

Discuss Swift's misanthropic views in part IV of *Gulliver's Travels*.

Gulliver's Travels is not a fanciful product of a deranged mind. *Gulliver's Travels* is considered a serious literature unique in its universal appeal. A careful look into the story shows a well-knitted structure, a well-defined characterization probing deep into human psychology. If the first three voyages comprise a satiric attack on man's behavior, Swift moves in the fourth and final voyage toward a denunciation of human nature itself.

In the part IV Gulliver emerges as a violent hater of mankind. His cynical views are betrayed to highest degree. The baseness and immorality of human beings enrage Gulliver so much so that he ultimately lays his strong faith in the superiority of the horses-the Houyhnhnms- negating the superiority of human race. However, we should remember Gulliver is the mere mouthpiece whose denunciation of human beings is part of Swift's satirical design. Gulliver's antipathy is so intense that even the familiar company of his family turns to be loathsome.

In the land of Houyhnhnms we see the three types of species. Yahoos represent the worst form of mankind with complete absence of rationality. They are portrayed as an abominable creatures. Whereas, Houyhnhnms are "The Perfection of Nature" over against the repulsiveness of Yahoos. Lastly, Gulliver himself represents the human beings- a product of European civilization- and in his discourses with the Master Houyhnhnm human race is portrayed in a debase manner. Their meanness and detestable qualities become acute when contrasted against the noble horses.

Houyhnhnms' positive attributes come as a relief in this cynic atmosphere that looms over the entire episode. These Houyhnhnms are the embodiment of "the Perfection of nature" opposed to the loathsome Yahoos who represent human beings. Both Gulliver and his master meticulously tried to point out wherein lies Houyhnhnm's superior qualities. These qualities are basically concerned with physical, mental and moral. Gulliver was awestruck by their strength, speed and graceful physique. In contrast he viewed his personal despicable drawbacks as human being. The Houyhnhnms are aware of what a human body lacks. According to them Gulliver's hands were too soft to walk on, he had no claws to grab, his face was flat, his eyes were not properly placed so everytime he had to turn his head to see sidewise, he could not feed himself without using forefoot. The horses' all activities are governed by reason so there is no chance of disputes and they come to the conviction in unison. As great advocates of morality these houses lead a life of moderation, hard work and cleanliness. Depravity, evil and lust are unknown to them. Even their passion is controlled by reason. The friendship and altruism are their primary virtues. To Gulliver Houyhnhnms symbolize all that is good. These are positive qualities which Gulliver gradually discovered from his three years of association with them.

It is significant that Gulliver's misanthropy at the end is not the result of any development of his knowledge of human beings over what he has had before; it is he after all who expounds to his Houyhnhnm master all those melancholy facts about men's "actions and passions" that play so large a part in their conversations. Gulliver resents that people in his country are ruined by the corrupt legal system, by their disgraceful habits like drinking, gratification of sex, gambling. They are basically treacherous by nature. They commit murder, theft, robbery, forgery, rape and sodomy. Gulliver opines that these depraved activities of human race show their lust for power, riches, viciousness and jealousy. There is some truth in his statements but such excess of hatred does not accommodate the character like benevolent Pedro de Mendez or any other noble person.

Through the character of Gulliver, Swift voiced his denunciation against the follies of mankind but Gulliver's ultimate transformation to an absolute misanthrope should not be identified with Swift's misanthropy. Swift clarified his stand in his letter to Alexander Pope explaining his own theory that has nothing to do with personal hatred. In this context we cannot imagine him as someone preferring to pass his time with the horses in a stable rather than in the familiar company of his nearest kin. Gulliver's misanthropy borders on insanity whereas Swift sees his misanthropy as an altruistic effort for the upliftment of mankind.