

**Tribhuvan University**  
**Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Savage Satire in Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* and *Gulliver's Travels***

**A Dissertation**

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**Letter of Approval**

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## Abstract

By *A Modest Proposal and Gulliver's Travels*, Jonathan Swift makes Savage Satire upon English rulers. Swift satirizes the lack of human behaviour in the English rulers of Ireland. Again, Swift satirizes man having evils and follies. They are full of irony and humour. Swift satirizes so called uncivilized and cruel behaviour about serious things which denounce mankind. Swift also satirizes corrupted politics of English politicians of that time.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

Jonathan Swift (1667- 1745), the satirist, received the best education which the Ireland of the English governing class had to offer. In 1674, he was sent to Kilkenny School and thereafter in the spring of 1682 to Trinity College, Dublin, where he took the degree of B.A. in 1686. He was still in residence at Trinity College and on the point of receiving the Master's degree when violence, in the wake of England's Bloodless Revolution of 1688, broke out in Ireland, "threatening English rule and bringing normal life in Dublin to a stop" (Davis 11). Early in 1689, Swift, along with his many friends, crossed the Irish Sea to England, "where his prospects, however dim, were at least better than they could possibly be in Ireland" at such a time (Quintana 1-2).

The ten-year period which dates from his arrival in England was an important event for his career development because then that time he came to intellectual maturity, took stock of his own situation in the world and in consequence determined upon a life in the Church, and after a none too successful wooing of the Muse discovered that his true vein lay in prose satire.

In Ireland, he had composed an Ode in celebration of King William's triumphs. Ode-in the form made popular by Abraham Cowley-now continued to attract him, though towards the end of these experiments "he turned to the heroic couplet" (4). But though he found himself thwarted for the moment in his efforts at poetry, he had been gathering in a "wealth of new experiences, social and intellectual" (4). He had gone up to Oxford and received the M.A. in 1692. Editorial work on Temple's essays, letters and diplomatic memoirs was sharpening his stylistic sense and giving him an understanding of how a modern and "well informed mind" ranged over theories having to do with art, human culture, political behaviour and the rise

and fall of civilization (12). He made a beginning on the prose satire ultimately to be entitled *A Tale of a Tub* – the sections thereof “concerned with corruptions in religion and the effect of English government over the Irish people” (13).

Jonathan Swift’s life, character, and writing are “distinguished not merely by the normal tensions and contrasts of human experience, but by the powerful clash of violently opposed forces” (Ross and Woolley xi). Further, in his case at least, it has always been not only difficult but finally impossible, to read the author out of the works and treat the texts as free-standing objects, complicated by authorial intention, biographical complexities, or historical relationships. F.R. Leavis in his essay on *The Irony of Swift* properly seeks to clear his discussion from focusing unawares on the kind of man that Swift was and to stop “well on this side pathology” (85). Yet, the same critic invokes “Swifts’s insanegotism that reinforced the savagery” which he finds in parts of the writing (99).

The circumstances of Swift’s birth and earliest years neatly illustrate the critical problems. He was the posthumous child of his father, and perhaps even more traumatic experience followed. He tells this story himself in the paragraphs he wrote in his early sixties or later under title “Family and Swift” and which has been given in part, the misleading modern title *Fragment of Autobiography to 1714*:

[...] when he was a year old, and event happened to him that seems unusual; for his nurse who was a woman of Whitehaven, being under an absolute necessity of seeing one of her relations, who was then extremely sick, and from whom she expected a legacy; and being at the same time extremely fond of the infant, she stole him on shipboard unknown to his mother and uncle, and carried him with her to Whitehaven, where he continued for almost three years [...]. The nurse

was so careful of him that before he returned he had learnt to spell, and by the time he was three years old, he could read any chapter in the Bible. (Qtd. in Davis 108)

All this must have had an effect on Swift's character, feelings, and ideas. Biographers are in duty bound to flesh out the psycho-drama, but the readers of Swift's works are not condemned to the long chain of inference. On the other hand, two immediate consequences flowed from Swift's parentage: his birth in Dublin and his family heritage fated him to be one of the English of Ireland. As an Anglo-Irish writer, he "received an irrevocable cultural stamp, a set of preoccupations, a social and historical role; certain more speculative characteristics, linguistic, tactical and imaginative, may also ensue" (xiv). The second important consequence of his origins was the family connection that led, after a rather old-fashioned course of study at Trinity College, Dublin, to Swift's employment as his secretary by Sir William Temple at Moor Park for the best part of the decade from 1689 to 1699.

Jonathan Swift was an Irish cleric, satirist, essayist, political pamphleteer, and poet. He was famous for his works like *Gulliver's Travels*, *A Modest Proposal*, *A Journal to Stella*, *The Drapier's Letter*, *The Battle of the Books*, and *A Tale of a Tub*. Swift is probably the foremost prose satirist in the English language, although he is less well known for his poetry. He published all of his works under pseudonyms such as Lemuel Gulliver, Isaac Bickerstaff, M.B. Drapier or anonymously, he is also known for being a master of two styles of satire; the Horatian and Juvenalian styles.

Swift's most notable and popular religious satire is *A Tale of a Tub* which was published in 1704. This novel demonstrates many of the themes and stylistic techniques he would employ in his later work. It is at once wildly playful and funny while being pointed and harshly critical of its targets. In its main thread, the *Tale*



recounts the exploits of 3 sons named Peter (a Roman Catholic), Martin (an Anglican), and Jack (a Calvinist), representing the main threads of Christianity, who receives a bequest from their father of a coat each, with the added instructions to make no alterations whatsoever. However, the sons soon find that their coats have fallen out of current fashion and begin to look for loopholes in their father's will which will allow them to make the needed alterations. As each finds his own means of getting around their father's admonition, they struggle with each other for power and dominance. Inserted into this story, in alternating chapters, Swift includes a series of whimsical "discourses" on various subjects.

*Gulliver's Travels* was published in 1726. Though, it has often been mistakenly thought of as a children's book, it's a great satire of the times. *Gulliver's Travels* is a misanthropic anatomy of human nature, a sardonic looking glass. It asks its readers to refute it, to deny that it has not adequately characterized human nature and society. Each of the four books has a different theme but all are attempts to deflate human pride. Critics welcome the work as a satiric reflection on the failings of Enlightenment modernism.

In *Gulliver's Travels*, the stories of Gulliver's experiences among dwarfs and giants are best known. Swift gave to these journeys an air of authenticity and realism and many contemporary readers believed them to be true:

They look upon Fraud as a greater Crime than Theft and therefore, seldom fail to punish it with death; For they alledge, that Care and Vigilance, with a very common Understanding, may preserve a Man's Goods from Thieves; but Honesty hath no Fence against superior Cunning: And since it is necessary that there should be a perpetual Intercourse of buying and selling, and dealing upon Credit; where

Fraud is permitted or connived at or hath no Law to punish it, the honest Dealer is always undone, and the knave gets the Advantage.  
(55)

In 1729, Swift published *A Modest Proposal*, a satire in which the narrator with intentionally grotesque logic, recommends feeding the rich using impoverished infants: "I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food ... " (4). Following the satirical form, he introduces the reforms he is actually suggesting by deriding them:

Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients ... taxing our absentees ... using (nothing) except what is of our own growth and manufacture ... rejecting ... foreign luxury ... introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance ... learning to love our country ... quitting our animosities and factions ... teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy towards their tenants ... Therefore, I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he hath at least some glimpse of hope, that there will ever be some hearty and sincere attempt to put them into practice. (5)

Swift mentions the first in a letter to Stella which appears to be about something else entirely:

Morning I have desired, A podia to be always careful, especially about the legs. Pray, do you see any such great wit in that sentences, I must freely own that I did . But party carries every thing now-a-days, and what a splutter have I heard about the wit of that saying, repeated with admiration above a hundred times in half an hour. Pray read it over

again this moment, and consider it. I think the word is advised, and not desired. I should not have remembered it if I had not heard it so often. Why-aye-You must knew I dreamt it just one, and waked with it in my mouth, Are you bit, or are you not, seraphs? (182-3)

*The Battle of the Books*, Swift's earliest mature work, exploits the satirical possibilities of guying "contemporary history" as recorded in newspapers or perhaps practiced by Temple (36). Swift considered himself "an Englishman dropped in Ireland but as a fighter for human liberty, since he was outraged by the results of English misrule" (113). Once again he took up his pen to combat the Whigs, this time on behalf of the Irish. Gradually, there collected around him the nucleus of an Irish party which gained popular support as a result of the six famous *Drapers Letters* (1724), where Swift protested the scandalous patent accorded William Wood for supplying Ireland with a coinage of copper halfpence. His other major prose satires are *The Mechanical operation of the Spirit; An Argument against Abolishing Christianity*, etc.

Swift countered the consumptions rhetoric of colonial ideology, fostering self-respect, self-reliance, and self-stuffiness in the face of the colonists' short-term selfishness, and the irresponsible neglect of their own economy that manifested the corrosiveness of their dependence upon England, in the *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* (1720), and the *Short View of the State of Ireland* (1727). His major satirical poems are *The Lady's Dressing Room*, *The Progress of Beauty* (1720), *A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed*, *A Description of the Morning* (1709), etc. *The Examiner* (1710) and *A letter to a Young Gentleman* (1720) are other his satirical works.

Primarily and essentially, Swift's satire is aimed at human nature. It is not satire of a party, or of a creed, or of a person, or of an age; though satire of all these

can be found in his writings. It is satire of the very nature of Man. It is satire of the very intricate system of human existence. It is satire of the very weakness of human character. Swift's satirical interpretations have a distinct universalness about them. However, it is not a satire which can be compared with the satire of others. While other writers may have a common technique of satire among them, Swift's satire is completely his own. He alone is the exponent and he alone is the follower of this intimidating satire of his. It is extraordinarily original in nature. The ingenuity lies in the delineation of his characters' temperaments; it lies in the interpretation of situations and events he describes. Unlike Keats, he derives ecstasy in the morbid. The greatest characteristic so far of his satire has been his down to earth attitude towards life. His satire has a drastic viciousness about it which is feared by friends and foes alike. It is this directness and audacity which make his satire excruciatingly painful.

The central point of Swift's satire is Man. He sees Man from all sides. He measures his intellectual, psychic, spiritual, and the moral values against his innumerable follies and vices. He finds, to his utter dismay, that there is no balance between Man's virtues and his vices. The balance is always tilted towards the vices. This realization instills in his mind, an unfathomable disappointment. This increased knowledge of mankind hardens his thought, irons his feelings and galvanizes his expressions. The ultimate outcome of this is not only disturbing but also indigestible. His attacks are monstrous and they give hint of being too ruthless for comfort. They become misanthropic in nature and they denounce mankind. So, his satire is misanthropic satire. Swift wants to unveil the misruling of English Government in Ireland through his writings mixed with satire.

## **Chapter Two: Satire across Times**

A satire, generally speaking, is an attack on foolish or wicked behavior by ridiculing vices and follies through the medium of humor, sarcasm and parody. The word 'satire' comes from the Latin word 'satura' which means "medley, dish of colorful fruits" and was defined by Quintilian as a wholly Roman phenomenon. To him, the satire was a literary form but soon it meant the tone of the piece.

Almost all the western literary forms have originated from Greek literature, but not satire. Although, one can find satirical spirit in Greek literature as even in the Bible, "No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom will die with you", it did not exist as a distinct literary genre form. It is accepted or justified fact that the Romans invented satire.

The satire is a literary composition in verse, essentially a criticism of folly and vice which it holds up to ridicule or scorn. Its chief instruments are irony, sarcasm, invective, wit and humor. The main characteristics of satire are: (I) it is a light form of composition, (ii) it aims at amendment of vices by correction, and (iii) forceful and outspoken and hits the target straight. Satire is both a specific literary genre in which human or individual vices, follies, abuses, or shortcomings are held up to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony, or other methods, sometimes with an intent to bring about improvement (2). It is used in graphic arts and performing arts as well. Although, satire is usually witty, and often very funny, the purpose of satire is not primarily humor but criticism of an event, an individual or a group in a clever manner.

High Holman defines satire as "a literary manner in which the follies and foibles or vices and crimes of a person, humankind or an institution are held up to ridicule or scorn with the intention of correcting them" [24]. This manner may be

present in various art forms and may employ many methods. It has also been justified as corrective of human vice and folly. Thus, satire is a comment on other's weakness in a humorous way to correct human follies. However, satire differs from the comedy. Comedy evokes laughter mainly as an end in itself, while satire uses laughter as a weapon. A satirist thus attacks them with a motive for correcting of human vice and folly. In this regard, remarked "those who are ashamed of nothing else are so being ridiculous" [6].

Although, satire is often comic, its objective is to evoke not mere laughter but laughter for corrective purpose. It always has the target such as pretense falsity deception, arrogance, which is held up to ridicule by satirists. Because the satirist usually can not speak openly or does not wish to do he chooses means that allow him to utter the unspeakable with impunity, with regard to satirist High Holman comments:

His view point is ultimately that of the cold eyed reality, which penetrates shame and pretense for a didactic purpose. The portrayals, generally are at variance with outward appearances, but they contain recognizable truth, and it is this truth that gives the satirist his license to attack. [293]

In the concise *Oxford Dictionary of English Literature*, satire is defined as a poem or in modern use, sometimes a prose composition in which prevailing vices or follies are held up to ridicule [11].

A satirist, like ironist presents one thing and means another, which may appear ridiculous at the surface. A satirist makes readers laugh, tries to reveal human vice which people do not want to hear. Satiric comedy ridicules political and philosophical doctrine or attacks deviation from the accepted social order. The early master of

satiric comedy was the Greek Aristophanes, who is particularly famous for his political satire in which he criticized the powerful Cleon (as in the *Knights*) and for the persecution he underwent [5-8]. His play mocked political, philosophical and literary manner of his age. His popular satirical works are *The Birds*, *The Clouds*, etc. reveal the bitter truth no matter what motive it may have behind it. A satire, at the surface, appears to be full of aesthetic feelings or like a romance. But its underlying intentions are attacking a particular target in a disguise. Satire, according to Abrams is "the literary art of diminishing or derogating a subject by making it ridiculous and evoking towards it attitude of amusement" [7].

In Rome, the first to discuss satire critically was Quintilian, who invented the term to describe the writings of Lucile's. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, most believed that the term 'satire' comes from the Greek Satyr; satyrs were the companions of Dionysos and central characters of the satyr plays of the Theatre of Ancient Greece. Horace and Juvenal are the two most influential Latin satirists who were active during the early days of the Roman Empire. Horace's major satirical work is *Sermones* where as Juvenal's major work is *Satiric Theory*. Other important Roman satirists are Lucilius and Persius.

Chaucer was the greatest satirist of middle ages. He is famous by his work *The Canterbury Tales*. He says: "I think that all the pilgrims in the *Canterbury Tales*" are satirized to some extent; some of the satirizations are more subtle than others. The Knight is one of the pilgrims that is more subtly satirized.

After Chaucer, the satirist Erasmus published his own work *The Praise of Folly*. In the *Praise of Folly*, God's will is long neglected while Folly attempts to seduce us from our responsibilities into a life of ignorance and ease; but once Folly starts quoting from the New Testament (Folly,79), its message gradually transforms

her into a new Folly, Christian Folly, which is close kin to Christian wisdom. The Elizabethan (i.e; 16<sup>th</sup> Century English) writers did not know about the real origin of the word satire, and stressed only the Greek influenced derivative, so that they believed it to relate to the half- animal, half-human satyr, that lived in the wild and was full of grim. John Dryden (1631-1700), the enlightenment satirist says "the true end of satire is the amendment of vices by corrections. He further says, roman satire has 2 kinds: comical satire and tragical satire, each with its own kind of legitimacy [6].

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) was one of the greatest of Anglo-Irish satirist, and one of the first to practice modern journalistic satire. He insisted that the satire he wrote was not malice but medicine. For him, "satire is a sort of glance where in beholder do generally discover everybody face but their own" [12]. His first major prose play, *A Tale of a Tub*, (1704) is the most notable and popular of Swift's satires on the state of religious affairs in day. Swift's major work is *Gulliver's Travels'* (1726), where the stories of Gulliver's experiences among dwarfs and giants are best known. Swift Says:

The Houyhnhnms have no letters, and consequently their knowledge is all traditional ... In poetry, they must be allowed to excel all other mortals; wherein the justness of their similar and the minuteness, as well as the exactitude of their descriptions, are indeed inimitable.

(321)

*A Modest Proposal* is the most important work of Swift, published in 1729. In this essay, Swift proposes to kill all the poor children of Ireland and sell their flesh to wipe out starvation prevalent in Ireland and to get rid of the problem of over population and the use of the skin for various purposes for ladies and gentleman.



Swift said to Pope "I hardly hope or detest that animal called man" (256). This remark is an elaboration of his cynical attitude. *The Rape of the Lock* by Alexander Pope is the master piece of satire which most of the people accepts such. Pope shared the current view that poetry was a great instrument of moral improvement and that its effective method was that of satire, which by its ridicule destroyed corrupt customs and exposed the wicked. As Swift said speaking of himself in his ironic verse on the death of Swift 1739:

Yet malice never was his aim. He lashed the vice, but spared  
the name. His satire points at no defect. But what all mortals  
may correct He spread a hump, or crooked nose. Whose  
owners set not up for beaux. (Qtd. in Abrams 276)

William Shakespeare was also the greatest satirist and his famous satirical line:

Riddled with madness, backstabbing, and bitter love,  
Hamlet has been unwillingly exposed to the worst side of  
humanity. Everyone around him tries to hide their  
blemishes but it is Hamlet's gruesome... [Hamlet,119].

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Mark Twain became the best known American satirist publishing satire in a variety of forms, including news satire and full length books. Twain's novel *Huckleberry Finn* is set in the antebellum South, where the moral values Twain wishes to promote are completely turned on their heads. His hero, Huck is "a rather simple but good -hearted lad who is ashamed of the sinful temptation" that leads him to help a runaway slave.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, satire has been used by authors such as Aldous Huxley and George Orwell to make serious and even frightening commentaries on the dangers of

the sweeping social changes taking place throughout Europe and United States. T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) employs motifs from myth in a work which can be considered by and large as a verse satire directed against what Eliot perceives the spiritual death in 20<sup>th</sup> century life. The film, *The Great Dictator* (1940), by Charlie Chaplin is a satire on Adolph Hitler and his Nazi Army. The film *Dr. Strangelove* from 1964 was a popular satire on the cold war. The television programme *That Was The Week that was* was also a popular satire.

In the 21<sup>th</sup> century, the famous satirists are L. Hutcheon, D. Griffin and T. Hall. Among them, D. Griffin, the post modern satirist, writes, "Pope made openly self-cantered satire his special stance as a satirist" [215]. Edward and Lillian Bloom, talking all satire as their province, insist on humanitas' as an innate quality of great work in this modality. Humanitas means "the satirist's preoccupation with everything human: man's nature, feelings, inclinations, alienations" [215]. It implies commitment, caring; it involves "an underlying hope, a disguised sense of generosity conducive to dealing with the encrustations of corrupted lives" [20].

Satire has usually been justified as a corrective of human vices and follies. Satires are the jokes about serious things. Satirists, like ironists, say one thing and means another. Wayne C. Booth introduces the term 'stable irony', by which he means that once a reconstruction of meaning has been made, the reader is not then invented to undermine it with further demolitions and reconstructions. But irony, to D.C. Muecke, is:

a way of writing designed to leave open the question of what the literal meaning might signify; there is a perpetual deferment of signification. The old definition of irony-saying one thing and giving to understand the contrary-is superseded; irony is saying something in a way that

activates not one but an endless series of subversive interpretations.

[31]

In short, satire is a form of humour where the writer or the speaker tries to make the reader or listener have a negative opinion about someone, by laughing at them, making them seem ridiculous or foolish, etc. If someone is being satirical, their aim is not to amuse but to affect the person that they dislike; to hurt them, ruin them, etc. A good example of popular modern satire would be Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. The ironic utopia, Huxley illustrates in *Brave New World* sets out a vision of humanity that has eradicated healthcare issues, abolished war and is technologically and, from their perspective, sociologically advanced. However, the book also describes a world which has eliminated family, diversity, art and culture, even religion and philosophy.

In this way, satirist presents one thing under the grab of another which may appear ridiculous at the surface. A satirist, though he jokes and makes readers to laugh, tries to reveal human vice and folly, which is the truth to him. Satirists declare that their truth is what people do not want to hear. We find two main concepts of its purpose, one it not to cure but to wound, to punish, to destroy, and the other is to warn and cure.

## Chapter Three: Textual Analysis

### A Modest Proposal

Jonathan Swift, the savage satirist, wrote his savage work *A Modest Proposal* which is almost frightening and shocking. The essay *A Modest Proposal* means a moderate plan or suggestion or request. This essay is about the conflict between Native Irishmen and British administrators. This conflict continued for years, then onward eventually causing rift among the Irish people. Irish people were suppressed and had to undergo tremendous hardships and difficulties. Irish trade and business were suppressed and religious conflict between Catholic Irish and Protestant Irish were intensified. Eventually, Irish people had to suffer a lot and they were drowned in poverty. However, English rulers were indifferent towards the miseries and miserable condition of Irish people. Swift, in this essay, by means of savage satire dramatizes the reality of poor people and inhuman passion of so-called elite class that is in fact appealing to the heart.

Swift sees a large number of beggars in the street of Dublin. He sees those begging children are burden for their parents and proposes to sell all these children for delicious, nourishing and wholesome food. From their selling, parents as well as the Government will be benefited, the abortion rate will be diminished, poor parents will get some money. The rich people will also be benefited by getting delicious, nourishing and wholesome food. Swift says he has no personal interest upon this proposal but he has favored of his country.

Swift has used the technique of enumeration to talk about the advantages of his proposal:

1. It would greatly lessen the number of papists.
2. The poor tenants will earn something by selling their children.

3. Gentlemen of fortune will have new delicious dishes and money will be circulated within country.
4. Constant breeder will be free from the charge of maintaining them (babies) after the first year.
5. Business of public house will increase which will bring great custom to the state.
6. There would be great incentive for marriage. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers towards their children. Men would become fond of wives and take their care during pregnancy.

The title "*A Modest Proposal* for preventing the children in poor people in Ireland from being a burden to their parents or country and for making them beneficial to the public" is longer but persuasive itself. It is evident that the essay is about the poverty in Ireland. Swift reinforces the pitiful condition of poor people and angers upon the state who is either indifferent or unsuccessful to address such a pathetic situation of many countrymen in Ireland. Swift in the beginning says:

It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin door, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for alms.

(1)

This sentence reflects satirically upon Swift's narrator: the expected sentiment is basically backwards, as the sight of poor people begging makes him melancholy rather than eliciting compassion for them. This sentiment seems to adopt a similar moment of reflection in Graunt's *Natural and Political Observations made upon the Bills of Mortality* (1662). Graunt wonders whether people give alms to the poor out of

"the purest Charity? That is purely for God's sake", or for some other reason; he proceeds to answer his own question:

When we see such objects, we then feel in our selves a kind of pain, and passion by consent; of which we ease our selves, when we think we have eased them, with whom we sympathized: or else we bespeak aforehand the like commiseration in others toward our selves, when we shall (as we fear we may) fall into the like distress. (6)

Graunt recognizes, as Swift himself later did, that giving alms can be self-serving, but his pain and sympathy are real and his final "or else" acknowledges an important human fear – "There, but for the grace of God, go I" – as Swift's speaker does not.

Swift proposes (to the state) the solution of pathetic situation. He writes:

I propose to provide for them in such a manner as instead of being a charge upon their parents or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall on the contrary contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing, of many thousands. (2)

Is it an honest proposal that a human baby can be slaughtered and served at dining table, and used his skin to produce clothes? It means that Swift is a savage satirist because he proposes very horrific proposal.

Barbara Bengels criticizes:

That Jonathan Swift could devastate the object of his satire through the use of wordplay is particularly apparent in *A Modest Proposal*, in which his concern over England's economic structures evokes a most recurrent and vicious pattern of imagery through the seemingly harmless vehicle of clothing. (13)

Right from the first paragraph, he begins alluding to the sartorial state of the Irish as he writes of "Beggars of the Female Sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags" (Swift 502;). By the fourth paragraph, he incorporates a double meaning when he writes of children "exactly at one Year old [...] who instead of wanting Food and Raiment for the rest of their lives; they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the Feeding, and partly to the Cloathing, of many Thousands" (503). It is impossible for us on a first reading to see Cloathing in this context as a noun rather than as a verb; on a second reading, however, his real meaning is clear and horrifying. Throughout the rest of the essay there are at least seven references to clothing as clothing, *per se*: in paragraph seven, he speaks of "the charge of Nutriments and Rags" (504); in paragraph 18, he refers to the "foreign Fineries" of the "several plump young girls in [...] Town" (506); in paragraph 32, he worries about how other projectors will "find Food and Raiment, for a Hundred Thousand useless Mouths and Backs" (509). One must question why Swift felt it appropriate to use clothing, as a vehicle for his satire.

Lance Bertelsen, in his essay *Ireland, Temple, and the Origins of the Drapier* points out that:

Clothing was a prominent social and economic factor in eighteenth-century England. A survey of the notable literature of the time reveals a remarkable interest in its real and symbolic value. Moll Flanders, Robinson Crusoe, and Gulliver respectively view it as that which sets them apart from the rabble, the savages, and the Yahoos. "True Wit," says Pope, "is Nature to Advantage drest;" and Three coats represent the three forms of Christianity in *A Tale of a Tub*. (413)

It is obvious from this quote that Swift had used clothing symbolically before writing *A Modest Proposal*, but it is in this essay that he can exploit its usage most appropriately for his subject, a subject that deals with the ultimate exploitation of children—and of man's ultimate misuse of man.

One of the pleasures mothers take in their children is in their manner of dressing them, a pleasure observed even in a young child playing with her dolls. Ordinarily, dressing one's child becomes synonymous with caring, with the outward manifestation of love and pride, as well as the flaunting of social class. But here in this essay how does Swift toy with this concept of clothing? First and most obvious, he uses it to show Ireland's degradation: Ireland, without the ability to manufacture its own goods, must go in rags. But then Swift takes it a step further and uses the image of dressing in a far more perverse fashion. Demonstrating the need to the Irish to waste nothing, he writes in paragraph 15, "Those who are thrifty (as I must confess the Times require) may flay the Carcase; the Skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable Gloves for Ladies, and Summer Boots for fine Gentlemen" (505). here he does not use the verb to mean "attire" but rather "To prepare and finish, as leather". Perhaps we must admire his restraint in not referring to these as "kid skin gloves". This shows that Swift is uncivilized or barbaric or ferocious writer.

In 16<sup>th</sup> paragraph, Swift carries this usage further in what is perhaps the most morally depraved passage of the entire essay: "I rather recommend buying the Children alive, and *dressing* them hot from the Knife", as we do roasting Pigs. It means that he is savage person or merciless person. The physical revulsion here springs at least partially from the tension created by the normal expectations we have about dressing our children in contrast with the realization of the moral insensitivity of the projector. This is further exemplified in the syntactical withholding of the



phrase "hot from the knife"; up until these words, the sentence would appear relevant to the ordinary, non-Swiftian world. In one final passage employing this same kind of a reversal, there is an ironic culmination of this image pattern: in paragraph 25, Swift speaks of vintners being "so prudent, as to procure the best Recipes for dressing this food to Perfection" (507), the ultimate antithesis of any mother's humane and maternal impulses. It is also the final symbol of the degradation of a society where only a promise of profit will encourage mothers to attend to their offspring.

Swift states advantages one after another, which gradually intensifies pity and shock to the readers. He himself mourned by saying:

I HAVE been assured by a very knowing American of my Acquaintance in London; that a young healthy Child, well nursed, is ,at a Year old, a most delicious, nourishing, and whole some Food; whether Stewed Roasted, Baked, or Boiled; and I make no doubt, that it will equally serve in a Fricasie, or Ragoust. (3)

We would prefer to believe that this is not funny, but we laugh. Swift himself wrote that "the chief end I propose to myself in all my labors is to vex the world rather than divert it", and this rhetorical principle is nowhere more active than in *A Modest Proposal*.

In paragraph 6, Swift presents statistical data through which he wants to make sure his readers about the pathetic situation of Irish people. The number to be "annually born" is twice, refuted, first, in paragraph 10, and second in paragraph 11. In paragraph 10, mothers are to be advised "to let them suck plentifully in the last (the twelfth) month ..." (3) so as to fatten their babies for slaughter. Quite correctly lactation, within the bounds of reasonable nourishment and fluid intake for the mother, is rather automatic and stimulus dependent, i.e.; the greater the nursing, the

greater the flow. But this is not the point; lactation inhibits ovulation, ergo fertility. Although, ovulation post partum may occur at any time, in one group which breast fed, the earliest ovulation began in the thirty-first post partum week as contrasted to the forty-second post partum day in a group not breast-feeding (2). Thus, given the normal nine months from conception to birth, women who breast feed their babies may need as many as seven additional months before the recurrence of fertility. This neatly totals some sixteen months, more or less, and not the required twelve months to validate "annually born".

In paragraph 11, we learn that "a Child just born will weigh Twelve Pounds." Robeta Borkat seems to be the first to publicly question this rather large numbers, although the figure may have occasioned many raised reader eyebrows over the years. She errs, however, to state that this is impossible (3). There are on record birth weights, of infants vaginally delivered, of twenty-four pounds and more (4). That twelve pounds could be the medium, or average, is, to be sure, quite unlikely although women with abundant diets and indolent habits do have larger babies (4). But this is not the point; fetal gigantism gives rise to high perinatal mortality due to disproportion between fetal size and maternal Pelvis (5). Damage to the mother may also be incurred, including a ruptured uterus or inflicted injuries (6): in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, such damage quite probably induced more maternal deaths in childbirth than today. Note now that in paragraph 6, the Modest Proposer has subtracted "Fifty Thousand, for those women who miscarry (deliver prematurely), or whose children die by Accident, or Disease, within the Year". None of his terms anticipate either perinatal mortality or maternal death in childbirth. Thus, if we allow the Proposer his twelve-pound birth weight, his calculations are immediately not accurate, and the

number will be "annually born". It means that Swift did not have such modern medical knowledge and the dangers of oversized newborn.

"I GRANT this Food will be somewhat *dear* and therefore very *proper* for landlords; who, as they have already devoured most of the Parents, seem to have the best Title to the Children" (3). Robert Phiddian says we have the distancing effect of legal terminology, and again we have the focus on opportunities for the wealthy rather than necessities of the poor. However, there is something here in excess of the requirements of parodic impersonation; and there is no good reason to call that excess by any other name than the voice of Swift. The point of the opening in decorum is the word "devoured". Its power goes beyond the needs of the dialect of economic discourse, and it points to a completely different way of "hearing" the text. The sudden savagery follows on through the rest of the sentence so that we are shocked directly by the economic violence of the situation, where landlords are seen to be devouring the tenants whom they should be protecting. The excess of "devoured" also works to awaken puns in the words "dear" and "proper". As the proposer speaks it, the dearness is merely an index of money value. In the market, the infants' flesh will have to attract buyers willing and able to pay a premium for the quality or novelty of the product. However, seen (or, rather, heard) from the broader and more humane perspective of the rest of the sentences this food becomes 'dear' in an emotional sense. A child is dear to her his parents, and human life should be dear to all. We note that "dear" is one of the most common adjectives to attach to a baby. And something similar occurs with "proper", which means little more than appropriate in the Proposer's idiolect. Revised by the Swiftian force of "devoured", however, it recovers much of the weight of its etymology, reminding us of property, propriety, and the act

of appropriate by which landlords assume ownership of their vassals, without assuming an appropriate sense of responsibility.

"Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients; till he has at least some glimpse of hope that there will be ever some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice" (3). This is the last words of Swift, signing off with a snarl after his description of the expedients which just might work and handing control of the text back to the lunatic projector. Symbolically, he is despairing of the efforts he has made in more than a decade of pamphleteering on Irish problems, and giving up the battle to wrest control of public policy, leaving the field to the fools and the knaves, to the projectors and the apologists.

Swift challenges politician to come with answer of his proposal in paragraph 32. The Proposal is deliberately addressed not to oppressing England (who would not care) or to all the Irish (most of whom could not read), but to the Anglo-Irish, a class debilitated in part by English colonialism and in part by its own fecklessness (19). The member of this class are being called to their responsibilities and reminded of the guilt they share for the condition of their country. They are Dublin merchants, Cork clergymen, Limerick gentry, being vexed both by a hard look to their own condition and at the condition of those who depend on them. Swift is being unable to see the oppression of landlords and politician wrote this satiric proposal hoping that they would focus their concentration towards the burning problem of poor Irish people who have neither food to eat or clothes to wear even nor proper place for settlement.

George Wittkowsky, also demonstrates that *A Modest Proposal* had many antecedents over the previous seventy years in the netherworld of pamphleteering and the modest proposer himself is a composit of many voices raised to promote one or another scheme to benefit the public. Nonetheless, he singles out for attention earlier

works by two especially influential writers: John Graunt, the pioneering statistician and demographer, and Sir William Petty, the social theorist who was a significant originator of "political arithmetic", what we today call economics. It is their methods and implicit values that ultimately stand behind the confident social and financial projections of Swifts proposer. Wittkowsky closes his argument with a rhetorical flourish: "May it not be said that *A Modest Proposal* is, in part, at least, the creation of whatever muse presides over the spirit of political arithmetic?" (101).

In the end, Swift says he has no personal interest to promote this necessary work. he has no other motive than the public good of the country, by advancing the trade, providing the infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. He has no children by which he can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and his wife past child-bearing.

## **Gulliver's Travels**

### **First part: A Voyage to Lilliput**

*A Voyage to Lilliput* is an example of man's lust for power as well as the diverse ways and means he employs in achieving it. It is a satire, no doubt, but it is such a satire that it has reduced human kind. That is why, it is called savage satire. Savage satire means vicious or merciless or cruel or uncivilized satire. The objective of satire is to ridicule human nature with a view to correcting faults. In this part, Swift denounces misuse of power, attacks rivalries and considers all evils. The allegorical accounts strongly resemble to that of Queen Anne of England, or in other words, her Government. Basically, the denunciation of Queen Anne's Government and its policies is the denunciation of all the governments of the world which are run by men. It is not the denunciation of a particular government as such, but the evils and maladies rampant in such governments. His attacks have universality about them. Swift hated most of the politicians of his time. His hatred was based on the critical observation he made about them. When he found out that the political system was riddled with corruption and moral deterioration, his disgust developed into an intense hatred. His hatred was directed especially towards those who were hypocrites. He used to believe in healthy politics, but the politics in reality turned out to be different from that which he had conceived.

*A Voyage to Lilliput* contains uncivilized people and their uncivilized emperor. Lilliputians were incorrigible and their problem is a permanent problem. So long as, Man is what Man is, all systems of politics and government will run along the same line as was rampant in his own period. His humorous incident stated in this part:

The Emperor holds a Stick in his Hands, both Ends parallel to the Horizon, while the Candidates, advancing one by one, sometimes leap over the Stick, sometimes creep under it backwards and forwards several times, according as the Stick is advanced or depressed:...

Whoever performs his part with most Agility, and holds out the longest ... is rewarded with the Blue coloured Silk. (36)

This passage is an excellent example of how Swift can hide his feelings behind humour. On the one hand, it reveals the deep-seated hatred that Swift nurses for the foolish persons who hold ultimate power over their subjects. On the other hand, it will give a certain degree of amusement to the reader. He is amused at the size of the Lilliputians (under six inches height), their customs and traditions. It also tries to insinuate that evils and follies are clearly found in the human beings too. Moreover, this particular malady is not confined to a particular country. It engulfs the entire world as:

They are ... not always of noble Birth or liberal Education. When a great office is vacant, either by Death or Disgrace, five or six of those Candidates petition the Emperor to entertain his Majesty and the Court with a Dance on the Rope; and whoever jumps the highest without falling, succeeds in the Office. (35)

Swift looks upon Man as a worthless creature. In fact, the Lilliputians are a dynamic replica of human beings. They are prideful, envious, treacherous, cruel and hypocritical. They are governed by an Emperor who is so ambitious as to think of destroying the neighbouring kingdom; who appoints ministers and courtiers not for their fitness for office but for their ability in walking the tight ropes, to leap over sticks or to creep under them. The same situation can be found in the human world

also. Thus, the above lines are satirically written by Swift.

Some critics opined that Swift's objective in this voyage is to try to bring about a change in the existing laws and codes of conduct. They refer to the description and admiration of Swift for some of the laws regarding ingratitude and fraud. Both of them are regarded as capital crime in Lilliput and draw a death penalty. In our world, ingratitude and, in most instances, fraud go unpunished. The critics argue that Swift wanted both these crimes to be regarded as capital crimes in the human world also. Their argument certainly has become victim of Swift's masterly act of deception. Of course, Swift is a true satirist. This is why, he tries hard to authenticize the events by trying to create Gulliver's bonafides out of nothing. Inwardly, he rejects human system. This indirect rejection is reflected in what Gulliver sees, perceives and observes in the strange lands. For instance, the projection of the Lilliputian Government turns out to be nothing less than despicable. It is influenced by such utterly foolish notion as the controversy of breaking eggs at proper ends. Swift's purpose in exposing this particular incident is indicative of his belief in the existence of such things in the human governments. Maladies such as these and many others have generated seeds of dissension among powerful people and as a result wars have been fought with millions injured or dead. The existence of such ugly character in the human political and social system is one of the reasons of his satire.

Swift was equally critical of the ways of the princes and heads of state of his time. Their feudal administration, their whims and ambitions were so rapacious and disgusting that he bore immense hatred for them. This feeling he reflects in the character of the Lillipution King. Gulliver says:

[...] So unmeasurable is the ambition of princes, that he seemed to think of nothing less than reducing the whole Empire of Blefuscu into



a province, and governing it by a Viceroy; of destroying the Big-Indian Exiles, and compelling that people to break the smaller end of their Eggs; by which he would remain sole Monarch of the whole world.

(50)

This instance is reflective of the profound imperialistic design of the rulers of those times. They are furious at the slightest mistake of their wishes, no matter how servile and obedient one had been in the past. This is proved by the case of the Lilliputian King who is furious with Gulliver for not complying with His Majesty's desire for a complete annexation of the Empire of Blefuscu. So, the Lilliputian King is a cruel or savage person.

## **Second Part: A Voyage to Brobdingnag**

*A Voyage to Brobdingnag* is an example of good government. As compared to its counterpart in Lilliput, the Brobdingnagian Government is much healthier. Here too critics have tried to suggest Swift's yearning for a change. The Brobdingnagian Government, in other words, is Swift's ideal of a government. This argument, as the previous one, is fraught with misgivings. It seems to be based on Swift's excessive attacks on the Lilliputian Government and admiration for the Brobdingnagian one. The Lilliputian Government is a true replica of a human government. On the contrary, the Brobdingnagian Government has been presented as a totally different type of organization where evils are rare and even if there are any major ones they are less evilsome than humans. Both the governments are contrasted with one another under a strong sense of reasonableness and non-evilness. Swift employs this technique to achieve effect for his point: it is his attempt to both maximize and magnify the sheer corruptibility of the Lilliputian Government. It is an established fact that a thing in contrast reveals a great deal more colour than otherwise. This exactly is the case with this problem. If the Lilliputian Government reveals, for instance, ten maladies without being contrasted with its Brobdingnagian counterpart, it reveals as many as twenty when contrasted. So, the contrast is intentional, and undoubtedly made to denounce the Lilliputian Government which, in every form, resembles to a human government. The Brobdingnagian Government consists of politicians who are not only intelligent but also free of evils. The Brobdingnagians believe that:

[...] whoever could make two Ears of Corn, or two Blades of Grass to grow upon a Spot of Ground where only one grew before; would deserve better of Mankind and do more essential Service to his Country, than the whole Race of Politicians put together. (132)

On the contrary, the Lilliputians believe in treachery, cunning, deception etc. Thus, by making a very thorough comparison between the two totally different types of governments, Swift has been able to express his hatred more effectively. So, this text is savage satire.

Gulliver's description of his country, its constitution, and its government is a very dark picture of mankind. Although Swift has tried to restrict these attacks to the European continent in general and to England in particular, it must not be taken at its face value. By talking only of the European continent he makes it appear that his love for other countries remains cruel and thus he is regarded as savage satirist. There are several instances which prove that he is speaking not only for the Europeans but also for the whole world. For instance, the Brobdingnagian King, when told about the legislator and law protectors of England, retorts:

You have clearly proved that ignorance, idleness, and vice are proper ingredients for qualifying a legislator. That law is best explained, interpreted, and applied by those whose interests and abilities lie in perverting, confounding, and eluding them. (128)

These lines are symbolic of such persons in the human world. It is not the post of a legislator or that of a law protector that is at the bottom of the evils. It is Man who is responsible for such a malady. Man, being a universal phenomenon, does not represent a continent only. What can be found in the European continent can be found in other parts of the world too. It is the instinct of evilness in Man that exercises such unreasonable and unethical acts. Thus, the argument that the attack is only against the European does not sound convincing. It is universal phenomenon that laws are violated by those who are supposed to respect, protect and enforce them; injustice is done by those whose job it is to impart it. Swift's satire here is not through Gulliver,

his spokesman, but through the Brobdingnagian king. Swift has tried to suggest that one cannot see one's own faults.

The summing up of Man by the King is not the first observation made by the Brobdingnagians. In fact, several Brobdingnagians have already written about the weaknesses, evils and vices of mankind. For instance, Gulliver wants to find out what that country had to say about Man. He selects a book in the library and turns its pages. After reading a few pages, he stops at one point where the author had very insipidly drawn a sad picture of mankind:

This writer went through all the usual topics of European moralists, showing how diminutive, contemptible, and helpless an animal was man in his own nature; how unable to defend himself from the inclemencies of air, or the fury of wild beasts. How much he was excelled by one creature in strength, by another in speed, by a third in foresight, by a fourth in industry. (134)

Here, Man has been interpreted as an utterly contemptible and helpless creature. He is regarded inferior even to the beasts. Man is excelled in strength by elephants; by ostrich in speed, and by ants in industry. This certainly is an underestimation of Man. He is shown as tiny and worthless creature among animals. His rationality has not been accounted for. A lover of mankind never draws such a dark picture; he loves Man for what he is. He likes Man in his total self and integrity, with his merits and demerits alike. By birth, Man is selfish and to fulfill his petty interests. He takes delight in having Man subjected to murderous denunciation. In this way, Swift satirizes Man having evils, and follies, and correcting them.

### **Third Part: A Voyage to Laputa**

Swift viciously attacks the pursuit of progress that not only aimed at artificiality but also fiddled with innocent human lives in the name of scientific experiments. Swift has presented the frivolous character of Politicians and scientists in a most ludicrous and funny way. Their effect is made not through exaggeration or isolation but through distortion of the physical. They make little physical effect, for their outer aspect is unnatural and purely emblematic. Their interests are entirely abstracts, and they see nothing of the everyday practical world. They have no conception of physical and sensuous beauty, since they see beauty only in mathematical abstractions, and judge not by sense impressions but by an arbitrary relation of animal forms to abstract shapes existing in their minds. Their land is seen to be a place of superstition, sorcery, tyranny, ghosts and the corpselike immortals of Luggage. This is a true manifestation of a human world as Swift sees through the eyes of his misanthropy. The whole voyage is an act of superb allegory depicting in depth the ultra-frailties of mankind. This voyage is a denunciation of human character.

During the course of the seventeenth century, government came to be regarded by many as a science rather than as an art. Those who held this view began to demand that the State should be run by experts well versed in mathematics and other sciences rather than by cultured amateurs. Early in the century, Francis Bacon, himself a prime example of the scientists in politics, defined this demand when he wrote: "The great counsels, and plots and marshalling of affairs come best from learned men (24). As the work of government became more complicated in the latter half of the century, men like William Petty and Gregory King, who were known as political arithmeticians, came into their own. Armed with statistics about population and wealth, they suggested schemes for governmental interference in the economy in

order to achieve economic growth. Such experts helped bring about the financial reforms of the 1690s, and the foundation of the South Sea Company in 1711. To many laymen the effects of these schemes, such as the distress caused by the shortage of money during the recoinage of the nineties, and the South Sea Bubble of 1720, were always disastrous. Swift shared their views that the experts were too theoretical in their approach to be of real practical use. Swift's view was strongly opposed or ignored by then political experts as a result of which he turned sour with them and hence the denunciation. He projects his dislike of governments run by such 'experts' in the island of Laputa where the political arithmeticians are completely in charge and are making a completeness of things. They appear ludicrously absent minded and impractical when Gulliver tells of the Flappers who attend them to keep their minds on the immediate subject under discussion, and of the ill-fitting suits of clothes produced by their refined method of measuring. Gulliver sees for himself the effects of their schemes when he looks around Balnibari. There they have inspired projects designed to work economic miracles, but

The only Inconvenience is that none of these Projects are yet brought to Perfection; and in the mean time the whole Country lies miserably waste, the Houses in Ruins, and the People without Food or Cloaths.

(170)

However, by contrast the estates of Gulliver's friend Lord Munodi, who used old-fashioned methods, were flowing with milk and honey. Even in these few lines Swift has already said things clear. He has quite distinctly exposed the real worth of such mathematically oriented projects and programme. He has lashed out at the artificialness of such a plan and, of course, on the formulators of such absurd policies. The misanthropicness of Swift is so bitter that his narration, although outwardly very

hilarious, is replete with mind-piercing viciousness. It is just not only a satire. It is a satire dipped into the sea of poisonous hatred. There is no such thing as 'correctness' about his satire as used in this part of the book, or any other parts for that matter. It is clearly a misanthrope at large and he sees nothing but disgust and despicability in Man's real character.

After denouncing and ridiculing the political arithmeticians, Swift turns his attacks on the experimental scientists of the Royal Society. His denunciation of this society is mentioned in Part II where three Brobdingnagian scholars examine Gulliver and conclude that he is *Lusus Nature*, or a freak of Nature:

[...] A Determination exactly agreeable to the Modern Philosophy of Europe, whose Professors... have invented this wonderful Solution of all Difficulties, to the unspeakable Advancement of human Knowledge. (100)

His dissatisfaction with these scientists becomes explicit in the description of the Academy of Lagado in the third part. For instance, there is a scientist who is bent upon extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers; another is trying to reduce human excrement into its original food. Similarly, there is an architect who has contrived a new method of constructing a house; by beginning at the roof and working downward to the foundation. There is a man born blind who is assisted by several other blind apprentices in mixing colours for painters. The Academy also boasts of a textile expert genius that he proposes the spiders themselves for a spinning and weaving machine. And then there is a doctor who cures all abdominal or intestinal disorders by conveying a pair of bellows eight inches up the patient's anus and sucking intestinal air out. These descriptions have in fact some basis in reality. Many of

them were taken from the Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society, though they were given a Swiftian twist to wring out every ounce of ridicule from them.

*A Voyage to Laputa* can be termed a very bitter disappointment expressed by Swift. He tries to prove that progress does not necessarily lead to an earthly paradise. He tries to convince that not all things change for the better. He has seen the outcome of the schemes and projects launched by political arithmeticians; he has witnessed the result of experimental scientists which prove that all is not what one hopes of expects. Even in death mankind cannot hope for complete bliss. He was so frustrated with life that even in immortality, he did not see any hope of salvation. This is clearly proved by the case of the immortal Struldbruggs. These people represented a lot of human beings freed from the fear of death. Although they have eternal life they do not have eternal youth. So, the physical and mental decay continue until they acquired an additional ghastliness in proportion to their number of years. Their fate is in itself a sermon on the vanity of human wishes. So, this voyage is that owing to his utmost frustration and a strong sense of disgust over the existing human values, Swift explodes his bitterness in a seemingly vicious manner. That is why, it is called savage satire.



#### **Fourth Part: A Voyage to Houyhnhnms**

*A Voyage to Houyhnhnms* constitutes in itself the savage attack made by a man upon Man. Mankind is shown as a worthless creature. As suggested in the novel, Gulliver is identified with Swift, and Yahoos have been identified as his representation of how human beings are. This voyage is screens which are projected the rareness of mankind, humiliation of human beings, and the worthlessness of the rational animal.

Three kinds of creature like the Houyhnhnms themselves, the Yahoos and the asses live in the Houyhnhnmland. Among these, the Yahoos are described as the most abominable, vile and filthy creature. With this vile creature, Swifts through Gulliver, has tried to equate the human beings of his world. Man, as described in this voyage, resembles to the Yahoos in all aspects except a few. For instance, when Gulliver's master horse comes to know of the dress worn by Gulliver, he is convinced that in every feature Gulliver agrees with the body of the Yahoos except in matters of strength and agility. The Yahoos are known to hate one another more than any other species.

The reason is assigned to the odiousness of their physical features, which one could see in others but would not see upon oneself. This is reflective of the human nature which regards oneself superior to others. As in another attitude, both the Yahoos and human beings resemble of their food makes it necessary for them to take a special kind of root for digestive purposes. This root is believed to give them a general evacuation. This has a streak of similarity with the human wine which is taken either before or during or after meals more or less for the similar purpose. Both the Yahoos root and the human wine have characteristics in commons. They are intoxicating. Just as an overdose of wine makes a human being stupid, the Yahoo

root does the same to them. When the Yahoos are intoxicated, they sometimes hug, and sometimes tear one another, they would howl and grin, and chatter and reel. Both have the qualities of laziness, idleness, depression and the like.

The degeneration of human character is due to the unrestricted wants and passions that engulf the human mind. This is what Swift tries to imply by talking about them. Since, he has to fulfill his wants; Man commits all kinds of evils and indulges in vices. The human character is a synonym of betrayal, treachery, cunning, manipulation, exploitation, suppression, oppression etc. The entire human world is a solid mass of innumerable vices and follies. Among such follies is the perpetration of war which Gulliver tells his master:

Sometimes the Ambition of Princes, who never think they have Land or People enough to govern: Sometimes the Corruption of Ministers, who engage their Master in a War in order to stifle or divert the Clamour of the subjects against their evil administration. Difference in Opinions hath cost many Millions of Lives; ... Sometimes one Prince quarrelled with another, for fear the other should quarrel with him. Sometimes a War is entered upon, because the Enemy is too *strong* and sometimes because he is too *weak*. Sometimes our Neighbours *want the Things* which we have, or have the Things which we want; and we both fight, till they take ours or give as theirs. (233)

War is a product of Man's uncontrollable passions. This passage exemplifies how futile wars are and how stupid and trivial reasons are responsible for waging them. On the other hand, there are Houyhnhnms who know nothing about wars and feuds simply because they have no passions. This comparison between the two species is a very obvious act of ridiculing.

One of the several things about Man is the element of disparity. Disparity exists everywhere: be it between nations, between things, or between persons. There are poor nations and rich nations and the element of disparity is always there. Since a nation is poor, it has to be aided by the rich and thereby be victim of the latter's hegemony. Poor nations are hungry and richer nations are proud. The disparity between poverty and pride can never bridge. In this case, the Houyhnhnms are much better than human beings.

The mention of lawyers and judges in chapter five is also symbolic of Man's diversified techniques of treachery, cunning and deception. They belong to the society of men who are bred from their youth in the act of proving by words, that 'white' is 'black' and 'black' is 'white', according as they are paid. To this society, according to Swift, all the rest of the people are slaves. In the eyes of human law, what matters is the proof or evidence. If a person commits a crime and if the law fails to procure evidence against him, he is set free. Mere witnesses can not make a man guilty. So, the Houyhnhnm is justified in his conviction that instead of reason man is only possessed with some quality fitted to increase his natural vices. Swift is so bitterly disappointed with the human beings that he penetrates deep into the intricate life-system of Man and projects a picture totally disgusting and repugnant. For instance:

I told him, we fed on a Thousand things which operated contrary to each other; that we eat when we were not hungry, and drank without the provocation of Thirst; that we sat whole Nights drinking strong Liquors without eating a Bit; which disposed us to sloth, enflamed our Bodies, and precipitated or prevented Digestion. That, prostitute female Yahoos acquired a certain Malady, which bred Rottenness in

the Bones of those, who fell into their Embraces: That this and many other Diseases, were propagated from Father to son. (240-241)

The reason is Swift suffered a great deal in his life from frustrations which warped his character and his work. He not only denounces the human race, but also makes it worthless one by comparing it with that of the Houyhnhnms which is governed by reason. Katherine Williams' summing up of this particular aspect is quite apt: "... to live by reason alone is neither possible nor desirable if one is to remain a human being" (36). Mankind is full of virtues and vices alike. Man is predestined to possess these contrastive qualities. It is not clear whether Swift wants a human being to follow suit of the Houyhnhnms or wants a complete transformation in lines consistent with the life-style of horses. If it is the first, it is practically impossible; if it is the second, it will mean a world full of not human beings but some other obscure race the identity of which is unknown.

When Don Pedro takes him along outside, Gulliver keeps his nose well stuffed with rue or sometimes with tobacco. Again, when he eventually joins his family, he is received with great joy and surprise. On the other hand, Gulliver thinks in a totally different way:

[...] but I must freely confess the Sight of them filled me only with Hatred, Disgust and contempt, and the more by reflection on the near Alliance I had to them... And when I began to consider, that by copulating with one of the Yahoo species, I had become a Parent of more; it struck me with the utmost Shame, Confusion and Horror.  
(278)

Gulliver has reached the point where he forgets all his alliance with the human world. He substantiates his conviction by buying two young horses made of stone and

keeps them in a good stable. What he hates most is a lump of deformity and diseases both in body and mind, smitten with pride (46). Thus, Gulliver's final reconciliation is only a partial phasing of his character. Deep down his heart, he hates mankind with its follies and vices, and remains a true misanthropic satirist.

Jackie E. Stallcup says: Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* is a lengthy, complex, uninhibited, and savage social satire that concludes with the narrator's descent into madness and misanthropy-hardly a likely candidate for children's reading, given the modern conception of childhood as a time when children should be protected by adults in orders for them to retain a sense of carefree innocence (2). It has become strongly associated with children's literature. As many editors and critics have noted that it is not surprising given its adventurous elements and the way that it invites children to reveal in a world that corresponds to their own (3). In fact, children straddle the world in much the way that Gulliver does in the first two books; on one side is the Lilliputian world of play where children are giants among their dolls and action figures; on the other side is the Brobdingnagian world of adults where children are at the mercy of beings much larger and more powerful than themselves.

Ronald Paulson writes: "I would suggest that if satire originates as rhetoric, or attack, it only matters or survives as literature as mimesis, exploration, and analysis is. Like comedy or tragedy, satire is a form which gives a compelling poetic representation of a certain area of experience"(7-8).

Carole Fabricant comments: Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* exploits a "formally loose, open-ended literary genre... that accentuate (s) the fragmentation of traditional hierarchic organization and institutionalized order; the collapse of tight, coherent systems and centers of unquestioned authority"(6).

## Conclusion

Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal* and *Gulliver's Travels* make satiric humour on some of the accepted values of the settled life of the Irish people of that time. It ridicules certain aspects of Irish domestic life, Irish social life, and Irish religious life. Satires are freely used as a means creating humour as well as attacking social conventions that seems strange to the readers. Swift attacks the unusual kind of relationship between the Irish people and their English administrators. Thus, Satire is the literary art of making a subject ridiculously arousing towards it feelings of contempt amusement, and scorn. While humour has the evocation of amusement as its comic to the end, satire often employs the comic to the end of pointing up human faults and effecting some improvement in humanity of human institutions. The butt of satire may be an individual, a type of person, a particular social evil as in Swift's *A Modest Proposal*, or even the entire race of mankind or humankind as in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.

*A Modest Proposal* is one of the most effective and savage examples of sustained ironic tone in English Literature. It is cruel and bitter satire to English Government which has indifferent nature towards Irish people and it has made Ireland poorer and poorer. It is satiric because he wants to prevent the children of the poor people in Ireland from being burden to their parents. In fact, his intention is not to kill Irish children rather he wants to say that English Government should pay due attention towards poor people of the Ireland.

Jonathan Swift subscribed to the pre- Enlightenment, protestant idea that man is by nature sinful, having fallen from perfection in the *Garden of Eden*. While man is a rational animal, his rationality is not always used for good. Therefore, one should not hold up rationality as the greatest human quality, as many Enlightenment thinkers

did. It is the human condition, Swift felt, to sin; to be deceitful, cruel, selfish, and otherwise flawed. Rationality and institutions such as Governments, churches, and social structures (Schools, for example) exist to rein in man's tendency to sin, to keep him in line.

Swift's savage satire may be seen as a controlled display of man's nature and his social life. Man is shown as tiny and worthless creature among animals. By birth, Man is selfish and to fulfill his petty interests. Swift, the satirist, in *Gulliver's Travels* forces the reader to bear hard up against the conflict between the possibilities for good in man, and the despicable actions which history, experience and self-realization all show is only too certain, only too obvious, yet there is some qualified hope in the work. The past presents the picture of failure, but failure cannot exist without some goal or aim which is not achieved.

Swift portraying the attitude of Irish people towards the English rulers are also remarkable. Thus, the purpose of thesis has been to look at/read these works from the point of view of savage satire. The other elements associated with satire just helped this writing to explain events and situations.

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