flea, and the Mouse, and the Clangel Wangel, and the Blue Boss Woss, all met together to rejoice over their good fortune.

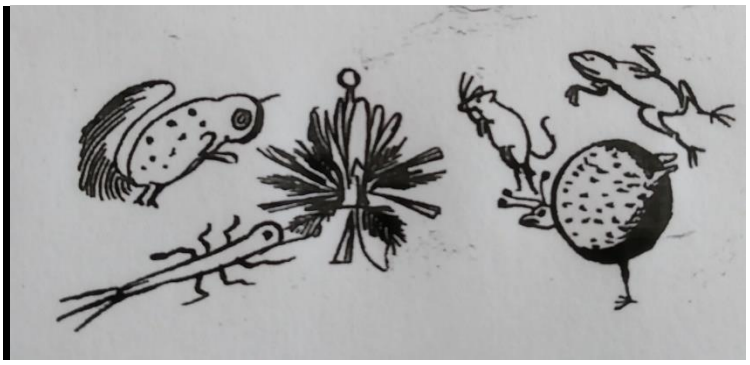

Figure 42 Edward Lear. Image from "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple". *Complete Nonsense.*

And they collected the Seven Feathers of the Seven young Parrots, and the Seven Bills of the Seven young Storks, and the Lettuce, and the Cherry, and having placed the latter on the Lettuce, and the other objects in a circular arrangement at their base, they danced a hornpipe round all these memorials until they were quite tired; after which they gave a tea-party, and a garden-party, and a ball, and a concert, and then returned to their respective homes full of joy and respect, sympathy, satisfaction, and disgust.[57]

Deconstructing the above strange spectacle, I contend that the objects of prey have turned the tables on the taxonomies of the Seven Families. They have collected the Families' remains in a circular arrangement at their base and proceed to dance round the remains in an orgy of revenge. The fetish they created of the feathers, bills, lettuce and 'other objects' is a reference, I contend, to the detritus that often came from the collection of deceased specimens such as those which Lear had been forced to breathe life into for the plates of *The Zoology of Captain Beechey's Voyage* (1839).[58] I agree that this centrepiece is also a physical representation of Tennyson's fear of the loss of individuality, but is that as far as Lear's image and text go? I would argue that by linking the bits and pieces similar to the ones that collection and classification produced and uniting them as one in image and text, Lear is parodying the efforts of natural history's frequently incorrect classification, and fetishisation of specimens into monstrosities like the one in the image above, not unlike the infamous Fiji mermaid.[59] Moreover, Lear equates the efforts of collection and classification with

[57] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 204.
[58] Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear*, 50.
[59] *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum*, 1836, 260–61. Here König (keeper of geology and mineralogy) discusses a specimen of uncertain integrity regarding remains and construction. See also Peck's

Tennyson's fear of the loss of individuality – of self – by conglomerating the remnants of multiple species into one fetish item, thus creating counterfactual hierarchies of taxonomy *and* of the individual.[60] Here it is difficult not to think back to those parrot species that Lear's natural history work identified as separate species.

Applying this symbiosis of scientific image and text, I would also enlarge upon the holotypes and allotypes theory, left pickled in their jars at the end of "the Seven Families".[61] Here are the final two chapters of "the Seven Families":

CHAPTER XIII
OF WHAT BECAME OF THE PARENTS OF THE FORTY-NINE CHILDREN

But when the two old Parrots,
and the two old Storks,
and the two old Geese,
and the two old Owls,
and the two old Guinea Pigs,
and the two old Cats,
and the two old Fishes,
became aware by reading in the newspapers, of the calamitous extinction of the whole of their families, they refused all further sustenance; and sending out to various shops, they purchased great quantities of Cayenne Pepper, and Brandy, and Vinegar, and blue Sealing-wax, besides Seven immense glass Bottles with air-tight stoppers. And having done this, they ate a light supper of brown bread and Jerusalem Artichokes, and took an affecting and formal leave of the whole of their acquaintance, which was very numerous and distinguished, and select, and responsible, and ridiculous.

CHAPTER XIV
CONCLUSION

And after this, they filled the bottles with the ingredients for pickling, and each couple jumped into a separate bottle, by which effort of course they all died immediately, and become thoroughly pickled in a few minutes; having previously made their wills (by the assistance of the most eminent Lawyers of the District), in which they left strict orders that the Stoppers of the Seven Bottles should be carefully sealed up with the blue Sealing-wax they had purchased; and that they themselves in the Bottles should be presented to the principal museum of the city of Tosh, to be labelled with Parchment or any

description in *Natural History*, p 50, of the decayed, long-deceased remains from which illustrators had to reconstruct a whole animal.

[60] For another discussion on the importance of fetishes and natural history, see Anne McClintock' s first chapter "Lay of the Land" in *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (New York & London: Routledge, 1995), 21–36, https://www-fulcrum-org.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/epubs/gq67jr33c?locale=en#/6/66[xhtml00000033]!/4/4/1:0. This indicates a similar line of thought that I will discuss in "Darwinian Nonsense".

[61] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, 17-24. Brown here is discussing the historical ornithological method of including in a formal species description the original holotype and the 'secondary' form of 'a specimen of the opposite sex from the holotype', 17.

other anticongenial succedaneum, and to be placed on a marble table with silver-gilt legs, for the daily inspection and contemplation, and for the perpetual benefit of the pusillanimous public.

And if ever you happen to go to Gramble-Blamble, and visit that museum in the city of Tosh, look for them on the Ninety-eighth table in the Four hundred and twenty-seventh room of the right-hand corridor of the left wing of the Central Quadrangle of that magnificent building; for if you do not, you certainly will not see them.[62]

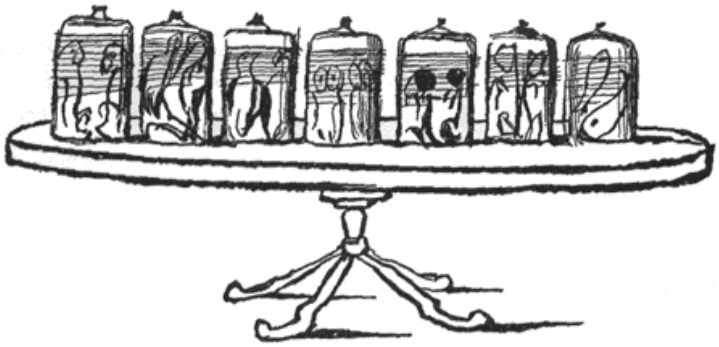

Figure 43 Edward Lear. Image from "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple". *Complete Nonsense.*

Having dispatched the multi-member species to extinction with the deaths of their progeny, Lear makes a mock attempt, like the professional natural historians, to rescue these species from obscurity by pickling in the same jar both the male and the female of each family according to the conflicted dying wishes of these once prolific species.[63] The families, by willing themselves into the collection of the Gramble-Blamble museum, are committing a last act of self-volition and identity by bequeathing their only worldly goods—their *individuality,* their *self,* their *species*—to permanent classification and display in the museum in order to obviate their own extinction.

Gazing on the physicality of those seven jars of pickled remains on their 'marble table with silver-gilt legs' in Lear's accompanying image, the reader of the time would have been viscerally returned to the crowded and disordered arrangement of displays with hand-written labels at the British Museum. This is reflected by the litany of directions in the last paragraph: 'on the Ninety-eighth table in the Four hundred and twenty-seventh room of the right-hand corridor of the left wing of the Central Quadrangle of that magnificent building'. Moreover, is there a message in the order of the creatures in those jars? Moving from left to right, we have the birds, then the guinea pigs, cats, and the fishes. In the ladder of creation

[62] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 206.
[63] Catherine O. Frank, *Law, Literature, and the Transmission of Culture in England, 1837-1925* (London: Routledge, 2010), 1. The importance of the 1837 Wills Act is that it revoked generations of testamentary law. This new legal document also promoted engagement with the ideas of ontology, volition, self, death, and extinction.

(and in vertebrate classes), mammals do not come *between* fishes and birds. Here again, Lear underscores the explicit nonsense of the efforts of natural history, this time by parodying the specific issues that were brought up in the Parliamentary inquiry I discussed earlier, as well as orthodox hierarchies of imperial taxonomy. This could also be an additional arrow pointing in the direction of Darwin's web of life on the entangled bank at the end of *On the Origin*, and which I discuss in the final chapter. Returning to Lear's "the Seven Families" and his own habit of reclassification, we are given a reference to this practice by Lear's use of the phrase 'anticongenial succedaneum'. Was this a direct reflection of the examiners' cross-examination of Gray's efforts at reclassification and the succession method he employed?

Lear's reference here prompts speculation regarding the language philosophy inherent in the succeeding names that Gray reclassified and the ontological questions raised by Lear's "W was a whale". Were the creatures in Lear's alphabets a reference to the endless taxonomical hierarchies that empire imposed on nature? Indeed, are Lear's counterfactual taxonomies a reflection of the frequent reclassification and re-naming of species that engendered the debates within early nineteenth-century taxonomy networks, and on Lear's own counterfactual taxonomies? Despite their proper labels affixed and the bequest of their remains to the museum and placement on the fine silver-gilt legged table, the Seven Families are consigned to extinction and obscurity by being lost in the convoluted catalogue directions in that 'magnificent building'. This is clearly a reference to the haphazard organisation of the Zoology section of that ultimate expression of imperial collection, classification, and display which is the British Museum. Their individuality, their self, like that of their progeny, has been subsumed by the empire's collection, classification, and display hierarchies.

Ashton Nichols in *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism* discusses the effect on visitors of seeing all the creatures in natural history collections crammed together and the resultant homology that pointed explicitly to the idea of *Homo sapiens*' relationship to all of life represented by Darwin's entangled bank from *On the Origin*. He writes that, 'In the rooms of these early "Romantic" museums, scientists came to believe that the human world had emerged directly out of these examples of nonhuman life'.[64] With his conglomerate fetish and his parody of the British Museum collection at the end, Lear makes clear his thoughts on the great web of life, as well as his subversion of imperial taxonomic and classification hierarchies. He parodies, too, that Parliamentary inquiry where he was called to testify.

[64] Ashton Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting.* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 134.

Although this testimony was mild in comparison to that of Gray, the experience of his testimony would have made an impression on a twenty-four-year-old Lear.

Additionally, the structure that provides the framework for his counterfactual taxonomies is present in this nonsense. The story begins with the naming of each of the Seven Families. This is followed by a depiction, in true natural history fashion, of the habits of each family. Next Lear posits an extinction event for each of the families, culminating in an impossible world where the conglomeration of the detritus of the Seven Families' extinctions becomes a fetish object around which their former prey dance. Finally, Lear returns to an enhanced version of the Seven Families. He again presents the Seven Families, both holotypes and allotypes, preserved for all eternity in their jars, but now extinct and lost amidst the jumble of the Gramble-Blamble museum collection. With the end of this story, Lear has made nonsense of the gravitas of the taxonomic and classification hierarchies that were part of the imperial agenda.[65]

These classification hierarchies were portrayed, thanks in part to Lear's ground-breaking publication of *Psittacidae*, in taxonomical groups, rather than in loose geographical conglomerations. The revolution that Lear wrought in the British ornithological natural history text may even have influenced not just ornithological publishers like John Gould, but, through him, Charles Darwin. The last two sections of this chapter then, discuss the following: British trends in the publication of natural history texts, Lear's revolutionary effect upon those texts, and aspects of the ontological issues in Lear's counterfactual taxonomies of natural history, their symbiosis with the nonsense images, and his problematisation of their relationship with questions of the individual self.

Lear Rewrites Natural History

Natural history texts in Britain from the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, ones that would have been available to a young Edward Lear, were usually created from non-living specimens and organised on a geographical basis, rather than by taxonomical classificatory principles.[66] The confusing phrase 'painted from life' is explained by Robert McCracken Peck in *The Natural History of Edward Lear* (2016), in that this term often meant

[65] Ritvo, *The Platypus and the Mermaid and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination*, 209–10. See my discussion in the introductory chapter.
[66] Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear*, 60–63.

that an illustration had been painted from a deceased specimen.[67] More often than not, these supposedly real-life images were painted from stuffed skins. In addition, even if the image was from a living specimen, it was not depicted, nor had it been seen by the artist, in a natural setting. McCracken Peck stresses the 'stiff and lifeless appearance' of the images that were produced from such practices, speaking specifically about George Edwards who had produced *Gleanings of Natural History* (1758).[68] Such were the texts that would have been available for Lear to study.[69]

In 1828 Lear gained admission to the exclusive Royal Society menagerie in Regent's Park through the recommendation of a Mrs. Godfrey Wentworth, the daughter of William Turner's (1789-1862) patron.[70] Around this time, Lear became acquainted with Edward T. Bennett (1797-1836), who employed Lear to produce at least two wood-engraved plates for *Menagerie of the Zoological Society Delineated*, published 1830-1831, and who nominated Lear for membership into The Linnaean Society.[71] Working with live specimens became Lear's preferred method, but he was forced to work with only dead skins for the illustrations he did for *Beechey*.[72] The difference in quality from *Beechey* to *Psittacidae* is stark, and Peck writes of how Lear's reputation may have been harmed by having to work from desiccated specimens, as well as the delay in publication of the monograph.[73]

In 1830, Lear successfully applied for permission from the Royal Society to make drawings of all the parrots in the menagerie and was allowed to remove birds from their cages to have the keepers hold the creatures while he took precise measurements of wingspan, beak length, etc. for his meticulous depictions (See Figure 44 below).[74] Also during this time, Lear received instruction from Charles Hullmandel (1789-1850) in the revolutionary printing technology of lithography. Lear was able to use Hullmandel's studio and tutelage to master the different shading techniques that would bring his subjects to startling and vivid life on the plates of his upcoming *Psittacidae*. This included training in the multi-step process of

[67] Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear*, 61.
[68] Peck, 60–63.
[69] Peck, 63.
[70] Peck, 35; Noakes, *Life of a Wanderer*, 16.
[71] Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear*, 39–41.
[72] Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear*, 49–50.
[73] Peck, 50. Peck also explains that the publication was delayed due to John Edward Gray's very lengthy procrastination in supplying his contributions. It delayed the publication for almost 10 years. Peck speculates that the difference in the quality of Lear's work (completed in 1829) in this volume to his work in *Psittacidae* would have been damaging to his professional standing. In addition, this work was before Lear had been trained in lithography, for which he appeared to have a peculiar genius.
[74] Peck, 37.

creating coloured lithographic plates.[75] Since Lear insisted on working from live specimens, this meant that he made an initial drawing at the Royal Society menagerie; subsequently, he would colour his own drawing. Next, he would recreate the outline of the drawing onto the lithography stone using a black ink. Then shading and texture would be added via the use of a lithographic crayon to portray fine details of feather and fur. Once a plate was made from these steps, Lear would create a coloured pattern-plate so that hand colourers could replicate his final shading and colouring on the rest of the exemplars of each specimen.[76] Although it would be the publications of John Gould that would become the Audubons of Britain, some critics argue it was from Lear that Gould took the idea of lithographic engravings of live specimens of a collection of animals with some kind of taxonomical relationship rather than a loose geographical grouping, for *Psittacidae* was the first British ornithological text devoted to one taxonomical family of birds.[77]

Lear's publication of the parrot monograph (See Figures 3 and 4) helped garner him nomination into the Linnaean Society and established him as an expert in natural history illustration *and* lithography. Lodge in *Inventing Edward Lear* (2019) writes that Lear's attention to detail in his bird illustrations '… mark Lear as himself a gifted naturalist: one who looks birds directly in the eye and notices what others miss'.[78] Gould quickly engaged him as an artist and instructor in lithography and ornithological drawing for his wife Elizabeth. Together, Lear and Elizabeth Gould would vastly improve the quality of Gould's publications, continuing the revolution that Lear had set in motion with *Psittacidae.*[79]

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[75] Michael Twyman, "Lear and Lithography," in *Edward Lear the Landscape Artist: Tours of Ireland and the English Lakes, 1835 & 1836* (Grasmere: The Wordsworth Trust, 2009), 11–29. Twyman discusses Lear's landscape lithography extensively, but he also describes the early training Lear gained from Charles Hullmandel, as well as James Duffield Harding's (1797-1863) influence on Lear's lithographic work, 25.

[76] Charles Nugent, *Edward Lear the Landscape Artist*, 11-21.

[77] See Twyman's essay "Edward Lear and Lithography" in *Edward Lear the Landscape Artist: Tours of Ireland and the English Lakes, 1835 & 1836* (2009) for comments on the sometimes-fraught relationship between Gould and Lear. See also Newman, "Elizabeth Gould: An Accomplished Woman"; Hindwood, "The Letters of Edwin C. Prince to John Gould in Australia"; Tree, *The Bird Man: The Extraordinary Story of John Gould*, regarding the often-unattributed work of Elizabeth Gould and Lear in Gould's publishing empire. Elizabeth's execution of ornithological specimens was key to Gould's publishing success. She was a talented pupil of Lear's. Lear wrote bitterly that he and Elizabeth contributed immensely to Gould's publications in a diary entry 7 February 1881; Gould's secretary Edwin C. Prince confirms this in a letter to the 13th Earl of Derby (transcription in Appendix I). See also Christine E. Jackson and Peter Davis' *Sir William Jardine: A Life in Natural History* (London: Leicester University Press, 2001) for further information regarding Lear's work with Gould, Jardine, and his revolutionary idea of devoting one monograph to one family on pages 40 42, 44, 73, 74, 79, 128, 133, 134-135. For more information on Lear's professional relationship with Jardine's *The Naturalist's Library,* see Susan Sheets-Pyeson's "War and peace in natural history publishing: The Naturalist's Library, 1833-1843," *Isis,* Vol. 72, No. 1 (Mar. 1981), 50-72, as well as Sara Lodge's *Inventing Edward Lear* (2019), 144-45, 405.

[78] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 144.

[79] Tree, *The Bird Man: The Extraordinary Story of John Gould*, 55.

It should be noted that Gould added his own contributions of precise scientific descriptions to the images that Lear and his wife produced. However, it is important to acknowledge Lear's influence on Gould because of the ways in which Darwin would later call on Gould's work in *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and *Descent of Man* (1871).[80]

Lodge also discusses Lear's particular taxonomical knowledge:

> Jardine's *Naturalist's Library* aimed to illustrate as completely as possible each separate genus of birds, but Lear suggested going further: 'could you not in this new series, set about them—so as to be able to bind up the genera in families—or Classes—eventually?'[81]

Smith in *Charles Darwin and Victorian visual culture* devotes most of the third chapter to a discussion on the interplay between Gould's books and Darwin's use of Gould's illustrations in his own works, writing that in 1837 '… Elizabeth had executed the fifty colored lithographs'.[82] Significantly, Gould engaged Lear from 1832-1837.[83]

Lear was not only acclaimed for his artistry, but also for the meticulous and *scientific* depiction of his subjects. His images in *Psittacidae* enabled the classification of three new species that had been mis-classified with other earlier identified species because of his careful anatomical measurements and laborious notations of colour and plumage patterns, eye colour, etc., which he was able to accurately portray with his lithographic knowledge. Lodge notes the professional ornithological discussions Lear contributed to with the following passage from a letter Lear wrote to Jardine attesting to Lear's expertise:

> "Naturalists – it appears to me – don't pay sufficient attention to the colour of the eyes in their figures of birds." He explained to Jardine, "the colouring of the eye is frequently a very strong point which marks genera". Where he had to rely on the work of a taxidermist, he might discover that the feathers of a crested bird had been set incorrectly, or to Jardine, Lear explained, "I have placed this purposely on the ground – there is a very erroneous figure of it lately published – *perched* –: these birds seldom or never perch".[84]

[80] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 3; "Gould's Book of Toucans."
[81] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 145. Smith also discusses Gould's role in the eureka moment regarding Darwin and the Galapagos finches in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 95. And Brown in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists* discusses Lear, Gould and their influences on Darwin, 23.
[82] Jonathan Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 95.
[83] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 58.
[84] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 144.

The following preparatory sketch of a parrot's head held at Harvard's Houghton Library testifies to the scientific and empirical eye that Lear applied to his natural history work:[85]

Figure 44 Edward Lear. Detail of image held at Harvard Houghton Library. Edward Lear Collection. MS Typ 55.9.20.

With Elizabeth Gould, Lear revolutionised Gould's *The Birds of Europe, A Monograph of the Trochilidae, or Family of Hummingbirds* (1849-1861) and other ornithological publications, at a time when he was also working for his patron the 13th Earl of Derby on the illustrations for *Gleanings from the menagerie and aviary at Knowsley Hall* (1846). It was at this time, too, that Lear was creating a cache of nonsense for his first publication in that genre. In *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists,* Brown connects Lear's

[85] Edward Lear, *Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots,* 1830, https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:30660426$1i.

nonsense and his natural history work. Brown contends that the timing of *Gleanings* and the first *Book of Nonsense* (1846) are not accidental: 'Their parallel histories suggest that his natural history and nonsense were for Lear compatible, even comparable, activities'.[86] It is here that I find the crux of the argument that Lear created his own counterfactual taxonomical classifications of the individual in his nonsense, like he revolutionised the natural history text.

A Singular Taxonomy

Lear's use of holotypes in the limericks as representative of the entire species – the ontology of a species centred on one individual – is embodied in those singular misbehaving species, as well as in the preserved holotypes (and allotypes) of the Seven Families (now extinct) and in the lone Pip.[87] The singular holotypes of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies seem to be in direct contrast to Darwin's reluctance to view individuals as an 'avatar of a hidden idea, expressible as species,' as Beer discusses in *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (2009).[88] Beer writes:

> The delineation of species tends to take the individual as its model, but such a model is instantly subverted by the fact that no single individual is archetypical – individuals are individual – and the discrepancies between them press upon the bounds of species-description, making it difficult to ascribe limits and conformities.[89]

This aspect of Darwin's attitude to the definition of species might seem contradictory to Lear's single member species, but on closer examination, I would argue that there is an affinity for recognising the inherent web of nature between the two seemingly dichotomous stances, as well as Darwin's reticence on the definition of species. Brown marks the subversion of species lines in Lear:

> A sub-group of the limericks asserts an ontological parity, indeed the coalescence, of man and animal, with the two being depicted in the accompanying drawings parallel to one another, often facing each other, the fundamental situation of Lear's early natural history work.[90]

Examining another alphabet – "The Absolutely Abstemious Ass", Lear subsumes human behaviour into animal in a parade of characters, where non-human animals behave as humans with human emotions, tools, graces, foibles, and character traits, with *Homo sapiens*

[86] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, 10.
[87] The *Oxford English Dictionary* describes 'holotype' as 'a specimen chosen as the basis of the first description'; Brown, 17-24.
[88] Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 91.
[89] Beer, 91.
[90] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*,19.

absent in all but three of the letters.[91] The animal for the letter 'j' – "The Judicious Jubilant Jay" (1871) – represents precisely the sort of nonsense and upending of social hierarchies that delighted Lear. Below is the image and verse:

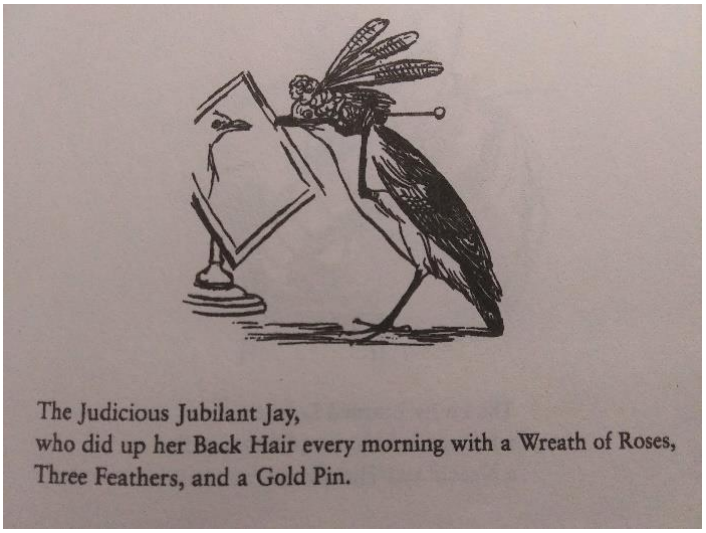

Figure 45 Edward Lear. Image from "The Absolutely Abstemious Ass". *Complete Nonsense*.[92]

The word 'jay' recalls quarrelling, contentious creatures. However, Lear terms his jay as 'judicious', yet provides an image of a bird preening like any nineteenth-century *Homo sapiens* lady in front of a mirror and adorning herself with gold, roses, and *feathers*. Furthermore, it prompts the question of why a jay – another bird – would need to use the *feathers* of another bird species to beautify herself. Is this Lear's reference to the fact that human *females* adorn themselves with the feathers of *male* birds in a topsy-turvy version of Darwin's sexual selection theory, where male birds adorn themselves and are chosen by female birds?[93] And what role here do holotypes and allotypes play, given that the holotype Lear presents is female and the general male-as-allotype bias in historical natural history collections?[94] Furthermore, did Lear's serial reclassification of his self – as natural historian, Byronic landscape painter, gentleman traveller, Pre-Raphaelite, queer lover – consequently

[91] Helena Feder, *Ecocriticism and the Idea of Culture: Biology and the Bildungsroman*, 134. Feder writes that recent critics have established 'a meaningful continuity of sentience and social feeling between humans and other animals' in her discussion of the separation of humans from the other animals (and the correlated othering or speciation of non-Western peoples). Colley in 'Edward Lear's anti-colonial bestiary' emphasises that in the limericks, the humans 'cannot help but adopt an animal's features', 115.

[92] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 261.

[93] This illustration is also reminiscent of two other Lear images: the fop preening himself in a mirror from Miss Maniac, and the blue-bottle fly image from "the Four Little Children", who has a similar decoration in its 'back hair'. I discuss both images in other chapters.

[94] Natalie Cooper and Alexander L. Bond et al., "Sex Biases in Bird and Mammal Natural History Collections | Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences," *Proceedings of the Royal Society* 286, no. 193 (October 16, 2019): 1.

lend his illustration of the taxonomy of gender roles a subversive cartwheeling of heteronormative gender hierarchies?

Returning to the anthropomorphisation discussion, are the odd birds in the limericks, in fact, *holotypes* of individual but different *Homo sapiens* species that Lear has created – a kind of *Homo sapiens ombliferens* or *Homo sapiens scroobiensis*, as it were? Brown's argument is that Lear's limericks, in fact, subvert the hierarchies of early nineteenth-century natural history by presenting a holotype as a single-member species, rather than as a representative of a multi-member species. They are what they are, individually – 'My only name is the Scroobious Pip' Lear later writes. Is Lear arguing for a proclamation of individual self – for the ontology of the single-member species – yet one that is included in the unity of all life as in Darwin's entangled bank? Why are the lone eccentrics in the limericks assailed by the 'they' for maintaining their own holotypical ontology? Lear's later nonsense is densely populated with such lone and eccentric figures like the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo, the Pobble, and the Dong. The sheer volume of singular oddities in his work points to the importance of this theme in Lear's mind and culminated for him in a series of counterfactual taxonomies of one, 'avatars' of the singular self.

However, there is another link between Darwin's and Lear's work: that of scientific illustration trends, pointing to the simplified lines of Lear's later nonsense.[95] Smith, too, explores the trajectory of simplified lines in scientific illustrations in his discussion of the relationship between text and image from a history of science perspective, outlining the work of critics like William Ivins, Bruno Latour, and Anne Shelby Blum. After stressing the importance of Ivins' insistence that prints should be seen as repositories of information rather than aesthetic objects, he quotes directly from Blum's *Picturing Nature: American Nineteenth-Century Zoological Illustration* (1993), '"natural history illustrations took their meaning from adjacent written descriptions"'.[96] This blunt statement struck a chord with the ways in which I see Lear's illustrations interacting with their text. And here again, I think this work regarding Darwin's illustrations can provide a useful method of analysing what Lear was doing with that symbiosis between the texts and the illustrations of his nonsense. Returning to the Smith passage I quoted earlier is relevant in the context of Lear's use of illustration:

[95] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, 23.
[96] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 36.

> They read illustrations through the eyes of the scientists producing them, seeking a stable meaning or meanings, and thus they treat the relationship between image and text in terms of reinforcement, reciprocity, and symbiosis.[97]

I would argue that Lear's nonsense images and texts should be read 'through the eyes' of the scientist who produced them because they 'constitute knowledge rather than merely re-packaging textual statements'.[98] Lear's images extend his counterfactual taxonomies rather than just repeating or supporting them or providing any kind of stable definition. Gazing again at the preparatory sketch of the parrot head above with its angle lines and mathematical hash marks reinforces the scientific eye through which Lear approached his natural history illustrations, especially when taken in the context of the increasing trend in natural history illustrations of simplified, clean lines. Brown makes a direct comparison of this trend in the evolution of scientific illustration to the increasingly cleaner and simple lines in the evolution of Lear's limericks and nonsense, noting their similarity to illustrations in Darwin's and Owen's works: 'increasingly minimal and monochromatic, functionalist and diagrammatic'.[99]

There is a progressive simplification in Lear's drawings in exemplars from the late 1820s like "Miss Maniac" and "The Adventures of Mick" to the much cleaner lines of the limericks and other nonsense. Observe the cluttered nature of the following image:

[97] Smith, 34.
[98] Smith, 34. Here, I would point out that Lear's first accolade was for his *scientific* renditions of parrots – hence his immediate nomination into the Linnaean Society.
[99] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, 23–24.

Figure 46 Edward Lear. "Miss Maniac".

Although the limericks are from published works, the timing of 'Miss Maniac' and the migration to simpler lines in the limericks may suggest the influence that mastering the lithographic process had on Lear's nonsense drawings, as well as coinciding with the migration to the more simplified line drawings that arose in scientific illustration and the development of his own draughtsmanship.[100]

Simple line drawings are the hallmark of the limericks, including two describing nonconforming females who perform extraordinary acts: "There was a Young Lady of Bute" and "There was a Young Lady of Wales". Similar patterns of female nonconformity depicted in simple lines emerge in many of the limericks, like the ones seen in "There was a Young Lady of Ryde", "There was a Young Person whose History", and "There was a Young Person of Ayr" – all singularly odd creatures performing extraordinary acts. Compare the above messy image from "Miss Maniac" with the cleaner lines in "There was a Young Lady of Bute" from the first *Book of Nonsense,* published *after* Lear had been working in lithography:

[100] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 477; Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear*, 51–54.

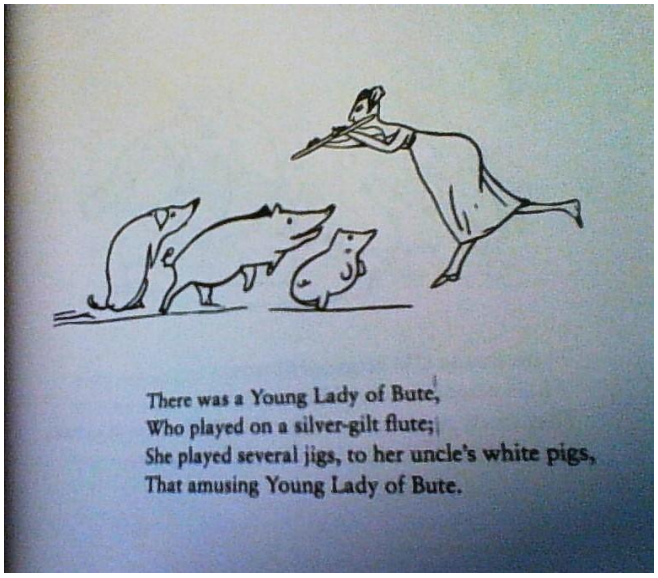

Figure 47 Edward Lear. "There was a Young Lady of Bute". *Complete Nonsense*.

The timing of "Miss Maniac" and the migration to simpler lines may suggest the influence that mastering the lithographic process had on Lear's nonsense drawings, as well as coinciding with the migration to the more simplified line drawings that arose in scientific illustration.[101] And I argue that the simplified lithographic lines that broke down species barriers for Lear coincided with his later sympathy for Darwin's entangled bank of related creatures and his search for a taxonomy of self, of the individual amongst those creatures. With the above limerick, we see Lear's attitude towards the differences, or lack thereof, between man and animal. The 'young lady' and the pigs are mimicking each other's stances – balancing on half of their legs, with torsos leaning forward. But the symbiosis of Lear's text and image also encourages the reader to explore several nonsense ideas regarding the closeness of man to other animals: that pigs would appreciate such refinements as a 'young lady' (hair adorned with an ostrich feather) playing music, or that they would be interested in *jigs*, especially jigs played on a 'silver-gilt flute', not a type of flute that was common for the period. And that a 'young lady' able to play such an instrument would play *jigs* on it, rather than Bach or Telemann, for the obvious enrapturement of the pigs, who are clearly inspired by her performance to dance.

For that matter, would brown or spotted pigs enjoy the jigs, or would they, perhaps, prefer the Bach or Telemann? Additionally, there is the curious, one might say, counterfactual fact, that the Young Lady is flouting musical convention so far as to be holding the flute incorrectly, with both hands placed on the same side of the flute, rather than

[101] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 477; Peck, *The Natural History of Edward Lear*, 51–54.

with the left hand rotated and holding the opposite side of the flute. Given the limited rotating ability of a pig's forelegs, is this another way in which the Young Lady and pigs are similar? Lear himself was a flutist, so this flouting of proper hand placement is truly curious and marks the Young Lady of Bute as a true eccentric. With her strange proclivity to entertain pigs with jigs on a sliver-gilt flute with one backwards hand, 'the young lady' is another taxonomy of one.

A second example of these cleaner lines in the limericks describing a non-conforming female returns to Lear's fascination with taxonomy, fishes, and scales. Below is "There was a Young Lady of Wales" (1846, 1855):[102]

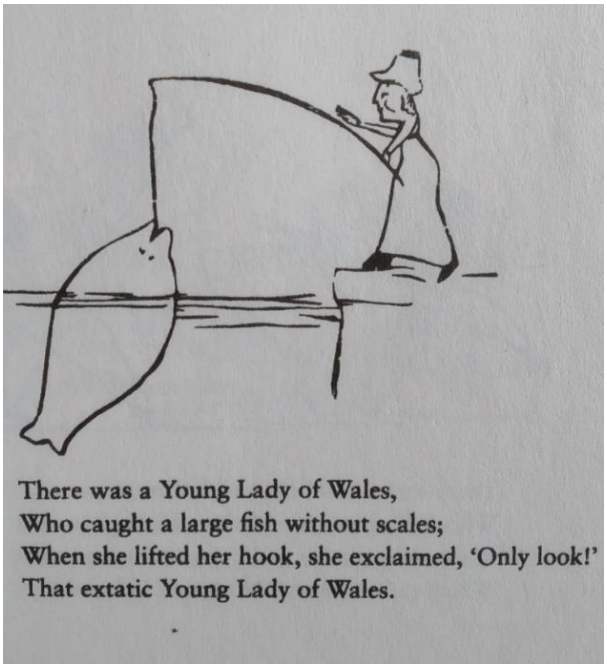

Figure 48 Edward Lear. "There was a Young Lady of Wales". *Complete Nonsense*.

The image included in this later limerick underscores how often Lear returned to his play with taxonomy and natural history. As I discussed above, Lear would have been well acquainted with the proper classification of cetaceans, but the limerick above prompts a further inquiry into Lear's knowledge of other marine natural history.[103] Gazing closely at the fish, most people would recognise it as a type of flat fish or *Pleuronectidæ*:[104]

[102] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 101.
[103] This coincides with his use of Darwin's barnacles, which I discuss in "Darwinian nonsense".
[104] "Sole," in *Britannica Academic*, October 2008, academic-eb-com.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/levels/collegiate/article/sole/68575.

Figure 49 *Solea solea*. Image from "Sole". *Britannica Academic*.

Flat fish are famous for having asymmetrical eyes, an appearance that seems comical because it is anomalous compared to the symmetry displayed in most chordates. However, I would contend that few people are aware of some of the more extraordinary characteristics of this type of fish. *Pleuronectidæ,* or flat fish, of which sole are members (a school of sole are decimated in "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World"), are hatched with symmetrical eyes on either side of their heads, like most other chordates. At a young age, one eye migrates to the other side of the head, twisting the skull in the process, and causing it to swim on its side, rather than upright.[105] The migration in some species always occurs on the same side, whereas in other species, considered ambidextrous, it might migrate either way.[106] Furthermore, flat fish have a different kind of scale to most other bony fish; their scales have mutated into bony tubercles.[107] It is a curious fish indeed, and Jardine's *The Naturalist's Library* (1830-1836), for which Lear created illustrations, discusses the odd morphology and development of flat fish in volume 37 *Ichthyology – British Fishes – Part 2*:

> The characters of this family are so peculiar as to render it one of the most marked and insulated groups in the whole tribe of fishes, nay, as Cuvier remarks, in the whole series of vertebrate animals.[108]

Moreover, Jardine claims that there are 18 species of *Pleuronectidæ* in England.[109]

Returning to the interplay of image and text of this limerick, how was Lear playing with taxonomy and natural history here? We are again presented with two characters – human and another animal – who are idiosyncratic in their ontology. The fish is one of those strange chordates who is *not* symmetrical. Moreover, it might even be one of those bizarre species which, as it may have appeared to nineteenth-century eyes, was able to *choose* to which side

[105] "Flounder."
[106] "Earthlife.Net."
[107] "Earthlife.Net."
[108] William Jardine, ed., *The Naturalist's Library: Volume XXXVI-XXXVII Ichthyology British Fishes* (London: Chatto & Windus, 184-), 219–47, https://doi.org/10.5962/bhl.title.155390.
[109] Jardine, 221.

it migrated its eye. This creature has a will for even its own constitutional state – a truly powerful ontological will. In addition, this strange, wilful creature has scales that are highly unusual for a bony fish, another example of its idiosyncrasy.

Facing this strange creature from the deep is another 'Young Lady' – another wilful creature, this time from Wales. Is Lear punning off the word 'whale' – another creature who shares a habitat with the other fishes, also without scales? And what do we know of this 'Young Lady'? Are we meant to think that she is an angler – a genteel sport that was acceptable for Victorian young ladies to engage in?[110] Is she a conflation of those female naturalists Lear knew like Elizabeth Gould and Elizabeth Hornby, gathering specimens for their taxidermy or drawings? Lear writes that this 'Young Lady' is 'extatic' – why is she ecstatic?[111] Because she has caught such a large fish or because she has found an interesting specimen – a fish without scales – a new species? Jardine tells us that specimens of flat fish as large as three to six feet were regularly caught off the Isle of Man and notes the bony tubercles in some species.[112] This 'Young Lady of Wales' is a non-conformist, asserting her individual taxonomy with her own particular sport and the trophy of an unusual specimen. With the will to migrate its eye asymmetrically to one side of its body and devoid of scales, this creature, too, is an oddity, a taxonomy of one. An additional question might pertain to the double meaning in English of the word 'scales'. This type of fish is without scales, but it is also 'large' – is it therefore beyond the standard measure of a fishmonger's scale? By creating taxonomies of these singular individuals from Wales, Bute, Ryde, etc., Lear subverted the orthodox taxonomic and classification hierarchies of species, and of the individual.[113]

In Lear's singular, holotypical avatars and simplified lines, I see a powerful link to Ann C. Colley's discussion of the significance that skin held for Victorians in *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain: Zoos, Collections, Portraits, and Maps* (2014):

[110] D. MacMurray, "'A Rod of Her Own': Women and Angling in Victorian North America," 20.

[111] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 225, 369. Elizabeth Hornby (1817-1912) was a niece of the 13th Earl of Derby and daughter of Admiral Phipps Hornby. She travelled with her father and procured and taxidermied specimens for her uncle's menagerie and natural history collection. She was a friend of Lear's; they were frequent correspondents.

[112] Jardine, *The Naturalist's Library: Volume XXXVI-XXXVII Ichthyology British Fishes*, 224, 230.

[113] Williams in *Edward Lear* also notes the 'fish without scales' and the surprise of the Young Lady regarding her catch, as well as the implications in natural history terms, 54.

> skin was the place where identity was assigned. It was the primary medium through which people differentiated species and ordered the natural world.[114]

Colley argues that this embodiment of self in the skin was in direct contrast to the Romantic patterns of thought which emphasised that self could be found *within*, invoking Mary Shelley's Viktor Frankenstein, who, unlike the Victorians, worked from the inside out. She writes, 'Unlike the taxidermist, he does not commence with the life-giving, life-containing skin. Frankenstein does not acknowledge that existence comes through skin'.[115] Although Colley mentions the scientific fact that skin is in fact the largest organ elsewhere in her book, she omits it from the discussion regarding the exteriority of skin versus the interiority of Frankenstein's work. She also does not mark the migration from the Romanticism in Shelley's Frankenstein, but it is an apt illustration of one of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies of nineteenth-century attitudes towards nature. Lear retraced this migration, journeying from the Romanticism inherent in works like "Miss Maniac" with its focus on the inner mind of its protagonist displayed in the illustrations, to a Victorian emphasis on skin and the depiction of it as something that can be read and stand for the self. Lear's work after "Miss Maniac" is on the surface – in the skins of his natural history subjects and the black line drawings of the nonsense. And perhaps more significantly, no longer does he create formal anthropomorphised animal portraits like those seen in his natural history work.[116]

I would take the Victorian emphasis on skin as an emblem for self even further, however, working towards a theory of Lear's reclassification of Romantic patterns of thought on humanity and nature *and* Victorian taxonomical conventions. I argue that the outlines of the nonsense sketches are Lear's desire to 'acknowledge the intimacy of life inherent in skin', which were revealed to him through his expertise in lithography and natural history illustration.[117] The complicated process of producing natural history lithographic plates included more than just transferring a sketch, in whole, onto a single lithographic stone. The whole and complete image must be broken down into its different parts – outline, detail of plumage or fur, background, and colour – to be reunified onto the single completed plate. Colley writes of the nonsense sketches, 'The carefully rendered details have receded into an approximation and gathered into simplified lines,' echoing criticism on the development of

[114] Colley, *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain*, 64.
[115] Colley, *Wild Animal Skins and Victorian Britain*, 98.
[116] Preoccupation with skin can be linked to the outward search for self and the transition of the Dong's luminous nose from a mind mirror to a mind lamp.
[117] Colley, 111, 120.

scientific illustration. I argue further that these simplified outlines, *the skin*, of the subjects were revealed through the lithographic process that Lear so meticulously transcribed onto the stones. For Lear, did tracing those lines break down the boundaries separating species, and man from the other animals, paving the way for his embrace of Darwin's great web of life metaphor and the fusion of man and other animals in the limericks and "The Absolutely Abstemious Ass"? Did they prompt Lear towards the subversion of imperial taxonomy and its tendency to reinforce hierarchies?[118] Returning to the symbiotic relationship of image to text in Lear, we see a continuation of those of gaps in meaning, which Lear attempts to bridge or network with the impossible, counterfactual taxonomies and images he creates, again in an embrace of Darwin's great web of life metaphor.[119]

Colley also touches on the ontology so prominently displayed in Lear's work, even in his natural history illustrations, arguing that Lear was creating an individual self in his animal *portraits*, creating other counterfactual taxonomies of one. She then contends that Cynthia Freeland's argument in *Portraits and Persons* (2010)—that there can be no such thing as animal portraiture—is disproved by Lear's work. She discusses the bird portraits:

> A transaction between the artist and animal becomes a possibility, for both bird and artist do appear mutually to be conscious of one another. Lear's portraits of animals and birds are truly proof of contact.[120]

I would extend this argument to include Lear's chimpanzee portrait, and I do not use the word 'portrait' lightly.

Painted some time in 1835, Lear's chimpanzee portrait currently hangs at Knowsley, the ancestral seat of the Earls of Derby. The preparatory work for it pictured below resides at Harvard's Houghton Library.[121] Even this preparatory sketch below (Figure 50) in graphite with watercolour wash is extraordinary in its ability to convey mood and expression. It is significant that one of the few images approaching a human portrait was the one Lear painted of this chimpanzee, classified as *Pan troglodytes*:[122]

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[118] Ritvo, *The Platypus and the Mermaid and Other Figments of the Classifying Imagination*, 209-210.
[119] Minslow, "Challenging the Impossibility of Children's Literature: The Emancipatory Qualities of Edward Lear's Nonsense," 48-51; Heyman, *Isles of Boshen: Edward Lear's Literary Nonsense in Context*, 218-220.
[120] Colley, *Wild Animal Skins and Victorian Britain*, 112.
[121] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 81.
[122] Significantly, one of Lear's pictures stories ("Lear in Sicily") ends with Lear sitting down and nursing an 'infant troglodyte' on his knee. http://www.nonsenselit.org/Lear/LiS/lis04.html

Figure 50 Edward Lear. *Chimpanzee Head* (1835). Image from Harvard's Houghton Library Lear collection.

Human faces abound in Lear's visual work, but the vast majority are caricatures or have vague features. Comic human faces were safe for him to portray, but realistic, detailed portraits of humans are not in Lear's oeuvre. The absence of human portraiture constituted a hindrance to Lear's success as a professional painter, competent depiction of the human figure being a vital arbiter of Royal Academy recognition. And clearly, Lear possessed the skill to convey human emotion in the face of one of *Homo sapiens'* closest relatives, the chimpanzee. As a corollary to this, I argue that this portrait was emblematic of one of the contributing factors that caused Lear to abandon his extremely successful career as a natural history illustrator and reclassify himself into the performance of another role which the nineteenth century promoted as a legitimate masculine identity – that of landscape painter.

At a young age, Lear created a role for himself in the contentious world of natural history, walking a fine line to appease aristocratic patrons of his work *and* to establish cordial relations with the different factions of professional scientists who were also a source of bread and butter to him. Once he had solidified this performance, Lear was embroiled in the Parliamentary inquiry and entangled in the juggernaut of Gould's publishing franchise. Mixed into this dilemma, too, is the issue of Lear's eyesight: he claims in his diary that the fine work of accurately depicting feather and fur was too exact for his deteriorating eyes and was determined to abandon natural history illustration for landscape painting.[123] It would be illuminating to know how close to the animals Lear had to be to produce a portrait like the one above. Lear saw an ontological autonomy reflected in the eyes of his animal subjects, and he was obviously technically capable of producing such emotion in a portrait. Did he have to bring himself into extreme proximity to produce such fine detail, and did this proximity and the emotional connection that is evident in his anthropomorphised portraits provide the impetus to examine those questions of the individual's and humanity's place in nature that were to occupy his nonsense?[124]

Leaves and rocks do not return the gaze, and despite intense and obsessive work, his landscapes never garnered the acclaim his natural history work did. In his nonsense, Lear returns again and again to the issues of the individual's place in nature and empire which he

[123] NB measurements of the tiny, detailed landscapes Lear included in letters I examined from Liverpool Central Library Derby Collection belie this claim. Recall Sir David Attenborough's article in *Art, Animals & Politics: Knowsley and the Earls of Derby* (2016).

[124] The same proximity would have been necessary for the precise preparatory work on the parrot (Figure 44), as well.

met with in the eyes of his animal subjects.[125] Despite abandoning the performative persona of natural historian role for that of landscape painter, the life-long preoccupation with the questions that were prompted by his natural history work are testament to the importance these questions held for Lear. The ever-evolving nature of Lear's answers to these questions – those of self-identity and the place that the individual occupies in nature and empire, I argue, were mirrored in the continuous reclassification of his performance of those authorial roles to which he had access as a nineteenth-century English male and the various networks associated with that English maleness. These roles were permanently and indelibly affected by his initial role of natural historian and his personal early biography. This in turn is reflected in the creation of counterfactual taxonomies that include a holotypical, single-member species, which was nevertheless part of the whole of creation represented by Darwin's entangled bank, represented in the lone eccentrics of the limericks, the Dong, the Bo, and the Pip. This cry of the individual—and later the self—is critical to Lear's upending of the careful taxonomy of the nineteenth-century hierarchies that ruled his social, natural history, and imperial networks. In the next chapter, "Imperial Nonsense: Subverting Taxonomies and Hierarchies of Natural History and Empire", I explore the counterfactual taxonomies Lear created that subvert imperial hierarchies in "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" (1870). "The Four Little Children" is an example of this skin outward look for 'self' versus 'other' that I argue is inherent to the Victorian obsession with collection, classification, and display and which is bound with the expansion of empire in the nineteenth century.

[125] Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*; Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Recall my application of Kosofsky Sedgwick's work on affect, identity, and performativity to Lear's biography in the introduction.

Chapter 3: Imperial Nonsense: Subverting Taxonomies and Hierarchies of Natural History and Empire

Lear spent a great deal of his life on board various ocean-going vessels, as did many nineteenth-century imperial travellers and travel writers, and in his notes and travel journals, Lear slips into the performative role of imperial traveller with frequent and consistent ease.[1] Though often plagued by seasickness, he always embraced a new travel adventure. His travel images and texts abound with wayfarers, seas, and ships, as do his nonsense stories and verse. This is most visible in the nonsense tale "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" (1870) and in the curious ship they use to travel the empire. Lear describes the ship: 'The boat was painted blue with green spots, and the sail was yellow with red stripes; …'.[2]

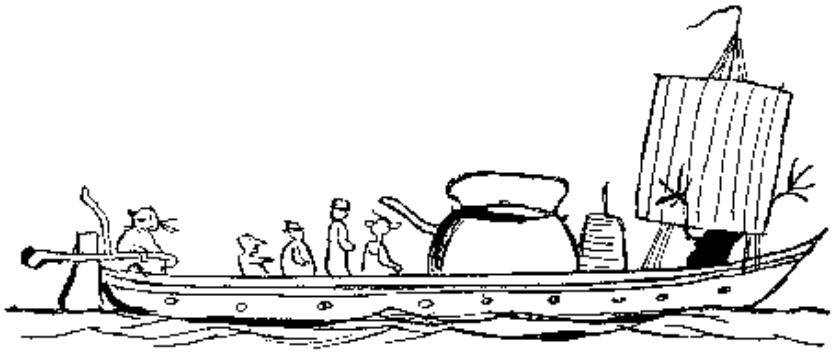

Figure 51 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense.*

Compare Lear's illustration and description of The Children's ship to this watercolour from his series of Venetian craft painted in 1865 (Figure 52):[3]

[1] Dubois, "Edward Lear's India and the Colonial Production of Nonsense"; Hammond, "The Uses of Balkanism"; Satpathy, "Lear's India and the Politics of Nonsense"; Tock, "The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo's Journey: Destinations of the Romantic and the Gothic in Edward Lear's Journals of a Landscape Painter in Albania &c" (1851).

[2] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 220.

[3] Edward Lear, *Studies of Venetian Craft*, Royal Museums Greenwich Picture Library, accessed April 8, 2019, https://images.rmg.co.uk/?service=asset&action=show_zoom_window_popup&language=en&asset=16769&location=grid&asset_list=16769&basket_item_id=undefined.

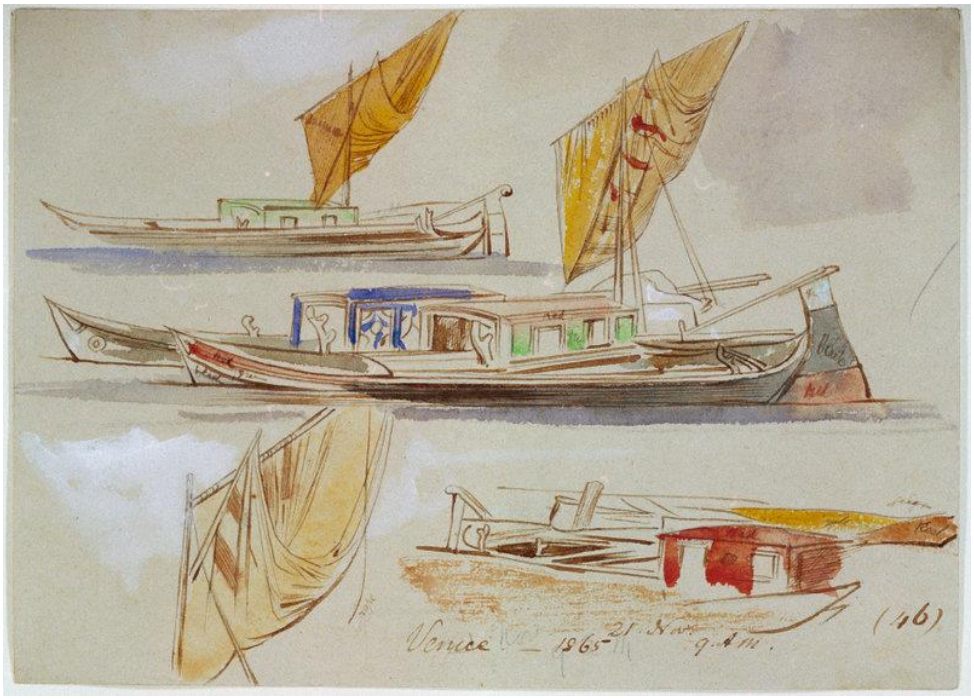

Figure 52 Edward Lear. Image from *Studies of Venetian Craft.*

The colours and shapes that Lear uses in "the Four Little Children" are an echo of these Venetian ships that he had painted two years prior to creating this nonsense story. With his early work in natural history and his extensive travel, Lear was an eyewitness to the expansion of the British Empire throughout the Mediterranean and beyond, a witness to the collection, classification, and display of the riches of its colonial possessions.[4] He was a witness, too, of the empire's imposition of social, religious, and imperial hierarchies on those places it absorbed. Given his long history of parody, as well as his embrace of evolutionary thought and Darwin's later theories, the creation of counterfactual taxonomies of these hierarchies of society, religion, and empire in "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" (1870) is a natural evolution of Lear's nonsense work. This chapter explores the ways in which Lear posed his nonsense evolution – through the creation of counterfactual taxonomies of the hierarchies of a) the colonisation agenda via the exploitation of resources, animals, and inhabitants; b) society and religion through replacing the Great Chain of Being with a system that illustrates Darwin's web of life; and c) taxonomic classification through biological and linguistic homology.

[4] For discussion of the Mediterranean as a place of empire, see Gekas, "Colonial Migrants and the Making of a British Mediterranean;" Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Empire, 1550-1660.* See also my discussion in the introductory chapter.

With his later nonsense texts and images, Lear reclassified his own visions of a natural history of life and empire. The text and illustrations to "the Four Little Children" (1870) are a mirror of those visions. Published eleven years after *On the Origin of Species,* they reflect the wondrous complexity of the natural world which reflected evolutionary thought, as well as the 'web' of life that Darwin postulated in works like *A monograph of the sub-class Cirripedia, with figures of all the species* (1851) and *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (1859).[5] Brown in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists* writes that an '… odd parallel universe of Lear's verse and drawings offered a surreal articulation of popular Victorian preoccupations with "Man's Place in Nature"'.[6] In the imperial adventures of 'the Four Little Children', Lear subverted the hierarchies and exploitation of the natural world that imperial agendas attempted to impose and preserve. By offering his counterfactual taxonomies of social and classification hierarchies, natural theology, and an intelligent Creator through the strange creatures the children encounter, Lear created his own sense out of the nonsense in the anomalies of the natural world that science had revealed in the nineteenth century and which evolutionary theory had attempted to explain. In preserving the structures of taxonomy in natural history and the political environment of empire, Lear's counterfactual nonsense aligns with the contrafactum he used to needle his empire-promoting audience. Although critics such as Henchman and Brown have spoken of Darwinian aspects of language theory and evolution in Lear's works, my discussion in this chapter proposes a deeper connection to Darwin's theories of the web of life. This chapter positions "the Four Little Children" as a crucial text in Lear's subversion of the hierarchies of religion, society, and the empire's exploration, collection, and classification agenda via counterfactual taxonomies of Victorian natural history into a kind of nonsense evolution in process. This is manifested in the strange creatures he created for the counterfactual world of "the Four Little Children". The story's counterfactual world consists of various island ecosystems that make possible Lear's evolution-in-process creatures, mirroring the islands that contributed so much to Darwin's formulations in *Origin* and *The Descent of Man.*

The thesis of this chapter expands on the issues of homology, evolution, and ecocriticism in Lear.[7] In addition, I will explore empire-subverting trends in the adventures

[5] Charles Darwin, *A Monograph on the Sub-Class Cirripedia, with Figures of All the Species* (New York: Weinheim J. Cramer, 1964); Darwin, *On the Origin of Species,* 351.
[6] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 23–24.
[7] Anna Henchman, "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 35, no. 5 (n.d.): 479–87; Henchman, "Fragments Out of Place: Homology and the Logic of Nonsense in Edward Lear," 183-201; Brown, "Being and Naughtiness" in *Play of Poetry*, 162-182.

of the travel expedition depicted in "the Four Little Children". Finally, an ecocritical reading of Lear's nonsense is explored as a concomitant to those issues of subversion, homology, evolution, and ontology in Lear. My discussion of ecocritical questions in Lear's work provides an answer to the question Jesse Oak Taylor proposes in "Where is Victorian Ecocriticism?" (2015). With a concrete analysis of the texts and images created for the story, via an ecocritical stance, my work strengthens the bridge between a Romantic ecocriticism and a Victorian one, mirroring Lear's status as a transitional figure in the migration from Romantic to Victorian views on nature, self, and empire. Moreover, my analysis offers Victorian ecocriticism a link to an alternative Darwinian approach to Victorian ecocriticism, one that celebrates the connected web of life on Earth and subverts the taxonomies of imperial expansion and the exploitation of colonial resources. In an echo of my analysis of Lear as a serial re-classifier, a similar transition has been characterised as an ever-changing and ambivalent reclassification of what Romanticism entailed for the Victorians. Indeed, Andrew Radford and Mark Sandy in the introduction to *Romantic Echoes in the Victorian Era* (2008) even use that term 'taxonomy' when they write of this messy transition: 'Renowned for their own taxonomies of knowledge, the Victorians were unable to represent a pointed, coherent and unified Romantic phenomenon and, unwittingly, contributed to the serious semantic and historical instability of Romanticism …'.[8]

Yet we may recall that Nichols discusses a key concept of Romantic ecology, one which did not recognise the 'oneness' that humans must see in themselves: 'This earlier Romantic version of environmentalism—the one that saw human beings as the problem—revealed serious limitations whenever it was applied to a world in which "nature" and "culture" merged into a unified vision'.[9] Although his work in natural history is a well-established phenomenon in Lear scholarship, previous discussions of evolutionary influences on art and literature present an exciting opportunity for Lear scholars. Works like Henchman's provide a foundation for this dissertation to explore the way Lear uses the symbiosis of text and image to subvert the hierarchies of empire via his illustrations of evolutionary thought. In addition, discussing ecocritical and Romantic transitions in works like Nichols' and *Romantic Echoes* in the context of Lear's texts and images has not, to my knowledge, been approached by any Lear scholars to date. A discussion expanding on all

[8] Andrew Radford and Mark Sandy, eds., *Romantic Echoes in the Victorian Era* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008), 14.
[9] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, xxii.

these critical works via a Lear framework is the focus of this chapter. With my analysis of "the Four Little Children", I explore the ways in which Lear's images and texts problematised the issue of empire in the intense effort to collect, classify, and exploit the natural world under its imperial control.

James Williams in *Edward Lear* (2018) speaks of "the Four Little Children" as a tale 'politely deferred'.[10] This is in reference to Lear's conclusion:

> … and where they finally resolved to carry out the rest of their travelling plans at some more favourable opportunity.
>
> As for the Rhinoceros, in token of their grateful adherence, they had him killed and stuffed directly, and then set him up outside the door of their father's house as a Diaphanous Doorscraper.[11]

I would go further, however. I see this as a tale not only 'politely deferred', but as a tale of promised threat – of the looming threat which the empire presented for its colonial holdings and their nature, ecology, animals, and inhabitants. Uglow writes of this story as a retelling of the Fall, but she also sees it as Lear's tribute to the many books like Cook's (1728-1779) Tahiti travel narrative (*A journal of a voyage to the South Seas, in His Majesty's ship the Endeavour (1773),* and Darwin's *Voyage of the HMS Beagle,* which he loved to read.[12] She writes that 'Lear's disquiet about the raids of the botanists and zoologists, and the assumption of superiority over other races, found a voice in another story' – "the Four Little Children".[13] Lear parodies that which he loves – this is visible in the ways he rewrote Tennyson's verse to his accompanying illustrations or his parodies of Moore's and Byron's work, which I discuss in "Sense out of Romantic Nonsense". Here Lear parodies his favourite travel literature genre via counterfactual taxonomic writing that subverts the hierarchies of empire. Beginning my discussion of this Lear piece with the conclusion may seem counterintuitive; however, the conclusion is the crux of this story of adventure on the high seas, for the conclusion renders as a hammer blow the subtler message of the tale that has preceded it. In addition, this circularity is an echo of the structures of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies. Colley in *Wild Animal Skins* writes of the fate of the Rhinoceros at the end of the story, that:

> Lear's harsh, abrupt conclusion immediately empties "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" of its harmless, humorous play, and baldly

[10] Williams, *Edward Lear*, 20.
[11] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse,* 232.
[12] Finally, in the notes to "the Four Little Children" in *Complete Nonsense*, Noakes writes, 'The story is a parody of popular books of travel, in particular Captain Cook's *A Voyage towards the South Pole, and Round the World*, (1777), which described the journey, the food they found and the strange people they met' (*CN*, 508).
[13] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 367.

> exposes the fate of numerous grand, exotic mammals whose bodies were mounted and exhibited, by hunters and scientific institutions. The exaggerations of nonsense disappear. Lear's rhinoceros is yet another victim of the self-appointed license to show off colonial authority.[14]

The Rhino's horrific fate in this tale is presaged by several passages with subtle reference to imperial-inflicted damage on the various animals that the party encounters, as well as on the resources of the islands to which the children travel. With such messaging and that obvious and final hammer-blow, I suggest that Lear's work subverts the hierarchies of society that were imposed by empire and imperial travel.

At the time of writing "the Four Little Children", Lear had not yet journeyed to the major colonial holdings in India. However, he was nevertheless personally acquainted with empire from his travels in the Mediterranean and the Balkans, as well as the spoils of colonisation, having created numerous drawings of exotic flora and fauna for Derby, Gould, and other natural history publishers. Uglow writes about how Lear 'devoured the stories of mapping "unexplored" areas, and the accounts of plant and animal collectors. Behind these, as he knew from his Knowsley days, ran a lust for possession, labelling, conquest, and commerce'.[15] She also discusses the London Acclimatisation Society, the dining club which feasted on exotic animals brought back from the colonies.[16] She then writes:

> Lear's disquiet about the raids of the botanists and zoologists, and the assumption of superiority over other races, found a voice in another story, 'absurd, but good fun …'.[17]

During the course of their ocean journey, the children sail to a series of islands. In fact, the first 'land' they come to is a counterfactual taxonomy of the established knowledge of island geography and geology – it has a counterfactual formation:

> After a time they saw some land at a distance; and when they came to it, they found it was an island made of water quite surrounded by earth. Besides that, it was bordered by evanescent isthmusses with a great Gulf-stream running about all over it, so that it was perfectly beautiful, and contained only a single tree, 503 feet high.[18]

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[14] Ann C. Colley, *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain*, 90.
[15] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 366. Uglow writes that the founders of the Society 'argued that foreign species could be introduced and adapted to European conditions, improving local breeds. To prove that these strange creatures tasted good, the society's dinner at Almack's Assembly Rooms in 1862 included Bird's Nest, Soup, Chinese sea-slugs, …', 366.
[16] Uglow, 366; Harriet Ritvo, "Going Forth and Multiplying: Animal Acclimatization and Invasion," *Environmental History* 17, no. 2 (April 2012): 404–14. Ritvo also discusses various 'acclimatization' societies in nineteenth-century Britain. See also Bevis in "Edward Lear's Lines of Flight," 38.
[17] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 367.
[18] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 221.

Thus, Lear sets the scene for the series of counterfactual taxonomies that the children encounter on their voyage of discovery. Islands, it must be noted, were crucial points of observation in Darwin's *The Beagle* journey. They were also crucial in the evolution of the peculiar beaks of the Galapagos 'finches' that provided the eureka moment for Darwin's theories on natural and sexual selection. Similarly, the four children in Lear's tale are also engaged in observation and collection of the counterfactual taxonomies that Lear creates for the islands that these four children encounter, and which challenge the epistemology of imperial collection and classificatory knowledge. Lear provides a clever link to the imperial nature of this journey in its similarity to Darwin's and other imperial journeys.

A further clue to Lear's Darwinian mind-set can be found in a specific plant that he uses in "the Four Little Children". Lear writes in the conclusion:

> They were, however, able to catch numbers of the chickens and turkeys, and other birds who incessantly alighted on the head of the Rhinoceros for the purpose of gathering the seeds of the rhododendron plants which grew there, and these creatures they cooked in the most translucent and satisfactory manner, by means of a fire lighted on the end of the Rhinoceros' back.[19]

Rhododendrons were introduced to Britain and Ireland in the late eighteenth-century as popular additions to formal gardens, but on both islands have become the bane of ecologists and foresters because of the virulence with which they quickly out-compete native species.[20] Darwin references the *Rhododendron* genus quite often in his Transmutation notebooks from 1837, as well as using the genus as a useful illustration when discussing heredity in *On the Origin*.[21] Duncan M. Porter relates many instances of Darwin using this genus in his formulations for *On the Origin* in his article "Darwin and Hooker: Azaleas and Rhododendrons" (1998). Additionally, Porter provides this quotation from Darwin's Transmutation Notebooks, a major source of evidence for his theoretical work on evolution:

> It is difficult to believe in the dreadful but quiet war of organic beings going on in the peaceful woods & smiling fields - we must recollect the multitudes of plants introduced into our gardens (opportunities of escape for foreign birds & insects)

[19] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 231.
[20] Khatarina Dehnen-Schmutz and Mark Williamson, "Rhododendron Ponticum in Britain and Ireland: Social, Economic, and Ecological Factors in Its Successful Invasion," *Environment and History* 12, no. 3 (August 2006): 328-30. This is a case of a colonial species becoming invasive in Europe. Crosby discusses this phenomenon of invasive species, 6-7, 145-94, 217-68. Chang also discusses the rhododendron specifically in relation to the idea of invasive species, 11-15 and throughout *Novel Cultivations.* She emphasises that movement of species is more complicated than any unidirectional construct placed on biology, botany, and indeed human history and anthropology.
[21] Duncan M. Porter, "Darwin and Hooker: Azaleas and Rhododendrons, Part II," *Journal American Rhododendron Society*, Darwin Correspondence Project, University Library, Cambridge, 52, no. 2 (Spring 1998), https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/v52n2/v52n2-porter.htm.

> which are propagated with very little care -& which might spread themselves, as well as our wild plants, we see how full nature, how firmly each holds it place – When we hear from authors that in the Pyrenees, that the Rhododendron ferrugineum begins at 1600 metres precisely & stops at 2600 & yet know that plant can be cultivated with ease near London.[22]

It is worth noting that Lear points specifically to the *seeds* of the plant that grew on the Rhinoceros' back, for Porter notes in the article that Darwin writes of the remarkable fertility of rhododendron:

> Mr. C. Noble, for instance, informs me that he raises stocks for grafting from a hybrid between Rhod. Ponticum and Catawbiense, and that this hybrid "*seeds* [italics mine] as freely as it is possible to imagine."' (Duncan 'Darwin and Hooker' Part II).

Lear had a botanist's eye when it came to landscape, and one wonders if he noticed the proliferation of this plant in his frequent walking/sketching trips in the British countryside. Lear's eye for invasive species notwithstanding, his use of this plant in the story could be another indicator of the Darwinian lens he used in writing this nonsense tale of imperial voyages, collection, and upended hierarchies.

Lear begins his imperial tale, in keeping with that promised threat I discussed earlier, with not just collection, but resource exploitation and outright gluttony, followed by this image:

> When they had landed, they walked about, but found to their great surprise, that the island was quite full of veal-cutlets and chocolate-drops, and nothing else. So they all climbed up the single high tree to discover, if possible, if there were any people; but having remained on the top of the tree for a week, and not seeing anybody, they naturally concluded that there were no inhabitants and accordingly when they came down, they loaded the boat with two thousand veal-cutlets and a million of chocolate drops, and these afforded them sustenance for more than a month, during which time they pursued their voyage with the utmost delight and apathy.[23]

[22] Duncan M. Porter, "Darwin and Hooker: Azaleas and Rhododendrons Part I," *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society*, Darwin Correspondence Project, University Library, Cambridge, 52, no. 1 (Winter 1998), https://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/v52n1/v52n1-porter.htm.

[23] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 221–22. See my discussion of resource exploitation in the introductory chapter, as well as the work of Crosby, as well as John M. MacKenzie, *Imperialism and the Natural World* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2017) <https://www.manchesterhive.com/view/9781526123671/9781526123671.00005.xml>.

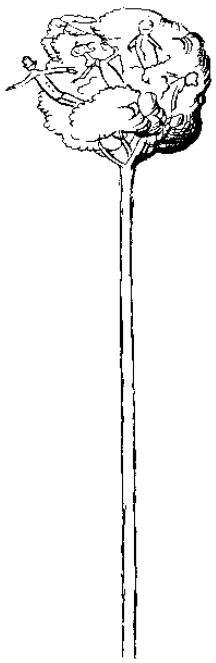

Figure 53 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense.*

Lear is making at least three points here. The first is the assumption of physical right to unseen lands and resources. The children, 'naturally', believe they have become complete experts on this land with only a week's observation in one limited location, and 'naturally' they assume they may do as they will with the resources they have found. They climb to the top of the 503-foot tree to see if there are any people visible; they do not *see* any, so decide it is uninhabited and proceed to loot the island.[24] This scene contains many metaphors of imperial power through colonisation: the often-unobserved indigenous peoples that oblivious Western colonisers did not notice; Argentinian and Australian cattle ranching; the growing demand for chocolate; and the assumption that only human inhabitants would be disturbed by the looting of resources.[25]

The second point Lear is making is that of gluttony: 2000 veal cutlets 'and a million of chocolate drops' is sustenance only for a month for six creatures.[26] With simple maths, we can calculate that the bounty they have obtained amounts to 11 cutlets per day per creature

[24] McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*, 30–36.
[25] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, 31; Pratt, Mary Louise, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 4–7. Nichols discusses the phenomenon of Western Europeans overlooking indigenous peoples. Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* also discusses this negation of indigenous peoples' voice, authority, and culture.
[26] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 222.

and over 5000 chocolate drops per day per creature.[27] This is an incredible amount of consumption that recalls the levels of destruction of the North American bison and the passenger pigeon. Jonathan Bate in *Romantic Ecology* writes of Ruskin's prescience regarding the consequences of Victorian exploitation of natural resources, noting Ruskin's 'recognition of the potentially catastrophic consequences of the exploitation of nature'.[28] Lear, who had corresponded with and read Ruskin, appears to be making a similar point with his emphasis on gluttony here and in other similar episodes in "the Four Little Children".

Finally, note the image Lear includes here. The children have climbed the 503-foot tree with the assumption that there, isolated and removed from the land which they have invaded, they can observe and know thoroughly that this locality is deserted. Their assumed superiority at the top of this 503-foot tree is a visual reminder of the hierarchies that placed the English on the top rung of the ladder of empire. In addition, there is something reminiscent of crows' nests atop Royal Society commissioned expedition ships in the image of the children as they perch confidently in this very tall tree, observing with imperial eyes, eager to collect, classify, and display the flora and fauna of colonial possessions.

A second message of exploitation is relayed with the following episode:

> The next thing that happened to them was in a narrow part of the sea, which was so entirely full of fishes that the boat could go on no further; so they remained there about six weeks, till they had eaten nearly all the fishes, which were Soles, and all ready-cooked and covered with shrimp sauce, so that there was no trouble whatever. And as the few fishes who remained uneaten complained of the cold, as well as of the difficulty they had in getting any sleep on account of the extreme noise made by the Arctic Bears and the Tropical Turnspits which frequented the neighbourhood in great numbers, Violet most amiably knitted a small woollen frock for several of the fishes, and Slingsby administered some opium drops to them, through which kindness they became quite warm and slept soundly.[29]

There is a great deal to unpack in this passage, not the least of which is the implication that the children are eating *souls* ('Soles') in their gluttony.[30] In this orgy of resource exploitation, they manage to consume 'nearly all the fishes' which before had been so profuse that the boat

[27] For more on Lear and gluttony, see Ina Rae Hark's article "Edward Lear and Victorian Angst," *Victorian Poetry*, vol. 16:1/2 (1978): 112-122.
[28] Bate, *Romantic Ecology: Wordsworth and the Environmental Tradition*, 83. MacKenzie's *Imperialism and the Natural World* includes exploration of the subject of colonial exploitation of natural resources: Chapter 2 "Colonial Exploitation", which I discuss in the introductory chapter in the imperialism-colonialism-taxonomy section.
[29] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 223.
[30] See my discussion of Lear's knowledge of sea-life and the curious biology of flounders and soles in my chapter "Edward Lear's Taxonomy", as well as in "The Pip" discussion in the following chapter.

had been prevented from making progress through the sea.[31] Does this consumption represent the decimation that was visited on native peoples, animals, and resources in the expansion of empire? This is one possibility. But this could also be another salvo in Lear's counterfactual taxonomy of natural history, subverting the separation of man from the other animals. The implication here is that *fish* also have souls, which underscores Lear's disgust with such organisations like the Acclimatisation Society.[32]

Furthermore, Slingsby then gets the poor creatures addicted to opium in an effort to, at best, make amends or pacify them into a state in which they offered no further resistance or, at worst, into a permanent demise wherein they 'slept soundly' as a metaphor for death or extinction.[33] Is Lear equating the high-density population of the soles with China, which was also the target of an imperial opium-addiction-agenda?[34] Additionally, Violet is described as knitting woollen frocks for the poor remaining fishes as they are suffering from the cold. Lear is referencing here the 'good' works which Victorian ladies on both sides of the Atlantic performed by producing clothes for the 'heathen' as part of missionary society efforts to improve the lives of those peoples that had been brought into the imperial realm through colonial expansion.[35] Lear's microcosm, however, shines a light on the children, representing colonisation, as both the cause and saviour of these poor 'Soles'. This colonialist behaviour could be what prompts Lear to begin to use the terms 'the Travellers' and 'the Four Children' interchangeably. From here, the Children are not just Children, they are imperial Travellers, embarking on a triumphant exploration of their demesne, not unlike the Hornby family – Lear's Derby-family friends.[36] With this counterfactual taxonomy of fishes with souls who might be in need of charity-knitted woollens, Lear posits a world where fishes are more akin to colonised peoples than their biology would suggest.

Various other examples of exploitation of the sentient inhabitants of the lands they visit include the children's assumption of privilege and precedence over indigenous

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[31] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 223.
[32] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 366.
[33] See Chris Feige's and Jeffery A. Miron's article on the Opium Wars, addiction and prohibition in China "The opium wars, opium legalization and opium consumption in China" in *Applied Economics Letters,* vol. 15 (2008): 911-913.
[34] Gang Deng, *The Premodern Chinese Economy: Structural Equilibrium and Capitalist Sterility* (London: Routledge, 1999), 361–62.
[35] See McClintock, pp. 34–36, for a discussion on domesticity and colonialism that is relevant to Violet's knitting to uplift the Soles-Souls here.
[36] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 369. Lear corresponded with Elizabeth Hornby as she sailed with her father Admiral Sir Phipps Hornby (1785-1867), collecting specimens for her uncle the 13th Earl of Derby.

inhabitants. An early example of this in the story includes the children demanding an over-large share of a pudding belonging to a countless multitude of white mice. When the children come upon them, Lear writes that the mice are all sitting in a circle, placidly eating 'with the most satisfactory and polite demeanour'.[37] When the children are rebuffed with what they think is a paltry share, Guy whinges about how small an amount they are offered. The mice subsequently turn on him and 'sneeze' at him:

> (and it is impossible to imagine a more scroobious and unpleasant sound than that caused by the simultaneous sneezing of many millions of angry Mice,) so that Guy rushed back to the boat, having first shied his cap into the middle of the Custard Pudding, by which means he completely spoiled the Mice's dinner.[38]

This episode can be summed up as follows: many millions of mice were politely sharing a finite resource; they gave some up to share with the children (to the detriment of themselves – how many mice out of millions went without?). With a remarkable absence of good manners and sportsmanship, Guy spoils the dinner of millions.

The following episode also emphasises the children's assumption of privilege and precedence:

> After this they came to a shore where there were no less than sixty-five great red parrots with blue tails, sitting on a rail all of a row, and all fast asleep. And I am sorry to say that the Pussy-cat and the Quangle-Wangle crept softly and bit off the tail-feathers of all the sixty-five parrots, for which Violet reproved them both severely.
>
> Notwithstanding which, she proceeded to insert all the feathers, two hundred and sixty in number, in her bonnet, thereby causing it to have a lovely and glittering appearance, highly prepossessing and efficacious.[39]

This episode, again, is full of ripe imperial and colonial exploitative imagery. For instance, the Dodo is famous for having been driven into extinction in part by the impact of imported Western animals, which helped to destroy both them and their island habitat.[40] One of these animals was the domestic cat, an animal notorious for wreaking havoc on bird populations. And here Lear gives his readers a first-hand account of the havoc a single Western-introduced cat could cause a population of native birds. Significantly, this is the only mention that is made of these birds. Have the children and their cat caused the extinction of these parrots? Violet goes on to adorn herself, as Victorian women did, with the spoils her cat has procured

[37] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 225.
[38] Lear, 255.
[39] Lear, 222. For the mice episode see same, page 225.
[40] Eric Fuller, *Dodo: from extinction to icon*. (London: Collins, 2002), 17, 25.

for her. This represents another link to Darwin's theories on sexual selection – as I discuss further in the homology discussion in "Darwinian Nonsense".

Pictured below is Violet's 'prepossessing' and 'efficacious' head-dress:[41]

Figure 54 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense*.

Violet's bonnet stays atop her head throughout most of the story, despite losing some of the feathers in a great wind in one adventure. The bonnet is, however, not just a bonnet. With the bonnet, Lear creates another reference to imperial explorations. In the notes to "the Four Children" in *Complete Nonsense*, Noakes writes of Violet's bonnet:

> … Violet's head-dress is reminiscent of the feathered head-dresses of Tahiti, which Cook brought back and gave to the British Museum, and of the head-dress given to Cortez which was plucked from the South American bird, the Ketzal, whose feathers grew again…[42]

Noakes attributes the Quetzal bird to South America, but there are species from North and Central America whose feathers were given to Cortez by the North American Aztec Emperor Moctezuma. However, I would expand on Noakes' Tahitian source here. Below are images of a Maori chief depicted by Cook's natural history artist, Sydney Parkinson:

[41] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 223.
[42] Lear, 508.

Figure 55 Sydney Parkinson. “The Head of a New Zealander”.

Figure 56 Sydney Parkinson. "The Head of a New Zealander".[43]

[43] John Wilson, "European Discovery of New Zealand - Cook's Achievement," *Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand*, accessed April 8, 2019, https://teara.govt.nz/en/artwork/1429/early-depiction-of-a-maori-chief. Sydney Parkinson (1745-1771) was a natural history artist who worked for Banks. He created 27 of the plates in Cook's *Endeavour* journal as noted in the article "The head of a New Zealander by Sydney Parkinson" https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/head-new-zealander-sidney-parkinson, including these images from Figures 55 and 56. In addition, he created many of the images for Banks' *Florilegium*, which were held in the Natural History section of the British Museum until the late nineteenth century, as noted in the article 'About

These portraits bear an interesting resemblance to the image related to the Blue-Bottle-Fly episode in "the Four Little Children". I see this scene as Lear's subversion of colonial processes and hierarchies. The following is the relevant image:[44]

Figure 57 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense*.

The accompanying text for this image is as follows: 'As a token of parting respect and esteem, Violet made a curtsey quite down to the ground, and stuck one of her few remaining Parrot-tail feathers into the back-hair of the most pleasing of the Blue-Bottle-Flies, …'.[45] The term 'back-hair' is a curious choice here. Lear is referring to the bun on the back of the fly's head, but, remembering Uglow's comments on how Lear read travel accounts and that he was extremely detail-oriented and expert in plumage depiction, I would contend that he is also referencing the way in which the Maori were portrayed by Western artists. The question is what did Lear hope to convey with this likening of the Maori chief with a fly? I turn here to a passage from Nichols' *Beyond Romantic Criticism* and will apply it to Lear's fly and the Maori chief. Nichols, quoting William Blake's "The Fly", writes:

> Little Fly
> Thy summers play
> My thoughtless hand
> Has brush'd away.
> Am not I
> A fly like thee?
> Or art not thou
> A Man like me? (1-8)

> Such a dream of contact across the species boundary is the basis not only of all anthropomorphic thinking, but also of all ecomorphism. As comical as it sounds

Sydney Parkinson' at *Botanical Art & Artists* https://www.botanicalartandartists.com/sydney-parkinson.html#. This article quotes The Natural History Museum, UK, that Parkinson was the first European 'to observe and draw a kangaroo'.

[44] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 227.

[45] Lear, 227.

> on one level—like a Monty Python skit—a fly's life does share characteristics with any human life: he respires, he eats, he finds a mate, he reproduces. More important than these shared characteristics is the subsequent metaphoric question: if a fly is *like* a human being, what might that say about the human? That is Blake's question.[46]

The story of the Blue-Bottle-Flies, and the children's interaction with them, answers Blake's question. The children in this story, unlike in their role as colonial exploiters in the other events of the story, are here acting as supplicants. Note that Lear creates a world where Violet offers some of her few remaining feathers as a 'token of parting respect and esteem' to the Blue-Bottle-Flies in a subversive mirroring of the offering of the native peoples of a feathered head-dress to Cooke's party. Not only has Lear subverted the social hierarchy with the Blue-Bottle-Flies, he also blurs the lines between humans and other species, providing an illustration of Darwin's web of connected life. Moreover, he placed Violet – the only female of the party – at the ceremonial forefront, a space usually occupied by a British male.[47] Conversely, Violet's act here is decidedly one of Victorian expansion of empire, seen in colonial practices or 'habits of cultural exchange and accommodation' as Games discusses in *The Web of Empire*. By linking this colonialist act to Blake's question of how a fly might be '*like* a human being', Lear's nonsense works as a threshold in the transition from Romantic thought patterns toward a Victorian, more externally directed search for self.

The feathers also serve as a segue to a discussion of Lear's subversion of imperial society and the Great Chain of Being.[48] In this adventure of The Blue-Bottle-Flies, the children come to a land that was covered, not with what they might recognise as houses, but with large blue bottles:

> … Each of these blue bottles contained a Blue-Bottle-Fly, and all these interesting animals live continually together in the most copious and rural harmony, nor perhaps in many parts of the world is such perfect and abject happiness to be found. Violet, and Slingsby, and Guy, and Lionel, were greatly struck with this singular and instructive settlement, and having previously asked permission of the Blue-Bottle-Flies (which was most courteously granted), the Boat was drawn up to the shore and they proceeded to make tea in front of the Bottles; but as they had no tea-leaves, they merely placed some pebbles in the hot water, and the Quangle-

[46] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, 81.
[47] Lear maintained close relationships with many women in literary, imperial, and natural history networks throughout his life, including Elizabeth Gould (1804-1841), Emily Tennyson (1811–1887), Elizabeth Hornby (182?-1875), Lady Francess Waldegrave (1821–1879), and Marianne North (1830-1890). Therefore, Lear had a wide experience of the various limitations placed on women in the nineteenth century, as well as the overcoming of such limitations. This and his own life experience may have made queered notions of gender roles more readily available to his formulations of gender, imperial, literary, and societal hierarchies.
[48] See also my discussion of this topic in the introductory chapter of this dissertation.

> Wangle played some tunes over it on an Accordion, by which of course tea was made directly, and of the very best quality.
>
> The Four Children then entered into conversation with the Blue-Bottle-Flies, who discoursed in a placid and genteel manner, though with a slightly buzzing accent, chiefly owing to the fact that they each held a small clothes-brush between their teeth which naturally occasioned a fizzy extraneous utterance.[49]

Later, in his Indian journals, Lear refers to colonial architecture marring indigenous architectural landscape vistas.[50] Is the children's inability to recognise the bottles as homes a reference to the colonial tendency of obtuseness towards the beauty and utility of indigenous architecture? Each of these bottles is the home of a Blue-Bottle-Fly, and Violet and Slingsby ask various anthropologically and naturalist related questions of these creatures: *why* they live in blue bottles and what they eat. Recalling Lear's proclivity for reading travel literature, I would like to interrogate this scene further considering the history of Britain's engagement with the indigenous population of New Zealand. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi presents a slightly unusual episode in the empire's collection of territory. At the signing of the treaty, the British presence on the islands was only 2000 in comparison to the hundreds of thousands of Maori.[51] In the more than a thousand years the Maori had been on the islands, the culture had rapidly adapted to the different climate/topography of New Zealand, engaging in complex agricultural and political organisation in order to make best use of resources.[52] Just prior to the treaty with the British, the Maori had attained high literacy levels in the newly codified Maori language and created a Maori Declaration of Independence in 1835, which the Crown officially recognised.[53] After initial European contact, Maori culture responded to economic opportunities by further organisation of trade, labour, and farming practices, presenting a certain amount of resilience to European invasion.[54] These and many other factors resulted in a relatively stronger footing for native inhabitants of the islands with the British, as well as nuanced perceptions of Maori people, culture, and sovereignty by the British.[55]

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[49] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 226.
[50] Edward Lear, *Edward Lear's Indian Journal: Watercolours and Extracts from the Diary of Edward Lear (1873–1875)*, ed. Ray Murphy (Peterborough, UK: Jarrold Publishing, 1953), 95. Lear makes reference to 'British stationism' in his journal.
[51] Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, Ltd. with assistance from the Historical Publications Branch, 1997), 2–7, http://www.humanitiesebook.org/. See also Belich, *The Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict: The Maori, the British, and the New Zealand Wars* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986), 20, 304, 310.
[52] Orange, 6–7.
[53] Orange, 2–7.
[54] Orange, 7; Belich, 19.
[55] Orange, 2–7; Belich, 310.

Remember that Lear's sister Sarah and her son had emigrated and were living permanently in New Zealand by the late 1840s, setting up a farm on South Island. We can also recall that Uglow writes of Lear, his sister, and New Zealand:

> Lear was fascinated by her farm near Otago and for once he sounded envious. 'The more I read travels, the more I want to move', he told Chichester Fortescue. 'Such heaps of N. Zealand as I have read of late! I know every corner of the place'.[56]

Orange writes the following regarding Maori culture in the late 1830s and 1840s:

> Some adopted Christianity and many more blended Christian practices into the traditional Maori ritenga or custom. The change was remarkable but in the long term it proved not so much a revolutionary overturning of old ways as selective development by a resilient, adaptable culture.[57]

Did the history of British and Maori relations, perceived sovereignty, and family connections to New Zealand influence Lear's imagination in subverting imperial hierarchies with the episode of the Blue-Bottle-Flies?[58] It should be noted here that Lear's interrogation of colonial resource exploitation is focused on its impact on non-human animals. This focus on the consequences to the non-human occurs often in Lear's nonsense.

Satpathy's essay on Lear's Indian nonsense provides an interrogation of Lear's history of racist-tinged journal observations and nonsense that makes for an important aside regarding Lear's relationship with non-European *Homo sapiens*. In his chapter in *Children's literature and the fin de siècle* (2003), "Lear's India and the Politics of Nonsense", Satpathy points to the imperial favour that Lear obviously enjoyed in his appointment as drawing master to Victoria and the close relationship he had with the Viceroy of India, Lord Northbrook (1826-1924) to support his contention that 'much of Lear's nonsense actually came from his travels to the East, particularly India'.[59] Satpathy analyses the poems "The Cummerbund" and "The Akond of Swat" and a few of the limericks, pointing to their echo of the Anglo-Indian appropriation of indigenous language that upheld the politics of the Raj, recalling Lecercle's contention that nonsense reinforces rather than subverts societal norms and mores.[60] In "Edward Lear's India and the Colonial Production of Nonsense", Dubois also discusses the use of Anglo-Indian terms that Lear expropriates in "The Cummerbund" and

[56] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 203.
[57] Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, 7. See Belich in *The Victorian Interpretation of Race Relations*, p 20; see also Crosby, 244-47.
[58] Belich, *The Victorian Interpretation of Racial Conflict*, 20–21, 299, 301, 304.
[59] Satpathy, "Lear's India and the Politics of Nonsense," 73.
[60] Lecercle, *Philosophy of Nonsense*, 3–10.

"The Akond". He writes that the relatively little notice taken of the Indian nonsense belies the import of the colonialist patterns present in these works: that the Indian nonsense prompts 'the need to reconsider the relationship between nonsense literature and Victorian imperialism, which previous studies have found to be largely embedded rather than explicit'.[61] Dubois discusses a kind of ambiguous double-entendre that exists in Lear's appropriation of native words, as a mocking of indigenous peoples *and* the only audience that might have understood the terms Lear plays with in "The Cummerbund" – the Anglo-Indian imperial inhabitants of the sub-continent. He writes:

> Lear's poem most obviously mocks the foreign coloring seen in the language of earlier oriental tales and in more recent representations of India intended for a British public hungry for first-hand insight into what was considered the jewel in the crown of Empire. These domestic readers are not the only butt of the poem's joke, however, for the definitions help us to realize that Lear also pokes fun at those on the colonial periphery who obtrusively display special knowledge.[62]

In contrast, Satpathy maintains that Lear's racist diary entries should be a grounding context for any holistic commentary on the import of Lear's nonsense. This line of thought can be equally applied to Darwin's personal observations and published journal entries, which are in opposition to the thrust of his theory of an interconnected web of life on an entangled bank metaphor. For instance, in his journal from *The Beagle* voyage, Darwin's entries on various indigenous populations underscore the systemic racism that was at the core of colonial exploration and resource exploitation. Specifically, in *The Voyage of the Beagle* (2nd ed. 1845) Darwin writes: 'I could not have believed how wide was the difference between savage and civilized man : it is greater than between a wild and domesticated animal, inasmuch as in man there is a great power of improvement. … Their skin is of a dirty coppery red colour'.[63] Similarly, Lear uses the following language in his 20 May, 1874 journal entry: 'Meanwhile, 2 persons are there, with whom I converse, – apropos of a big horrid vulgar ill-dressed gross blacky Indian, who having stared at me for 20 minutes, talked in his own lingo to a younger fellow, …'.[64] Such observations and language are why Satpathy's interrogation of Lear's equally devastating journal entries and Indian nonsense are a powerful critique of nineteenth-

[61] Dubois, "Edward Lear's India and the Colonial Production of Nonsense," 36.
[62] Dubois, 46.
[63] Charles Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle: Journal of Researches into the Natural History and Geology of the Countries Visited during the Voyage Round the World of H.M.S "Beagle" under Command of Captain Fitz Roy, R.N.*, 2nd ed. 1845, reprint 1987 (London: Marshall Cavendish, Ltd., 1987), 195. Smith discusses what he calls the 'appropriation' of Darwin's theory of natural selection for 'a wide variety of different and even incompatible purposes' in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* (16-17).
[64] Edward Lear, "Indian Journals: Manuscript, 1875-1878." (1878 1875), MS Eng 797.4, Edward Lear Collection, https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:45436732$344i.

century society. They are also an additional example of the ambiguous nature of Lear's subversion of imperial and taxonomical hierarchies.

Lear clearly felt a stronger sympathy towards the non-human victims of colonial exploitation. The lack of sympathy towards human victims can seem glaringly evident in his journal entries and nonsense. However, I would like to note that with the saga of the Blue-bottle Flies, I believe that Lear *is* questioning some part of the imperial agenda that concerns *Homo sapiens,* for the Blue-bottle flies, despite their non-human incarnation in Lear's nonsense, are clearly representative of non-European colonial peoples. Additionally, Dubois writes:

> Yet the expectation that Victorian nonsense has a dark, unconscious relationship to colonialism, which vigilant critics must uncover, assumes a passivity that the texts themselves do not actually bear out. That the roots of nonsense literature (if not always its ends) are frequently parodic makes the genre intensely aware of its own processes.[65]

Parodic self-awareness aside, although Lear was a product of his time and birthplace, this does not excuse his racist journal entries or his Indian nonsense. Rather, it serves as an excellent example of the systemic racism and 'othering' of non-European *Homo sapiens* that were at the core of nineteenth-century European-North American society, literature, and thought.

The ambiguity of Lear's interrogation of imperial exploitation is made clear in the following analysis. During the children's *anthropological* interrogation of the flies, they are interrupted by an elder Blue-Bottle-Fly who insists that it is time for what James Williams cogently describes as a 'benediction'. Notably, the New Zealand native blue-bottle fly had been decimated by the highly adaptive Old World housefly imported and deliberately propagated by European settlers.[66] Here Lear writes of this doomed native species:

> At this time, an elderly Fly said it was the hour for the Evening-song to be sung; and on a signal being given all the Blue-Bottle-Flies began to buzz at once in a sumptuous and sonorous manner, the melodious and mucilaginous sounds echoing all over the waters, and resounding across the tumultuous tops of the transitory Titmice upon the intervening and verdant mountains, with a serene and sickly suavity only known to the truly virtuous. The Moon was shining slobaciously from the star-bespringled sky, while her light irrigated the smooth and shiny sides and wings and backs of the Blue-Bottle-Flies with a peculiar and trivial splendour,

[65] Dubois, "Edward Lear's India and the Colonial Production of Nonsense," 38.
[66] Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900,* 266. Crosby notes that Hooker mentioned the same prophecy in his 'Note on the replacement of species in the colonies and elsewhere' in *The Natural History Review*, 1864.

> while all nature cheerfully responded to the cerulæan and conspicuous circumstances.
>
> In many long-after years, The Four little Travellers looked back to that evening as one of the happiest in all their lives, and it was already past midnight, when – the Sail of the Boat having been set up by the Quangle-Wangle, the Tea-kettle and Churn place in their respective positions, and the Pussy-cat stationed at the Helm – the Children each took a last and affectionate farewell of the Blue-Bottle-Flies, who walked down in a body to the water's edge to see the Travellers embark.[67]

About this passage Williams writes:

> There is a temptation here, which the passage feels as well as provokes, to understand this moment as childhood, seen through the eyes of the adult. The parallels to 'The Owl and the Pussy-cat', however, are significant and not at all child-focused: the Moon shines down her benediction on a musical gathering (buzzing this time, rather than dancing) …[68]

There is a profound solemnity in how the children react to these creatures. They ask permission to come ashore. They at times engage with them as equals and partake of the "Evening-song", which must be a reference to the office of Evensong in the Anglican ecclesiastical day. In the image for this passage, the children even appear to be walking in processional with offerings (See Figure 50 above). In other words, Lear, through the children, creates a counterfactual taxonomy of the Anglican office of Evensong with The Blue-Bottle-Flies' Evening-song, granting these creatures equal footing with humans of the Anglican (and English!) sort.[69] Are Lear's children being converted to the religion of The Blue-Bottle-Flies in a counterfactual taxonomy of the conversion to Christianity justification used by the empire? Could Lear also be acknowledging the successful conjoining of indigenous and Christian belief and religion?[70] In fact, Lear, using the Blue-Bottle-Flies, is also subverting

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[67] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 227; Hugh Haughton, "Playing with Letters: Lear's Episthilarity," in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 238; Sonstroem, "Making Earnest of Game: G. M. Hopkins and Nonsense Poetry," 195–96. Sonstroem discusses this passage, comparing it with G. M. Hopkins' similar way of leaving the reader 'puzzling over how we got from there to here'. More recently, Haughton writes of this passage ('mucilaginous…') in his chapter for *Play of Poetry*: 'Here they enact a comparably melodious protest against the numbing effects of ordinary language, offering a parody of high-sounding rhetoric which manages to sound 'low' but offers an elastic expansion of the resources of the mind for dealing with the limits of language and experience', 238. Thus, Lear adds a pseudo-solemnity to the proceedings.

[68] Williams, *Edward Lear*, 72.

[69] This is reminiscent of Lear's contrafactum. See discussion of contrafactum in Sara Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2018), 32-40.

[70] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 202. Another of Lear's brothers was a medical missionary in Sierra Leone and according to family stories, married a Sierra Leonian nurse, who later worked as a missionary herself.

The Great Chain of Being. Again, Nichols provides an interesting discussion on the ways in which nineteenth-century literature', Darwin in particular, subverted this religious hierarchy:

> The Genesis picture saw species as separate creations. It described all life as irrevocably arranged along a strictly hierarchical Great Chain of Being. Here is one version of that so-called chain:
>
> GOD
> ANGELS
> BLESSED SPIRITS
> GHOSTS
> HUMAN BEINGS
> MAMMALS
> BIRDS
> REPTILES
> AMPHIBIANS
> FISH
> INSECTS
> PLANTS
> MICROSCOPIC CREATURES
> INANIMATE OBJECTS.[71]

Lear has upset this hierarchy with how he positions the children in relation to the Blue-Bottle-Flies, as well as referencing the deleterious effects of colonisation on a native New Zealand species of fly.

Continuing on this ecocritical theme in the story, Nichols points to the knotty question of what to do philosophically with plants like the Venus flytrap, which completely upset the above hierarchy:

> Once plants like the Venus flytrap and the sundew arrived in Europe from the swamps of the American South, two lowly organisms stepped out from the Great Chain of Being and into a world of more confused being, no longer a chain, but now a web of complex organic interrelatedness or—as Charles Darwin would soon announce—a tree of life whose branches would eventually reveal the connectedness, and also the precise relations, between and among all living things.[72]

Lear has another counterfactual taxonomy as answer to meat-eating plants and what that might say about the blurred lines regarding all species with the following episode of nonsense evolution in process:

> After this the Four Little People sailed on again till they came to a vast and wide plain of astonishing dimensions, one in which nothing whatever could be discovered at first; but as the Travellers walked onward, there appeared in the extreme and dim distance a single object, which on a nearer approach and on an accurately cutaneous inspection, seemed to be somebody in a large white wig

[71] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, 15.
[72] Nichols, 15.

> sitting on an arm-chair made of Sponge cakes and Oyster-shells. 'It does not quite look like a human being, said Violet, doubtfully; nor could they make out what it really was, till the Quangle-Wangle (who had previously been round the world), exclaimed softly in a loud voice, 'It is the Co-operative Cauliflower!'[73]
>
> And so in truth it was, and they soon found that what they had taken for an immense wig was in reality the top of the cauliflower, and that he had no feet at all, being able to walk tolerably well with a fluctuating and graceful movement on a single cabbage stalk, an accomplishment which naturally saved him the expense of stockings and shoes.
>
> Presently, while the whole party from the boat was gazing at him with mingled affection and disgust, he suddenly arose, and in a somewhat plumdomphious manner hurried off towards the setting sun, – his legs supported by two superincumbent confidential cucumbers, and a large number of Waterwagtails proceeding in advance of him by three-and-three in a row – till he finally disappeared on the brink of the western sky in a crystal cloud of sudorific sand.
>
> So remarkable a sight of course impressed the Four Children very deeply; and they returned immediately to their boat with a strong sense of undeveloped asthma and a great appetite.[74]

Below are the two images accompanying this episode:[75]

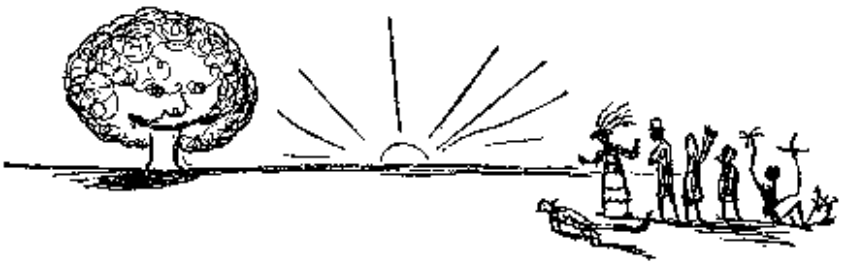

Figure 58 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense.*

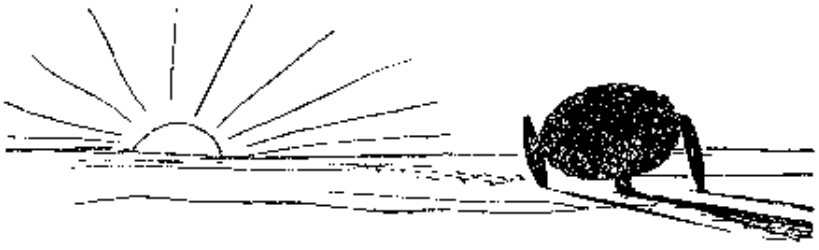

Figure 59 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense.*

[73] One wonders if Lear was giving a nod to Carroll's plant and human relationships here. *Alice in Wonderland* was first published in 1865, two years prior to "the Four Little Children".
[74] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 228–29.
[75] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse,* 229. Note that the Cauliflower bears a slight resemblance to Lear himself.

Although the children do not actually converse with him, the image of the Cauliflower is a counterfactual taxonomy of a plant with a human-like face, perhaps a nod to plants that can consume flesh. With the symbiosis of image and text for this creature, Lear creates a world where a plant is sentient, and indeed, is mobile, with the *will* to move off when confronted with a gaggle of staring children.[76]

Additionally, this incident might contain another reference to the Darwinian lens or mind-set with which Lear constructed this nonsense story. Note the manner in which the Cauliflower departs:

> … he suddenly arose, and in a somewhat plumdomphius manner hurried off towards the setting sun – his legs supported by two superincumbent confidential cucumbers, and a large number of Waterwagtails proceeding in advance of him by three-and-three in a row – till he finally disappeared on the brink of the western sky in a crystal cloud of sudorific sand.[77]

In his natural history illustration work for John Gould, Lear's name appears as the creator of one of the illustrations of the wagtail species in *The Birds of Europe* (1832-1837). This genus – *Motacilla* – has a distinctive behavioural trait of wagging its tail up and down frenetically as it walks and includes great plumage colour variation even within a single species. Interestingly, Darwin mentions coming upon one of these 'old English friends' at one of the last stops – the Azores – that *The Beagle* made on its homeward journey in 1836. Darwin uses the vernacular name 'water wagtail', rather than a scientific one. Darwin writes in his journal of their stop on Teirceira on 21 September 1836:

> I saw, moreover, some old English friends amongst the insects, and of birds, the starling, water wagtail, chaffinch and blackbird. … — When we reached the so called crater, I found it a slight depression, or rather a short valley abutting against a higher range, and without any exit. The bottom was traversed by several large fissures, out of which, in nearly a dozen places, small jets of steam issued, as from the cracks in the boiler of a steam engine. The steam close to the irregular orifices is far too hot for the hand to endure it; …[78]

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[76] Chang, *Novel Cultivations: Plants in British Literature of the Global Nineteenth Century*, 84–85. Chang includes a discussion of the varying ontologies of human and plant in Carroll's *Alice*. Additionally, Chang notes a Ruskinian (immobile, unsentient plants) versus Butlerian ('expansionist potato') view on animal and plant sentience, 58.

[77] Lear, 229; Chang, *Novel Cultivations: Plants in British Literature of the Global Nineteenth Century*, 160–61. In her chapter "The Sentient Specimen Returns", Chang discusses 'the activities of "man- eating trees," "strange orchids," and "plants that fight,"' in Wells, Doyle, Robinson, and others. She writes that the use of sentient-seeming plants expands 'beyond the limits of realism', not dissimilar to Lear's *counterfactual* taxonomies.

[78] Charles Darwin, "Beagle Diary" (personal journal, on board *The Beagle*, 1836 1831), 762, Darwin Online, http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?keywords=wagtail&pageseq=791&itemID=EHBeagleDiary&viewtype=text.

Remembering Lear's experience with illustrating one of the *Motacilla* species, his use of the word 'Waterwagtail' might be dismissed as mere fond recollection of an endearingly idiosyncratic bird, but Lear also uses two terms in this nonsense story that give a nod towards Darwin's 1836 *Beagle* entry. Lear chooses the word 'sudorific' to describe the sand where his counterfactual creature is walking. Sudorific means having the quality of perspiration, which could be called the biological equivalent of geological steam. In addition, Lear speaks of this sweaty sand as wafting up in a 'crystal cloud', which indicates a chemical reaction taking place. In his geological notes for *On Volcanic Islands* (1844), Darwin noted many crystal structures on Teirceira:

> The manner in which the solid trachyte is changed on the borders of these orifices is curious: first, the base becomes earthy, with red freckles evidently due to the oxidation of particles of iron; then it becomes soft; and lastly, even the crystals of glassy feldspar yield to the dissolving agent.[79]

Lear's counterfactual taxonomy of a wafting and crystalline, yet sweaty, sand appears to be an oblique nod to Darwin's observations of chemical and geological processes on this island.

Another curious detail from this episode involves the *name* Lear gives to this creature of nonsense evolution: the Cooperative Cauliflower. Nichols describes another instance of when the Great Chain of Being was upset by discoveries of plants which blurred the lines of what science had long taken for granted in his discussion of Shelley's "Sensitive Plant":

> The sensitive plant (*Mimosa pudica*), as Erasmus Darwin had noted in his *Botanic Garden* (1791), posed a continuing scientific mystery because its visible movements seemed so much like those of an animal. Sensitive plants possessed rudimentary forms of sensation; they responded to touch and folded up their leaves (some observers said they "slept") at night. … A plant that can be aid to "sleep," even metaphorically, easily provides Shelley with a botanical example of more widely organic, and even human, characteristics.[80]

Lear's counterfactual taxonomy of a plant that, not content to react with movement or to sleep, possesses the *will* to move off, cooperatively with 'superincumbent confidential' cucumbers. Lear gives us, in fact, two plants with human traits – a Cauliflower who can act cooperatively and cucumbers that, also cooperatively, are confidential. This is a degree above the so-called 'sensitive' plants, for sleep and reaction to physical stimuli exist in other animals, whereas characteristics such as the ability to be confident is viewed as a distinctly

[79] Charles Darwin, *On Volcanic Islands* (London: Stewart and Murray, 1844), 24, http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=F272&viewtype=text&pageseq=1.
[80] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, 23–24. See further discussion on the ontology of names and Lear in the analysis of "The Scroobious Pip" in the next chapter.

human one. One wonders, indeed, to what level of idiosyncrasy 'superincumbent' cucumbers might evolve. Are they incumbent because they, too, will evolve beyond the level of a stationary plant in another counterfactual taxonomy of evolutionary nonsense?

The ability of the Cauliflower to move provides a link to the final topic I would like to address regarding "the Four Little Children" – homology. Anna Henchman, in "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts" (2013), writes:

> Lear's acute awareness of relations – between part and whole, claw and hand, individual and species – grows out of his work illustrating animals and plants for Charles Darwin and other naturalists. His play with bodies in words and images is part of a mid-nineteenth-century fascination with the fluidity of identity and the kinds of metamorphoses that happen in both biology and literature.[81]

In this article and her *Play of Poetry* chapter ("Fragments Out of Place: Homology and the Logic of Nonsense in Edward Lear"), she discusses the work of Richard Owen (1804-1892) in anatomy which led to the theory of homology.[82] Lear first broaches this concept in an 1866 picture story titled "The Adventures of Mr Lear, the Polly and the Puseybite" and continues it with "The Scroobious Pip" and the nonsense botanies. But clearly homology was at play in the counterfactual taxonomies that Lear created for the adventures of "the Four Little Children", as well. The Cauliflower's 'single cabbage stalk' plays the role of an animal's legs, providing him with the ability 'to walk tolerably well with a fluctuating and graceful movement on a single cabbage stalk'.[83] Lear underscores this homology of stalk=legs when he later writes, '… and in a somewhat plumdomphious[84] manner hurried off towards the setting sun, – his *legs* supported by two superincumbent confidential cucumbers' (my italics).[85] Lear uses the terms 'single cabbage stalk' and 'legs' interchangeably, even noting the savings of not needing stockings and shoes for a *stalk*.

Lear also plays with homology, and hierarchies, in the following episode:

> Nothing particular occurred for some days after these events, except that as the Travellers were passing a low tract of sand, they perceived an unusual and

[81] "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts," 479.
[82] "Homology, n.," in *OED Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed July 9, 2018, http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/88080. The OED defines homology as 'Correspondence in type of structure (of parts or organs)'.
[83] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 229.
[84] Lear uses two interesting neologisms: 'slobacious' and 'plumpdomphious'. Is the reader to assume that the 'plumdomphious' is from 'plum' and the 'slobacious' from 'sloe'? Both fruits are drupes, and this would coincide with the emphasis on the gustatory preoccupations of the children. There could also be a reference in 'slobacious' to 'sebacious' (of the skin); see my discussion of Lear's skin/lines in "Edward Lear's Taxonomy".
[85] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 229.

> gratifying spectacle, namely, a large number of Crabs and Crawfish – perhaps six or seven hundred – sitting by the water-side, and endeavouring to disentangle a vast heap of pale pink worsted, which they moistened at intervals with a fluid composed of Lavender-water and White-wine Negus.
>
> 'Can we be of any service to you, O crusty Crabbies?' said the Four Children.
>
> 'Thank you kindly,' said the Crabs, consecutively. 'We are trying to make some worsted Mittens, but do not know how.'
>
> On which Violet, who was perfectly acquainted with the art of mitten-making, said to the Crabs, 'Do your claws unscrew, or are they fixtures?'
>
> 'They are all made to unscrew,' said the Crabs, and forthwith they deposited a great pile of claws close to the boat, with which Violet uncombed all the pale pink worsted, and then made the loveliest Mittens with it you can imagine. These the Crabs, having resumed and screwed on their claws, placed cheerfully upon their wrists, and walked away rapidly on their hind-legs, warbling songs with a silvery voice and in a minor key.[86]

There are several elements of counterfactuality here that Lear presents in his homage to homology. Crabs are able to regrow their claws if lost in an injury – which Lear must be referencing here – underscoring the 'fixture' dialogue that Violet has with the Crabbies, for they unscrew their claws and then reattach them after Violet uses the claws as a comb to sort the pink worsted.[87] The word 'fixture' carries interesting connotations regarding the level of societal hierarchy these crabs might occupy. Their claws are not permanent. Is Lear implying that, like the impermanence of their claws, they are like seasonal transient workers? Moreover, they do not appear able to master a middle-class domestic act – the knitting of mittens, though they clearly have the will to learn this domestic accomplishment. Violet again bestows her middle-class largesse on a lesser species by sorting the worsted into mittens for the Crabs, a similar act of charity to the frock-knitting for the Soles.[88] However, these creatures *are* capable of whistling warbly tunes and recognising the value in worsted wool. Although they have not quite reached the pinnacle of being able to knit mittens, clearly they are a counterfactual taxonomy of a creature that is evolving into one that might one day be able to master knitting – and one that is worthy of Violet's generosity. They are evidence of Lear's further subversion of the boundaries between species.

Aside from upending species hierarchies, this episode mirrors the nonsense botanies where Lear conjoins inanimate objects and living organisms in ludicrous combinations of

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[86] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 228.
[87] "AFSC/RACE - Molting: How Crabs Grow," accessed April 8, 2019, https://www.afsc.noaa.gov/kodiak/shellfish/cultivation/crabgrow.htm.
[88] McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*, 34–36. McClintock discusses the implications of imposing European domesticity in the colonies.

simultaneous utility and fancy. We are clearly meant to conflate *hands* with the Crabs' claws when Lear writes, 'These the Crabs, having resumed and screwed on their claws, placed cheerfully upon their *wrists*, and walked away rapidly on their hind-legs, warbling songs with a silvery voice and in a minor key' (italics mine).[89] Not only are we to imagine the Crabs' claws as having *wrists*, but we are also to assume that Crabbies might be in want of mittens to keep their claws warm, just as humans might be in want of mittens to keep their hands warm. Additionally, Lear writes that they 'walk away rapidly on their *hind-legs*'. What does he mean by the term 'hind-legs'? Crabs have four sets of walking legs; they do not use their claws, or 'front-legs' for walking, so Lear's term here is ambiguous. Does he mean to imply that the Crabbies are evolving to be bipedal, like humans, and equally capable of singing 'songs with a silvery voice and in a minor key'?[90] With these rapidly evolving crabs, Lear has created a counterfactual taxonomy of crustaceans who enjoy singing and worsted mittens, and who are evolving to walk upright.

Nonsense evolution in process as seen above with the Crabs, is a frequent image Lear ties in with homology, as well as with language development. Sara Lodge writes in *Inventing Edward Lear* (2018):

> When Lear, in 'The Story of the [sic] Little Children Who Went Round the World', plays with the idea that Blue-Bottle-Flies live in bottles, he tests the proposition that the name of the creature is the equivalent of a homologous structure—that it derives from the word *bottle*, meaning vessel, which is the creature's home. … Nonsense relishes these decoy ducks in the family tree of etymology. It enjoys mimicking Nature, creating composites (Froglodytes, the hippopotamouse) that do not yet exist but might as well do so.[91]

And the 'back-hair' I discussed earlier regarding the Blue-Bottle-Fly represents that same type of analogous thinking – the homology of hair in humans and flies. Flies do indeed have hair, but on their legs, not on their heads. The hair on a fly's legs functions as part of a tactile system, not unlike the whiskers of mammals, or indeed the sensation of 'the hair on the back of the neck standing up' in *Homo sapiens*. In "the Four Little Children", Lear creates a world where The Blue-Bottle-Flies have homologous human hair that is to be adorned with the gift of Violet's feathers. In addition, I would suggest that Lear is pointing to the homology of fly

[89] Lear, 228.
[90] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse,* 228.
[91] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 161. For more on homology see the discussion in the analysis of "The Scroobious Pip" in the next chapter.

hair, human hair, *and* bird feathers to further his illustration of Darwin's web of life metaphor and the challenges that evolutionary theory posed to the epistemology of imperial knowledge.

Despite playing the role of supplicant to The Blue-Bottle-Flies and being dismissed contemptuously by the Cooperative Cauliflower, at the end of their adventure "the Four Little Children" reassert their imperial prerogative by seizing – note Lear's use of this word – a rhino upon which to return to their father's house as a replacement to their ship being capsized by a Seeze Pyder:

> The Four Travellers were therefore obliged to resolve on pursuing their wanderings by land, and very fortunately there happened to pass by at that moment, an elderly Rhinoceros, on which they *seized* [my italics]; and all four mounting on his back, the Quangle-Wangle sitting on his horn and holding on by his ears, the Pussy-cat swinging at the end of his tail, they set off, having only four small beans and three pounds of mashed potatoes to last through their whole journey.
>
> They were, however, able to catch numbers of the chickens and turkeys, and other birds who incessantly alighted on the head of the Rhinoceros for the purpose of gathering the seeds of the rhododendron plants which grew there, and these creatures they cooked in the most translucent and satisfactory manner, by means of a fire lighted on the end of the Rhinoceros' back. A crowd of Kangaroos and Gigantic Cranes accompanied them, from feelings of curiosity and complacency, so that there were never at a loss for company, and went onward as it were in a sort of profuse and triumphant procession.[92]

Following is the image Lear included for this passage:[93]

[92] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 231 - additionally, Lear uses one of his stock contradictory pairs at the end of the Cauliflower episode: the children return to their ship after watching the crystal cloud with 'a strong sense of undeveloped asthma and a great appetite'. Similar to the gluttony exhibited by the children with the Soles and the white mice, encountering this unique creature – this counterfactual taxonomy – the children are not filled with wonder at the marvels of the natural world, they are *hungry*, their appetite is increased for the final adventure homeward.; For a discussion on the importance of imperial ritual, specifically processions, see David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2002), 32.

[93] Lear, 231. For the varied history of the representation of the rhinoceros in Western Europe and the US, see T. H. Clarke's *The Rhinoceros from Dürer to Stubbs, 1515-1799* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1986) and Kelly Enright's chapter "Why the rhinoceros doesn't talk: the cultural life of a wild animal in America" in *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans and the Study of History* by Dorothee Brantze (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2010. *Project Muse* www.muse.jhu.edu/book/15952).

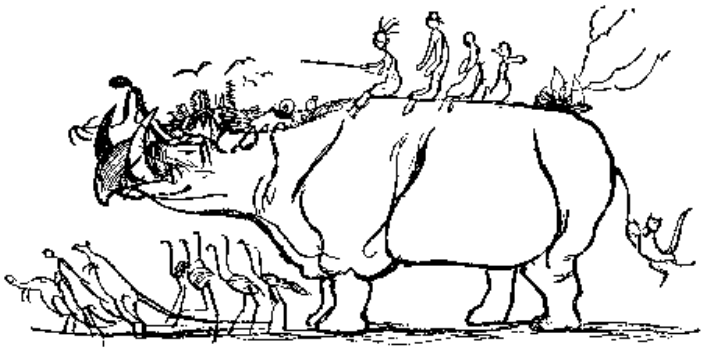

Figure 60 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense.*

This is another text and illustration that are full of imperial and colonial imagery. The children have 'seized' on the rhino for their own use. However, as with Violet's bonnet, the Rhinoceros is not just a rhinoceros. With his series of counterfactual taxonomies of Soles, Blue-Bottle-Flies, Cooperative Cauliflowers, and singing Crabs, Lear culminates his impossible world with this rhinoceros, for this animal represents the entirety of British colonial possessions – upon which the sun never set. Not only is Africa represented by the Rhinoceros, but Australia is represented by the Kangaroos and countless other lands by the birds, both named and unnamed (as Gould had collected countless birds from all over the world, so do the children on the back of the Rhinoceros). In fact, the Rhinoceros is also a metaphor for an entire ecosystem, for this being is *host* to both the plants and the animals that consume them. Right atop the back of this ecosystem are "the Four Little Children" (with Violet wielding a stick), having seized it for their own. Consuming the birds and burning the plants the ecosystem-Rhinoceros offered them, they return in a 'profuse and triumphant procession' back to their father's house, where that ecosystem is to be killed and mounted.[94] Lear creates a world where it is the fate of this ecosystem to serve as a 'Diaphanous Doorscraper', victim of the endless boot-wiping of an ever-expanding empire and its colonial exploitation, a mirroring of the colonial processions that had an analogous effect on the colonised.[95] With "the Four Little Children", Lear created a parody of the imperial adventures he loved to read, filled with both stark assessments and subversions of the colonial agenda. This story is also marked by subtle subversions of the hierarchies of taxonomy and social society that he created with the counterfactual taxonomies of the Blue-Bottle-Flies, the Soles, the Cauliflower, and the Crabs that he created to illustrate evolutionary theory and Darwin's web of life.

[94] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 231.
[95] Lear, 232.

Regarding the lamentable fate of the rhinoceros, an ecocritical approach provides an enlarged answer to Jesse Oak Taylor's question "Where is Victorian ecocriticism?". With Violet at the head of the party of 'Travellers' wielding a stick, Lear makes clear who oversees this rhinoceros-as-ecosystem panoply. The children feel free to continue their exploitation of natural resources by consuming the resources provided by the rhinoceros on their triumphant procession home with imperial pomp and circumstance.[96] Additionally, once they have returned to their father's home, they have their ecosystem slaughtered, stuffed, and placed *outside* of their home:

> As for the Rhinoceros, in token of their grateful adherence, they had him killed and stuffed directly, and then set him up outside the door of their father's house as a Diaphanous Doorscraper.[97]

Lear makes clear how the successful imperial 'Travellers' easily remove themselves from the wonders of nature they have encountered on their adventures once they are returned home. They even indulge in the Victorian craze for exotic stuffed-and-preserved specimen as every-day object, as a plaything of the empire. The final image of the story and the rhinoceros presents the reader with an exotic animal as pull-toy, missing only the wheels:[98]

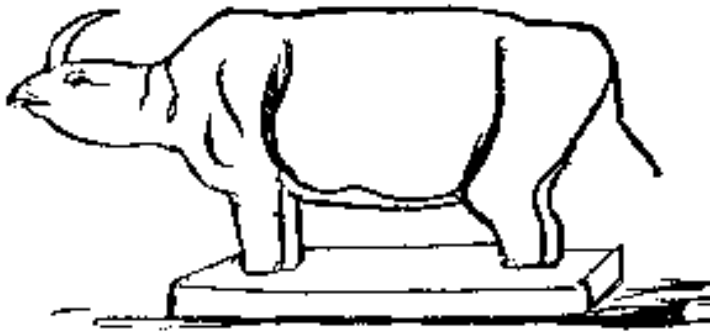

Figure 61 Edward Lear. "The Four Little Children". *Complete Nonsense.*

This magnificent creature has become even less than a beloved toy. It is an afterthought for wiping the feet outside of an imperial mansion divorced from nature and enriched by collection, classification, and display of colonial resources.

I would like to include here a brief return to the continuing significance of the structure of Lear's nonsense that underlines the importance of the counterfactuality in Lear's work. In "the Four Little Children", Lear adheres to the circular nature of his counterfactual

[96] This resource exploitation is a nexus of ecocritical works and ecological imperialism.
[97] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 232.
[98] Lear, 232.

nonsense.[99] As I have shown with the previous structural analyses in this dissertation, Lear presents his readers with an original term, posits counterfactual events or characters and then returns to an enhanced original term. This is true also for the Children. Lear tells a tale of four very British children embarking on a high-seas adventure similar to the ones he loved to read. They even have servants to steer their ship and make their dinner and tea. However, the children are in actuality engaging in a voyage of discovery of the powers of empire and collection, mirroring Darwin's and other explorers' imperial journeys with the Waterwagtail, sudorific yet crystalline sand, and prolific rhododendron seeds. During their journey, they encounter Lear's counterfactual taxonomies like the Blue-Bottle-Flies and the Co-operative Cauliflower. They even appear to accept the subversion of social hierarchies and Christianity during the scene with the Blue-Bottle-Flies. Despite these encounters with Lear's counterfactual taxonomies and topsy-turvy social hierarchies, they revert to their original identity of very British children. However, they are an enhanced original of their selves, for they have seen the impossible and astounding world that empire had to offer, even partaken of Lear's impossibilities. But on their final adventure home, what do they do? They seize a rhinoceros and sail home on a triumphant journey that hails the collection, classification, and display of the creatures—the natural world—at the empire's disposal. They have become their father and proceed to consign the rhinoceros – the ecosystem, the natural world – to endless display as the empire's boot scraper. By returning the children to their original but enhanced state, Lear maintains the structures of imperial society, yet needles his audience with that last hammer-blow image of the rhinoceros as boot-scraper.[100]

I began this analysis of "the Four Little Children" by pointing to Lear's stark ending, and I conclude it with this ending where, as Colley writes, 'The exaggerations of nonsense disappear', where 'Lear's rhinoceros is yet another victim of the self-appointed license to show off colonial authority'.[101] My circular pathway is a fitting precursor to my analysis of Lear's deeper dive into the issues of homology, language philosophy, natural history, taxonomy and his illustration of Darwin's web of life with the images and text of "The

[99] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, 24-31.
[100] Tock, "The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo's Journey: Destinations of the Romantic and the Gothic in Edward Lear's *Journals of a landscape painter in Albania &c* (1851)." It is interesting to note that the Four Little children are expert at collecting, classifying, displaying of the colonial 'other', returning to their father's imperial home with colonial booty in tow and reinforcing the idea of the imperialist confirmation of self through that collection, classification, and display of the 'other'.
[101] Colley, *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain*, 90.

Scroobious Pip" (1871-1872) in the next chapter. Like "the Four Little Children", "The Pip" is also centred on circles and the infinite nature of the web of life inherent in those circles.

Chapter 4: Darwinian Nonsense: Translating Darwin's Entangled Bank in "The Scroobious Pip" (1871-1872)

In *Edward Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense,* Uglow writes that 'Lear's own nonsense was open to the protean, changing Darwinian world'.[1] This is an apt description of "The Scroobious Pip". Created in 1872, several years after "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round The World", "The Scroobious Pip" was never published in Lear's lifetime, and Vivien Noakes describes the work as 'unfinished' in her notes to the piece in *The Complete Nonsense*.[2] "The Scroobious Pip" is a five-stanza poem of an impossible-to-classify creature, a creature that Uglow describes as a 'mixed-up medieval bestiary' of which 'any metamorphosis seems possible'.[3] There appear to be two illustrations of the Pip, one that was included in the text manuscript (See Appendix II) housed at Harvard and a later drawing, also housed at Harvard, that Noakes includes in *The Complete Nonsense*. Despite its unfinished state, "The Pip" can be considered a sibling to "the Four Little Children". Like the story of imperial voyages of exploration, collection, and exploitation of resources, Lear inverts Victorian hierarchies of empire, society, and natural history with the images and text of "The Pip".

Additionally, the counterfactual taxonomy used in "The Scroobious Pip" is representative of Lear's focus on providing a natural history of the world and the individual's place in that natural history: "The Pip" is Lear's idiosyncratic interpretation of Darwinian and evolutionary formulations of the interconnected web of life on planet Earth. It constitutes a significant and emblematic nineteenth-century cultural response to the debate surrounding Darwin's works and the contemporary embraces, rejections, and misuses of his theories on natural and sexual selection. Darwin's startling discoveries of the strangeness of barnacle and avian sexuality and reproduction and what that might say about *Homo sapiens*' sexuality and gender, an intelligent Creator, and imperial hierarchies had a cataclysmic effect on

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[1] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 361; Edward Lear, "Edward Lear Diaries, 1858-1888," 13 December 1866, Harvard Houghton Library, accessed July 19, 2021, https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/3092. An important caveat here is Lodge's observation in *Inventing Edward Lear* that in discussing natural history and Lear's nonsense it is 'important not to see Darwin in isolation', 147. This is in alignment with exploring Owen's work in homology and Lear's work, as well as Lear's experience in the natural history wars of the early nineteenth century which I discuss in chapter 2. This caveat notwithstanding, we know that Lear read Darwin. In the 13 December 1866 entry, he writes '… - reading Darwin'.

[2] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 526–27.

[3] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 421.

nineteenth-century philosophy that Lear translated and illustrated in mock-scientific fashion and symbiotically paired with the text of "The Pip". Lear created a counterfactual taxonomy that challenged Victorian orthodox knowledge of the natural history that was integral to imperial hierarchies. This counterfactual taxonomy illustrated another aspect of Darwin's work – the great web of life, a web that dances together on the entangled bank in a circle round the Pip, a creature that encompasses all taxonomies, all languages, all genders, all habitats of life on Earth – an impossible taxonomy in a counterfactual world that posits as nonsense the imposition of taxonomical categories on the chaos of nature, as well as the rejection of the creation of the 'other' via that taxonomical classification.[4] Additionally, the Pip represents a transition from that Romantic environmentalist concept of humanity representing a dire threat to 'nature' towards an environmentalism that includes *Homo sapiens* and its objects in the great web of life that Nichols discusses in *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism.*[5]

Like his other counterfactual taxonomies, in "The Pip" Lear challenges established knowledge of natural history by using the same taxonomical structures of that established knowledge to illustrate his challenge, just as he preserved the melody and socio-political elements in his contrafactum.[6] The preservation of those structures suggests a mirroring of that dance round the Pip. The circular structure of his earlier counterfactual taxonomies is preserved in "The Pip", as well, providing an orbicular frame for the circle dance around this singular creature. Circles, orbs, and ovoids abound in Lear's drawings and personal correspondence.[7] His diary entries often contain a diagram of the dinner table from the previous evening's dining arrangement, a majority of which are spherical, with lively descriptions of the dinner companions enumerated in the diagrams. However, even some that presumably depict rectangular tables have been softened with rounded edges, as below (Figures 62 and 63):[8]

[4] The random pairings in works like "Ribands and Pigs", "The Jumblies", and "The Quangle Wangle" hint towards a predilection for this creation of unexpected connections within the chaos of nature.
[5] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, xiii–xxii.
[6] Sara Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2018), 32–40.
[7] Edward Lear, *Edward Lear: Selected Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 163, 164, 165, 166, 168, 192, 193,194, 195, 232, 233, 234, 235, 249, 263.
[8] Lear, "Edward Lear Diaries, 1858-1888," 22 October 1864; 18 October 1864.

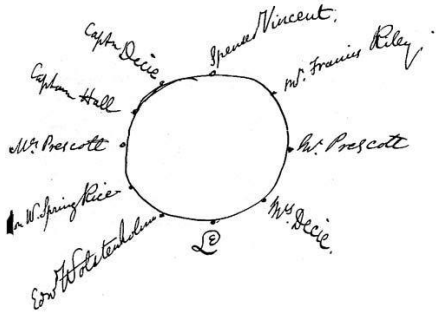

Figure 62 Edward Lear. Seating diagram.

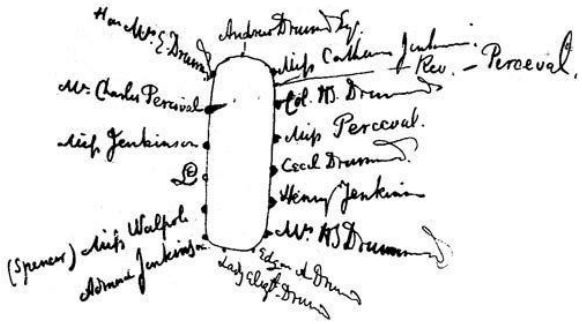

Figure 63 Edward Lear. Seating diagram.

The issue of symbiosis in image and text is a frequent theme in Lear scholarship, and his texts have been discussed at length as being inseparable from his art. Thomas Dilworth discusses this symbiosis in "Edward Lear's Suicide Limerick" (1995), as does Anna Henchman in "Homology and the Logic of Nonsense in Edward Lear" ("Homology") in *Play of Poetry* (2017) and her article "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts" ("Dismembered"). I also discuss this symbiosis in chapter 2, "Edward Lear's Counterfactual Taxonomy". Similarly, symbiosis is an important factor in the illustrations that Darwin chose for his works. Smith speaks of this in *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*: 'When it came to picturing natural selection, Darwin had to rely heavily on the symbiosis of word and image'. Smith underscores the importance of this symbiosis that images have with text and language.[9] He writes:

> … Darwin found language a slippery commodity. He was trying to deny the existence of a supervising agent in the evolution of species, yet agency is built into

[9] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 16. He also discusses Darwin's influence on Victorian literature in "Darwin's barnacles, Dickens' *Little Dorrit* and the social uses of Victorian seaside studies" (1996), in his monograph *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture* (2006), and in his chapter "Picturing Sexual Selection: Gender and the Evolution of Ornithological Illustration in Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man"* from *Figuring It Out: Science, Gender, and Visual Culture* (2006).

> the structure of grammatical form. He was trying to refuse human beings a privileged spot in the natural order, yet human language is necessarily anthropomorphic.[10]

Smith argues that since language is so culturally dependent and that depiction of the *processes* of natural and sexual selection so difficult, it was almost inevitable that Darwin's theories were appropriated for 'even incompatible purposes'. In other words, Smith claims that they were misused to support theories like Christian theism, laissez-faire capitalism, eugenics, racism, and the Great Chain of Being with the white British male at the apex.[11] Because of this appropriation and misuse, Smith maintains that in studying Darwin's illustrations, researchers should remain cognizant of not just Darwin's intentions with his illustrations, but also the 'potential instabilities in those meanings and to the ways his illustrations are received and appropriated'.[12] With this admonition in mind, examining some of the Darwinian elements in Lear's "The Pip" aligns with tracing Lear's pastiches, parodies, and illustrations of his other favourite authors like Moore, Byron, and Tennyson while at the same time grappling with the problem of the instability of language that Smith discusses.

This instability of language presented a problem for Darwin, as well as Lear in his attempts to illustrate his visions of those favourite authors. My argument is that with "The Pip", Lear used a similar symbiosis of image and text to offer his own illustration, via his counterfactual taxonomies, of Darwin's theories of the great web of life, sexual selection and the implications these theories held for the individual and humanity's role in nature, reinforcing the message initiated in "The Dong" regarding the similar fate of the self and the 'other' in the relentless march of empire. Brown in "Being and Naughtiness" argues that

> … Lear's limericks and other nonsense texts proceed from word sounds and arbitrary forms to generate effects of verisimilitude, giving them an ontological poise that precludes their being dismissed as mere unmeaning nonsense.[13]

We can return here to Brown's discussion of Lear and Becket that Lear's

> nonsense works mark a modest linguistic turn, an ontology that is preposterous to Parmenides, as it names that which is not, but plausible to Samuel Beckett's *Unnamable*, who concludes that being is "all words, there's nothing else".[14]

[10] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual* Culture, 16.
[11] Smith, 16.
[12] Smith, 17.
[13] Brown, "Being and Naughtiness," 163.
[14] 163.

the Pip's ontological insistence that he is merely what he is named as in Lear's text— "The Scroobious Pip"—is an example of Lear's 'modest linguistic turn'. Similarly, I argue that Lear's works align with the development of linguistic structures used to discuss notions of self, empire, and sexuality and constitute one of the literary antecedents that made Beckett's *Unnamable* possible.[15] My analysis of the text of "The Pip" and how it interacts with the two illustrations, as well as its relationship with Darwin's texts support this proposition.

Darwin's *A monograph of the sub-class Cirripedia, with figures of all the species* (1851) was published at a time when the study of natural history and the seaside was promoted as an innocent antidote to the excesses of the upper classes.[16] Coinciding with the development of rail travel, which made accessing the coastal regions possible for the upright middle classes, Darwin's *Cirripedia* was excerpted and promoted in several extremely popular natural history studies of the seaside. These included works like Phillip Henry Gosse's (1810-1888) *Tenby: A Sea-Side Holiday* (1856) and Charles Kingsley's (1819-1875) *Glaucus: Or, The Wonders of the Shore* (1856).[17] Lear's previous career in natural history illustration for works like Jardine's *Naturalist's Library* and Bell's *A History of the British Quadrupeds, including the Cetacea* (1837) presuppose his wide knowledge of natural history, including oceanic natural history, as I discuss in chapters 1 and 2.

Before the 1830s, barnacles had been categorised as molluscs and as exclusively hermaphroditic.[18] But Darwin's discoveries of barnacle reproductive complexity put them on par with the intricate metamorphosis of insects and required that they be re-classified as a sub-class of crustaceans.[19] Even further, far from being exclusively hermaphroditic, Darwin's work identified several barnacle species that incorporated extreme sexual dimorphism. Darwin's work found that the female of these species was the more complex gender and that their shells housed rudimentary male genders, which he described as little more than 'swimming sperm sacs'.[20] In direct opposition to Darwin's theory of natural and sexual selection, authors like Gosse and Kingsley attributed the unusual and seemingly miraculous reproduction of barnacles as proof of an intelligent Creator, while conveniently eliding the

[15] Brown, "Being and Naughtiness," 181–82.
[16] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 60-64.
[17] Smith, 44; 60–64; Richard Sha, "Scientific Forms of Sexual Knowledge in Romanticism," *Romanticism on the Net*, no. 23 (2001), https://doi.org/10.7202/005993ar.
[18] Smith, 46.
[19] Smith, 46.
[20] Smith, 55–59.

implications of what effect this kind of complex female sexuality might have on Victorian views of gender roles and sexuality. Here Smith describes Kingsley's reaction to barnacle reproduction:

> For Kingsley, barnacle metamorphosis provided, not surprisingly, a parable for bourgeois life. Speaking of a species of *Pyrgoma,* Kingsley explains that the free-swimming larva, "having sown its wild oats … settled down in life, built itself a good stone house, and became a landowner". Converting Darwin's story of a hermaphrodite's progress into a seaside tale of an aquatic prodigal son, Kingsley makes no reference to those unusual species in which barnacle "wives" do the settling down and keep multiple, parasitic "husbands" solely for the sake of their reproductive capacities.[21]

In addition, Smith argues that Darwin's barnacles influenced the development of imperial philosophy and criticism. He discusses Dickens' use of the animal in his depiction of the Barnacle family from *Little Dorrit* (1857) as a criticism of British imperial administration and the aristocracy's assumption of imperial appointment with little or no merit.[22] Reminiscent of Beer's discussion of how Darwin used language history in his discussion of evolutionary theory, Smith also explores Dicken's exploitation of the language surrounding barnacle natural history that produced 'anxieties about gender and sexuality' with his Barnacle family.[23]

Darwin's works presented nineteenth-century society with a new paradigm, a new scientific language that explained the anomalies that new discoveries in geology and the fossil record had brought forth. Though it provided a solution to these scientific anomalies, Darwin's evolutionary theories, sexual selection and the web of life especially, wreaked havoc on orthodox religious thought and the presumption of a divine Creator that guided life on Earth in a great chain of being leading to the human species in God's image. Darwin's appropriation of even beauty as a utilitarian function of sexual attraction and driver of evolution prompted some artists, writers, and social critics like Ruskin and Lear's long-time friend Holman Hunt, to expressions of horror at the rationalisation of such a concept as beauty. Lear was disappointed in Hunt's rejection of both Darwin's theories and the stances of liberal theologians like Benjamin Jowett (1817-1893) and Lear's friend A. P. Stanley (1815-1881) of the *Essays and Reviews* controversy (see *Essays and Reviews: The 1860 Text*

[21] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 63.
[22] Smith, 63-66.
[23] Smith, 68.

and Its Reading (2000)).[24] Uglow describes Lear's attitude to the *Essays & Reviews* controversy:

> He disliked the extreme advocates on both sides, the High Churchman and the Calvinists, and supported the liberal intellectual line taken by Jowett and his old friend Arthur Penrhyn Stanley.[25]

Additionally, in a letter from Lear to Thomas Woolner (1825-1892) in May of 1870, Lear writes:

> … I find I have knocked my head against a wall; for supposing that he [Hunt] was—as he used to be—of what you & I should call 'advanced or liberal principles'; in religious matters, I had spoken about the increase of rationalistic & antimiraculous though, & hoped his future pictures would point or express such progress. Whereas I find I never made a greater mistake, & that on the contrary, he is becoming a literalist about all biblical lore, & has a horror of Darwin, Deutsch, & I suppose of Jowett & A Stanley, tho' he don't name them. You may imagine that I shall nevermore touch on this subject:—meantime, if he should paint Balaams Ass or Gideon's Fleece it will not surp[ris]e [m]e.[26]

With his background in natural history and growing agnosticism, Lear came down in favour of evolutionary theory and liberal theology yet offered up his own topsy-turvy counterfactual taxonomies of a natural history of life, the self, and empire with works like "The Pip" and "the Four Little Children", both of which are replete with evolutionary images, references, and metaphors.

Darwin's discoveries and illustrations of the intricacies of barnacle anatomy and reproduction are reflected in the illustrations of Lear's "The Pip". Furthermore, I discuss the phonemic intricacies in the text of "The Pip" as a reflection of Lear's reaction to the wonders of evolution that Darwin and others had proposed. "The Pip" is an embrace of the nonsensical yet closely related paths that natural and sexual selection can take, documented in linguistic form and paired symbiotically with Lear's extraordinary drawings.

As I noted previously, Lear's art and illustrations throughout his career often marked an attempt to illustrate favourite authors like Thomas Moore, Lord Byron, and Tennyson. This is evident from Lear's illustrations of Moore's work "By that lake whose gloomy shore"

[24] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 254; 308–9.
[25] Uglow, 308.
[26] Lear, *Edward Lear*, 216. In addition to Uglow, other scholars have discussed this aspect of Lear's religious stance. See Lodge in *Inventing Edward Lear*, 97-140; Williams in *Play of Poetry*, 30-31; Lodge in *Play of Poetry* 70-88, 84-85.

from *Irish Melodies* (1820) in "St Kiven and the Gentle Kathleen" (ca 1830s), Lear's travel journal and landscapes retracing Byron's Albanian journeys, and Lear's 200 plus illustrations of Tennyson's verse. Providing his own translation of Darwin's theories of natural and sexual selection and the web of life conforms with Lear's pastiches and parodies of his other favourite authors. Lear's habit of creating author tributes led him to provide illustration for Darwin's theories, an issue with which the scientist struggled. Smith describes Darwin's frustration with the problem of adequately providing illustration of the process of natural selection for the artistically challenged evolutionary theorist:

> But the *Origin* offers limited "illustration" in another and more obvious sense; it contains just a single visual illustration. While Darwin often speaks vividly to the mind's eye, most memorably in the closing paragraph's evocation of a "tangled bank", he has little to offer the reader's physical eye. … Darwin's private writings are hardly rich in such visual material and those that exist are rather crude. In developing illustrations for his books, he had to rely heavily on others and frequently borrowed images that had already been published elsewhere.[27]

Lear created two illustrations for "The Pip", providing two visual interpretations for his counterfactual views on natural history that supported Darwin's theories of the web of life. I turn here to Anna Henchman's discussion of the theory of homology from her article "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts" (and her chapter in *Play of Poetry*), and where she discusses Lear's first illustration for "The Pip" as pictured below in Figure 64:

[27] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 4.

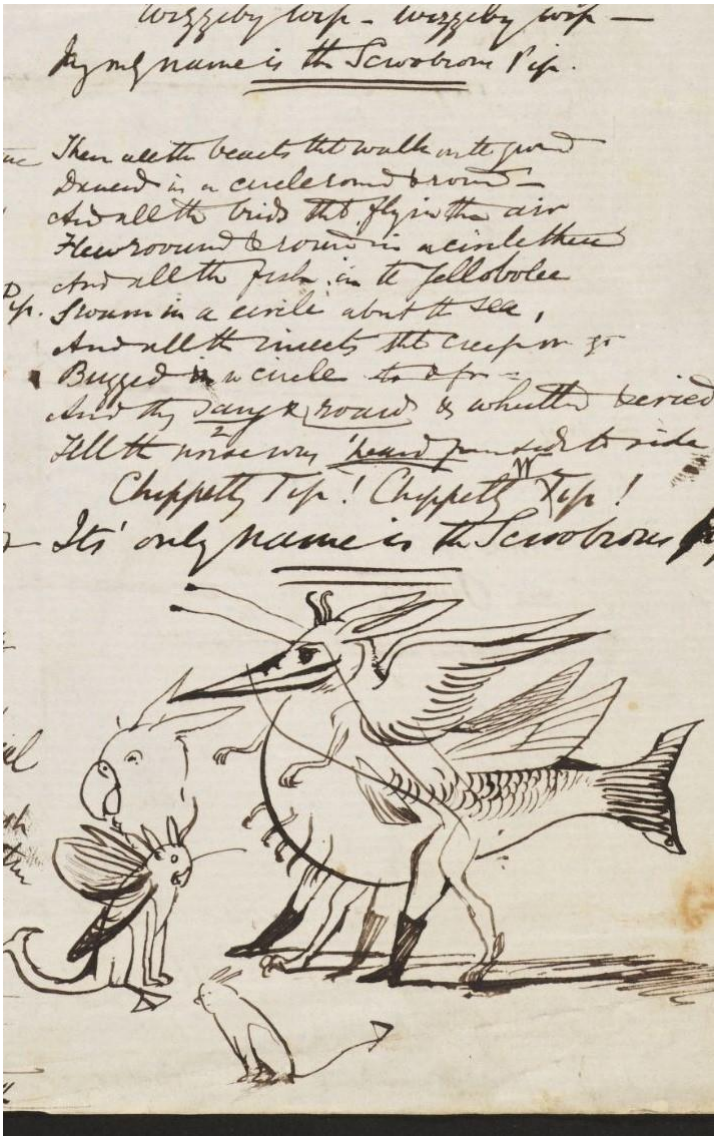

Figure 64 Edward Lear. "The Scroobious Pip".

Here I would like to recall Henchman's discussion of part and whole quoted in the last chapter:

> Lear's acute awareness of relations – between part and whole, claw and hand, individual and species – grows out of his work illustrating animals and plants for Charles Darwin and other naturalists. His play with bodies in words and images is part of a mid-nineteenth-century fascination with the fluidity of identity and the kinds of metamorphoses that happen in both biology and literature.[28]

Henchman writes at length about Owen's work on homology, that he 'constantly uses the language of "arrangement" and "relation" of part to whole to describe and compare the organisation of bodies'.[29] She associates this homology with the way Lear plays with both

[28] Henchman, "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts," 479.
[29] Henchman, 483.

body parts and word parts – as being supremely interchangeable.[30] Here Henchman speaks directly of the first illustration of "The Pip":

> The drawing places insect wings and a parrot head on a cat body, and mixes physiological parts up while still retaining some sense that there are several whole creatures depicted—creatures that, though unidentifiable, can move, balance, see, grab, consume, and probably excrete their own waste.[31]

I would argue that the second illustration of "The Pip" adds an additional nuance to Lear's views on sexual selection, gender binaries, and the great web of life. The second illustration, standing alone in the sketch, does not give the impression of 'several whole creatures'.[32] As a study in comparison and contrast and part to whole, below are images from Darwin's *Cirripedia,* followed by Lear's second illustration of "The Pip" (Figures 65-69):

[30] Henchman, "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts,"483.

[31] Henchman, 484. Henchman also writes in "Fragments Out of Place" that 'Lear's play with homologous body parts offers a way of illustrating such temporal transformations by mapping them onto a spatial body. His composite bodies transpose centuries of gradual temporal change on the image of a single body. That development was hard for Victorians to imagine, in part because it was impossible to see *in process*', 193.

[32] Henchman, 484.

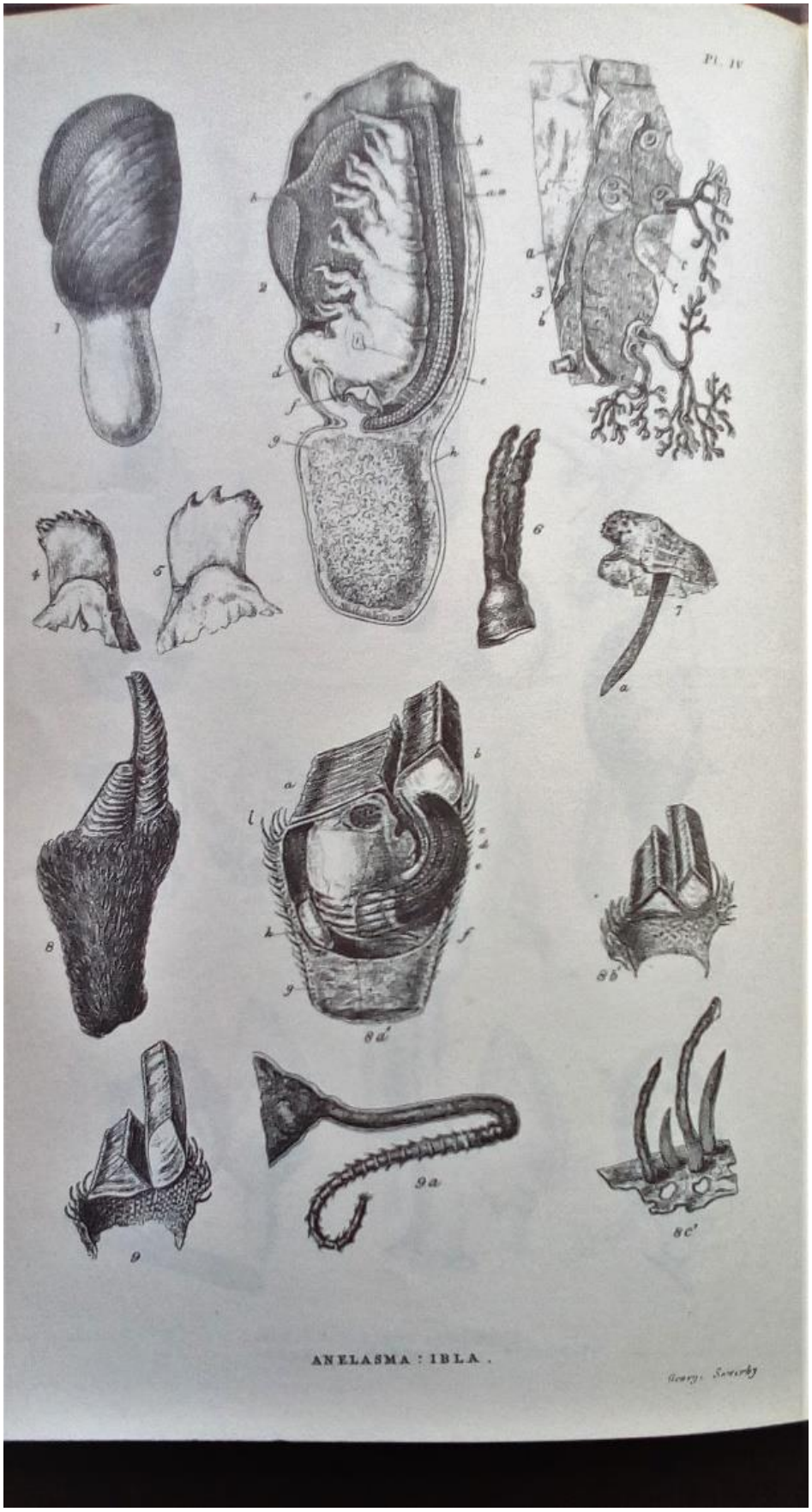

Figure 65 Charles Darwin. *Cirripedia: The Lepadidae* Plate.

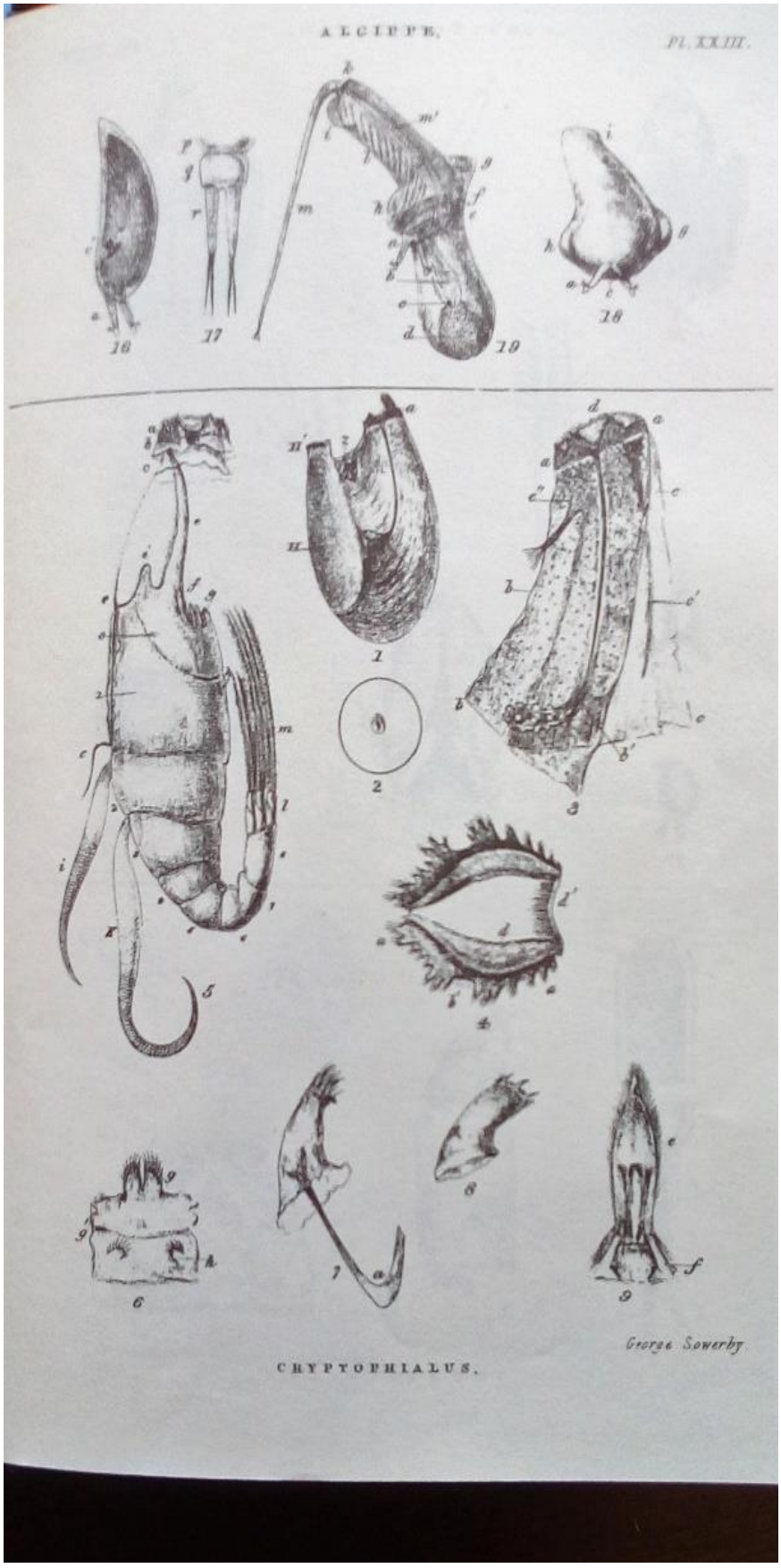

Figure 66 *Cirripedia: The Balanidae* Plate 13.

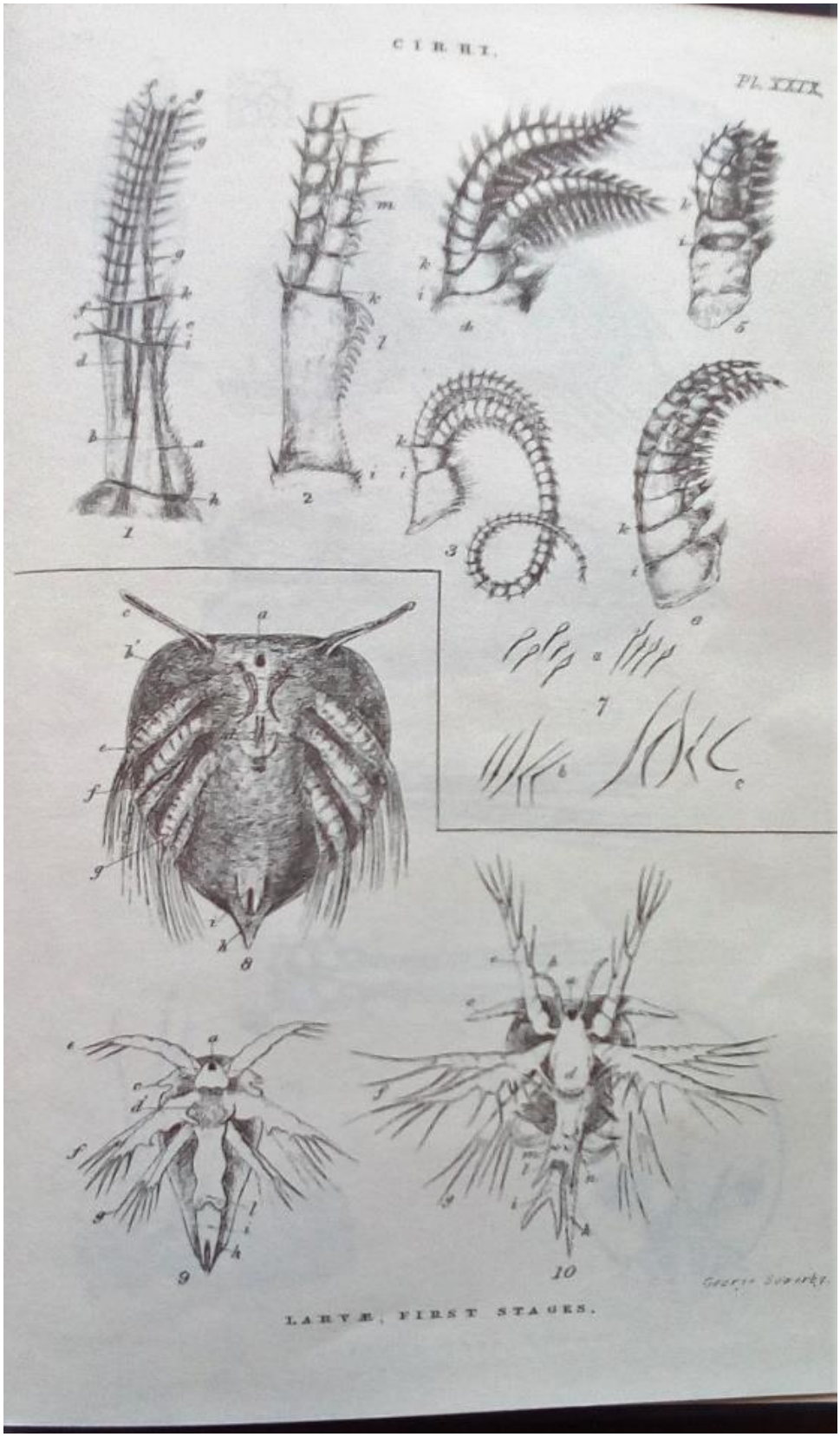

Figure 67 *Cirripedia: The Balanidae* Plate 29.

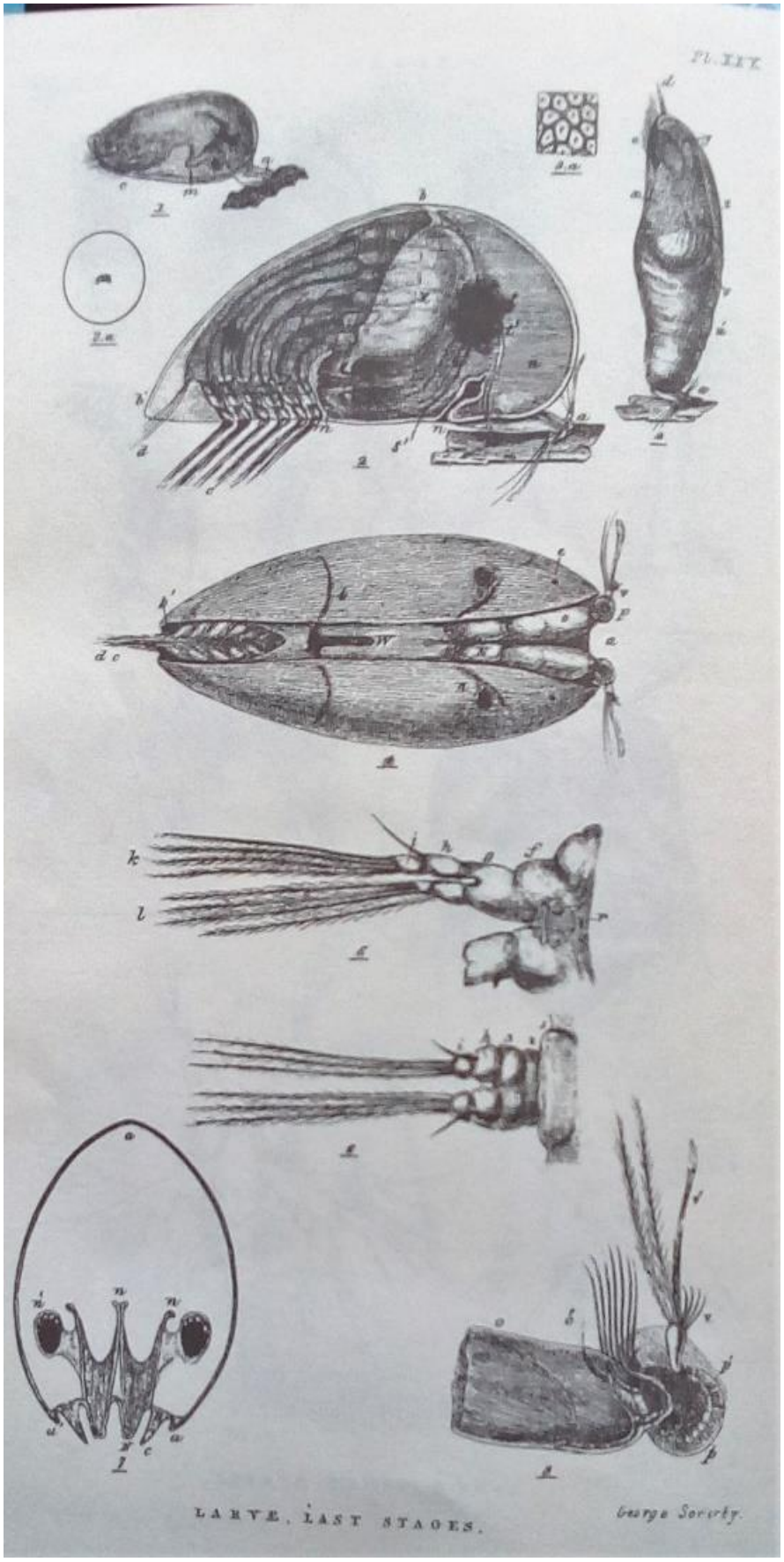

Figure 68 *Cirripedia: The Balanidae* Plate 30.

Figure 69 Edward Lear. "The Scroobious Pip" second illustration.[33]

This second image of "The Pip" carries further relevance in relation to Darwin's barnacle image, although the long tendrils in the first image do look like crustacean antennae. I have found no definitive evidence yet that Lear read Darwin's *Cirripedia* specifically, but it is known that he read Darwin's works as well as other natural history publications throughout his life.[34] Based on the wide audience which Darwin's *Cirripedia* had gained and Lear's life-long interest and reading in natural history and the evolution-centred debate that dominated natural history circles, I am confident in the supposition that Lear was aware of Darwin's barnacles. I have proceeded from this confidence to argue that Lear incorporated visual elements of Darwin's illustrations in *Cirripedia,* as well as Darwinian concepts of the great web of life and sexual selection in the counterfactual taxonomy that is "The Pip".

A cursory glance at this strange creature in the second illustration might prompt its identification simply as an anthropomorphised mole with wings. However, the mouth on Lear's image is not rodent-like and bears a distinct resemblance to Figure 66 in the first set of Darwin's barnacle illustrations (Darwin's Plate 13 above), which depicts an entire specimen of a female *Anelasma*. If Lear based this image on Darwin's barnacle illustrations, calling this

[33] Edward Lear, "The Scroobious Pip Second Image" (Harvard University Houghton Library, 1872), Typ Dr 805.L513.88c, Harvard University Houghton Library Edward Lear Collection, https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/ids:43342620.
[34] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 254, 306–7, 308–9, 359, 364, 368.

homologous would be incorrect, as the mouth in Lear's image is part of the valve of the barnacle from Darwin's image. In addition, the common European mole, *Talpa europaea*, does not possess a hairless tail, as pictured in Lear's drawing, nor are insectivore tails so tightly curved at the tip.[35]

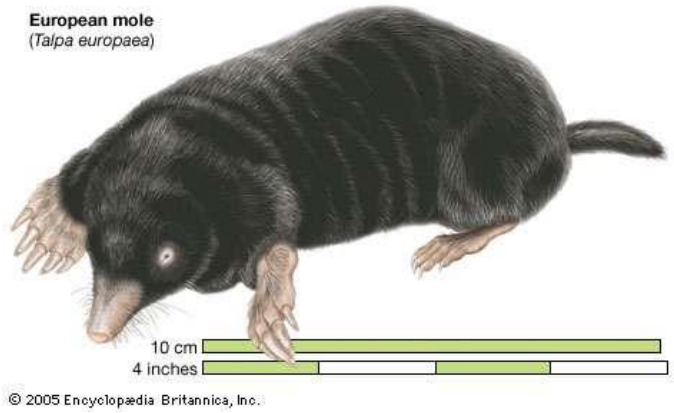

Figure 70 "European mole".

The shape and texture of the tail on Lear's creature is more akin to the appendage in my Figure 66 of Darwin's Plate 13 above (my Figure 71 below is a close-up of dorsal body appendage in *Cryptophialus minutus*):

[35] "Talpidae," in *Britannica Academic* (Encyclopædia Britannica, February 9, 2015), https://academic-eb-com.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/levels/collegiate/article/mole/53237#242094.toc.

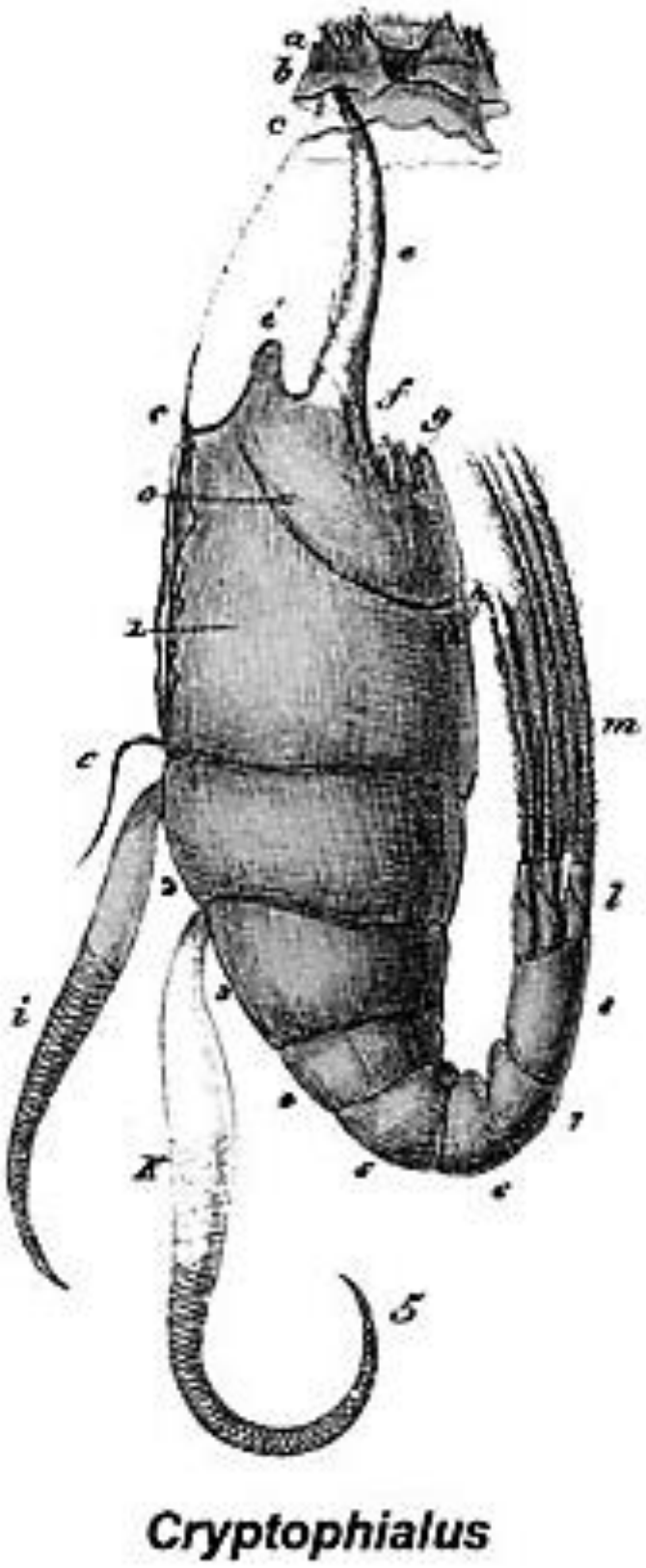

Figure 71 Charles Darwin. *Cryptophialus minutus* from *Cirripedia: The Balanidae* Plate XXIII Figure 5 close-up.

This contains texture lines similar to those in the tail in Lear's image. This tail or dorsal appendage, contrastingly, *could* be classified as homologous per Henchman's discussion. However, I argue that the body shape of Lear's second image bears a distinct resemblance to Figure 66 in Darwin's Plate 13 in the first set of barnacle illustrations. In addition, the growth pattern of the 'hairs' in Lear's second illustration are more like the 'cirri' in Darwin's barnacle illustrations (Figures 1, 2, 4, and 5 in Darwin's Plates 29 and 30) rather than the fine, silky, unidirectional growth of mole fur.

Finally, the second image of "The Pip" incorporates what appear to be both feminine and masculine human limbs and accessories. The two legs on Lear's second creature are of distinctly different sizes and are wearing different clothing. The foot of the closer leg is much larger than the farther one and is wearing a boot and a loose trouser leg, whereas the foot on the farther looks to be encased in a type of stocking and slipper. Adding to the ambiguity of binary gender identification is the use of both a parasol, more generally associated with femininity, as well as a walking stick – a more masculine accessory. By incorporating sexually ambiguous limbs and accessories into the one creature, Lear appears to be referencing Darwin's revelations regarding the confusing sexuality of barnacles, a sub-class that contains both hermaphroditism and extreme sexual dimorphism. Lear represents this visually with human female and male legs and mixed gender-associated human accessories. And by placing the *male* peacock feathers on the head of the Pip (where *female* humans use the male peacock feathers as ornamentation), Lear is referencing the ambiguity of gender roles that was reinforced by Darwin's startling discoveries of barnacle reproduction in the 1850s. Lear enjoyed extensive relationships with women who were engaged in work that was traditionally the preserve of the nineteenth-century middle- and upper-class male, women like Elizabeth Hornby in collection and preservation, Elizabeth Gould in natural history illustration, and Marianne North in botany. These women were living proof to Lear that traditional gender roles held an unspoken ambiguity. Here, too, we can recall those nonconforming females he created in the limericks like the young ladies of Bute, Wales, etc. Additionally, Lear's own ambiguous sexuality and his serial counterfactual taxonomies of his own authorial persona and queer self might have been a contributing factor in his engagement with Darwin's ideas on sexual selection. Finally, with Lear's inclusion of the paraphernalia of *Homo sapiens,* we get a mirror of Nichols' discussion of including physical, non-living,

objects in that great web of life, suggesting that Lear is transitioning away from a Romantic concept of environmentalism that viewed humans as a threat to nature.[36]

Furthermore, Lear appears to embrace the revolutionary theory of sexual selection as outlined with Darwin's explicit discussion of peacock and peacock pheasant plumage in *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (*Origin*). As Uglow writes of Lear and Darwin:

> Plumage interested Darwin. What were the shimmering crests and brilliant feathers for? Why were there specific forms for different species? Did a special fleck or dazzling spot make a difference? Lear, a wry observer of current London fashions, had often wondered what the point was of wearing elaborate plumes, much lampooned in *Punch*.[37]

Lear was not only interested in plumage as an observer of London fashion; he was also expert in plumage from a scientific standpoint because of his earlier work in natural history. Smith includes a lengthy discussion of Darwin's preoccupation with bird plumage and their relationship to *Homo sapiens* in *Visual Culture* and "Picturing Sexual Selection" with emphasis on the ocelli of both peacocks and the peacock pheasant:

> Yet even in cases like the peacock pheasant, the illustration does not capture the male display before the female that Darwin's text emphasizes. Unlike the peacock, the peacock pheasant has a dully colored breast and ocelli (eye-spots) on its wing feathers as well as its tail. Darwin explains that the male thus does not display directly in front of the female, … "In this attitude," writes Darwin, "the ocelli over the whole body are exposed before the eyes of the admiring female in one grand bespangled expanse." Darwin's text must do the work that his illustration cannot. The reader is urged implicitly to see the static illustration in dynamic and evolutionary terms; the description of male display and admiring female selection invites the reader simultaneously to envision this male engaging in courtship and to construct a narrative history in which he is the product of generations of such display and selection.[38]

Lear, with his inclusion of this type of tail feather with ocelli, placed prominently where female humans used them as decoration, presents another counterfactual taxonomy of traditional Victorian views of sexuality and gender. In contrast to "The Judicious Jubilant Jay", which I discussed in "Edward Lear's Taxonomy" and Violet's parrot-feather bonnet in chapter 2, "Imperial Nonsense", this could be another instance of Lear exploring various

[36] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, xvi–xxii.
[37] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 368.
[38] Jonathan Smith, "Picturing Sexual Selection: Gender and the Evolution of Ornithological Illustration in Charles Darwin's Descent of Man," in *Figuring It Out: Visual Language of Gender in Science*, ed. Ann B. Shteir and Bernard Lightman (Lebanon, NH: UP of New England, 2006), 98–99.

ramifications of Darwin's theory of sexual selection from *Origin* and *Descent*, as well as the extreme sexual dimorphism he relayed in *Cirripedia*. The Jay and Violet's bonnet place the female in the male role, whereas here Lear is placing a gender ambiguity on the Pip, reflecting the hermaphroditic aspects of Darwin's barnacles. It should be noted that Lear only uses the pronoun 'I' in relation to the Pip until the end when the rest of the creatures use 'it'.

The overall visual character of the second "Pip" image also mimics trends in taxonomic illustration more than does the first illustration, which is reminiscent of the marginalia that are sprinkled in Lear's preparatory sketches for his *Psittacidae* (1832) (Figure 73). Images of the first illustration and Lear's caricature of the parrot peering askance at humans are below:

Figure 72 Edward Lear. "The Scroobious Pip".

Figure 73 Edward Lear. Preparatory parrot sketch.[39]

Both Smith and Brown discuss the conventions associated with taxonomic illustration in the nineteenth century. Smith writes:

> The plates in Darwin's *Monograph* were also consistent with the visual conventions of taxonomic studies. They contained numerous individual figures floating without background on the plane of the plate. [40]

Whereas Brown writes the following in *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists:*

> While Lear makes his own obscured contributions to this volume [*Zoology of the Voyage of the H.M.S. Beagle* (1838-1841)], it is, … , rather in his nonsensical departures from natural history that this work offers affinities with the new biology. The simplified pictures used for the limericks suggest a pastiche of the utilitarian illustrations favoured by the emerging life sciences, which, encouraged alike by the palaeontologist Richard Owen's comparative anatomy and Darwin's mechanism of natural selection, became over the course of the century increasingly minimal and monochromatic, functionalist and diagrammatic.[41]

[39] Edward Lear, "The Scroobious Pip" (Harvard University Houghton Library, 1872), MS Typ 55.14/159, Harvard University Houghton Library Edward Lear Collection, https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/31651771?buttons=0; Edward Lear, "Parrot and Sketches of Human Figures" (Harvard University Houghton Library, n.d.), https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:30660470$1i, Harvard University Houghton Library Edward Lear Collection.

[40] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 48.

[41] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists*, 23.

Figure 74 Edward Lear. "The Scroobious Pip" second illustration.[42]

In the above image, Lear included precise texturing in the 'cirri' and the tail. In addition, the Pip is depicted as an individual creature, which conforms to the taxonomical conventions Smith and Brown discuss, rather than the informal mass of creatures in the first illustration.

The text that Lear composed to accompany the precise conglomerate morphology of the second "Pip" also marks this work as one of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies as a translation of Darwin's theories. My analysis of Lear's classified description of Darwin's web of life uses Vivien Noakes' transcription of the text which she included in *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse* (2001). Given the state of the manuscript, Noakes is remarkably faithful to the original manuscript (held at Harvard Houghton Library), and includes emendations that Lear made himself. I have provided Noakes' transcription as well as a digital image of the manuscript housed at Houghton in Appendix II as reference for the following analysis of the text of "The Pip". Basing my comments on the precision of Lear's previous texts and images and his own emendations on "The Pip" manuscript, I am assuming deliberate choice on Lear's part regarding capitalisation and spellings of nonsense words in my analysis.

[42] Lear, "The Scroobious Pip Second Image."

Lear has provided rough classificatory groupings of animals (three vertebrate and one invertebrate) in this nonsense text: Beast (mammals), Bird, Fish, and Insect. Interestingly, he glosses over the anomaly of including whales and porpoises in Fishes and spiders in Insects; Linnaeus had correctly classed cetaceans as mammals and arachnids as separate from insects in the Arthropoda phylum in the late eighteenth century. As I argued in "Edward Lear's Counterfactual Taxonomy", it beggars belief that Lear was not aware of the proper classification of at least whales and porpoises, especially given his wood engraving contributions to Bell's *A history of British quadrupeds, including the Cetacea*.[43] Presumably, then, this is a simplification based on habitat, which could be related to his framing of the environment at the beginning of each group's stanza. The Beasts are given the following habitat:

> The Scroobious Pip went out one day
> When the grass was green, and the sky was gray,
> Then all the beasts in the world came round
> When the Scroobious Pip sate down on the ground.[44]

In contrast, Lear seats the Birds in this habitat:

> The Scroobious Pip from the top of a tree
> Saw the distant Jellybolēē,
> And all the birds in the world came there,
> Flying in crowds all through the air.[45]

The Pip then moves on to the Fishes, and Lear places them in this habitat:

> The Scroobious Pip went into the sea
> By the beautiful shore of the Jellybolēē –
> All the Fish in the world swam round
> With a splashy squashy spluttery sound,[46]

And finally, the Pip speaks with the Insects, where Lear moves the Pip back to the ground, but under a tree on the bank of the Jellybolēē, not the generalised area between the earth and sky as with the Beasts:

> The Scroobious Pip sate under a tree
> By the silent shores of the Jellybolēē,
> All the Insects in all the world

[43] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 387. This is another instance where Lear's work was influenced by the natural history wars from the early nineteenth century.
[44] Lear, 387.
[45] Lear, 388.
[46] Lear, 388.

About the Scroobious Pip fluttered and twirled.[47]

Lear thus classifies the Pip, counterfactual to all taxonomical knowledge, as equally at home in all four habitats, a uniting and infinitely adaptive creature, not unlike Lear himself who was often described as a strangely compelling personality, at home with artists, scientists, aristocracy, women, children, and servants.[48] "The Pip" is an illustration of the interconnected web of life that Darwin describes on his entangled bank because he claims, not just all habitats, but all languages and all taxonomies. Given the debate over Linnaeus's simpler classification philosophy based on form versus Buffon's more complex philosophy which included habitat considerations, is Lear deliberately satirising the controversy between Buffon and Linnaeus proponents by arranging his groupings by environment, despite the obvious mammalian status of whales and porpoises? The satire of scientific squabbling can be seen elsewhere in Lear's work (see my argument on Lear's nonsense botany "Phattfacia Stupenda" from my master's thesis and this dissertation's chapter 2, and Henchman's discussion in *Play of Poetry*).[49]

In keeping with this unifying philosophy, the Pip seems to be as comfortably fluent in each group's language as he is comfortable in all four different habitats. He 'sings' in a dialect unique to each group. To the Beasts he sings 'with a rumbling sound', to the Birds 'with a chirpy sound', to the Fish 'with a liquid sound', and to the Insects 'with a whistly sound'.[50] By making the Pip able to converse with all four of the groups, is Lear referencing Darwin's argument that sounds as signs are not unique to *Homo* sapiens, which I discussed in the natural history chapter? Moreover, the Pip is *singing,* not speaking, a further reference to Darwin's discussion of bird vocalisations. The Pip's adaptive facility paired with the later insistence of his ontology and refusal to comply with the self-classification demands the four groups place on him is a metaphor for successful adaptation to any environment of an individual, the Pip. Further, this ability to perform successfully in each environment and language is reflective of the biographical performativity that Lear himself displays

[47] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 389.
[48] Lodge, *Inventing Edward Lear*, 2, 24, 27, 39–40; Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 29, 40,92, 98, 100, 246–47.
[49] Smith addresses the importance of this debate and paraphrases Ann Shelby Blum's *Picturing Nature* (1993) in his chapter "Picturing Sexual Selection: Gender and the Evolution of Ornithological Illustration in Charles Darwin's Descent of Man" from *Figuring It Out: Science, Gender, and Visual Culture* (2006): 'The primary emphasis on the bird's external appearance, its structure and plumage, reflected the concerns of Linnaean taxonomy, while the inclusion of landscape in preference to the bird-on-a-branch reflected the insistence of the French naturalist Buffon on the classificatory importance of an animal's surroundings'.
[50] See my discussion of Darwin, sound as signs, and language in the chapter "Edward Lear's Taxonomy".

throughout his career. Moreover, I argue that Lear later emphasises the inherent nonsense of such classificatory squabbles by referring to the 'web' of life that connects all of Animalia.[51]

At the end of the introductory stanza for each group, Lear emphasises the animals' intense scrutiny of the Pip. I argue that this scrutiny, this 'looking', is not an idle device that Lear employs, repeated for each of his four classes of animals. The idea of 'looking' at or examination and observation of a specimen is paramount in the development of Victorian conquest, collection, classification, and display:

> And every beast he stood on the tip
> Of his toes to look at the Scroobious Pip.
>
> And every bird he fluttered the tip
> Of his wing as he stared at the Scroobious Pip.
>
> And every Fish he shook the tip
> Of his tail as he gazed on the Scroobious Pip.
>
> And every insect curled the tip
> Of his snout, and looked at the Scroobious Pip.[52]

The animal groups here 'look' at the Pip with their Victorian, classifying eyes. This is not the only instance of Lear exploring the idea of 'looking' and imperial observation and classification – we can return to "the Four Little Children", who perched themselves in a 503-foot-tall tree to 'observe' with covetous imperial eyes the land of their first disembarkation.

The animal groups, like good Victorian naturalists, are watching and attempting to classify the Pip into the familiar tribes or 'races' with which they are both familiar and comfortable. Lear emphasises these group classifications by denoting a taxonomical attribute: 'tip | of his toes', 'tip | of his wing', 'tip | of his tail', 'tip | of his snout'. Then Lear unites the groups by pairing the attributes with the ability to examine the Pip. Because 'looking', the ocular, is an integral part of visual and print culture *and* scientific observation, Lear's emphasis here on 'looking', I argue, could be a reference to the debate between Darwinists and anti-Darwinists on the role of aesthetics. Smith discusses 'ocular proof' in *Visual Culture*. He associates the continued rivalry between Darwinists and anti-Darwinists with a fundamental disagreement on what constituted 'ocular proof', arguing 'vigorously about what

[51] Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 351; Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 158.
[52] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 389.

counted as seeing and what it meant to believe'.[53] Calling on Wordsworth and Shelley as metaphor, Smith sees poetry as an 'act of seeing *things*', even naming this section of his book after Seamus Heaney's 1989 *Seeing Things*.[54] And like poets, Smith argues, scientists are often accused of seeing things that are not there when they attempt to produce physical observations and account for any anomalies in the larger schema of the universe.[55] This repeated insistence on 'looking' in "The Pip" satirises both scientists and poets (and perhaps Lear himself as a poet), both of whom engage in 'looking' at, in observing and explaining things and objects.[56]

Related to this idea of ocular proof is the issue of being or selfhood and the act of being seen.[57] Peter Swaab and Brown discuss these issues in *Play of Poetry*. Peter Swaab associates "The Pip" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose" with Lear's obsession with keeping his epilepsy concealed:

> The idea of being really seen and understood was especially meaningful for Lear in view of his intense problems around secrecy and self-exposure. It animates some of his longer nonsense narratives, culminating in the meticulous exhibitionism of 'The Dong with a Luminous Nose'.[58]

And in "Being and Naughtiness" Brown writes:

> …Lear's portmanteaus bring into relief and articulate the wilfulness of words, the means by which the characters of the limericks defy classification, not simply by being eccentric, but more radically by being contingent. This function is nicely represented by the similarly unique Scroobious Pip, who on being asked by various creatures 'Are you Beast or Insect, Bird or Fish?' displaces the ontic with the nominal as he informs each in turn, 'My only name is the Scroobious Pip'.[59]

These creatures have looked intensely at the Pip, and despite having *seen* him, they still must ask *him* to name, or define, himself. Brown here pinpoints a key aspect of "The Pip" with his use of the term 'contingent', and perhaps aligns with his argument regarding the agency in 'grammatical form' that is inherent in human language.[60] The Pip is 'contingent' on – or inextricably inter-related to those who *see* him. Those who *see* him are, in Lear's text, the panoply of animal life represented by his classificatory groupings, and yet these animals are

[53] Smith, *Charles Darwin and Victorian Visual Culture*, 18–19.
[54] Smith, 18–19.
[55] Smith, 19.
[56] The idea of 'seeing things that are not there' are akin to the imagining of scientific impossibilities things that we see in Miss Maniac.
[57] See Bate's correlated discussion of being seen in his discussion of Ruskin in *Romantic Ecology*, 67-73.
[58] Swaab, "'Some Think Him ... Queer': Loners and Love in Edward Lear," 105–6.
[59] Brown, "Being and Naughtiness," 180–81.
[60] Brown, *The Poetry of Victorian Scientists: Style, Science and Nonsense*, 16.

unable to know him. The Pip refuses to oblige this insistence by providing only his name and maintaining the agency over self with the grammar of the 'nominal', the ontological.[61]

After observation, as all good Victorian natural historians do, each group of animals elects the wisest of their group to ask the Pip what, exactly, he *is*: Beast, Bird, Fish, or Insect – demanding that he classify or declare himself and his membership in a specific tribe or race – recalling that Darwin's theories were used to support imperial racial taxonomy.[62] I argue that Lear here questions the limits and mind-set of conquest and classification of the natural world with which British imperial culture was obsessed and which it used to support race taxonomies.[63] By marking the affinities of all animals, from Beasts to Birds to Fishes to Insects, what does Lear imply regarding the differences between different tribes or races of one species – *Homo sapiens* – is a question that might be posed.[64] Ben Westwood in "Edward Lear's Dancing Lines" (2017) has also spoken of Lear's tendency to emphasise the interconnections, or blur the lines, between species in his taxonomical works, 'and in doing so offers a redescription of the forms of relation that might be possible between humans and other animals'.[65] This 'redescription' is mirrored by my contention that Lear was reclassifying taxonomical hierarchies to subvert ideas of humanity's place in nature. In addition, Uglow in *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* discusses this aspect of Lear's philosophies regarding man's status as occupying a unique place at the top of a ranked 'pyramid', or the great chain of being.[66] She writes of Lear's reactions as early as 1835 while attending the BAAS meeting in Dublin with Arthur Penhryn Stanley:

> Lear enjoyed the noise and talk, and was enrolled as a member of the BAAS. But a kind of unease affected him. Current arguments about design, creation and the long history of the earth still placed mankind at the top of the pyramid, with all other creatures below. As he drew and painted the animals and birds and reptiles, Lear was not so sure about man's assumed dominion. … And the more Lear looked at the smart society set on the one hand, and the animals on the other, the more he seems to have asked, "What does it mean to be human?".[67]

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[61] Brown, "Being and Naughtiness," 180-81.
[62] See my discussion of the internecine war in natural history in the chapter 2 "Edward Lear's Counterfactual Taxonomy" and McOuat, "Cataloguing Power: Delineating 'Competent Naturalists' and the Meaning of Species in the British Museum."
[63] See also Uglow's discussion p 367-369 in *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense* and Ann C. Colley's discussion in *Wild Animal Skins in Victorian Britain: Zoos, Collections, Portraits and Maps* (2014).
[64] Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 158.
[65] Ben Westwood, "Edward Lear's Dancing Lines," *Essays in Criticism* 67, no. 4 (October 1, 2017): 367, https://doi.org/10.1093/escrit/cgx024.
[66] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 80.
[67] Uglow, 80.

Additionally and as I discussed earlier in chapter 4, regarding "the Four Little Children", Lear addresses the subversion that discoveries of meat-eating plants wrought on this hierarchical chain in the context of the Cauliflower.[68]

However, no more than Darwin does Lear discount the differences between the groups of animals. In contrast to the general unifying philosophy, the Pip's responding choruses for each group of animals appear to contain reflections of descending complexity in phonemes, capitalisation, and consonant and vowel alterations. In addition, there appear to be differing gradations of the levels of complexity moving from one group to another: for example, the differences in the choruses from Beast to Bird are much smaller than the differences from Beast to Insect.

Returning to Henchman's work on homology and Lear, she applies the homological part to whole theory to his language use, as well. She writes in *Play of Poetry* that Lear's play with words is linked with homology both semantically and structurally.[69] And she writes in "Dismembered" that Lear

> removes sections of words and bodies alike, going on to build new creations out of stray morphemes, limbs, and torsos. In the process, he exposes the peculiar exchangeability of homologous parts.[70]

and later links Lear's use of evolution in both language and image:

> Bodies and words share several characteristics: they are products of evolution, can be broken into parts (organs, limbs, or morphemes), and function as individual units that are inseparable from the larger systems of which they are parts.[71]

I extend this argument regarding Lear's use of word parts down to the phonemic level in the text of "The Pip". Then I link this to Gillian Beer's work regarding *why* Darwin (and Lear perhaps) found linguistics and language to be a powerful illustrator of the process of evolution. In her chapter "Darwin and Language Theory" from *Nature Transfigured*, Beer writes that

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[68] Nichols, *Beyond Romantic Ecocriticism: Toward Urbanatural Roosting*, 23-24, 40.

[69] She writes that Lear's play with words is 'related to the question of homology in two ways, one semantic and the other structural. First, since both language and anatomy are the products of evolution, the principles of change are similar. … For Victorians, the idea that words evolved was more familiar and less jarring than the notion that organisms evolved. Lear's play with linguistic parts often follows a similar logic to that of his play with bodily parts, making legible transformations over time that might otherwise go unnoticed. Anna Henchman, *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry*, 199-201.

[70] Henchman, "Edward Lear Dismembered: Word Fragments and Body Parts," 479.

[71] Henchman, 479.

> Two controversies in particular created connections between language theory and the biological sciences. One question was whether humankind uniquely possessed language and was thereby manifestly of a different order from all other living creatures. The second was whether a genealogical organisation was the correct mode of categorising the relationships of different languages.[72]

Beer also discusses the second great debate in language transformation – that of classification and language genealogies. She points to Darwin's use of language theory to make an analogy to his theory of evolutionary genealogy, quoting Darwin's *Origin*:

> "It may be worthwhile to illustrate this view of classification by taking the case of languages. If we possessed a perfect pedigree of mankind, a genealogical arrangement of the races of man would afford the best classification of the various languages now spoken throughout the world; and if all extinct languages, and all intermediate and slowly changing dialects, had to be included, such an arrangement would, I think, be the only possible one."[73]

She claims that Darwin used linguistic theory as an exemplar of the processes of evolution, noting that he had been reading works on the history and theory of language.[74]

I argue that Lear was taking a similar cue to Darwin's use of the language transformation metaphor in his play with the smaller element of phonemes in "The Pip" to differentiate the different groups of animals. The final two lines of each chorus contain a dual set of hyphenated nonsense words unique for each animal group, consisting of a three-syllable word with the makeup of:

consonant – i – consonant – varying vowel – consonant – y

followed by a monosyllabic word of:

consonant – i – consonant:

The chorus for the Beasts is:

> The Scroobious Pip looked vaguely round
> And sang these words with a rumbling sound –
> 'Chippetty Flip – Flippetty Chip –
> My only name is the Scroobious Pip.'[75]

Closely related is the chorus for the Birds:

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[72] Gillian Beer, "Darwin and Language Theory," 154.
[73] Beer, 157–58.
[74] Beer, 158. Henchman also notes Darwin's *and* Lear's use of the rhetoric of language evolution in *Play of Poetry*, 201.
[75] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 388.

> The Scroobious Pip looked gaily round
> And sang these words with a chirpy sound –
> 'Flippetty chip – Chippetty flip –
> My only name is the Scroobious Pip.'[76]

Further away from both Beasts and Birds, the Fishes receive:

> The Scroobious Pip looked softly round
> And sang these words with a liquid sound –
> 'Plifatty flip – Pliffity flip –
> My only name is the Scroobious Pip.'[77]

And finally, the Pip addresses the Insects:

> The Scroobious Pip turned quickly round
> And sang these words with a whistly sound –
> 'Wizziby wip – wizziby wip –
> My only name is the Scroobious Pip.'[78]

Moving through his different groups, we can see Henchman's homology of word parts, but instead of using morphemes, for "The Pip" Lear uses phonemes to differentiate the different groups of Animals, utilising initial consonant changes and vowel changes to mark the different groups of animals, as well as decreasing instances of capitalisation and complexity of consonant and vowel alteration. Via the smaller unit of phonemic shifts rather than morphemic (word part) shifts, "The Pip" highlights the close relation of all the kingdom Animalia, yet still marks the differences, mirroring Darwin's theories from *Origin*.[79]

For the Beast and Bird groups he uses a tʃ-f/f-tʃ alteration, with tʃ-f in both sets of nonsense words and all initial capitals for the Beasts: |Chippetty Flip – Flippetty Chip – |. For Birds he uses f-tʃ, a mere reversal of the initial consonant change from the Beasts: |Flippetty chip – Chippetty flip – |. Lear uses a triple vowel alteration in both Beasts and Birds, repeated in both sets of nonsense words: ɪ-ɛ-ɪ. However, the second element of both sets of nonsense words is un-capitalised for the Bird chorus.

For the Fish chorus, Lear uses the alteration of p-f, the consonant change p-f constituting a much closer consonant alteration than tʃ-f: |Plifatty flip – Pliffity flip – |. Lear uses the vowel alteration ɪ-æ-ɪ, but only in the first set of nonsense words; the second set

[76] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 388.
[77] Lear, 389.
[78] Lear, 390.
[79] I use the International Phonetics Alphabet to denote phonemes in the following section (see http://www.internationalphoneticalphabet.org/ipa-sounds/ipa-chart-with-sounds/).

contains no vowel changes. This set of nonsense words, |Plifatty flip – Pliffity flip – |, presents an interesting question regarding phonics versus orthography, however. Given the normal vowel reduction of English and the presumed stress on the first syllable in 'Plifatty', there would be no discernible difference in pronunciation between 'Pliffaty' and 'Pliffity'. As I noted earlier, Noakes' transcription is beautifully accurate. However, from the manuscript it is obvious that Lear himself has written over his original marks for the first part of the nonsense set, which Noakes transcribed as 'Plifatty'. The illegibility of the first part of the word where the emendation occurs makes it difficult to judge the accuracy of Noakes' use of a single f, but there is no ambiguity in Lear's use of the single t at the end of the word where there is no obscuring emendation. I argue that Noakes incorrectly transcribed this word, and it should read 'Pliffaty', which makes more Learian phonemic sense given the double f and single t in the second element 'Pliffity'.

For the Fishes only the first element of both sets of nonsense words is capitalised, like the capitalisation scheme for the Birds. And finally, Lear uses no consonant alteration for Insects, utilising a w throughout, which is also a noticeably softer consonant than tʃ, p, or f, and no vowel alteration at all: |Wizziby wip – wizziby wip – |. In addition, Lear uses only one initial capital in the entire double sequence of nonsense words, which is a mere repetition of the first set of words. For Lear, Insects are degrees away from the complex chorus required for Beasts, Birds, and Fishes. This could be a recognition on Lear's part of the classification of Insects as the only invertebrates in his taxonomic system in "The Pip".

In the final chorus, Lear returns to the initial tʃ, but the mutation is merely tʃ-t, a closer consonant alteration than the initial Beast/Bird tʃ-f and one that occurs often in Indo-European languages: |Chippetty Tip – Chippetty Tip – |.[80] Both words in each set are capitalised and the triple vowel alteration ɪ-ɛ-ɪ returns for the final united chorus. In this final stanza and chorus, Lear presents this set of lines:

> Then all the Beasts that walk on the ground
> Danced in a circle round and round,
> And all the Birds that fly in the air
> Flew round and round in a circle there,
> And all the Fish in the Jellybolēē
> Swam in a circle about the sea,

[80] Gerald L. Mayer, "Teaching Russian Verb Conjugation: A Reappraisal," *The Slavic and East European Journal* 37, no. 1 (1993): 86–96, https://doi.org/10.2307/308622; Johnnie Robinson, "Phonological Change in the English Language," in *British Library Online*, April 24, 2019, http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/changing-voices/phonological-change/.

> And all the Insects that creep or go
> Buzzed in a circle to and fro –
> And they roared and sang and whistled and cried
> Till the noise was heard from side to side –
> 'Chippetty Tip! Chippetty Tip!
> Its only name is the Scroobious Pip.'[81]

I argue that this final stanza contains a link to Darwin's 'web of affinities' metaphor.[82] In *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (2000), Beer discusses the potency of Darwin's web metaphor, in opposition to the chain, or ladder, of life that was associated with natural theology:

> In his most developed and climactic discussion of classification the 'web of affinities' expresses equally the interconnections of kinship and the energies of descent. … The web is a different shape from the chain, and this formal property of the image has great importance for Darwin: "The several subordinate groups in any class *cannot be ranked in a single file,* but seem rather to be clustered round points" (my [Beer's] italics)'.[83]

Again, in that final stanza of Lear's

> Then all the Beasts that walk on the ground
> Danced in a circle round and round,
> And all the Birds that fly in the air
> Flew round and round in a circle there,
> And all the Fish in the Jellybolēē
> Swam in a circle about the sea,
> And all the Insects that creep or go
> Buzzed in a circle to and fro – [84]

The animals dance round the Pip – in clusters of their classifications. The Beasts dance in a circle on the ground, the Birds fly round in a circle in the air, the Fish in the water swim in a circle, the Insects go to and fro in their buzzing circle, all of which echoes Darwin's line 'but seem rather to be clustered round points'.[85]

All these animals dance, fly, swim, and buzz in a seemingly celebratory circle round the Pip, and the emphasis here is on the word 'circle', repeated four times, reflecting Lear's obsession with the ovoid. The final stanza, with the Birds singing, the Insects flitting and creeping and the obviously 'higher animals'— represented by the most complex chorus for the Beasts on a bank of the Jellybolēē where the Fishes are swimming—is a remarkable

[81] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 390.
[82] Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 351.
[83] Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 158.
[84] Lear, *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 390.
[85] Beer, *Darwin's Plots* 158; Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 99.

tableau. Lear does not explicitly expound upon Darwin's theories of natural or sexual selection in his letters or diaries (his nonsense abounds with them, however) but he does speak with contempt of those who react in horror to Darwin's theories several times, and he would read Darwin and other nonfiction works supporting Darwin's theories in uncomfortable situations as self-consolation.[86] And I argue that, with its circular groups of dancing animals on the shore or bank of the Jellybolēē, this final chorus is inextricably linked to the final paragraph of Darwin's *Origin* below:

> It is interesting to contemplate an entangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent on each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; Inheritance, which is almost implied by reproduction; Variability, from the indirect and direct action of the external conditions of life, and from use and disuse; a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less-improved forms. Thus, from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.[87]

Beer connects Darwin's web metaphor to this 'entangled bank' imagery in the conclusion: 'The emphasis in these final affirmative pages is on the delicate richness and variety of life, on complex interdependency, ecological interpretation, weaving together an aesthetic fullness'.[88] It is a different aesthetic to Ruskin's beauty as a metaphor of God's mercy and goodness, but, as Darwin writes, '… there is grandeur in this view of life…'[89]

To my mind, Lear created the counterfactual taxonomy of "The Pip" as an illustration for the great dance of life resplendent on Darwin's bank, with Lear's nonsense attempting to catalogue and illustrate the *sense* of Darwin's theories on sexual selection and the web of life, intertwined in the Pip's ontology and counterfactual taxonomy. The Pip *is,* in fact, Darwin's beautiful web, embodied in its conglomerate parts, in its gender ambiguity, its overturned sexual selection, and in its ability to live in each group's habitat and to speak in each group's

[86] Uglow, *Mr Lear: A Life of Art and Nonsense*, 254, 308–9, 356, 364, 368.
[87] Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 360.
[88] Beer, *Darwin's Plots*, 159.
[89] Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, 360.

dialect. "The Pip" represents the 'interconnections of kinship and the energies of descent' that Beer describes in her discussion of Darwin's theories. By arranging his creatures in a circle, rather than a chain or ladder, Lear subverts the great chain of Being, creating a supreme counterfactual taxonomy of life, with the individual, the Pip—an avatar of the individual, the self—as the nexus. Yet the Pip is a creation that encompasses both the individual self and that which has been classified as the other by refusing to engage with and place itself in that imperial classificatory nonsense.

Is Lear remembering nineteenth-century pattern dances with this complex pattern surrounding the Pip, a counterfactual taxonomy of the supposed superiority of *Homo sapiens* at the top of the great chain of being? Lear spent a great deal of time at the keyboard entertaining his friends and acquaintances, so he would have been an intimate witness to these complex dance patterns, beautifully mirrored in these creatures' dance round the Pip. With the impossible world that he created for his taxonomically counterfactual Pip, Lear catalogues, illustrates, translates, and makes taxonomic *sense* for one of his favourite authors, just as he did with Moore, Byron, and Tennyson.

But typically, Lear cannot leave such grandiose themes in isolation, for these four groups of animal life 'roar' and 'sing', 'whistle' and 'cry' — Lear hints at an aggression and perhaps a threat to the Pip. Are these groups of animals *celebrating, lamenting,* or *condemning* the existence of the Pip? A comparison to Maurice Sendak's '…we'll eat you up, we love you so!' from *Where the Wild Things Are* (1963) comes to mind with this fierce response by the animals to the Pip.[90] His refusal to categorise, and thus limit, himself into one of the animal classes condemns and refutes as nonsense the limitations that collection and classification place on life and the individual. By incorporating visually and symbiotically the hermaphroditism, dimorphism, and allusions to Darwin's barnacles in the second illustration, Lear suggests alternative sexualities and gender roles that represented a serious challenge to established Victorian societal roles. And finally, with the other animals' own voluntary and insistent sorting of themselves into separate tribes or 'races', Lear subverts the imperial appropriation and use of natural selection, instead emphasising in "The Pip" Darwin's theory of a fertile bank where life is ever evolving and ever inter-connected.

[90] Maurice Sendak, *Where the Wild Things Are* (New York: Harper Collins, 1963), 29, http://archive.org/details/WhereTheWildThingsAreByMauriceSendak.

Here I would like to provide a short structural analysis of "The Pip" to show how it, too, conforms to the structure of Lear's other counterfactual taxonomies. Like in his other nonsense, the circular structure of "The Pip" is also easy to trace. Lear presents a seemingly inscrutable Pip at the beginning of the work. We are given no clue as to what the Pip might be, and in fact the different types of animals all engage in an interrogation of the Pip on his being, on his ontology, after failing as naturalists in their attempt to observe and classify the Pip. Thus, Lear provides his readers with a counterfactual taxonomy of a creature who is comfortable in all habitats and able to commune with all manner of widely disparate creatures. Finally, in the world that Lear creates for "The Pip", these diverse classes of creatures unite in a circle of celebration to dance round this creature who has refused to classify himself. The Pip remains as he was at the beginning of the verse, but through Lear's counterfactual taxonomy of self, of sexual and gender identity, and of the separation of species, he has become a symbol of the great web of life on Darwin's entangled bank.

This dancing spectacle is Lear's creation of impossible worlds of counterfactual taxonomies that bridge the gaps in meaning of his nonsense to translate Darwin's theories about life on this Earth. Peter Swab in "Loners and Love in Edward Lear" from *The Play of Poetry* quotes Wordsworth in his discussion of the dancing element of "The Pip":

> The Scroobious Pip is like Lear's Derry down Derry figure, a figure around whom others can be merry, 'a centre of the circle which they make'. Lear's poetic imagination transforms his unattached creature into a uniquely celebrated one.[91]

This dance is a vision not of a chain, nor perhaps even a tangled bank, but a vision of a joyous, tragic, and interdependent dance that celebrates and embraces nonsense, a nonsense that is the only path to making sense of the baffling story of life on planet Earth. This vision of tragedy, joy, and utter *sense* is perhaps a consoling counterfactual taxonomy to the imperial collection, classification, and conquest explored in "the Four Little Children", a counterfactual taxonomy to his own counterfactual taxonomies, celebrated in the intricate dance round the Pip on the banks of the Jellybolēē.

[91] Peter Swaab, "'Some Think Him ... Queer': Loners and Love in Edward Lear," in *Edward Lear and the Play of Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 106. Swaab quotes Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (1850).

Conclusion

My research re-examines the role that Lear's works play in the aesthetic and cultural debates prompted by the development of evolutionary theory and the professionalisation of natural history in the nineteenth century and the relationship of these phenomena with networks of literature, art, and empire. Concentrating on the paired forces of Lear's fascination with taxonomy and counterfactuality, this research project commenced with the following questions regarding Lear's role as an actor in key transitions from the legacies Romanticism to Victorian concepts of nature, empire, and the self. What role did Edward Lear, as a natural-history illustrator, landscape-artist, travel-writer, and nonsense-poet play in the aesthetic and cultural debate over scientific naturalism and natural theology, as well as the transition from Romantic to Victorian concepts of the natural world? What is Lear's place in the transition from a Romantic ecocriticism in which 'nature' is a paradise from which *Homo sapiens,* when not actively engaged in 'nature', is perceived as a separate and potentially threatening entity to an ecocriticism that embraces the idea of the 'oneness' of all entities engaged in a dance on Darwin's entangled bank? As an author and artist who maintained a presence in scientific, artistic, and imperial cultural networks both at home and abroad, how can Lear's work inform us about the relationship between evolutionary theory and networked conceptualisations of empire and the self? How do his performative masculinities interact with this relationship? How do Lear's nonsense texts and images further our understanding of the development of the self and the individual in Western literature and society?

Reviewing the placement of Lear's setting of "Tears, Idle Tears" in Holman Hunt's *The Awakening Conscience* (Figures 1 and 2) that I discussed in the theoretical section of this dissertation, as well as discussions with my supervisor, I returned again and again to the same mantra: 'Lear was *there*'. Lear was a ubiquitous presence in nineteenth-century networks of science, literature, art, and empire, evidenced by one of his works painted into the iconography of Holman Hunt's painting, as well as his extensive network of friends, acquaintances, and correspondents. With that ubiquitous presence to the fore, I proposed that Lear acted as a key figure in the transition from the inward search for self towards an outward facing search that coincided with the expansion of empire in the nineteenth century. His nonsense and art, ever-present in those networks, act as a bridge between the Enlightenment-based ideals of reason and acquisition of knowledge that fostered both the professionalisation of science and the expansion of empire to the ideals of the Romantic search for the self. That

acquisition of knowledge, in conjunction with the expansion of empire and use of that knowledge to better exploit colonial resources, made possible the emphasis on the classification of the other as a way of defining the self. Subsequently, this played a role in the proliferation of the different types of performative self-identities that were available to Western males, and to Lear in particular. In the introduction, I discuss this performative aspect of Lear's biography, linking it with the serial reclassifications of the hierarchies of natural history, the self, and empire that form the basis of the subversive nature of his works. These masculine identities included the natural historian, landscape painter, queer lover, gentleman travel writer exploring the wilds of empire, and Pre-Raphaelite artist. From the privileged position of those various possible identities that he could assume, Lear was able to imagine the ultimate counterfactual taxonomic creation such as "The Pip". This counterfactual creature is one that is able to resist the imposition of empire's and society's classification and assert an autonomous self, in contrast to the subjective status of the colonial other, be it human or other animal. The Pip is a creature that could reject the stifling of binary gender categories and taxonomic speciation, a creature that could engage with joy in performative dances with all the categories of creatures on the bank of the Jellybolēē in a dance celebrating the wonderful chaos of nature, not unlike Lear who was able, from his privileged position, to create vast networks of correspondence, friendship, and commerce with aristocracy, scientists, artists, authors, servants, and children.

Exploring the philosophical mind-set that made possible the creation of this creature is vital to an understanding of the progression from the search for self associated with Romanticism to the outward search for the collection, classification, and display of colonial possessions – of the other – as a way of defining the self. Interrogating this mind-set is also vital in understanding the progression towards an ecocriticism that includes *Homo sapiens* in the web of life on Darwin's entangled bank. My dissertation proposes that Lear's counterfactual taxonomies act as a vehicle for exploring the creation of the self versus the other, as well as the role of empire in nature that made possible the creation of that self and the subsequent question of where that placed the self in nature and empire, as well as contextualising Lear's work in the discussions surrounding Victorian ecocriticism raised by Taylor and Nichols. Before I discuss the findings of the research in this dissertation, however, a review of the theoretical underpinnings of the term 'counterfactual taxonomy' and the critical stance I used to apply the term to Lear's works is advisable.

Conclusion

Counterfactuality is key to understanding the trajectory of both the professionalisation of science and the rise of the novel that are emblematic of the early nineteenth century. The positing of worlds and conditions that are counter to reality make possible the thought experiments that are the basis of the formulations of scientific theory and the imaginative world of fiction. Given his early career and personal interests, Lear was fascinated with classification, with the taxonomy of imperial, natural history, and societal hierarchies. Entering into professional work during a critical stage in the expansion of empire and the professionalisation of natural history, Lear became enmeshed in the competing interests of the networks in natural history. I propose that as a result of what I term the Taxonomy Wars, Lear engaged in a career-long practice of subverting those hierarchies that resulted in a series of re-classifications of those networks of natural history, empire, and society that ruled his world. In the upending of those hierarchies, Lear's nonsense performs counterfactual taxonomies, and through them, he reclassifies the hierarchies of the self, natural history, and imperialism in the circular structures of his nonsense. Significantly, through the performance of those counterfactual taxonomies, Lear undermines the borders of the gaps or blanks in meaning which are created by his texts and images, echoing his synthesis of a single bird family into one monograph, yet rescuing the identity of individual species of parrots in that larger taxonomic system. Thus, Lear networks the blank spaces in his nonsense so his readers can imagine an impossible world that subverts the orthodox hierarchies of empire, nature, and the self, akin to the way he tumbles the figures of his nonsense images.

Remaining within the confines of those hierarchies of natural history and imperial networks, Lear tumbles the philosophies of imperial collection-classification-display while maintaining those same networks of natural history and empire, like he retained the music and political milieu in his contrafactum. Like contrafactum to original songs, Lear was an inherent addendum to the nineteenth-century networks of natural history, art, literature, and imperial travel. Lear enjoyed a great deal of privilege through his participation in those networks. However, I contend that he maintained an ambiguous stance, a scepticism about the long-term goals and effects of imperial agenda in the creation of his counterfactual worlds and taxonomies-as-illustration of the self, natural history and evolutionary theory. Lear's ambiguous stance here mirrors the Victorian ambiguous and sceptical relationship with the inheritances of Romantic ideals of nature and *Homo sapiens*' role in it. This scepticism is also visible in Lear's efforts at translating and illustrating Darwin's work on sexual selection and the web of life, as well as the nonsense that can be found in trying to impose an erroneous

human-centred order on the chaos of nature, embodied by the fetish around which the prey animals in "the Seven Families" dance.

How do Lear's counterfactual taxonomies serve as the vehicle for his subversion of those hierarchies he questioned? How can we analyse his work to interrogate the forces at play on nineteenth-century literature, science, empire, and the construction of the self? What were the conditions that spurred Lear into his obsession with taxonomy, counterfactuality, and subversion? What early influences may have affected his playful subversions and explorations of the self, empire, and their place in nature? The research in the core chapters of this dissertation address these questions and provide exciting opportunities for further research into this artist, author, and key creative actor of the nineteenth century.

The imagining of the impossible, the exploration and play with counterfactuality is the twin to the other potent force in Lear's work – the obsession with taxonomical structures and hierarchies. Those same hierarchies have continued as the potent and most basic and underlying forces of contemporary systems of knowledge, education, government, and society. The longevity and ubiquity of those hierarchies continue to shape power relationships between student and teacher, government and citizen, developed and developing world. Similarly, the fascination with counterfactuality has enjoyed the same longevity long after Lear's death in 1888. And yet, even in the most contemporary counterfactual explorations of art, literature, film, and television, those hierarchical structures Lear questioned, yet maintained in the circular structures of his nonsense, persist. Kuno and the Machine, Lyra Belacqua and the Magisterium, Luke Skywalker and The Empire: in the counterfactuality of the worlds imagined in all these works, it is the exploration of the struggle against the power relationships that is the constant, the subversion of the 'empire' that is the key. The destruction of the hierarchies in these works is always implied, but the audience is always left to imagine independently, in isolation, the resultant world without those structural hierarchies. With the creation of the Pip, a creature that represents all languages, all habitats, all genders, all species, Lear illustrated the most vital of Darwin's theories – that of the dance of life on Earth, inter-related, symbiotic, contingent, dancing on the bank of the Jellybolēē in Lear's fertile imagination, resistant to the insistence on such structural hierarchies and classification.

What are the legacies of this imagination on fin de siècle and twentieth-century authors of nonsense and literature of the absurd? What kinds of counterfactual DNA can be found in thought experiments like Forster's "The Machine Stops" (1909)? Exploration of

those influences on artists such as Forster, Mervyn Peake, indeed, even Steven Spielberg and Philip Pullman, are either non-existent or in the earliest stages. Interrogating the legacies of Lear's counterfactual taxonomies, especially via an ecocritical and postcolonial lens, on the ways in which such authors and artists formulated ideas of the self and *Homo sapiens'* role in nature will continue to clarify Lear's place amongst this coterie of poets and the rise of questions of self and identity. Additionally, elucidating similar challenges to, play with, or subversion of, Western taxonomies and hierarchies of knowledge should prove enormously fertile ground. What Lear influences can be discovered in the works of Acmeists like Daniil Kharms, or the similarly taxonomy- and classification-obsessed visual work of contemporary artists like Mark Dion?

Ocean voyages abound in Lear's nonsense, and in answering my research questions on my own voyage of discovery, I embarked into waters I did not anticipate, including into waters of both theory and the creation of a technical framework to apply to Lear's nonsense. Given Lear's knowledge of and delight in natural history and taxonomy, re-examination of his works via ecocritical-postcolonial criticism, however, was a natural evolution for me, but it is a stance that has been little explored to date. Recent work in ecocritical-postcolonial criticism like MacKenzie's expands the multi-valent criticism that is vital for examining the interplay of empire and nature that will be critical in future Lear studies. I look forward to further such enquiry into Lear and his texts and images in the future. Similarly, the creation of a new method of nonsense analysis – counterfactual taxonomies – is a nonsense of which I feel sure Lear would have approved. However, the formulations and theory that are the basis of this new category provide an innovative mind-space – a fresh language – to re-evaluate Lear's works in the trajectory of counterfactuality that runs through the long nineteenth century, which saw the concomitant professionalisation of science, vast expansion of empire, the birth of modern nonsense and absurdist literature, and post-modernism. Additionally, this subversion of orthodox hierarchies of knowledge that is inherent in counterfactual taxonomies can expand the inquiry into postcolonial, feminist, queered and alternative masculinities studies perspectives on the complex relationships between empire, nature, the self, and the other.

These oceanic voyages of discovery were important underpinnings of both imperial expansion and Lear's nonsense, and so I embarked on my own voyage of discovery into Lear's works and their place in ecocritical-postcolonialism that evolved via the course of my research and dissertation. This journey and the resultant findings carry implications and open

lines of dialogue in widely divergent arenas in the academy, from the question of ecocriticism in a Victorian context, scientific humanities, to Victorian print culture, to the threshold areas between the shift from Romantic thought patterns to Victorian ones and their place in the creation of the Orientalised 'other', to Victorian history in toto. For Lear scholarship, this dissertation's journey refines the discourse on the roles that his and the Victorian obsession with collection, classification, and display – in the curious form of his reclassifications of self and taxonomic hierarchies – play in the texts and images of his nonsense verse, alphabets, limericks, and stories, as well as in nineteenth-century evolutionary and Darwinian thought.

With the analyses of key nonsense texts and images, my project acts as a reassessment of Lear's role in the aesthetic and cultural debates prompted by the development of evolutionary theory and conceptualisations of the self. Lear, as a natural-history illustrator, landscape-artist, travel-writer, and nonsense-poet played an often-overlooked role in the aesthetic and cultural debate over scientific naturalism and natural theology, as well as the transition from Romantic to Victorian concepts of the natural world, the Orientalised 'other', and expansion of empire. My analysis of Lear's early parodic work paired in verse and image provides an avenue to explore the influence of Moore's and Byron's Orientalism and Orientalised concepts of Irish identity, as well as concepts of madness, reason, and scientific inquiry, in nineteenth-century cultural and literary thought. This furthers a line of inquiry into Lear scholarship in the scientific humanities. Finally, this dissertation adds to the discourse on the ambivalent and ever-evolving Victorian *and* Victorianist engagement with Romantic concepts of nature, science, and self – as seen in the complicated relationship Tennyson had with evolutionary theory and critical exploration of this phenomena.[1] My analyses of Lear's obsession with Romantic Orientalism and taxonomy add a further layer to this pregnant engagement. Additionally, my work on Lear's place in Victorian ecocriticism engages with critical enquiry into the nuances of the transition from a Romantic ecocriticism in which 'nature' is a paradise from which humans are conceived as a separate and potentially threatening entity if not actively engaged in or returned to 'nature' to an ecocriticism that embraces the idea of the 'oneness' of all entities engaged in a dance on Darwin's entangled bank. Moreover, my analysis offers Victorian ecocriticism a discourse on Lear's view of an alternative Darwinian approach to man and nature, one that subverts the taxonomies of imperial expansion and exploitation of colonial resources.

[1] Holmes, *Darwin's Bards*, 62–74.

Similarly, the trajectory of Lear's work as an artist informs the history of scientific illustration and nineteenth-century print culture. Lear gained early professional success as a natural history author because of his genius at depicting his animal subjects and his mastery of print technologies like wood engraving and lithography; this genius spurred an association with the Gould natural history publishing juggernaut and resulted in Lear's tutelage of Elizabeth Gould in ornithological illustration and lithography. In addition to working in depth with Gould and his natural history monographs, Darwin consulted Lear's illustrations from other natural history works when he was working on *Origin of Species*, thus illuminating the far-reaching influence of Lear's natural history work. Furthermore, the symbiosis of text and image that I explored through my term 'counterfactual taxonomies' provides in-depth analyses of Lear's nonsense that link the overall trend of nineteenth-century illustration to the subversive world of his impossible creatures that question the hierarchies of natural history and empire.

In contrast to the above unanticipated seas, I had definite expectations of exploring those waters of evolutionary and Darwinian theory and Lear's nonsense. This is an established genus of criticism in Lear studies; however, my dissertation went through an evolution that refined Darwinian applications in Lear studies, homing in on the species of Lear's nonsense evolution in process. This resulted in a microscope placed not on the *natural* selection mantra, but rather on Darwin's theories on *sexual* selection and the web of life and the ways in which Lear's work translates and illustrates these theories via his counterfactual taxonomies. The resulting findings of my research have therefore refined inquiry into the relationship between Lear, Darwin's theories, and the impact of that relationship into postcolonial examinations of Western hierarchies of knowledge that have so shaped the metropole, its literature, and its relationship with colony. In chapter two, I spoke of the perfect storm of the professionalisation of natural history, expansion of empire, and the proliferation of new print and publishing technology that surrounded Lear's entry into an early meteoric success in professional illustration.

In conjunction with the development of the self and the other and their relationship with empire and nature, a similar perfect storm has been identified in this dissertation: the swirling, dancing chaos of the expansion of empire, the use of natural history to exploit empire's colonies, the defining of self through the collection, classification, and display of the other, and the subversion of those knowledge hierarchies that made possible this perfect storm. All of these found their nexus in Lear's work, perhaps best personified by The

Conclusion

Scroobious Pip at the centre of the beautiful chaos of nature dancing on the bank of the Jellybolēē. Ably and gleefully resisting the imposition of classification, this impossible species questions the validity of imposing those hierarchies of knowledge on the beautiful chaos of life on Earth. In the current era of Covid-19, the nonsense inherent in the attempt to control nature has risen to the fore. It is my hope that in the creation of a post-virus world, humanity will tend towards that most vital theory of Darwin that Lear illustrated for us with "The Scroobious Pip": we must unite and delight in our differences and resist the *non*sense of reinforcing the hierarchies that have dominated our systems of knowledge, education, government, and society. *Homo sapiens* cannot be quarantined from nature, be it a virus or a mosquito. That nature of which we are a part is not a pyramid, a ladder, or a chain, but a swirling, contingent, and symbiotic dance of nonsense, a system that functions and thrives without hierarchies, pyramids, and chains; so too should our human story be.

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Appendix I: *Report from the Select Committee on British Museum.* (1836). Transcript of Edward Lear's testimony.

Mr. *Edward Lear*, called in; and Examined.

Appendix I: Report from the Select Committee on British Museum. (1836). Transcript of Edward Lear's testimony.

3196. Sir *Robert Inglis.*] YOU are the author of a Monograph on Parrots?—Yes.

3197. Your profession is to delineate objects of natural history? —Yes.

3198. Have you visited the museums on the Continent, in which the chief collections of natural history are found? —Some of them; Leyden, Berlin and Frankfort.

3199. Will you state what facilities of access you experienced in the British Museum, both absolutely and relatively, as compared with any other collections to which you have had access?—I have met with every possible facility here from all the officers with whom I have come into contact.

3200. Do those facilities exist in the personal kindness and courtesy of the officers individually to you, or are they, consistently with the general rules and regulations of the establishment, applicable to other individuals as well as to yourself? —I should say the latter, because I received those attentions before I knew some of the officers personally.

3201. Do you frequently go to the Museum for and on behalf of persons engaged in scientific pursuits, with a view to the delineation of objects of natural history for those pursuits? —Very often.

3202. Are you permitted to take down and examine, in every direction in which you may require it, any object of natural history? —I always ask, and permission is always given. Some of the officers take them down for me, and I am permitted to examine them as fully as I may require.

3203. In point of fact, you possess every facility which, as a man of science working in that particular department, you desire to possess? —Every possible facility.

3204. Are you able to state anything as to the relative value of the particular departments, as compared with corresponding departments in the foreign museums which you have specified?—I do not think I am competent to make any comparison.

3205. Are there many gentlemen engaged in the same professional pursuits as yourself, whom you meet occasionally in the Museum?—I have seen several at different times.

3206. Have you reason to think that they experience corresponding facilities to those which you enjoy?—Exactly so; because they have been drawing in the same room with myself frequently.

3207. Mr. *Hawes.*] Would extending the hours of admission be a convenience to you in your profession?—Very great, I should think, to almost all artists.

3208. You frequent the Museum for your professional purposes; are you able to suggest any improvement or any additional conveniences that might be made for your accommodation?—I do not think I can suggest any, except the lengthening of the hours, which would be desirable.

Excerpt from a transcription of a letter from Edwin C. Prince to Edward Smith-Stanley, 13th Earl of Derby. Held at Liverpool Central Library. MS 920 DER (13) 1/67/8.

…

Appendix I: Report from the Select Committee on British Museum. (1836). Transcript of Edward Lear's testimony.

In reference to your Lordship's ^remark that till lately you had always understood that "Gould did not draw himself at all" I have to state that outline design of every plate published by him has been done by himself, but the finished sketches and the drawings on stone were executed by Mrs Gould, with the occasional assistance of Mr Lear, until the period of her untimely and lamentable death, your Lordship was, therefore, rightly informed when you were told that "independent of all other natural grounds her decease was a very serious loss to him" since but for that loss there would have been no necessity for his incurring the large annual expense requisite to remunerate Mr Richter for his trouble in executing the drawings on stone of The Buds of Anshala &c.

…

Transcription of a letter from J. E. Gray to Edward Smith-Stanley, 13th Earl of Derby. Held at Liverpool Central Library. 920 DER (13) 1/67/33.

14 Sept 1844

Dear Lord Derby,

I have been looking through the Drawings of Lears [sic] to verify some more of the names for you before I send them back and I am very sorry to Part with them ? having some of them copied in Lithograph for Publication I am therefore before I finally part with them indeed ? to you again on the subject for am reviewing my calculations I think I could have some copies of them lithographed and produce ? fifty copies of them with coloured ? ? the Drawing if you ? not object to one hundred Pounds being expended on the subject? Would make a most beautiful Work and on that I am certain ? ? by ? ? friends ? especially by your ornithological correspondent ? ? be an ornament to any public library as so few being printed would render it a Novelty like the Works published by Lord ? and others.

I need not say that if you were inclined to expand the sum that double the number of plates might be prepared

Hoping you will ? my again recurring to the Subject believe
Me dear Lord Derby

Yours Very Truly

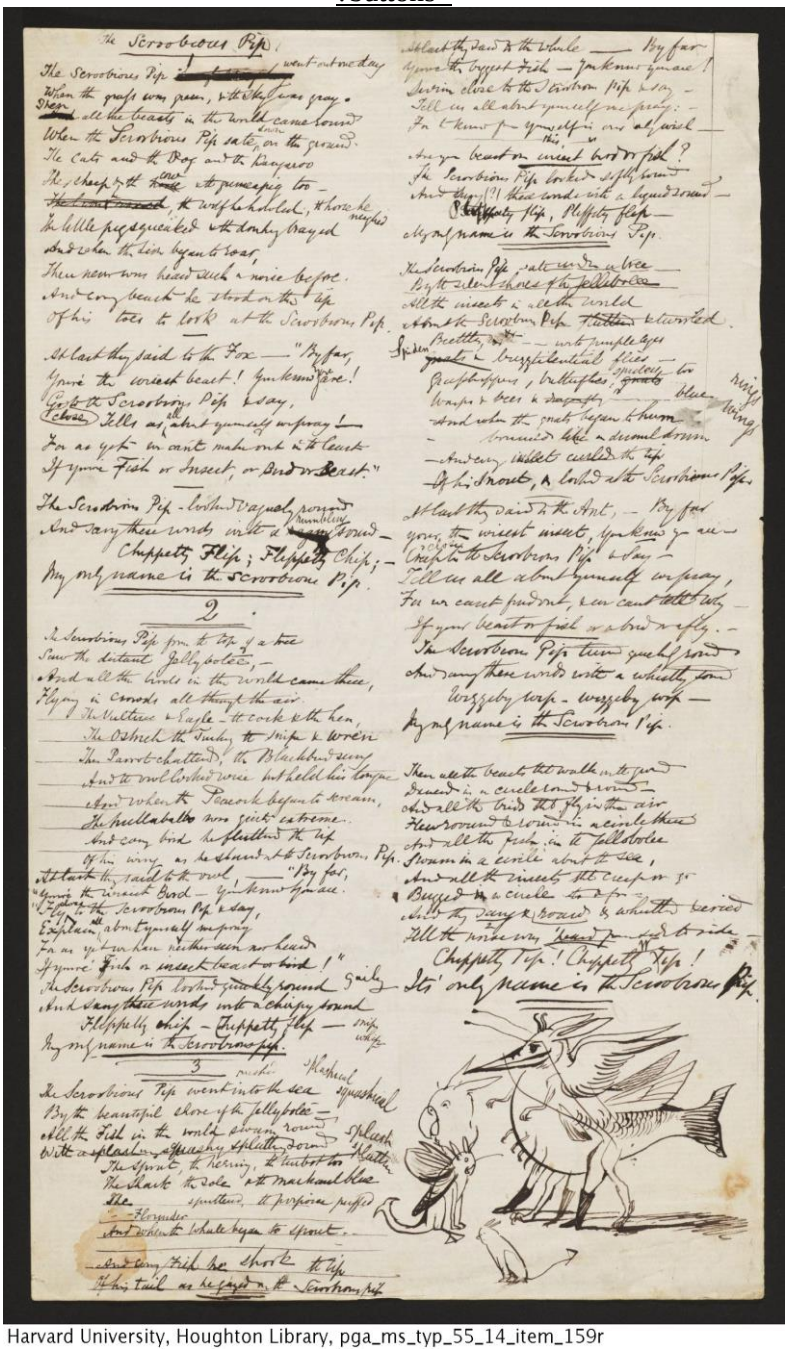
J E Gray

Appendix I: Report from the Select Committee on British Museum. (1836). Transcript of Edward Lear's testimony.

Among Mr Hawkins Drawings there is a figure of a Palamidea is it from a living or a stuffed specimen? If from the latter my brother would be much obliged to you if you would let him have for a short time to examine as he thinks it is distinct from ? Palamidea in the Museum Collection and he would like to figure the new species if it proves one for his genera.

Appendix II: "The Scroobious Pip" Manuscript

MS Typ 55.14 Harvard Houghton Library Edward Lear Collection.
https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/31651771?buttons=0https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/31651771?buttons=



Harvard University, Houghton Library, pga_ms_typ_55_14_item_159r

Appendix III: Provenance and Holdings of Figures

NB Harvard's Houghton Library Lear collection is from donations by Philip Hofer and William B. Osgood Field. See Hope Mayo's "The Edward Lear Collection at Harvard University." Mayo, Hope. 2012. The Edward Lear Collection at Harvard University. Harvard Library Bulletin 22 (2-3): 69-124. https://dash.harvard.edu/handle/1/37363362.

Introduction

Figure 1: *The Awakening Conscience*. William Holman Hunt. The Tate Gallery, T02075, https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hunt-the-awakening-conscience-t02075. Oil paint on canvass; 762 × 559 mm; presented by Sir Colin and Lady Anderson through the Friends of the Tate Gallery 1976; 1856.

Figure 2: *The Awakening Conscience*. William Holman Hunt. Close-up.

Figure 3: Lithographic Plate 2. Edward Lear. *Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots.* London (1830). Images from *The Biodiversity Heritage Library*, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/125973#page/7/mode/1up.

Figure 4: Lithographic Plate 7. Edward Lear. *Illustrations of the family of Psittacidae, or parrots.* London (1830). Images from *The Biodiversity Heritage Library*, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/125973#page/7/mode/1up.

Figure 5: Lithographic Plate 3. Edward Lear. *Gleanings from the menagerie and aviary at Knowsley Hall.* Knowsley, Derby (1846). Images from *The Biodiversity Heritage Library*, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/161293#page/5/mode/1up.

Figure 6: Lithographic Plate 2. John Gould. *A monograph of the Ramphastidae, or family of Toucans*. London (1854). Image from *The Biodiversity Heritage Library*, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/263349#page/5/mode/1up.

Figure 7: Oil Landscape. Edward Lear. *The Mountains of Thermopylae* (1852). 68.4 x W 135 cm. Original held at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery. Photo credit Bristol Museums, Galleries, and Archives, https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/the-mountains-of-thermopylae-188737.

Figure 8: "There was an old person of Ems." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes *The Complete Nonsense and Other Verse*, 104, 484. From the 1846 and 1855 editions of A Book of Nonsense; London: Thomas McLean, 1846, 1855, published anonymously by 'old Derry Down Derry. Date of composition unknown.

Chapter 1 Sense Out of Romantic Nonsense: Parody and the Orientalised Other in Thomas Moore, Lord Byron, Edward Lear

Figure 9: "St. Kiven and the Gentle Kathleen." Edward Lear. ca. 1840, pen and ink. Yale Center for British Art, Gift of Donald C. Gallup, Yale BA 1934, PhD 1939. (12 x 19 cm) https://collections.britishart.yale.edu/catalog/orbis:13531469.

Figures 10-28: Images from the illustrated verse "Miss Maniac." Edward Lear. Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library; MS Typ 55.6 https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:48895553$1i. Ink drawings; 21 x 26 cm. Date of composition unknown.

Figure 10: Drawings 15, 16.

Figure 11: Drawing 33.

Figure 12: Drawing 9.

Figure 13: Drawings 29, 30.

Figure 14: Drawing 15.

Figure 15: Drawing 25.

Figure 16: Drawing 17.

Figure 17: Drawing 12.

Figure 18: Drawings 29, 30.

Figure 19: Drawings 41, 42.

Figure 20: Drawing 43.

Figure 21: Drawings 1, 2.

Figure 22: Drawings 3, 4.

Figure 23: Drawings 5, 6.

Figure 24: Drawing 5, enlarged.

Figure 25: Drawing 21.

Figure 26: Drawings 1, 2.

Figure 27: Drawing 5, enlarged.

Figure 28: Drawing 43.

Figure 29: "The Dong with a Luminous Nose." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes, *The Complete Nonsense*, 422, 536. From Laughable Lyrics: Fourth Book of Nonsense Poems, Songs, Botany, Music, etc., London: Robert John Bush 1876, fair copy for publisher. Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library, MS Typ 55.14, (152), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/645754. Ink drawings; 22 cm; August 1876.

Figure 30: *Acanther planci*. "Crown-of-Thorns-Acanther planci-Sea Stars—Tropical Reefs." Florent's Guide to the Tropical Reefs. https://reefguide.org/indopac/crownofthorns.html.

Figure 31: *Crossaster papposus*. "Common Sun Star (Crossaster papposus)." MarLIN: The Marine Life Information Network. https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/1192.

Figure 32: *Crossaster papposus*. "Common Sun Star (Crossaster papposus)." MarLIN: The Marine Life Information Network. https://www.marlin.ac.uk/species/detail/1192.

Figure 33: "The Jumblies." Noakes. Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. *The Complete Nonsense*, 253, 422, 516, 536. From Laughable Lyrics: Fourth Book of Nonsense Poems, Songs, Botany, Music, etc., London: Robert John Bush 1876. 22 cm. Composition date 7 July 1870.

Chapter 2 Edward Lear's Counterfactual Taxonomy: Species and the Singular Avatar in Lear's Limericks, Alphabets, and "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple"

Figure 34: Woodblock Plate 14 from Sir William Jardine. *The Naturalist's Library, (Ornithology, vol 10 Parrots). London: W. H. Lizars (1853).* Image from *The Biodiversity Heritage Library*, https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/item/57923#page/8/mode/1up.

Figure 35: *Victoria R., the Rose of England*. William Clark. *Novelty* (2 September 1837). Image held by ©Trustees of the British Museum. Catalogue number 1902,1011.8659. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1902-1011-8659. Lithograph 236mm X 74mm. First issued 1834.

Figure 36: "Phattfacia Stupenda." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. *The Complete Nonsense*, 252. From *Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets* (1871). Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.14 (16), https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/ids:31651773. Ink drawing 1s.(1p.); drawn 1870

Figure 37: "Queerifloria Babyöides." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. *The Complete Nonsense*, 419. From *Laughable Lyrics* (1877). Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.14 (19), https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/ids:31652217. Ink drawing 1s.(1p.); date of composition unknown.

Figure 38: *Victoria R, The Rose of England*.

Figure 39: "Phattfacia Stupenda."

Figure 40: Alexander Bassano, *Queen Victoria*, (1887 (1882)). Alexander Bassano. Photo held at National Portrait Gallery, https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/use-this-image/?mkey=mw119713. Albumen cabinet card; NPG x8753.

Figure 41: "W was once a whale." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. *The Complete Nonsense*, 301, 520. From "A was once an apple pie," published in Drawing Book Alphabet, ed. Philip Hofer (Cambridge, MA: Houghton, 1954). Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library MS 55.14 (144), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/645746. Ink drawing; 26s (26p); date of composition unknown.

Figure 42: "The History of the Seven Families of the Lake Pipple-Popple." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. *The Complete Nonsense*, 204, 502. From Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets (London: R J Bush 1872). Manuscript held at British Library MS 47462, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_47462; Ink drawing; folio; presented by an anonymous gentleman and Messrs W. H. Robinson, Ltd., Pall Mall; February 1865.

Figure 43: "The Seven Families," 206.

Figure 44: Preparatory parrot sketch. Edward Lear. Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.9 (20), https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:30660470$1i. Graphite drawing; 37.5 x 26.5 cm; date of composition 1830.

Figure 45: "The Judicious Jubilant Jay." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. Complete Nonsense, 261, 516. From "The Absolutely Abstemious Ass" in More Nonsense, Pictures, Rhymes, Botany, Etc., London: R J Bush, 1972. Manuscript extant until 1950s, since lost. Photocopy of manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library, MS TYP 55.14 (95), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/645627. Ink drawing; 13.5. x 10.5 cm; date of composition August 1870.

Figure 46: "Miss Maniac" Drawing 2. Lear. "Miss Maniac" manuscript.

Figure 47: "There Was a Young Lady of Bute. Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. *The Complete Nonsense*, 73, 486. From the 1846 and 1855 editions of *A Book of Nonsense*, London: Thomas McLean, 1846, 1855. Published anonymously by 'old Derry Down Derry'. Date of composition unknown.

Figure 48: "There Was a Young Lady of Wales." Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. *The Complete Nonsense*, 101, 484, 490. From the 1846 and 1855 editions of *A Book of Nonsense*, London: Thomas McLean, 1846, 1855. Published anonymously by 'old Derry Down Derry'. Date of composition unknown.

Figure 49: *Solea solea*. "Sole" in *Britannica Academic*, October 2008, academic-eb-com.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/levels/collegiate/article/sole/68575.

Figure 50: "Chimpanzee Head." Held at Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.12, (50), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/891716. Watercolour over graphite; date of composition 17 October 1835.

Chapter 3 Imperial Nonsense: Subverting Taxonomies and Hierarchies of Natural History and Empire

Figure 51: "The Story of the Four Little Children Who Went Round the World" ship. Edward Lear. Vivien Noakes. Complete Nonsense, 220, 507-508. From Nonsense Songs, Stories, Botany, and Alphabets, London: R J Bush 1872. Proofs held at Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.14, (107), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/645709. Ink drawings; date of composition 17 September 1869.

Figure 52: *Studies of Venetian craft*. Edward Lear. Image from Royal Museums Greenwich Prints https://prints.rmg.co.uk/products/studies-of-venetian-craft-pu9083. Original held at National Maritime Museum, Greenwich London, PU9085. Watercolour over ink drawing; 127 mm x 178 mm; 1865.

Figure 53: "the Four Little Children," 222.

Figure 54: "the Four Little Children," 223.

Figure 55: "Early Depiction of a Maori Chief." Image from European Discovery of New Zealand – *Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand* https://teara.govt.nz/en/artwork/1429/early-depiction-of-a-maori-chief.

Figure 56: "Early Depiction of a Maori Chief." Image from European Discovery of New Zealand – *Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand* https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/head-new-zealander-sidney-parkinson.

Figure 57: "the Four Little Children," 227.

Figure 58: "the Four Little Children," 229.

Figure 59: "the Four Little Children," 229.

Figure 60: "the Four Little Children," 231.

Figure 61: "the Four Little Children," 232.

Chapter 4 Darwinian Nonsense: Translating Darwin's Entangled Bank in "The Scroobious Pip"

Figure 62: Dining table diagram from diary entry 22 October 1864. Edward Lear. From diary held at Harvard Houghton Library. MS 797.3 (7) (seq) (153). https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:44446334$153i.

Appendix III: Provenance and Holdings of Figures

Figure 63: Dining table diagram from diary entry 18 October 1864. Edward Lear. From diary held at Harvard Houghton Library. MS 797.3 (7) (seq) (153). https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:44446334$153i.

Figure 64: "The Scroobious Pip." Edward Lear. Manuscript held by Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.14 (159), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/645761. Poem with ink drawing; date of composition unknown.

Figure 65: *Cirripedia*: The Lepadidae. Charles Darwin. From A Monograph on the Sub-Class Círripedia, with Figures of All the Species, The Lepadidae Plate 4. New York: Weinheim J. Cramer, 1964.

Figure 66: *Cirripedia*: The Balanidae. Charles Darwin. From Círripedia. The Balanidae Plate 13.

Figure 67: *Cirripedia*: The Balanidae. Charles Darwin. From Círripedia. The Balanidae Plate 29.

Figure 68: *Cirripedia*: The Balanidae. Charles Darwin. From Círripedia, The Balanidae Plate 30.

Figure 69: "The Scroobious Pip" 2. Edward Lear. Manuscript held at Harvard University Houghton Library, TypDr 805.L513.88c, https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/ids:43342620. Ink drawing; date of composition unknown.

Figure 70: *Talpa europea* "Talpidae" in Britannica Academic, https://academic-eb-com.libgate.library.nuigalway.ie/levels/collegiate/article/mole/53237#242094.toc.

Figure 71: *Cryptophialus minutus*. Charles Darwin. From Círripedia, The Balanidae Plate 23.

Figure 72: "The Scroobious Pip." Edward Lear. Manuscript held by Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.14 (159), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/645761. Poem with ink drawing; date of composition unknown.

Figure 73: Preparatory parrot sketch. Edward Lear. Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.9 (20), https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:30660470$1i. Graphite drawing; 37.5 x 26.5 cm; date of composition 1830.

Figure 74: "The Scroobious Pip" 2. Edward Lear. Manuscript held at Harvard University Houghton Library, TypDr 805.L513.88c, https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/ids:43342620. Ink drawing; date of composition unknown.

Appendix image: "The Scroobious Pip." Edward Lear. Manuscript held at Harvard Houghton Library MS Typ 55.14, (159), https://hollisarchives.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/archival_objects/645761; image url https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/31651771?buttons=0https://ids.lib.harvard.edu/ids/view/31651771?buttons=. Illustrated verse (ink drawing); date of composition 1871-1872.