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Critical Analysis of “A Modest Proposal*”*

Jonathan Swift is famous for his peculiar style of writing. He has published several masterpieces to awaken the rational faculty of his Irish masses. However, he is widely acclaimed for his witty essay “A Modest Proposal”. This is the essay where he adopted the satirical style of writing to illuminate the new perspective. Basically, it is an effort on his part to salvage the already stressed Irish population. He discovers and projects an idea that parents can make use of their children if they are not able to cope with their expenses. Jonathan Swift in this essay also mocks at the pragmatists as they try to solve every humanitarian problem with the help of logic. Jonathan Swifts’ s modest proposal was an attempt on his part to solve several social problems of the Irish land and also a to focus on the idea that not every real-life problem can be solved with the use of logic and rationality only.

To begin with, Swift elaborates the intricacies of poor life and the associated miseries with it. Besides, the very opening lines of the essay depict the cruel side of poverty where he pictures the beggars, sex-workers on the road asking for alms (Swift, 442). He detests the situation in his homeland that has remained under the colonial empire. He discovered this plan in the era of enlightenment where it was all about rationality and practicality in life. He doesn’t beggary and giving an innovative solution for it. He does not like young people wasting their talent on the road when they could fully utilize their potential. He wants them to work for the greater good in the country.

Furthermore, he satirically advises the parent to seriously realize the potential of selling for their livelihood. He suggests,” I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled ...” (*Jonathan Swift - A Modest Proposal*). He urges parents to use their children for survival rather than begging on the road. He used the weirdest possible logic to mock at realists and pragmatist. He seems emotionless and made full use of the logic here as he advises people to eat their children (swift, 444). However, it is just his way to control the social maladies of poor Irish land. With this strange piece of logic, he actually attacks the rational class of people as real-world problems are so complex that they are not solved with rationality. Hence, he criticizes the imperfect use of rationality in solving life problems.

Moreover, Swift argues that this scheme of selling children would also limit the high rate of abortions (Swift, 443). He argues that women would not murder their own child for the sake of money. Besides, such sale and purchase would reduce the chances of murders in society. As a matter of fact, he is propagating such novel and merciless ideas to eradicate social evils as he mentions in (swift, 447). Hence, he made it clear to the readers why he is giving such immodest proposal to the Irish people as he wants to solve the issue of murders and abortions in society.

To summarize, the Modest Proposal is a satirical piece of writing and like all satirical writings, it doesn’t mean that sift has the same intent. He is basically mocking at people to adopt effective ways of livelihood rather than begging on the road with their children. He used his peculiar artistic expression to control several social problems such as poverty, beggary, and overpopulation. Perhaps, this is the time that to think seriously on this proposal the world is gradually progressing to hit the mark of eleven billion people.

# Works Cited

*Jonathan Swift - A Modest Proposal*. https://art-bin.com/art/omodest.html. Accessed 25 June 2019.