

The Bishop and the Braggart: truth and fiction in Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone*

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Bishop Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone: or A Discourse of a Voyage Thither by Domingo Gonsales, the Speedy Messenger* (1638 ; references in this article are to the bilingual edition by Annie Amartin, which includes the preface 'To the Ingenious Reader') describes the adventures of a Spaniard, who – after travelling to the East Indies to seek his fortune – is set ashore on the island of St Helen's to regain his health. There, Gonsales trains wild swans, or *gansas*, to carry him into the air. Rather underestimating the potential of this original technique, he accidentally flies to the moon, which he finds to be inhabited by giants who “doe hate all manner of vice, and doe live in such love, peace, and amitie, as it seemeth to bee another Paradise.” (Godwin, 82) In spite of the perfection of lunar life, Gonsales begs leave to fly home to see his wife and children and travels safely down to China, where he writes his travel report, sending it home to Spain. In its first edition, the work bore no mention of Francis Godwin's name, purporting simply to be “by Domingo Gonsales”. It was widely read following its publication, with 24 editions in English, French, Dutch and German appearing over the following 30 years, and it influenced several writers of imaginary voyages, most notably Cyrano de Bergerac.

Godwin's text appeared four years after the astronomer Johannes Kepler's *Somnium* and just five months before John Wilkins' *A discovery of a new world*, both of which also raise the question of the inhabitability of the moon, reflecting the keen interest which had been sparked by Galileo's *Sidereus Nuncius* (1610). It is in this context, as an early science-fiction text and one of the first accounts in English of space travel, that reference is generally made to Godwin's work (See for instance the works by H. W. Lawton, R. Philmus (1970) and M. Hope Nicolson cited in the bibliography below). Where more extensive analysis has been carried out, it has focused on the new and sometimes visionary scientific ideas explored in *The Man in the Moone*: Gonsales' experiences allow him to bear witness to several controversial theories, relating notably to the Earth's magnetic attraction and diurnal rotation. Godwin – whom Elizabeth I had made Bishop of Llandaff in 1601 as a token of her appreciation of his *Catalogue of the Bishops of England*, and who went on to become Bishop of Hereford – was evidently not only a competent clergyman and historian. He also possessed keen and detailed knowledge of the latest scientific ideas.

However, comparatively little attention has been paid to the *The Man in the Moone* as a work of literary fiction even if there are two notable exceptions: Frédérique Aït-Touati's article published in 2005 and the earlier monograph by Anke Janssen. This is all the more curious as Godwin's text, in appearance, seems to bear little relation to a serious scientific treatise. Although the full title given to the text may be read as hinting at the author's scientific intentions, as indicated by the term “discourse”, the description of Gonsales as “the speedy messenger” appears less serious. Indeed,

the work's shorter title recalls the many popular tales inspired by the facial features which are discernible on the surface of the moon, and also directly echoes John Lyly's 1591 play, *Endymion, The Man in the Moon*. In his prologue, Lyly informs the reader that if his work "seems ridiculous for the method, or superfluous for the matter, or for the means incredible, for three faults we can make but one excuse: it is a tale of the Man in the Moon." (20) Having thus chosen a title commonly associated with inventive story-telling, and more or less synonymous with tall tales, Godwin also gave his work a frontispiece illustrating one of the more memorable episodes of Gonsales' adventures, that in which the traveller is lifted into the air by his *gansas*, an image which does little to counter the impression of fiction. He further included a prefatory letter addressed "To the Ingenious Reader," in which the text is described as:

an essay of Fancy, where Invention is shewed with Judgment. It was not the author's intention (I presume) to discourse thee into a beliefe of each particular circumstance. Tis fit thou allow him a liberty of conceite; where thou takest to thy selfe a liberty of judgment. (Godwin, 10)

The paratextual elements available to the contemporary reader thus combine to create a fairly effective impression of Godwin's text as fictional, rather than factual.

As the almost simultaneous publication of Godwin's and Wilkins' books shows, the latter had no knowledge of *The Man in the Moone* when he wrote his work. He soon read it, however, and promptly reworked and expanded his treatise to include a discourse concerning the possibility of travel to the moon. In this third edition of his text, published in 1640, Wilkins describes how he "chanced upon a late fancy to this purpose under the fained name of Domingo Gonsales, written by a late reverend and learned bishop: in which [...] there is delivered a very pleasant and well contrived fancy concerning a voyage to this other world." (203). While one can perhaps speculate as to whether a sense of rivalry on Wilkins' part led him to identify *The Man in the Moone* as fiction rather than serious writing, his remarks nonetheless tend to confirm the idea that Godwin's work was perhaps not initially noted for its scientific content, being viewed rather more accurately as a "fancy," an agreeable work of imaginative fiction.

The frontiers which modern readers are inclined to erect between fiction and science were less clearly defined in the early 17th Century, and Godwin's work contains many theoretical passages, while Wilkins' treatise at times resembles fiction. It is however interesting that so little attention has been paid to the structural and narrative aspects of *The Man in the Moone*, which are consistent with those found in other imaginary voyages of the 17th and 18th centuries. I wish here to consider one of the more intriguing features of *The Man in the Moone*: the choice, made by an Anglican bishop, of a Spanish Catholic as the hero of his moon voyage. At a time when Anglo-Spanish relations were, as often, marked by bitter rivalry and enmity, it seems remarkable that Godwin did not offer his readers a more congenial narrator, one with whom they might identify more easily. Having made the decision to write his text in English – his other published works having been composed in Latin – one may wonder why he did not also portray an English traveller. I will try to demonstrate the way in which Francis Godwin works behind the scenes, using his narrator as a mask or puppet, in order to achieve specific literary ends for which the choice of a Spanish traveller-narrator is an ideal ruse.

Several ideas have been put forward as to why Godwin should have decided upon such an unlikely hero. One reason may be that he was highlighting the literary connections between his text and the picaresque tradition. In a more radical analysis, William Empson suggested that Godwin was insane at the time he wrote his *Nuncius Inanimatus* (1629), an admittedly rambling and abstruse work about cryptography and the swift means of sending secret messages. Agreeing with Empson, Robert Philmus speculates that:

our Anglican bishop had already gone beyond the bounds of proverbial English eccentricity when(ever) he chose a Spaniard and a Catholic as his "hero" (even if he did so at least 20 years after Philip II's attempt at overthrowing Elizabeth and English Protestantism). (Philmus:1996)

Grant McColley's judgement is somewhat less severe; he sees the decision to allow a Spaniard the glory of being the first man to set foot on the moon as a patriotic attempt to encourage more – and more daring – voyages of discovery by the English, in order to keep pace with the Spanish. Connections have also been made between Domingo Gonsales and Domingo Gundisalvo, a 12th-Century Spanish philosopher whose works included translations of texts on magic. However, as James Knowlson remarks, the possible motives behind such an obscure link are unclear and it is more likely that Godwin gave his narrator names which were particularly common in Spain and were therefore more plausible (359). It has also been suggested by Annie Amartin that Godwin found potential for humour in having a Spanish narrator (Godwin, 114).

This last argument may well be accurate, as the *Man in the Moone* contains several episodes whose irony derives directly from Gonsales' nationality and his assumed hostility towards the English. Godwin appears to have found satiric inspiration in having his narrator either criticise his fellow Spaniards or praise the English, his natural rivals. At one stage, Gonsales recounts how

a certaine great Count of ours came home from the West-Indies, in triumphant manner, boasting and sending out his declarations in print, of a great victory hee had obtained against the English, neere the Isle of Pines. Whereas the truth is, he got of the English nothing at all in that Voyage, but blowes and a great losse. (20)

A little later, he describes an incident where the fleet with which he is travelling encounters three English vessels near Tenerife; although the Spanish convoy outnumbers the English, its vessels are cumbersome and overburdened, so the captain decides "wisely enough (but I am sure neither valiantly, nor fortunately) to flie" (40). The English set off in pursuit, with the result that the Spanish carrick transporting Gonsales strikes a rock, splitting asunder. The narrator (showing little more courage, albeit better fortune than his compatriot) escapes the shipwreck by flying off with his *gansas*. Meanwhile, in contrast to the Spanish captain's allegedly cowardly decision, the English crews courageously save as many Spaniards as they can from the rough seas, risking their lives to do so and, as Domingo Gonsales admits, behaving "like men of more noble and generous disposition then we are pleased to esteeme them." (42)

Once on the moon, Gonsales is asked by the Lunarian king, Pylonas, to “salute from him Elizabeth whom he tearmed the great Queene of England, calling her the most glorious of all women living. [...] Though I account her an enemy of Spayne,” says Gonsales, “I may not faile of performing this promise as soone as I shall bee able so to doe.” (88) Francis Godwin doubtless did take a certain wry pleasure in making a Spanish narrator the mouthpiece for such comments to the detriment of the Spanish and to the advantage of their English enemies.

However, the full ramifications of Godwin’s use of a Spanish narrator go beyond the different hypotheses described above: as Anke Janssen has suggested, the presence of Domingo Gonsales is one of the key factors within the wider strategy used by Francis Godwin to address important philosophical and scientific issues of the day within an openly fictitious text, thereby combining two levels of discourse. Like many imaginary voyages, *The Man in the Moone* provides a fictional framework for the investigation of new, daring and potentially dangerous ideas, which are thus very superficially concealed beneath an initially misleading exterior. In keeping with the generic conventions found in many such works, the examination of these ideas is carried out in a context where distinctions which might otherwise appear simple – between truth and lies, the familiar and the unknown – are consistently blurred, allowing the author to maintain a safe distance from the theories explored.

This distortion comes into play as early as the prefatory epistle addressed to the “ingenious” reader. The letter is signed E.M., indicating that it is the work not of Domingo Gonsales (nor, of course, of Francis Godwin), but of a presumably more disinterested third party. It provides conflicting information about *The Man in the Moone*: having described it as “an essay of fancy,” it then compares the hypothesis that there might be a world in the moon with initial conjecture as to the existence of the American continent, which Columbus subsequently proved to be true. “That there should be Antipodes,” states the writer of the letter, “was once thought as great a Paradox as now that the Moon should bee habitable. But the knowledge of this may seeme more properly reserv’d for this our discovering age.” (10) After first arguing in favour of reading the text as a purely fictional “fancy,” and then encouraging a more open-minded approach, the writer finally suggests that readers must make up their own minds, announcing that “this [question], and more in the ensuing discourse I leave to thy candid censure, and the faithfull relation of the little eye-witness, our great discoverer.” (10)

As Grant McColley has shown, Godwin’s efforts at confusing the public were at least partly successful. Although Wilkins’ allusion to “a late reverend and learned bishop” shows that Godwin was almost immediately identified as the author of *The Man in the Moone*, a fact that is confirmed by the title page of the 1657 edition, where the author is identified as “F.G. B. of H.” (Francis Godwin, Bishop of Hereford), there is evidence that some readers were initially unaware of the text’s authorship. The *Stationers’ Register* contains an entry for an individual called Edward Mahon, who is described as having translated *The Man in the Moone* from the Spanish of Domingo Gonsales: this must refer to the E.M. purporting to have written the prefatory letter. The antiquary Anthony Wood recorded that an individual with the initials E.M., “of Christ Church,” (Oxford) had “published” Gonsales’ work some years after the death of Francis Godwin, information which was later reproduced in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. Although there is no Spanish text of *The Man in the Moone*, no evidence

Domingo Gonsales existed and no surviving trace of an Edward Mahon in the annals of Christ Church, these relatively serious sources all testify to belief in the existence of an Oxford-educated linguist called Edward Mahon, who translated and published Gonsales' Spanish account of his trip to the moon.

One does apparently need to be an "ingenious reader" to untangle the mesh of facts and inventions surrounding the reality of Domingo Gonsales. In the first pages of the narrative, this confusion is compounded by the intermingling of reality and fiction in Gonsales' biography. As the fictional E.M. points out in his letter, the overwhelming argument in favour of the Spaniard's account is that it is a first-person report of events as experienced by the protagonist. The credibility of "the little eye-witness" is therefore a key element in determining the reader's faith in the travel narrative, and as if to prove Gonsales' existence, Godwin begins by providing a detailed biography. The narrator was born in Seville in 1552; his father was Therrando Gonsales (a relation of the "worthy Count of Almanera," Don Pedro Sanchez); his mother (who remains unnamed), was the daughter of "the Reverend and famous Lawyer Otho Perez de Sallaveda, Governour of Barcellona, and Corrigidor of Biscaia." The youngest of 17 children, Domingo was sent to be educated with a view to entering the Church, but he abandoned his studies in order to get a taste of battle, travelling through France to Antwerp where he entered the service of one Marshall Cossey.

While the names of Gonsales' parents appear to have been entirely fictional, albeit plausible, this last allusion is a fairly clear reference to the diplomat and soldier, Artus de Cossé-Brissac (1512-1582), and it thus sets the narrator within a realistic context. Having made his fortune, Gonsales returned home to Spain with the Duke of Alva, another historically identifiable figure, who was Governor of the Spanish Netherlands from 1567-1573, and whose cruelty earned him the nickname of "the Iron Duke" amongst Protestants in the Low Countries. Gonsales then married and settled down, but soon quarrelled with one of his relations, killed him in a duel and fled to Portugal, whence he set sail for the East Indies. It was during the return voyage that he was left on St Helen's, where he trained his *gansas* to carry him through the air. The account of Gonsales' adventures also includes, in the character of Captain Rymundo, a probable reference to Captain George Raymond, a respected sea captain who perished when his vessel sank in 1591 after passing the Cape of Good Hope, whose name Godwin may have found in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* (1598-1600) (Knowlson, 359). This figure could well have inspired the captain whose name Gonsales spells "Rymundo" and whose crews so bravely save Spanish sailors from drowning.

The detailed nature of Gonsales' account, complete with dates and the names of actual historical figures, certainly seems intended to provide the narrator with a convincingly comprehensive biography, thereby encouraging readers to view him as a real person and his report as a reliable one. However, upon closer analysis, the portrayal of Domingo Gonsales, while unquestionably thorough, contains several indications that he may not be an entirely trustworthy individual. The rather high-handed way in which he forsakes his studies in order to spend "some time in the warres," suddenly "leaving the Universitie of Salamanca (whither my parents had sent mee) without giving knowledge unto any of my dearest friends" (14), may be attributed to the selfishness of youth. However, it may also be seen as reflecting a more general want of tact and regard for others, which would indeed seem to be

reflected in the various conflicts which mark Gonsales' early life: he appears increasingly to be a figure of some controversy, provoking dissension and duels. His "enemies" apparently spread rumours that while in the service of Marshall Cossey, Gonsales was in fact nothing more than his horse-keeper's boy; the Spaniard hotly denies such aspersions, and refers the reader to "the Count Mansfield, Mounsiour Tavier, and other men of knowne worth and estimation," (16) who will, he claims, back up his version of events.

While the "other men" remain entirely anonymous, and the identity of M. Tavier has yet to be established (the name may well not be that of a real person), Count Pierre-Ernest de Mansfeld is, like Cossé, a historical figure, Governor of the Duchy of Luxemburg from 1545 to 1604 and Lieutenant-Governor of the Low Countries from 1590 to 1594. This is an impressive individual for Gonsales to quote as guarantor of his honesty: since Mansfeld is famous for having rescued many French Catholics during the battle of Moncontour in 1569, he is also a plausible protector for the Spaniard. However, had a suspicious reader tried to follow up Gonsales' claims regarding his true status in Cossey's household, he would have been unable to obtain testimonies from these worthy individuals: Artus de Cossé-Brissac died in 1582 and Mansfeld in 1604, nearly thirty-five years before the publication of *The Man in the Moone* and several years before its likely composition (the exact date of which remains uncertain). The intricate network of verifiable chronological and biographical references, while creating an impression of authenticity and placing Gonsales in an identifiable historical context, is in fact a flimsy façade, whose flaws quickly become apparent.

It is also clear from a very early stage in the text that Domingo Gonsales' nationality and tendency to make enemies are not the only things which prevent the readers from identifying with him. His blithe description of the manner in which he kills and loots a rider in the Prince of Orange's army provides a disconcerting insight into the Spaniard's ethics:

It was my good hap at that time to defeat a horseman of the enemy, by killing his Horse with my Pistoll, which falling upon his leg, so as he could not stirre, hee yielded himselfe to my mercie; but I knowing mine owne weaknesse of bodie, and seeing him a lustie tall fellow, thought it my surest way to dispatch him, which having done, I rifled him of a chaine, monie, and other things to the value of 200 ducats: no sooner was that money in my purse, but I began to resume the remembrance of my nobilitie. (16)

Godwin's narrator then goes on to inform us, almost incidentally, that having joined the Duke of Alva's court, where he frankly owns that he is accepted thanks to his "purse full of good Crownes" (16), he is often an object of merriment and mockery because he is, to put it bluntly, a dwarf: "I must acknowledge my stature to be so little, as no man there is living I think lesse." (18) Gonsales' diminutive size sets him clearly apart from his fellow men (be they English or Spanish). Although it proves useful, allowing the narrator to be carried more easily by his *gansas* and thus to reach the moon, this physical peculiarity reinforces his status as misfit, perhaps explaining why the narrator initially feels the transgressive, potentially dangerous urge to leave his friends and family and travel the world.

Gonsales himself places a very different interpretation upon his adventures, suggesting somewhat conceitedly that he is in fact fulfilling a divine destiny. Recounting how he dropped out of Salamanca University, he declares that “our Lord purposing to use my service in matters of farre other nature and quality, inspired me with spending some time in the warres.” (14) A similar sentiment is expressed a little later, when the narrator criticises the Duke of Alva for mocking his smallness, adding that:

those things which have happened unto mee, may bee an example, that great and wonderfull things may be performed by the most unlikely bodies, if the mind be good, and the blessing of our Lord doe second and follow the endeavours of the same. (18)

He professes to believe that his mission in life is to impart to his fellow men the unique knowledge acquired during his travels, an undertaking which he apparently feels he has accomplished, expressing the hope that his voyage has been “a meanes of eternising my name for ever with all Posteritie [...] and to the unspeakable good of all mortall men.” (20)

It is commonplace in imaginary voyages – and particularly in those with a Utopian dimension – for the traveller-narrator to be depicted as invested with a specific vocation, that of communicating to his fellow men the perfection and happiness of life in the fictional other world he alone has visited. However, in Godwin’s text, the Lunarians’ perfection is of less importance than either their existence, which confirms Kepler’s speculations on the subject, or the opportunities which the moon voyage affords Gonsales to verify the Copernican worldview and confirm that the Earth turns on its axis. Gonsales’ adventures are important not because they offer a glimpse of a perfect existence to readers living in the imperfect real world, but because they provide eye-witness, first-hand evidence in support of controversial scientific hypotheses.

The rather self-aggrandising way in which Gonsales describes his mission in life is borne out by other elements in the text. From the very first sentence of his narrative, the Spaniard presents himself in a markedly arrogant way, declaring: “It is well enough and sufficiently knowne to all the countries of Andaluçia, that I Domingo Gonsales, was borne of Noble parentage, and that in the renowned City of Seville.” (14) This rather conceited introduction may well have struck more of a chord with 17th-Century English readers than it does today, confirming widespread prejudices about the pride and dishonesty of the Spanish. In her study of *The Man in the Moone*, Anke Janssen cites a range of sources showing that accounts from the period refer to Gonsales’ countrymen as “poore and proud, Vaunters, vaine glorious, tyrants, truce-breakers, Envious, irefull and ambitious.” According to Sir Francis Hastings, “It is recorded of the Spaniard, that in dissimulation he surpasseth all nations, till he have attained to his purpose, and when he can once prevayle, he goeth beyond them all in oppression and tyrannie.” Robert Ashley wrote of “magnificent Dom Diegos and Spanish Cavalieros, whose doughtiest deeds are bragges and boastinges.” (Janssen, 41) The reference to the lying, vain Count, who unjustly claimed to have won a great victory over the English at the Isle of Pines, also serves – a little later in the tale – as a reminder of this contemporary cliché.

Gonsales himself appears rather vain, recalling that once he had contrived to fly using his *gansas*, “how often did I wish my selfe in the midst of Spaine, that speedily I might fill the world with the fame of my glory and renowne!” (34) More tellingly, when he describes his motives in leaving the moon, he admits that not only did he wish to return to his family, but, as he puts it:

to tell you the truth, I was so far forth moved with a desire of that deserved glory, that I might purchase at my return, as me thought I deserved not the name of a Spaniard, if I would not hazard 20 lives, rather than lose but a little possibility of the same. (86)

The final lines of Godwin’s imaginary voyage also reiterate Gonsales’ craving for fame: writing in China, awaiting the opportunity to return home, he expresses the hope “that by enriching my Country with the knowledge of hidden mysteries, I may once reape the glory of my fortunate misfortunes.” (98)

These recurrent allusions to contemporary clichés of the boastful and bombastic Spanish are an integral part of the blurring of boundaries between truth and fiction which is begun in the prefatory letter. Since Gonsales’ experiences are primarily a pretext for the exploration of contemporary scientific theories, the traveller is constantly at pains to point out that his personal testimony invalidates the traditional worldview upheld by the writings of scholars. Having observed at first hand the rotation of the Earth, Gonsales declares: “Philosophers and Mathematicians I would should now confesse the wilfulnesse of their owne blindnesse. They have made the world believe hitherto, that the Earth hath no motion.” (54) Approaching the moon, he notes that it is covered with “a huge and mighty Sea,” the parts which seem darker from the Earth being in fact dry land, while that which shines is another ocean: the light perceived from below is therefore merely the reflection of the sunlight. Gonsales remarks:

How ill this agreeth with that which our Philosophers teach in the schooles I am not ignorant.
But alas how many of their Errors hath time and experience refuted in this our age, with the recital whereof I will not stand to trouble the reader. (58)

He does however take the time to refute another widely-held theory, explaining: “As for that Region of Fire our Philosophers talke of, I heard no newes of it; mine eyes have sufficiently informed me there can be no such thing.” (60) The “little eye-witness” thus provides the reader with his own personal experience, whose directness contrasts with the abstract and theoretical nature of the traditional ideas taught by philosophers.

The ideas Godwin defends in his text were obviously, at the time of writing, daring and audacious ones which it was dangerous to endorse. The introductory letter links *The Man in the Moone* to Galilean theory, noting that “our Galilaeusses can by advantage of their spectacles gaze the Sunne into spots, & descry mountains in the Moon.” (10) Gonsales’ experiences provide him with physical, sensory evidence not only of the rotation of the Earth, but also of its attraction and of the weightlessness experienced when one rises any distance above its surface. Godwin is, however, wary of explicitly supporting Copernican theory, and his narrator prudently remarks, “I will not go so farre as Copernicus, that maketh the Sunne the Center of the Earth,

and unmovable,” adding rather ambiguously, “neither will I be positive in any thing.” (56) He thereby eludes the issue while hinting broadly that he may in fact agree with Copernicus. This equivocation was undoubtedly necessary during the first part of the 17th Century, when censorship remained stringent and the mathematician Thomas Hariot wrote to Kepler that “Things with us are in such a condition that I still cannot philosophise freely. We are still stuck in the mud.” (Jacquot, 167) In such circumstances, presenting a text supposedly written by a Spanish, Catholic narrator is an ideal means of circumventing official interference and possible censorship. Not only does the use of Domingo Gonsales set Godwin at a safe distance from his text, but the narrator’s account is apparently discredited by his portrayal as vain, boastful, unreliable and frequently motivated by personal ambition and greed. As the aforementioned references from Wood and the *Stationer’s Register* demonstrate, this apparently transparent ruse seems actually to have deceived some readers, while the lack of official reaction also indicates that it was successful. By choosing an individual whose very nationality is at that time synonymous, in the popular mind, with deceit and bluster, Godwin provides himself with the perfect mask behind which to criticise the Ptolomean worldview.

The characterisation of Domingo Gonsales – an exceptionally diminutive Spanish Catholic who is apparently prepared to go to considerable lengths to gain wealth and social status – thus reflects a great deal more than Godwin’s picaresque ambitions, his taste for humour, his desire to goad the English into greater exploits abroad, or indeed his alleged madness. While the *Nuncius Inanimatus* does perhaps suggest that he shared with his narrator a propensity to egocentricity and self-aggrandizement, he doubtless intended to distance himself radically from Gonsales, while simultaneously encouraging readers to think carefully about the ideas investigated in his work. Blurring the distinction between fact and fiction, science and narrative, the serious and the light-hearted, he offers readers a text that cannot be read at face value, thus preventing any definite assimilation between the demonstration of Copernican theory and the author’s own personal ideas. It is not Godwin, the anonymous author working behind the scenes, who dismisses Aristotelian theories as “Vanities, fansies, Dreames!,” (58) but his puppet narrator, Gonsales, an invented and clearly mendacious dwarf. This simple strategy provides the perfect cover for the Bishop – reliant upon official patronage and approval – and offers him the opportunity for what one critic has described as “nonchalant incorporation of scientific detail” (Parrett, 51), thereby allowing him to explore and endorse controversial new speculation concerning man’s status and position within the universe. Although the posthumous publication of *The Man in the Moone* may indicate that the author was uncertain as to the success of his ploy, the reception and reputation of his text bear witness to its ingenuity.

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