# Elaborating on The Social Inequality

The two works I choose were “A Modest Proposal” and 'The Story of the stone.' “A Modest Proposal” is about famine and poverty in Ireland as “The Story of the Stone” is more so a love story and a family saga. These two works are known for their standpoints on certain ideals. Both of the works share similar methods on addressing their points as well as their differences. The style of the authors, and the messages they put forth share a common goal which can be considered to be equality.

The first work, to begin with, is “A Modest Proposal.” It was written by Jonathan Swift and was questioned by many by the satire used. Swift’s writing could be seen as an act for protesting against social equality. Swift’s writing purpose was to bend light onto the topic of the poverty of the Irish after rule was placed. The Irish were in the streets starving and struggling to make it every day. Swift’s tactic to catch attention on the severity of the situation was to use satire in “A Modest Proposal.” Swift used a sense of sarcasm of cannibalism which caused some to be shocked.

Swift’s sarcastic proposal includes consuming Irish children for dinner. Swift’s reasoning for aiming his proposal at children being eaten is because of the annoyance of the beggars in the streets. Swift mentions in his proposal,” It is a melancholy object to walk through this great town, or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and all importuning every passenger for an alms.” (1). Swifts claims this is causing a downfall, and instead, they can be put into something more useful than begging on the street. As a result, the proposal is formed.

Swift mentioned multiple ways the proposal is beneficial. Swifts said it would benefit the Irish economy as he suggests children are delicacies which infer the Irish children would not be cheap. Swift also said it would attract tourism. It could even limit the number of new thieves as there would be fewer children or people in general with the motivation of starving to steal from others. In result, it is causing a growth in profit for the Irish community. Swift even goes as far as mentioning how you could serve the children, indicating he has a friend that would give helpful suggestions in the preparation of cooking the children and how many servings are in a child. Swift’s claimed the only objection that could be made of the proposal is the population of the Irish would fall; however, rule would benefit from the decrease in population for there would be fewer dealings with disobedient subjects.

However, the second work, “The Story of the Stone” by Cao Xueqin takes a different approach to talk about social inequality. “The Story of the Stone,” begins describing a stone that is made by the Goddes of Works, but is left out from the other stones. The stone’s purpose was not achieved or used, which caused the stone to feel ashamed, unworthy, and troubled from not being used for its purpose. Then a Buddhist bonze and Taoist priest saw the stone who brought it to a different place to experience a purpose. The purpose is through feeling a human experience, which will make the stone feel less shame as it will be a part of something and be used. The stone is placed in a stream of souls that are to be born which leads to Jia Bao-yu to be born as the reincarnation of the stone. Then the story is transformed into telling of the Jia

Family, the statuses of the generations, and a love story between the characters Bao-yu and Dai-yu.

Considering the social hierarchy in “The Story of the Stone” and lower classes poverty in “A Modest Proposal,” both of the stories share a common element on the inequality present in society. Cao Xueqin uses a standpoint of the realistic social hierarchy during his century, but he also adds a twist to point out the imbalance in the social classes. Swift, as well, uses the realistic situation but adds his twist with an absurd solution. Therefore, both use methods of adding non-realistic aspects to their works to add a sense of elaboration of social inequality.

Swift uses his proposal to call out rule and the social disorder they caused. Swift used his satire to express how he felt even the upper class, and even the wealthy Irish, have stripped the rights of the poor and make them live in constant struggles. Swift also calls out social disorder by mentioning how landlords have ignored their responsibilities and have abused their power. This includes the matter of greed, as it is greed that has corrupted the society, which leaves the poor in difficult situations and hardships to continue theirs and their families survival. The disorder is caused by not allowing the Irish to build themselves back up as they put restrictions on the Irish. For example, when Swift mentions the land of Ireland, it is about the limit on agriculture by and how it caused a hold up in the development.

Cao Xueqin uses his novel in a different stance to call out the unjust social levels. Cao Xueqin calls out the Chinese’s hierarchy feudal system. The author alters the Jia family to live a different lifestyle from the traditional perspective in the reality of his current society. The slight differences enhance how Cao Xueqin wanted to point out a reflection of social history through the Jia family or clan. Cao Xueqin even adds a twist of genders roles as he includes strong female representation in his novel. Females had descriptive backgrounds and were round characters. They were not limited to being males’ lovers. Therefore, Cao Xueqin included adjusted elements in his novel to pinpoint the roles in separation in social order and even in genders.

Both of the authors take you on a journey through their works of elaborating on the themes of inequality. Swift’s is on the short side of a journey; however, it can be considered as just as impactful as the long journey Cao Xueqin brings you along in his novel. They both use realistic as well as non-realistic elements to elaborate on their perspectives in the situations included in their writings.