

The Last Stage of *Gulliver's Travels*: The Role of Animal Figures in the Protagonist's Identity Crisis

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Abstract

In the context of 18th century booming English nationalism and colonial power, Swift's satire unravels the dark side of anthropocentrism that heavily relies on rationalism and utilitarian ideology. In fact, Swift uses the Juvenalian style of satire that expresses indignation at the wrongs of society-- to frown at the follies and the moral degeneracy of man in a cross-species rather than a cross-racial view in *Gulliver's* last voyage to Houyhnhnms' land. Swift adopts "zoomorphic" tropes to expose the reductive definitions of human-ness in his age, inspired by such ideas as the Ladder of Species. Swift uses irony throughout the novel to undermine the role of reason (*logos*) and language as concepts much adored and relied upon by his contemporaries to tell humans and non-humans apart. In this paper, the last stage of *Gulliver's Travels* is examined to figure out how Swift undermines Enlightenment notions of reason, language, human superiority, and master-slave binaries, and how this destabilization leads to Gulliver's identity crisis. According to the findings of this research, it is the protagonist's inability to adopt a more porous and inclusive worldview that leads to his identity crisis. Although Gulliver notices the shortcomings of his society through comparing it with the world of speaking animals, he still seeks Enlightenment ideals and fails to think beyond the ideology he has internalised.

Keywords: anthropocentrism, logocentrism, non-human, otherness, rationalism, satire, utilitarianism

Introduction

The complicated connection between man and nature in literary works is often shown through the interaction between humans and animals. How humans and animals are juxtaposed and characterized in a literary landscape, how connections are formed and developed between them, how transformative the encounter between humans and animals turns out to be are all questions to be examined in order to understand how a literary work imagines or reimagines the position of man in the world. A simple look at folk culture as well as literary culture can show how animal attributes--when used to describe human beings-- can cultivate antagonism, and this attitude has paved the way for the emergence of animal otherness. Complicating the concepts of "alterity" or "otherness", Swift's dystopian satire depicts the dynamics of animality in both human and non-human characters. To understand the complications of the concept of animality and how such complications finally dismantle the worldview of the self-assured protagonist, it is important to re-examine the role of animal figures or zoomorphic incarnations in the philosophical development of Lemuel Gulliver. Also, Gulliver's failure to stomach the blurred boundary between the human and non-human, overwhelmed as he is by humanist logocentrism, leads him to rethink the cult of civilization.

Within a post-colonial framework, we can study the role of the anthropomorphized horse-like

creatures in subverting the classical hierarchies founded on positivism, utilitarianism and rationalism.

This study relies on a close reading of the metaphors of alterity and liminal identity in the novel to understand how the humanist obsession with the logical faculty is manifested throughout the text. Examining Gulliver's identity crisis in the context of 18th century Enlightenment rationalism, the aim of this paper is to unravel the deconstructive potentials of animal figures and to probe how the protagonist's logocentric mentality prevents him from fashioning a more porous subjectivity receptive to the complexity of real life.

Historical Background

Gulliver's identity crisis takes place against a backdrop of human supremacy over the animal, prevalent in the philosophical paradigms of eighteenth-century Europe. Historically speaking, the supremacist mindset is rooted in the concept of the *Ladder of Beings*, an offshoot of medieval grand narratives. Corresponding to the late medieval and early Renaissance Humanism, the position of man was just above animals: human, wild animals, and domesticated animals. Support for such anthropocentric ideas could be instigated by English nationalist prowess. The spirit of nationalism developed through ages of subcontinental conflicts, mainly as a response to civil or religious strife. In line with the dawn of maritime power, trade also culminated. However,

seafaring stretched the borders of the British Empire, mainly through exploration in the Indo-Hispanic and Cross-Atlantic territories. However, Swiftian irony subverts or satirizes the long-held idea of Scala Naturae, the Great Chain of Beings or the Ladder of Species by refusing to praise the ideals of the British Empire. In Gulliver's Travels, in chapter IV of part IV, Gulliver elaborates on the conventional power dynamic between men and horses, and how people tame horses back in his country which evokes an anthropocentric attitude, practicing domination over nature:

I described, as well as I could, our way of riding; the shape and use of a bridle, a saddle, a spur, and a whip; of harness and wheels. I added, 'that we fastened plates of a certain hard substance, called iron, at the bottom of their feet, to preserve their hoofs from being broken [...] that if any of them proved intolerably vicious, they were employed for carriages; that they were severely beaten [...] that the males, designed for the common use of riding or draught, were generally castrated about two years after their birth [...]. (Swift 305)

However, later the reader faces a Gulliver disdainful of his species after being exposed to the Houyhnhnms' community of reason and truthfulness, a shift that could be interpreted as a counterargument to his sense of superiority as a man:

When I happened to behold the reflection of my own form in a lake or fountain, I turned away my face in horror and detestation of myself, and could better endure the sight of a common Yahoo than of my own person. By conversing with the Houyhnhnms, and looking upon them with delight, I fell to imitate their gait and gesture [...] Neither should I disown, that in speaking I am apt to fall into the voice and manner of the Houyhnhnms, and hear myself ridiculed on that account, without the least mortification. (Swift 357)

The passage indicates the ultimate estrangement he feels towards his human-ness and his preference for the brutish Yahoos to human beings is vividly expressed here. On another occasion, Gulliver avows his admiration for Houyhnhnms and wishes to turn away from human society to live among the horse-like creatures, a preference imaginatively overturning man's high position in nature:

I had not yet been a year in this country before I contracted such a love and veneration for the inhabitants, that I entered on a firm resolution never to return to humankind, but to pass the rest of my life among these admirable Houyhnhnms, in the contemplation and practice of every virtue, where I could have no example or incitement to vice. (Swift 329)

Actually, what further turns the inversion of anthropocentric hierarchy to an apt topic for

Swift's satire could be the moral degeneracy of mankind hinted at in this part. Moral follies had afflicted his society where people --out of delusion or hypocrisy-- held a decent moral image of themselves. And in a world reigned by animals he could find a relief from man's viciousness:

I did not feel the treachery or inconstancy of a friend, nor the injuries of a secret or open enemy. I had no occasion of bribing, flattering, or pimping, to procure the favor of any great man, or of his minions; I wanted no fence against fraud or oppression. (Swift 354)

Christian-centered humanity carried connotations of religiosity, and upheld sectarianism for many centuries. Therefore, color-bound racial or ethnic undertones could be counted as more recent influences. Yet, even within the course of the 14th century officialization of the English language and civil wars, grand-styled prose of historiography, as in Edward Hall's *Chronicles*, was not exempt from reproducing a monstrous alterity when referring to other ethnicities or sects, reflected in such metaphoric wordings as "plague", "calamity", "eclipse", or "pestilence (pestiferous)" (Hall 1-2). In other non-English European texts, de Montaigne's *Essais*, for example, we can see the native people described as "savages", despite the narrative voice's claim of being fair and impartial in his portrayals (Puchner 1522-1534). The same condescending attitude can be traced in the commodification of native people in slave-trade,

branded as "chattel", conveying non-land properties (Hall 310). These examples show how dehumanization takes place, and how societies of longstanding civilization are nullified through dehistoricization and reduced to out-of-context commodities. As the examples indicate, it was not uncommon in European cultural history to relegate some social groups to the « less-than-human » folk to justify their disposability.

Main Discussion:

The Subversion of Classical Hierarchies in *Gulliver's Travels*

In this process of othering, often animalization or the attribution of animal-like characteristics to the racial or ethnic other frequently takes place. Swift, however, turns out to exhibit a non-conformist position in borrowing the trope of zoomorphic dehumanization for the 18th century "refined" man, highly believed to be capable of reasoning. His nonconformism is realized when he illustrates mankind in humanoid forms (Yahoos), and humanizes the Equidae species (Houyhnhnms), who ultimately discipline the anthropoids. Yahoos are the animalized versions of human beings and are at points set against mankind in comparison. Gulliver admits:

The reader may be disposed to wonder how I could prevail on myself to give so free a representation of my own species, among a race of mortals who are already too apt to conceive the vilest opinion of

humankind, from that entire congruity between me and their Yahoos. (Swift 328) Gulliver quotes his master Houyhnhnm who refers to his resemblance to Yahoos and also his capacity to learn their language that distinguishes him from Yahoos, who are typically untamable creatures:

He was extremely curious to know 'from what part of the country I came, and how I was taught to imitate a rational creature; because the Yahoos (whom he saw I exactly resembled in my head, hands, and face, that were only visible), with some appearance of cunning, and the strongest disposition to mischief, were observed to be the most unteachable of all brutes. (Swift 296)

Another point is the way Houyhnhnms keep and control Yahoos to use them for drudgery, although they failed to tame them completely due to their uneducable nature. Yahoos draw sledges as vehicles for Houyhnhnms (Swift 352), they are "tied by the neck" with "withes" and kept as livestock or domestic animals (Swift 289), and they could also "dig deep holes with their nail" as a toil in primary stages of agricultural tasks (Swift 340). What could be added here is that, culturally, "taming" and harnessing are attributes of man in his interactions with nature, and with horses above all. Yet, in the narrative, the position of authority and domination subversively belongs to horse-like beings. In a fictional society, horse-like creatures prove to be exercising formative power and

normative civilizing practices despite their biological categorization as animal. Yahoos, in the same way, and in contrast to their anthropic shape, are deprived of the benevolent rationality to put freewill into effect and transcend their partial animalism.

Basically, dealing with Gulliver's arrival at the land of Houyhnhnms, neither Lemuel, the narrative voice, nor the reader would encounter figures of entirely human or impeccably animal nature; rather, the liminality of the creatures, falling somewhere between the two ends, calls for a destabilization of the Great Chain of Beings. As an instance, Houyhnhnms communicate through a language of their own. Since conventionally, having and using languages are attributed to mankind, such a capability could render the animality of the Houyhnhnms dubious. Such dubious identity destabilizes the hierarchy that relegates animals to a lower status than men in terms of intellectual capacity, agency, and the capacity to self-express. Gulliver claims Houyhnhnms' language "approaches nearest to the High-Dutch, or German, of any I know in Europe; but is much more graceful and significant" (Swift 295). On another occasion, Gulliver explains:

The two creatures stood silent while I spoke, seeming to listen with great attention, and when I had ended, they neighed frequently towards each other, as if they were engaged in serious

conversation. I plainly observed that their language expressed the passions very well [...]. (Swift 285)

There seems to be an oft repeated pattern throughout Gulliver's observations: the more human-like the creature in outward impression, the more non-human in quintessence. In another sense, the main qualities ascribed to the less-than-human communities in the colonial discourse--such as indolence, promiscuity, and covetousness--Swift ascribes to anthropoids, or Yahoos in his satiric novel. The Houyhnhnm's account of Yahoos characterizes them as totally incapable of overcoming internal tensions:

He said, 'the Yahoos were known to hate one another, more than they did any different species of animals; and the reason usually assigned was the odiousness of their own shapes, which all could see in the rest, but not in themselves. (Swift 331)

Maneuvering on instances of man's moral degeneration and ironically bringing parallels through Yahoos' vices in later chapters, Swift sardonically animalizes mankind. But the Scriptural concept of *imago dei* cherishes and regards man's intellectual, spiritual, and moral potentialities at a divine level. Bestializing a creature "created in the image of God" (Genesis, I: IV), and denigrating him to the level of beasts and brutes, was a major counterargument to Christian beliefs. Besides religious doctrines, the rationalist ideology of the age deemed human

logical faculty as the supreme redemptive force. Swift's overt irony and sarcasm counteracts the basis of rationality and scientific positivism of his age. Gulliver justifies the "causes" and "motives" of war to his master Houyhnhnm:

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 administrations. Difference in opinions has cost millions of lives [...]. (Swift 311)

He, at another point, explains:

Sometimes our neighbors want the things which we have, or have the things we want, and we both fight, till they take ours, or give us theirs, it is a very justifiable cause of a war, to invade a country after the people have been wasted by famine, destroyed by pestilence, or embroiled by factions among themselves. (Swift 312)

As mentioned above, Swift introduces covetousness, corruption, and ideological or political conflicts as causes of war. The unsuspecting tone with which he justifies war doubles the satire to render the causes of human strife unreasonable and ridiculous. Later, he describes Yahoos concerning their viciousness, meanness, insatiable greed, and aggressiveness:

You throw among five Yahoos as much food as would be sufficient for fifty, they will, instead of eating peaceably, fall together by the ears, each single one impatient to have all to itself [...] those kept at home were tied at a distance from each other: that if a cow died of age or accident, before a Houyhnhnm could secure it for his own Yahoos, those in neighborhood would come in herds to seize it, and then would ensue such a battle as I had described, with terrible wounds made by their claws on both sides [...] the like battles have been fought between the Yahoos of several neighborhoods, without any visible reason. (Swift 331)

The fights among the despicable Yahoos are highly reminiscent of the human wars Gulliver explains to the Houyhnhnms. Then, the master Houyhnhnm tells Gulliver about Yahoos' odd habit of collecting some sort of shining stones, which further conveys their greed for a trifling object:

My master said, 'he could never discover the reason of this unnatural appetite, or how these stones could be of any use to a Yahoo; but now he believed it might proceed from the same principle of avarice which I had ascribed to mankind. (Swift 332)

When putting men and Yahoos side by side, the pettiness and unreasonableness of their

motivations are comparable. Such petty intentions brought about man's moral decadence.

Swift reproaches the follies of men who claim to show a civilized behavior by portraying humanoid creatures to mirror the vices of human beings, reminding them that walking on two legs, like yahoos, would not suffice to make them "human". Swift goes on to venerate animals' exalted moralities to shock his readers out of their anthropocentric certainties.

Challenging Rationalism as the Defining Trait of Humanity

The main question is why Yahoos are majorly interpreted as representations of civilized men, or man in general, rather than the native people of uncharted lands. In the sardonic phrase, "gentle Yahoos", reminiscent of "gentlemen", Swift underpins the cross-species premise of the satire. By rendering gentle yahoos as synonymous with gentlemen, Swift ridicules the British nobility. More specifically, his remarks were targeted at Englishmen, who invest too much in man's faculty of reason, manifest in their technological, scientific, or philosophical pursuits in the Enlightenment era. The excerpt below illustrates Gulliver's rationalist gesture as he admires the equines' sensible behavior:

I was amazed to see such actions and behavior in brute beasts; and concluded with myself, that if the inhabitants of this country were endued with a proportionable

degree of reason, they must needs be the wisest people upon earth [...] upon the whole, the behavior of these animals was so orderly and rational, so acute and judicious [...]. (Swift 283-284).

And this remark was made by Gulliver before he learned that Houyhnhnms were not tamed by any man, but essentially created as rational animals. Nevertheless, reason in the community of the equine is highly regarded as well. Swift sketches the fictive community of Houyhnhnms to mirror the dominant European rationalism. Gulliver's account of his fame among Houyhnhnms highlights the status of reason in the fictional world he depicts: "the report spread of 'a wonderful Yahoo, that could speak like a Houyhnhnm, and seemed, in his words and actions, to discover some glimmerings of reason'" (Swift 297). Actually, Gulliver's "capacity for speech and reason" amazed the Houyhnhnms (Swift 300).

A better example of the way rationality was enthroned in Swift's satire is the Houyhnhnms' advocacy of collective reasoning and council as the entire species gather in an assembly every four years, "at the vernal equinox", to make decisions on "the state" and "districts", or agricultural issues (Swift 345). One of the issues debated in their councils is the "extermination" of Yahoos (Swift 346).

Another example of Houyhnhnms' superiority to mankind is their use of simple, clear

language, testifying to their unambitious natures. Gulliver explains: "their language does not abound in variety of words, because their wants and passions are fewer than among us" (Swift 305). A more elaborate example shows how Houyhnhnms' objective view of the world leaves no room for controversy:

I remember it was with extreme difficulty that I could bring my master to understand the meaning of the word opinion, or how a point could be disputable; because reason taught us to affirm or deny only where we are certain; and beyond our knowledge we cannot do either. So that controversies, wranglings, disputes, and positiveness, in false or dubious propositions, are evils unknown among the Houyhnhnms. (Swift 342)

Essentially, the Houyhnhnms would not allow the kind of degeneracy brought about by indulging in unnecessary disputes. Not only do they avoid debates and disputes, but they also limit their verbal repertoire to limit the linguistic possibilities that could facilitate unending disputes. For example, they simply use the word "Yahoo" to refer to a wide range of evils:

I know not whether it may be worth observing, that the Houyhnhnms have no word in their language to express anything that is evil, except what they borrow from the deformities or ill qualities of the Yahoos. Thus they denote the folly of a

servant, an omission of a child, a stone that cuts their feet, a continuance of foul or unreasonable weather, and the like, by adding to each the epithet of Yahoo. (Swift 352)

To caricature the overemphasis on reason and puncture the pompous language employed to rationalize all sorts of irrationalities, Swift turns the value system of the British society upside down by rendering man's faculty of language the source of unnecessary evil among the Houyhnhnms.

Fading Myth, Rising Crisis

As Gulliver first comes across the Houyhnhnms' land, he still takes it upon himself to civilize and tame the residents of other lands as an English subject. This tendency conjures up the colonial mentality that pictures the native people as primitive, naïve, and barbarous:

When I was a little refreshed, I went up into the country, resolving to deliver myself to the first savages I should meet, and purchase my life from them by some bracelets, glass rings, and other toys, which sailors usually provide themselves with in those voyages [...] I walked very circumspectly, for fear of being surprised, or suddenly shot with an arrow from behind, or on either side. (Swift 280-281)

But he comes to be disillusioned with the European version of civilization, which heavily

relies on rationalism. But before long, he finds a substitution for what he thinks he has given up: he subscribes to another model of logocentrism—to the Houyhnhnms' cold reason. Devoting himself to this new mode of cold rationalism, the European image of civilized man is shattered in his mind. He expresses his discontent to ever live among mankind again (to which he refers as Yahoos) as his master Houyhnhnm tells him to leave:

[...] for, supposing I should escape with life by some strange adventure, how could I think with temper of passing my days among yahoos, and relapsing into old corruptions, for want of examples to lead and keep me within the paths of virtue? That I knew too well upon what solid reasons all the determinations of the wise Houyhnhnms were founded, not to be shaken by arguments of mine, a miserable Yahoo [...]. (Swift 359)

He also denotes:

When I thought of my family, my friend, my countrymen, or the human race in general, I considered them, as they really were, Yahoos in shape and disposition, perhaps a little more civilized, and qualified with the gift of speech; but making no other use of reason, than to improve and multiply those vices whereof their brethren in this country had only the share that nature allotted them. (Swift 356-357)

Not only is he disconnected from human society, and divorced from the power structure that legitimizes his identity, but is also debased and

dehumanized by the new system in which he cannot fit successfully. As Gulliver's sense of superiority is shattered, there emerges a subtle discordance between what the disillusioned narrator beholds as despicable and what Swift tries to imply as the wrong way of seeing the world. There are instances depicting the way authorial and narrative voices are inconsistent. Upon returning home, Gulliver obsessively admires the Houyhnhnms to a degree of idolizing them:

For although, since my unfortunate exile from the Houyhnhnm country, I had compelled myself to tolerate the sight of Yahoos, and to converse with Don Pedro de Mendez, yet my memory and imagination were perpetually filled with the virtues and ideas of those exalted Houyhnhnms. (Swift 372)

Swift made an attempt to expose the flaws of an absolutist system of thought through parody and irony, standing in opposition to his protagonist, who absolutely worships the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver's critical revaluation of his society is taken to an extreme; the reader witnesses a misanthropic self-exile by the end of the novel:

During the first year, I could not endure my wife or children in my presence; the very smell of them was intolerable; much less could I suffer them to eat in the same room. To this hour they dare not presume to touch my bread, or drink out of the same cup,

neither was I ever able to let one of them take me by the hand. (Swift 372)

Booth maneuvers on Gulliver's statement that "these noble Houyhnhnms are endowed by nature with a general disposition to all virtues" (Swift 341). He believes that Swift could not be a promoter of the idea of Houyhnhnms' perfection in the satirical landscape of Gulliver's Travels. Sherburn, similarly refers to the improbability "that there will ever be unanimous agreement as to what Swift is doing in ... Gulliver's fourth voyage" (92). So, the reader could observe the distinction between the "norms" Gulliver set (advocacy and conformism to radical rationalism) and the "norms" Swift set (critical resistance to obsessive rationalism) (320-321). Shurbern concludes that the "distance" between the narrator and the implied author is not clear, but they are "morally" and "intellectually" different, if not opposite (155-156). The reader of the novel must be aware, Gong notes, of "telling" (by Gulliver the narrator) and "showing" (Gulliver the character), which makes a "dual focalization" (1-2). But both voices are flawed: whether it is Gulliver the character that is naïve, faithful, and an advocate of English rationalist gentlemanliness, or Gulliver the narrator that has become disillusioned and misanthropic, and obsessively adores the Houyhnhnms' rationalism. According to the conventions of satire, the narrator is supposed to have a sober vicarious voice that presents

moralizing comments at times; such as what we hear from Gulliver after returning home:

Therefore, since my acquaintance were pleased to think my poor endeavours might not be unacceptable to my country, I imposed on myself, as a maxim never to be swerved from, that I would strictly adhere to truth; neither indeed can I be ever under the least temptation to vary from it while I retain in my mind the lectures and examples of my noble master and the other illustrious Houyhnhnms of whom I had so long the honour to be an humble hearer. (Swift 375)

Near the ending, he posits that Houyhnhnms should take control of Europe to correct their moral failures: But, instead of proposals for conquering that magnanimous nation, I rather wish they were in a capacity, or disposition, to send a sufficient number of their inhabitants for civilizing Europe, by teaching us the first principles of honor, justice, truth, temperance, public spirit, fortitude, chastity, friendship, benevolence, and fidelity. (Swift 378)

Swift leaves Gulliver vacillating in despair. The authorial voice of satire diagnoses the cold rationalism of Houyhnhnms as a version of European rationalist gentlemanliness; he tries to portray how reason without passion could be as deleterious as human corporeality without reason, by creating a contrast between Houyhnhnms and Yahoos. He prepares the setting for his protagonist

to go past the flawed ideology of his time, but Gulliver fails to move beyond the frame of thought he has lived by, he merely changes the object of worship by the end of his quest and helplessly subscribes to an uncompromising Manichean ideology.

Gulliver Challenges Anthropocentrism

As soon as Gulliver projects his illusory image of perfection on Houyhnhnms, his character development undergoes a major shift. The shift does not change him for the better but leaves him disenchanted with human society and frustrated with modern science and technocracy. Hence, he opts for speaking animals who not only mirror the abnormality of human beings, whether Gulliver notices it or not. He resides among them temporarily, and then forever yearns for their accompaniment. His long hours of conversing with the horses in his stable could better portray his attachment to them.

Gulliver's bond with horses expands as he totally endorses and assimilates to Houyhnhnms' hierarchical society. Their system authoritatively maintains slavery and caste order, hardly exhibits affective policies, tends to endorse the agenda of mass extermination, and brings mankind down to the level of brutes. He embraces their supremacy, narrow-scoped definitions, and limited worldview, despite his seemingly worldly-wise gestures. Failed by mankind, he obediently and unquestioningly turns to the horse-like creature

and addresses him as “my master” (Swift 295-373).

The Body as a Site of Power: Hierarchy and the Politics of the Gaze

The question of corporality preoccupies Gulliver's mentality from the beginning of the novel. In Nichols' words, fleshly-ness, “senescence”, even abject, and decay could all be peculiarities or associations of carnal body that modern man struggles to transcend. Gulliver's keen observation of the gigantic anatomies of the dwellers of Brobdingnag, as if scrutinizing them under a magnifying glass, only intensifies his aversion (1153-1169). Later on, his inquisitive look at the Yahoos is reminiscent of a laboratorial outlook intent on dissecting a biological specimen. That scientific gaze is complemented by his descriptive vocabulary on their animality such as “claw”, “roar”, or “brute”, as if writing a piece for a wildlife documentary program (Swift 278-382).

The narrative voice assigns logos, or the faculty of reason, to Houyhnhnms by indicating the fact that they possess a language and employ codes of inter-species and intra-species communication. While Houyhnhnms interact, Yahoos “roar”. Evidently, from their first encounter on, never does the narrator employ a milder word in connotation than “brute”, “beast”, “animal”, or “monster” to describe the Yahoos (Swift 278-382).

Power dynamics can be found in the communication between Gulliver and the Houyhnhnms. The Equine objectify Gulliver and treat him like an artifact to be exhibited at dinner table or on social settings. Their treatment of him, as he applies their language, evokes the image of a toddler being overseen by pedagogical superintendents, and more precisely, a pet being played with, as far as his level on their social scale is concerned. Gulliver gives an account of how the equine observe him closely:

The two horses came up close to me, looking with great earnestness upon my face and hands, the gray steed rubbed my hat all around with his right fore-hoof [...] the latter felt the lappet of my coat, and finding it to hang loose about me, they both looked with new signs of wonder. He stroked my hand, seeming to admire the softness and colour [...] they were both under great perplexity about my shoes and stockings, which they felt very often, neighing to each other and using various gestures, not unlike those of a philosopher, when he would attempt to solve some new and difficult phenomenon. (Swift 284)

Kelly expresses his doubt about the positionality of Gulliver in the world of Houyhnhnms; whether Gulliver ultimately consummates his position as a “pet” or “pet-keeper” remains debatable, conferring him a liminal identity in the narrative's constant juxtaposition of human and non-human

animals (323). Therefore, the equines' view of him as a pet, or a creature of a lower nature, does not confirm their compassionate manner, but reveals their infantilization of the "other."

Nichols comments on the social order of the horse-like creatures as a mockery of Platonic Republican community. Within the satirical framework, their tenet of "cultivating reason" without a tincture of "passion", eventually ends up in the authoritarian or totalitarian version of the Platonic Republic. Selective breeding for example, can be traced in the Houyhnhnms's inter-clan systematization of demographic growth, a procedure which marks their strategies for regulating "overpopulation":

When the matron Houyhnhnms have produced one of each sex, they no longer accompany with their consorts, except they lose one of their issue by some casualty [...] This caution is necessary, to prevent the country from being overburdened with numbers [...] In their marriages, they are exactly careful to choose such colours as will not make any disagreeable mixture in the breed. Strength is chiefly valued in the male, and comeliness in the female; not upon the account of love, but to preserve the race from degenerating; for where a female happens to excel in strength, a consort is chosen, with regard to comeliness. (Swift 343)

Nichols explains how aspects of private life fade into the Houyhnhnms' communal landscape of rationality and equability; even emotions or issues posited as matters of taste are absent (1153-1158). One of their meetings revolves around decimation of Yahoos, reminiscent of racial cleansing in the discourse of Eugenics essentially based on the eradication of the deficient, infirm, or any agent of socio-economic drain. Later, Gulliver proposes a sterilizing method for gradually wiping Yahoos out, a practice necessary for ethnic hygiene in Eugenics (1153-1158). Apart from Eugenics, it seems that classism is also operating in the world of the Houyhnhnms. There is a hierarchical system as they nurture servants to serve the upper-class Houyhnhnms. It is elaborated that "the race of inferior Houyhnhnms, bred up to be servants, is not so strictly limited upon this article: these are allowed to produce three of each sex, to be domestics in the noble families" (Swift 343). Not only is the right to reproduce strictly regulated within the society of Houyhnhnms, but also the commodification of the "inferior Houyhnhnms" as low-status servants, is the norm. Ultimately, Swift exposes how vision, control, and embodiment intertwine to reproduce power itself.

Rational Order, Utility, Discipline

With rising literacy in the 18th century, pamphlets and periodicals became accessible to the reading public and relied on journalistic style and a matter-of-fact tone to attract middle-class audiences. The

supporters of different political factions presented their doctrines and criticized their rivals and responded to their challenges within the pamphlets they wrote and published. In the high point of the Pamphlet War, Swift, as a notable pamphleteer, adopted a witty language as a means of delivering social critique, a technical device he used in both essays and narratives. Although the clash between Puritans and Papacy, as well as Whig-Tory tensions, provided Swift with the political materials that he chose to address in his writings, the caricaturing wit of Gulliver's Travels emerged as a critical reaction to scientific objectivism. Recurrent textual reference to well-organized and pragmatic procedures of the equine culture and conventions, like details on their hospitality, dietary habits, table manners, or filial piety over meals, allude to the European calculative mindset and the obsession with structural orderliness. To exemplify:

About noon, I saw coming towards the house a kind of vehicle drawn like a sledge by four Yahoos. There was in it an old steed, who seemed to be of quality; [...] they dined in the best room, and had oats boiled in milk for the second course, which the old horse ate warm, but the rest cold. Their mangers were placed circular in the middle of the room, and divided into several partitions, round which they sat on their hunches, upon bosses of straw. [...] The behavior of the young colt and foal

appeared very modest, and that of the master and mistress extremely cheerful and complaisant to their guest. (Swift 291-292)

The description echoes the Houyhnhnm's hierarchical society and geometrical discipline within the family and the private space of home. Houyhnhnms' pattern of communication is similarly marked by their laconic manners and their omission of all unnecessary words: "[...] but I was infinitely delighted with the station of an humble auditor in such conversations, where nothing passed but what was useful, expressed in the fewest and most significant words [...]" (Swift 355). Language economy reflects the cultural and collective ideology of rationalism outdoing subjective, affective, or rhetorically adorned speech. In the land of Houyhnhnms, not only the living members of society must be filtered so that only the clean and the well-formed would remain, but also their language must be filtered to leave out the useless and let in the useful and the necessary. The narrative addresses the follies of the "Age of Reason" to expose and level social criticism at the excessive rationalization common in the English society during Swift's lifetime by anthropomorphizing non-human animals as the caricatures of social types in his society.

Gulliver's Narrative Translation and His Inevitable Othering

It might be that Yahoos' impenetrable savagery is as ossified and rigid as Houyhnhnms' meritocracy, and as rigid as their disdainful rejection of the outsiders. For the equine, Gulliver's "otherness", is not an issue they could get used to. First and foremost, Gulliver's integration to quasi-republican cult of equines depicts the imposed internalization of the maxim of rationalistic practicality. Even in such a landscape that is far from human society, he automatically sides with Enlightenment logocentrism. Second, he has to confront the fact that among his nation or the equine, and any other society, he is destined to be an "other". On the one hand, he rebuffs most humanistic tenets defined by his coevals. On the other hand, the community whose ideals he adheres to, estranges him. At the climax of his awakening, he is helpless because he has no other alternative ideological choice than to turn inwards.

Marshal comments on the main idiosyncrasies that Swift presents in his satiric style. The quality that Marshal identifies as "degree of obfuscation and clarity of target", represents the muddled boundaries of the fictive and factual in Swift's satirical landscapes. She delineates how the authorial voice in Swift's works prefers to waver between perspectives rather than to champion or fully negate a view. Her remarks rebuke an absolute sense of "universal meaninglessness", but still take into account the microcosmic perplexity the protagonist, and inevitably, the reader, go through. And such

perplexed persona, by the way, should not, and would not contribute to an overwhelming vainness, nor to the unreliability of the narrative, but rather, serve as narrative liminality (216, 233-235).

However, Wübbelt presents a contradictory stand point. Applying Rawson's ideas in her assessment of the same issue, she suspends Gulliver's reliability as a speaker or narrative mask throughout most of the account. She sets the devoted nationalist Gulliver, who has high regards for science and philosophies of his age and keeps an almost broad-minded stance towards the cultures he comes across, against the misanthropic man submitting to the government of animals. She notes that the accounts of the three first voyages are chronologically composed by the "transformed" Gulliver. Hence, she concludes, the narrator had been ostensibly maintaining an inauthentic approach, as if counterfeiting the naïve amiable Gulliver in several chapters (qtd. in Wübbelt 10). This observation supports the idea of the narrator's unreliability.

Nevertheless, instead of centralizing the notion of reliability by wrapping up the two interpretations and adding some more details, the discrepancy could be ascribed to a gap between the authorial agency and the narrator's voice. Swiftian voice comes in contrast to Gulliver's earlier outlook. Gulliver goes on a quest to find a worldview he can adhere to, such as patriotic prowess, human-centered rationality, or

technocratic perfection. However, while Swift welcomes the precarious or the heterogeneous relativity of truth, Gulliver fails to come to terms with such a relativity and regresses to secluded existence instead.

Regarding Bachmann-Medick's views on "projection" and "alterity", one can say that Gulliver keeps projecting his inner incapacity to keep up with the flow of reality onto humanity's highly charged inability to reach transcendental ideals in general. The effect develops as a widening gap between him and the other men, aggravating his sense of "otherness" (Bachmann-Medick). Yet, back to the contextual evidence, even such a configuration of Gulliver's individual defect cannot overshadow his communal dysfunction. The communal flaw develops as an obsession with intellectual growth in a one-dimensional way. Infatuated with similar standards as his contemporaries, he fails to substitute another framework, like that of a self-made, eclectic or liminal viewpoint, and prefers to turn inwards. And here, the catalyzing role of animals should be highlighted. In spite of earlier explorations, in which he had run across different groups or shapes of man, the last voyage confronts him with the land of articulate animals. They emerge as safe grounds to incarnate his utopian ideals. In sharp contrast, Yahoos from the beginning, whom he labels as untamable or uneducable, provoke his abomination, and are denied any reconsideration because they are

anthropoids. They resemble mankind's pettiness to him, and in human beings he has already lost hope.

Conclusion

Swift, in his satirical novel, specifically utilizes animals or anthropoid figures to render visible the shaky boundaries between humanity and animality. These characters would help expose the protagonist's alienation from the cultural codes in which he is entrenched. As the classical notion of the Ladder of Beings is subverted, and as equines are given authoritative agency over mankind, the anthropocentric supremacy crackles. Throughout Gulliver's Travels, the characters' gaze towards "the other" could range from commodification, objectification, patronization, condescension, to self-denigration; therefore, the traditional or top-to-bottom power structures are sometimes reinforced and often problematized. The journey gives Gulliver the chance to move around the British society and observe it from multiple perspectives. However, the travels fail to transform him into a man prepared to confront the world with all its shortcomings and setbacks. He ultimately ends up disillusioned and turns inward.

Swift's sardonic irony and invectives are targeted at his contemporaries and the impractical Enlightenment ideals: He exposes man's pettiness, dominion of passion over reason, colonial ambitions, and disappointment with modern science and futuristic technocracy. Swift

expresses his critical viewpoint through the depiction of societies entrenched in the utilitarian system which glamorize a one-dimensional pursuit of profit.

Purported reversal of roles, in alignment with the discrepancy between the authorial and narrator's voice, brings about a rich subversive stance against the one-dimensional standards of rationality, as approaching the post-Enlightenment era. The mission that Gulliver, the protagonist, fails to accomplish, the authorial Swiftian voice successfully realizes. And logically, that is the way a satire should be. His irony illustrates regression and reclusive inwardness as the fate of a man of ideals who undergoes an anticlimactic confrontation with man's follies. Gulliver can't identify his inner powerlessness to form a balanced, relative worldview; thus, he distances himself from others, further positioning himself as another. And this way, he projects his inescapable paralysis onto humanity's unredeemable viciousness and triviality. Yet, the issue goes beyond individual flaws. Swift carefully portrays such incapacity to warn against how indoctrination, single-mindedness, and overemphasis on the human faculty of logic could lead to the communal flaw of upholding rationalism as the sole means to truth, ultimately falling into the abyss of disillusionment, desperation, and loneliness.

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