

*Gulliver's Travels: An Example of Alienation*¹

Güliiver'in Gezileri: Bir Yabancılaşma Örneği

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Abstract

The final voyage of Gulliver to the land of Houyhnhnms is distinct from his previous voyages in terms of the effect it leaves on Gulliver. It can be designated as an effect of alienation—the alienation of Gulliver not only from himself but also from his human identity. As opposed to the humanism of the Enlightenment which corresponded to the period in which Swift lived, it appears that Swift lost his faith in both the human being and the humanity. Although each of his previous voyages ends with his happy return back to England, and although one previous voyage consolidates his motivation to take on another, he wishes to prolong his stay in the land of Houyhnhnms for as long as possible, and he dismisses the possibility of returning to his homeland as utterly undesirable. The reason is that he emerges as ontologically someone else from his final voyage, particularly in the sense that he is now identifying himself as a Yahoo who is desperately aspiring to become a Houyhnhnm. He cannot avoid the paradoxical sense of belonging to the Yahoos despite his intense hatred of them. In a similar way, he cannot avoid the paradoxical desire to become a Houyhnhnm despite his assurance that he will not be able to do so. Both the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos are defined as creatures endowed with the capability of reasoning. However, the fundamental difference between the two is that the Houyhnhnms are representatives of virtue, whereas the Yahoos are representatives of vice. This distinction provides the basis of the justification for Gulliver's growing misanthropic attitude towards the human kind. This paper situates *Gulliver's Travels* in a largely historical context in its first part to demonstrate how Swift responds to the foregrounding of reason in his time as the most principal defining characteristic of human existence, and then examines the emergence of alienation through the example of Gulliver in its second part.

Keywords: Gulliver, Alienation, Misanthrope, Houyhnhnm, Yahoo

Öz

Güliiver'in Houyhnhnmlerin (Tekboynuzlar) ülkesine yaptığı son seyahat, üzerinde bıraktığı etki bakımından önceki seyahatlerinden farklıdır. Bu, bir yabancılaşma etkisi olarak adlandırılabilir—Güliiver'in sadece kendisinden değil fakat aynı zamanda insan kimliğinden de yabancılaşması. İçinde yaşadığı döneme denk gelen Aydınlanma çağının beraberinde getirdiği hümanizmin aksine Swift insana ve insanlığa olan inancını yitirmiş görünmektedir. Önceki seyahatlerinin her biri Güliiver'in İngiltere'ye mutlu bir şekilde geri dönüşüyle biterken ve bir önceki seyahati Güliiver'i bir sonraki seyahate çıkması noktasında daha güçlü bir motivasyonla hazırlarken, Güliiver Houyhnhnmlerin ülkesindeki kalışını olabildiğince uzatmak ister ve ülkesine geri dönme fikrini tümüyle arzu edilmeyen bir durum olarak değerlendirebilir. Bunun sebebi son seyahatinden sonra, özellikle kendisini bir Houyhnhnm olmaya çalışan bir Yahoo olarak tanımlaması ve ontolojik anlamda bam başka biri olarak ortaya çıkmasıdır. Paradoksal bir şekilde, Yahoolarla karşı duyduğu nefrete rağmen Yahoolarla olan aidiyet duygusundan kurtulamaz. Benzer bir şekilde, yine bir paradoksun içinde sıkışarak asla bir Houyhnhnm olamayacağını bildiği halde bir Houyhnhnm olma arzusundan da sıyrılamaz. Hem Houyhnhnmler hem de Yahoolar akıl etme yeteneğine sahip yaratıklar olarak tanımlansalar da, ikisi arasındaki temel fark Houyhnhnmlerin erdemi, Yahooların ise ahlaksızlığı temsil etmelerinde yatmaktadır. Bu ayrım Güliiver'in insan türüne karşı gittikçe büyüyen nefretini haklı kılmak için dayandığı temeli oluşturmaktadır. Bu makale, ilk kısmında Swift'in yaşadığı dönemde aklın insan varlığını tanımlayan en öncelikli özellik olarak öne çıkartılmasına nasıl tepki verdiğini gözönüne sermek için *Güliiver'in Gezileri*'ni büyük bir oranda tarihsel bir bağlama oturtmakta, ve daha sonra ikinci kısımda Güliiver örneği üzerinden yabancılaşmanın ortaya çıkışını incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Güliiver, Yabancılaşma, Mizantrop, Houyhnhnm, Yahoo

Introduction

This paper proposes that the final voyage of Gulliver to the land of Houyhnhnms is distinct from his previous ones in that his final voyage brings him to a point at which his

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choice of the term ‘Yahoo’ to refer to members of the human kind, including himself, and his ensuing juxtaposition of the Yahoos with the Houyhnhnms become a marker not only of his hatred of the human race but also of his ontological isolation from the entire human race. It is especially the final pages of the novel which depict Gulliver in a state of quasi-delirium where he can be portrayed as a case of estrangement from the human race in general, and from the English society, his family and even himself in particular. The presence of the human Gulliver among the Houyhnhnms causes his ontological relation with himself as a human being to undergo an unexpected transformation; and consequently, he splits from his human self—something which can most clearly and easily be spotted in instances where the reader finds him referring to human beings, including himself, as a Yahoo. With all this in mind, the present study aims to base its explanation for the reasons of Gulliver’s ontological attachment to the Houyhnhnms on the argument that considered as a whole, his experiences among the Houyhnhnms work progressively towards and eventually culminate in forming what can be called a case of estrangement, or alienation, on his own part. In this respect, the proposed argument is premised upon the suggestion to place the final voyage of Gulliver and the ensuing emergence of his misanthropy in a largely historical context and then to demonstrate the acceptability of reading it as a case of utter alienation from the human race.

Historical Contextualization of Gulliver’s Final Voyage

Gulliver loves and aspires to become a Houyhnhnm, and he detests the idea of being one of the Yahoos. This is because the Houyhnhnms exemplify in the best manner ever possible the use of the faculty of reasoning for the attainment of a virtuous existence, whereas the Yahoos embody the corruption of the faculty of reasoning to such an extent that the whole race of the Yahoos is unexceptionally associated with the general collection of vices. Gulliver’s emphasis on the use of reason on the one hand and on its abuse on the other can thus be taken as a signal of Swift’s response to the then newly emerging attitude of his time towards the idealization of reason as the sole defining characteristic of human kind. Moreover, it appears that Gulliver’s final voyage to the country of Houyhnhnms reflects Swift’s critical stance on the worshipping of reason as the ultimate source of happiness on earth. For Swift as well as for Gulliver, happiness should be sought in something else, which is the use of reason for the accomplishment of a higher level of existence in terms of its repository of virtues.

The period of time in which Swift wrote *Gulliver’s Travels*—the early eighteenth century—corresponds to a period of time in which a radical change was already starting to take place not only in England but also across much of Europe. It was namely the Age of Enlightenment which was beginning to have its effects felt all across the continent when Swift was writing *Gulliver’s Travels*. One of the most significant characteristics of the Enlightenment was that it propagated the belief in the human capability of replacing darkness with light, ignorance with knowledge, and poverty with prosperity, solely through the human reason. It was the age of change from “scepticism and the belief in the corruption of human nature” to “rationalism and an optimistic faith in man” (Wedel, 1926, p. 447). To use the words of Eric Josephson and Mary Josephson, it was a period of “optimism, hope and certainty—a period when man believed in himself and the work of his hands, had faith in the powers of reason and science, trusted his gods, and conceived his own capacity for growth as

endless and his widening horizons limitless” (10). In the European history, this is also known as the age of scientific discoveries and exploration of different societies and cultures by means of overseas traveling. Among many other things, new discoveries of natural laws such as Newton’s discovery of the laws of optics, and the inventions of the microscope and telescope transformed the conventional view of nature profoundly. It became evident that there was much more to be explored than what the naked human eyes could see. The acquisition of expanded knowledge about different territories and their inhabitants also helped to improve familiarity with and understanding of different cultures. In this respect, *Gulliver’s Travels* can be considered as a literary outcome of the adventurous spirit of the early 18th-century European outlook on the world.

Indeed, the Enlightenment came with a profound change of perception. The fundamental change in the common attitude towards the notion of being a human meant a corresponding change in various aspects of life at its various levels. A “revolutionary” change was taking place in the way the European philosophy was developing in the direction of moving not only away from Pascal and his pessimism to Leibnitz and his optimism but also away from Montaigne and his scepticism to Locke and his rationalism (Wedel, 1922, p. 436). The future was no longer bleak for the Europeans because the increase in the scientific knowledge about the nature and the human body made possible the betterment of sanitary conditions which, in turn, contributed to the extension of man’s life span. Furthermore, the public access to the facilities of education increased concomitantly with the invention of the printing machine. The governmental encouragement of public literacy through educational institutionalization, such as the establishment of the Royal Academy in Britain, improved significantly the public attitude towards science and its functionality. Despite all this, however, the scientific attitude of the Enlightenment which promoted the idea of perpetual progress and the promise of a future Eden on the earth did not appeal to Swift at all (Monk, 1955, p.50). The advent of science as a project of Enlightenment brought with itself the intense secularization of the human values and the eradication of religion from the human life. As a man of religion, however, Swift strongly opposed it.

It is important to notice that Swift wrote the last part of *Gulliver’s Travels* in a manner which displayed his rejection of the faith in “the capacity of human reason [at present] to attain metaphysical and theological truth” (Monk, p. 50). It is generally held that the main reason for Swift’s rejection of the Enlightenment and its promotion of confidence in the human reason to turn the world into a future Eden consists in his Christian propensity to favour the divine reason over its human counterpart. It is true that as a devout Christian, Swift believed that “man’s fallen nature could never transcend its own limitations” (Monk, p. 51). In contradistinction to Swift, however, the eighteenth-century man questioned the Christian doctrine of the original sin—that is, the religious perception of humanity as a creation which God created in His own image but expelled from heaven when Adam and Eve failed to resist Satan’s temptation by eating the forbidden apple—and rather advocated the idea that “Human nature was being absolved of corruption” (Wedel, p. 441). The faith in God as a supreme being which left man helpless and wretched on earth lost its strength when the newer faith in man as the owner of the unique capability to improve his own destiny through his rationality gained wider acceptance. The Chain of Beings which conventionally placed God at the top of

the list of beings but positioned man just above the animals became obsolete. Thus, the age of Enlightenment became known as the age of conversion from religion to science, from God to man, and from the pure faith in the existence of anything which may or may not be verifiable by the senses to the maxim that only those which may be verifiable by the senses can be scientifically assumed to exist.

At this point, a suggestion could be made to take Swift's long-lasting priesthood in the Church of England as supportive of the argument that the Houyhnhnms embody the ideal combination of reason and faith together, while the Yahoos emerge as representative of adherence to the guidance of uncultivated reason. One such suggestion can be found in Roland M. Frye's (1954) analysis where he argues that the distinction between the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos should be read in the Christian terms. His suggestion is based upon the argument that Gulliver's final voyage reflects a Christian dichotomy between the spirit (representative of the Houyhnhnms) and the flesh (representative of the Yahoos): while the spirit represents "the valuable, redeemable part" of man, the flesh represents "all the natural inclinations to evil which warred against the higher powers" (p. 205). Despite all this, Swift seems to avoid making a direct suggestion in Gulliver's final voyage that it is their loyalty to a religious faith which puts the Houyhnhnms on a level far above the Yahoos. His account of his voyage to the country of Houyhnhnms does not contain a single reference to a religious belief system with which the Houyhnhnms can be associated. The state of existence in which the Houyhnhnms are depicted in *Gulliver's Travels* do not appear to imply a future state of mankind which symbolizes the embodiment of Swift's eschatological expectations either. On the contrary, According to Ehrenpreis (1957), Swift inserted into his narrative the Houyhnhnmland and their inhabitants as representatives of the belief in "the adequacy of reason without Christianity" (p. 898). For Swift, the tendency of the Houyhnhnms to grow to a better state of existence rather resides in their recognition of the need to benefit from "the time-approved wisdom of the race" (p. 50). Therefore, Swift regarded the Houyhnhnms as beings which far surpassed the Yahoos in terms of their ability to reach a higher level of existence through their subscription to the common sense rather than to a form of faith in a divine being. This may suggest that the Houyhnhnms are far better than the Yahoos at drawing lessons from their past mistakes. In this regard, the Yahoos can be taken as representative of the type of existence which appears to be focused on the present moment only, whereas the Houyhnhnms rather emerge as the creatures which are able to base the perfection of their future existence upon their past mistakes. In other words, in terms of their temporality, the Yahoos can be defined as one dimensional, while the Houyhnhnms appear to be multi-dimensional.

The Emergence of Gulliver's Alienation in the Country of Houyhnhnms

Gulliver's final voyage to the country of Houyhnhnms is distinguished from his previous ones, in that while he can maintain his status as a stranger coming from a foreign land and subsequently returning home without a loss of identity in his previous voyages, his identity as a human being completely disappears in his return to his homeland from his final voyage to the country of the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver's status as a stranger to the inhabitants of each country he visits remains unchanged until his final voyage to the country of

Houyhnhnms where after a brief period of time he begins to feel he should belong. Mehmet Ali Çelikel (2011) similarly points out in his comparative study of *Gulliver's Travels* and *The Satanic Verses* that "Gulliver finds himself as 'otherized', having to learn the language and culture of all the savage lands that he explores;" and furthermore, he draws attention to the rule which marks Gulliver in each case as "an illegal alien" to the inhabitants of the countries his fortune takes him to (p. 22).

In accordance with Çelikel's argument that unlike the commonly practiced colonial manner of viewing the natives of a particular land as strangers to be renamed and redefined, Gulliver himself becomes the stranger to be renamed and redefined by the inhabitants of the countries he visits. However, the exception comes up in his final voyage to the country of the Houyhnhnms—which Çelikel's discussion does not include—where his sense of ontological belonging to the human kind undergoes a profound change. His feelings of hatred which he develops for the humankind causes him to stop identifying himself as a member of the human species. Additionally, his idealization of the Houyhnhnms as the true owners of reason as well as of virtue lead him to look down upon man as an animal endowed with the gift of rationality, yet unable to combine it with the virtues. Indeed, it is nobody else but Gulliver himself who 'redefines' and 'renames' himself as a Yahoo in the country of Houyhnhnms (p. 23).

As it was stated earlier in this paper, the reason of Gulliver's choice to redefine and rename himself as a Yahoo in the country of Houyhnhnms can be explained by the notion of alienation.² How can alienation be defined? To put it roughly, alienation can be defined as the breaking-off of the fundamental relation of man both from himself and from his environment. The common usage of alienation signifies a state of estrangement or detachment from self and from others. In their joint introduction to *Man Alone: Alienation in Modern Society*, Eric Josephson and Mary Josephson (1966) discuss alienation at length, and trace the rise of alienation in its modern sense back to the late eighteenth century—the period which foresaw the arrival of a series of technological innovations and political revolutions (p. 10). According to them, with the advent of the industrial society, the connection between humanity and nature went weaker, giving way to the alienation of man from his environment. It placed humankind on a superior position of a subject while nature was lowered to the position of an object. The emergence of individual as a phenomenon of the Renaissance also played a significant role in the emergence of alienation.

It was during the nineteenth century when alienation became a subject of philosophical discussion in the works of such philosophers as Hegel, Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Søren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche. While Hegel developed a metaphysical perspective from which he dealt with the notion of alienation, Feuerbach argued in the Christian terms. Hegel viewed the human alienation as a result of the conflict between the human being and the 'spirit' of his/her existence. Feuerbach regarded the alienation as the

² Edward Rosenheim (1962) argues that the narrative of the final voyage of Gulliver should be taken as "the narrative of Gulliver's increasing alienation;" however, his argument places its emphasis upon Gulliver's alienation from "the traditional sources of human security," while this paper is concerned with Gulliver's ontological alienation not only from himself but also from the whole of human species (p. 114).

consequence of the transformation of the Christian god from “a projection of human essence” into “an object of worship” (Macey, 2001, p. 7). Marx placed it in a largely sociological context. For Marx, alienation was a result of the “transformation of human labour into a commodity” under the newly emerging capitalist conditions (E. Josephson and M. Josephson, p. 22). Weber extended Marx’s theory of alienation from the industrial situations of workers to governmental situations of soldiers, police officers, teachers, and all other civil servants. It was especially Kierkegaard and Nietzsche who discussed self-alienation as a consequence of “the ‘nothingness’ (or selflessness) that yawned before men in a technological, secular and materialistic society” (p. 15). The existentialists of the twentieth century such as Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre also developed critical insights into the alienation of modern man from his own existential situation. To sum up, the alienation of man is essentially the separation of man from his identity as he is “divorced from nature, bereft of his religion, isolated in his community, [and] chained to monotonous work” (p. 40).

What can be the cause of alienation which Gulliver undergoes while he is in the Houyhnhnmland? One part of the answer to this question can be found in his tendency to continue to define himself as a Yahoo despite his paradoxical rage against the Yahoos. In this respect, it can be considered as a typical result of misanthropy—hatred of the humankind. In his discussion of Gulliver’s misanthropy, Monk strictly emphasises that Gulliver’s views about the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos must not be taken as Swift’s, and he particularly blames Gulliver’s pride for his incurable alienation: “He took refuge in a sick and morbid pride that alienated him from his species” (p. 70). On the mistakenness of taking Gulliver’s views as identical to Swift’s, the author of this paper agrees with Monk that “the meaning of the book is wholly distorted if we identify the Gulliver of the last voyage with his creator, and lay Gulliver’s misanthropy at Swift’s door” (p. 56). However, taking pride as the cause of Gulliver’s alienation falls outside the purview of the agreement in question. Contrary to Monk’s attribution of pride to Gulliver, it is rather the Yahoos, “smitten with *pride*,” which cause Gulliver to feel even more alienated from them (Swift, 1966, p. 317). What rather explains the incurable alienation of Gulliver from the human race appears to be his tireless maintenance of the disbelief that man will ever be cured of the vices and follies, including pride, which Gulliver thinks are part of the nature of mankind: “My reconciliation to the Yahoo-kind in general might not be so difficult, if they would be content with those vices and follies only which nature hath entitled them to” (p. 317). Another possible answer to the same question may be that Gulliver is the creation of a fictional world mastered by a novelist. In explaining the reason for his alienated or estranged existence as an English novelist living within the English society, John Fowles, a contemporary British novelist who lived more than two hundred years after Swift, argues that estrangement in all its forms, including isolation and exile from the society is a natural consequence of writing fiction:

Most novelists are implicitly in exile from most of society around them because of the elements which require you to look at your society objectively and criticize it. That immediately makes you different from most other members of that society. Therefore, that is a kind of inner exile which I should have thought every ordinary novelist would have felt. I mean, we do see life differently from most other people—and not only in a political way or a social way. (Tarbox, 1999, p. 152)

As it has been pointed out above, the self-alienation of Gulliver can most easily be noticed on occasions where he is seen referring to human beings, including himself, as Yahoos. Gulliver principally uses the word 'Yahoo' to refer to human beings for the first time in one of his early conversations with his Houyhnhnm master about himself—who he is, where he was born, what he has been doing for a living, who rules his country, how he has arrived in the country of the Houyhnhnms, and so on. His use of the word 'Yahoo' is specifically targeted to the designation of a group of shipmen who were working for him while he was commander of the ship on his last voyage (Swift, 1966, p. 259). Subsequent references to human beings as Yahoos continue to come up as his narrative is manoeuvred into introducing his homeland, England, to his master in its many aspects. One of these aspects is concerned with the legal system and its perpetuators—namely, the lawyers, being hired to defend a case regardless of whether it is a just one or not. Gulliver's Houyhnhnm master is baffled by the idea of hiring lawyers for "engaging in a confederacy of injustice, merely for the sake of injuring their fellow animals," and he therefore feels the need to introduce to his master the notion of money and the way it is used by human beings; or, to use Gulliver's choice of the word, Yahoos (p. 267). He also uses the same way of labelling when he speaks about "prostitute female Yahoos" and their role in spreading certain diseases from "father to son" (p. 270). As Gulliver shares with the reader an account of the happy days he has spent among the Houyhnhnms, he expresses his gratitude to his master for having allowed him to mix up with other Houyhnhnms and praises his master for having been able to understand from his description of the human beings "the nature of Yahoos" far better than himself. Once again, the reference is, of course, directed to the nature of human beings, which consists of "vices and follies" (p. 297).

Gulliver draws the attention of the reader to the differences between the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos. In Gulliver's opinion, the most noticeable thing about the Yahoos, hence human beings, is that they represent a species mostly inclined to vice, whereas the Houyhnhnms emerge as the sole owners of the natural disposition towards virtues. He describes the Houyhnhnms as "wise and virtuous" beings which "abound in all excellencies that can adorn a rational creature," and adds that they "hath no terms to express any thing that is evil, except those whereby they describe the detestable qualities of their Yahoos" (p. 317). Gulliver's first days among the Houyhnhnms lead him to get the initial impression of the Houyhnhnms that they are highly "acute and judicious" animals which prescribe to an "orderly and rational" pattern of behaviour (p. 240). As for the Yahoos, he describes them as "odious" animals—something which encourages him to develop a strong feeling of "hatred and contempt" for them (p. 252). Additionally, Gulliver describes the Yahoos as "the most filthy, noisome, and deformed animal which nature ever produced" (p. 289). His description of the Yahoos further includes the use of such adjectives as "cunning, malicious, treacherous and revengeful" as well as "insolent, abject, and cruel" (p. 284).

Gulliver's account of his years among the Houyhnhnms can also be of great help to us in discerning the qualities by virtue of which Gulliver contrasts the Houyhnhnms with the Yahoos. Gulliver's description of these qualities manifests his inclination to regard the country of the Houyhnhnms as a place where he can feel safer in comparison to the country of

the Yahoos. Gulliver speaks of the reasons for his enjoyment of his residence in the country of the Houyhnhnms in the following terms:

I enjoyed perfect health of body, and tranquillity of mind; I did not feel the treachery or inconstancy of a friend, nor the injuries of a secret or open enemy. I had no occasion of bribing, flattering or pimping, to procure the favour of any great man, or of his minion. I wanted no fence against fraud or oppression: here was neither physician to destroy my body, nor lawyer to ruin my fortune: no informer to watch my words and actions, or forge accusations against me for hire: here were no gibbers censurers, backbiters, pickpockets, highwaymen, house-breakers, attorneys, bawds, buffoons, gamesters, politicians, wits, spleneticks, tedious talkers, controvertists, ravishers, murderers, robbers, virtuosoos; no leaders or followers of party and faction; no encouragers to vice, by seducement or examples: no dungeon, axes, gibbets, whipping-posts, or pillories: no cheating shopkeepers or mechanicks: no pride, vanity or affectation: no fops, bullies, drunkards, strolling whores, or poxes: no ranting, lewd expensive wives: no stupid, proud pedants: no importunate, over-bearing, quarrelsome, noisy, roaring, empty, conceited, swearing companions: no scoundrels raised from the dust upon the merit of their vices; or nobility thrown into it, on account of their virtues: no lords, fiddlers, judges, or dancing-masters. (p. 296)

The passage above shows that while Gulliver equates the Yahoos with the form of existence which is closest to his perception of human existence at its lowest level, he depicts the country of Houyhnhnms as a place where the common follies of human beings do not exist. This place is pictured as human-free in the sense that there is no room for anything bad which a human being is capable of doing. Ehrenpreis believes that the reason for this lies in Gulliver's decision to endow the Houyhnhnms with superiority which they achieve "in their way—which is not the human way" (p. 891).

A philosophical approach to the act of pointing at the distinctions between the two species can be found in Wedel's analysis. According to Wedel, Gulliver's portrayal of the differences between the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms reflects Swift's endeavor to contrast Hobbes with Locke: while Hobbes saw man at perpetual war with each other, Locke viewed man as creatures endowed with reason (pp. 442-3). In another respect, Fleischmann (2013) interprets Gulliver's final voyage to the Houyhnhnmland in evolutionary terms, and he uses "equus sapiens" to describe Houyhnhnms, while he uses "homo Yahooensis" to define the human species as "capable of reason but without it" (p. 40). Apart from Wedel and Fleischmann, Kathleen M. Williams (1951) believes that Gulliver's great respect for the Houyhnhnms reflects Swift's hostility towards "all doctrines of the natural self-sufficiency of man" (p. 275). In other words, Gulliver seems to be implying that the quality of being a rational animal alone cannot adequately define human beings. To be human in the sense of being like a Houyhnhnm means and necessitates much more than the presence of reason alone. The 'much more' here can be elaborated with reference to "the grand maxim" of the Houyhnhnms which is "to cultivate *reason*, and to be wholly governed by it" (p. 285).

His consequential equation of the Yahoos and human beings with the lower rank of existence on the one hand and of the Houyhnhnms with the higher one on the other hand leads him to think of possible ways to prolong his residence in the country of Houyhnhnms until the end of his life:

I had not been a year in this country, before I contracted such a love and veneration for the inhabitants, that I entered on a firm resolution never to return to human kind, but to pass the rest of my life among

these admirable Houyhnhnms in the contemplation and practice of every virtue; where I could have no example or incitement to vice. (p. 275)

Also, the idea of having to return to his homeland and to lead the rest of his life “in the society and under the government of Yahoos” sounds to him so dreadful that he feels an immediate need to embrace the hope of finding “some small island uninhabited” where he could spend his days reflecting “with delight on the virtues of those inimitable Houyhnhnms” and obliterate any possibilities of “degenerating into the vices and corruptions” of Yahoos, or human beings (p. 303).

He is apparently amazed at the way the Houyhnhnms live up to his ideal of how a perfectly social existence should be. Swift defines the meaning of the word Houyhnhnm as “Perfection of Nature” (p. 250). His growing admiration for the Houyhnhnms eventually transforms itself into a growing sense of alienation from his own kind as a human being. Gulliver’s estrangement from the human kind subsequently gives birth to the feelings of horror and abomination. One of the moments when Gulliver’s identification of the entire humanity with Yahoos perhaps becomes most evident in his expression of feelings of utter “horror and detestation” at seeing the reflection of his own image on water:

When I thought of my family, my friends, my countrymen, or human race in general, I considered them as they really were, Yahoos in shape and disposition, perhaps a little more civilized, and qualified with the gift of speech; but making no other use of reason, than to improve and multiply these vices, whereof their brethren in this country, had only the share that nature allotted them. When I happened to behold the reflection of my own form in a lake or fountain, I turned away my face in horror and detestation of myself; and could better endure the sight of a common Yahoo, than of my own person. (p. 298)

The ontological gap, or distance, that exists at this point between the two Gullivers, the human and the Yahoo, also sets the degree to which he can now be described as utterly estranged from himself. When his master declares to him the assembly’s note of exhortation to leave the country of Houyhnhnms as soon as possible, he refers to himself as “a miserable Yahoo” to express his sense of powerlessness to try and seek a revision of the issued note of exhortation (p. 300). Gulliver’s perception of his own self in a state lower than that of a ‘Yahoo’ makes evident his intellectual/spiritual transformation when it is compared with his previous references to himself as a Yahoo. His identification of himself as “a miserable Yahoo” as well as “a poor Yahoo” actually goes back to an earlier moment in his narrative when the first two Houyhnhnms that he had met by chance took him to be a Yahoo only after circumstances delivered him safely to the country of Houyhnhnms (p. 306). Gulliver’s zero-tolerance for the reflection of his own sight either in a mirror or on the surface of water and his expression of a preference for the sight of a common Yahoo becomes alleviated only at the closing lines of his narrative. Here he expresses his decision to look at himself in the mirror so often in the remainder of his life at Redriff as to become tolerant enough of his sight as “a human creature” (p. 316).

His estrangement from the human kind in general and from the human language in particular shows itself up in his first contact with human beings which takes place after his exhortation from the country of Houyhnhnms and his arrival in New-Holland. His travel away

from the country of Houyhnhnms takes him to the south-east point of New-Holland. While he seeks a place to spend a couple of days there, he encounters a group of natives, sustains a serious injury by a poisonous arrow and eventually gives up hope of settling in New-Holland. Desperate enough to make a decision as to what he now should do, he sees a ship come nearer to his canoe. Seized and carried by Portuguese seamen to their ship, he is interrogated about his nationality, identity, and purpose of travel. During the interrogation, he is completely taken aback by the unnaturalness of the sound of words spoken by Portuguese seamen: "When they began to talk, I thought I never heard or saw any thing so unnatural; for it appeared to me as monstrous as if a dog or a cow should speak in England, or a Yahoo in Houyhnhnm-land" (p. 306).

He does not deviate an inch from his use of the word Yahoo to address human beings even after he is welcomed by the human presence once again: he is politely brought to the presence of the captain of the ship, namely Pedro de Mendez; he is offered food and drink, and he is assured that he will be treated in just the same manner as the captain is himself treated while aboard. Added to this is his intense hatred of Yahoos which yet provokes him into cherishing the idea of cutting off his contact from the human race for ever by diving into the sea and swimming for the rest of his life "rather than continue [his existence] among Yahoos" (p. 307). Despite the renewed assurance Gulliver receives from the captain not to hold him prisoner on board as long as he remains faithful to his promise to keep away from attempts of any kind to commit suicide, he chooses to keep alive his "antipathy against human kind" and declares to the captain that he "would suffer the greatest hardships rather than return to live among Yahoos" (p. 308). All this is simply because of his obstinate refusal to conceive of it as possible to "find such civilities from a Yahoo" (p. 307).

It would hardly be an exaggeration to argue that his abhorrence of the human kind rises to its highest level where the direction of the movement is expected to occur contrariwise. This is a point about which Williams agrees with us. Although Don Pedro urges Gulliver to "return to a life of humanity, tolerance, and affection among his own people," Williams observes, Gulliver's choice of the manner in which he responds to his family "is exaggerated to the point of madness" (p. 283). Contrary to his/her expectation, the reader is perhaps given the starkest portrayal of Gulliver's estrangement when he safely arrives home at Redriff where he remains entirely indifferent to the joy his family has felt at seeing him again at home. Gulliver reiterates that he can hardly "tolerate the sight of Yahoos;" and he feels utterly ashamed of having been married to a Yahoo and of having made it possible for more Yahoos to exist:

My wife and family received me great surprize and joy, because they concluded me certainly dead; but I must freely confess, the sight of them filled me only with hatred, disgust and contempt; and the more, by reflecting on the near alliance I had to them. For, although since my unfortunate exile from the Houyhnhnm country, I had compelled my self to tolerate the sight of Yahoos, and to converse with Don Pedro de Mendez; yet my memory and imaginations were perpetually filled with the virtues and ideas of those exalted Houyhnhnms. And when I began to consider, that by copulating with one of the Yahoo-species, I had become a parent of more; it struck me with the utmost shame, confusion, and horror. (p. 310)

Gulliver's choice not to alleviate his hatred towards his own family despite the risk of being called a mad person can be explained by his staunch belief that his aspiration to lead the existence of a Houyhnhnm can save him from all possible accusations of madness. For Gulliver, it is only the Houyhnhnm way of reasoning which can be used as a criterion for the judgement of madness.

Additionally, he feels no shame in addressing his wife as an animal although she hugs and kisses him to display her warm reception. After all, Gulliver seems to be unconcerned about the resultant incongruity of his behavior towards his own family. Neither does he feel that he has to provide a plausible explanation to the reader for his harsh treatment of his family nor does he express any feelings of remorse for it. What appears to us to be a sign of insanity leaves Gulliver under no feelings of doubt about the appropriateness of his behavior. His feelings of confidence in the righteousness of his belief that although he is a Yahoo, he is a better one when compared with the rest of the Yahoos, including his own family, simply because he has had the opportunity of learning from his Houyhnhnm master about the use of reason to lead a virtuous existence. In accordance with his unflinching self-confidence, Gulliver feels perfectly comfortable about confessing that in his early years after his return to Redriff he would allow his family to share neither the same room nor the same food and drink with him. Rather, he expresses great joy that he has two young stone-horses with which he has established a friendly relationship and with which he converses on a daily basis:

As soon as I entered the house, my wife took me in her arms, and kissed me; at which, having not been used to the touch of that odious animal for so many years, I fell in a swoon for almost an hour. At the time I am writing, it is five years since my last return to England: during the first year I could not endure my wife nor my children in my presence, the very smell of them was intolerable; much less could I suffer them to eat in the same room. To this house they dare not presume to touch my bread, or drink out of the same cup; neither was I ever able to let one of them take me by the hand. The first money I laid out was to buy two young stone-horses, which I keep in a good stable, and next to them the groom is my greatest favourite; for I feel my spirits revived by the smell he contracts in the stable. My horses understand me tolerably well; I converse with them at least four hours every day. They are strangers to bridle or saddle; they live in great amity with me, and friendship to each other. (pp. 310-311)

Gulliver can never come to friendly terms with the two sensory aspects of the Yahoos: the sight and the smell of them. Gulliver's unease with the sight of Yahoos, or human beings, as well as with their smell never dies off. It is only after five years since his reunion with his family that he can allow his wife to share his dinner, on condition that she sits "at the farthest end of a long table," simply because she emits the smell of a Yahoo (p. 317). He cannot stand the smell as well as the sight of other Yahoos, while he cannot stand the sight of his own self in a mirror or on the surface of water. As it has been pointed out above, he finalizes his narrative with the disclosure of his decision to look at his own reflection in the mirror as often as possible so that he can perhaps come to the point in the future at which he can easily "tolerate the sight of a human creature" (p. 316). This makes it clear that for Gulliver the idea of a possible return in the ontological to the humankind does not cover others. He expresses no possibility for other members of the humankind, including his family, of the obliteration of the Yahoo identity.

Gulliver's estrangement from the human kind goes beyond the borders of his narrative and extends to his years in the wake of the publication of his narrative as well. One year after the first publication of the novel in 1726, Richard Sympson, Gulliver's cousin and the first publisher of *Gulliver's Travels*, receives a letter from Gulliver in which he is harshly criticized for having made considerable changes to the novel in the forms of both omission and insertion without Gulliver's consent—something which has caused Gulliver to appear as if he lied in certain parts of the novel. In directing his criticism to Sympson, however, Gulliver avoids using the word 'liar' or 'lie;' he rather follows the Houyhnhnm manner of addressing the act of lying as "saying the thing which was not," because he still firmly believes that he should closely follow the Houyhnhnm example in all aspects of life (p. 3). He regards the Yahoos as "a species of animals utterly incapable of amendment by precepts or examples," and he admits that he is himself a Yahoo; nonetheless, he feels appreciative of "the instructions and example of" his Houyhnhnm master that the period of time he has spent among Houyhnhnms has helped him to get cured of the "infernal habit of lying, shuffling, deceiving, and equivocating" which "is deeply rooted in the very souls of all my [his] species, especially the Europeans" (p. 7).

Conclusion

Edward Said (1969) refers to Swift's work in general as "a persisting miracle" in terms of the permanency in the definition of its state as "problematic" despite the diverse critical commentary it has so far received (48). As William Casement (1992) similarly points out, the interpretation of the final voyage of Gulliver in *Gulliver's Travels* in particular has been a controversial issue for many scholars. The controversy has led to the birth of the two major schools of interpretation: the hard versus the soft. The scholars of the hard school tend to regard the Houyhnhnms and their pure rationality as representative of an ideal type of existence which favours the idea of putting reason in control of passions. The scholars of the soft school, however, hold that the Yahoos represent a better-balanced type of existence because it brings reason and passion together. This is a controversy which still continues to exist (p. 531). Aware of the controversy in question, however, this study has been rather oriented towards the investigation of why Gulliver begins to refer to himself as a Yahoo during and after his voyage to the land of Houyhnhnms, and this study has proposed that it should be taken as an effect of alienation on his part from the human race.

Gulliver quite fits the joint description by Erich Josephson and Mary Josephson of the alienated man as "everyman and no man, drifting in a world that has little meaning for him and over which he exercises no power, a stranger to himself and to others" (p. 11). Gulliver is likewise a stranger to himself and to others. Yet, as hinted at above, Gulliver tends to treat the line which he draws between vice and virtue as the sole source of justification for his resultant estrangement from the whole of humanity and his subsequent identification of himself as a Yahoo. However, aside from the distinction which he draws between the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos on the basis of the line which divides virtue from vice, Gulliver does not offer any other justification for his growing resentment at being a member of the human race, or of the Yahoos.

It is also important to note that it is largely through the discourse of his Houyhnhnm master that Gulliver tends to form an opinion not only about the Yahoos but also about himself as a Yahoo who is “only a little more civilized by some tincture of reason” when compared with the others (p. 291). However, the discourse of his Houyhnhnm master is evidently conflictual at certain points, and interestingly enough Gulliver avoids elaborating on those points; he rather leaves them as they are. For example, his Houyhnhnm master tells him at one point that “nature and reason [are] sufficient guides for a reasonable creature” (p. 264); similarly at another point he hears his Houyhnhnm master speak of “*reason* alone” as being “sufficient to govern a *rational* creature” (p. 276). However, Gulliver avoids clarifying whether it is solely reason or both reason and nature which can adequately guide a rational creature. Additionally, the opinion which Gulliver’s Houyhnhnm master develops about Gulliver and his country may strike one as insubstantial because his Houyhnhnm master speaks of corruption as part of human nature:

He [the Houyhnhnm master] looked upon us as a sort of animals to whose share, by what accident he could not conjecture, some small piittance 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. (p. 276)

If it had been possible to ask both Gulliver and his Houyhnhnm master to provide adequate evidence to support their argument that nature has placed the Houyhnhnms on a level far above the Yahoos on the basis of their ability to make a better use of reason, they would have been at great pains to do so. Besides, Gulliver’s account of his final voyage does not elucidate how the Yahoos become corrupt on the one hand and how the Houyhnhnms become exalted on the other hand despite their joint possession of reason. If nature has the pivotal role to play in determining the propensity of the Houyhnhnms to virtue and of the Yahoos to vice, then it becomes imperative to ask as to whether or not it would be right to hold the Yahoos responsible for their natural corruptions. It is also interesting to note that apart from Gulliver himself, no Yahoo is described as having the desire to become like a Houyhnhnm. There is no textual evidence to suggest that the idea of joining reason together with virtue does appeal to the Yahoos. One feels prompted to ask why they are depicted as creatures doomed to a fixed level of existence? The reader of the final part of *Gulliver’s Travels* will not be able to find an adequate explanation for any of these questions.

In conclusion, it appears that Gulliver allows no room for a grey area to exist between the two spheres of vice and virtue. He appears to have erased the line between the concept of vice and the act of vice, or between the sin and the sinner when he attacks the Yahoos as representatives of vices. Neither does Gulliver’s account of his years in the country of Houyhnhnms offer the slightest indication that he has duly reflected on whether it would be right to associate Yahoos with human beings and to name himself a Yahoo from then onwards, nor does his account of the years he has spent following his final return to Redriff sound optimistic. Indeed, Gulliver leaves his narrative at a cynical ending, remains silent about his future, and utters no words of hope for a possible shift in his identity from a Yahoo back to a Houyhnhnm or to a human being.

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