INTEGRATING LITERATURE WITH OTHER DISCIPLINES: THE CASE OF GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

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Abstract: Literature has always maintained a close relationship with other academic disciplines because literary works reflect social, political, historical, philosophical, and scientific realities. Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels is one of the most significant examples of interdisciplinary literature because it demonstrates the connection of literary studies with geography, history, politics, sociology, philosophy, and science. The novel presents fictional journeys of Lemuel Gulliver to different lands; however, beneath the adventurous narrative lies a broad criticism of eighteenth-century society and human behaviour. The work provides opportunities for analysing social structures, political systems, moral values, and scientific development. Studying Gulliver's Travels through an interdisciplinary approach allows students and researchers to understand the broader educational value of literature and its relationship with other subjects. This article examines the correlation between literature and various academic disciplines through the themes and ideas presented in Gulliver's Travels.

Key words: literature, interdisciplinary studies, Jonathan Swift, Gulliver's Travels, history, geography, politics, sociology, philosophy, science

Literature is not an isolated field of study; rather, it intersects with many academic disciplines and contributes to a deeper understanding of human life and society. Literary texts often serve as mirrors of historical periods and cultural environments while simultaneously addressing political, philosophical, and scientific concerns. Educational systems increasingly encourage interdisciplinary approaches because they help learners connect knowledge across different subjects. Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels, published in 1726, is widely considered both an adventure novel and a satirical masterpiece. While children often read the work as a tale of imaginary lands and unusual people, scholars interpret it as a profound commentary on social and political conditions in England and Europe during the eighteenth century. The novel follows the protagonist, Lemuel Gulliver, on four voyages to strange places inhabited by tiny people, giants, scientists, and intelligent horses. The significance of Gulliver's Travels lies not only in its literary qualities but also in its interdisciplinary nature. Through its themes and symbols, the novel establishes relationships with several fields of knowledge. Understanding these connections allows readers to appreciate literature as a medium that integrates diverse forms of learning.

One of the strongest correlations of Gulliver's Travels is with history. Literary works often preserve historical conditions, attitudes, and social structures of their time. Jonathan Swift wrote during a period characterized by political instability, social transformation, and intellectual change in England. The political disputes between different groups in eighteenth-century Britain influenced Swift's writing significantly. In the novel, the conflict between the Big-Endians and Little-Endians represents religious and political disagreements in Europe. Their absurd dispute over the proper end of an egg to break symbolizes the irrational nature of real historical conflicts. Through satire, Swift criticized unnecessary political arguments and social divisions. The work

also reflects the conditions of the Enlightenment period, an era emphasizing reason and intellectual progress. Historians can therefore use literary texts such as Gulliver's Travels as sources for understanding social attitudes and concerns of a particular period. Consequently, literature and history are interconnected because literature not only entertains readers but also records historical realities and cultural values.

One more important relationship exists between literature and geography. Geography studies locations, landscapes, environments, and spatial relationships. Gulliver's Travels revolves around voyages and discoveries of unknown lands, making geographical knowledge essential for understanding the narrative. The novel introduces readers to fictional places such as Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa, and the country of the Houyhnhnms. Although these locations are imaginary, Swift describes them with realistic geographical detail. The descriptions of landscapes, environments, and cultures create a sense of authenticity. Moreover, the eighteenth century was an age of exploration and geographical discovery. European nations were expanding their territories and increasing international travel. Swift integrated this context into his narrative structure by presenting Gulliver as an explorer traveling across unfamiliar territories. Studying geography alongside literature helps readers understand how places influence human behaviour and social organization. It also encourages imagination and global awareness.

Sociology focuses on human societies, relationships, and social behaviour. Literature frequently reflects social structures and cultural norms, making sociology and literature closely related fields. In Gulliver's Travels, different societies operate according to different values and systems. Lilliput demonstrates strict social hierarchy and political competition. Brobdingnag represents a society emphasizing morality and common sense. The Houyhnhnms create a rational society governed by logic rather than emotion. Swift compares these societies with human civilization to expose social weaknesses. Through this comparison, readers can analyse issues such as inequality, social organization, cultural identity, and human behaviours. Sociological perspectives allow readers to understand how social environments influence individuals. Similarly, literature provides concrete examples of social dynamics that may otherwise remain theoretical.

Philosophy addresses fundamental questions concerning human existence, morality, and knowledge. Gulliver's Travels contains numerous philosophical themes regarding human nature and ethical values. Swift raises questions about whether human beings are truly rational creatures. The Houyhnhnms, intelligent horses guided by reason, appear morally superior to humans. In contrast, the Yahoos represent negative human characteristics such as greed, selfishness, and violence.

This contrast forces readers to consider philosophical questions:

What defines humanity?

Is reason superior to emotion?

Are humans naturally good or naturally flawed?

These issues correspond with philosophical debates concerning ethics and human nature. Literature becomes a platform for philosophical reflection because it transforms abstract ideas into narrative experiences. Modern education increasingly values interdisciplinary learning because knowledge is interconnected rather than separated into independent categories. Gulliver's Travels serves as an effective educational tool because it integrates literature with multiple subjects.

The study of literature becomes more meaningful when examined in relation to other disciplines. Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels demonstrates strong correlations between literature

and history, geography, political science, sociology, philosophy, and science. Although presented as an imaginative adventure story, the novel addresses complex issues affecting society and humanity. The interdisciplinary nature of Gulliver's Travels reveals literature as a valuable educational instrument capable of connecting diverse fields of knowledge. Through literary analysis, readers gain not only aesthetic appreciation but also deeper insight into social realities and intellectual questions. Therefore, literature should be viewed as an essential component of comprehensive education because it creates bridges between different subjects and enriches human understanding.

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