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ATILIM ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI

THEMATIC AND FORMAL ANALYSES OF JONATHAN SWIFT’S
TWO PROSE SATIRES; *GULLIVER’S TRAVELS* AND *A MODEST*
PROPOSAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to discuss how Jonathan Swift uses the genre satire in order to criticize and to reform early eighteenth-century British society as will be revealed through thematic and formal analyses of two of his prose satires *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*.

It is almost an undeniable fact that Jonathan Swift was quite sensitive to injustices and corruptions of his society. He had a gift for satire, wit and humour through which he was able to reflect in his works and awaken in his readers reactions to these injustices, corruptions and the grim realities of the lives of Irish peoples. His gift for prose satire is praised by many well-known critics and writers. For instance, George Orwell, "one of his literary heirs in the twentieth century" defines Swift as a satirist who is "capable of picking out a single hidden truth and then magnifying and distorting it."¹ Similarly, in his *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (1733), Voltaire praises Swift by claiming "the poetical numbers of Dean Swift are of singular and almost inimitable." He adds that "taste, true humour whether in prose and verse, seems to be his peculiar talent."² In this thesis, Swift's satires *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*, the works regarded as his literary masterpieces, will be studied from the point of views of the thematic and technical aspects of his most skillful and extensive use of satire as pointed out by the above critics.

When the works *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* are considered, it is evident that they both reflect Swift's society. They demonstrate that Swift could not bear the social and political corruptions of his society and the indifference of human beings to them. They both hold a mirror to these corruptions in order to make readers realize the problems they ignore and to compel them to take action to correct them. Thus, they both are social and political satires. The critic Howard Erksine Hill

¹Paul McCormick (et al), **Adventures in English Literature**, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., 1968, s. 313.

²J.H. Real, Introduction, "The Reception of Jonathan Swift in Europe", **Ebrary**, From <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/anadolu/docDetail.action?docID=10224791>, May 15 2010 s. 5.

points out how Swift reflects the contemporary happenings of his society in *Gulliver's Travels* as follows:

The sources of *Gulliver's Travels* are literary, moral, psychological as well as historical. Yet it is clear that the historical and political events of Swift's lifetime too contribute to his book. The platitudes of history: the ingratitude and deceptions of princes, the conflicts of creed and party, the perils of power, unforeseen problems growing out of hard-won solutions, the lust for glory and the pursuit of interest- all this can be raffled off without feeling had been perceived with feeling by Swift, often at first hand.³

Another common point of these satires is that even though they both satirize the events and people of their own society, they both give universal messages that are beneficial for anyone at any time. For instance, in *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift reveals the absurdity of pride and prejudice by revealing how these passions cause deception. Similarly, in *A Modest Proposal*, Swift discloses the inhumanity of human beings to their own kind and indifference of human beings to the lives of the others. Hence, both in *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* Swift intended to reform not only his own society, but also human beings in general.

It is not only his entertaining and extraordinary satire on the contemporary events and individuals of his society and human beings in general, but also his application of satirical techniques in his works *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* makes them memorable literary masterpieces. Swift conveys his messages through the genre satire that sometimes enables him to ridicule his objects of satire in a humorous way and sometimes to criticize them severely. In both works, Swift demonstrates his gift as a satirist. For instance, in *Gulliver's Travels*, he transforms contemporary events of his society into a comic but disturbing fiction by using the satirical techniques of parallelism, allegory, parody and irony. Similarly, in *A Modest Proposal*, Swift demonstrates his skill in irony via the proposal of cannibalism as a solution for Ireland's financial problems.

³Howard Erksine Hill, **Jonathan Swift: *Gulliver's Travels***, Northamptonshire, Cambridge UP, 1993, s. 10.

By reflecting the social and political problems of the society and negative outcomes of some human passions and behaviors through his satires *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*, Swift aims at awakening in his readers an awareness of the realities of their times, at the same time the instinct to take action to reform these corruptions as it will be analyzed in this thesis.

1.1. THE AGE of REASON and NEO- CLASSICAL LITERATURE

Eighteenth-century is known as “age of reason” or “age of enlightenment” due to the explosion in knowledge and insistence on the logical explanation of many things. Almost everything which could not be subjected to objective observation and scientific experimentation was rejected. Mostly due to this boom in knowledge and insistence on reasonable explanation, the eighteenth-century is known as “age of enlightenment” or “age of reason”.

The development of science and the establishment of provincial presses (1690) had also great influence on the age's being known as “age of reason” or “age of enlightenment”. English people in the eighteenth-century were “skeptical” and “rationalistic in matters of knowledge” due to the innovations in science. The Royal Society of London for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge in which many scientific experiments were conducted had great impact on the scientific developments of the eighteenth-century England. Its foundation in 1662, during the reign of Charles II gave way to official approval to the scientific revolution of the period.⁴ In 1665, Royal Society began to publish a scientific journal called *Philosophical Transactions*. Francis Bacon, “the father of experimental science and the idea of cooperative community of natural philosophers, as scientists”, Robert Boyle, “a versatile chemist” and Isaac Newton, a mathematician and philosopher “whose *Mathematical Principals of Natural Philosophy* (1687) provided the framework of a system that seemed capable of explaining everything in the universe”, were among the most significant members of the Royal Society. By the

⁴Martin, Price, *The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century*, Frank Kermode and John Hollander (eds), **The Oxford Anthology of English Literature**, London, Oxford UP, 1973, s. 1549, 1553.

help of the development in science, people required a reasonable explanation for many things.⁵ However, it is mostly the establishment of the provincial press which loosened government control over the press and enabled the spread of knowledge. People started to be informed about the happenings of the Royal Society via regular publications. The provincial press gave way to the availability of printed material, which provided many people the chance to read more because it reduced the prices of the books.⁶ Thus, more and more people were “enlightened” both in the fields of science and literature. When the spread of knowledge through developments in the fields of science and establishment of provincial press are taken into consideration, it becomes easy to see why eighteenth-century is known as the “age of reason or enlightenment”.

The insistence on reason not only affected people’s ways of thinking, but also pervaded every aspect of life in the society including the arts and literature. There was a belief that reason should guide individuals and society. This great emphasis on reason had a great influence on the literature of the period because neoclassical literature advocated rational forms. There was an emphasis on common sense of the society rather than on imagination. There was also a mistrust in intuitions, supernaturalism and emotions. The work of art was expected to be logically organized and reasonable. Fancy and imagination were thought to be irregular and uncontrolled. The period reflected desire for peace and order. Apart from these issues, due to classical ideals of order and moderation that inspired the period, the literature of the eighteenth century can be characterized as rational. All these features of eighteenth-century literature demonstrate the effects of rational thought of the “age of reason” or “age of enlightenment” on literature.⁷

⁵ Ronald Knowles, **Gulliver’s Travels The Politics of Satire**, 2nd Edition, New York, Twayne Publishers, 1996, s. 100- 102, 104, McCormick (et al), **a.i.e.l.**, s. 269.

⁶ R.D. Hume, “‘Satire’ in the Reign of Charles II”, **Modern Philology**, London, (2010), <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=1&hid=8&sid=7be5bb4d-5445-4320-8bd1-7c9c5a9404b4%40sessionmgr10&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZW9vc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=17483896>, 15 May 2010, s. 340.

⁷ Alfred David (et al), **The Norton Anthology of English Literature**, M.H. Abrams and Stephen Greenblatt (Eds.) Volume I., 7th Edition , New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2000, s. 2050, 2054.

In the eighteenth-century, as a consequence of developments in science that led to the discovery of laws of nature, philosophy and religion changed. It was believed that man was not good by nature, but he was capable of reason. Deism, a religion based on observation of nature, was quite popular. The Deists rejected mystery and superstition and believed that the human mind relied merely on reason, so can deduce the existence of a supreme being through the exercise of reason and observation of nature and natural events. It was believed that human beings are free and responsible beings who can improve themselves and society by the exercise of reason. Therefore, men of literature of the eighteenth-century saw themselves responsible to the society and tried to reform the society by revealing the vices and follies in it. As a consequence, literature of the period was didactic and emphasized reason rather than passion.⁸

Literature of the early eighteenth century is known as “neo-classical literature” because early eighteenth-century writers admired and followed “the form and content of ancient Greek and Roman models.”⁹ It was Charles II and his court who introduced neoclassical literature to England. Since King Charles and his court spent many years in exile in France, they brought contemporary French literature, which was under the influence of classical literature, to England. Neoclassical literature was strongly influenced by the writers of the reign of the first Roman Emperor, Augustus Caesar as Augustan Age in Rome was a period of stability and peace. For this very reason, the neoclassical writers wanted to revive the stability and peace of the Augustan Period and they admired classical writers such as Homer, Virgil and Cicero. Nevertheless, the developments in science in the eighteenth-century caused a conflict between those who supported the modern developments and those who favored the ancients in learning. Those who favored the modern scientific developments emphasized the ignorance of the ancients on the modern developments such as existence of microscopic organisms. On the other hand, those who supported the ancients in learning argued that everything that is necessary to know for understanding life exists in the works of classical writers such as Homer, Virgil, Cicero and Aristotle. Thus, a battle of books broke out in the late seventeenth

⁸ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2050, 2052.

⁹ McCormick (et al), **a.i.e.l.**, s. 269.

century between the supporters of ancients and of moderns in learning.¹⁰ It was Temple who started this battle with his essay “Upon Ancient and Modern Learning”.¹¹ The traces of this conflict can also be found in Swift’s *The Battle of the Books* which was written “in defense of Temple against the ‘moderns’ who were, in Swift’s view, unwisely neglecting ‘ancient’ modes of learning.”¹²

The neoclassicals favored “the form and content of ancient Greek and Roman models”. The most favorite prose literary forms were the satire, the essays, and the novel. In poetry, like Alexander Pope, the poets used the rhymed couplet.¹³

The neoclassical literature was “a vehicle for public discourse” rather than a private one and “it was expected to conform to the conventions of public behavior.”¹⁴ The neoclassical writers favored simplicity of style because they wanted their works to be understood by everyone.¹⁵ These qualities of neoclassical literature show that literature was not subjective and it dealt with universal and common matters for the benefit of the society. Thus, it can be concluded that the neoclassical writers regarded literature as a vehicle to reform the society and educate people, which makes the literature didactic and explains the reason behind the insistence on simplicity of style.

In eighteenth-century literature, with the growth of periodicals, an interest among the reading public for the kinds of literature that flourished in periodicals developed. These periodicals included various kinds of writing such as “brief essay on a topic of general interest”, “short pieces of fiction”, “poems”, “book reviews”, and “satirical pieces”. The early eighteenth-century witnessed “the emergence of a number of newspapers, led by Richard Steele’s *The Tattler* and *The Spectator* led by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele”. Coffee houses in London being aware of their impact on patrons by subscribing these periodicals contributed to the increase of the popularity of periodical literature in the early eighteenth-century. Some of the best

¹⁰David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2048, 2050.

¹¹ Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 103.

¹²Joseph Black (eds. al), **The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: Restoration and Eighteenth Century**, Volume III, Toronto, Ontario, Broadview Press, 2006, s. 302.

¹³McCormick (et al), **a.i.e.l.**, s. 269, 278.

¹⁴Levine, George R. , Introduction, **A Modest Proposal and Other Satires**, By Jonathan Swift, New York, Prometheus Books, 1995, s. 10.

¹⁵ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2055.

writers such as Swift and Pope wrote for them. Swift contributed to *The Tattler*, *The Spectator* and *The Examiner* and Pope contributed to *The Spectator*. Some Tory politicians such as Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke and their Whig successor Sir Robert Walpole recognized that more people could be reached and influenced with the popularity of periodicals. Then, Tory government employed the best writers of the age, like Swift during the years 1710-1714. Hence, political journalism came into existence.¹⁶

The focus on the universal subject matter rather than individual thought in neoclassical literature was so common that it even had influence on the poetry of the period because the poetry of the period was expected to be didactic and concerned with universal subject matter. The neoclassical poetry was associated with nature since the neoclassical regarded nature as a reflection of general truths for everyone in all times. Since experience was important in the eighteenth century, the poetry of the period was expected to reflect natural, moral and intellectual experiences of human beings. With simplicity of style, poet's objective was to teach through delight. The verse was descriptive and didactic. Thus, like other literary genres, poetry of the period had didactic purpose.¹⁷

The fact that men of letters were concerned with general issues rather than individual ones and their desire to teach through their works explains why neoclassical literature was in close relationship with political and social problems of the period. Since neoclassical literature was concerned with generalized common matters and men of letters felt the necessity to reform society through their works, literature of the eighteenth-century is full of political writings in all genres, with satires of the age. Thus, satire, both in prose, drama and poetry was very common. Satire was even the most important genre of the period and Jonathan Swift was the most significant name that overshadows all others in eighteenth-century prose satire.

¹⁶Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 11.

¹⁷David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2051, 2055, 2056.

1.2. SWIFT, HIS WORKS and HIS ART

Jonathan Swift was born in Ireland in 1667 to English parents in Dublin. His father died before he was born. Through the help of his uncle, Swift studied at Kilkney School and then moved on to Trinity College at the University of Dublin at the age of fourteen. When he completed his education, he moved to England where he was employed as a secretary by a retired politician, Sir William Temple and worked for him between the years 1689-1699. He also took the advantage of Temple's vast library and decided to embark on a career as an Anglican priest.¹⁸

Temple influenced the formulation of Swift's opinions, politics and society and encouraged him to indulge his creativity. Swift's first literary attempts were history and poetry in Dublin. In 1692, Swift's almost certainly first publication a poem called *An Ode to the Athenian Society* was published. Apart from this work, Swift wrote *Ode to the King* and two other pindarics. Swift also revised Temple's *Introduction to the History of England* in 1694.¹⁹ However, Swift quickly recognized his own shortcomings as a poet and discovered his gift for satire, humor and wit. In 1696-97, Swift wrote two powerful satires on corruptions in religion and learning. One of them is *The Battle of the Books* (1704) and the other is *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), "an extended satire on a variety of subjects such as literary and scientific pedantry, the zealotry of religious dissenters, the vacuity of language, and what Swift considered the distorted perspectives with which many modern philosophers viewed the world."²⁰

In the first decades of the eighteenth-century, Swift began to distinguish himself as a political writer by political pamphleteering and his comical hoaxes, some of which were published in Steele's periodical *The Tattler*. As a devoted supporter of the Anglican Church, he was hostile to all who seemed to threaten its stability, so he was against Whig attempts to repeal the Test Act, which imposed certain civil discriminations against those who refused Anglican Church's sacrament.

¹⁸David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2298.

¹⁹J.A. Downie, **Jonathan Swift Political Writer**, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984, s. 32-33, 47, 49.

²⁰Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 17.

Thus, Whig's attempt to repeal Test Act and indifference of Whigs to the welfare of the Anglican Church in Ireland caused Swift's abandonment of the Whigs in 1710 and alliance with the Tories. Then, Swift was welcomed by the Tories and he became their propagandist in support of the government as editor of the party organ, the *Examiner*. At that time Swift was not the single important Tory writer. Apart from Swift, his friends Pope, Arbuthnot, Gay and the poet Thomas Parnell were the supporters of Tory views and they founded the Scriblerus Club, a literary group that met regularly in 1713. Swift also became a part of the inner circle of the Tory government and acted as a mediator between Henry Saint John (Viscount Bolingbroke) the secretary of state for foreign affairs (1710–15) and Robert Harley (Earl of Oxford) lord treasurer and prime minister (1711–1714). However, the reward of Swift's service for the Tory government was not the English bishopric in London as he expected, but the deanship of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. It is because Queen Anne had little sympathy for Swift since she misread *A Tale of a Tub* as an attack on the established religion although the work was a defense of it. With the death of Queen Anne in 1714, The Tory Government fell and replaced by the Whig government of George I, so Swift had no hope for high promotion in England as a clergyman and returned Ireland in disappointment as the dean of Saint Patrick's Cathedral.²¹

In Ireland, Swift became the leader of the Irish resistance against English oppressions. He reacted against destructive effects of English commercial and political injustices through his pamphlets, essays and satirical works, which brought him the status of the Irish patriot. His works *Proposal for Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* (1720) and series of public letters known as *Drapier's Letters* under the pseudonym "M. B. Drapier" (1724-25) are among these pamphlets. However, none of Swift's works is as severe as *A Modest Proposal* (1729) which was written in response to the worsening condition in Ireland.²²

During these years, Swift began to write his masterpiece, *Gulliver's Travels*, which was finished in 1725. In *Gulliver's Travels* was published anonymously in 1726 for the first time. As Real argues, the publication of the work "turned Swift into

²¹Black (eds al), **t.b.a.o.e.l.**, s. 302, 303, Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 17, 18.

²²Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 19, David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2298.

a European star” since it was immediately translated into German, French and Italian.” The publication of the book also initiated new translations of Swift’s other works such as *A Tale of a Tub* which was translated into French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish.²³

After the deaths of Swift’s good friends such as John Gay and John Arbuthnot and Thomas Sheridan, Swift’s health began to gradually decline and he began to show signs of illness in 1742. Towards the end of his life, he began to lose his ability to speak and experienced his fear of being mentally disabled and finally in 1745, at the age of seventy-eight, Jonathan Swift passed away. He now rests in his own cathedral St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Dublin where he was buried in accordance with his wishes.²⁴

Jonathan Swift is known as the writer of the satires and a man of great intellectual powers. Since he has been generally acknowledged as the greatest English satirists, his style and ability to convey his thoughts are commented on by many critics of today. For instance, the description of Swift’s style in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* shows that Swift’s style was suitable to neoclassical literature because it is argued that “clear, simple, concrete diction, uncomplicated syntax, economy and conciseness of language mark all his writings.” Swift’s definition of “good style” as “proper words in proper places” also reveals that Swift favors “economy of words”. It is suggested that both his prose and poetry surprise the reader with their hard look at the facts of life. His poetry is defined as “an unpoetical poetry devoid of romantic love, indeed as often as not mocking at, inspiration, romantic love, cosmetic beauty, easily assumed literary attitudes, and conventional poetic language.” It is also argued that like his prose, his poetry is “predominantly satiric in purpose”, but it includes “the moments of comedy and light- heartedness”.²⁵ These definitions of Swift’s style reveal that as a representative of the early eighteenth-century writer who wanted his works to be understood by everyone, Swift was in favor of a style without exaggeration, ornamentation and

²³Real, “The Reception:”, s. 3.

²⁴Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 23, 24.

²⁵David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2299.

passion both in verse and prose. It is also clear that as he himself expresses, he aims to find the exact words that constitutes an effective order.

The critic George R. Levine comments on Swift's success by asserting that the reader regards his works "as great literature, quite apart from the satire" as follows:

Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, *A Tale of a Tub*, and *A Modest Proposal* have become the very touchstones for great satire. What enables such satires to rise above the merely topical? Why do they touch us even when we are ignorant of the historical particulars that prompted them? Perhaps it is because we respond to these works primarily as great literature, quite apart from the satire. What continues to draw us is the power of Swift's vision, the sophistication of his prose, the universality of his comic portraits, the precision of his language and his mastery of irony and his skills in creating and sustaining the personalities of his narrative spokesmen.²⁶

This observation of Levine reveals that Swift had such a gift for satire that his satires not only prove themselves as great representatives of the genre, but also impress readers with the mastery of Swift to convey his objects of satire.

Another critic David Nokes attributes the success of Swift's satires to their combination of vice and virtue in "all human actions":

The achievement and challenge of Swift's satires consists precisely in his unsettling recognition of the inevitable intermingling of vice and virtue, self interest and moral principle in all human actions."²⁷

As for Peter J. Schakel, "for Swift successful composition depends on creative interplay between imagination and reason."²⁸ Thus, he draws attention to the importance Swift gives to imagination and reason both of which were highly valued in the eighteenth-century since it was the age of reason.

When these different points of view are taken into consideration, it is evident that all the critics agree on Swift's success as a satirist. Since Swift is regarded as the

²⁶Levine, *a.m.p.a.o.s.*, s. 12, 13.

²⁷David Nokes, *Raillery and Rage: A Study of Eighteenth Century Satire*, Brighton, The Harvester Press, 1987, s. 17.

²⁸Peter J. Schakel, *Critical Approaches to Teaching Swift*, New York, AMS Press, 1992, s. 97.

master of prose satire in the eighteenth-century and most of his works are satire, studying Swift's works require studying satire. Thus, it is proper to refer to the aspects of the genre in this chapter.

1.3. SATIRE: DEFINITION and ETYMOLOGY

Satire can be defined as a genre that aims to correct or improve the subject of satiric attack and to reform the society by means of humour, wit and exaggeration. Satire aims to correct human vice and follies by making his readers face the reflection of their own follies and vices in the work and it discloses the contrast between what things are and what they are ought to be.²⁹

Since the satirist reflects his anger and contempt through satire, the critic George A. Test, defines satire as “a kind of domestication of aggression and transformation of chaotic impulses into a useful, social and artistic expression.”³⁰ The main peculiarities of this “artistic expression” can also be summarized as follows:

A work of satire is designed to attack vice or folly. To this end it uses wit or ridicule. ..., it seeks to persuade an audience that someone or something is reprehensible or ridiculous and ... it engages in exaggeration and some sort of fiction. But satire does not forsake the ‘real world’ entirely. Its victims come from that world, and it is this fact that separates satire from pure comedy. Finally satire usually proceeds by means of clear reference to some moral standards or purposes.”³¹

As Griffin observes, satire is a genre that reveals the unpleasant facts of life and corruptions, blames and ridicules those who cause these corruptions by a combination of fact and fiction.

Another critic David Nokes draws attention to the aesthetic qualities of the genre satire and the pleasure it gives to the readers as such:

²⁹George A. Test, **Satire Spirit and Art**, Tampa, U of South Florida P, 1991, s. 1.

³⁰Test, **s.s.a.a.**, s. 4.

³¹Dustin Griffin, Introduction. **Satire A Critical Reintroduction**, Kentucky, The UP of Kentucky, 1994, s. 1.

As a literary or aesthetic object, satire exists to amuse and entertain us; to tickle us with its wit, stimulate us with its daring, divert us with its parodies and delight us with its art.³²

As Nokes points out, satire gives delight to the reader through its various techniques used in reflecting its object of satire.

Since satire implies what is good and what is bad and why, it is regarded as “didactic” and “moral art”. *Gulliver’s Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* are the important moral satires that reveal “moralizing quality of satire since the reader can draw “clear conclusions” and “moral defectiveness” from them. For instance, in *Gulliver’s Travels*, the reader is invited to be moral and sensitive with a revelation of the negative outcomes of immorality. Similarly in *A Modest Proposal*, the reader can see the moral corruptions in Ireland and feels the need to reform them.³³

Apart from individuals and institutions, satire ridicules other types of literature as referred by the critic Dustin Griffin:

It can through parody invade any literary form: epic, pastoral, travel book, song, elegy, and so on. When satire takes over another literary structure, it tends not just to borrow it ... but to subvert it or also to alter its ‘potential’.³⁴

As Griffin argues, satire may remind the qualities of many genres with the purpose of parodying them. This quality of satire reveals that a satirist should not only be knowledgeable about the qualities of literary forms, but also have imagination and wit to convey his object of satire through them.

As for the formal qualities of satire, as it is suggested by Gilbert, satirists generally use colloquial language and most satires include trivial and comic words. In order to create a relief from tension, most satires cause laughter especially if the satirist intends to humiliate by ridicule. “In plot, in discourse, in emotional tone, in vocabulary, in sentence-structure and pattern of phase, the satirist tries always to

³²Nokes, **r.a.r.**, s. 17.

³³Griffin, **s.a.c.r.**, s. 25, 27.

³⁴Griffin, **s.a.c.r.**, s. 3, 134.

produce the unexpected, to keep his hearers and readers guessing and gasping.” The satirist also intends to disturb his readers by presenting unpleasant facts and people in order to make them see the vices and follies in the society. The satirists generally use satiric devices such as “irony, paradox, antithesis, parody, colloquialism, anticlimax, topical obscenity, violence, vividness and exaggeration.” With such techniques, the author wishes to evoke an emotion “blend of amusement and contempt.”³⁵

The success of satire has been in its purpose of awakening its readers to the realities of life and reformation of the society which is still in vogue can be touched on with Dustin Griffin’s comment on the effects of satire on its readers. He argues that satire:

conducts open ended speculative inquiry, provokes and challenges comfortable and received ideas, unsettles our convictions and occasionally shatters our illusions, asks questions, rises doubts, but does not provide answers.”³⁶

As Dustin argues, satire at least makes its readers contemplate on the object of satire; reveals that what they believe may not be always true and invites them to question their “received ideas” through unanswered questions.

The origin of the word “satire” comes from the Latin word ‘satura’ which means primarily ‘full’ and then comes to mean ‘a mixture full of different things’.” The records show that the origin of satire goes back to the Roman poet Ennius, living between the third and second centuries before Christ. It was Ennius who called his poems “saturae” since his poems resembled “satura”. Several decades later, around 150 B. C. Lucilius “added to this satura personal and social criticism”. Then Horace (65-8 BC) wrote satires “in which he held a mirror to the follies of his society with the aim of correcting them.” It was Juvenal who succeeded Horace about a century and a half later.³⁷

The difference between the ways in which Horace and Juvenal choose for their satiric attacks caused the emergence of two distinct forms of satire. One of them

³⁵Gilbert Highnet, **The Anatomy of Satire**, Princeton, Princeton UP, 1962, s. 18, 21.

³⁶Griffin, **s.a.c.r.**, s.160.

³⁷Dilek Doltaş, “The Canterbury Tales Satura and Satire”, **Satire Publication of Papers Presented at the Seventh All- Turkey English Literature Seminar**, Philips V. Brooks (Ed.) Ankara, Hacettepe UP, 1986, s. 70.

is the satire of Horace which is defined as “the genial, laughing, and urban”. The other is the satire of Juvenal which is defined as “severe” and “lashing”. Since the satire of Horace includes laughter, it is “termed as comic satire”. On the other hand, since the satire of Juvenal “emphasizes a severely satiric attack in which laughter is at a minimum or perhaps even lacking”, it is termed as “caustic or corrosive satire”. When the history and criticism of satire is examined, it is observed that comic satire of Horace is more common. Swift made use of both of these kinds of satire in his writings as it will be analyzed in the formal analyses of *Gulliver’s Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*.³⁸

Rome was not alone in showing the early traces of satire because the Greeks accompanied them in that Greek playwright Aristophanes, whose plays included “mix political, social and literary satires”, was one of the best known early satirists. *The Knights*, “a political satire on the demagoguery of the period”, *The Clouds*, “a satire on the sophists and on Socrates” and *The Birds*, “an escape into an imaginary kingdom; Lysistrata” are among his well-known satirical plays.³⁹

As for England, satire seriously started in medieval times in 12th century with Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* which was written “predominantly in the manner of Horace”.⁴⁰ It continued to develop in Renaissance England and Thomas More’s *Utopia* can be an example for satire in that period.⁴¹ In the 16th century England, Elizabethan satirists were inspired by the reading of the “classical models”. Thomas Nashe’s *The Unfortunate Traveller* which “derived principally from the great Roman satirists, especially Juvenal, Horace and Persius” can be an example for Elizabethan satire.⁴² In the 17th century, John Dryden, who wrote verse satires such as *Absalom and Achitophel*, Andrew Marvell whose works were “circulated anonymously and not immediately printed” and Samuel Butler the author of *Hudibras*, a satirical poem

³⁸John F. Ross, “The Final Comedy of Lemuel Gulliver”, **Swift Gulliver’s Travels: A Casebook**, Richard Gravil (Ed.), Hong Kong, Houndmills, Macmillan Press, 1974, s. 102-104.

³⁹Abstract, **Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th Edition**, 2009, 20 May 2010, From <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=7&sid=5342ff58-ad70-4003-883e-b089cff4b941%40sessionmgr14&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=39044530>, 15 May 2010, s. 2

⁴⁰Doltaş, “The Canterbury:”, s. 69.

⁴¹Christine Rees, **Utopian Imagination and Eighteenth-Century Fiction**, London and New York, London Group, 1996, s. 123, 129.

⁴²Clifford Endres, “John Donne’s Satyres: Ancient and Elizabethan”, **s.p.o.p.a.t.s.a.**, Philip V Brooks, s.57.

that ridicules the late Puritan regime were among the most popular satirists of the century. It was the eighteenth century that was the golden age for English satire. As it was the age of enlightenment the writers aimed to reform the society by making their readers see the vices and follies in the society and teaching them how to improve society through their works. Thus, in their didactic purpose the writers of the age mostly apply the genre satire. Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope were the most famous satirists of the period. Whereas Pope wrote verse satire such as *The Rape of the Lock*, Swift wrote prose satire.⁴³

For Swift, as observed by Levine, “satire was more than simply attack and ridicule, a convenient tool for heaping scorn upon those whom one disliked”. As Levine argues, Swift believed that “to be a satirist was a noble calling” because for him a satirist was “someone who attempts to respond constructively to the follies and vices of a fallible world.”⁴⁴ Swift’s ideas about the genre satire demonstrate these arguments. In *The Intelligencer*, Number III (1728), Swift characterized satire as follows:

There are two ends that men propose in writing satire; one of them less noble than the other, as regarding nothing farther than the private satisfaction and pleasure of the writer; but without any view toward personal malice; the other is a public spirit, prompting men of genius and virtue to mend the world so far as they are able. As both of these ends are innocent, so the latter is highly commendable.⁴⁵

It is clear that for Swift satire is not merely a kind of expression of anger of the writer that pleases the person who writes it. It is also a vehicle of “men of genius and virtue” to “mend” the world. These words of Swift support the corrective purpose of the satire and the writer’s aim of reforming the society. As it is suggested by Robert Harris in his essay “The Purpose and Method of Satire” with this definition, Swift “proclaims the purpose of satire as the correction of vice and reinstatement of virtue.” This can be concluded from the fact that the above quotation reveals that Swift “calls for a complete moral regeneration of man.” Thus,

⁴³Robert D. Hume, “Satire: ”, s. 332, 335, 361, 370

⁴⁴Levine, *a.m.p.a.o.s.*, s. 13,14.

⁴⁵qtd. in Levine, *a.m.p.a.o.s.*, s. 14.

with his definition of satire, apart from revealing satire's corrective and reformatory qualities, Swift reveals the moralizing quality of satire.⁴⁶

Swift's satire is in prose and an all-inclusive covering of almost everything that disturbs him. The extensiveness of his satire on human beings and institutions causes him to be regarded as a misanthrope. It is not known for sure whether he was a misanthrope or not, but it seems as if these words of Swift support his misanthropy: "I hate and detest that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas and so forth."⁴⁷ It is clear that Swift hates human beings in general, but loves individuals. Because of his hatred for humanity, the issues Swift criticizes are so extensive that it is almost impossible for the readers to recognize everything he satirizes. However, the general issues he criticizes in his works can be summarized as the abuses and vices around him, political and social corruption and hypocrisy, most of which will be observed in the analysis of *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*.

In conveying his satiric attacks, Swift generally uses satirical devices of drawing parallels, irony, parody, allegory and black comedy as it will be studied in detail in the formal analyses of the works. He sometimes applies the comedy of comic satire to ridicule his objects of satire and sometimes applies the corrosiveness of corrosive satire to accentuate the severeness of his satire.

As one of the greatest satirists of the eighteenth century, Jonathan Swift makes his readers contemplate on various subjects of the period and some negative human passions. His satires reveal the vice and follies in the individuals and institutions, and thus causes the emergence of the instinct to take action to correct them, which reveals the corrective and reformatory qualities of satire. Apart from these effects, by giving moral lessons to his readers and showing the follies and vices in *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift foregrounds the moralizing quality of satire. Similarly, in *A Modest Proposal*, Swift faces the reader with the harsh realities of Ireland by making use of the unsettling quality of the genre satire.

⁴⁶Haris, Robert "The Purpose and Method of Satire", Virtualsalt.com, Sept. 12 2009. www.virtualsalt.com/satire.htm .

⁴⁷Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 11.

2. THEMATIC and FORMAL ANALYSIS of *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*

Gulliver's Travels is a vehicle through which Swift takes his readers to a wonderful journey to fantastic lands in which they face the realities of their world in a very different light. As suggested in the *Anthology*, *Gulliver's Travels* is "almost unique in world literature" since "it is simple enough for children", but at the same time, "complex enough to carry adults beyond their debt."⁴⁸ These qualities of *Gulliver's Travels* make it one of the greatest prose satires of world literature and to be commented on by a variety of critics both in the past and the present. Although it is impossible to convey all these comments, some comments of the critics deserve to be pointed out. For instance, Richard Gravil who is one of the critics studying Swift summarizes the issues Swift attacks in the work with these words:

Gulliver's Travels is one of the greatest satires of the early eighteenth-century with its criticism on politics, science, war and commerce, its savage indignation at the animalism and pettiness of man, culminating in its magnificent peroration on pride.⁴⁹

Another critic Downie who deals with Swift's life and his satires comments on Swift's revelation of the ideal and real as follows: "With his satire *Gulliver's Travels*, "Swift exposes the gap between actual and ideal between how things are and how things should be".⁵⁰

As for Dean Swift, the nephew and biographer of Swift, "*Gulliver's Travels*, is a direct, plain and bitter satire against the innumerable follies and corruptions in law, politics, learning, morals and religion."⁵¹

All these different points of view reveal that *Gulliver's Travels* is one of the greatest prose satires of the eighteenth-century which was written with the intention

⁴⁸David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2330.

⁴⁹T.O. Wedel, "On The Philosophical Background of *Gulliver's Travels*", **s.g.t.**, Richard Gravil (Ed.), s. 86.

⁵⁰Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 266.

⁵¹Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 264.

to correct the vices and follies in the society of Swift's time by making its reader face them. *Gulliver's Travels* is a prose satire that was anonymously published in 1726 in London. Then it became so popular that as was said by Pope, it was read "from the cabinet council to the nursery."⁵² Although it was published in 1726, some portions of the book were written much later. The original name of the work is *Gulliver's Travels Into Several Remote Nations of the World. In Four Parts. By Lemuel Gulliver, First A Surgeon, and Then A Captain of Several Ships.*⁵³

Before beginning to analyze *Gulliver's Travels* thematically, it is necessary to summarize the work in order to remind Swift's vehicle for his objects of satire. *Gulliver's Travels* is a satirical tale in which the protagonist Lemuel Gulliver recounts his four voyages. The work consists of four parts in all of which Gulliver recounts his adventures to different places. His first voyage is to Lilliput, a land inhabited by tiny people who are "sometimes ingenious, sometimes petty". Gulliver's second voyage is to Brobdingnag, "the country of crude and magnanimous giants". Then, Gulliver goes to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Glubbudbrib, Luggnag, and Japan, "a third trip on which he meets various sort of mathematicians, scientists and projectors". Finally, he goes to the fourth and last voyage to the land of Houyhnhnms in which he meets "horse like creatures of perfect reason" called the Houyhnhnms and "a race of loathsome beasts, with human resemblances- called Yahoos". Apart from these, Swift also "uses various fictitious people to comment on a wide range of virtues and abuses of morality and reason."⁵⁴

In the introduction of the book, the reader is informed about Gulliver's family, education, marriage and his unprofitable voyages. Lemuel Gulliver presents himself to the reader as an educated Englishman trained as a surgeon.⁵⁵ In 1699, Gulliver, as a ship surgeon, embarks on a voyage on a ship named *Antelope*. After a shipwreck, Gulliver finds himself in Lilliput. When he wakes up, he finds his whole body fastened to the ground. Then he realizes tiny people, "a human creature not six inches high", are moving over him. Gulliver becomes the captive of these people called Lilliputians. Despite their tiny size, Lilliputians do not hesitate to use violence

⁵² Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, London, Penguin Popular Classics, 1994, s. 2.

⁵³ Hill, *j.s.g.t.*, s. 10.

⁵⁴ William Brag Ewald, *The Masks of Jonathan Swift*, Oxford, Harvard UP, 1954, s. 124.

⁵⁵ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 9,10.

against Gulliver. On the other hand, they are hospitable enough to risk famine in their land in order to feed Gulliver. He is taken into the capital city *Mildendo*, by a wagon specially built for him. There, he is welcomed by the Emperor and royalty. After learning their language, Gulliver is informed about the political problems and religious conflicts of the country that are similar to the problems of England in Swift's time. In a short time, the Lilliputians begin to abuse Gulliver's physical strength by using him in their war against their enemy Blefuscu. After the victory of Lilliput with the help of Gulliver, he is rewarded with the title of *Nardac*, "the highest rank in that empire."⁵⁶ When the Emperor wants Gulliver to reduce "the whole Empire of *Blefuscu* into a province", Gulliver refuses his request and puts out a fire in the royal palace with his urine, which causes him to be convicted of treason. Thus, the Lilliputians decide to punish him by having his eyes put out and thereafter leave him gradually starving to death alleging the capital crime of pissing on the palace and disobedience to the Emperor in not destroying Blefuscu. Gulliver escapes to Blefuscu where he discovers and repairs a real boat and goes to England.

Gulliver stays in England with his wife and family for two months and sets sail for his second voyage as a trader in 1702 on a ship named *Adventure*, which takes him on a land of giants called Brobdingnag in 1703. There, a farmer recognizes him and makes profit out of Gulliver by showing him to the county people for amusement. During his stay in the farmer's house, farmer's daughter Glumdalclitch takes care of Gulliver who experiences some adventures such as fighting with rats. He also learns the language of the country. Then the farmer sells Gulliver to the queen and Glumdalclitch continues to take care of him in the palace. The king is curious about Gulliver's country and listens to Gulliver as he is talking about the politics, traditions and religious doctrines of his country all of which appear to be ridiculous to the king in comparison to the system in Brobdingnag. A special kind of box is made up for Gulliver for his trips in the country and Gulliver mentions his observations in the country. One day, during his trip to the frontier with the royal couple, Gulliver's box is plucked up by an eagle and it is dropped into the sea, so

⁵⁶Swift, *g.t.*, s. 51.

Gulliver's adventures in Brobdingnag comes to an end. Finally, he returns to England with the help of the sailors in 1706.

After staying with his family just fourteen days, Gulliver sets sail for his third voyage as a captain's assistant, on a ship called *Hope Well*. After being attacked by the pirates, Gulliver finds himself in Laputa, where a floating island inhabited by theoreticians, mathematicians and scientists oppresses the land below, called Balnibarbi in 1707. He is received into the royal presence. The King and his courtiers are entirely preoccupied with abstract and intellectual pursuits. All their concern is with mathematics, astronomy and music. Gulliver learns their language and goes to Lagado, the capital city of Balnibarbi where he visits Academy of Lagado in which many strange experiments are conducted. After his trip to Lagado, Gulliver goes to Glubbudubdrib, the land of sorcerers in which he meets figures from history such as Julius Caesar and some important military leaders. Gulliver realizes that these historical figures are actually less impressive than as mentioned in the books. After visiting Glubbudubdrib, Gulliver goes to Luggnagg. There, he learns that subjects are expected to lick the floor as they approach the king, and that the king sometimes gets rid of opponents in the court by coating the floor with poison. In Luggnag, Gulliver also meets senile immortals called Struldburgs. Finally, he is able to sail to Japan from which he returns to England in 1710.

Gulliver stays with his family for about five months and sets out on his last voyage as captain of a ship called *Adventure* in 1710. After the mutiny of his crew and a long confinement in his cabin, Gulliver is left on an unknown land called Houyhnhnmland. This land is inhabited by rational thinking horses called the Houyhnhnms and human-like creatures appear to be loathsome animals ruled by the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver is treated with great courtesy and kindness until the Houyhnhnms realize Gulliver's physical similarity to the Yahoos, a race they hate, when they saw Gulliver without his clothes on. After learning their language, Gulliver narrates his voyages to the Houyhnhnms and mentions the constitution of England and he is enlightened by his conversation with what he calls his "Houyhnhnm Master". During his conversation with his "Houyhnhnm Master", Gulliver realizes the vices and follies in his society and gradually begins to hate the human race. Therefore, he wants to stay with the Houyhnhnms forever, but he is not

allowed to do so, because of his physical resemblance to the Yahoos. The Houyhnhnms want Gulliver to leave their land as soon as possible. Gulliver unwillingly accepts to leave there and makes a canoe with which he makes his way to nearby island from which he is picked up by a Portuguese ship captain called Don Pedro Mendez who rescues and rehabilitates him. Finally, he returns home in 1715.

When Gulliver returns home, he is so much filled with disgust and contempt for the human race that he cannot even stand being near his wife and his children. He buys two horses and converses with them. Finally, Gulliver closes his narrative by claiming that the story he tells the reader is true and the lands he has visited actually belong by rights to England, as her colonies. Gulliver concludes his narration mentioning his plans concerning how he plans to spend rest of his life.

Gulliver's Travels is a prose satire by Jonathan Swift in which Swift manages to combine general and particular satire "within an independent whole."⁵⁷ He reveals the corruption of the society through a variety of themes with the aim of making his readers consider their own vices and follies.

2.1. THEMATIC ANALYSIS of *GULLIVER'S TRAVELS*

In *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift conveys many messages not only to his own society, but also to human beings in general through the themes he applies in the work. This chapter intends to clarify these messages which are hidden in the themes in order to see Swift's attempts to reform early eighteenth-century English society.

2.1.1. Criticism of Modern Science Society and People

One of the themes Swift applies in the work is the criticism of modern science society and people. Swift reflects his anger at the misguided experiments carried out in science's name and corruptions of his contemporary society.

⁵⁷Liz Bellamy, *Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels*, New York, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992, s. 79.

2.1.1.1. Criticism of Modern Science

As it is suggested by the critic Ronald Knowles, one of the attacks of Swift reflected in the third part of the book is “the rise of experimental science” that is a “major branch of modernism” and “symbolized by the foundation of the Royal society.”⁵⁸ What Swift actually attacks is not science *per se*, but misused and misapplied knowledge of modern scientists and its outcome; the misguided and dangerous experiments carried out in science’s name by modern scientists.⁵⁹

Swift’s attacks on experimental science and misused or misapplied knowledge of modern scientists are mostly felt in Gulliver’s accounts of Academy of Lagado with which Swift makes fun of the experiments carried out in the Royal Society. This argument is supported with Knowles’ explanation of the close similarity between the actual experiment carried out by the member of the Royal Society and a project carried out in the Academy. Knowles asserts that the project carried out in a projector of the Academy concerning “extracting sun-beams out of cucumbers which were to be put into vials hermetically sealed, and let out to warm the air in raw inclement summer”⁶⁰ reminds the reader of the project of John Hales. It is because it was John Hales who contributed to the discovery of the term photosynthesis through his experiments “concerning the effect of the sun’s light and heat on the earth and on the plants’ absorption and respiration” which Knowles argues to be recorded to the Royal Society.⁶¹ This similarity between the actual experiment carried out by John Hales who was the modern scientist of the Royal Society of the time and the project carried out in the Academy makes it possible to regard the experiments carried out in the Academy as a satire on modern scientists.

In the Academy of Lagado many experiments which are conducted appear to be absurd even ridiculous. In the episode concerning the Academy of Lagado, apart

⁵⁸Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 99.

⁵⁹ Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 281.

⁶⁰Swift, **g.t.**, s. 196.

⁶¹ Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 103-104.

from criticizing misused knowledge of the modern scientists, Swift criticizes “false assessment of human priorities in science’s name.”⁶² He implies that modern scientists use their knowledge in the studies which are not beneficial for humanity instead of concentrating on the studies that serve human need. For instance, Gulliver informs the reader about one of the most leading projectors of the Academy who is called “*the universal artist*” and who for thirty years has devoted himself to “the improvement of human Life”. This man works on such absurd and ridiculous experiments that he is not even aware of the fact that even if he succeeds in his projects, they will not be beneficial for humanity. This can be deduced from this account of Gulliver:

He told us that he had been thirty years employing his thoughts for the improvement of human life. He has two large rooms full of wonderful curiosities, and fifty men at work. Some were condensing air into a dry tangible substance, by extracting the nitre, and softening marble for pillows and pin-cushions; others petrifying the hoofs of a living horse to preserve them from foundering. The artist himself was at that time busy upon two great designs; the first, to sow land with chaff, wherein he affirmed the true seminal virtue to be contained, as he demonstrated by several experiments which I was not skillful enough to comprehend. The other was, by a certain composition of gums, minerals or vegetables outwardly applied, to prevent the growth of wool upon two young lambs; and he hoped in a reasonable time to propagate the breed of naked sheep all over the kingdom.⁶³

As it is suggested by the critic Edward J. Rielley, the above quotation reveals that the projector “has such passion for his projects that he never considers how naked sheep or solidified air will benefit human kind should he succeed in producing them.”⁶⁴ Thus, with his account of Gulliver, Swift reveals that what the projectors try to do will not do any favor to humanity. This project of the projector also appears to be absurd even ridiculous when humanity’s need of beneficial innovations are taken into consideration. The quotation reveals Swift’s satire on the scientists of the Royal Society. Swift implies that like the projectors in the Academy of Lagado, the

⁶²Hill, **j.s.g.t.** s. 54.

⁶³Swift, **g.t.**, s. 200.

⁶⁴Edward J. Rielley, **Approaches to Teaching Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels**, New York, The Modern Language Association of America, 1988, s. 59.

scientists of Royal Society misuse their knowledge by spending their time and energy for useless innovations such as observing the effect of sun's light and heat on the plants' absorption and respiration.

As mentioned before, another point Swift draws attention to in his attack on modern science revealed in Laputa is misguided or dangerous experiments of the experimental science, which are the outcomes of misused or misapplied knowledge, carried out in science's name by modern scientists.⁶⁵ Swift draws attention to possible outcomes of misguided experiments carried out by the modern scientists through deterioration of Balnibarbi's agriculture because of a mis-managed programme of experiment as follows:

He only desired me to observe a ruined building, upon the side of a mountain about three miles distant, of which he gave me this account. That he had a very convenient mill within half a mile of his house, turned by a current from a large river, and sufficient for his own family, as well as a great number of his tenants. That about seven years ago, a club of those projectors came to him with proposals to destroy this mill, and build another on the side of that mountain, on the long ridge where of a long canal must be cut, for a repository of water, to be conveyed up by pipes and engines to supply the mill, because the wind and air upon a height agitated the water, and thereby made it fitter for motion, and because the water, descending down a declivity, would turn the mill with half the current of a river whose course is more upon a level." He said, "that being then not very well with the court, and pressed by many of his friends, he complied with the proposal; and after employing a hundred men for two years, the work miscarried, the projectors went off, laying the blame entirely upon him, railing at him ever since, and putting others upon the same experiment, with equal assurance of success, as well as equal disappointment."⁶⁶

It is evident that mis- managed experiments carried out in Balnibarbi by the projectors, who represent modern scientists, make its agriculture worse rather than improve it. With this failure of the projectors, Swift attacks experimental science. He implies that misguided and dangerous experiments of experimental science carried

⁶⁵Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 281.

⁶⁶Swift, **g.t.**, s. 195.

out by the members of Royal Society in the name of science may make life worse rather than improve its quality.

Another object of Swift's satire, in his criticism of the modern scientists, is "pretensions of scientists who seek to explain the workings of the natural world."⁶⁷ Swift attacks the modern scholars who attempt to explain whatever they cannot explain as *lusus nature*.^{*} For instance, in Lilliput, the philosophers unable to define what Gulliver is, assert that Gulliver "dropped from the moon, or one of the stars."⁶⁸ Similarly, in Brobdingnag, Gulliver is examined by the great scholars attending the court, who agree that he must be a *lusus nature*.⁶⁹ The tone of Swift's mockery can be felt in Gulliver's comment on the decision of scholars who examine him:

a determination exactly agreeable to the modern philosophy of Europe, whose professors, disdaining the old evasion of *occult causes*, whereby the followers of Aristotle endeavor in vain to disguise their ignorance, have invented this wonderful solution of all difficulties, to the unspeakable advancement of human knowledge.⁷⁰

Here, Swift openly mocks the modern scholars of Europe who try to explain everything they find inexplicable as *lusus nature* in order not to reveal their inability to explain "the workings of the natural world."⁷¹

When all the instances given to demonstrate Swift's attacks on modern science are taken into consideration, it is evident that Swift wanted his readers to realize the outcomes of misused knowledge of modern scientists, which led to false assessment of human needs and misguided experiments. Swift wanted to draw attention to the possible outcomes of experimental science introduced by the rationalism of the early eighteenth-century.

⁶⁷ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 60.

^{*} a marvel of nature.

⁶⁸ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 43.

⁶⁹ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 113.

⁷⁰ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 107.

⁷¹ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 60.

2.1.1.2. Criticism of Modern Society and People

In the third part of the book, Swift attacks both modern science and the early eighteenth-century English society which is Swift's "modern society". He implies that few people have courage to fight against tyranny in his society. This implication of Swift is observed in Gulliver's visit to the island of Glubbdubdrib. In the episodes of Glubbdubdrib, "five of six famous figures from the deads Gulliver meets, Marcus Brutus, Socrates, Epaminondas, and Cato the Younger, are ancients and distinguished for their struggles against tyranny. Sir Thomas More, the only modern in this group, is presumably chosen for his resistance to Henry VIII."⁷² Thus, there is an imbalance between the numbers of ancients and moderns who represent individual resistance to tyranny. As suggested by Guilhamet, with this imbalance, Swift may be implying that "few moderns had shown the courage to expose tyrants and defend liberty."⁷³ Thus, it is highly probable that with this imbalance, Swift intended to point out the lack of courage to react against tyranny in the members of his society.

Through Gulliver's visit to the island of Glubbdubdrib, Swift also draws attention to the corruption in his "modern society" by comparing the ancients with the moderns. As Knowles argues, in this episode, "models of public virtue whose willingness to sacrifice their private interests for the good of the state was contrasted with the corruption that was identified as inherent in the modern political system."⁷⁴ This argument of Knowles can be supported with the contrast between Gulliver's description of "seneta of Rome" and "an assembly of somewhat a later age": "The first seem to be an assembly of heroes and demigods; the other a knot of pedlars, pickpockets, highway- man and bullies."⁷⁵ It is possible to identify the "assembly of somewhat a later age" Gulliver defines above as a representation of the moderns

⁷² Leon Guilhamet, *Satire and the Transformation of the Genre*, Philadelphia, U of Pennsylvania P, 1987, s. 153.

⁷³ Guilhamet, *s.a.t.o.t.g.*, s. 153.

⁷⁴ Knowles, *g.t.t.p.o.s.*, s. 86.

⁷⁵ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 215.

because it is highly probable that the “seneta of Rome” refers to the ancients. It is because the phrase “an assembly of somewhat a later age” makes it clear that Gulliver implies the assembly he mentions as belonging to the later period. Thus, if “assembly of a later age” Gulliver refers to in his comparison is regarded as a representation of the moderns; it would be easier to realize Swift’s attack on the corruption of the modern society. It is because Gulliver defines “seneta of Rome” as “assembly of heroes and demigods” whereas he defines “a seneta of later age” who stand for the moderns as “a knot of pedlars, pickpockets” and so on. Thus, it is possible to claim that with this comparison, apart from revealing how humanity has degenerated since ancient times, Swift draws attention to the corruptions in the modern society of his time.

Swift’s attacks on the corruptions in the modern society are more clearly seen in Gulliver’s account concerning his observations on “modern history” with which he is “chiefly disgusted”. Gulliver says:

How many innocent and excellent persons had been condemned to death or banishment, by the practicing of great ministers upon the corruptions of judges, and malice of factions. How many villains had been exalted to the highest places of trust, power, dignity, and profit: how great a share in the motions and events of courts, councils, and senates might be challenged by bawds, whores, pimps, parasites, and buffoons.⁷⁶

Here, Swift clearly criticizes corruptions of law and politics of his society. He indicates how the politicians of his society misuse their power by sending people to death or banishment and filling the important places with their own fellows through the help of the corrupted men of justice.

Swift’s attacks on modern society and its members continue in the final part of the book in which Swift invites his readers to “investigate” and “re-assesses” the nature of human beings through the presentation of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms.⁷⁷ In this part, Swift rejects the popular eighteenth-century thought that man is not good by nature, but capable of reason and claims that human beings are

⁷⁶Swift, **g.t.**, s. 218.

⁷⁷Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 282, 283.

not “*animal rationale*” (rational animal), but “*rationis capax*” (capable of reason).⁷⁸ Moreover, he implies that although human beings have capacity for rationality, they do not cultivate it as much as they are supposed to do and attributes the corruptions in his society to human beings’ inability to cultivate reason. Swift’s implication that human beings are “*rationis capax*” who do not cultivate reason can be seen in this comment of Gulliver’s “Master” on human beings that is given after Gulliver’s account of the corruptions of his society:

...he looked upon us a sort of animals to whose share, by what accident he could not conjecture, some small pittance of reason had fallen, whereof we made no other use than by its assistance to aggravate our natural corruptions, and to acquire new ones which nature had not given us.⁷⁹

As it is seen, Swift implies that human beings are *animal rationale*, but they fall short in cultivating reason and it is this inability of human beings which causes corruptions in the society. It is because Gulliver’s “Master” observes that although human beings have “small pittance of reason”, they do not cultivate it; on the contrary, they abuse it by using their capacity for reason for their “natural corruptions.” This quotation also reflects Swift’s misanthropy since with this claim of Gulliver’s “Master”, Swift rejects the well-known definition of human beings as *animal rationale* and regards human beings as merely “*rationis capax*” who even do not make use of their capacity for reason.

Although Swift’s argument that human beings fall short in cultivating reason concerns every human being, the accounts Gulliver gives about his world concerning England during the reign of Queen Anne reveal that Swift’s main object of satire is the institutions and the individuals of English eighteenth-century society, as it is seen in the preface given at the beginning of the episode concerning Gulliver’s account of his world: “*A continuation of the state of England; so well governed by a Queen as to need no first Minister.*”⁸⁰ This preface reveals that Swift’s main object of satire was the contemporary English society during the reign of Queen Anne since there

⁷⁸Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 21.

⁷⁹Swift, **g.t.**, s. 286.

⁸⁰Swift, **g.t.**, s. 277.

was no other queen in England within the years Gulliver tells his adventures.* Through Gulliver's account to his "Master", Swift discloses the corruptions in his "modern society". He mostly draws attention to the corruptions as a consequence of insatiable desire for money and power, jealousy and malice in the English society of his time. What Swift mostly stresses among the corruptions Gulliver mentions is the corruption in the judicial system of English society as Gulliver's definition of the lawyers to his Master indicates:

I said there was a society among us, bred up from their youth in the art of proving by words multiplied for the purpose, that white is black, and black is white, according as they are paid. To this society all the rest of the people are slaves. For example, if my neighbor hath a mind to my cow, he hires a lawyer to prove that he ought to have my cow from me. I must then hire another to defend my right, it being against all rules of law that any man should be allowed to speak for himself.⁸¹

It is evident that with this account of Gulliver, Swift criticizes the corruption in the judicial system of modern English society. He implies that in the modern society, everything even the judicial system is under the control of money since Gulliver says if they are paid, lawyers lie, which is not an expected action from men of justice. Thus, the quotation discloses the corruption of the judicial system in the modern European society by claiming that it is based on money rather than justice.

In his account, apart from the corruptions in the judicial system, Gulliver informs his "Master" about the corruptions in English government, war and emergence of extreme poverty and luxury caused by endless desire for more money. Upon these accounts of Gulliver, his "Master" reaches such a conclusion:

That our Institutions of government and law were plainly owing to our gross defects in reason, and by consequence, in virtue; because reason alone is sufficient to govern a rational creature; ...⁸²

* 1702-1714

⁸¹ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 274.

⁸² Swift, **g.t.**, s. 286.

This conclusion of Gulliver's "Master" reveals that Swift attributes corruptions in the modern society to human beings' inability to "cultivate reason" as much as they are supposed to do. It is because in the quotation Gulliver's master states that if human beings behaved in accordance with dictates of reason, the corruptions existing in the contemporary English society would not have occurred since he implies that reason brings virtue.

Swift's implication that human beings' inability to "cultivate reason" causes corruptions is also revealed in Gulliver's account of the Houyhnhnm society. In his account Gulliver states that since for the Houyhnhnms, the "Grand maxim is to cultivate reason, and be wholly governed by it", they are ignorant of what is evil:

As these noble Houyhnhnms are endowed by nature with a general disposition to all virtues, and have no conceptions or ideas of what is evil in a rational creature, so their Grand maxim is to cultivate reason, and to be wholly governed by it.⁸³

The quotation also reveals Swift's implication that human beings fall short in "cultivating reason" because if human beings managed to "cultivate reason", they would not be aware of "evil" like the Houyhnhnms, since reason only brings virtue.

As it is revealed in the instances from the work, Swift attributes the degeneration of human beings and the society to human beings' inability to "cultivate reason" as much as they are supposed to do. Thus, it is possible to conclude that through Gulliver's visit to the land of the Houyhnhnms, Swift invites his readers, especially the English readers to draw conclusions from the comparisons between the rational Houyhnhnm society and irrational human society.

Another aim of Swift's intention to reform early eighteenth-century English society is to make his readers control their pride and prejudice by revealing how these passions cause deception. Since these passions can be observed in any human being at any time, it would be wrong to regard Swift's attack on these passions as merely an attack on the pride and prejudice of the members of his society, but more appropriately, a general attack on human pride and prejudice.

⁸³Swift, *g.t.*, s. 295.

Swift's intention to reveal the absurdity of pride and prejudice is observed when the inconsistency between the pride of the figures Gulliver encounters and their actual situations are taken into consideration. For instance, in the first part, because of their excessive pride the Lilliputians deceive themselves thinking that they are powerful enough to dominate, even to kill Gulliver and they cannot realize the fact that Gulliver can crush most of them easily. At the same time, in the third part of the book, the Laputans are proud of their knowledge of mathematics, geometry, astronomy and music. However, their clothes which are "very ill made and quite out of shape"⁸⁴ and their "very ill built" houses"⁸⁵ reveal that their pride mislead them. Thus, by revealing how wrong the Lilliputians are in miscalculating their power and how impractical the Laputans are, Swift demonstrates the absurdity of pride that causes deception and he invites his readers to control their pride.

As for Swift's intention to make his readers control their prejudice, this intention of Swift can be observed when inconsistent behaviors of Gulliver are taken into consideration. For instance, in the first part, Gulliver wins the approval of the reader by saving Blefuscu and refusing to "reduce the whole empire of Blefuscu to a province."⁸⁶ Thus, the reader starts reading the second part with sympathy for Gulliver and he/she continues to sympathize with him until his offer of gun powder to the Brobdingnagian king, which not only completely shatters reader's sympathy, but also makes the reader see that his/ her presumption about Gulliver is wrong.⁸⁷ Thus, by playing with the reader's expectations, Swift teaches his readers that "prejudices are of little assistance to us."⁸⁸

As it is mentioned before, although Swift's attack on pride and prejudice concerns every human being, there are some instances within the work which reveal Swift is directing his satire especially towards the members of the modern English society. For instance, in the second part of the work where Gulliver as a representative of the modern Englishman of the early eighteenth-century is being ridiculed, reveals that Swift is actually mocking the pride of Englishmen of the

⁸⁴Swift, **g.t.**, s. 175.

⁸⁵Swift, **g.t.**, s. 176.

⁸⁶Swift, **g.t.**, s. 48.

⁸⁷Hill, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 46.

⁸⁸Guilhamet, **s.a.t.t.o.t.g.**, s. 156.

modern society. Gulliver's conversation with the Brobdingnagian king in which Gulliver gives an account of "my (his) own beloved country, of our (their) trade, and wars by sea and land, of our (their) schisms in religion, and parties in the state"⁸⁹ causes the laughter of the Brobdingnagian king. In other words, the contemporary events of the modern society are being ridiculed as this account of Gulliver exposes:

...the prejudices of his education prevailed so far, that he could not forbear taking me up in his right hand, and stroking me gently with the other, after an hearty fit of laughing, asked me whether I were a Whig or a Tory.⁹⁰

The above quotation, the account of the issues Gulliver tells to the king and the king's reaction as laughter make it clear that to Swift the issues eighteenth-century English people are proud of are not actually worth being proud of. Swift means that it is their pride in "blind and slavish nationalism" that makes English people "distort reality".⁹¹ To Swift, members of the English modern society's pride in their nationalism prevent them from evaluating events objectively. Their excessive pride gives way to "blind and slavish patriotism that causes its adherents distort reality".⁹² These arguments can be concluded from the behavior of Gulliver as a representative of Englishman of the modern society who prefers to blame Brobdingnagian king for having prejudice instead of "looking down with a critical eye on the corruptions of his country" because of his excessive pride in his nationality.⁹³ Thus, it is seen that Swift intends to make his English readers control their pride by revealing how it causes deception.

Another instance that reveals pride as one of the main objects of Swift's social satire is the last paragraph of the work in which Gulliver says:

But the Houyhnhnms, who live under the government of reason, are no more proud of the good qualities they possess, than I should be for not wanting a leg or an arm, which no man in his wits would boast of, although he must be miserable without

⁸⁹Swift, **g.t.**, s. 110.

⁹⁰ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 110.

⁹¹ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 66.

⁹² Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 66.

⁹³ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 62.

them. I would dwell the longer upon this subject from the desire I have to make the society of an English Yahoo by any means not insupportable; and therefore I here entreat those who have any tincture of this absurd vice, that they will not presume to come in my sight. ⁹⁴

The above quotation reveals Swift's attempts to expose the absurdity of pride since Gulliver regards it as an "absurd vice". Gulliver's intention to make "the society of an English Yahoo" "not insupportable" through this account clearly indicates English society of Swift's time as the main object of Swift's satire.

Another instance which supports the above argument is Gulliver's experiment concerning the failure of his expectation about the behavior of a Dutchman. When the ship in which Gulliver is working as a surgeon is attacked by pirates and one of the pirates who is a Dutchman threatens to throw the crew into the sea, Gulliver "begged him (the Dutchman) in consideration of (their) being Christians and Protestants, of neighboring countries, in strict alliance, that he would move the Captains to take some pity on (them)."⁹⁵ Gulliver begs forgiveness from the Dutchman pirate in such a way because at the time the book was written Holland fought in alliance with England against the French in the War of the Spanish Succession. However, contrary to Gulliver's expectation the Dutchman treats him more aggressively. On the other hand, the Japanese pirate captain from whom Gulliver has no expectation of pity because in the eighteenth-century the Japanese were regarded as "brutal pagans" turns out to be "far more humane and charitable than the Dutchman." It is because he agrees on not killing Gulliver and his crew. Moreover, he doubles Gulliver's food "out of his own store, and would permit no man to search him (Gulliver)."⁹⁶ Thus, with this experience of Gulliver, Swift teaches his readers, especially his English readers how prejudices may mislead humanity.⁹⁷

When all these attacks on eighteenth-century society and people are taken into consideration, it is seen that Swift was dissatisfied with the happenings and corruptions in his society and intended to reform it by revealing these corruptions

⁹⁴ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 329.

⁹⁵ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 167.

⁹⁶ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 167.

⁹⁷ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 74.

and follies through *Gulliver's Travels*. Another point Swift draws attention to is the lack of courage in his society to fight against tyranny as it is revealed in Gulliver's visit to Glubdubdrib. It seems as if by revealing how few people manage to fight against tyranny in his time, Swift invites the members of the society of his time to react against tyranny. Apart from these points, Swift invites his readers to cultivate reason by implying it is human being's inability to cultivate reason that causes corruption in modern society. Finally, Swift invites his readers especially his English readers of his society to control their passions of pride and prejudice by revealing how they cause deception. To conclude, Swift's revelation of the vices and follies in the society awakens the wish to correct them in the reader and it is one of the steps which Swift takes to reform his society. The analysis of Swift's criticism of modern society and people also reveals that Swift's attacks on modernism are not limited to only a few areas of life, "for Swift, modernism infiltrated every area of life" from science to judicial system.⁹⁸ Another "area" modernism has "infiltrated" for Swift is politics. Thus, criticism of the early eighteenth-century English Politics and Governments is another theme of the work.

2.1.2. Criticism of the Early Eighteenth-Century English Politics and Governments

In each part, Swift attacks different aspects of the corruption in the British governments of his time. His attacks begin to be felt in the first part of the book in which Swift invites his readers to compare the corrupted political situation of Lilliput to that of England in the early eighteenth-century with explicit similarities. The most obvious point that makes the reader realize the close similarity between the politics of Lilliput and England of Swift's time is the political account Reldresal gives to Gulliver:

As to the first, you are to understand, that for about seventy moons past there have been two struggling parties in this empire, under the names of *Tramecksan* and

⁹⁸Knowles, *g.t.t.p.o.s.*, s. 86.

Slamecksan, from the high and low heels of their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves. It is alleged, indeed, that the high heels are most agreeable to our ancient constitution; but, however this be, his majesty has determined to make use only of low heels in the administration of the government, and all offices in the gift of the crown, as you cannot but observe; and particularly that his majesty's imperial heels are lower at least by a *drurr* than any of his court (*drurr* is a measure about the fourteenth part of an inch). The animosities between these two parties run so high, that they will neither eat, nor drink, nor talk with each other. We compute the *Tramecksan*, or high heels, to exceed us in number; but the power is wholly on our side.⁹⁹

It is almost impossible for the early eighteenth century English people not to compare *Tramecksan* and *Slamecksan* with eighteenth-century English political parties Whig and Tory after reading this account of Gulliver. It is because the accounts Reldresal gives about '*Tramecksan*' the High Heels who are the closest to the 'ancient Constitution' and more numerous, resemble the High Church Party Tories. In the same manner, the accounts he gives about *Slamecksan*, the Low Heels resemble the Low Church Party Whigs. Like the supporters of the Lilliputian party *Tramecksan*, Tories were the supporters of the "ancient constitution". Similarly, just as the supporters of *Tramecksan* "exceed" the supporters of *Slamecksan* in numbers Tories exceeded Whigs in numbers in Swift's time.¹⁰⁰ Another parallelism between the politics of Lilliput and England is the fact that like the Emperor of Lilliput, George I was dominated by the less numerous one, the Whigs.¹⁰¹ Thus, with this quotation, by drawing attention to the close similarities between the politics of Lilliput and the politics of England in the early eighteenth century, Swift emphasizes the pettiness of party divisions in the early eighteenth-century English court.

After making his reader realize the parallelisms between the politics of Lilliput and England with such explicit similarities, Swift makes it easy for his readers to realize his attack on the improper way of choosing government officers and on Sir Robert Walpole. Since the reader has already identified the Lilliputian

⁹⁹Swift, *g.t.*, s. 42, 43.

¹⁰⁰J.A. Downie, "The Political Significance of *Gulliver's Travels*", *Swift and His Contexts*, John Irwin Fischer, H. J. Real and J. Wooley (Eds.), New York, AMS Press, 1989, s. 9.

¹⁰¹Hill, *j.s.g.t.*, s. 35, 36.

court with the English court of Swift's time, it becomes easier for them to fully realize Swift's attacks.

As suggested by Bellamy, "the portrayal of dancing as a method for deciding between candidates for government office provides a general satire on "the flexibility and luxurious and dexterous footwork that were required to get and maintain office in the early eighteenth-century."¹⁰² This quotation indicates how Swift satirizes this "flexibility" in government employment of his time:

This diversion is only practiced by those persons who are candidates for great employments, and high favor at court. They are trained in this art from their youth, and are not always of noble birth, or liberal education. When a great office is vacant, either by death or disgrace (which often happens,) 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. Very often the chief ministers themselves are commanded to show their skill, and to convince the emperor that they have not lost their faculty. Very often the chief ministers themselves are commanded to show their skill, and to convince the Emperor that they have not lost their faculty. Flimnap, The Treasurer, is allowed to cut a caper on the strait rope, at least an inch higher than any other lord in the whole empire.¹⁰³

As revealed above, the Lilliputian politicians are required to "dance on the rope" and "jump the highest". With this ridiculous way of deciding between the candidates for government office in Lilliput, Swift implies that in the early eighteenth-century England, the government officers are not chosen according to their ability for their profession or their moral virtues, but they are chosen arbitrarily. On the other hand, with this quotation, Swift also attacks Sir Robert Walpole who was notorious for his "political acrobatics" in Swift's circle.¹⁰⁴ The critics agree that Flimnap, the Emperor's Lord High Treasurer is compared to Robert Walpole, the Prime minister in George I.'s administrations after 1721, who was also Lord Treasurer of England in the early eighteenth century.¹⁰⁵ Thus, with this quotation apart from drawing attention to the arbitrary way of choosing government officers in

¹⁰² Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 40.

¹⁰³ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 32.

¹⁰⁴ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2347.

¹⁰⁵ Hill, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 36.

the early eighteenth-century England, Swift obviously satirizes Sir Robert Walpole's "political acrobatics".

Swift continues to draw attention to the corruption in the English governments of the early eighteenth-century in the second part of the book in which Gulliver seems to play the role of Reldresal since like him he gives an account of his country. Gulliver and the Brobdingnagian king make five interviews in which Gulliver gives an account of his own country. Then in the sixth interview, the Brobdingnagian king asks questions and makes his own observations through which Swift's attack on the corruptions in the British governments of his time is revealed. The extravagance of the government and the existence of standing armies in peace time, wars, taxes and national debt are among the subjects Swift criticizes in the English governments from the mouth of the Brobdingnagian king. As it is suggested by Bellamy, the Brobdingnagian king is "a staunch exponent of Tory rhetoric" who "points out what to Swift and his associates were the major failings of the British political system."¹⁰⁶

Swift's attack on the extravagance of the English governments of his time can be observed from the Brobdingnagian king's surprise at the extravagance of the English "kingdom" as observed from this account of Gulliver: "But, if what I told him were true, he was still at a loss how a kingdom would run out of its estate like a private person."¹⁰⁷ These words of Gulliver point out that through Brobdingnagian king's inability to comprehend the extravagance of the government, Swift draws attention to the uncontrolled spending of the government. Thus, with these words of the Brobdingnagian King, Swift implies that the government should not waste its money away like an ordinary person.

As mentioned before, another attack on the British government of his time revealed through the Brobdingnagian king is on the standing armies in peace time:

Above all, he was amazed to hear me talk of a mercenary standing army in the midst of peace, and among a free people. He said, if we were governed by our own consent

¹⁰⁶ Bellamy, *J.S.G.T.*, s. 69.

¹⁰⁷ Swift, *G.T.*, s. 138.

in the persons of our representatives, he could not imagine of whom we were afraid, or against whom we were to fight...¹⁰⁸

The Brobdingnagian King's surprise at Gulliver's account reveals Swift's support of the Tories of the early eighteenth century England who argued that "standing army was both unnatural and undesirable". It is because in the early eighteenth-century England, the standing army was thought to be the cause of imposition of the punitive taxes.¹⁰⁹ The quotation also reveals that Swift attacks the inability of the governors chosen by the public to keep the country in peace because it is another point the Brobdingnagian king fails to comprehend.

In the third part of the book, apart from criticizing colonial strategy of the English governments of early eighteenth-century as it will be examined in the analysis of the theme criticism of colonialism, Swift satirizes indifference of George I to the British subjects. Having spent much of his time in Hanover, George I neglected England's affairs, the attitude of which Swift satirizes in the third part of the book through the Laputian king's indifference to the petitions of his subjects.¹¹⁰

In our journey towards Lagado, the capital city, his Majesty ordered that the island should stop over certain towns and villages, from whence he might receive the petitions of his subjects. And to this purpose several packthreads were let down with small weights at the bottom. On these packthreads the people strung their petitions, which mounted up directly like the scraps of paper fastened by school-boys at the end of the string that holds their kite.¹¹¹

The petitions of the king's subjects are ignored by the king as Gulliver calls them "scraps of paper" school-boys fasten to their kite", which describes the arbitrariness of the way the Laputian king receives them. This attitude of the Laputian king towards the petitions of his subjects reveals that the king is not interested in the issues concerning his people. The quotation also indicates that the king did not always receive the petitions because Gulliver uses the term "might" in

¹⁰⁸ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 138.

¹⁰⁹ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 68.

¹¹⁰ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2417.

¹¹¹ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 176.

his account, which is another detail that reveals lack of interest of the Laputian king in his subjects. Since disinterestedness of the Laputian king towards the petitions of his subjects reminds the reader of George I who neglected England's affairs, it is possible to argue that through the Laputan king, "Swift satirizes distance of George I from the British subjects."¹¹²

In the final part of the book, Swift's satire on the corruptions in the early eighteenth-century England becomes more obvious because Gulliver as an Englishman gives an account of the politics of his country. In this part, Swift attacks the greediness and the hypocrisy of English leaders of his time. This can be observed from this account of Gulliver about the English system to his Master:

I told him that a First of Chief Minister of State, who was the person I intended to describe, was a creature wholly exempt from joy and grief, love and hatred, pity and anger; at least made use of no other passions but a violent desire of wealth, power and titles: That he applies his words to all uses, except to the indication of his mind; that he never tells a truth, but with an intent that you should take it for a lie; nor a lie, but with a design that you should take it for a truth; that those he speaks worst of behind their backs, are in the surest way to preferment and whenever he begins to praise you to the others or to your self, you are from that day forlorn.¹¹³

Swift openly criticizes greediness of the English governors of his society since Gulliver defines "Chief Minister of State" who can be regarded as a chief governor of the state, as a pitiless and loveless creature without passions except for "desire of wealth, power and titles". Similarly, Swift draws attention to their hypocrisy by emphasizing their tendency for lying. Although it is not known for sure who the object of Swift's satire is in the quotation, the critics assume that with "Chief Minister of State" mentioned in the passage Swift either means Queen Anne or Robert Walpole. The critic Hill claims that Swift may mean Queen Anne because the chapter in which the quotation is included has "an account of how Queen Anne rules without relying on any particular minister". Due to the title of the chapter "*A continuation of the State of England; so well governed by a Queen as to need no*

¹¹²David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2417.

¹¹³ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 281-282.

First Minister”¹¹⁴, Hill reaches such a conclusion. This title supports Hill’s argument that Gulliver’s criticism of “Chief Minister of the State” is directed at Queen Anne. Moreover, the years Gulliver stays in Brobdingnag (1702-1706) increases this possibility that Swift is directing his criticism at Queen Anne (1702-1714). On the other hand, as Hill himself agrees, Swift may also mean Robert Walpole as he was “the first prime minister” of the English government of that time.¹¹⁵ Swift attacks with these lines, the greediness, mercilessness and hypocrisy of the leaders of early eighteenth-century English governments.

As concluded from different instances in each parts of the book, in *Gulliver’s Travels*, Swift reveals different aspects of corruption in the early eighteenth-century English governments. The analysis of his attack on the corruption of the English governments in the early eighteenth-century reveals that Swift intends to arouse his readers, who can recognize Swift’s criticism, to react against these corruptions and to take action to correct the follies and vices. By drawing attention to the pettiness of the party divisions that cause unnecessary conflicts in the society, arbitrary way of choosing government officers, uncontrolled spending of the government, indifference of the governors to the lives of the public and the hypocrisy and greediness of the governors, Swift reveals the corruptions in the early eighteenth-century English governments in order to make his readers realize and take action to correct them, which is another step in his intention to reform his society.

2.1.3. Criticism of Colonialism

As suggested by the critic Liz Bellamy, colonialism as a state policy had become established in early eighteenth century England with the plan of the Whig thinkers for the economic expansion of England based on the “perpetual quest for new goods and new markets”.¹¹⁶ Colonialism gained importance in England during the reign of Queen Anne after the victory of England and its allies over France and

¹¹⁴ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 277.

¹¹⁵ Hill, *j.s.g.t.*, s. 71.

¹¹⁶ Bellamy, *j.s.g.t.*, s. 73.

Spain in the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713).¹¹⁷ In *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift emphasizes the negative effects of colonialism and its outcome, commercial society on the lives of the people of colonies and the colonizers.

Swift's attacks on colonialism are beginning to be felt in the first part of the book in which Gulliver is surprised at the "ambition" of the Lilliputian Emperor. When the Emperor of Lilliput wants Gulliver to reduce Blefuscu Empire to a province, Gulliver tries to "divert" him since it leads to slavery:

And so unmeasurable is the ambition of the princes, that he seemed to think of nothing less than reducing the whole Empire of Blefuscu to province, and governing it by a Viceroy";... But I endeavored to divert him from this design... I plainly protested that I would never be an instrument of bringing a free and brave people into slavery.¹¹⁸

This incident reminds the readers, especially early eighteenth-century readers of colonialism. In 1713, The War of Spanish Succession was brought to an end with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht which "was the product of secret negotiations between France and Tory administration." Robert Harley (Earl of Oxford) and Henry St John (Viscount Bolingbroke) saw no profit in the continuance of the war. On the other hand, the Whigs did not want to end the war; on the contrary, they intended to "carry the war to the utmost extremity" since they favored their commercial interest, believing that the continuance of the war might bring about the complete destruction of France's foreign trade. Thus, with the Lilliputian Emperor's desire to prolong the war, Swift criticizes Whig attitude to France. He implies that the endless ambition for gain leads to the destruction of "a free and brave people."¹¹⁹

Swift continues to reveal the negative effects of colonialism on the people of the colonies in the third part of the book by emphasizing the inhumane attitude of the colonizers towards the people of colonies. This can be observed from the way Laputan King punishes his people who rebel against him. In Gulliver's words:

¹¹⁷ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2047.

¹¹⁸ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 48.

¹¹⁹ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s.. 47-48.

If any town should engage in rebellion or mutiny, fall into violent factions, or refuse to pay the usual tribute, the King hath two methods of reducing them to obedience. The first and the mildest course is, by keeping the island hovering over such a town, and the lands about it, whereby he can deprive them of the benefit of the sun and the rain, and consequently afflict the inhabitants with dearth and diseases: and if the crime deserve it, they are at the same time pelted from above with great stones, against which they have no defense but by creeping into cellars or caves, while the roofs of their houses are beaten to pieces.¹²⁰

In the quotation, Swift implies that colonialism makes the colonizers inhumane and emotionless, as revealed by the actions of the Laputan King who pitilessly punishes people in rebellion against him, ignoring how much they suffer. Swift emphasizes the fact that the colonized people “have no defense” against the colonizers. Thus, with this quotation, Swift implies that colonialism makes people inhumane and emotionless through the revelation of the inhumane attitude of the colonizer court of Laputa towards the colonized people of Balnibarbi.

In the third part of the book, apart from drawing attention to the negative outcomes of colonialism on humanity, Swift invites his readers to fight against “colonial injustice” through Lindalinian rebellion. In Lindalinian rebellion, the people of Lindalino, the second city in the kingdom of Laputa “who had often complained of great oppressions, shut town gates, seized on the governor, and with incredible speed and labor erected four large towers”¹²¹ to fight against the oppressions of the kingdom of Laputa. Finally, the Laputian king “was forced to give the town their own conditions.”¹²² It was almost impossible for Swift’s contemporaries not to read the tensions between imperial Laputa and subject kingdom without thinking of England and Ireland because at that time, Ireland was a subject kingdom of England. It is agreed that with the passage concerning the Lindalinian rebellion*, Swift reminds his readers of the success of Ireland against British governments’ attempts to impose copper coins on Ireland. In 1722, William Wood, an English iron merchant was granted a patent to coin and distribute in

¹²⁰ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 185-186.

¹²¹ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 187.

¹²² Swift, *g.t.*, s. 189.

* It was published for the first time in 1896 in the text of *Gulliver’s Travels*.

Ireland* certain number of copper coins by English government. Wood intended to coin £100, 800 worth of copper half pennies when Ireland's total currency was £400,000. This excessive quantity of coins and their debased quality caused anxiety among the Irish since it was regarded both as an insult to Ireland and a threat to Irish trade. Thus, Irish Parliament and public reacted to the patent upon which Robert Walpole ordered an inquiry. At that time, Swift provoked the Irish to oppose Wood's coin and make Walpole revoke the patent through his *The Drapier's Letters* which he wrote under a pseudonym M. B. Drapier, a fictional Dublin tradesman. In his letters, Swift even suggested rebellion if the English persist in forcing the Irish to accept the coins. Dubliners also reacted against the pattern by demonstrating in the streets and sending petitions to parliament. Finally, the insistence of the protests resulted in the withdrawal of Wood's patent in 1725. Since there are parallelisms between Lindallian's reactions to the oppressions of Laputa and Ireland's reaction against the patent of Wood, Lindallian rebellion is regarded as allegorical representation of the victory of Ireland against England about the incident concerning copper coins. Lindalino is thought to represent Ireland or Dublin whereas Laputa is thought to represent England or London. Since both Lindalinian rebellion and Ireland's victory over England in making Wood's coins withdrawn serve as an instance to "rejection of colonial injustice", it is possible to conclude that with Lindalinian rebellion, Swift invites his readers to fight against "colonial injustice".¹²³

Swift continues to reveal the negative effects of colonialism on the lives of the people of colonies in the fourth part of the book through Gulliver's conversation with his Houyhnhnm Master. In this part, Swift implies that his object of satire on colonialism is especially on the colonial practice of the eighteenth-century England because Gulliver gives an account of his world to his Houyhnhnm "Master" as a representative of eighteenth-century Englishman. In this part, Swift's attacks on colonialism begin to be felt in this account of Gulliver in which he mentions the reasons of war:

* Ireland had no mint of its own at that time.

¹²³Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 20, Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s.78-79, Hill, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 9.

If a prince sends forces into a nation where the people are poor and ignorant, he may lawfully put half of them to death, and makes slaves of the rest, in order to civilize and reduce them from their barbarous way of living.¹²⁴

Swift explicitly draws attention to the fact that colonizers exploit the countries whose people are “poor” and uncivilized in the name of bringing civilization to those countries. He also implies that colonialism causes many people’s death or slavery.

Another attack of Swift on colonialism in the fourth voyage is on the damage colonialism causes on the innocent people of the colonized countries as Gulliver observes:

But I had another reason, which made me less forward to enlarge his majesty's dominions by my discoveries. To say the truth, I had conceived a few scruples with relation to the distributive justice of princes upon those occasions. For instance, a crew of pirates are driven by a storm they know not whither; at length a boy discovers land from the topmast; they go on shore to rob and plunder, they see a harmless people, are entertained with kindness; they give the country a new name; they take formal possession of it for their [King](#); they set up a rotten plank, or a stone, for a memorial; they murder two or three dozen of the natives, bring away a couple more, by force, for a sample; return home, and get their pardon. Here commences a new dominion acquired with a title by divine right. Ships are sent with the first opportunity; the natives driven out or destroyed; their princes tortured to discover their gold; a free license given to all acts of inhumanity and lust, the earth seeking with the blood of its inhabitants: and this execrable crew of butchers, employed in so pious an expedition, is a modern colony, sent to convert and civilize an idolatrous and barbarous people.¹²⁵

The quotation indicates that Swift criticizes the colonizers who exploit the “harmless people” of the colonized countries. Swift draws attention to the fact that colonizers easily possess the country formally by giving the country a name, killing its people and bringing its inhabitants to the colonizer country as samples. He adds that the native people are “driven out” and their princes are forced to tell the place of

¹²⁴Swift, **g.t.**, s. 271, 272.

¹²⁵ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 326.

their gold. What Swift mostly despises appears to be the fact that all these “acts of inhumanity and lust” are made in the name of religion because he says these” crew of butchers” are sent to introduce God to “idolatrous and barbarous people” and “civilize” them.¹²⁶

Another object of Swift’s satire in the final part of the book is the constant desire of the colonizers for trade, a vehicle for creation of new markets, which is one of the purposes of colonialism. It is possible to argue that trade can be regarded as a vehicle of “perpetual quest for new goods and new markets”¹²⁷ since it prepares the path to create new markets. In the final part of the book, Swift implies that perpetual desire for trade causes corruption in English society as it causes insatiable desire to have more and more money. With this account of Gulliver to his Houyhnhnm Master, Swift reveals not only the absurdity of endless desire for trade which opens the way to have more money, but also how this desire causes corruption in the society:

I replied that England (the dear place of my nativity) was computed to produce three times the quantity of food, more than its inhabitants are able to consume, as well as liquors extracted from grain, or pressed out of the fruit of certain trees, which made excellent drink, and the same proportion in every other convenience of life. But in order to feed the luxury and intemperance of the males, and the vanity of the females, we send away the greatest part of our necessary things to other countries, from whence in return we brought the materials of diseases, folly, and vice to spend among ourselves. Hence it follows of necessity that vast numbers of our people are compelled to seek their livelihood by begging, robbing, stealing, cheating, pimping, forswearing, flattering...¹²⁸

This account of Gulliver to his Master exposes the absurdity of sending great portion of the “necessary things” away in the name of trade in order to satisfy people’s “vanity” and desire for “luxury” with the money brought in by trade. He also implies that the money gained by trade causes insatiable desire to have more and

¹²⁶ Warren Montag, *The Unthinkable Swift*, London, Verso, 1994, s.131.

¹²⁷ Bellamy, *j.s.g.t.*, s. 73.

¹²⁸ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 278.

more things as implied by the word “intemperance”. The quotation also exposes that Swift’s attack is especially on England because at the beginning of his account Gulliver stresses that he is talking about England. Swift draws attention to the corruptions in the English society caused by the desire to have more and more money since all of the corruptions mentioned in the quotation are in relation to this desire. Swift’s attack on the insatiable desire for money which leads to a perpetual desire for new markets and new goods can also be deduced from this account of Gulliver:

Therefore, since money alone was able to perform all these feats, our Yahoos thought they could never have enough of it to spend, or to save, as they found themselves inclined, from their natural bent either to profusion or avarice.¹²⁹

This criticism of Swift refers to the constant desire for gain through the creation of new markets in the imperial English state of Swift’s time, thus in Gulliver’s account to his Master, Swift by exposing attacks on colonialism, parodies the constant desire to create new goods and new markets.

Commodification is another point of attack on the constant desire for new markets introduced by colonialism. It seems as if Swift implies that in commercial society, almost everything is commodified. In the second part of the book, Swift draws attention to commodification since Gulliver himself becomes the commodity. As it is suggested by the critic Peter J. Schakel “Gulliver becomes the exploited and enslaved, passing through the commodity chain as he changes place from farmhouse to town to royal palace.”¹³⁰ The fact that Gulliver uses the Blefuscan cattle as commodity by showing them to the English people in order to gain money in return can also be an instance of his satire on commodification in the commercial society. Gulliver says:

¹²⁹ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 277.

¹³⁰ Schakel, *c.a.t.t.s.*, s. 144.

The short time I continued in England, I made a considerable profit by showing my cattle to many persons of quality, and others: and before I began my second voyage, I sold them for six hundred pounds.¹³¹

Gulliver's first inclination after being given the cattle of Blefuscu is to make profit out of them. With this inclination, Swift implies that insatiable desire for trade causes commodification of almost everything in the commercial society.

When all these examples are taken into consideration, it is possible to conclude that for Swift the justice colonizers seem to distribute is actually "an instrument of injustice" because colonialism brings unhappiness and desperation rather than happiness and peace to the people of the colonized countries.¹³² Swift also implies that the constant desire for new goods and new markets causes corruption in the early eighteenth-century English society and diminishes humane qualities of a person. It seems as if by revealing these negative effects of colonialism on the lives of people, Swift intends to make his readers fight against colonial injustices, revealing once more his desire to reform early eighteenth-century English society.

2.1.4. Criticism of Contentiousness of Catholics and Protestants and Ceremonial Differences between Religious Sects

Another issue Swift intends to attack in the early eighteenth-century English society is the contentiousness of Catholics and Protestants and ceremonial differences between religious sects, one of the major themes of the work. It is true that Swift was a strong supporter of Protestantism, but the work reveals that he did not approve of the contentiousness of Catholics and Protestants. It is because as Downie suggests, in the first part of the work, "the conflict between Catholic and Protestant is reduced to a debate over whether one should break one's egg on the

¹³¹ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 79.

¹³² Montag, *t.u.s.*, s. 135.

bigger or the smaller end.”¹³³ Swift draws attention to the triviality of the religious conflicts by inviting the reader to compare the Lilliputian’s conflicts caused by religious beliefs with those of England. The triviality of the religious conflict and the parallelisms between the religious conflicts of Lilliput and England is revealed in this account of Reldresal:

Which two mighty powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate war for six and thirty moons past? It began upon the following occasion. It is allowed on all hands, that the primitive way of breaking eggs before we eat them, was upon the larger end: but his Present Majesty’s grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon the Emperor his father published an addict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law, that our histories tell us there have been six rebellions raised on that account; wherein one Emperor lost his life, another his crown. These civil commotions were constantly fomented by the monarchs of Blefuscu; and when they were quelled, the exiles usually fled for refuge to that empire. It is computed that eleven thousand of persons have, at several times, suffered death rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end.¹³⁴

The above quotation initially makes the reader laugh at the triviality of the cause of the conflict in Lilliput. Then the reader gradually sees parallels between this conflict and the conflict between Protestants and Catholics in the late seventeenth century England. Firstly, although the reason of the execution of Charles I was not religious controversies, Reldresal’s account that “one Emperor lost his life” is reminiscent of Charles the I.’s execution. Secondly, the emperor who lost his throne for religious conflicts reminds the reader of James II who lost his throne for being Catholic.¹³⁵ Similarly, the “addict” mentioned in the quotation reminds the reader of “the Test Act which required all holders of civil and military offices to take sacrament in an Anglican Church and deny belief in transubstantiation.”¹³⁶ It is because both the addict mentioned in the quotation and Test Act introduces

¹³³ Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 276.

¹³⁴ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 43, 44.

¹³⁵ Hill, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 30.

¹³⁶ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2046.

obligations to the public. As for Blefuscu, the empire “the exiles fled for refuge”, it resembles France to which the supporters of James II went to take refuge.¹³⁷ When all these parallelisms between conflicts caused by different religious opinions of England and the Lilliputian controversies over breaking an egg are taken into consideration, it becomes easy to realize the fact that the controversies of Lilliput are the representation of the religious controversies of England. Thus, Swift invites the readers to realize that all conflicts between Protestant and Catholics are as trivial as whether to break an egg from its big end or its smaller end, so contentiousness of Catholics and Protestants is unnecessary, even ridiculous.

Another point that helps to understand Swift’s attempt to reveal the triviality of the conflicts caused by religious differences is the phrase written on the *Brundecral*.^{*} Reldresal informs Gulliver about a phrase written in *Brundecral* and implicitly reveals that the phrase is open to different interpretations:

This however, is thought to be a mere strain upon the text: for the words are these; *That all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end*: and which is the convenient end, seems in my humble opinion, to be left to every man’s conscience, or at least in the power of the chief magistrate.¹³⁸

As it is revealed, the proper end of the egg to break is not revealed explicitly, which shows that the phrase is open to different interpretations. Thus, if *Brundecral* is regarded as an allegorical representation of the Bible, it is possible to argue that with the phrase “That all true believers break their eggs at the convenient end”, Swift implies that some writings in the Bible are open to commentary, so it is ridiculous to compel the believers to accept the truthfulness of an interpretation.

Another issue Swift attacks is the ceremonial differences between religious sects. The account Gulliver gives about the differences between Big Endians and Little Endians appear to be a ceremonial difference. In the same way, as Hill points out, the distinctions between Protestants and Catholics in eighteenth-century England were mostly ceremonial and “most obviously characterized in terms of ritual, and in

¹³⁷ Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 276.

^{*} Alcaron of the Lilliputians.

¹³⁸ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 44.

particular in terms of debate over transubstantiation.” “While Catholics believed that in taking Holy Communion, the communicant actually partook of the blood and body of Christ, Protestants held that the bread and wine were only symbols of Christ”. As Erskine observes, in *Gulliver’s Travels*, Swift mocks the ceremonial differences between Catholics and Protestants rather than “religious doctrine of conviction *per se*”.¹³⁹ Swift’s attack on the ceremonial differences between Anglican and Catholic Churches is revealed in the following account of Gulliver:

Difference in opinions has cost many millions of lives: for instance, whether flesh be bread, or bread be flesh; whether the juice of a certain berry be blood or wine; whether whistling be a vice or a virtue; whether it be better to kiss a post, or throw it into the fire; what is the best color for a coat, whether black, white, red, or gray; and whether it should be long or short, narrow or wide, dirty or clean; with many more.¹⁴⁰

Swift clearly mocks and highlights the absurdity of the ceremonial controversies between Protestants and Catholics that even cause the deaths of “millions of people”. As Bellamy argues, this account of Gulliver makes the ceremonial difference between the Catholics and Protestants “appear as ludicrous as the Lilliputian controversy between Big-Endians and Small-Endians.”¹⁴¹ By revealing the absurdity of the ceremonial differences in religion, Swift wants to prevent the extreme hostility between the Catholics and Protestants in the early eighteenth- century England.

Swift’s attacks on the contentiousness between Catholics and Protestants and ceremonial differences between religious beliefs reveal that to Swift, the extreme hostility between Catholics and Protestants is absurd. He implies that this conflict causes unnecessary disturbance in the English society by revealing the disturbance in Lilliput caused by a similar cause. With his revelation of the absurdity of the conflict between Catholics and Protestants, Swift intends to prevent the disturbance in the eighteenth- century English society caused by such conflicts. Thus, Swift’s

¹³⁹ Hill, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 45.

¹⁴⁰ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 271.

¹⁴¹ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 99.

revelation on the contentiousness of Catholics and Protestants and ceremonial differences between different religious sects is another step in his intention to reform the early eighteenth-century English society.

2.1.5. Conclusion to Thematic Analysis of *Gulliver's Travels*

The thematic analysis of *Gulliver's Travels* reveals that through *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift struggled to reform early eighteenth-century English society since in the course of the analysis, Swift's intention to reform his society is openly revealed. The themes Swift applies in the work reveal that Swift could not bear the tyranny and injustices in his society and intended to take corrective steps to put an end to them. It is not only the themes Swift uses in the work, but also his use of the genre satire and satirical techniques makes *Gulliver's Travels* an extraordinary satire of all times.

2.2. FORMAL ANALYSIS of GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

The previous chapter reveals that Swift either explicitly or implicitly reflects the important social and political events of the early eighteenth-century England, which reveals *Gulliver's Travels* as a social and political satire. This chapter aims at an analysis of how Swift uses the genre satire and the techniques to convey his satire aimed at reforming the society in *Gulliver's Travels*.

In *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift makes use of both comic satire and corrosive satire in his intention to reveal the vices and follies of the society.¹⁴² For instance, he uses the humour of comic satire in his attack on the arbitrary way of choosing government officers in the early eighteenth-century English governments as revealed in this account of Gulliver:

This diversion is only practiced by those persons who are candidates for great employments, and high favor at court. They are trained in this art from their youth,

¹⁴²Ross, "The Final:", **s.g.t.:a.c.**, Richard Gravil (Ed.) s. 102.

and are not always of noble birth, or liberal education. When a great office is vacant, either by death or disgrace (which often happens,) 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. Very often the chief ministers themselves are commanded to show their skill, and to convince the emperor that they have not lost their faculty.¹⁴³

Swift criticizes the arbitrariness of choosing government officers in the early eighteenth-century English governments by using the humour of comic satire. It is because as it is suggested by Downie, “the rope –dancers provide a ready metaphor for those who wish to gain and keep political office” in Swift’s society.¹⁴⁴

Swift’s use of the humour of the comic satire is also observed from his parody of the philosophy of nominalism that argues “reality lay in things, not in syllogisms.” This philosophy influenced some early scientists of the Royal Society such as Robert Boyle and his followers who “wished to purge language of rhetoric.”¹⁴⁵ Swift parodies this philosophy by using the humor of comic satire in Gulliver’s account of the Laputan “expedient” that suggests people to carry “*things*” to express themselves “since words are only names for things.”¹⁴⁶ Gulliver expresses the “inconvenience” of this “expedient” as follows:

... which hath only this inconvenience attending it, that if a man’s business be very great, and of various kinds, he must be obliged in proportion to carry a greater bundle of things upon his back, unless he can afford one or two strong servants to attend him.¹⁴⁷

Through humour, Swift indicates the absurdity of the philosophy of nominalism since the “expedient” Gulliver mentions above clearly demonstrates the impossibility of expressing oneself with “things” as the philosophy requires.

As for Swift’s use of corrosive satire, it can obviously be felt in the second part of the book in which the Brobdingnagian King questions Gulliver with “judicial

¹⁴³ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 32.

¹⁴⁴ Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 276.

¹⁴⁵ Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 101.

¹⁴⁶ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 203.

¹⁴⁷ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 203, 204.

inquiry” after Gulliver gives an account of early eighteenth-century England. As it is suggested by Graviil, “the king’s queries and final dismissal of mankind” serve as an instance to reveal Swift’s use of corrosive satire.¹⁴⁸ For instance, Swift’s criticism of extravagance of English government of his time is done as such: “But, if what I told him were true, he was still at a loss how a kingdom would run out of its estate like a private person.”¹⁴⁹ As it is revealed, there is nothing here to cause the laughter of the reader. The satire is direct and severe. Thus, this quotation serves as an instance to reveal Swift’s use of corrosive satire. The Brobdingnagian King’s final conclusion upon the accounts Gulliver gives concerning his country also reveals Swift’s use of corrosive satire:

I cannot but to conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth.¹⁵⁰

With this comment of the Brobdingnagian king, Swift severely criticizes not only the members of his own society, but also human beings in general since it disturbs whomever reads it. This comment produces no comic effect on the reader and accordingly the passage serves as an instance to Swift’s use of corrosive satire. In *Gulliver’s Travels*, Swift makes use of both the corrosiveness and the humour of the genre satire in order to criticize his contemporary society.

As for the techniques Swift uses in his satire, he uses various satirical techniques. One of the most obvious techniques Swift uses in *Gulliver’s Travels* is parallelism. He draws parallels between the actual events of his society and the accounts Gulliver gives. For instance, in the final part of the book, through Gulliver’s account to his Master, Swift reminds the reader of The War of Spanish Succession and the “Revolution under the Prince of Orange” both of which were the important events of the early eighteenth-century. Gulliver states:

¹⁴⁸ Ross, “The Final:”, **s.g.t.:a.c.**, Richard Graviil (Ed.) s. 106-107.

¹⁴⁹ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 138.

¹⁵⁰ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 140.

In obedience therefore to his Honors' commands, I related to him the Revolution under the Prince of Orange; the long war with France entered into by the said prince, and renewed by his successor the present Queen, wherein the greatest powers of Christendom were engaged, and which still continued: I computed at his request that about a million of Yahoos might have been killed in the whole progress of it, and perhaps a hundred or more cities taken, and thrice as many ships burnt or sunk.¹⁵¹

With this account of Gulliver, Swift explicitly reminds his readers of The War of Spanish Succession (1702-1714) that started during the reign of Prince of Orange (William III) and continued during the reign of Queen Anne. As it is recounted by Gulliver, this war continued long years and fought between Christian European powers such as England, France and Spain. The quotation also reminds the Glorious or Bloodless Revolution that started with the coming of William III and Mary to the throne with “the Revolution under the Prince of Orange.”* Thus, Swift uses the technique of parallelism in reflecting The War of Spanish Succession and the Glorious or Bloodless Revolution both of which were important events of his society.

Swift's use of the technique of drawing parallels in the work is also seen in his reflection of the South Sea Bubble. Although Swift does not use the term directly, he refers to the incident through some implications. For instance, on Gulliver's Fourth Voyage, Swift draws a parallel by making the destination of Gulliver's merchant ship reminiscent of South Sea Bubble whose primary aim was also to earn money through trade to South Sea as Gulliver intended to do.¹⁵² It is because Gulliver embarks on his voyage as a Captain of the *Adventure*, a stout merchantman of 350 tons” so that “I [he] should trade with the Indians in the South Sea, and make what discoveries I [he] could.”¹⁵³

Gulliver's being accused as a traitor of Lilliput upon which Gulliver escapes to Blefuscu is another parallel Swift draws since this incident reminds early

¹⁵¹ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 270.

* The revolution confirmed that the monarchy of England was a limited, mixed monarchy in which the King had to respect the liberty and property of the subject.” Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 28.

¹⁵² Schakel, **c.a.t.t.s.**, s. 143.

¹⁵³ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 243, 244.

eighteenth-century readers of Bolingbroke's being charged as a Jacobite traitor upon which he escapes to France.¹⁵⁴

The instances given to show Swift's use of technique of parallelism not only reveal *Gulliver's Travels* as a social and political satire, but also show how close parallels Swift draws between the actual events of his world and his fiction.

In *Gulliver's Travels*, "things are seldom what they seem to be, so Swift "exercises our perception of meaning."¹⁵⁵ As a satirist, apart from drawing parallels, Swift makes use of some deceptive satirical techniques such as irony, parody and allegory in the work in order to reflect the follies and vices in his society.

Swift's use of irony, meaning completely opposite of what is said, can be explicitly observed from his attack on the "prejudice" and "narrowness of thinking" of English people. Gulliver attempts to influence the reader before giving an account concerning his offer of gun powder to the king:

But great allowance should be given to a King who lives wholly secluded from the rest of the world, and must therefore be altogether unacquainted with the manners and customs that most prevail in other nations; the want of which knowledge will ever produce many prejudices, and a certain narrowness of thinking, from which we and politer countries of Europe are wholly exempted.¹⁵⁶

As it is observed by the critic Richard Gravil, in this quotation Swift makes use of irony.¹⁵⁷ The phrase "For I have always borne that laudible partiality to my own country"¹⁵⁸ reveals that it is actually himself who has "prejudices" and "narrowness of thinking" although he asserts that English people are "wholly exempted." Thus, Swift uses irony in his attack on the "prejudices" and "narrowness of thinking" of English people of his society since he means the opposite of what he says.

Another instance in which Swift's use of irony is observed is Swift's attack on the "hypocrisy, ingratitude and cruelty" of the English court by means of the

¹⁵⁴ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2048, 2368.

¹⁵⁵ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2330.

¹⁵⁶ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 141.

¹⁵⁷ Ross, "The Final:", **s.g.t.:a.c.**, Richard Gravil (Ed.), s. 107.

¹⁵⁸ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 141.

Lilliputian court. It is because “Reldresal proves himself *Gulliver’s* ‘true friend’ by suggesting that blindness would be a sufficient punishment.”¹⁵⁹ Swift’s use of irony is seen in this account of “a considerable person at court”:

Upon this incident, Reldresal, a principal Secretary for Private Affairs, who always approved himself your true friend, was commanded by the Emperor to deliver his opinion, which he accordingly did; and therein justified the good thoughts you have of him. He allowed your crimes to be great, but that still there was room for mercy, the most commendable virtue in a prince, and for which his Majesty was so justly celebrated. He said, the friendship between you and him was so well known to the world, that perhaps the most honorable board might think him prevail: however, in obedience to the command he had received, he would freely receive his sentiments. That if his Majesty, in consideration of your services, and pursuant to his own merciful disposition, would please to spare your life, and only give order to put out both your eyes...¹⁶⁰

Here, Swift makes use of the satirical technique irony in calling Reldresal “true friend” since as observed; Reldresal is quite away from being a “true friend”. Instead of trying to dissuade the court to punish Gulliver as expected from a real “true friend”, he offers to make him blind. The phrase “therein justified the good thoughts you have him” also demonstrates Swift’s use of irony since ingratitude never justifies “good thoughts”; on the contrary it causes disappointment. Thus, by using the satirical device of irony, Swift criticizes “hypocrisy, ingratitude and cruelty” of the English court.

These instances given to reveal Swift’s use of irony in *Gulliver’s Travels* demonstrate that Swift is using irony in order to reflect social and political events of his society with the purpose of reforming his society, which reveals the work as a social and political satire.

Another literary technique Swift uses in his attempt to reform his society is parody, a literary technique designed to ridicule through imitation of attitudes, style or subject matter for satiric purposes. As suggested by the critic Richard Gravil, in order to emphasize the absurdity of the actual accounts he had read in *Philosophical*

¹⁵⁹ Ross, “The Final:”, **s.g.t.:a.c.**, Richard Gravil (Ed.), s. 105.

¹⁶⁰ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 68.

Transiptions of the Royal Society, Swift uses parody in the episode concerning the Academy of Lagado.¹⁶¹ For instance, with the project concerning a blind man who attempts to distinguish colors “by feeling and smelling”, Swift parodies the claim of Robert Boyle that different dyes may have different smells.¹⁶² How Swift parodies this claim of Boyle can be observed from this account of Gulliver:

There was a man born blind, who had several apprentices in his own condition: their employment was to mix colors for painters, which their master taught them to distinguish by feeling and smelling. It was indeed my misfortune to find them at that time not very perfect in their lessons, and the professor himself happened to be generally mistaken...¹⁶³

In this extract, Swift parodies Robert Boyle who claimed that different dyes may have different colors because of a blind Dutchman who claimed that he identified colors by touch. This case of the blind Dutchman was reported in Robert Boyle’s *Philosophical Works* (1725). The similarity between this project of the projector and the claim of Boyle that different colors may have different smells indicates that Swift read Boyle’s work.¹⁶⁴ This close similarity also reveals that Swift closely parodies experiments of the scientists of the Royal Society. Thus, as suggested by Graviil, by “using his favorite method of parody which for full enjoyment requires an immediate recognition of the original, Swift was appealing more directly to his contemporaries and especially to his London audience.”¹⁶⁵ In other words, Swift parodies the contemporary events of his society, in this case, experiments carried out in the Royal Society.

Another literary technique Swift makes use of in his intention to reform the early eighteenth-century English society is allegory, a literary technique which tells a story on the surface, but intends to criticize something through unrealistic and symbolic representation in that story.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ H. Davis, “Moral Satire”, Richard Graviil (Ed.), **s.g.t.**, s. 127.

¹⁶² Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 104.

¹⁶³ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 197.

¹⁶⁴ Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 104.

¹⁶⁵ Graviil, **s.g.t.**, s. 127.

¹⁶⁶ Maureen Quilligan, **The Language of Allegory**, London, Cornell UP, 1979, s. 14.

Gulliver's Travels embodies the qualities of allegory since it does not provide a realistic representation of its objects of satire and presents symbolic events or figures. In his intention to convey his satiric attack, Swift applies parallelism between the characters or events of the work and the real people and the events of the actual world. These arguments can be supported by Sir Charles Firth who argues that: "In *Gulliver's Travels*, many figures which seem to be imaginary are meant to depict real personages or all events are drawn from them."¹⁶⁷ This claim of Firth demonstrates that as an allegory *Gulliver's Travels* intends to "mean quite opposite of what it pretends to be."¹⁶⁸ Swift uses "imaginary figures" in order to criticize "real personages". These words of Firth also reveal that Swift makes use of unrealistic and symbolic representation of allegory since characters "seem to be imaginary."

In order to evaluate the traces of allegory in *Gulliver's Travels* objectively, it is necessary to examine the work closely. As mentioned above, by using allegory Swift draws parallelisms between the existing situation of England and its people and the events and figures of the work, which is another aspect of allegory. The traces of Swift's use of allegory begin to be seen in the first part of the work. As it is mentioned in the previous chapter, Swift nearly compels his readers to compare the politics of Lilliput with the politics of England through this account of Reldresal about the politics of Lilliput:

As to the first, you are to understand, that for about seventy moons past there have been two struggling parties in this empire, under the names of *Tramecksan* and *Slamecksan*, from the high and low heels of their shoes, by which they distinguish themselves. It is alleged, indeed, that the high heels are most agreeable to our ancient constitution; but, however this be, his majesty has determined to make use only of low heels in the administration of the government, and all offices in the gift of the crown, as you cannot but observe; and particularly that his majesty's imperial heels are lower at least by a *drurr* than any of his court (*drurr* is a measure about the fourteenth part of an inch). The animosities between these two parties run so high, that they will neither eat, nor drink, nor talk with each other.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Downie, "The Political:", **s.a.h.c.**, F.J.I. Hermann and Wooley J. (eds), s.1.

¹⁶⁸ Stephen J. Greenblatt, Preface, Stephen J. Greenblatt (Ed.) **Allegory and Representation**, 3rd Edition, London, The John Hopkins UP, 1981, s. VII.

¹⁶⁹ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 42- 43.

In this quotation, Swift presents clear similarities between *Tramecksan* and *Slamecksan* and early eighteenth-century English political parties Whigs and Tories. Firstly, just as Lilliput has two political parties, in the early eighteenth-century England, there were two parties; Whigs and Tories. Secondly, the names of the Lilliputian parties “the high heels” and “the low heels” are reminiscent of the alternative names of English parties of early eighteenth-century because Tories were known as High Church party whereas Whigs were known as the Low Church Party. Finally, the supporters of *Tramecksan* who are “most agreeable to our (their) ancient constitution” and who “exceed” the other party “in number” reminds Tories who “were generally thought to compromise the majority of Englishmen.”¹⁷⁰ These close parallelisms between early eighteenth-century English political parties and the Lilliputian political parties make it possible to regard *Tramecksan* and *Slamecksan* as the symbolic representations of Whigs and Tories. On the other hand, the littleness of the Lilliputians whom Gulliver defines as a “human creature not six inches high”¹⁷¹ prevents them from being realistic representation of human beings. Thus, by using allegory which creates unrealistic characters or events that stand for people, ideas or events of the actual world, Swift discloses the absurdity of the party divisions in early eighteenth-century England, which also reveals the work as a social and political satire.

Apart from being an allegory, the text may also be read as a parody and a comic satire. It is because the similarities between the political parties of Lilliput and England observed above reveal that Swift closely imitates party divisions of England in his time in a humorous and satirical way. Thus, by using the humour of parody together with allegory, Swift highlights the absurdity of party divisions in England of his time.

Swift also conveys through allegory the conflicts between the Catholics and Protestants in the early eighteenth-century England since the accounts Reldresal gives about the religious conflicts of Lilliputians remind of the important events that occurred due to these conflicts. The most explicit events of the late seventeenth-

¹⁷⁰ Downie, “The Political...”, *s.a.h.c.*, F.J.I. Hermann and Wooley J. (eds) s. 9.

¹⁷¹ Swift, *g.t.*, s. 12.

century and early eighteenth-century England caused by religious conflicts represented through allegory are The Test Act, the execution of Charles I and the forced abdication of James II.¹⁷² The allegorical representations of these events can be observed in this account Reldresal gives to Gulliver concerning the conflicts between Big Endians and Little Endians:

Which two mighty powers have, as I was going to tell you, been engaged in a most obstinate war for six and thirty moons past. It began upon the following occasion. It is allowed on all hands, that the primitive way of breaking eggs before we eat them, was upon the larger end: but his Present Majesty's grandfather, while he was a boy, going to eat an egg, and breaking it according to ancient practice, happened to cut one of his fingers. Whereupon the Emperor his father published an addict, commanding all his subjects, upon great penalties, to break the smaller end of their eggs. The people so highly resented this law, that our histories tell us there have been six rebellions raised on that account; wherein one Emperor lost his life, another his crown.¹⁷³

The above quotation reveals that Swift reflects the conflicts between Catholics and Protestants by making use of the Lilliputians' debate over whether one should break his/her egg on the bigger or smaller end, which reveals Swift's use of allegory. This is because Swift does not satirize the religious conflicts of England of his time directly; he uses unrealistic and symbolic representations of the conflict. Similarly, Swift uses allegory in representing The Test Act. As observed in the quotation, Reldresal informs Gulliver about an "addict" that forces all the Lilliputians to break their eggs from the smaller end. This "addict" reminds the reader of The Test Act since like the act Reldresal mentions it imposed obligation to the public. Similarly, the emperor who loses his crown reminds of James I who lost his throne as a result of religious controversies.¹⁷⁴ All these close parallelisms between the events of Lilliput and those of England of late seventeenth and early eighteenth-centuries caused by religious controversies reveal the reason behind Swift's use of allegory. On the surface, Swift informs the reader about the Lilliputian

¹⁷² John F. Sena, "Gulliver's Travels and the Illustrated Book", **t.g.o.g.t.**, Frederik N. Smith (Ed.), s. 115-116.

¹⁷³ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 43- 44.

¹⁷⁴ Hill, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 29.

conflicts caused by religious controversies, but what he intended is to criticize through these events are the important events of late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century England.

Another worthy point that is observed is that just as he did before, Swift uses allegory together with parody since the quotation illustrates that Swift imitates the conflict and political problems caused by it in a humorous and satirical way. His use of the humour of parody together with allegory makes his emphasis on the absurdity of the conflict more effective.

It deserves to point out that Swift's excessive use of allegory in *Gulliver's Travels* in order to reflect his society's shortcomings caused the work's being regarded as children's book. It is because the readers as time goes by have gradually become less and less aware of the events, people and ideas of Swift's society reflected in the work. What is left for the readers of today is merely the story of each book Swift uses as a vehicle to convey his satire, which explains the work's popularity as children book.¹⁷⁵

When Swift's use of parallelism, irony, parody and allegory are taken into consideration, it is evident that Swift makes use of all these techniques in order to disclose the follies and defects of early eighteenth-century English society with the purpose of reforming it. Thus, with its reflection of the time in which it was written through a variety of techniques, *Gulliver's Travels* is a great work of social and political satire.

In *Gulliver's Travels*, apart from holding a mirror to the important events of his society, Swift reflects and ridicules popular literary genres of the period. He parodies the eighteenth-century novel and travel-writing genres both of which were quite popular at that time.

As referred to in the previous chapter, in eighteenth-century England, there was "a perpetual quest for new goods and new markets."¹⁷⁶ This interest influenced the literature of the period and caused the emergence of many stories of travels concerning new countries and new people. Swift intended to mock both this extreme

¹⁷⁵ Wedel, T.O, "On the Philosophical Background of *Gulliver's Travels*", **s.g.t.**, Richard Gravil (ed.), s. 83.

¹⁷⁶ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 73.

popularity of the genre and its excessive use of nautical jargon and inclusive details, in *Gulliver's Travels*.¹⁷⁷ How Swift mocks the excesses of the travel book genre of his time can be observed from this answer of Gulliver to Captain Wilcocks who offers to Gulliver to write his adventures in Brobdingnag when he returns to England: "My answer was that I thought we were already overstocked with books of travels; that nothing could now pass which was not extraordinary;..."¹⁷⁸ This answer of Gulliver reveals that Swift clearly mocks the excessive use of the travel-writing genre in through Gulliver's complaint. As for Swift's satire on the excessive use of nautical jargon in travel-writing, this satire of Swift can be observed from the beginning of the second voyage which begins with "a catalogue of exotic places, meteorological phenomena and nautical terms highly reminiscent of the classical travel narrative:"¹⁷⁹

Finding it was likely to overblow, we took in our spirit-sail, and stood by to hand the fore-sail; but making foul wheather, we looked the guns were all fast, and handed the mizzen. The ship wore bravely. We belayed the fore-down haul; but the sail was split, and we hauled down the yard, and got the sail into the ship, and unbound all the things clear of it.¹⁸⁰

With Gulliver's excessive uses of nautical terms in this narrative, Swift mocks nautical jargon in travel writing fiction. Swift's mocking is also seen in the below quotation:

I blotted out several passages of less moment which were in my first copy, for fear of being censured as tedious and trifling whereof travelers are often, perhaps not without justice, accused.¹⁸¹

Gulliver claims that he took out less important passages in order not to make his narrative "tedious and trifling". With this claim of Gulliver, Swift "satirizes rather inclusive style of writing that characterized the travel fiction genre."¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 31.

¹⁷⁸ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 158.

¹⁷⁹ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 54.

¹⁸⁰ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 84.

¹⁸¹ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 96.

Another genre Swift parodies in the work is the novel which was quite popular in the early eighteenth century England. It was popular among the early eighteenth-century writers to construct fiction about the origins of the manuscripts. Swift intended to parody this quality of the eighteenth-century novel in *Gulliver's Travels* through a letter from an imaginary publisher to the reader.¹⁸³ In that letter, an imaginary Publisher called Richard Sympson presents himself as a relative of Gulliver's: "The author of these Travels, Mr. Lemuel Gulliver, is my ancient and intimate friend."¹⁸⁴ He also presents himself as a publisher of the work: "I now venture to send them into the world, hoping they may be at least, for some time, a better entertainment to our young noblemen..."¹⁸⁵ By using an imaginary publisher called Richard Sympson, Swift parodies the construction of fiction about the origins of the manuscripts that was peculiar to eighteenth-century novel, and accordingly as the parody of eighteenth-century novel.

Gulliver's Travels, with its clear and simple language devoid of any ornamentation or exaggeration, is representative of early eighteenth-century literary style. Swift uses vivid details and his favorite style "proper words in proper places" in the work¹⁸⁶ as this account of Gulliver indicates:

When I found myself on my feet, I looked about me, and must confess I never beheld a more entertaining prospect. The country round appeared like a continued garden, and the inclosed fields, which were generally forty foot square, resembled so many beds of flowers.¹⁸⁷

The language Swift uses in the work is simple and clear. He uses short sentences that can be easily understood by anyone. He manages to make his readers visualize the place he describes with few words, which reveals his success to convey vivid details with economy of words.

¹⁸² Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 59.

¹⁸³ Bellamy, **j.s.g.t.**, s. 32.

¹⁸⁴ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 6.

¹⁸⁵ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 6.

¹⁸⁶ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2299.

¹⁸⁷ Swift, **g.t.**, s. 20-21.

The formal analysis of *Gulliver's Travels* as a social satire reveals that the work reflects the society in which it was written. Swift conveys his satire sometimes using the humour of comic satire; sometimes using the severe and direct satire of corrosive satire, also by using satirical techniques of irony, parody and allegory with the purpose of revealing the follies and vices in the society. Swift intended to reform early eighteenth-century English society. Apart from these points, the formal analysis of *Gulliver's Travels* also illustrates that the work satirizes and parodies not only the contemporary happenings of the society, but also the popular literary genres of the period.

To conclude, *Gulliver's Travels* is a work of social and political prose satire by Jonathan Swift written to reform early eighteenth-century English society. With the use of the genre satire and satirical devices of parallelism, irony, parody and allegory, Swift sometimes reflects and criticizes the vices and follies around him and in human nature severely and sometimes ridicules them in a humorous way. Whatever Swift satirizes, almost all his objects of satire have a common point, which is to reflect Swift's society. It is this quality of Swift's satire that makes *Gulliver's Travels* a social satire and Swift a social reformer.

3. THEMATIC and FORMAL ANALYSES of A MODEST PROPOSAL

A Modest Proposal is a social and political prose satire by Jonathan Swift in which he draws attention to the fact that English economic policies towards Ireland have put the country in such a desperate situation that the only saleable commodity left for Ireland is its people.¹⁸⁸ It is a prose pamphlet published by Swift in 1729 with the title: *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from Being a Burden to Their Parents or Country, and for Making Them Beneficial to the Public*. The proposal of the pamphlet is not suggested by Swift himself but an anonymous Protestant Irish who tries to solve Ireland's economic problems by selling the children of the poor Irish to the rich as foods. The proposal suggests "regulated cannibalism, which would have kept the Irish people alive although lowering their rate of increase".¹⁸⁹ The work draws attention to economic, social and political problems of Ireland in the early eighteenth-century, most of which were caused by England's exploitation of Ireland.

In the early eighteenth-century, Ireland which was first colonized by England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth was dependent on English governments in that the Irish parliament could not come together without the permission of the English king and his Privy Council. The reign of English king Charles II, who attempted to introduce religious freedoms for Catholics, was a time of "economic expansion" and trade in Ireland, which aroused the anxiety of Protestant England over the security of their power since Irish population were mostly composed of Catholics. Later, when Irish trade with France and English colonies threatened the English markets in the second half of the seventeenth-century, three-quarters of Irish trade was destroyed with the limitation of Irish exports by the English government. It was mostly the prohibition of the importation of cattle into England from Ireland that destroyed Irish

¹⁸⁸ Nokes, **r.a.r.**, s.76.

¹⁸⁹ Highet, **t.a.o.f.**, s. 57- 60.

trade because it was “by far the biggest market for Irish trade.” Similarly, the prohibition of the export in the Irish woolen manufactures to any country except England to protect the English woolen industry (1699) caused the collapse of Irish woolen industry, which was a chief economic resource for Ireland. The pass of Declaratory Act by the English government (1720) made Ireland more dependent on England since it denied the Irish House of Lords to make laws and asserted the right of British parliament to pass legislation for Ireland. Moreover, Irish interests were sacrificed to England.¹⁹⁰ On the other hand, Ireland was not permitted to tax English imports. “Both luxury for the few, and essentials for the many” were imported from England. Especially being a Catholic was quite difficult in Ireland whose population mostly consisted of Roman Catholics since Protestant England economically, politically and socially penalized the Roman Catholics in order to prevent their economic growth, which effectively ruined Roman Catholic Irish gentry. The Catholics were excluded from positions in the administration or the law. Their trade and ownership were controlled and they were not allowed for primogeniture and to prosper themselves.¹⁹¹ As a result, most of the Irish Catholics fled to foreign lands to be able to earn their living. As for those who remained in Ireland, they had to work as agricultural laborers or tenant farmers in the lands of the absentee Anglo- Irish landlords. These Anglo- Irish landlords obliged the Catholic Irish tenants to pay high rents for the lands, so the Irish Catholics could rarely pay for their rents and faced starvation. These economic and social problems existing in Ireland were the reasons that made Swift write such a harsh and memorable satire.¹⁹²

As a member of an Anglo-Irish family, Swift was furious at England’s oppressions of Ireland. Especially provoked by the pass of Declaratory Act by the English government, Swift intended to take action against England’s oppressive attitude towards Ireland. Firstly, he joined a political group called “Irish interest” the members of which were mostly consisted of Anglo-Irish descendants who “acknowledged the sovereignty of English crown but not the sovereignty of the English Parliament.” Then, in order to provoke the Irish to fight against Declaratory

¹⁹⁰ Downie, **j.s.p.w.**, s. 23, 41-42.

¹⁹¹ Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 93-96.

¹⁹² David (et al) **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2478.

Act, he wrote *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture* (1720) in which he argued that the Irish could fight against Declaratory Act by relying on Irish manufacture and refusing to buy English goods. Swift also wrote a series of seven pamphlets between 1724 and 1725 whose collective names is *The Drapier's Letters*. Another work in which Swift discloses the situation of Ireland as a “nonsatirical economic pamphlet” *A Short View of the State of Ireland* (1727) through which Swift conveys his ideas concerning the necessities for a nation's economic welfare and the economic situation of Ireland. However, it would not be wrong to claim that none of the pamphlets Swift wrote to fight against England's economic impositions over Ireland has been as great as *A Modest Proposal*.¹⁹³

A Modest Proposal is one of Swift's greatest pamphlets written as a reaction to the social, economic and political exploitation of the Irish by the English and passivity of the Irish to take action to remedy the problem. Since in Swift's time Irish population mostly consisted of Roman Catholics, as the proposer argues “at least three to one,”¹⁹⁴ what Swift mostly satirizes in this pamphlet is the exploitation of the Catholic Irish by the Protestant English.

Before moving on to the analysis of the work, it is necessary to summarize the work to remind the vehicles Swift uses to convey his satiric attacks. The work is narrated by an anonymous Irish Protestant patriot. It opens with a description of women and their children begging in the streets of Ireland. The narrator takes pity on those women who are obliged to beg for the “sustenance” of their children instead of being able to work for their own livelihood. He adds that the children of these mothers either grow up to be thieves or immigrate to Spain in order to fight for James II, or go to British colonies in America for their livelihood. Then he asserts that anyone who will be able to “find out” a good way of making these children “useful” members of “the common wealth” would do a great favor for the nation. After the description of the real poverty of Irish people, he presents some details, showing that there is a surplus of children who cannot be fed. He complains about the price given for the twelve year old children working as slaves. He also complains

¹⁹³ Knowles, **g.t.t.p.o.s.**, s. 93-96.

¹⁹⁴ Jonathan Swift, “A Modest Proposal”, **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, M.H. Abrams and Stephan Greenblatt (Eds), s. 2475.

about the duration to feed the children until the age of twelve, the minimum age for the children to be sold as slaves. He claims that this duration is too long for their parents to feed them. From this point, the proposer begins to make his famous proposal that the poor Irish should sell their infants to the rich as food. He adds that one fifth of the population should be “reserved for breed” for the continuation of the population. Later, the narrator gives suggestions for the price of the babies according to their weights. Then, he argues that if the poor sell their infants to the rich as food as he proposed, the problems caused by overpopulation and unemployment will be solved because the number of the Catholics will be diminished and the standard of living will rise. He also argues that the practice of selling and eating infants will affect family morality positively since the mothers will treat their babies more affectionately and the husbands will treat their wives with more respect:

It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers toward their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babies, provided in some sort by the public, to their annual profit instead of expense. ... Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, or sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice).¹⁹⁵

Before concluding his narration, the proposer advises readers not to suggest other solutions which are actually the solutions Swift proposed in his pamphlets before, such as encouraging the use of merely Irish goods and discouraging vanity and gambling. Finally, he argues that a quick death is more preferable than constant misery experienced by many poor Irish and claims to be impartial since he has no infant to make profit from by selling as food:

I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavoring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the public good of my country, ... I have no children by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past childbearing.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2477, 2478.

¹⁹⁶ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2479.

3.1. THEMATIC ANALYSIS of A MODEST PROPOSAL

Most of the themes Swift applies in *A Modest Proposal* are close to the themes analyzed in *Gulliver's Travels*. For instance, the theme of British colonialism is observed in both of the works. Although Swift stresses English colonialism in both works, in *A Modest Proposal*, he merely focuses on English exploitation of the Irish in the early eighteenth-century in applying the theme colonialism. Thus, English colonialism in the early eighteenth century is one of the themes of the work.

3.1.1. English Colonialism as Practiced on the Irish in the Early Eighteenth Century

As observed by Schakel, *A Modest Proposal*, focuses on the metaphor of England, as the “parent kingdom eats up its child colony (Ireland).”¹⁹⁷ In other words, in this work Swift implies that “under English domination, the population of Ireland” is “starving to death.”¹⁹⁸ The traces of Swift’s attacks on English colonialism on the Irish are beginning to be felt in the opening paragraph of the proposer in which Swift foregrounds “colonial deprivation.”¹⁹⁹ Through his proposer, Swift implies that due to the economic policies the English government imposes on the Irish, the poor Irish mothers are forced to beggary for the “sustenance” of their children. As for the children of these mothers, they either become thieves or immigrate to Spain as mercenaries against the armies of France for James II or to the British colonies in America as agricultural laborers due to unemployment. These implications of Swift are reflected as such:

¹⁹⁷Schakel, *c.a.t.t.s.*, s. 205.

¹⁹⁸ Hightet, *t.a.o.s.*, s. 58.

¹⁹⁹ Margot Gayle Backus, “Allegorizing Settler Colonial Reproduction”, **The Gothic Family Romance: Heterosexuality, Child Sacrifice, and Anglo-Irish Colonial Order**, London, Duke UP, 1999, s. 83.

These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants, who, as they grow up, either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbados.²⁰⁰

It is clear that with these words of the proposer, Swift draws attention to the colonial oppression of the English government on the Irish since the quotation shows that the English government makes the poor Irish obliged to work for the English who paralyze them financially. This can be deduced from the above quotation which indicates that both of the places the poor Irish go to earn their living are the places where the English government needs people to exploit. It is because at that time English government needed mercenaries to fight in The War of Spanish Succession and agricultural laborers to work for the English plantations in the British colonies in America.²⁰¹ Thus, with this quotation, Swift attacks the exploitation of the Irish by the English.

The solution the proposer suggests for the Irish who are exploited by the English is much more dreadful than his presentation of the exploitation since the proposer suggests that the poor Irish should sell their infants to the rich as food. Here is how the proposer explicitly puts forth his suggestion:

a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.²⁰²

By using such a dreadful irony, Swift draws attention to the desperation of the Irish as a result of the financial limitations the English government had brought on them, especially to the Catholic Irish for its colonial policy. Thus, with this irony, Swift accentuates how cruel the colonial English were towards the poor Irish.

Swift's criticism of landlords with which Swift, most probably, means Anglo-Irish landlords is another point in which Swift's attack on the practice of English colonialism on the Irish is observed: "I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and

²⁰⁰ Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2473-2474.

²⁰¹ David (et al), **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2474.

²⁰² Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2475.

therefore very proper for landlords, who as they have already devoured most of the parents...”²⁰³ Here, Swift implies that Anglo-Irish landlords are already, metaphorically, “devouring” their Irish farmer tenants obliging them to pay high rents for them. This argument is demonstrated when the information concerning the Anglo-Irish landlords who obliged their Irish farmer tenants to pay high rents is taken into consideration. Thus, with this quotation, Swift reflects his anger at the greedy English absentee landlords and draws attention to their mercilessness towards the Irish.

The traces of Swift’s attacks on English colonialism on the Irish can also be found in this extract in which the proposer not only alludes to the prohibition on the Irish exports by the English government, but also implicitly attacks the English exploitation of the Irish:

..., I fortunately fell upon this proposal, which, as it is wholly new, so it hath something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging England. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, and flesh being of too tender a consistence, to admit a long continuance in salt, although perhaps I could name a country, which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.²⁰⁴

Here, Swift alludes to the prohibitions of the Irish exports by the English government in the early eighteenth-century since the proposer refrains from “disobliging” England for the exportation of human meat. With this quotation, Swift also criticizes exploitation of the Irish by the English since even if the name of the country in question is not stated explicitly, England is implicitly regarded as “a country which would be glad to eat up whole our (Irish) nation”.

As various instances from the work indicates, through his pamphlet *A Modest Proposal*, Swift attacks English colonial practice on Ireland in the early eighteenth-century. He portrays the Irish misery caused by English colonialism on Ireland with the purpose of putting an end to the mercilessness of the English government towards the Irish. He presents the negative effects of colonialism on the people of the

²⁰³ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2475.

²⁰⁴ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2478, 2479.

colonized country in order to make the colonizers realize their oppression just as he does in *Gulliver's Travels*. Thus, both in *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*, Swift attacks oppressions of the colonizers on the colonized, especially the English colonial practices.

3.1.2. Protestant Hostility towards Catholics

Another theme Swift applies in the work that is close to the one he applies in *Gulliver's Travels* is Protestant hostility towards Catholics which is a theme close to the theme of contentiousness of Catholics and Protestants, as he applies in *Gulliver's Travels*. Swift reflects his criticism on Protestant hostility towards Catholics with a “savage irony” that argues “a quick death in barbaric cannibalism is more humane than protracted suffering and a painful end” for the Catholic Irish as long as “the condition remained unchanged in Ireland.”²⁰⁵ Swift's irony is revealed as follows:

I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold as to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food, at a year old in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual scene of misfortunes as they have since gone through by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like or greater miseries upon their breed for ever.²⁰⁶

Swift clearly reflects the effects of the oppression of Protestant English on the Catholic Irish through the proposer's argument that the Catholic Irish are in such a desperate misery that they prefer being sold as food “at a year old” rather than struggling with “a perpetual scene of misfortunes”. As referred to before, the Protestant English limited the economic resources of the Catholic Irish through

²⁰⁵ Knowles, *g.t.t.p.o.s.*, s. 97.

²⁰⁶ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2479.

prohibitions it brought on them, so the phrase “impossibility of paying rent without money or trade” alludes not only to these prohibitions on Irish woolen exports, but also to the control of the Catholic trade by Protestants. In this quotation, Swift implies that due to these financial limitations brought by Protestants on Catholics, they live on the edge of starvation. Thus, the quotation reflects the effects of Protestant hostility towards Irish Catholics. Swift concludes his work in this ironic manner in order to emphasize the mercilessness of the English through their colonial policy and prohibitions they brought on especially Catholic Irish.

The traces of Protestant hostility towards Catholics can also be observed from the proposer’s argument that one of the advantages of his proposal would be to diminish the number of Catholics in Ireland:

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of Papists, with whom we are yearly overrun, being the principal breeders of the nation as well as our most dangerous enemies; ...²⁰⁷

This short quotation gives many clues about Swift’s attacks on Protestant hostility towards Catholics, as revealed by the proposer’s argument that one of the advantages of his proposal would be to “lessen the number of Papist” in Ireland. It seems as if by making his proposer present the diminishment of Catholics as an advantage for Protestants, Swift implies that it is what English Protestants are trying to do by strictly limiting financial resources of Irish Catholics. The extract also reflects Swift’s attack on offensive treatment of Catholics by Protestants by making his Protestant proposer call Catholics as “Papists.” Finally and more importantly, it clearly reflects Protestant hostility towards Catholics since as it is seen, Protestant proposer regards Catholics as “our (their) most dangerous enemies”. Thus, Swift reflects how he satirizes Protestant hostility towards Catholics by reflecting offensive and hostile treatment of them.

Swift criticizes the hostility between Catholics and Protestants in *A Modest Proposal* just as he does in *Gulliver’s Travels*. It is reasonable to claim that through his work, Swift discloses how prohibitions brought on Catholics by Protestants

²⁰⁷ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2477.

caused the misery of Catholics in order to invite Protestants to be more kind and merciful towards the Catholics.

3.1.3. The Upper- Class and the Ruling Class Irish Indifference to the State of Their Country

In *A Modest Proposal*, Swift attacks not only colonial England for its exploitation of the Irish, but also the indifference of the Irish ruling class and the well-to do Irish, to the abuses inflicted on the nation by the English government and the starvation of the poor Irish.²⁰⁸

As suggested by Highet, Swift implies that even if Irish ruling class do not think of eating the Irish infants, they go on “letting them starve to death.”²⁰⁹ In other words, Swift attacks the indifference of the Irish ruling class to the starvation of the public caused by England’s colonial policy. This attack of Swift is revealed here: “... a well-grown, fat, yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor’s feast or any other public entertainment.”²¹⁰ The proposer suggests that the infants of the poor should be served as food “at a lord mayor’s feast or any other public entertainment”, which reveals that Irish rulers still hold feasts while many people are starving in the country. Thus, with this quotation, Swift attacks the indifference of rulers of Ireland to the public concerns since as seen in the quotation instead of taking action to stop Irish desperation, they still continue their entertainments; by remaining silent to English tyranny, rulers of Ireland are also “devouring” the Irish public.

Apart from the Irish ruling class, Swift attacks the well- to do Irish and the Irish middle class who are ignoring the economic misery of Ireland although they have capacity to remedy it. The below quotation reflects Swift’s views to this end:

Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: of using neither cloths, nor household furniture, except what is of

²⁰⁸ David (et al) , **t.n.a.o.e.l.**, s. 2473.

²⁰⁹ Highet, **t.a.o.s.**, s. 60.

²¹⁰ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2478.

our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence and temperance: of learning to love our country, wherein we differ even from Laplanders, and the inhabitants of Topinamboo: of quitting our animosities and factions, nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: of being a little cautious not to sell our country and consciences for nothing: of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy towards their tenants. Lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shop-keepers, who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.²¹¹

Most of the proposals the proposer advises his readers not to suggest in the quotations are “championed by Swift himself in a series of pamphlets during the preceding nine years.”²¹² Thus, by using irony, Swift attacks the indifference of the Irish to the abuses of the English through a complaint of the Irish who remain indifferent to the proposals Swift made for Ireland. Firstly, Swift complains of the luxurious Irish who waste their money in “foreign luxury” and “gaming” while many Irish are starving to death. Secondly, he complains of the Irish ruling class who let their country “sell for nothing” through their “silent approbation” to the English who are “bleeding the country”. Finally, he attacks the dishonest Irish middle-class who compels the Irish public to buy goods at excessive prices. These attacks of Swift on the Irish ruling class, the well-to-do Irish and the Irish middle class reveal that for Swift, they are nearly as responsible as the English for the economic problems of Ireland. Thus, with this quotation, by reflecting his rage against the indifferent Irish who prefer remaining indifferent although they can remedy the economic problems, Swift invites them to take action to correct the situation of Ireland.

Swift’s attack on the indifference of the well-to-do Irish to the starvation of the poor Irish is also reflected as follows:

²¹¹ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2478.

²¹² Nokes, *r.a.r.*, s. 74.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.²¹³

Swift reflects his anger at the indifference of the wealthy Irish. He implies that many wealthy Irish go on wasting their money while many poor Irish are dying of starvation. Swift criticizes the inhumanity of the wealthy Irish to their own fellows. He also invites them to be “thrifty” through the phrase in the parenthesis with which he implies that the current economy of Ireland requires everyone, including the rich, to be “thrifty.”

The instances given which reflect Swift’s criticism of the upper class and the ruling class Irish indifference to the state of their country in the work, reveal Swift’s anger against them for not recognizing the horror of their own situation, and not taking constructive steps to remedy the problem. Throughout this work, Swift tries to make the Irish acknowledge that they have a problem and to invite them to take action to remedy it. When the work is considered on a larger scale, it is also possible to argue that by disclosing the Irish indifference to the starvation of their own fellows, the work reflects the brutality and indifference of human nature.

3.1.4. Conclusion to Thematic Analysis of *A Modest Proposal*

To conclude, in *A Modest Proposal* Swift reflects his anger and disgust not only to early eighteenth-century Protestant English who exploit the Irish, but also to the ruling class and the upper class Irish who abide by these exploitations they are exposed to rather than fight against. It is the reflection of these social and political problems of the society in which it was written that makes the work a social and political satire like *Gulliver’s Travels*.

²¹³ Swift, “A Modest...”, s. 2476.

3.2. FORMAL ANALYSIS of *A MODEST PROPOSAL*

Since it is not only the themes Swift explored in the work, but also his use of satire and techniques in reflecting these themes that makes *A Modest Proposal* one of the greatest satires of world literature, they will be examined in this chapter.

A Modest Proposal is a satire that can be regarded in different aspects. It is both a social and political satire in which Swift demonstrates his skill to use irony once more through the monologue of his imaginary proposer as it is revealed in the previous chapter and a pioneering work of black comedy. This chapter aims at an analysis of how Swift uses the genre satire and the techniques necessary to convey his satiric attacks.

In *A Modest Proposal*, contrary to *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift ignores laughter of comic satire and merely uses the corrosiveness of corrosive satire to be able to reflect his anger more effectively. Swift's treatment of cannibalism as a rational and practical solution for Ireland's economic problems sometimes causes laughter, but this laughter is nothing but black humour. The awareness that Swift suggests such a solution in order to emphasize the degree of Irish misery prevents the work from being comic. The corrosiveness of Swift's satire can be observed from the proposer's observation on the Irish who are dying of starvation due to the unemployment:

And as to the younger laborers, they are now in almost as almost hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment to a degree that at any time they are accidentally hired to common labor, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.²¹⁴

In the quotation, Swift severely reflects his anger and disgust at the ones who are responsible for the misery of the Irish. Since the tone with which Swift conveys his satire is quite severe and causes not laughter but anger of the reader to the ones who are responsible for the Irish misery as the quotation discloses, *A Modest Proposal* is regarded as a corrosive satire.

²¹⁴ Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2477.

As for the techniques Swift uses in the work, Swift's strongest weapon in reflecting his satire is irony. As suggested by Nokes, in *A Modest Proposal*, Swift's ability to intermingle horror at the suggestion of cannibalism with the delight he creates through irony makes the work "a literary masterpiece."²¹⁵ In the work, Swift uses irony so frequently that it begins to be observed even from its title in which he uses the term "modest" whereas there is nothing modest about the proposal of selling the infants of the poor Irish to the rich as food. It is clear that he wants to draw attention to his objects of satire by using such an irony in the title.

Swift, in *A Modest Proposal*, instead of openly blaming the English government for its exploitation of the Irish or the Irish Parliament for its passivity, chooses to convey his satire through a "chilling irony" that the poor Irish should sell their infants to the rich as foods:²¹⁶

... I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he hath only some particular friend or his own family to dine with him.²¹⁷

Through these words of the proposer, Swift says exactly the opposite of what he actually intends. He does not really suggest that the poor Irish sell their infants to the rich as food since as it is suggested by Gilbert Highet, this proposal is so "atrocious that no one could possibly take it as serious."²¹⁸

Another irony Swift uses in order to reflect English colonial exploitation of Ireland can be observed from the proposer's comparison of the Irish infants to farm animals:

As to our city of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers may be assured will not be wanting; although I

²¹⁵ Nokes, **r.a.r.**, s. 76.

²¹⁶ Levine, **a.m.p.a.o.s.**, s. 22, 23.

²¹⁷ Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2476.

²¹⁸ Highet, **t.a.o.s.**, s. 58.

rather recommend buying the children alive, and dressing them hot from the knife as we do roasting pigs.²¹⁹

Here, on the surface, Swift seems to suggest that the poor Irish infants should not be treated as human being, but as animals emphasizing the cruelty of the act. However, what Swift points out with this quotation is that the Irish should not be treated with cruelty the way the English treat both animals, and the Irish. Thus, by using irony, he draws attention to English tyranny towards the Irish, especially the Catholic Irish through financial prohibitions the English government brought on them.

Another area in which Swift uses irony is his attack on Protestant hostility towards Catholics as this quotation indicates:

... there are more children born in Roman Catholic countries about nine months after Lent than at any other season; therefore, reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of popish infants is at least three to one in this kingdom, and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of Papists among us.²²⁰

On the surface, Swift seems to present the diminishment of Catholics as an “advantage” for Protestants. However, undoubtedly what he actually intends to satirize with this quotation is Protestant hostility towards Catholics since the proposer calls the Catholics as “Papists” and regards their diminishment as an “advantage, which shows his use of irony.

Swift uses irony to convey not only his political satire, but also his social satire. In his attacks on the wealthy Irish as the cause of the deplorable state of the poor Irish, Swift applies irony. By using irony, Swift satirizes the wealthy Irish who waste their money indifferently while many poor are starving:

²¹⁹ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2476.

²²⁰ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2475.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.²²¹

Swift seems to suggest that the skin of the infants of the poor Irish should be also used in manufacture. However, what he actually intends to do is to criticize the wealthy Irish who waste their money inconsiderately while many poor are struggling with starvation.

When all the instances are analyzed, which reveal Swift's use of irony; it is clear that all the instances reflect Swift's social and political satire. They all reveal Swift's anger at the exploitative attempts of Protestant English government of Catholic Irish and the passivity of the Irish to the condition of their country. *A Modest Proposal* is both a social and political satire in which Swift frequently uses irony in order to convey his satiric attacks.

Another technique Swift uses in the work is parody. In *A Modest Proposal*, Swift parodies the proposals written to solve the economic and social problems of Ireland. As Levine claims, Swift was fed up with reading "one silly proposal after another from well-meaning, but ineffective schemers" in order to solve the economic and social problems of Ireland. Finally, he "vented" his "frustration" in *A Modest Proposal*.²²² Swift implies that the proposals written to solve Ireland's problems are not any better than his offer of cannibalism in the work and emphasizes the necessity of finding effective solutions. He emphasizes the absurdity of these ineffective proposals by presenting cannibalism as a sensible and practical solution through an emotionless and serious tone and mathematical data:

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that of the hundred and twenty thousand children already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one-fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle or swine; and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of

²²¹ Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2476.

²²² Levine, *a.m.p.a.o.s.*, s. 22.

marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females.²²³

By using a serious tone and mathematical data, a diction expectedly found in the actual proposals written before, the proposer presents cannibalism as a reasonable solution to the economic problems of Ireland. The opening phrase with its serious diction the proposer uses at the beginning of the paragraph, “I humbly offer it to public consideration” reveals that the proposer is serious in his proposal of cannibalism. Through his serious tone and mathematical calculations, the proposer not only openly regards the poor Irish infants as livestock that can be bred, but also presents this as something rational through a diction that is suitable to write a sensible proposal. Thus, by this means, Swift parodies the actual proposals written for Ireland in his time.

Another clue that helps to deduce Swift’s parody of the proposals written for Ireland before is his use of unnamed friends to support his arguments. It is generally expected from an actual proposer to refer to the sayings of other people to demonstrate argument, which Swift parodies as such:

...as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me from frequent experience that their flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our schoolboys, by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable; and to fatten them would not answer the charge.²²⁴

Swift behaves as if he is making use of an argument of his friend’s in order to support his own argument just as the actual proposers are expected to do, which reveals Swift’s parody of the actual proposers.

When the analysis of Swift’s use of parody in his criticism of the proposals written for Ireland in his time is taken into consideration, it is observed that Swift parodies them through close imitation. Thus, another technique Swift uses in *A Modest Proposal* is parody.

²²³ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2475.

²²⁴ Swift, “A Modest:”, s. 2476.

Another aspect of the work is black comedy which can be defined as a sub-genre of comedy or satire in which an elevated subject is handled in a trivial manner for satiric purposes. Black comedy emerged in the nineteenth-century as a reaction to European industrialization that introduced individualism and increased colonialism. Black comedy presents social problems in a humorous but shocking manner and creates a memorable effect on the reader. Its object of satire can be anyone; it can severely satirize the governors or the governed. What is mostly criticized in a work of black comedy is the diminishment of human virtues for the sake of personal interests and desire for wealth. Black comedy disturbs what is digested by the society through its use of shocking irony. A reader of black comedy is always aware of the seriousness of the presented problem even while laughing. Another quality that distinguishes black comedy from other genres is its pessimism. It is pessimistic about the future of humanity and it claims that it is really hard to change the indifference of human beings to the problems of others.²²⁵

Jonathan Swift is regarded as the “ancestor” of black comedy²²⁶ and his work *A Modest Proposal* is one of the earliest instances of the genre. In the work, Swift reflects the qualities of black comedy in handling the subjects it deals with. For instance, Swift’s use of shocking irony which suggests that the poor Irish should sell their infants to the rich as food in order to draw attention to English colonial exploitation of Ireland reminds the reader of the use of shocking irony in black comedy. Similarly, by using such a dreadful irony, Swift manages to create a memorable effect on the reader, which is one of the purposes of the writer of the black comedy.

Another quality of black comedy that is observed in the work is black humour. The only point that causes laughter for the reader in the work is the proposer’s treatment of cannibalism as a really effective solution to the financial problems of Ireland in a serious manner:

²²⁵ Enis Batur, “Kanlı Bir Kristal Kara Mizah”, **Kara Mizah Antholojisi**, İstanbul, Hil Press, 1987, s. 7, 9.

²²⁶ Batur, “Kanlı:”, **k.m.a.**, s. 13.

Thirdly, whereas the maintenance of an hundred thousand children, from two years old and upwards, cannot be computed at less than ten shillings a piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased fifty thousand pounds per annum, besides the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.²²⁷

As the quotation exposes, the proposer's treatment of the infants of the poor Irish as "a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom" in a serious way causes laughter, but the awareness of the seriousness of the Irish misery even while laughing reveals Swift's use of black humour in the work.

Throughout *A Modest Proposal*, Swift reacts against colonialism, one of the main subjects his black comedy deals with. Similarly, as it is also analyzed in the previous chapter, it criticizes indifference of human beings to the lives of others, another subject he handles with black comedy. As black comedy, the work is also pessimistic about changing the indifference of people to the lives of the others. Swift reflects his hopelessness as to making the rich or ruling class Irish take action to better financial conditions of Ireland and fight against English colonialism as he suggests in his previous pamphlets:

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me 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 in practice.²²⁸

This quotation reflects Swift's pessimism concerning the taking up of a constructive step to put an end to the indifference of the Irish government and Irish public to the lives of the poor. Swift's use of the phrase "there will ever be some hearty and sincere attempt to put them into practice" demonstrates this argument since this phrase accentuates the improbability of making the rich or ruling class Irish take action. The work obviously reflects the pessimism of black comedy also, in this case, about changing the indifference of the Irish rich to the lives of the others.

²²⁷ Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2477.

²²⁸ Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2478.

As various instances indicate, by emphasizing English colonialism and the upper-class and the ruling class Irish indifference to this colonialism and the misery of the poor Irish, Swift satirizes the diminishment of human virtues for the sake of personal interests and desire for wealth, which is a common subject satirized in black comedies. It can also be said that since the work embodies many features of black comedy, *A Modest Proposal* is regarded as one of the earliest instances of the genre.

As for the language Swift uses in the work, Swift uses colloquial and clear language just as he does in *Gulliver's Travels*. Nevertheless, probably because the work is a pamphlet, Swift frequently uses long sentences. Here is one of those sentences:

Supposing that one thousand families in this city would be constant customers for infant's flesh, besides others who might have it at merry meetings, particularly weddings and christening, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about twenty thousand carcasses, and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty thousand.²²⁹

Though Swift uses long sentences, the language he uses is colloquial and unornamented suitable to the language of the early eighteenth-century English literature. The language Swift uses is also suitable to the language ordinarily used for animals, which enables Swift to convey his rage against the English authorities, "whose policies have resulted in mass starvation in Ireland" effectively.²³⁰

As a conclusion to formal analysis of the work, *A Modest Proposal* is a social and political satires of early eighteenth-century in which Swift uses irony as a strong weapon to reflect the objects of his satire. Apart from this point, Swift discloses his gift in using parody to ridicule the proposals written to correct the financial misery of Ireland in his time in order to highlight their absurdity. Another and final point that is observed from the formal analysis of the work is that the work serves as one of the earliest instances of black comedy.

To conclude, *A Modest Proposal* is a memorable social and political satire of the early eighteenth-century. Although it is written to reform the early eighteenth-

²²⁹ Swift, "A Modest:", s. 2478.

²³⁰ Nokes, *r.a.r.*, s.183.

century English society, it has power to reform any society at any time which can catch the universal messages Swift gives.

4. CONCLUSION

Gulliver's Travels and *A Modest Proposal* are two of Swift's significant satires in which he scorned and ridiculed the follies of the early eighteenth-century English society which was Swift's society and its institutions. In both works, by using the genre satire, Swift intends to criticize and to reform his society.

Both *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* prove themselves as representatives of neo-classical literature both with their themes and forms. As representatives of neo-classical literature, both of them reflect neo-classical insistence on reason as a guide for individuals and institutions, intention to reform the society, simplicity of style, didacticism and the use of prose style and the genre satire. Thus, both in form and content, these works of Swift reflect the characteristics of neo-classical literature.

It is also possible to find traces from Swift's life even from his works in both works. *Gulliver's Travels* reflects Swift's disgust at his modern society and colonial policy of English government, especially towards the Irish through Lindallian rebellion which also reminds the readers of Swift's *The Drapier's Letters*. Similarly, *A Modest Proposal* reflects Swift's fight against the practice of English colonialism towards the Irish, the subject Swift handles in his other pamphlets supporting the Irish against the English.

Both *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* are exemplary prose satires since they embody the qualities of the genre. As prose satires they both domesticate Swift's anger and transform his "chaotic impulses" into "artistic expressions". While *Gulliver's Travels* is the transformation of Swift's "chaotic impulses" into an entertaining story of Gulliver, *A Modest Proposal* is the transformation of these impulses into an ironic and shocking pamphlet.²³¹ Similarly, as great works of satire, they both entertain the reader with their artistic expressions and try to persuade the

²³¹Test, s.s.a.a., s. 4.

reader that what is satirized is really “reprehensible” and “ridiculous.”²³² Apart from these points, moralizing, corrective and didactic qualities of satire are also seen in both works. While *Gulliver’s Travels* tries to persuade the reader to refrain from human passions of pride and prejudice the passions that are deceptive and not moral, *A Modest Proposal* seeks to end the oppression of human being to their own kind for the sake of personal interests and indifference of human nature to the lives of the others. These qualities of Swift’s works analyzed in this thesis reveal that both *Gulliver’s Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* reflect the aim of the genre, which is to reform the society by presenting the difference between the actual and the ideal.

As for the type of satire Swift uses in his works analyzed in this thesis, it is observed that while he makes use of both comic and corrosive satires in *Gulliver’s Travels*, in *A Modest Proposal*, he conveys his satiric attacks only through corrosive satire. In *Gulliver’s Travels*, Swift conveys his satiric attacks sometimes by using the humour of comic satire to ridicule them; sometimes severely criticizes them to emphasize the seriousness of the problem. On the other hand, in *A Modest Proposal*, he handles the subjects in a severe and direct way and he does not intend to make the reader laugh.

Another point that is observed in Swift’s analyzed works is that they reflect not only the intention of the genre satire, but also the formal qualities of it. They both are written in a unornamented colloquial language. As a satirist, Swift surprises the reader through unexpected plot, discourse and emotional tone. In *Gulliver’s Travels*, he surprises the reader with unexpected and inconsistent behaviors of Gulliver whereas in *A Modest Proposal*, he surprises the reader with the proposer’s emotionless tone. Similarly, they both disturb the reader with their presentations of unpleasant facts of life.

In his analyzed satires, Swift employs a combination of divergent satirical devices. In *Gulliver’s Travels*, Swift successfully intermingles the satirical devices of parallelism, irony, parody and allegory within the story of Gulliver. Likewise, in *A Modest Proposal*, he intermingles irony together with parody. Swift’s combination of different satirical devices prevents the works from being tedious and entertains the

²³² Griffin, *s.a.c.r.*, s. 1.

reader. On the other hand, in *Gulliver's Travels*, his extreme use of allegory to reflect and criticize his society caused the work to be more popular as a children's book rather than satire for the reader of contemporary society most of whom are ignorant of the events, people and ideas Swift satirizes in the work.

Another common point that is observed in both works is that they both can be evaluated from different aspects. As it is analyzed in the formal analysis of *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift's ridicule of the travel-writing genre and the eighteenth-century novel caused the work to be regarded as the parody of these genres apart from social and political prose satire. By means of parody, Swift criticizes some features of these genres that are ridiculous for him. Similarly, as it is seen in the analysis of *A Modest Proposal*, Swift's treatment of cannibalism in a satirical and humorous way caused the work to be regarded as a black comedy apart from social and political prose satire. Through the help of black humor of black comedy, he makes his reader feel the severeness of his satire more effectively. Thus, Swift enables his works *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* to be regarded from different aspects, which proves both Swift's success as a satirist and extensiveness of his satire.

As pointed out in the above paragraph, this thesis also demonstrates extensiveness of Swift's satire since it is observed that Swift touches on nearly every point that disturbs him in his society through his satires especially through *Gulliver's Travels*. As observed, in this book, apart from satirizing the popular literary genres of his period, Swift criticizes the scientists, scholars, the general public, men of law and English governments of his time and human beings in general. Moreover, at some point, he satirizes the important individuals of his time such as Sir Robert Walpole, George I and Queen Anne. In the same manner, in *A Modest Proposal*, apart from parodying the pamphlets written for Ireland, he attacks both the tyrannical Protestant English government and the indifferent upper class and ruling class Irish. Frankly, the extensiveness of Swift's satire in *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* prevents this thesis from referring to every point he attacks through these works, especially through *Gulliver's Travels* since it requires a much more comprehensive, long-term and professional study. However, this thesis sheds light on the main concepts Swift attacks in these works.

As for the general issues Swift criticizes in the analyzed satires, it is observed that the subjects Swift handles in *Gulliver's Travels* are similar to those of he deals with in *A Modest Proposal*. This can be deduced from the similarity between the themes he applies in the works. In both works, by alluding to the contemporary happenings of his society, Swift reflects his anger at the diminishment of human virtues for the sake of personal interests and personal wealth, injustice and tyranny, the vices and follies, colonial practices, the contentiousness of the Protestants and Catholics, mercilessness of human nature. Swift, in both works, attacks especially the degenerated governors who misuse power for their personal benefits and tyrannize the innocent instead of trying to keep the country in peace.

Another common aspect of *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* is that although Swift wrote these satires to criticize and to reform his society, they give some universal messages that are directed to anybody at any time. Anyone who reads these satires of Swift can easily draw conclusions from them. He/She can at least realize how merciless and indifferent human beings can be when their personal profits are in question. Likewise, he/she can realize the negative effects of colonialism both on the colonizers and the colonies; sees the negative outcomes of the extreme conflicts caused by different religious sects. He/She also sees the absurdity of pride and prejudice, the human passions that mislead human beings in *Gulliver's Travels*. These qualities of the satires reveal that they have power to reform not only Swift's society, but also human beings in general.

To conclude, *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* are two of Jonathan Swift's significant social and political satires in which Swift used the genre satire in order to criticize and to reform early eighteenth-century English society. In both works, Swift intended to realize the mission he expected from a satirist: "to mend the world so far as (he is) able"²³³ since they also provide universal messages that can be applied to every time. All these explain why *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* are regarded as literary masterpieces of Swift and world literature.

²³³ qtd. in Levine, *a.m.p.a.o.s.*, s. 14.

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ÖZET

[Leventli, Aycan]. [Jonathan Swift'in düz yazı biçiminde yazılmış olan *Güiver'in Yolculukları* ve *Mütevazı Bir Öneri* yergilerini temalarının ve biçimsel özelliklerinin incelenmesi.],[Yüksek Lisans Tezi], Ankara, [2010].

Bu tez, Jonathan Swift'in düz yazı biçiminde yazılmış olan *Güiver'in Yolculukları* ve *Mütevazı Bir Öneri* eserlerinin temalarını ve biçimsel özelliklerini inceleyerek Swift'in on sekizinci yüzyıl İngiliz toplumunu eleştirmek ve ıslah etmek amacıyla yergi türünü nasıl kullandığını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışmada metin analizi metodu uygulanmıştır. Eserlerin analizleri öncesinde aydınlanma çağı, neo-classical edebiyat, Swift'in hayatı ve eserleri ve yergi türü hakkında temel bilgi verilmiştir. Analiz sürecinde ise Swift'in her iki eserde de yergi türünü kullanarak modern toplumu ve bu toplumda gerçekleşen önemli olayları eleştirdiği gözlenmiştir. *Güiver'in Yolculukları*'nda Swift paralellik, ironi, alegori ve parodi gibi edebi teknikler kullanarak kendi toplumunu yansıttığı Güiver'in hikâyesi aracılığıyla kendi toplumunu eleştirir ve ıslah etmeye çalışır. Benzer şekilde, *Mütevazı Bir Öneri*' de İrlanda'nın ekonomik problemlerini çözmek için yamyamlığı öneren ironik bir öneri ile İngiltere'nin İrlanda'yı sömürmesine ve İrlanda'nın yüksek tabakasının ve yöneticilerinin bu sömürüye kayıtsız kalmasına dikkat çeker. Swift'in gurur ve önyargı gibi evrensel insani duyguları eleştirmesi de dikkate değer. Sonuç olarak, *Güiver'in Yolculukları* ve *Mütevazı Bir Öneri* eserlerinde Swift'in eleştiri türünü kullanmadaki asıl amacı on sekizinci yüzyıl İngiliz toplumunu ıslah etmek olmasına rağmen, bu eserlerin Swift'in evrensel mesajlarını algılayabilen her toplumu ıslah etme gücüne sahip olduğu gözlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler

1. yergi
2. on sekizinci yüzyıl İngiliz toplumu
3. ıslah etmek
4. sömürgecilik
5. ironi

ABSTRACT

[Leventli, Aycan]. [Thematic and Formal Analyses of Jonathan Swift's Two Prose Satires], [Master Thesis], Ankara, [2010].

The purpose of this thesis is to reveal how Jonathan Swift uses the genre satire in order to criticize and to reform early eighteenth-century English society through thematic and formal analyses of two of his prose satires *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*. The method used in this thesis is textual analysis of these two satires. Before the analyses of the works background information concerning the age of reason, neo-classical literature, the life and works of Jonathan Swift and the genre satire has been given. Throughout the analysis, it is observed that in both works by using the genre satire, Swift criticizes his contemporary society and its important events. In *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift criticizes and tries to reform his society through the story of Gulliver in which the society is reflected through literary techniques such as parallelisms, irony, allegory and parody. Similarly, in *A Modest Proposal*, Swift draws attention to English colonial practices on Ireland and the upper class and the ruling class Irish indifference to this colonialism through a severe ironical pamphlet that suggests cannibalism to solve Ireland's economical problems. It is also notable that in both works, Swift attacks universal human passions such as pride and prejudice. In conclusion, it is observed that although the main intention of Jonathan Swift in using the genre satire in *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal* is to criticize and to reform early eighteenth-century English society, these works have the power to reform any society at any time as a result of the universal messages Swift gives.

Key Words:

1. satire
2. eighteenth-century English society
3. reform
4. colonialism
5. irony