

Západočeská univerzita v Plzni

Fakulta pedagogická

Katedra anglického jazyka

Bakalářská práce

**JONATHAN SWIFT: LIDSKÁ POVAHA NA POZADÍ
GULLIVEROVY CESTY DO ZEMĚ HVAJNINIMŮ**

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Plzeň 2018

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Undergraduate Thesis

**JONATHAN SWIFT: HUMAN NATURE IN
GULLIVER'S VOYAGE TO HOUYHNNMS**

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Plzeň 2018

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracoval samostatně
s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

Plzeň, 29. Června 2018

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vlastnoruční podpis

Acknowledgment

I would like to thank the supervisor of my undergraduate thesis, PhDr. Magdaléna Potočňáková, Ph.D. for her help and supervision of my work

Abstract

The focus of this bachelor thesis is the book written by Jonathan Swift *Gulliver's Travels*. Main interest lies in the last chapter *Voyage to Houyhnhnms*. Main objective of this work is to discuss human nature on the background of Gulliver's Voyage to Houyhnhnms. The book goes far ahead of its time. The work discusses the society and life of Houyhnhnms, humans and yahoos. This topic includes the question of utopia or dystopia, as one of those is represented by the society of Houyhnhnms. Work touches the most important topics which Jonathan Swift mentions in his book. Chiefly, the topics of reason, morality, family, health and slavery in Houyhnhnmland. To achieve that the work uses conversations between Lemuel Gulliver and his master. Proper attention is also given to Gulliver's decision to become one of Houyhnhnms and to his final failure in this regard. Than big focus is given to comparison of nature of humans, Houyhnhnms and yahoos. The work also includes a chapter focused on communication between all three species. One of the chief objectives of this work is to prove that Gulliver's Travels are not only book for children. Swift has used his imaginary lands to hide his revolutionary ideas behind a cover to be able to write openly. Swift's satire reflects the situation in England during the life of the Author. His critique view of human nature and society is priceless even today.

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2 Introduction

Gulliver's Travels is a very successful satirical book written by Jonathan Swift. The focus of this work is going to be the last chapter of the book *The Voyage to Houyhnhnms*. Swift describes supposedly ideal land in which the inhabitants live under the government of the pure reason. Houyhnhnms are compared to humans and to the race of savage Yahoos. Ideas hidden between the lines of *Gulliver's Travels* are going far ahead the time in which Swift has written his most famous book.

The focus of my undergraduate thesis will be the comparison of Houyhnhnms and humans on the background of *Gulliver's* descriptions. *Gulliver*, as the story teller, is not reliable as he can only praise the virtues of Houyhnhnms without considering their very apparent negative attributes or the prudent life style in which their pure reason locked them. Proper attention is going to be given to *Gulliver's* descriptions of the nature of Houyhnhnms and the human nature, while not forgetting about the third race of Yahoos.

Swift opens many controversial topics which were very apparent during his life. Mainly, the topic of family, slavery and the discussion about the ideal style of government and the way of properly living in general. The author uses *Gulliver* to express his ideas in the background of a fantasy book. This way of writing allows him to basically write what he wants. For example, the broad critique of human race and human society and the imperialistic behaviour of some humans.

In general, there are two approaches on how to perceive *Gulliver's Travels*. Some say that the book is merely a children story which does not represent any ideas at all. One of the goals of my undergraduate thesis is to prove this view wrong and to discuss Swift's utopia or dystopia by relating it to either the historical age in which Swift himself was living or to the historical events after his death. Some of the ideas presented are still very actual and our society can take many positive ideas out of Swift descriptions or, on the other hand, can stay away from trying to be exactly how Houyhnhnms are.

To achieve my goals, I would like to use many works of other authors, who has written their works about their perception of *Gulliver's Travels*. These books or shorter works have enlightened my own understanding of Swift and *Gulliver* and had profound influence on the final form of my work.

3 The society of Houyhnhnms

If we are to think about Gulliver's travels in a philosophical and partly political way, we might come to an idea that Swift is describing an ideal society, in which Gulliver finds not only relief, but also self-identity and integrity, on the other hand, finding himself imperfect and in a way defected compared to proud Houyhnhnms.

Lemuel is considered a Yahoo. Gulliver is not proud of his species, quite the opposite, being deeply ashamed of his previous behavior and his way of thinking. The only thing that makes our Hero better than ordinary Yahoo is his trace of reason (as his master often states). In this situation, Gulliver is getting more and more understanding of the culture of his master. The Hero admires the culture and suggests that the human society should try to copy and follow it.

In the book, Swift describes those ideas which are utopic but sometimes doubtful. Those are going to be discussed in this chapter in a deeper sense due to their importance for the whole piece.

Reason

The governing principle in the land of Houyhnhnms is without any doubt the voice of one's reason. In the land of admirable horses there is no evil, mischief, jealousy on the other hand things like love or family are reduced to their minimal forms (if they even exist).

Swift is suggesting that this state of being is the ideal way of living. One does not have to take care of his feelings because in the country governed by reason those things are not significant. What is important is the pure healthy species.

As Gulliver describes marriages done from lusts in England:

That the productions of such marriages are generally scrofulous, rickety, or deformed children; by which means the family seldom continues above three generations, unless the wife takes care to provide a healthy father, among her neighbors or domestics, to improve and continue the breed.
(Swift, p. 274)

The choosing of partners is not done for the fulfillment of one's dreams, love is insignificant, and money is unknown. On the contrary, in England the situation is different

and the reason in deciding who to breed children with is usually governed by human's passions and lusts or property and social standing.

The only important thing according to the government of reason is the fitting breed which creates pure lines, eliminates illness and promotes abilities of young Houyhnhnms.

Michael Hauskeller has written his opinion on True reason: "True reason leads and rules. It doesn't follow and serve. True reason coincides with virtue with the morally good will. The perfectly reasonable or rational creature must also be perfectly good."(2016, p.2)

This means that Houyhnhnms possess the true reason which allows them to do almost anything because everything is considered reasonable even things like genocide and slavery.

Interesting point is, that Gulliver while being born in our society is also healthy while living with the Houyhnhnms. An utterance can be denoted saying: When inhabitants of the certain land are healthy the country itself makes them healthy. This idea is presented by reason. Swift is suggesting that any reasonable creature can spread this idea and improve or influence the society. This resembles an ideal state of society which was often described by many authors before Swift and it's called Utopia. Utopia has no negative sides only positives and the people, which are creating it, are always contributing to the common good. Realistically, every society has its own positive and negative aspects and cannot be perfect. The comparison between those arguments, which Swift gives us in this part of his book, is worth a deeper look.

Education

Education is a necessary tool for cultivating the nation and its members as a promotion and improvement of their reason. The Author describes the education of the youth of Houyhnhnms.

The youth is being educated in a reasonable way. Without physical punishments, equally and according to one's qualities. Some of them do not possess the intelligence of others, therefore those are not being forced to be the leaders, simply becoming servants in the houses of wiser society members, not minding this status because their reason forbids them to think of rising to better position.

Gulliver says: "My master thought it monstrous in us, to give the females a different kind of education from the males." (Swift, p. 288)

Female Houyhnhnms are equal to males by having civil rights and most importantly by being educated as males are. This is something which Gulliver admires and suggest the promotion of this idea in his own society in England. During the 18th century women had almost no rights, chiefly they had no access to education and their social life was reduced to minimum, so this idea hidden in the book was revolutionary in Swift's England. The idea of equality between sexes mentioned in *Gulliver's Travels* did not cause the final change of relationship between Man and Women but is one of the first developments towards the final equality, which has happened long after Swift's death.

The author has proposed an idea of equality between sexes, which had to be rejected in his time, but it had found its way and finally became more apparent in the 19 and 20th century. The author is, therefore, in terms of equality, creating an ideal country in his mind, which was a pure fantasy in his time, but had slowly become reality just a century after his death.

Slavery and servitude

In the land of Houyhnhnms, slavery has its own place and it is considered reasonable. Yahoos are living in awful conditions. On the other hand, we must not forget that Yahoos are considered animals in the Land. Yahoos are considered no better by Houyhnhnms than horses, cows, pigs or birds were in Swift's England. The human slaves in our modern society almost do not exist, but we enslave animals without even giving them honorable living conditions.

Gulliver says:

He made me observe, that among the Houyhnhnms, the white, the sorrel, and the iron-gray, were not so exactly shaped as the bay, the dapple-gray, and the black; nor born with equal talents of mind, or a capacity to improve them; and therefore, continued always in the condition of servants, without ever aspiring to match out of their own race, which in that country would be reckoned monstrous and unnatural. (Swift, p. 273)

Swift compares this with the opposite way of thinking of the mankind. A servant in our culture is often trying to become something more. Everybody in our society is trying to achieve the best position and to acquire the most wealth.

The question is which of these two approaches is better. In the eyes of Gulliver, the one of Houyhnhnms. For humans, the infinite struggle for better life is the essence of staying alive and people always tend to push themselves even beyond their own powers.

There are many reasons why slavery does not exist anymore. Firstly, the human technology has come to the point in which machines can do previously men's work.

The second reason why slavery was abolished is the rise of Slave's reason, organization powers and the realization of the governing groups that man who possesses at least some traces of freedom works harder and does not riot so often. Houyhnhnms are governing the land but have no aspiration to become even greater than they already are. On the contrary, people always want more power and wealth, so our society had to develop quickly to support this way of human behaviour.

However, in the land, which the Author describes, there is no need for inventions and therefore we can say, that the evolution has come to its final form in Houyhnhnms. Yahoos and servants are stuck in their position because of their lack of organization in the case of Yahoos and with the limitations which are created by the government of reason in the case of Houyhnhnms.

Interesting connection between slavery and land of Houyhnhnms was discovered by Ann Cline Kelly in the work Swift's Explorations of Slavery in Houyhnhnmland and Ireland: She suggests, that Yahoos represent a nation (possible Irish in their relationship towards English Crown), which was intelligent when coming to Houyhnhnmland but due to genocide and slavery accepted their brutish nature. (1976, p. 846).

The slavery in Swift's time was still a very important part of the England's trade and was finally abolished in 1835 long after his death. Gulliver's travels express how rotten slavery is as Swift describes the awful living conditions of Yahoos.

Bodies

If we are to compare the body of a man and of a male horse, the conclusion would be the same as the one of Gulliver's master, when he was describing the imperfections of human body. Master is saying that human body is basically useless compared to his own or to Yahoos in his country.

Gulliver says:

As to myself, it was manifest I had neither the strength nor agility of a common Yahoo; that I walked infirmly on my hinder feet; had found out a contrivance to make my claws of no use or defence, and to remove the hair from my chin, which was intended as a shelter from the sun and the weather: lastly, that I could neither run with speed, nor climb trees like my brethren," as he called them, "the Yahoos in his country.(Swift, p. 276)

Mankind was harsh in prehistory, but the truth is that people were an easy prey for predators for a long time, before our bigger brains prevailed over the brute force of predators. This is what Gulliver's master cannot see. Our imperfect bodies are not a weakness as one may suggest. People learned how to compensate for those negative sides of having a human body. Over the years, the mankind has developed into a pleasant form of being. We do not need long nails to dig in the ground, when there is a possibility to use a tool or even a machine

Gulliver from the point of Houyhnhnm is an animal taken a little bit more ahead in evolution, than ordinary Yahoo. We can imagine this, as if Yahoos were our prehistorical ancestors and Gulliver would be a man, who has developed from them over many centuries. (Bloom, 2009)

To backup this theory let us consider the strange behavior of otherwise savage Yahoos considering the stones, which they collect.

Gulliver's master says:

That in some fields of his country there are certain shining stones of several colours, whereof the Yahoos are violently fond: and when part of these stones is fixed in the earth, as it sometimes happens, they will dig with their claws for whole days to get them out; then carry them away and hide them

by heaps in their kennels; but still looking round with great caution, for fear their comrades should find out their treasure. (Swift, p. 278)

A reader of the book can easily spot similarities between the behavior of Yahoos and our ancestors. Apparently, humans and Yahoos do share their lust for things without any purpose. The stones can serve as a treasure or an aesthetic thing but can also resemble a greater purpose. Yahoos can possibly worship those stones, which could lead to the roots of very primitive religious beliefs.

Morality

The reason which stands as a ruling principle can be often dangerous. Houyhnhnms do not know the meaning of the word Morale. Morality is the panic button of the human brain, which is often pressed when the reason goes too far. The beautiful example can be denoted from Swift's other masterpiece *The Modest Proposal*.

As Lee Perlman describes in his essay "The Truth about Human Nature" by saying: "Indeed, through most of *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift seems to present rationality as enslaved to passion — which might lead us to consider the liberation of reason from passion to be Swift's ideal. But in his depiction of the Houyhnhnms, we begin to see that rationality detached from life and feeling would make us strangers to ourselves". (Perlman,2012).

There still is the possibility that someday in the future Yahoos will arise from the mud and broke the chains of slavery and will become the governing species in the Houyhnhnms land possibly under the leadership of Lemuel, which is going to be further discussed later in this work. Houyhnhnms are aware of this possibility and they are discussing the possibility of wiping the entire nation of Yahoos just to preserve general good, which is in their point of view, only their race in its purest sense. (Bloom, 2009)

Swift is again ahead of his time and points out the danger of this way of thinking. Let us take a recent example of quite similar behaviour. Hitler was saying similar things about Jews or later Slavs and other nations, which did not correspond to his idea of Nordic race. However, there is an enormous difference between those two approaches. The one of Hitler is much worse because he was actively trying to murder members of his own kind even though Nazis thought that Jews, Gipsies or Slavs are unworthy animals. But this does not justify murdering the entire nation of Yahoos just because they are different.

A shocking statement can be conducted from this discussion. Human species is the only one which can murder not only other species but also its own kind often without any

reason or for not important things as for land, more people to govern, better industry etc. We have many words for this behaviour, because we consider war a form of social crises which is inevitable. It is coded in our nature.

Our only hope is a belief, that we will not wipe ourselves and that our planet will endure the mankind and its inventions. Weapons, cars and other devices can destroy not only our species but also the entire planet. Swift is emphasizing these many times during his book. His master in the last part of the book has never encountered war, jealousy or the struggle for power. Houyhnhnms appear to be innocent and above all those negative attributes, but they do not hesitate to enslave Yahoos and to exile Gulliver, so we can conclude that even though they seemingly do not understand the word war and violence Houyhnhnms are using power to prevail as the strongest species.

Family

A similar kind of thinking, which has been used in *The Modest Proposal* can be found in the discussions between Lemuel and his master. Especially, when the master describes the family matters in his country.

The family is a very strange term in the language of the Houyhnhnms. The word itself exists in their language but the meaning is very different, than the one in English. Their families are not formed by love or wealth but are formed as so-called reasonable marriage, which has only one goal – to produce healthy and strong members of society. Pairs are carefully chosen even by the colors of their skins. This kind of thinking resembles a eugenic theory which has been stretched to an extreme state. Eugenics is a practice of controlled selective breeding of human populations to improve the population's genetic composition. Swift presents this idea in his book many years before the founder of eugenics, Francis Galton, did so officially.

Gulliver describes:

Here likewise the regulation of children is settled: as for instance, if a Houyhnhnm has two males, he changes one of them with another that has two females; and when a child has been lost by any casualty, where the mother is past breeding, it is determined what family in the district shall breed another to supply the loss. (Swift, p. 289)

This idea is alarming and can be even considered racist. It is unlikely, that Swift is directly proposing racial pureness in his book. Quite the contrary, he is again thinking ahead, and gives us a big warning to not follow this kind of movement. Sadly, humanity must try everything and as the history has proven racial pureness is always a terrifying term.

The fall of the importance of traditional family is very disturbing. In our society this kind of trading one's child to the other according to its gender is unimaginable. The concept of family is very important in forming the minds of our children and, the imagination of violating this principle, is considered strange and terrifying.

Swift is masterfully showing the fall of the importance of traditional family, which is very apparent nowadays. Fewer couples are getting married or have children. Hopefully, our society will not end up like Houyhnhnms did. Having children just because the society requires it, goes against any kind of reason or freedom. Even more terrifying is a country where parents do not love their children. Houyhnhnms care about their children but only in limits of their true reason, this cannot be called love as love is unreasonable in Houyhnhnmland. Humans, however, have a very strong relationship with their children. Gulliver in his description is denying the importance of love, which is in some situations, far stronger than reason.

Lemuel after going through immense troubles during his voyages, finds this philosophy to be the best one possible, but by being stuck in his admiration of the proud virtues of Houyhnhnms, Gulliver fails to realize how rotten their so-called reason is. The idea of diversifying the society by one's birth is creating sort of caste system, which in fact, forces many of the inhabitants to not use their reason at all. Houyhnhnms do not really use the power of their minds because there is no reason to do so.

Furthermore, real horses are very fond of the youth and they take very good care of their younglings, so the idea of Houyhnhnms not minding exchanging their children is phantasmagorical, but Swift did it on purpose. The best way of influencing a reader's mind

is to put ideas into an extreme situation. The Author does just that several times during his book. Some may find the meaning of family in *The Gulliver Travels* laughable, somebody else amusing, others disturbing. Swift is not giving us clear instructions on how to approach his book.

Health

The proud race does not suffer from any diseases only from mechanical injuries, on the other hand, Yahoos due to their awful living conditions still do sometimes get ill but the illnesses are not as serious as in our world. Houyhnhnms usually die due to their age or a lethal injury. Their eating habits are very strict and governed by reason. Houyhnhnms do not drink or eat too much and are happy with the same meal repeatedly. Men are always trying to find the best food or drink.

Once again, humans and Yahoos are always pushing the levels of their happiness beyond the limits, by eating and drinking too much many diseases are therefore developed. Our food is being thrown away because the production is too large. Here a mindful reader can understand Gulliver's admiration of such a proud and reasonable society, which is on the other hand quite boring and in a way tiresome.

Gulliver explains the perception of death and health issues (which do not exist) in Houyhnhnmland:

If they can avoid casualties, they die only of old age, and are buried in the obscurest places that can be found, their friends and relations expressing neither joy nor grief at their departure; nor does the dying person discover the least regret that he is leaving the world. (Swift, p. 293)

The government of reason allows Houyhnhnms to perceive health issues and death differently than humans do. Our passions lusts and emotions make us very vulnerable and the stress from dying often leads to many kinds of illnesses.

Happiness

One of the key points in the book is the question: What is happiness and how can we achieve it? It seems, that people will never be fully satisfied and therefore happy. It is not in our nature to be happy forever. The never-ending lack of happiness moves humans forward in their pursuit of being even happier than before.

Houyhnhnms do not think as humans do. Their reason almost prohibits them from experiencing emotions. By being prudent in their lifestyle, with the never-ending love of the stereotype and by sharing the same fear of everything new or unsymmetrical with the horses in our society their happiness is reduced to a minimal form, if it does even exist. (Orwell, 1946).

We can conclude from those similarities, that Swift has not created a new species by taking the one which already exists and letting the evolution to lead the path. Horses, however can experience happiness. It seems, that Swift points out that reason and happiness are often different things and do not come along. One can be reasonable and happy but often reasonable decisions cause unhappiness. Reason is the virtue, which in an extreme sense, can overcome emotions and then those who possess this reason are immune to all wants and lusts apart from the necessities of nature, which as Lemuel often says, can be easily satisfied.

You said a thing which was not!

The common sentence of Lemuel's master is: You said a thing which was not! Meaning that everything that Houyhnhnms do not know or cannot imagine is a lie. Reason limited their perception of world around them and made them vulnerable to all things beyond their already acknowledged ideas. The master is one of the more open Houyhnhnms which is proven by the conversations with a reasonable Yahoo Gulliver, others would probably put our hero to work with other Yahoos.

The disgust, which Gulliver shows towards human race at the end of the book, is proving that animals and especially reasonable Houyhnhnms are completely incapable of lying deceiving and not telling the whole truth. Lemuel cannot lie after his departure from the land of his master, as he proves in conversation with the ship captain or later after meeting his family. Furthermore, he is not able to act and think otherwise, his state can be described as the pure honesty, which in his mind resembles the acting of Houyhnhnm. But his behaviour is not corresponding to the one of his master. Gulliver cannot be like him, as even though his desperate tries, his reason is still governed by his passions and morality.

The lie is the mean of self-protection which humans have developed to keep themselves safe against other humans and are the result of reason which is put to its use – to think, to shape and to create new things innovative ideas and new relationships.

In the comparison to this opinion upon lying Gulliver's master says:

That the use of speech was to make us understand one another, and to receive information of facts; now, if any one said the thing which was not, these ends were defeated, because I cannot properly be said to understand him; and I am so far from receiving information, that he leaves me worse than in ignorance; for I am led to believe a thing black, when it is white, and short, when it is long. (Swift, p. 255)

There is some truth in this perception of lying. The lie itself usually stops the conversation or changes its course in the favour of the liar. This situation is produced by reason, which is limited by emotions. Humans lie to hide something or to change the reality in their favour. Houyhnhnms are not able to even imagine such circumstances and, furthermore, are not interested in changing anything, because everything they do is considered reasonable.

Houyhnhnms nature

Houyhnhnms in *Gulliver's Travels* are highly stylized to show the opposite side of human behaviour. The Master cannot even understand some of the things that Gulliver describes, often saying, that he said a thing which was not. Not knowing words lie, rule and conquer Houyhnhnms seem to be almost like children which are not affected by, as the book describes, evil deeds of humanity.

Gulliver explains to his master:

But the common race of horses had not so good fortune, being kept by farmers and carriers, and other mean people, who put them to greater labor, and fed them worse." I described, as well as I could, our way of riding; the shape and use of a bridle, a saddle, a spur, and a whip; of harness and wheels. I added, "that we fastened plates of a certain hard substance, called iron, at the bottom of their feet, to preserve their hoofs from being broken by the stony ways, on which we often traveled. (Swift, p. 256)

The master is horrified hearing how badly are horses treated in Swift's England and cannot come to understanding why horses are willing to live in their awful living conditions when they possess the strength and minds to govern Yahoos. Master's disgust upon such conditions of horses is on the one side understandable but also very ignorant. It seems, that Houyhnhnms are living in their reasonable bubble not realizing that they treat other species in the same way as some humans treat horses.

Their nature is not to be concerned by the wants of others. Yahoos are not worth their time, which would be needed to support the better (faster) development of the species. For Houyhnhnm, this situation is (as every situation) reasonable and cannot be changed.

The shocking thing is the consideration of castrating Yahoos to wipe them out without destroying life. As said in the work of Michael Hauskeller who is paraphrasing Swift: Gulliver's equine master then suggests the supposedly more humane method of castrating them, which would not only make them tamer and easier to handle but would in a very short time also have the desired effect of putting an end to the whole species." (2016, p. 4)

Houyhnhnms' reason is some sort of love towards their nation. However, it seems that Houyhnhnms do not perceive this inclination as love. The state of mind of every Houyhnhnm is again purely reasonable. They protect their nation because it is beneficial for their own good not because they love or care for each other.

The word Houyhnhnm signifies the perfection of nature, this basically means that the race cares only for themselves and would go through unimaginable things to protect their way of living and thinking. The master is even able to take inspiration from Lemuel's speech and to propose castration as a solution for the Yahoo's question to the assembly. Gulliver's banishment is therefore necessary as his humanity, even though strictly limited by his admiration of Houyhnhnms, could possibly lead him to somehow organize a revolution of Yahoos. The pure reason is the strongest motion and, as they do not know morality, the wiping of Yahoos is inevitable because the act will only bring good to the species. The interesting point is the situation in which the proud race, supposedly being the best one ever to walk on earth, cannot harm one of its own, but can without any second thoughts wipe out an entire nation just out of the fear of possibly losing their dominant status to the dirty and disgusting race of Yahoos.

This stereotyped way of living however inevitably leads Houyhnhnms to their destruction. Their land is not prepared for more men from Europe. Gulliver was alone and most importantly very reasonable, patient and voluntary learner of their style of living and language. Another man would probably not be the same. The enslavement of Houyhnhnms would take place as well as the possibility of rehabilitation of Yahoos. Gulliver has explained how important the ability to defend one's domain is, and this may be one of the reasons why did Houyhnhnms decide to exile Gulliver and to discuss the second genocide of Yahoos.

Houyhnhnms are a unique race, who possesses the true reason and are willing to follow its voice through everything. From this philosophy and style of living comes various attributes of their nature. The reason gives them many advantages. Mainly, Houyhnhnms are always healthy and can always act for the general good of their nation. However, from reason comes many limitations, chiefly the reduction of feelings and a tiresome and repetitive style of living. Their life is quite empty and meaningless but truly reasonable.

The question is if the Houyhnhnms have the possibility to change their life. Humans in Swift's time had the possibility at least to some extent. On the other hand, in the country which is according to Lemuel governed by reason the inhabitants do not have the possibility to change the way of their lives. As they basically have their rights reduced to their minimal form by the government of reason and by the color of their skin or by the size of their bodies.

Can be the society of Houyhnhnms considered Utopic? Are those attributes which was discussed in this chapter admirable or should they be abandoned? As it seems those questions cannot be answered by one word. Some ideas are honourable but in the end most sides of Houyhnhnms behaviour are terrifying or even evil in their roots. The reason is the only motivation and the governing principle. Every proposal except for one (The genocide of Yahoos) is always immediately accepted because everyone is reasonable, so the agreement is inevitable. Discussion or disputations are considered to be evil and worthless.

As George Orwell says in his essay:

The Houyhnhnms, we are told, were unanimous on almost all subjects. The only question they ever discussed was how to deal with the Yahoos. Otherwise, there was no room for disagreement among them, because the truth is always either self-evident or else it is undiscoverable and unimportant. They had apparently no word for 'opinion' in their language, and in their conversations, there was no 'difference of sentiments'. They had reached, in fact, the highest stage of totalitarian organization, the stage when conformity has become so general that there is no need for a police force. (1968, Politics vs. Literature)

The society, therefore, represents dystopia more than utopia. The reason represents a form of totalitarian government, which is accepted by the whole society to such extent that there is nothing that can harm its rule. Seemingly, Swift has created a new type of government.

One can easily imagine that in some country people can become so loyal to the system that the system will in fact consume their emotions and lusts and, in the end, will call them truly reasonable. At first, the system appears to be ideal, but it also contains many negative sides. Those can be summarized under the loss of freedom, free will and happiness.

4 Human nature

Swifts satire is about human society and the way the humans live, think and behave. The author uses witty way of description and discussion to express personal opinions about the age he was living in. In the voyage to Houyhnhnms, this kind of thinking is especially apparent. The whole part of the book gives the reader a fitting image of the state of society in the 18th century. The masterful way of using an imaginary land to express various ideas ought to be known as one the one side philosophical book which can be compared to *Little Prince* and on the other hand can be viewed as a beautiful child story. Sadly, nowadays the second approach to Gulliver's Travels is more apparent. In many recent editions *Gulliver's Travels* are reduced to the first two chapters and many of Swifts satirical references are becoming too difficult to understand for some readers, who do not take big interest in Swift and the age he was living in. This situation leads to Gulliver's Travels being perceived as a fantasy book without any deeper meaning. The book was however written as a satirical piece about the situation in England during Swift's life. The ideas, which Swift has presented, are far ahead of this time and we can easily learn and identify with them even today, especially in the field of sociology and politics.

In the numerous conversations which Gulliver holds with his master, the descriptions of humans are given in a witty and satirical way. The opinion of our hero develops throughout the whole book and especially in the voyage to the Houyhnhnms. At the begging of *Gulliver's Travels in the voyage to Lilliput* Gulliver has not yet given up on the human society, quite on the contrary he seems to be a proud Englishman. However, as the story continues his opinions changes drastically. This development must be discussed as it represents the core of Swift's satire. Lemuel with his own special and incredibly deep character evolution represents cultural changes of this historical age and the opinions of Jonathan Swift. Gulliver upon his arrival to the country of intelligent horses still represents an ordinary Englishman however marked by his previous adventures and most importantly by his unsteadiness and passions to discover new lands with the promise of fortune.

Lesser Evil

Gulliver says: “Upon the 9th day of May 1711, one James Welch came down to my cabin, and said, “he had orders from the captain to set me ashore. ” (Swift, p. 236)

Suddenly, our hero appears in a land which he does not know anything about. The crew has stolen his ship and most of his possessions. This misfortune of Gulliver gives us an idea of how cruel and selfish some humans can be when acting in fear. No doubts the members feared being caught and judged for their crime, so their former captain had to be either killed or set ashore. So, Gulliver was lucky that they choose the less brutal option. The choose of less evil or less brutal solution is typical for humans. Swift debates this many times in his book especially when Houyhnhnms are discussing the existence of Yahoos, who represent evil in their eyes.

The need for choosing the lesser evil is used throughout the whole human history, as Gulliver describes to his master. Even today people tend to use this kind of thinking to make many important decisions for example when voting in the elections or as in the book when changing the course of their own or somebody else’s life.

Will to live

Gulliver cries over his fate, but his situation is possible to be solved. After a little while, after coming back to senses the exploration of his situation begins. Here another and maybe even the most important and admirable part of human nature becomes apparent - The never-ending will to live. Gulliver proves this numerous time in the whole book but especially in his last voyage by never giving up.

Gulliver says:

In this desolate condition I advanced forward and soon got upon firm ground, where I sat down on a bank to rest myself and consider what I had best do. When I was a little refreshed, I went up into the country, resolving to deliver myself to the first savages I should meet, and purchase my life from them by some bracelets, glass rings, and other toys, which sailors usually provide themselves within those voyages, and whereof I had some about me. (Swift, p. 237)

The thing that Houyhnhnms admire most about Gulliver is without any doubts his will. Trying to become the part of their society our Hero struggles to learn the language,

changes eating habits and his mind opens to innovative ideas and thoughts. The reason for making this chapter part of my thesis is to try and describe the process of how human nature can develop and change when our will to live takes control and humans are forced to change by some influence from the outside. This change has begun in the first voyage, but the most important development happened in the last chapter as early as Lemuel decided to go on his fourth voyage.

Adaptation

The most interesting thing in the chapter is how Lemuel tries to accept Houyhnhnms way of living but only to some extent. Gulliver thinks of himself very selfishly throughout the whole book, especially when deciding to become a horse. The behaviour which Lemuel accepts is funny or even the one of a madman. The further development of our hero supports my theory that Lemuel is creating alibi for his previous actions which under various circumstances was forced to do, as for example in his first voyage, when he destroyed and murder an entire navy of one nation.

In contradiction to the Houyhnhnms way of thinking, Gulliver appears on the shore and from the first day in the country tries to become a worthy member of their society, instead of accepting his pre-given state of being a Yahoo as would be fitting and proper according to Houyhnhnms style of living, which has been discussed in the previous paragraph. This is what makes him different from any Yahoo and from any of the proud horses which Lemuel admires so much. As famous philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche says: Every man has at least a bit of free will, if one is not able to make his will/opinion sound he becomes just an ordinary member of herd and uses his membership (in church or even in political system) as an immunity from being reliant on himself. Swift promotes this philosophy in his book, even before Nietzsche was born, by emphasizing the importance of one's free will and the possibility to decide as one finds best according to his/her reason.

This situation is same for Gulliver upon arriving in this country. His expectation is to find governing humans, which were so clever to make brutes (horses) to behave as a race, which has some traces of reason. The situation in which Gulliver and his master are is laughable but, in some time, intellectually difficult and almost impossible to be solved without one of them becoming agreeable to the arguments of the other one. Ultimately Gulliver submits to the arguments of his master and tries to become one of Houyhnhnms, at least spiritually, and by the tone of his speech and way of his gestures. Gulliver is even

falling into a deep depression when the obvious similarities between him and Yahoos become so apparent that nobody can deny its symptoms. The situation when a female Yahoo shows her attraction towards Gulliver shocks him deeply by taking down the cover in which our traveler has hidden. "It happened that a young female *Yahoo*, standing behind a bank, saw the whole proceeding, and inflamed by desire, as the nag and I conjectured, came running with all speed, and leaped into the water." (Swift. p. 284-285).

Suddenly, Lemuel is considered a human again and even worse a Yahoo in the terminology of Houyhnhnms and realizes, that he cannot change himself completely.

People, in general, tend to be like the beings (other people) which are the chief point of their admiration. The fanaticism of Lemuel forces him to forget about the honorable parts of human nature (love, passion, free will, family values) and makes him describe only the negative things which humans tend to do. His image of the English society is fitting but on the other hand is not proper by being reduced only to criticism without considering any positives.

The proud Houyhnhnms may represent the ideal nation out of all, which have been described in the book. Their mind is however purely reasonable without giving any room for emotions or opinion. These things make us human. Emotion and Opinions are the core of so-called human nature. This is the reason why Lemuel fails his journey to become Houyhnhnm in his mind, his nature forbids such a tremendous change.

If Lemuel would just, try to become more like Houyhnhnms by accepting some of their virtues the ending result would be definitely the better outcome for him and his family in England. Critical view here is needed towards the sudden change of mood towards Lemuel's own family. Upon his departure on his fourth voyage Gulliver is a loving father and husband at the end of the voyage, however, is full of hate and disgust towards the closest relatives whose have done him no wrong. The message of the book is therefore quite strange and brings the reader to understand the human nature even more, as humans tend to put "everything into the one bag" not thinking about differences between people, their way of living and acting. In other words, the one bag is an easy way of adaptation in certain situations.

Gulliver's disgust of human race has some good points and can be understood but his hatred makes him resemble Yahoo more than Houyhnhnm and betrays his own journey of becoming as good as possible. Lemuel in his final madness, after leaving the imaginary

land of Houyhnhnms, forgets everything good which has happened to him in his previous life and resembles angry old man filled with hatred to not only everything around him but mainly to himself and his own looks and previous actions. As his state of mind improves after his return to England Gulliver becomes more reasonable again and behaves in almost normal way. This state of mind is to improve as time goes on and he will be the loving father again, however with some virtues which were given to him through his mental development (and by the necessity of adaptation) in the land of Houyhnhnms.

Exploration and power over other beings

Gulliver says: "I continued at home with my wife and children about five months, in a very happy condition, if I could have learned the lesson of knowing when I was well." (Swift, p. 235)

Gulliver is described as a proud and happy father in England who has been living with his family for quite some time enjoying the way in which they were living. Suddenly, cheerful time ends as the offer comes to our Hero once again to set sail, trade and explore with natives of foreign countries. Gulliver being restless and curious to see new lands agrees.

An interesting turn here is to be made asking if we can generalize this approach to life. Is this way of thinking common to every human? Furthermore, are all humans interested in exploring and meeting with strangers? Is the exploring of the unknown the essence of humanity? Are there people who do not wish to interfere with or even conquered the lives of others? All these topics are in the author's concern. Swift expresses his ideas in dialogues between Gulliver and his master.

Firstly, considering the attractiveness of exploration. According to the theory of famous physician, Hippocrates, human nature can be divided into four groups from the point of view of their expressiveness, which often leads our life paths. (Boylan).

In the 18th century, men lead the society. Many of those were like Gulliver others preferred mastering their trade on land, in the book represented by lawyers, judges and salesman. These are happy with their lives being quiet and calm without any foreign ambitions, however, their joy in conquering others is expressed by controlling lives of those in a local sense. The layer can easily influence the life of his employee or that of an opponent. As Gulliver describes most of the humans yearn for power, money, possession. On the other hand, there are still men who do not wish to have any of these, being happy with their often hard everyday labor after which their family and friends await them.

Is the exploration the essential attribute of humanity? The necessity here is to consider the lust for control, a power which humans possess, and which is being expressed by their behavior in the new lands. Gulliver expresses his fear about the discovery of the land of Houyhnhnms. By describing the behavior of English explorers Gulliver tries to warn his master about the danger which comes from “intelligent Yahoos.”

Gulliver explains:

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. (Swift, p. 315)

Sadly, this kind of approach has some positives. From the prehistoric age, humans tried to control new lands which in fact gave them necessities for survival. The horrific negative sides are wiping out entire nations (Indians in America) and destroying native cultures. After hearing all those things Gulliver’s master reacts firstly by accusing the Hero of lying and then by being disgusted by humans and their behavior. Master goes on and tells Gulliver’s story to the great assembly of Houyhnhnms, where yet again the fear of unknown takes place and the question of wiping the entire nation of Yahoos becomes very important again.

Swift in his works (*Modest proposal* or *Gulliver’s Travels*) tend to describe mostly the negative things which come from the modern society. His satire therefore often gives hard criticism, which is sometimes extra graduated to either make a joke or more often to give us warning or advice on how to proceed to make our society a little better. The question which was asked at the begging of this chapter has one easy answer, that humans are impossible to label – every person is different and cannot be forced into something that is not fitting to one’s nature. Someone enjoys travelling and possibly even conquering new lands but somebody else prefers power in local sense and finally majority of people do not wish to gain power over others. The power over other nation is represented by the social relationship between Yahoos and Houyhnhnms. It seems that Swift has described the behaviour of the more developed nation towards the less developed one. In this case Yahoos are basically living in prehistoric age and Houyhnhnms are far ahead. The violent

attitude towards Yahoos is the same as the one of colonist for example in America and in other countries.

Yahoos as a nation are considered animals and group which is not worth to be talked to or reason with, basically being slaves.

Gulliver says: “He was convinced (as he afterward told me) that I must be a Yahoo; but my teachableness, civility, and cleanliness astonished him; which were qualities altogether opposite to those animals.” (Swift, p. 249)

Yahoos do possess a trace of reason which is apparent in their social structure which even the Master himself must admit. Houyhnhnms are in fact trying to keep Yahoos in their submissive state. The most genius thing about the book is the creation of nations which represents, on the one hand, the positive sides of human society and on the other the most negative sides.

Swift used his satire to create a society in which the strong rule the weak not only by the power of their bodies but also by the power of their minds. Who knows what would happen to Yahoos if somebody would be willing to put the effort into teaching them? Pig, for example, lives in a mess just because there is no any other possibility for this otherwise very intelligent animal to live and behave. Man locked pigs into small living space and therefore have prohibited them the chance to live somehow decently. Quite similar is the situation for Yahoos.

Are animals able to learn how to live in a more decent manner? Horses or dogs and many other animals can indeed learn and communicate with their owners on their own terms and in their own way. Humans consider them less intelligent because they, in fact, cannot speak human. Swift shows us that when somebody must live with other species this difference becomes irrelevant. Yahoos are therefore stuck in their animality because the huminazition process was stopped by force.

Interesting is the parallel to bible considering the coming of the Yahoos into the land in a pair, of course, to a land which is considered a paradise by Gulliver. Master explains the creation of Yahoos: “Yahoos had not been always in their country; but that many ages ago, two of these brutes appeared together upon a mountain; whether produced by the heat of the sun”. (Swift, p. 289)

The paradise in which the perfection of nature is symbolized by Houyhnhnms is suddenly forced to fight the Yahoos which are bringing the evil to otherwise innocent land.

Houyhnhnms, otherwise behaving as peaceful race, have organized a great hunt on Yahoos. So, the discussed genocide of Yahoos is more than possible. Yahoos and their nature can probably never develop into more pleasant state because of their “reasonable” masters.

This approach of the ruling nation to the less developed Yahoos is evil in his beginning. Houyhnhnm will, of course, rule those brutes because in his mind he sees himself as the superior being. Humans see themselves in the same manner. Saying that a Houyhnhnm is any better than ordinary human is from this point of view pure madness. Swift has succeeded in showing his readers the extremes which would come from the government of pure reason. The combination between the virtues of Houyhnhnm and the emotion, passions and sometimes even violence of humans (in this sense Yahoo) would be the perfect state of human nature. Reason must be controlled otherwise terrible deeds would be justified.

5 Communication between species

The language in the Voyage to Houyhnhnms is one of the most interesting topics for discussion which are covered in Swift's work.

Does among many other important things the language represent/reflect the reason of the nation? Example being the limits of Houyhnhnms language when compared to English. The first argument for supporting the proposed theory is the difficultness of a particular language. The development of means of speech goes hand in hand with the development of the nation which uses the language. In the voyage to Houyhnhnms three languages meet in the same time and are compared as the story goes on.

Languages or better to say communication means serve just as another argument for Swift's radical thoughts in the book. Lemuel Gulliver is used as a middleman between the culture of Houyhnhnms and of ordinary humans living in England.

Yahoos may be representatives of earlier stages of human culture. Swift is far ahead of his time by presenting this idea. Many years later Darwin develops his *Theory of evolution*, but some roots of this philosophy are very apparent in *Gulliver's Travels*. This theory is confirmed by the way in which of each of the mentioned races communicates. English as one of the most commonly used languages is the one which is the most developed. The language of the Houyhnhnms is much more limited by the way in which the users tend to think and behave. Yahoos and their language are the most primitive of all mentioned, but the question here is if this condition is their fault or if we should blame Houyhnhnms for that. Yahoos are forced to live and obey the further developed nation and they use their communication means mostly for survival. However, Lemuel can understand what Yahoo means (As a human can mostly understand what horse means). These signs signify more complicated behaviour than just surviving because of instincts.

Yahoos represent the situation of a race which is being controlled by the superior one. The question of what would be if Yahoos would be given the chance to develop is not taken into an account. Houyhnhnms simply do not see a way in which Yahoos would develop into a better nation. The situation according to their masters is not going to change and the race will not become any better.

Gulliver says in letter from captain Gulliver:

Yahoo as I am, it is well known through all Houyhnhnmland, that, by the instructions and example of my illustrious master, I was able in the compass of two years (although I confess with the utmost difficulty) to remove that infernal habit of lying, shuffling, deceiving, and equivocating, so deeply rooted in the very souls of all my species; especially the Europeans. (Swift, p. 7)

Gulliver is extra graduating his despise of the Human race. Of course, we are in some ways comparable to Yahoos more than to Houyhnhnms, but Yahoo will never mean Human. Yahoos are at the best Humans before the humanization process was completed. The language is the result of evolution. Vocal cords which allow us to make more sounds are an outcome of this development which took many centuries to be fully or almost done. Yahoos can, therefore, represent a dead end of human development while sharing some future similarities. Lemuel is very hard on himself doing not one similar thing as Yahoos tend to do. His morality forbids him from killing or stealing as he pleases. His intellect allows him to learn the very difficult language in a few months. Yahoos simply do not possess those qualities. Meaning that similarities between Gulliver and Yahoo are only physical, not psychological. The language capabilities of Gulliver are even greater than those which Houyhnhnms possess. Man can learn how to neigh however horse will never be able to speak. The ability to adapt our bodies to such matters is the biggest gift from nature to man. Gulliver nor his master do appreciate this enough. The discussion given was the recount of the difference between humans and yahoos.

The most important question is if the way in which Houyhnhnms communicate can even be considered language? Probably not as not being supported by the linguistic system or even written form. Lemuel could adjust the neighing of horses to his imagination and his liking. The idea of Gulliver speaking with his master is rather absurd.

One can speak to a horse and imagine what answers horse is giving but truly Lemuel was generally thinking and speaking with himself. The idea of a horse taking interest in for him unimportant things (human nature and society) is unreasonable. The same things can be applied for humans as we would probably take no interest in many sides of horse's nature or being. For example, many people do not care about the taste of oats or grass. On the other hand, horses can express disapprove to certain matters especially when those

concerns them. Horse often expresses his dislike towards people who meet with his owner which often helps the master to decide who to let in his social bubble.

However, most of the horse breeders will agree that horses are able to communicate with humans in a reasonable way. Horse can learn to understand parts of human language especially when those have some meaning for the animal as an example when a worker in a stable says word food horses tend to sometimes respond by neighing, or if the equestrian comes very close to an obstacle which the horse is expected to jump over saying the word “jump” often helps the horse to do as told. Similarly, after a human spends a huge amount of time with horses he slowly starts to understand the way in which the horses communicate. This communication is labeled as a language of horses in the *Gulliver's Travels* to demonstrate that animals are in fact worth to talk to and to reason with. Owing few horses, myself, I can see the truth in those words. If someone simply uses his strength to control a horse he usually ends up in the hospital with some broken limbs, on the other hand, an owner who treats his horses with proper respect receives the same benefits from the animal and not only from one horse but from the whole species. The notion of a horse who possesses the true reason is funny, on the other hand, a horse in who's the most admirable virtues meet is not unacceptable because the image which horses tend to represent usually carries these notions.

What is the difference between the two superior, as explained before, languages of Houyhnhnms and Humans? While being described as equals by Lemuel clear evidence of quite enormous differences in semantics can be found throughout the whole story. Starting with words that are simply not present in the Houyhnhnms language.

As Gulliver says: It put me to the pains of many circumlocutions, to give my master a right idea of what I spoke; for their language does not abound in variety of words, because their wants and passions are fewer than among us. (Swift, p. 257)

The vocabulary of this language is limited by the reason of its users. By not getting involved in war or violence the language misses many words, phrases, and utterances. Without any doubt, a significant part of English vocabulary is closely connected to violence. Those words did not only enrich the word bank but also helped with the language development. Violence is a terrible thing, on the other hand, many positive things have come from many wars which have happened in the past. Examples are antibiotics,

improvements in economy fields and mainly the liberalization process, by those things languages are being influenced in a very positive way.

Freedom gives writers the possibility of publishing their book and works. The reason and its limitations influence the meaning of words greatly. Houyhnhnms have hardly anything in common with the ideals of humans which influences many words that have different connotations in English and in the Houyhnhnms language. This is due to their social and cultural behavior and the language represents this fact clearly.

6 Conclusion

The Voyage to Houyhnhnms proves, that *Gulliver's Travels* are much more than a children book. In my work, the discussion of many sides of Houyhnhnms nature took place and I have discovered many innovative ideas, which Swift presents in his book. Swift hides his ideas behind imaginary lands to express his revolutionary thoughts openly and without any possible persecution, which might have happened as he criticized government and its behaviour.

The true reason is the governing principle in *The Land of Houyhnhnms*, however, its core is rotten and represents more dystopia than utopia. After the first reading of *Gulliver's Travels*, the reader may easily come to the imagination of an ideal race of intelligent horses, who are governing the land in a reasonable way. This point of view is not entirely wrong, but it is very vague. After reading the book multiple times and studying the works about *Gulliver's Travels*, which has been written by many great authors cited in my work, this vague point of view has become more deep and representative. Houyhnhnms in their reason can do terrible deeds and what is even worse, they can justify them. The true understanding of Swift's book can open minds of many people nowadays. Mainly, politicians and sociologists should be familiar with Swift's imaginary lands, as they can enlighten their view of their professions.

Swift's description of slavery hidden in the book help us to understand the terrible living condition of slaves, even during Swift's life. Yahoos do represent a nation which is oppressed by some other nation. Their lives are not in their own hands and they cannot change the courses of their lives. This situation leads the reader to doubt the government of true reason once again. The true reason prohibits Houyhnhnms from experiencing emotions and lusts. Their families are formed without love or inclination. Houyhnhnms do not love their children as love does not exist in their land. The true reason, in this case, is more terrifying than attractive.

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Résumé in Czech

Předmětem této bakalářské práce je kniha Gulliverovy Cesty, jejíž tvůrcem je Jonathan Swift. Práce se věnuje zejména poslední kapitole knihy Cesta do země Hvajninimů. Kniha a názory, které jsou v ní obsaženy značně předběhly dobu ve které byly napsány. Stěžejním tématem je srovnání společnosti a života Hvajninimů, lidí a jahůů. Toto téma zahrnuje také otázku zda Swift popisuje spíše utopii či dystopii. Práce také probírá hlavní Swiftova témata, která jsou v knize zmíněna. Zejména rozum, morálka, rodina, zdraví a otroctví v zemi Hvajninimů. Toho je dosaženo použitím konverzací mezi Lemuelem Gulliverem a jeho pánem. Práce se dále věnuje Gulliverovu rozhodnutí stát se jedním z Hvajninimů a jeho konečnému neúspěchu na této cestě. Dále následuje srovnání povah všech tří národů (druhů), které Swift ve své knize zmiňuje, to také souvisí s kapitolou, která je zaměřena na komunikaci mezi Hvajninimi, lidmi – které reprezentuje pouze Gulliver a jahůy. Zásadním cílem práce je prokázat že Gulliverovy cesty nejsou pouze knihou pro děti. Swift použil fantastické prvky, aby mohl kriticky psát o společnosti své doby. Swiftova satira reflektuje situaci za autorova života v britském impériu. Autorův kritický pohled na lidskou povahu a společnost je velmi hodnotný i v dnešní době.