Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

ANIMALS AS HUMANS OR HUMANS AS ANIMALS? A STUDY OF HUMAN AND ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP IN ROBERT HENRYSON'S *MORALL FABILLIS*

Ulaş ÖZGÜN

Master's Thesis

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KABUL VE ONAY

Ulaş Özgün tarafından hazırlanan "Animals as Humans or Humans as Animals? A Study of Human and Animal Relationship in Robert Henryson's *Morall Fabillis*" başlıklı bu çalışma, 23 Haziran 2015 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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ÖZET

ÖZGÜN, Ulaş. İnsan olan Hayvanlar mı yoksa Hayvan olan İnsanlar mı? Robert Henryson'ın *Morall Fabillis'*indeki İnsan ve Hayvan İlişkisi. Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Ankara, 2015.

Fabl yapısal olarak iki bölümden oluşan bir türdür ve anlatı bölümündeki insanlaştırılmış karakterler ders bölümünde bir hakikate işaret eder. Klasik dönemden Ortaçağ'a kadar köklü bir değişime uğramadan gelmiş birkaç türden biridir. Bu süre zarfında, fabllar genellikle okullarda Latince öğretiminde ve vaizler tarafından zaman zaman *exampla* olarak kullanılmıştır. Ancak, 12. yüzyıldan sonra, fabl, ciddi bir edebî tür olarak popüler olmaya başlamış ve giderek artan bir yazar kitlesi bu fablları dinî ve sosyal eleştiri amaçlarına uyarlamaya başlamıştır. Bu açıdan İskoç şair Robert Henryson (c. 1430 – c. 1506) fabl türünü ciddi bir edebî tür olarak gören ve yaşadığı zamanın şartlarına uyarlayan en önemli şairlerden biridir. Henryson'ın fabl türünü kullanmasının asıl nedeni, içinde yaşadığı toplumda artmakta olan yozlaşmayı ve günahkârlığı dile getirmek ve insanları erdemli olmaya teşvik etmektir. Bu yönleriyle fabl türü, kullandığı hayvansı karakterler aracılığıyla Henryson'a ihtiyacı olan örnekleme fırsatını verir. Ancak Henryson kendisini sadece bu hayvansı karakterlerle sınırlamaz, aynı zamanda da melez ve insansı olmak üzere iki yeni karakter türü yaratır. Bu amacı gerçekleştirmek adına insanların melekler ve hayvanlar arasında gösterildiği Büyük Varoluş Zinciri kavramını kullanır. Böylece, insanların hayvansı güdülerine ve dünyevi arzularına yenik düşüp mantığı bir kenara bıraktıklarında, hayvanlardan farksız olacağını gösterir. Bu sebeple, bu çalışmanın amacı Robert Henryson'ın *Morall Fabillis*'indeki karakterleri insanları hayvani yapan dünyevi arzular teması ışığında analiz etmek ve şairin bu türü ahlaki açıdan insanlara öğüt vermek üzere nasıl kullandığını göstermektir. Karakter analizi, fabldaki karakterleri değerlendirerek, her bir karakterin sahip olduğu özellikleri belirleyerek ve aynı özellikleri sergileyen karakterleri aynı karakter türü altında gruplayarak yürütülmüştür. Bu doğrultuda, üç karakter türü gözlenmiştir: hayvansı, melez ve insansı. Böylece eseri oluşturan on üç fablın altısı hayvansı karakterleri, beşi melez karakterleri ve ikisi insansı karakterleri içermektedir. Hayvansı karakterlerin yanı

sıra, Robert Henryson'ın *Morall Fabillis'*te dünyevi arzular ana temasını anlatı bölümünün tam ortasına taşımasına olanak veren melez ve insansı karakterleri kullandığı ileri sürülmüştür. Bu yüzden, farklı karakter türleri ana temayı tekrardan vurgulamış ve hikâye bölümünü alınacak ders bölümü kadar önemli kılmıştır. Dahası, bu fabllar yükselen ve alçalan bir düzen içinde hayvansı karakterlerden insansı karakterlere ardından hayvansı karakterlere geri dönüş yapacak şekilde düzenlenmişlerdir. Eserdeki bu düzen, insanın Büyük Varoluş Zinciri'ndeki aradalığını anımsatır, böylece eserin insanın melekler ve insanlar arasındaki pozisyonu temasına tekrardan vurgu yapar. Sonuç olarak, Henryson'ın, fabl türünü Hristiyan ahlaki dersleri ve insanları günahtan kaçınıp, kendi mantığını kullanmaya davet etmesi için kullandığı sonucuna varılmıştır. Ayrıca, bunu o kadar karmaşıklaştırmıştır ki diğer fabl koleksiyonlarının aksine bütün eser, karakter oluşumunda, fablların eser içindeki düzenlemesinde, fablların anlatı ve hikaye bölümlerinde var olan insanlardaki dünyevî arzular temasının etrafında şekillenmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Fabl, Robert Henryson, *Morall Fabillis*, Büyük Varoluş Zinciri, İnsan, Hayvan

ABSTRACT

ÖZGÜN, Ulaş. Animals as Humans or Humans as Animals? A Study of Human and Animal Relationship in Robert Henryson's *Morall Fabillis*. Master Thesis, Ankara, 2015.

Fable is a literary genre that is structurally bipartite, and the anthropomorphised characters in the narrative part illustrate a truth in the moral part. It is one of the few literary genres that has come down from the classical times to the Middle Ages without undergoing a dramatic change. During this time, it was mostly used as a school text for teaching Latin and occasionally used as *exampla* by the preachers. However, after the twelfth century, it became popular as a serious literary genre, and a growing number of authors began to appropriate the genre for their own purposes of social and religious criticism. In this respect, Scottish poet Robert Henryson (c. 1430 – c. 1506) is one of the most important representatives of these fabulists who regarded the fable genre as a serious form of literature and appropriated it to the time period he was living in. Robert Henryson's main reason in employing the fable genre was to express the growing corruption and sinfulness among people in his time and to motivate people to be virtuous. In this regard, the fable genre presents an ideal analogy for him with its animal characters. However, he does not confine himself only to animal-like characters of a traditional fable, but creates two additional character types which are namely hybrids and human-like characters. To that end, he employs the concept of the Great Chain of Being where humans are presented between the angelic and the bestial. Thus, he shows in the fables that when humans indulge in their carnal appetites and worldy temptations and neglect reason, they become indistinguishable from animals. For this reason, the purpose of this study is to analyse the characters of Robert Henryson's *Morall Fabillis* in relation to the theme of carnality which makes humans bestial and to illustrate how the poet utilises this genre to advise people moralistically. The character analysis has been conducted by evaluating the characters within the fables, determining the characteristics each character has, and grouping these characters that display similar

characteristics under the same character type. In this regard, three character types are observed: animal-like, hybrid and human-like. Hence, out of the thirteen fables that constitute the work; six fables include animal-like characters, five fables include hybrid characters and two fables include human-like characters. It is argued that along with the animal-like characters, Robert Henryson's use of the hybrid and human-like characters within the narrative part allows him to situate his main theme of carnality in the middle of the narrative part. Hence, various character types re-emphasise the main theme and make the narrative part as important as the moral part. What is more, these fables are arranged in an ascending and descending order from animal-like characters to human-like and then back to animal-like. This arrangement in the work suggests human's in-between condition in the Great Chain of Being, thereby stressing the work's main idea of human's position between angels and animals. As a result, it is concluded that Henryson employs the fable genre for Christian moralisation to invite man to use his reason and avoid sin. Besides, he makes it more intricate so that unlike any other fable collection, the whole work is unified around the theme of carnality in humans which is present in the character formations, in the arrangement of the fables within the work, the narrative and the moral part of the fables.

Key Words: Fable, Robert Henryson, *Morall Fabillis*, The Great Chain of Being, Human, Animal

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INTRODUCTION

"I could end this with a moral,
as if this were a fable about animals,
though no fables are really about animals"
(Atwood, *The Tent* 52)

"What piece of work is a man
– how noble in reason; how infinite in faculties, in form and moving; how express and admirable in action; how like an angel in apprehension; how like a god; the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals" (*Hamlet* II. ii. 2. 269-73)

Robert Henryson (c.1430 - c.1506) is a Scottish poet who lived in the 15th century. However, other than this fact, information concerning his life is scarce, and many parts of his life remain unknown. The most trustworthy evidence is Dunbar's poem *Lament for the Makars* which was written around 1505-6 and mentions him as a dead poet, thus, fixes "a limit to Henryson's life, though it does not provide an exact date of death" (Gray 155). Denton Fox compiles all of the possible evidence about the life of Robert Henryson in the introduction of his edition of Henryson's poems and lists several documents mentioning the name of Robert Henryson. First of all, there is an admittance paper to the University of Glasgow on 10 September 1462 mentioning a Robert Henryson. Secondly, in the notary papers in Dunfermline, a Robert Henryson is named as a witness to three deeds which signals his post as a public notary and justifies his excessive use of law terminology in his works. Thirdly, almost all of the witnesses to his works describe him as the "scolmaister of Dunfermline" (*The Poems* xiii). In terms of the relation between a notary public and a schoolmaster, Denton Fox shows a tradition of notary publics having the position of schoolmaster in the Middle Ages which is supported by Henryson's overtly didactic tone in his works and his use of Gualterus Anglicus's elegiac *Romulus*, the most common school text in the Middle Ages, as the primary source for *Morall Fabillis* (*The Poems* xv-xvi).

His works also provide information concerning his life. In this regard, the poet's acknowledgement of himself as "ane man of age" (l. 29) in *The Testament of Cresseid*

provides the information that he lived to a ripe old age. In addition, Denton Fox associates him with Dunfermline on account of the lost poem of his called "On fut by forth" which leads him to think Dunfermline as "an appropriate residence for the author of" the poem since the place "is about three miles from the Forth" (*The Poems* xvi).

Apart from these dubious inferences concerning his life, his works also indicate his manner, style and aim quite clearly. First and foremost, they were mainly derived from "Latin, French, and English" (Schrader 124) sources and were appropriated to Henryson's own culture by conscious expansion and transformation. In *The Testament of Cresseid*, Henryson takes up the subject matter from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, yet as Kurt Witting argues Henryson "does not imitate. He assimilates Chaucer's conception of poetry and creates from this artictic centre" (35). As for *Orpheus and Eurydice*, Henryson follows "Boethian version of the story, and Trivet's commentary to it" (Mameli 4). However, Henryson does not refrain from adding his own contributions such as courtly love convention to the story. Still, such contributions and additions are especially the case with *Morall Fabillis* which is a work containing a prologue and thirteen interconnected fables. Seven fables come from the Aesopic tradition, and six fables are appropriated from the beast epic tradition (Mann 264-65). In the Prologue to the work, Henryson states his aim of displaying how humans become similar to animals when they indulge in earthly pleasures. As a result, he consciously selects thirteen fables that deal with the issue of carnality in their morals. In addition to that, he creates three different character types which are animal-like, hybrid and human-like so that this enables him to incorporate sinful humans into the fantastic realm of the fable genre, thereby presents an alternative way to criticise these sinful humans.

In his undertaking of creating these character types, Henryson benefits from the idea of the Great Chain of Being which has its roots in classical times, developed by the church fathers over years and became a "cultural model that concerns kinds of beings and their properties and places them on a vertical scale with 'higher' beings and properties above 'lower' beings and properties" (Lakoff and Turner 166). In the Middle Ages, human was largely conceived "as a rational animal – 'Homo est animal rationale mortale' – [which] at once name[s] our status as animals and our distinctive characteristic of

reason" (Leemans and Klemm 154). When reason is subtracted from that definition, however, there remains only the status of being an animal. Therefore, it can be deduced that it was rationality that marked human's difference from animals, and it was also rationality that tied humans with angelic beings since Aristotle's view that "part of the thinking mind is unchangeable and immortal" had long been annexed to Christianity (Sobol 110). Hence, Henryson creates this analogy with the help of the characters in the fable so that when humans are indulged in earthly pleasures and neglect using their reason, they become no different from the animals or animals behave in such a way that they remind us of the actions of humans. Thus, these characters become a means for offering harsh criticism towards humanity and calling humans to follow the Christian moral behaviors. In addition to various degrees of character formations, the idea of human's inbetween condition in the Great Chain of Being is also reflected in the arrangement of the fables so that the characters traverse from animals to hybrids then to humans and back again. This pattern reflects Henryson's intention in arranging the structure of the whole work and reinforces the idea of human's inbetweenness. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to analyse the three types of characters that Robert Henryson creates in *Morall Fabillis* which are namely; animal-like, hybrid and human-like, to comment on the analogical relationship of these characters with the Great Chain of Being, display how these fables are arranged in a particular way that reflects a similar gradational method present in the Great Chain of Being and discuss how such an arrangement and categorisation of fables and characters reinforce the work's main theme of carnality against spirituality.

Henryson's first step in terms of exploiting the fable genre's potential is the introduction of hybrid and human-like characters along with fable's traditional animal-like characters. The reason why these characters are referred to as "animal-like", "hybrid" or "human-like" in this thesis comes from the fact that none of these character types displays one hundred percent engagement with either animals or humans. Still, in the work, animal-like characters display mostly animalistic behaviour such as searching for food or hunting each other. They are also depicted as lacking reason and prudence so that they do not learn from their mistakes and cannot forsee what will happen in the future and take precautions unlike other character types. However, the fact that they are

endowed with the anthropomorphic quality of speech that is bestowed on them by the fable genre positions them in a state of almost-animal-but-not-quite. The second type of characters is hybrid. The characters in this category display qualities that belong to the animal-like and the human-like. They are wittier than the animal-like characters, but they still fall for their appetites. They try to behave in way humans would do, but often these gestures and actions create absurdities in the fable. They hold parliaments, judicial courts, but their innate animal qualities make these institutions disarrayed. Therefore, in order to underline the characteristic mixture present in this type, it is referred to as "hybrid". Human-like characters constitute the last category. These characters behave in manners similar to humans; they display reason in their character composition. Unlike the fables of animal-like characters that repeatedly fall for their carnal appetites, the fables that contain human-like characters are concerned with the human quality of seeking justice. For Henryson, this character type represents sinful men whose outer dispositions are not different from animals because of their corrupt nature. Thus, they are in a state of almost-human-but-not-quite.

Apart from the detailed character formation in *Morall Fabillis*, the text itself is craftily composed to a point that critics sometimes tend to propose adverse arguments concerning both the work and Henryson's objective in it. In this regard, Marshall Stearns points to the poet's ardent criticism of the ills of the society and remarks that "[t]he poet's interest in the fundamental problems of his day was exceeded only by his outspoken attitude toward them" (32). On the other hand, George Gopen believes that highlighting political, social and economic commentary in *Morall Fabillis* as the primary focus will "obscure [tales'] relationship to the fable tradition, to ignore their original, innovative use of the fable genre, and to limit the possibilities of interpretation and response (Introduction 5).

The general integrity of *Morall Fabillis* is also a subject of debate. There was a tradition, especially in the 1950s and 60s, to perceive the work as two separate parts: tales and morals. The tales were regarded as witty re-workings of former fables, whereas morals were regarded as "postscript[s], where [they] can be taken or left alone" (Wood 17). However, after Denton Fox's article "Henryson's Fables" was published,

the tide turned for the unity of fable-moral relationship. Fox argued convincingly why he did not consider "the *moralitas* … [as] an arbitrary appendage" (348) and asserted that "[a]ny interpretation which emphasizes one at the expense of the other, or which concentrates on either the fable or the *moralitas* to the exclusion of the other element, is bound to be partial" (*The Poems* xliii). However, the relevance of morals to their respective tales or the relevance of them as an aid for establishing an overarching concern is still a point of debate.

Apart from the unity of the work, the arrangement of the tales is an issue on which several suggestions have been put forward. George Gopen argues that "[a] careful look at the way the *Moral Fables* is put forward reveals three different, simultaneously functional symmetries, all of which taken together demonstrate the unity of the work and its fundamentally serious moral intent" and he goes on to explain how the seventh fable plays the role of a key fable as the central one (Introduction 17). Just the opposite idea is put forward by Dieter Mehl who states that such an arrangement is an afterthought of the compiler of these fables and should not be seen as an original intention of the author (87).

The reason for such diverse range of opinions having sometimes adverse points of views certainly results from Robert Henryson's skill as a Scottish "makar" and his intention of composing his works so as to signify various meanings at the same time. In the Middle Ages, "makar" or "maker" was a rough synonym for poet "lay[ing] stress on the poet as craftsman" (Bawcutt, Introduction 19). In *Morall Fabillis,* Henryson builds up various patterns and embellishes the "narrative with detail, but rather than spelling out everything for the reader in the *Moralitas,* he chooses to urge the reader to discover that richness through re-readings of the fable with the *Moralitas* in mind" (Gopen, Introduction 30). Gopen supports this view with a reference to the second stanza of the Prologue:

> In lyke maner as throw a bustious eird,
> Swa it be laubourit with grit diligence,
> Springis the flouris and the corne abreird,
> Hailsum and gude to mannis sustenance;
> Sa springis thair ane morall sweit sentence

> Oute of the subtell dyte of poetry,
> To gude purpois, quha culd it weill apply. (ll. 8-14)

With these lines, Robert Henryson signals the inexhaustible interpretative quality of the work at the hands of the wise people who work with diligence so that an appropriate "flower" for them will spring. He achieves this multi-layered text with an abundance of meanings by pushing the limits of the fable genre to a point that when "[t]aking all … features together … [Henryson] seem[s] to break every rule in the book" (Mann 270).

For this reason, providing a definition for Robert Henryson's *Morall Fabillis* under a definitive genre-based concept, fable, which has its own historical bleakness and literary complicacy, is always lacking, one way or the other, an essential part. Therefore, it is convenient to provide a definition that encapsulates both the fable genre and Henryson's use of it through a minimalist definition. In this respect, van Dijk seems to present the most minimalistic definition which is "just three words [and he defines the fable] as a fictitious metaphorical narrative" (113). This definition surely does not explicitly present the fable genre's most important distinction from other short tales, that is, the moral. Hence, it must also be included in the definition of the fable since it "must be told not just to entertain, but also to impart a moral" (Ziolkowski 17). Other than that, its length, the characters, the fable's function may vary according to the authors' practices or her/his aim. (van Dijk 377-78). Thus, unlike a traditional Aesopic fable which is defined as a "brief and simple fictitious story with a constant structure, generally with animal protagonists (but also humans, gods, and inanimate objects …) [acting and speaking in the manner of humans and] which gives an exemplary and popular message on practical ethics," (Zafiropoulos 1) Henryson develops his fables sometimes up to 350 lines as in the case of "The Trial of the Fox". In addition to that, its fictitious quality is blurred by the obvious references to contemporary social, religious and economic events and institutions, the protagonists are animal, however, the degree of animality is disrupted by the additional human qualities that he gives to his characters and finally, its message on practical ethics is replaced by Christian morality and good conduct in the moralisation part.

Unlike many forms of literature, in fables, the moral is not a deduction extracted from the story by the reader in her/his own fashion but a part co-existing within the fable and what should be deduced from the story is explicitly stated by the author. Thus, there is an essential interdependence between the story and the moral part. Such an interdependency eliminates the possibility of looking at the genre through the animal point of view because no matter how skilful and playful a poet can be in creating a fable world which seems to be "a composite space partaking of both the animal and the human world without privileging either," (Rudd 39) animals' actions are only "useful in that they illuminate human ways, but they are of no interest beyond that usefulness" (Crane 43). Therefore, whatever the degree of animality or humanity the characters have or whatever action takes place in the narrative part, ultimately, the moral section of the fable will transpose the actions of these characters into the human sphere. Thus, actions of the animals become only a guideline for humans to avoid the pitfalls that these characters have experienced. Hence, the fable genre becomes "more about the multiplicity of human points of view than an argument for the possibility of nonhuman points of view" (Cohen 43).

The possible question arising out of such a statement is the reason why animals are used in order to "illuminate human ways". One possible answer lies in the "tradition of using the persona of an animal … to represent a real-life human whose appearance in his own guise in a satirical text might prove dangerous to the author" (Figg 88). In this respect, the fable's relative ambiguity in terms of concealing the targeted individual have encouraged men to express their beliefs especially on political, religious and economic matters. Therefore, fable plays an important part in directing criticism at the ills of society in an implicit manner since it is known that starting from the Hellenistic times, fables were used to "veil and cloak, protect and preserve especially lofty truths from uninitiated eyes" (Jacobs, Introduction 8) and offer criticism without attracting attention.

Another reason why the fables are preffered by the authors is that the fable genre "implies an overlap of the human and the animal world: the animals are seen as having

human characteristics although they lack human complexity" (Mann 30). Henryson in the Prologue to *Morall Fabillis* indicates that he uses fables for these reasons:

> Bot takis all the lust and appetyte,
> Quhilk throw custum and the daylie ryte
> Syne in the mynd sa fast is radicate
> That he in brutal beist is transformate. (ll. 53-56)

It is clear from these lines that Henryson employs the first usage by presenting veiled human figures succumbing to their appetites and sins so that they are transformed into beast forms which become a criticism for humanity. In this regard, Henryson benefits loosely from the idea of physiognomy which includes in the Middle Ages "the doctrine of the right construction of the body, which will be later known … as theory of the proportion or symmetry, of the human body; on the other, the doctrine of the proper mixing of the humors, which determines our temperaments, or theory of the complexion" (Stimilli 21). According to this doctrine, it was believed that "the physical features of a person's face and body indicated character instincts and behaviour, and all these were expressive of the soul" (Hartley 16). Thus, human's animal appearance is an implied judgement on these characters' indulgence in their carnal appetites. Henryson is aware of the concept because in the last fable, the mouse notes the physical ugliness of the paddock and says:

> 'For clerkis sayis the inclinatioun
> Off mannis thoct proceidis commounly
> Efter the corporall complexioun
> To gude or euill, as nature will apply:
> Ane thrawart will, ane thrawin phisnomy. (ll. 2826-30)

Hence, it can be deduced that physical deformity or, in the case of the human-like characters, animal appearance is an indication of a sinful nature in *Morall Fabillis*. Henryson uses this in order to illustrate how the world is now full of sinful individuals who are indistinguishable from animals.

On the other hand, so as to show the overlap between the human and the animal, which is the second usage, Jill Mann indicates Robert Henryson's "examples of the 'mony

diuers inclinatioun' that differentiate the 'kyndis naturall' of animals" (30). Henryson indicates this attitude in the beginning of "The Cock and the Fox" with the lines:

> The bair busteous, the volff, the wylde lyoun,
> The fox fenȝeit, craftie and cawtelows,
> The dog to bark on nicht and keip the hows.
> Sa different thay ar in properteis (ll. 401-04)

The extract marks the tendency of Henryson's belief in the diverse inclinations of the animals "[t]hocht brutall beistis be irrationall" (l. 397). According to Salisbury, with the popularity of *Physiologus* and bestiaries in medieval Europe especially after the thirteenth century, there had been a change in the perception of animals which led some scholars to believe in humans and animals possessing mutual traits (104). Even, in the fourteenth century, a scholar would argue about the animals as "exhibiting human traits, as having conscious motives or even moral standards" (qtd. in Salisbury 104). In *Morall Fabillis*, Robert Henryson takes the idea of animals displaying human traits even further by creating characters that have appearances of animals but character traits from both the human and the animal. Therefore, in the work, along with animal characters that are portrayed realistically as strutting in the barns as in the case of "The Cock and the Jasp" or stealing food from the cellars as in "The Two Mice", Henryson adds hybrid characters such as wolves that dress as church fathers in the fable of "The Fox and the Wolf" and human-like characters under the thin veil of animal appearance such as the sheep and appear in courts which resemble an exact recreation of the human court in the fable of "The Sheep and the Dog".

As for the reason why Robert Henryson used the fable genre as a form of expression to convey his ideas and to comment upon the plight of the human condition with the help of the genre's characters along with his own formation of characters, it has three broad but distinct reasons that are related with each other; familiarity of the genre to all walks of life, its suitability to the medieval notion of literary theory and its adaptability to the notion of the Great Chain of Being. First of all, the fable was a genre which appealed both to the nobility and peasants at the same time since the fables' "unadorned brevity and wit make them approachable by the simplest minds; their neatness and inevitability give a profounder pleasure to the more sophisticated" (Hobbs 12). The fables also had a

rooted tradition in the curriculum of the primary schools all over Europe and were popular among the clergy in their sermons (Newlyn 77). Over the centuries, throughout its journey from ancient Greek tradition to Henryson's time in Europe, the role of the fable as school text had not been subject to many changes. The tradition of learning Aesopic fables in schools was manifest even as early as the Aristophanes' times since in the play *Birds* the chorus leader is scolded with the words: "[y]ou are uneducated and not of an inquiring mind and you haven't thumbed up your Aesop" (83). For Holzberg this extract "indicate[s] that, in the fifth century B.C., fables already constituted in some form part of the elementary curriculum" (Holzberg 29). As for the Roman period, Aesop's importance as a school text in the Roman Empire is also evident from the fact that "[i]n the first century A.D., Quintilian recommended Aesopic fables ('Aesopi fabellas') as subject-matter for school-exercises in which they were to be paraphrased, abbreviated, or more fully elaborated, without losing the poet's meaning" (Mann, Introduction 6). The reason was that "[a] thorough knowledge of rhetoric was seen as prerequisite for every form of elite education" (Holzberg 25) and these Aesopic fables' compact nature with a proper moral made them ideal texts for beginners.

The tradition of the Aesopic fables' usage as a school text continued into the Middle Ages. Most of the classical Greek and Roman authors had long been forgotten during the Middle Ages, but in primary schools "there was no need for a revival. Classical texts including classical animal texts, and texts with animals – Aesop and other fabulists, *Physiologus* … – had never ceased to be used to teach reading and writing" (Clark 98). Fables were almost ingrained in the educational system of the Middle Ages and the students even took for granted that they "existed only to be rewritten" (Wheatley 71). Such a tendency also resulted in an attitude which "encouraged everyone who received an education to view fable as common property" (Ziolkowski 22). As an educated man and also a probable school teacher, Henryson must have been familiar with the tradition of paraphrasing and re-phrasing of these fables which is manifest in his *Morall Fabillis*.

In relation to the Aesopic fable tradition, which Henryson also makes use of, there is not any extant fable that could be associated with Aesop. What is more, animal stories that are close to the fable genre had been present before the supposed century of Aesop's life

which was the early sixth century B.C. (Fidone 39). Therefore, it is highly likely that the fable genre has its roots in the North African, Middle and Far Eastern wisdom literature which includes the Semite, Indian, Persian and Egyptian cultures (Fidone 39). Yet, denying the possibility that a historical figure, Aesop, established the genre's qualities is just as deterministic as perceiving him as the innovator under such ambigious circumstances. It is, however, safe to say that Aesop is a figure whose legendary identity provides an umbrella term to distinguish the genre from other genres featuring animals such as folk tales and myths. It is for this reason that the term "Aesopic" refers "not to fables *by* Aesop but to fables that are felt to be *in the manner of* Aesop. Hence, Aesopic fables exist not just from the period in which the largely legendary Aesop lived but from all periods" (Ziolkowski 16).

Actually, it is only in the first half of the first century A.D. that the Roman poet, Phaedrus, wrote the first verse collection of Aesopic fables, *Liber primus fabularum Aesopiarum*, whose source is unknown (Holzberg 39). The fable genre had not been perceived "as a genuine literary genre [until then], but was simply seen as a means to an end" before this collection (Holzberg 11-12). However, Phaedrus' belief that his endeavour was of a stately achievement and his claim to be "in the same league as one of the greatest Latin poets" (Holzberg 42) indicates that the genre was well established in his time. After Phaedrus came the Greek poet Babrius whose collection was in choliambic verse and was kind of a subsidiary tradition to Phaedrus' collection. Subsequently, Avianus translated a major portion of Babrius' text into Latin in elegiac verse in the fourth or fifth century A.D. and the text was circulated throughout Europe in the Middle Ages because of its suitability as a school text (Mann, Introduction 4-6). On the other hand, Phaedrus' text was in an unusual meter and difficult for a student in a primary school who was learning Latin by re-writing these fables. As a result "[a]fter the tenth century, Phaedrus was not [sic.] longer copied because the prose version known as the *Romulus* superseded his original version" (Fidone 41). As a result, there had been numerous recastings of the *Romulus* version in the Middle Ages. The version known as the "elegiac *Romulus*" which was written in the late twelfth century acquired particular importance with its concise and simple format. It was suitable as a school text, and it was so popular during the late Middle Ages that any reference to Aesop's

text would actually mean the elegiac *Romulus* (Mann, Introduction 11-12). Robert Henryson was not an exception, and his major source in *Morall Fabillis* was also Gualterus Anglicus' version of the elegiac *Romulus* (Schrader 125).

Apart from the popularity of fables in schools during the Middle Ages, preachers and orators also saw the genre's possibility as *exempla*. The term is the plural form of *exemplum* which means a "moralized anecdote, whether historically true or fictitious, drawn from sources both ancient and contemporary, secular as well as religious" (Owst 149). In this regard, even St. Augustine recognizes the genre's suitability for Christian moralisation as he states in *To Consentius: against lying* that in this "sort of fiction [in which] men have put even human deeds or words to irrational animals … [that is] by this sort of feigned narrations but true significations, they might [be] in more winning manner" (12.28, 872). In addition to this, Jill Mann recounts Pope Urban's "admonishing [of] secular clergy of Poiters for paying more attention to worldly than to spiritual matters, [and comparing] them to the wolf in the fable who was being taught to read, and when his teacher said 'A', responded 'lamb', and when his teacher said 'B', responded 'piglet'" (qtd. in Mann, Introduction 5). Similarly, *Morall Fabillis* has the same objective of pointing out Christian morals since it is an overtly religious work laden with moralised animals, prayers to God and religious exegesis. It is concerned with the carnal desires of the body against the soul's wishes. In this regard, Henryson even discloses his intention that these tales would pose as an *exempla* to those "quha culd it weill apply" (l. 14) at the beginning of the work. In addition to that Henryson's intention to leave the rest "vnto the freiris, / To mak a sample or similitude" (ll. 2971-2) at the end of the concluding stanza signals the aforementioned tradition of the use of fables by preachers and orators and Henryson's intention of leaving these fables to be used in this tradition.

However, it should be noted that the fables had not always been used as a means for Christian moralization. Although fables had been recognized as "ideal *exempla:* [since] they were short and striking" (Fox, Introduction xlii) and used by orators and preachers before the twelfth century, it was a well-known fact that it was pagan literature and a clergyman's recounting of a fable was perceived "as an unsavoury thing to many people

in the Middle Ages" due to the fact that such an act would be technically telling a lie (Manning 403). Moreover, fabulists in the Middle Ages, up until the twelfth century, "systematically left out of their collections specific allusions to Christianity and its social world. It is as if such insertions into 'Aesop's fables would, for these fabulists, have violated the decorum of a formal fable collection" (Henderson, "Having Fun" 68) which had its roots in pagan times and had been out of the boundary of religous influence. However, after the twelfth century, Henderson marks a tendency in the fables of a number of fabulists such as Berechiah ben Natronai, Marie de France, Odo of Cheriton and Robert Henryson in terms of new moral applications. It was not a collectively conscious decision of these writers who were obviously distanced by their respective time period, location and culture. Yet, after the twelfth century, a shared sense of novelty emerged among these fabulists which was reflected in the way they dealt with their fables. As a result, these fabulists "began turning fables to new purposes right in the written moralization itself" (Henderson, "Medieval Beasts" 41). One striking difference from the traditional fabulists is that they began to "refer to figures of contemporary medieval society and religious concepts" (Henderson, "Having Fun" 68) in the moral part of their fables. Burçin Erol, in this regard, perceives and expresses Marie de France's tendency of presenting a Christian society attending masses with feudal lords, knights and ladies veiled as animals (77). She also concludes by pointing out that despite any conclusive research on the field, there is a good possibility of Henryson being inspired by Marie de France under these circumstances as Erol remarks there is a striking similarity of expanding the extent of fable narratives both in Marie de France and Henryson (Erol 83). Thus, mingling social, economic and religious concerns in their fables were things that were becoming more and more common with the rest of the fabulists after the twelfth century. As a result, they did not simply deal with "general human types … [such as] 'the strong' and 'the weak' … [but incorporated] religious concepts like 'soul'" (Henderson, "Having Fun" 69) and the body, thereby recreating new meanings out of old fables and exploiting the natural limits of the fable genre to new applications in order that fables "can be made to parody Christian rituals, as in the parodies of confession and baptism in the *Fables*, and animal fables can be used to produce Christian morals" (Fox, "The Coherence" 376).

Robert Henryson is one of these fabulists some of whose morals have traditionally been found puzzling and sometimes far-fetched (Henderson 71). However, his method of extracting morals out of these tales can only be understood after a close examination of the reasons behind such an action. During the course of his work, *Morall Fabillis*, occasionally, in some of his *moralitas*, he displays a tendency to allegorise not just the fable's main action but even the inanimate objects within the fable. One particular example is that in the moral part of "The Trial of The Fox" Henryson states that "[t]he lyoun is the warld be liklynace," (l. 1104) the mare "is men of contemplatioun," (l. 1111) the wolf "[he] likkin to sensualitie," (l. 1118) he likens the mare's hoof "to the thocht of deid" (l. 1125) and the fox "to temptationis" (l. 1132). The close study of the text, however, reveals in an open manner that Henryson's detailed allegorical moralising only "add[s] up to a general theme of reason or goodness resisting the call of worldliness" (Henderson "Having Fun" 78) which is the general moral teaching that the work aims at. Hence, Henryson's complex manner of moralising becomes only a different method of asserting the ills of following temptations. Thus, in this thesis Henryson's unification of this theme to the fable characters will be studied in detail, and his different methods of establishing this view in the moral part will be illustrated in detail. In this process, occasionally the characters in the narrative part are transformed into allegorical subjects in the *moralitas* and receive a meaning accordingly. Thus, Robert Henryson's formation of the characters in the narrative part and these characters' importance in terms of affecting the moral part will be examined in detail.

In this regard, highlighting the origins of Henryson's style of moralising which is not unique to Henryson, and is a proof of his familiarity with the group of people mentioned above will be beneficial in understanding Henryson's style of moralisation. Odo of Cheriton, another member of this loosely formed group, also used a similar style in his fable collection for preachers. Jill Mann highlights Odo of Cheriton's style and remarks about the resemblance:

> […] when he tells the story of the buzzard chick brought up in a hawk's nest, which eventually betrays its origins by fouling the nest, Odo explains that the hawk is God, whose children are brought up in the 'nest' of the Church, while the buzzard is the devil, who places his own children in the nest; when they foul it, God throws them out of the 'nest'

> into the pit of hell (*Fabulae* IV). Such interpretations replace the simple moralizing summaries characteristic of Aesopic fables with allegorizing parallels that resemble the method of [*Physiologus* and] the bestiary. … In fifteenth century Odo's brand of social moralization reappears in the fables of the Scottish poet Robert Henryson. (Mann, Introduction 15)

In this manner of moralising, these fabulists brought about a new perspective in looking at these fables. Unlike many fabulists in the Middle Ages, whose morals were secular and general commentaries about the way of life, these fabulists extracted new morals out of them. They considered writing morals as "a witty game, a chance to display creativity and to surprise the audience" (Henderson, "Having Fun" 69). Hence, as it is stated in the Prologue to *Morall Fabillis*, each moral becomes a "nuttis schell, thocht it be hard and teuch, / Haldis the kirnell, sueit and delectabill;" (ll. 15-16). Additionally, as Jill Mann suggests this practice has its roots in the bestiary and sermon tradition which was used for Christian moralisation. Henryson's moralisation that insinuates another branch of animal lore adds variety to his fable collection. Thus, such an addition functions as a new way to comment on "the moral characteristics of man, the 'little world', as an individual with passions, vices and virtues, in his relationship with himself and with other men, in his relationship with society" (Gray 135) and his relationship with the world around him through the observation of the characters within the fables.

As it has been indicated above, the method of extracting meaning out of animal actions was a tradition employed in the *Physiologus* and the bestiaries. *Physiologus* is an anonymous book of animals, birds, insects both real and mythical. It is a product of Christian culture which was probably produced "in the second century A.D, in or near Alexandria" (Wirtjes, Introduction lxx). During the course of time in Europe, the work expanded by including "folklore, legend, pseudoscience, and rudimentary scientific observation of an assortment of real and imaginary animals" so that the new versions of *Physiolgous* were called bestiaries (Flores 16). In the Middle Ages, *Physiologus* and bestiaries were important sources of animal lore that had great influence on the minds of medieval people. They give clues about how medieval men perceived animals and the world around them. Sophie Page provides valuable insight about the medieval perception of animals in these texts:

> In the medieval cosmos God spoke to man in symbols, an interaction that worked on the one hand through the analogy or dissimilarity of visible and invisible things, and on the other through the participation of all physical things in their creator. Thus the use of animal symbols depended on the view that every living thing had some resemblance to God and that the physical world was an expression of the thought of God, from which his teaching could be uncovered. The significance of this approach to Creation is shown by the popularity of [*Physiologus* and] the bestiary, … genre[s] based on the principle that the characteristics of animals had been determined by God to serve as a guide to moral conduct and to reinforce biblical teachings. Bestiaries [and *Physiologus*] provided complex readings of the animal world that combined abstract ideas and legitimate observations about animal habits with interpretations of their moral significance. (Page 33)

This worldview is reflected in *Morall Fabillis* as Robert Henryson displays in "The Preaching of the Swallow" that although we may not fully comprehend God:

> 3yt neuertheles we may haif knawlegeing
> Off God almychtie be his creatouris,
> That he is gude, fair, wyis, and bening.
> Exempill takis be thir iolie flouris, (ll. 1650-53)

Hence, through the animals and other beings in the world, it was possible to reach an understanding of God and his intentions at least partially. In the same manner, Henryson uses the characters in *Morall Fabillis* as a means to provide deductions similar to the texts of *Physiologus* and bestiaries. He allegorises his characters in some of his tales so as to convey his message of resisting the call of earthly pleasures in a different and surprising way which helps him to make his point in a fresh and unprecedented way in the moral section of his fables. This is especially the case for some of his morals which are found puzzling (Henderson 71).

In this regard, Robert Henryson extends the traditionally short morals of the fable genre to a point that the moral part of the fables even "swell to fill several stanzas, sometimes threatening to rival the fable narratives in length" (Mann 267). It is highly probable that by expanding the moral part, Henryson emphasises the value of morals as much as the narrative part in the fable genre and wants his work to both entertain and instruct which is an idea deriving partly from Horace's statement in *Ars poetica*, "[p]oets aim either to

benefit, or to amuse, or to utter words at once both pleasing and helpful to life," (479) which is as Glending Olson points out "the most familiar literary dictum in the Middle Ages" (292). In this respect, the fable genre would be a perfect choice for Henryson to be both entertaining and instructive. In fact, Henryson commences his work by explaining this paradoxically interdependent nature of "feinʒeit fabils" which he defines as "not al grunded vpon truth, ʒit than, / Thair polite termes of sweit rhetore / Richt plesand ar vnto the eir of man," (ll. 2-4) thus, these tales "repreif the[m] of thi misleuing, / O man, be figure of ane vther thing" (ll. 6-7). His awareness of the fables' fictional nature does not hinder either the pleasurable or instructive value of them as they commonly please and direct men out from wickedness with their figural power.

The word "figure" is crucial in understanding Henryson's way of conveying meaning in these fables. In this respect, Denton Fox's application of Erich Auerbach's definition of the "figure" is an important milestone in understanding the function of figurative language in Henryson's work. "Figure" for Auerbach is an established "connection between two events or persons, the first of which signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second encompasses or fulfils the first" (58). As a result, Denton Fox contends that in the narrative part of the fables "Henryson's animals, while remaining animals, signify men, while we are continually reminded that men encompass or fulfil (but sometimes are no better than) animals" ("Henryson's Fables" 341). In sum, Denton Fox reads the characters within the fables as veiled human beings and unites the moral parts accordingly. Thus, at first sight, Auerbach's definition of the term that is the result of his extensive research of the word and covers the usage of the word from the first century A.D. to the sixth seems to be the only one to fit perfectly, however, it is not the exact definition nor the only one that Henryson holds in his mind since Henryson's next two imageries in the next two stanzas of the Prologue suggest a slight but important difference in the understanding of the term. Explaining the manner of figuration in extracting moral of "sweit sentence," (l. 12) Henryson employs the image of ploughing the earth "with grit diligence" (l. 9) so that "the flouris and the corne abreird," (l. 10) could spring and it will be used "[t]o gude purpois, quha culd it weill apply" (l. 14). In this example, Henryson's stress on the interdependence of each part of the fable as entities holding equal value becomes apparent. Just like the earth without having the

necessary seed, that is, the proper material could not produce a flower, that is, a result or a moral, similarly a flower cannot spring out of nothing. It requires a portion of soil to sprout. Hence, the entity of the earth, that is, the narrative part and the characters in it becomes as important as the flower, that is, the moral part.

On the other hand, in Auerbach's definition, an image that signifies another thing in the figuration process has a reduced value than what has been signified resulting in a creation of an unbalanced equation, thus posing a minor but crucial difference. Philippa M. Bright perceives this difference and doubts the validity of relying too much on Auerbach's definition of the term. She acknowledges the extensive research Auerbach has done about the term "figure," but she is sceptical about the applicability of the term to Henryson's work as she argues that Auerbach's research covers only the time period between the first and sixth century Latin writing tradition, and Auerbach mainly focuses on the relationship between the term and the typological writing common in these centuries (136). Therefore, she sets off to present alternative usages of the term "figure" in the Middle Ages that might help to clarify what Henryson meant. Along with an example of the word "figure" used by Aquinas that is similar to Auerbach's meaning (Bright, "Medieval Concepts" 139) Philippa M. Bright presents the notions of Hugh of St. Victor who reacts against overlooking the literal meaning in the figural interpretation of the Scripture and states that "[i]f, as they say, we ought to leap straight from the letter to its spiritual meaning then the figures and likenesses of things by which the mind is educated spiritually, would have been included in the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit in vain" (qtd in Bright, "Medieval Concepts" 140). Therefore, the importance of what has been signified is a crucial matter but the letter on its own is just as important:

> For even in that which is accepted as having been said figuratively, the letter is not denied to have its own significance, for when we claim that what is said ought not thus, as it is said, to be understood, we assert that very thing to have been said in some other way. Therefore something is said and is signified by the letter, even then when that which is said is not understood just as it is said, but something else is signified by that which has been said. So then in general something is said and is meant by the letter and we must understand first of all that which is meant by the letter, so that what is signified by it can subsequently be understood. (qtd in Bright, "Medieval Concepts" 141)

The reasoning of Hugh of St. Victor allows us to look at the characters of the fables not as humans veiled only in the form of animals but as characters that have qualities of their own because of the fact that "such allegorical or figurative interpretations do not imply any dissolution of the literal senses – the brutal beast remains [in this case] unharmed" (Gray 120). In this respect, C.S. Lewis in his book *The Allegory of Love* also urges us not to ignore the literal meaning for the sake of its abstract significance and states that "allegory, after all, is simile seen from the other end; and when we have seen the point of simile we do not throw it away" (125).

It is only in the moral part that these characters are transposed into the human sphere, sometimes allegorically, sometimes figuratively. Thus, this allows a necessary partitioning of the story and the moral part only to become interdependent on each other as suggested by the metaphors in the Prologue. For example, Henryson invokes the flower metaphor which springs from the earth only "be laubourit with grit diligence" (l. 9). The interdependence of each part is evident in this metaphor since a flower, that is, the moral needs a portion of earth, that is, the narrative in order to sprout and the negligence of one makes the other redundant. The earth would be barren without flowers and flowers cannot sprout without the earth. Hence, Henryson's decision of taking the characters figuratively, or sometimes allegorically in the moral part may be puzzling, however, such a decision suggests only a variety of ways to reach a conclusion and this conclusion is humankind's indulgence in

> … all the lust and appetyte,
> Quhilk throw custum and the daylie ryte
> Syne in the mynd sa fast is radicate
> That he in brutal beist is transformate" (ll. 53-56).

There is, of course, more than one meaning for "figure" in both the Scriptural commentary tradition and Latin poetic tradition in the Middle Ages, nevertheless Henryson's metaphor in the third stanza of "[t]he nuttis schell" which is "hard and teuch," (l. 15) but "[h]aldis the kirnell, sueit and delectabill" (l.16) is coincidentally explained by a commentary in the twelfth century on the *Thebaid* of Statius which gives clues about the perception of the term "figure" in the Middle Ages:

> Just as there are two parts to a nut, the shell and the kernel, so there are two parts to poetic compositions, the literal and the allegorical meaning. As the kernel is hidden under the shell so the allegorical interpretation is hidden under the literal meaning; as the shell must be cracked to get the kernel so the literal must be broken for the allegories (*figurae*) to be discovered. (qtd in Bright, "Medieval Concepts" 144)

Henryson's use of two important metaphors that stress the interdependent but equally important nature of the narrative part and the moral part, the fictional part and the non-fictional part, pleasurable part and the instructive part is not a coincidence. He connects these notions neatly by the term "figure" so that in this way, he finds an intermediary way to conform to the common literary principle of "delight and instruct" in the Middle Ages. Robert Henryson stresses the importance of this notion by stating that "clerkis sayis, it is richt profitabill / Amangis ernist to ming ane merie sport, / To blyth the spreit and gar the tyme be schort" (ll. 19-21). The fable genre, in this regard, offers the perfect solution for him since he does not want to vex his audience "[w]ith sad materis" (l. 26) all the time as he believes

> … ane bow that ay is bent
> Worthis vnsmart and dullis on the string;
> Sa dois the mynd that is ay diligent
> In ernistfull thoctis and in studying. (ll. 22-25)

Henryson, again, invokes a fitting metaphor in order to convey his thoughts of not annoying the reader by continually exposing them to harsh morals of his, but blends his serious warnings with witty-written narrative parts. In a literary mode whose moral quality holds the key element of importance, Henryson enlivens the narrative part with his characters, thus gives equal importance to the narrative part in terms of narrative creativity. Stephen Knight also agrees with this view of the narrative part's importance and states that "the story exists as a pleasant, amusing object, and by figuration it may also have another existence, as a moral analysis" (11). Therefore, Henryson's action becomes a thing which enables him to be more creative and varied since now he has the chance of exploiting both the narrative part and the moral part and it conforms to

Horace's notion of "delight and instruct". This act also enables Henryson to comment on the plight of human condition in a more striking way compared to his predecessors. Therefore, in order to balance the importance of the "dichotomous structure [of fables] … he puts his creativity into the fable part" (Henderson 67). This action helps him to make the narrative part match with the morals of the work. His creativity, however, is reflected more in his characters, resulting in a diversity of characters from animals to hybrids, that is, characters having the characteristics of animals and humans, and to characters resembling humans so that the narrative parts could themselves comment on the plight of humankind.

In his endeavour, Henryson benefits from the idea that in a corrupt world when humans leave their angelic attributions and forsake their reason "mony men in operatioun / Ar like to beistis in conditioun," (ll. 48-9) thereby there remains little difference between the animals and humans. In fact in the Middle Ages philosophers "considered humans to be part of the animal world. We share significant parts of our souls with animals; our bodies have the same physiology and thus are subject to the same kinds of passions" (Leemans and Klemm 153). However, it is also believed that "humans alone were said to possess the reason and will necessary to transcend the natural world. Through reason, we form thoughts completely abstracted from our physical sensations. By will, humans are moral free agents who can act in opposition to natural inclinations" (Leemans and Klemm 153). Therefore, along with reason there comes another distinction between human and animal. This is the belief that "humans possess the free will to resist instigation toward sin, [yet] animals are completely controlled by their instincts" (Sobol 120). Still, Sobol gives an extract from Thomas Aquinas who perceives the weakness of humans in terms of the will and states that "[a]n *instinctus diaboli* could [always] drive humans to sin" (qtd. in Sobol 120). As a result, human's intermediary status, as a being, is both marked by their intellect and will since the appropriate or inappropriate usage of intellect and will determine humans' place in the universe. Medieval scholars, largely for these reasons, believed that humans were "composite being[s], partly akin to the angels who are rational but – on the later, scholastic view – not animal, and partly akin to the beasts which are animal but not rational" (Lewis, *The Discarded Image* 153). Therefore, humans were perceived as holding the central position among all the beings

because of the fact that the heavenly attributes can raise them above animals while at the same time the negligence of them can reduce them to the status of animals.

However, the idea of cataloguing every being according to a gradational scale and importance was not a Christian practice originally. Arthur Lovejoy's extensive study of the concept of "The Chain of Being" in Western philosophy traces its origins to Greek philosophy and finds that the notion originates from "not one unit-idea, but the product of an agglutination of three unit-ideas, namely the principle of 'plenitude' (first introduced by Plato) and the principles of 'continuity' and of 'gradation' (first formulated in Aristotle)" (O'Meara 17). According to Lovejoy, originating from his philosophical writings, Plato's principle of "plenitude" means

> … not only the thesis that the universe is a *plenum formarum* in which the range of conceivable diversity of *kinds* of living things is exhaustively exemplified, but also any other deductions from the assumption that no genuine potentiality of being can remain unfulfilled, that the extent and abundance of the creation must be as great as the possibility of existence and commensurate with the productive capacity of a 'perfect' and inexhaustible Source. (52)

In a way, Plato expresses the conclusion that the Good with its supreme generosity would not be that good if all the possibilities were not realized. Later on, this conception would merge with Aristotle's deliberations of "continuity" and "gradation" which was not actually fully formulated by him but attributed to him. He only implied that "there must be a continuity from type to type in the plenitude of types in the world" (O'Meara 17). He also contributed to the idea of cataloguing by offering "to naturalists and philosophers of later times the idea of arranging (at least) all animals in a single graded *scala naturae* according to the degree of 'perfection'" which could be regarded as a form of "gradation" (Lovejoy 58). More importantly, Lovejoy suggests:

> another hierarchical arrangement of all organisms … which was destined to a greater influence upon subsequent philosophy and natural history. It is based on the 'powers of soul' possessed by them, from the nutritive, to which plants are limited, to the rational, characteristic of man 'and possibly another kind superior to his,' each higher order possessing all the

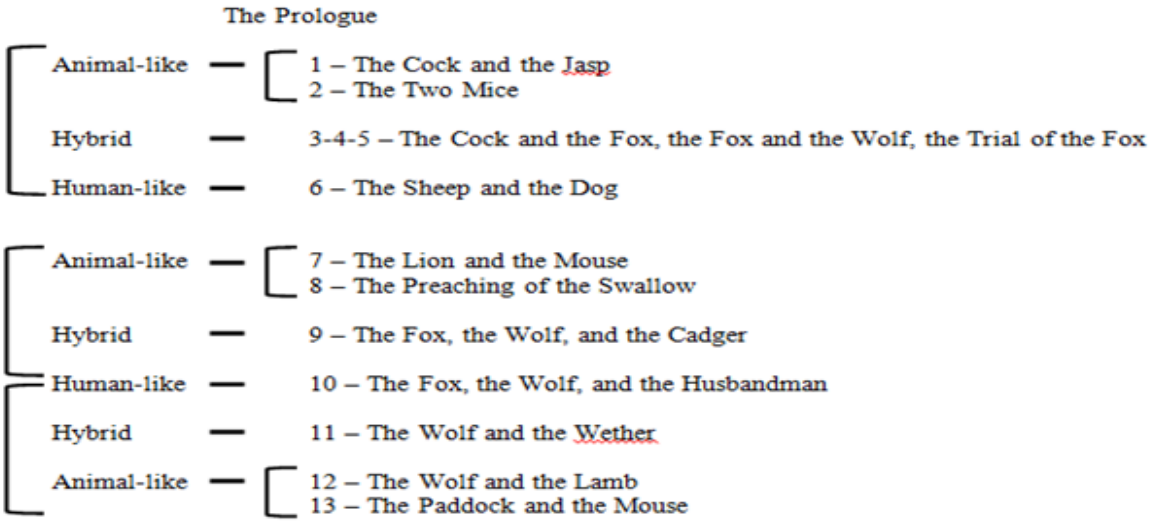
> powers of those below it in the scale, and an additional differentiating one of its own. (58-9)

However, it was not until the Neo-platonist thinkers that these three-unit ideas were moulded into one coherent idea. It was these Neo-platonist thinkers that "conceive[d] the world as being structured in terms of a large number of links arranged in *hierarchical* order (gradation), going from the lowest through *every possible* grade to the highest (plenitude), each grade differing by the *least* possible difference (continuity)" (O'Meara 17-18). From these Neo-platonist thinkers, especially with the writings of Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius in the fifth and sixth century, Christianity derived the set of ideas that shaped the perception of the medieval concept of the Great Chain of Being for the Christians. From the early Christian fathers, Augustine's famous epigram "*non essent Omnia, si essent aequalia*: 'if all things were equal, all things would not be; for the multiplicity of kinds of things of which the universe is constituted – first and second and so on, down to the creatures of the lowest grades would not exist'" (qtd. in Lovejoy 67). St. Augustine became an important figure for the conception of the idea of the Great Chain of Being in the medieval world. In this regard, his own hierarchy of beings is distinctively dynamic rather than static compared to the previous gradations in terms of the placement of humanity so that "he [humanity] may turn 'upward or downward'. If his will turns up to God, it is *conversio*, if downward, it is *aversio* or *perversio*" (Kuntz 43). Later on, theologians and church fathers like Pierre Abelard, Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and John Duns Scotus commented on and discussed the subject and helped the notion to firmly establish itself in the medieval conception. The outcome "was the conception of the plan and structure of the world which, through the Middle Ages and down to the late eighteenth century, many philosophers, most men of science, and, indeed, most educated men, were to accept without question" (Lovejoy 59). The idea was one of the most enduring worldviews of human perception and dominated religion, society, economy and culture. In fact, as C.S. Lewis observes "this Model of the Universe is a supremely medieval work of art, but that it is in a sense the central work, that in which most particular works were embedded, to which they constantly referred, from which they drew a great deal of their strength" (*The Discarded Image* 12).

In this study, Henryson employs the idea of the Great Chain of Being to present a useful analogy between humans who indulged in sinful activities and the animals that lack reason. By using the Great Chain of Being and placing it in the centre of *Morall Fabillis*, Robert Henryson already has "an implied judgement on human nature and behaviour. The animal world is a mirror-image of the world of men" (Gray 72) because Henryson believes that humans' "[s]aull with sensualitie / So fetterit is in presoun corporall" (ll. 1629-30) that "mony men in operatioun / Ar like to beistis in conditioun" (ll. 48-9). He reflects this attitude plainly, but as Gopen rightly observes, "we are unaccustomed to such unvarnished moral preaching in modern literature [so that] we are in danger of not taking him at his word" (Introduction 12-13). In this respect, as it has been indicated above, Robert Henryson gives equal importance to the narrative part as well as the moral part of the fable. In doing so, he creates characters in the narrative part that convey the predicament of humankind. Hence, in this thesis it is argued that instead of simply drawing conclusions from the actions of animals veiled thinly as humans which correspond to the traditional animal-like characters of Aesop, Henryson introduces two more categories. The first category contains characteristics from both humans and animals which playfully display "the consequences of the denial of nobler human qualities [and offers] – a world of lust, appetite, and selfish desires in which human and animal concerns merge" (Ebin 59). The second category reverses the fable tradition by depicting corrupt humans as animals. These two additional character types are the contributions of Henryson to the Aesopic fable tradition. Thus, by constructing a deliberate arrangement among the fables containing characters that are essentially animal, Henryson intends to show how human beings downgrade themselves to the level of animals and become indistinguishable from them.

In this regard, although there have been attempts at arranging *Morall Fabillis* as a meaningful and a unified whole by various scholars such as George D. Gopen, Philippa M. Bright and Lois A. Ebin, for the first time in this thesis, a character based arrangement of the work will be undertaken. This study's arrangement, just like the other arrangements of Gopen, Ebin or Bright, percieves the seventh tale as the central fable whose centrality will be analysed in detail in the second chapter. In the first part, after the first two fables that contain animal characters, there occurs a transition to

hybrid characters in the third, fourth and fifth fables which feature a distinctive central character, a wily fox that ties these three tales together. The sixth fable contains human characters under the thin masks of animals and presents us the idea that the world we live in is as brutal and as cruel as those of animals. With the sixth fable, the first cycle of transition from the animal to hybrid and then to the human is complete. In the second part, the fable with human-like characters is placed at the centre. One fable with hybrid characters is located before and after this central fable. The fables with animal-like characters are placed on the two opposite ends of the diagram thus, making it a unified whole again by opening and ending with fables that contain animal-like characters. If this arrangement was to be illustrated with a diagram it would be as shown below:



This arrangement mirrors a consistent representation of Henryson's design in *Morall Fabillis*. First and foremost, the arrangement of these fables conveys the concept of the inbetween condition of human beings in a convenient way so that as character types traverse from animal-like to human-like in an ascending and descending order, the idea of the Great Chain of Being is invoked. Therefore, the arrangement is an indication of Henryson's intention to create a unified work. Secondly, another indication of Henryson's work as a unified whole is the fact that unlike the fable collections of Marie de France, Odo of Cheriton, Gualterus Anglicus or Berechiah ben Natronai, Robert Henryson renders only a small amount of fables that correspond with the main theme of his work. Thirdly, Henryson also unites these fables with different character types under the common themes of moral blindness and succumbing to appetite which implies the

intermediary nature of human beings so that when humans indulge in vices and carnal appetites, they do not differ from animals to a great extent.

As for the distinctive qualities of these characters, it would be illuminating to start with the way Henryson starts his fables so that first of all, the animal-like characters will be analysed. The fables that contain animal-like characters are "The Cock and the Jasp", "The Two Mice", The Lion and the Mouse", "The Preaching of the Swallow", The Wolf and the Lamb" and "The Paddock and the Mouse". These characters in these fables keep their bestiality in size and shape except for the speech quality bestowed to them by the genre itself. In their respective fables, their manners and reactions are similar to those of a real-life animal. Hence, even if they are able to speak, they do not interact with human beings in the fables, but strictly keep their conversation ability to their own kind. Thus, if there is an occasion when humans are present, they immediately return to their bestiality. Their major quality as animals is that they lack reason and as a result, they do not learn from their mistakes, which causes them to make the same mistakes over and over again. Robert Henryson's main reason in employing this type of characters is to show that humans have the capacity to learn from their mistakes with their rationality unlike these animals that lack reason so that reading these animals' stories should guide the reader not to repeat the same mistakes these animals make. Usually the fables that contain these characters deal with unrestrained appetite and a tendency to fall for their carnal urges which further emphasises their animality.

The second category is the hybrid characters. These characters have qualities pertaining both to humans and animals in their embodiments. They are witty and actually more intelligent than the previous animal-like category, but still they have animal carnality that tempts them to follow their appetites, and contrive foul play, which leads them to their downfall eventually. In a mocking way, Henryson makes these characters imitate human beings with their gestures, dresses and manners, but it is obvious that these actions do not fit them and at the end of the day, one way or the other, they display their animality by succumbing to their animal appetites. In the fables, they may or may not interact with human beings, but their bestiality is overtly apparent under such a circumstance. This type generally features in the light-hearted fables such as "The Cock

and the Fox", "The Fox and the Wolf", The Trial of the Fox", "The Fox the Wolf and the Cadger" and "The Wolf and the Wether" as if to display such a mixture's overtly comic overtones. They also become a kind of experiment for Henryson to show how chaotic the world would be if animals assumed the roles of humans and try to govern the man-made institutions. Additionally, it becomes a criticism towards humans for creating a world of sin, chaos, and corruption that could only be achieved by man's indulgence in sin. Similar to the previous group, Henryson addresses the issue of unrestrained appetite and moral blindness in these tales as well.

The third category includes human-like characters. The fables that contain these characters are "The Sheep and the Dog" and "The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman". The characters in this group, except for their overtly bestial physiognomy, are completely human. They act and behave in the way human beings would do. They interact with humans on equal terms, and humans are not surprised by their physical appearance since their appearances are only metaphoric representations of their characteristics. Henryson uses them as representations of humans indulging in vices. Hence, they become tools to display how people are indistinguishable from animals when they yield to their earthly desires. Their tone, as a result, is grimmer and darker than previously light-hearted tales and such a dichotomy of tone is established, purposefully, to imply that in a world that is governed with animal appetites, injustice would reign and cruelty dominate. Hence, in these fables, human notions of injustice and cruelty instead of yielding to carnality are the objects of criticism. Finally, it should be noted that these characters are not specific people who are being criticized but humankind in general.

To conclude, Robert Henryson's *Morall Fabillis* presents a valuable insight into the medieval understanding of the world. The work is moulded by the dominant concepts and notions of the Middle Ages. At first glance, his fable collection may seem traditional; however, his expansion of these Aesopic fables by adding character details, rhetoric, long dialogues and local colour quickly attracts the readers' attention and prompts the reader into suspecting that there is more than meets the eye. Subsequently, in this study, it is argued that Robert Henryson's formation of the three different

character types that are animal-like, hybrid and human-like situates the work's main theme of carnality in the narrative part so that the idea of humans' indulgence in their carnal appetites is also found in the narrative part. In addition, it is argued that Henryson derived his addition of hybrid and human-like characters from the concept of the Great Chain of Being and its notion that when humans neglect reason and abandon the will to avoid sin, they are not very different from animals. Thus, these characters present alternative ways of emphasising the moral parts' instigation of avoiding sin. It is also propounded that in *Morall Fabillis*, the arrangement of these fables and the characters in them reflect humans' inbetween condition and the gradational structure of the Great Chain of Being, and such a conscious arrangement also indicates Henryson's intenion of creating a unified work.

CHAPTER I: CYCLE OF ORDER: TALES BEGINNING FROM "THE COCK AND THE JASP" TO "THE SHEEP AND THE DOG"

1.1. ANIMALITY OF ANIMALS

The aim of the first chapter is to analyse animal-like, hybrid and human-like characters in the fables of "The Cock and the Jasp", "The Two Mice", "The Cock and the Fox", The Fox and the Wolf", "The Trial of the Fox" and "The Sheep and the Dog". It is argued that Henryson creates these characters and places them in an ascending order from the animal-like character types to the human-like character types which reminds the ascending order of the Great Chain of Being and which indicates Robert Henryson's conscious arrangement of these fables in order to make it a unified whole. In order to achieve such ascension, Robert Henryson begins *Morall Fabillis* with two fables which are of Aesopic fable origin. In addition, by commencing with "The Cock and the Jasp", which is from the Aesopic tradition, Henryson makes a traditional start with classic animal characters which helps the reader familiarise with the work. These characters, whose animal features are vividly described, their animal natures truly exposed and their animal "rationale" subtly mocked, are used so as to show the reader how to avoid making the same mistakes these characters make in the narrative parts. Henryson believes that "… we may haif knawlegeing / Off God almychtie, be his creatouris" (ll. 1650-51). Similarly, he reflects this notion in his animal characters in the fables so that we may learn lessons from their actions. He also utilises the common belief of the medieval period that animals lack reason and will, which cause them to "lufis ay carnall and foull delyte" (l. 51). For this reason, Henryson depicts the animal characters who are mostly indulged in their carnal appetites in various situations. What is more, animals tend to be frequently juxtaposed with humans in the fables which is a convenient way to emphasise their animality for Henryson so that such juxtaposition reveals how a human being can sometimes be similar in terms of her/his behaviours to animals or it can impart comic effect to the animals within the story.

1.1. 1. "The Cock and the Jasp"

Morall Fabillis opens with the fable of "The Cock and the Jasp" whose immediate source is Gualterus Anglicus's version of the fable (Kindrick, *Medieval Arts* 198). As it is stated at the end of the Prologue with the lines: "[a]nd to begin, first of ane cok he [Aesop] wrate, / Seikand his meit, quhilk fand ane iolie stone, / Of quhome the fabill ȝesall heir anone," (ll. 61-3) Robert Henryson subtly prepares the reader for the Cock's animality by referencing his habit of "seeking" (l. 62) his food. However, throughout the tale, Henryson manages to cover the ignorant nature of the Cock by constructing a façade to this apparently hungry Cock which persuades the reader into believing that he is actually very wise. However, even the line at the beginning of the tale demonstrates that for the Cock, "[t]o get his dennar set was al his cure;" (l. 67) which indicates an early manifestation of this animal's priority of having earthly needs over other things.

In the beginning of the tale, Henryson even includes the Cock to fable's play and makes the Cock conscious of his own animality. Upon discovering the gem, with an eloquent rhetoric, the Cock addresses the gem as "'O gentill Iasp, O riche and nobill thing, / Thocht I the find, thow ganis not for me; / Thow art ane iouell for ane lord or king" (ll. 79-81). In addition to this, throughout the tale, Henryson puts details of the Cock's animality in the fable; physical descriptions of the Cock like "feddram fresch" (l. 64) and the actions of a cock such as he "[f]leu furth vpon ane dunghill sone be day" (l. 66) or "[s]craipand amang the as be auenture" (l. 68) abounds in the opening of the tale. Then, at the end of the first stanza, while seeking food among the bushes "[h]e fand ane iolie iasp, richt precious," which "[w]es castin furth in sweping of the hous" (ll. 69-70).

The next stanza, however, takes the focus away from the Cock to the gem and the chambermaids who swept it carelessly into the bushes. In doing so, Henryson creates both similarity and dissimilarity between the Cock and these "damisellis wantoun and insolent" (l. 71). There is an apparent human/animal difference between the chambermaids and the Cock**,** yet Denton Fox accurately demonstrates that just like the Cock "they pay no attention (' tak na tent,' ' cair na thing') to a jewel of great value because they are entirely preoccupied with their animal appetites" ("Henryson's *Fables*"

342). They would oftentimes "play and on the streit be sene," so that "[…] swoping of the hous thay tak na tent" (ll. 72-3). Generally this is the reason why "[i]owellis ar tint, as oftymis hes bene sene, / Vpon the flure, and swopit furth anone. / Peraduenture, sa wes the samin stone" (ll. 75-7). However, it should be noted that the comparison, between the two does not elevate the Cock to the level of human but downgrades the damsels to the level of animal in terms of their indulgence in their bestial sides.

Turning back to the Cock, upon discovering the gem, the Cock addresses the precious stone in a very dignified way and says:

> 'It is pietie I suld the find, for quhy
> Thy grit vertew, nor ȝit thy cullour cleir,
> I may nouther extoll nor magnify,
> And thow to me may mak bot lyttill cheir;
> To grit lordis thocht thow be leif and deir,
> I lufe fer better thing of les auaill,
> As draf or corne to fill my tume intraill. (ll. 85-91)

After approximately thirty lines of pondering, the Cock comes to the conclusion that it is best to desert this "gentill Iasp" (l. 110). Henryson's placement of the Cock's speech just after the Damsels' careless swooping of the jasp seems to construct an analogy with "the wanton damsels […] which we read as implying that the Cock has a higher estimation of the jewel than they" (Gray 123) while, in fact, the case is far from that. The Cock's unexpectedly persuasive speculation generally surprises the reader and cajoles her/him to believe that the Cock, in fact, speaks in a very sensible way. Yet, such an explanation contradicts with the moral part's identification of the Cock as a fool. Many critics such as Kurt Witting have been puzzled by such a discrepancy and regarded the *moralitas* "as a surprise," (40) however, what Henryson is actually trying to point out is that the Cock is, in fact, a fool, an animal, indulging only in his appetite, and he is not different from the damsels in this respect. This idea is fittingly explained by Marshall Stearns who states that the Cock "deserts the jewel, [so that he] remain[s] true to the logic of his station in life, which the poet probably considered fitting and proper" (108). At first glance, it seems that the Cock understands the value of the stone and is saddened by the thought of its new residence since its real place is among the

lords and kings. However, just after these lines, it is immediately observed that the Cock's actual "lufe [was] fer better thing of les auaill, / As draf or corne to fill [his] tume intraill" (ll. 90-1) or "small wormis, or snaillis," (ll. 94). Henryson's insistence on demonstrating the details of the Cock's immanent bestiality, at this point, coincides with the Cock's justification of himself to the gem and causes him to say: "'Thow hes na corne, and thairof I had neid; / Thy cullour dois bot confort to the sicht, / And that is not aneuch my wame to feid," (ll. 99-101). Yet, it is visible from the Cock's words in these lines that he is, actually, solely attracted to the colour of the gem, a physical feature that implies the Cock's misunderstanding of the real meaning of the gem. Just like his only care is seeking food throughout the tale, he looks at the gem from the perspective of whether it is able to ease his appetite or not, and his conclusion is that it is not. This action signals the Cock's habit of taking things at face value and causing him to overlook the true meaning of the gem which is expounded in the *Moralitas* as having the properties of making "man stark and victorious; / Preseruis als fra cacis perrillous" and bringing "gude hap" (ll. 123-25).

In fact, the Cock is overconfident about the uselessness of the gem to the point that he bids the gem to "Rise […] of all stanis the flour, / Out of this fen, and pas quhar thow suld be; / Thow ganis not for me, nor I for the" (ll. 110-2). The Cock's three rhetorical questions are also an indication of this attitude:

> 'Quhar suld thow mak thy habitatioun?
> Quhar suld thow duell, not in ane royall tour?
> Quhar suld thow sit, bot on ane kingis croun
> Exalt in worschip and in grit honour? (ll. 106-9)

For Ian Bishop, rhetorical questions "are often employed as a substitute for thought, or as counters in the game of persuading others […] to accept a position already arrived at through prejudice or self-interest" (476). Accordingly, the Cock also has a preconceived stance against the gem while asking these rhetorical questions since he already claims to know that it should be on a king's crown. He admires the gem superficially and in reality "regards it as a useless nuisance; he does not wish to accept the responsibility for disposing this thing which the carelessness of the housemaids has swept into his

domain" (Bishop 477). As a result, he believes that he has done the right thing by deserting "this iowell law vpon the ground," and goes "[t]o seik his meit" (ll. 113-4).

In the moral part, Henryson is aware of the function of the jasp and its place in the lapidaries so that he enumerates the seven properties of the jasp that the cock ignores. The jasp's quality as the "lorde iaspe … [which] kepeth a mane fro his aduersaire. Who-so bereth hit he shal lede clene life" (Evan and Serjeanstson 23) is reflected on the lines of Henryson who similarly argues that the one who holds the jasp is "[p]reseruis als fra cacis perrillous" (l. 124). However, Henryson stresses the more important aspect of the jasp that is "perfite prudence and cunning," (l. 128) which makes men "[h]appie, and stark to haif the victorie / Of all vicis and spirituall enemie" (l. 132-3). Then, he underlines the importance of knowledge by devoting an entire stanza to the concept which stresses that "[t]o mannis saull it [knowledge] is eternall meit" (l. 140). The extract's emphasis on knowledge as man's ideal food hints at the generic juxtaposition between human and animal as in the tale part in which Henryson chooses an animal seeking his food. Therefore, the Cock in the fable, as Stephen Khinoy also agrees, is "a real rooster who really lives on a barnyard dunghill and eats worms" (102) and out of his animality, he is destined to ignore the gem, follow his own appetite and "desyrand mair the sempill corne" (l. 141). It is his unchanging station in life that directs him to behave this way whereas humans have the capacity to break out of their instinctual tendencies and better evaluate what is present to them.

This is indicated by Henryson's equation of man's ideal food with knowledge which is a thing that could only be gained by exercising intellectual capacity that is lacking in animals and which enables man to appreciate the real value of the gem. It is also argued in the medieval lapidaries that in order to have this green gem you need to have "feith of Ihesu Xrist haue mynde" (Evan and Serjeanstson 24). Therefore, Henryson does not actually condemn the Cock for rejecting the gem because that is what is actually expected from him to do, but he condemns first and foremost humans "[q]uhilk at science [knowledge] makis bot ane moik and scorne," (l. 143) and depart from the path of Jesus Christ. As a result, Henryson establishes a reverse equation and pairs those men with ordinary animals who follow their earthly desires instead of gaining "science",

"prudence" or "cunning". Therefore, the Cock, in the fable, may have the disadvantage of grasping and learning the desired lesson because of its nature and for this reason, Henryson leaves the Cock without making him hear the *moralitas* as he does not believe that the Cock could learn anything, but the criticism is directed to those "fools" who neglect taking any advice and downgrade themselves to the level of animals. Henryson criticises them because he believes that humans naturally possess the capacity to learn from their mistakes and if they seek their ideal food, that is, knowledge, they will satisfy themselves and can elevate themselves from the level of animals to angelic beings. It is also because of this reason that "its [fable's] lesson is learned only in the *moralitas*, and by the audience, not by its protagonist" (Greentree, *Reader* 14).

Robert Henryson intentionally selects the tale of "The Cock and the Jasp" as the first tale in the work due to "its direct applicability to the reader and to the experience of reading fables" (Gopen, Introduction 14). In addition to that, the tale helps him to establish the infrastructure of the whole of *Morall Fabillis* and allows him to comment on the three major concerns that Henryson wants to point out throughout *Morall Fabillis*. First of all, by placing a tale with a surprising moral at the beginning of the work, Robert Henryson proves that he is serious in stating that only by labouring with great diligence there "springis thair ane morall sweit sentence / Oute of the subtell dyte of poetry (ll. 12-3). He is an author who communicates with his readers and invites them to participate in his creation. The final line of the first fable, therefore, addresses directly the audience: "Ga seik the iasp, quha will, for thair it lay" (161). Thus, it becomes a kind of encouragement for the reader to find true wisdom in both this text and real life by continually seeking knowledge and wisdom. As David Benson states that "the first fable initiates the reader into the difficulty of achieving true wisdom, which is always 'tynt and hid' (l. 155). To be truly possessed, wisdom must not be merely passively accepted but actively and continually striven for" (219). For this reason, Robert Henryson hints at the inherent wisdom his work suggests and invites the reader to decipher these messages. Moreover, the reason why he appeals only to the audience but spares the Cock is because humans are the only beings that have the potential to acquire wisdom through their reasoning, the Cock, however, becomes

nothing more than "a pompous, comic figure" (Bright, "Figurative Technique" 17) with his feigned reasoning.

Secondly, in "The Cock and the Jasp", the Cock's "preference for food instead of the jewel is framed by the tale and its *moralitas* in terms of carnality as opposed to reason" (McKenna 492). This duality, however, ironically draws its strength from the relatively forsaken condition of the latter one at Henryson's time since the author states that medieval people "seik it [knowledge] nocht, nor preis it for to find" (l. 156). The world is now overcrowded with "ignorants, that vnderstandis nocht / Quhilk is sa nobill, sa precious, and sa ding" (ll. 149-150). As a result, he pairs these "fule[s]" with animals to show that actually when we forsake our intellectual capacity, we are no better than these animals.

Thirdly, the tale becomes the ideal example of how Robert Henryson employs the concept of "figure" in *Morall Fabillis*. The Cock, in the tale, acquires its own identity as an animal character. Accordingly, the irrational actions caused by these characters' bestial desires and their corrupt characteristics remain in the tale part functioning as a kind of warning to the reader, and reflect the current state of humanity and the way of the world when we "moik and scorne" (l. 143) reason. The *moralitas*, however, is directed to the audience reminding them that these characters behave just like sinful humans neglecting their reason, and this designates Henryson's overall point in an explicit way.

1.1. 2. "The Two Mice"

"The Two Mice" also known as the "Taill of the Uponlandis Mous and the Burges Mous" is the second fable of the work which tells the story of a city mouse and a country mouse and their hospitality to one another in their respective abodes. Robert Kindrick argues that "[t]he relative separation in social status and well-being of the two mice, the invitation to dine, the *sentence*, the elements of the *moralitas* and the appearance of the cat to interrupt the feast" suggests Odo of Chariton as the source of this fable (*Medieval Arts* 71). Still, Robert Henryson's own touches of detail transform

this popular fable into a piece of work that contains social, religious and economic criticism and advice for the readers.

The fable presents a vivid depiction of the two mice: the eldest one "duelt in ane borous toun;" (l.164) as a "fre burges" (l. 172) and "[t]he vther wynnit vponland weill neirr," (l. 165) living "soliter" (l. 166) like an "owtlawis dois" (l. 168) and suffering "hunger," and "cauld" (l. 170). These depictions pose a convenient analogy about the poor villagers in the uplands of Scotland and the prosperous city tradesmen in the cities. As Robert Kindrick argues the life of the country mouse "reflects some of the facts of the living conditions of the peasant classes … [and] the Burgess Mouse' life reflects the … rise of middle classes" ("Lion or Cat" 125). The relationship between the two mice as sisters, which is a detail that did not exist in the former versions, establishes a connection between the two communities of the Highland and Lowland and becomes a criticism for the two parties. Reading the text from this perspective is by no means inappropriate since as a Scottih "makar" Henryson provides several layers of meaning in his works, and he would not and did not miss the opportunity of presenting social commentary as a "makar" whose deep "interest in the plight of the common man" (Wood 17) was obviously felt by his choice of the subject matters in his works. However, Henryson does not put much stress on the dichotomy of villagers as opposed to city burgesses living in Scotland. The point is not elaborated enough other than the word play of "burgh" (l. 171) which *OED* defines as "a town in Scotland possessing a charter" and "burges" (l. 172) as "[a]n inhabitant of a borough" as well as the meaning in Henryson's time which denotes "a privileged trading community, established by the king" (Barrel 33). However, the real concern of the *moralitas*, as it is asserted by John MacQueen, deals "with gluttony" (*Robert Henryson* 123-4) and being "content with small possessioun" (l. 372) rather than having socio-political overtones. In addition, in the *moralitas*, Robert Henryson, again, addresses the reader and calls her/him as "[f]reindis" and urges her/him to "tak heid / In this fabill ane gude moralitie" (ll. 365-66). In this manner, Henryson distances the reader from the fable again and in so doing prompts the reader to observe the characters' mistakes and learn from them. Similar to the Cock, in the first fable, these two mice do not and cannot learn from their mistakes. John MacQueen explains the reason of this: their "god is their belly" (*Full with*

Numbers 106). However, Henryson believes that those "quha culd it weill apply" (l. 14) with their reasoning and intellectual capacity could actually learn that a "merry hart with small possessioun" (l. 388) is the best thing in the world.

In order to emphasise the theme of the *moralitas,* Henryson even alters the ending of the fable to underline the point of these two mice's animality. Douglas Gray does not fail to recognise that "Henryson's version [of the fable] is unusual in having two climaxes, two interruptions to the dinner" (Gray 92). The first one is by "[t]he spenser" who "come[s] with keyis in his hand" (l. 293) and opens the cupboard finding them eating. In this scene, their animality becomes overtly apparent when they run off on their own in terror trying to save their lives. The city mouse "had ane hole, and in scho gois," (l. 297) but the country mouse, having no hole to escape to, feels extreme "dreid […] fell in swoun near deid" (l. 301). Luckily, the spenser did not have time to "seik nor serche, to char nor chace," (l. 304) but goes about his own business, leaving "the dure [door] vp wyde" (l. 305) thus "making the entry of the cat possible" (MacQueen, *Robert Henryson* 123-4). Henryson subtly but effectively uses "this incident as [a] foreshadowing [which] heightens the drama when, later in the poem, the two mice must deal with the more serious threat posed by the cat" (Kindrick, *Medieval Arts* 74).

I.W.A Jamieson holds the same opinion with Robert Kindrick about the source of this fable being Odo of Cheriton's "The House Mouse and the Field Mouse" because only in this fable and in Odo's follower, John of Sheppy's, there is a cat character not a spenser (78). In this regard, Robert Henryson's additional details seem to have the function of strengthening the moral. Other versions of this fable in the Middle Ages finalise the story by introducing only the cat or the spenser threatening the lives of the mice and having the country mouse, but not the city mouse, come to the realisation that enjoying simple life without dread is a style of living that should be sought after rather than living in constant fear while having luxury. Initially, Henryson directs the reader to assume that the country mouse has come to the same realisation like the mice in other versions for she responds negatively to the city mouse's pleas to continue their dinner: "'I may not eit, sa sair I am agast. / I had leuer thir fourty dayis fast" (ll. 319-20). Yet, immediately after that, it becomes evident that this mouse is not different than the others

as she is persuaded by the city mouse "[w]ith fair tretie" (l. 323) so that "to the burde thay went and togidder sat" (l. 324) and begin to eat. Such an alteration indicates Henryson's astute choice of presenting the carnality of these mice and demonstrating how easily they can be subjects to their carnal desires and make irrational choices.

Henryson is quick to display the country mouse's wrong descision since as they begin eating, "in come[s] Gib Hunter, our iolie cat," (l. 326) and once again the fable's fantastic setting is transformed into a natural setting. In this scene, Henryson presents a vivid depiction of the condition of the mice when they encounter with the cat which becomes humorous but at the same time violent. The city mouse ran to "hir hole" just like a "fyre of flint," (l. 328) but the country mouse, this time, was caught by the cat:

> Fra fute to fute he kest hir to and fra,
> Quhylis vp, quhylis doun, als tait as ony kid.
> Quhylis wald he lat hir rin vnder the stra;
> Quhylis wald he wink, and play with hir buk heid;
> Thus to the selie mous grit pane he did; (ll. 330-34)

Henryson depicts the scene with clarity and with a touch of natural brutality that is expected from a cat that has just caught a mouse. The mouse's minute stature compared to the cat's relatively enormous size and the cat's playing with this "selie" mouse underlines these animals' natural brutality quite clearly. Luckily, the mouse escapes from the paws of the cat, and without giving the city mouse a chance to persuade her this time, the country mouse bids the city mouse farewell. However, even her farewell words hint at her susceptibility to carnal desires as she contends: "[t]hy mangerie [meal] is mingit all with cair / Thy guse is gude, thy gansell [garlic sauce] sour as gall" (ll. 344-5). All in all, she manages to leave her sister and goes to the countryside with the implication that she, as an animal, did come to the realisation of the perils she was in, but did not learn fully from her actions in the fable. She escapes from her sister's place because there is the immediate danger of a cat. It is shown that she can easily be seduced by the city mouse even though she has just been intimidated by the spenser and the cat. In order to continue this sense of feeling, Henryson, alters the ending by leaving it ambigious and not commenting whether the country mouse realised the moral message or not as he states "I can not tell how eftirwart scho fure, / Bot I hard say scho

passit to hir den" (ll. 357-58). The reader is again addressed in the *moralitas* because similar to "The Cock and the Jasp", these animal characters do not have the rational capacity to evaluate the condition they are in according to Robert Henryson. The reader who seeks wisdom could, on the other hand, learn from the *moralitas* that "[b]lissed be sempill lyfe withoutin dreid; / Blissed be sober feist in quietie. / Quha hes aneuch, of na mair hes he neid" (ll. 373-5) since Henryson expects the reader to have at least enough logic to learn from this event.

Compared to the first fable, "The Cock and the Jasp" which is "tragic, or tragic in its implications for the real subject [that is] man … ['The Two Mice'] is comic" (McDiarmid 65). The comedy in "The Two Mice" mainly arises from the mixture of human-animal details as well as the discrepancy between the two. For example, George D. Gopen argues that "[w]hen the City Mouse tells her sister that 'the crumbs I leave behind on my plate are equal to your whole expense,' (Stanza 36) she is unaware that for a real mouse crumbs might well suffice for an entire meal" (Introduction 10). In the city mouse's cupboard, these mice mimic a lord's meal with "[m]uttoun and beif, striking in tailȝeis greit" (l. 270) only with the exception that "thay drank the watter cleir / In steid off wyne" (l. 272-3) or when the city mouse decides to visit her sister's place in the country she goes "[b]airfute allone, with pykestaf in hir hand / As pure pylgryme" (l. 180-1). Henryson creates comic images but at the same time prepares the ground for the *moralitas*' main point. These two mice, being animals, endeavour to mimic something which they will never be able to attain because of their positions in the Great Chain of Being. As a result, their endeavour becomes "all the more rollicking here because [they are tiny mice] that live in a world of pretence" (Witting 48). Introduction of the spenser, in this regard, affirms these two character's animality by having a scene in which these two beings are juxtaposed which is functional in the sense that this scene reveals the carnality of the country mouse. In this regard, Robert Henryson displays the animality of these two mice to the reader since they are continually falling for their animal appetites. However, he knows that humans have the capacity to restrain these urges so that he demands from the reader to take example from the bad sides of these animals and not to desire more than what you have, but be grateful with a "sempill lyfe withoutin dreid" (l. 373). Hence, these two fables and the

animal-like characters in it become tools for Robert Henryson to display the rational dissimilarity of these animals with humans. Thus, they become a warning for humans to avoid continuously seeking carnal pleasures.

1.2. ANIMALITY OF HUMANS OR HUMANITY OF ANIMALS

The incongruity of human details in these bestial creatures in "The Two Mice" invokes comedy and also prepares the way for Henryson's increase of the level of human-animal mixture in the following three loosely connected fables which are namely "The Cock and the Fox", "The Fox and the Wolf" and "The Trial of the Fox" and whose immediate source is *Roman de Renart* (Mann 267). "The Two Mice" is Aesopic in its origin, yet, Robert Henryson provides in this fable "concrete and picturesque detail, seasonal descriptions, lengthy dialogues which brilliantly capture the varying tones of human speech, and rhetorical embellishment of every kind" whose epitome is *Roman de Renart* (Mann 267). It can be observed that Henryson's overall work is highly influenced by the beast epic tradition. In this regard, Douglas Gray presumes that Henryson is "[p]erhaps encouraged by his knowledge of a French *Isopet* and of the *Roman de Renart*, [thus] he has expanded them, and transformed them into *contes* or miniature short stories" (82). Conversely, Henryson reshapes these verbose Reynardian tales by conforming them to the fable genre by implementing "a harsh physical reality that imposes on it the closure characteristics of fable" (Mann 281) and also by supplementing a *moralitas* that is not present in the original beast epics. The result becomes a narrative composition which Henryson calls as "fabill" (l. 413). For this reason the tales that are of Reynardian origin will be referred to as fables in this thesis as well.

The following three fables are unique in *Morall Fabillis* as Henryson "combine[s] a number of tales derived from the beast-epic of Reynard the Fox. Three of these are united to form a miniature epic, which in the Bannatyne manuscript is entitled *The Tod* (*The Fox*)" (MacQueen, *Historical Novel* 283). In these fables, the transition from the distinctly animal characters to hybrid characters occurs smoothly. "The Cock and the Fox" contains a fox whose existence extends to "The Fox and the Wolf" but is killed at the end of the fable. However, his son takes over the tale in the fifth fable, "The Trial of

the Fox", beginning with a disposal scene in which the son throws his father's corpse remaining from the previous fable into the river, thereby connecting the fable with the previous one.

In these fables, Henryson relies heavily on the traditional Reynardian depiction of characters in which "an animal kingdom of the feudal kind [which] is ruled by a lion-king" holds the other characters as his subjects in a similar fashion to the medieval class system (Varty, Introduction xiv). Hence, these characters acquire a different character formation from the first two fables of animal characters. Henryson often leaves their depiction ambigious in order to make it hard for the reader whether they are animal or human. In addition, he depicts these characters as desiring to imitate human habits by donning human clothes, saluting and addressing each other in the manner of humans or holding parliaments, and although they are shown as wittier than the first category, they have the irrational urge to fall for their animal appetites. This incongruity and their aspiration to something which they are not are the main issues that render them all the more humorous. As a result, this character type becomes an experimental figure for Henryson that could only be created in a fictional work. Thus, forming a type whose qualities come from the polar ends allows Henryson to comment on a fantastic situation where animals at least attempt to live according to reason eventhough they fail to do so. Secondly, Henryson depicts a humorous but chaotic possibility of how human lives would be if humans indulged in their animal instincts within this civilisation that they have so long encumbered to build.

1.2. 1. "The Cock and the Fox"

As mentioned above, the following three tales have a loose connection with one another similar to the Reynardian beast epic tradition, yet although the manner is Reynardian that does not lead to the conclusion "that their direct source was the *Roman de Renart*" (Mann 265). Jill Mann compiles all the information related to the sources of these three fables from other scholars namely, Donald MacDonald, Paull F. Baum, I.W.A Jameison, Marienne Powell and Arthur R. Diebler and offers her own conclusions about the sources of these three fables. As a result, Mann argues that "The Cock and the Fox"

is "more likely to have been based on Chaucer's *Nun's Priest Tale* than on Branch II of the *Renart*" (265). "The Fox and the Wolf" contains the "comic re-labelling of a kid as salmon which follows the confession does not appear in the French Reynard cycle; rather it has antecedents in Mardie de France and the Latin tradition" (265). "The Trial of the Fox" has a general story that has "parallels in Branch I of the *Renart*, but the trick by means of which the mare manages to brain the wolf with her hoof has analogues in the fable tradition as well as in beast epic" (265-66). Thus, it can be observed that these tales have their own distinct sources from which Robert Henryson brings them together. Henryson's choice of combining these three fables from various sources indicates his intention of creating a unified whole within the work in which the characters move from one polar side, that is, animal to another, that is, human. In this fable, the transition from the animal towards the human becomes distinctly apparent from the very beginning. Henryson's version of the fable, which is 216 lines, is relatively more concise than Chaucer's *Nun's Priest's Tale*, which is 626 lines. Still, although Henryson has more limited space, as Kindrick also draws attention, he starts his fable with a digression about the traits of beasts excerpted from Aristotle (*Medieval Arts* 86):

> Thocht brutall beistis be irrationall,
> That is to say, wantand discretioun,
> 3yt ilk ane in thair kyndis naturall
> Hes mony diuers inclinatioun:
> The bair busteous, the volff, the wylde lyoun,
> The fox fenȝeit, craftie and cawtelows, (ll. 397-402)

The choice of beginning the fable with this extract is significant in that Henryson implies "an overlap of the human and the animal world: the animals are seen as having human characteristics although they lack human complexity" (Mann, Introduction 30). These animals have inclinations towards their own natural instincts, and these instincts reveal some characteristics that can be associated with humans for Robert Henryson. In fact, in the Middle Ages, the thin line that separates the human from the animal is the will that humans have so as to avoid temptation and committing sins. In this regard, Thomas Aquinas attributed "animal behaviour to a natural tendency or instinct" (Sobol 120) and after that he added:

> Humans, too, lived under the influence of various kinds of instinct. An *instinctus diaboli* could drive humans to sin. But while humans possess the free will to resist an instigation toward sin, animals are completely controlled by their instincts. Any apparent wisdom or prudence in animal behaviour is simply a manifestation of God's creative genius, just as a clock reflects the creative genius of its human builder. (qtd. in Sobol 120)

This viewpoint combined with the mock-epic tradition of Reynardian tales helps Henryson to create characters that possess both animal and human qualities and ultimately yield to their natural instincts and commit sins. Besides, as Douglas Gray states, out of these characters, Henryson satirises and "build[s] up larger ironies extending beyond the vanishing form of the unfortunate Chantecleir [for example] to wider questions of husbands and hypocrisy" (94).

The first hybrid character to be introduced after the poor widow, who dwells in a village, is the cock, Chantecleir. He seems very similar to the barnyard Cock in the first fable, "The Cock and the Jasp", but in this fable Henryson's depiction of the cock "is minimal … [which signifies that the] tale concerns the human qualities which he represents, and these [are] clearly and delightfully exposed" (Greentree, *Reader* 12). Therefore, Henryson just comments on the cock as "iolie" and "courageous" (ll. 415-16). The same manner of minimalism is also applied to the description of the fox as "craftie and cautelous (cunning)" (l. 420). These descriptive adjectives that are normally applicable only to humans signify Robert Henryson's intention of changing from animal-oriented characters to the type of characters that are more mixed in nature even to the point of humanised creatures disregarding their animal bodies.

Henryson further emphasises this mixture by naming these animals as "Chantecleir" and "Lowrence". Although these names have almost become generic in literature, still naming these characters differentiates them from the other animals of their kind and gives them an identity, a certain kind of uniqueness. Especially, by changing the traditional name of the fox from Reynard to Lowrence, Robert Henryson ascribes a touch of Scottish identitiy to the fox character and makes the fable all the more amusing and familiar to the Scottish reader. Henryson also makes them address each other with their unique names like Lowrence who salutes Chantecleir as "'Gude morne, my

maister, gentill Chantecleir!'" (l. 434) just before contriving to catch him. Yet, Henryson also presents them occupied with animal activity as in the example of Chantecleir who "crew befoir the day" (l. 417) or Lowrence who does "… grit violence / In pyking off pultrie baith day and nicht" (ll. 422-23). Animal and human mixture, in the fable, however, reaches its climax in the scene when Lowrence sees Chantecleir at dawn and thinks "[b]e quhat menis he micht this cok begyle" (l. 431) and decides to attract Chantecleir's attention by making a cross statement:

> 'Wald I not serue (serve) to ȝow, it wer but blame,
> As I haue done to ȝowr progenitouris.
> ȝour father oft fulfillit hes my wame,
> And send me meit fra midding to the muris:
> And at his end (death) I did my besie curis
> To hald his heid and gif him drinkis warme;
> Syne at the last, the sweit swelt (died) in my arme.' (ll. 439-445)

Henryson constructs a witty speech for Lowrence that could simultaneously mean the exact opposite according to the animal or human perspective which displays Henryson's craft in blurring the line between the human and animal. This scene can be marked as a checkpoint in Henryson's shift from the animal to the hybrid characters. From this point on, these characters begin to show failings that pertain to humans: Chantecleir displays vainglory and pride, Lowrence displays deception and Chantecleir's wives, Pertok, Sprutok and Cuppok display hypocrisy and infidelity. On the other hand, they continue to yield to their own natural instincts. Thus, the incongruity between the two statuses generates a somewhat comic tone in the three consecutive fables. Douglas Gray who perceives some characters as more animal and some more human states that

> On the animal side of the animal-human relationship there is a good deal of determinism – the creatures as animals tend to act according to their 'kind' (the cock wants its dinner, and the little mouse is desperate to reach the food on the other side of the water), but in their more human roles they make rational or irrational choices (Chantecleir decides to sing in the way he wants him to, and the wether decides to forsake its 'kind' and become a dog). (139)

Chantecleir, however, does not believe that Lowrence is an acquaintance of his father and retorts only with a "leuch" (l. 446). Lowrence, on the other hand, understands that his insistence on how he and his father were close together or his flattery on his physical features would be of no avail and changes his strategy as he perceives that Chantecleir's real weaknesses are pride and vainglory. Indeed, only after Lowrence compares him to his father and says that Chantecleir has

> … changit and degenerate
> Fra [his] father and his conditioun
> Off craftie crawing he micht beir the croun,
> For he wald on his tais stand and craw.
> This is na le; I stude beside and saw.' (ll. 462-6)

These words encourage Chantecleir and immediately he "[k]est vp his beik, and sang with all his micht" (l. 468). It is a scene in which, as John MacQueen puts it, "[t]he shallowness of the cock is revealed by his false pride, his determination to outdo the deeds of his ancestors and avoid degeneracy. It is this that leaves him open to the fox's sudden assault" (*Full with Numbers* 209). Lowrence's assault, in this regard, comes suddenly but does not happen at his first try since he knows that Chantecleir is under his control now. Henryson makes additions to the source, and in this instance, he raises the suspense by making the fox admit Chantecleir's effort by saying that his father "wald, and haif na dout, / Baith wink, and craw, and turne him thryis about" (ll. 472-3) (Gray 93-4). Similar to the fable, "The Two Mice", Henryson employs two climaxes so as to show that the character is in the wrong. In this instance, however, Lowrence "wes war (ready), and hint him be the throte" (l. 480).

Right after the abduction of Chantecleir, Robert Henryson introduces the three wives' viewpoints to the fable which is also an original contribution to the fable. The widow faints when she sees the cock being taken by the fox and during her swoon, the three hens begin to talk. Chantecleir's first wife, Pertok, mourns the loss saying "'Quha sall our lemman be? Quha sall vs leid? / Quhen we ar sad quha sall vnto vs sing? / With his sweit bill he wald brek vs the breid" (ll. 502-4). But the second wife, Sprutok, interrupts asking "[ȝ]e be to mad" (l. 510) and sings "'[w]es neuer widow sa gay!'" (l. (515) because she thinks he is not worth their sorrow as "'[h]e wes angry and held vs ay in

aw, / And woundit with the spear off ielowsy" (l. 516-7). To the reader's surprise; however, these words are met with complete affirmation by Pertok who, this time, states that he "[w]ald not suffice to slaik our [sexual] appetyte" (l. 526). In addition to these two wives, Coppok, defines what has happened to Chantecleir as "vengeance from the heuin" (l. 531) since he was "lecherous" (l. 532) and "[p]rydefull" (l. 536). The hypocrisy of Pertok as a wife feigning loyalty, who acts in the complete opposite way after being seconded by the two other wives, and their immediate harsh criticism of Chantecleir and their betrayal of him imply a criticism of married life in the human context in the narrative part of the fable.

In the meantime, the widow wakes up from her swoon and the hens return to their animality. Then, the widow calls her hounds to follow the fox. The hounds ran swiftly "… ouer the feildis flaw; / Full wichtlie thay throw wood and wateris went, / And ceissit not, schir Lourence quhill thay saw" (ll. 552-4). While the hounds close in on the fox, Lowrence invokes God and says "'God sen / That I and thow (Chantecleir) wer fairlie in my den'" (ll. 556-7). For this scene John MacQueen who places a particular emphasis on the subject of numerology in Henryson's works in his book *Complete and Full with Numbers* argues about the fox's plea and propounds that "23, the number of the stanza, represents vengeance on sinners. The fox makes a mistake when he invokes God for help in his nefarious enterprise. The prayer produces its effect, but it is the reverse of the fox's desire" (212). Therefore, in the beginning of the next stanza, Chantecleir speaks "with sum gude spirit inspyrit" (l. 558) and convinces Lowrence to turn back so that Chantecleir would tell the hounds that they had become friends. Lowrence, a trickster figure, is deceived "be menis richt meruelous, / For falset failȝeis ay at the latter end" (ll. 567-8) and when he stops and opens his mouth "[Chantecleir] braid (flew) vnto a bewch (branch)" (l. 570). Nevertheless, it should be noted that Chantecleir does not save himself by his own means, but he is saved through God's grace as hinted with the lines that he is "with sum gude spirit inspyrit" (l. 558). In the end, the Cock, "ouer the feildis tuke his flicht" (l. 584) disregarding the Fox's sweet words. For this reason, in the *moralitas*, Henryson likens Chantecleir to "proud men, woid and vaneglorious / Of kin and blude (both in nature and character), quhilk is presumpteous" (ll. 591-2). Lowrence is similarly likened "[t]o flatteraris with plesand wordis quhyte, / With fals mening and

mynd maist toxicate" (l. 601-2). However, it should be noted that Henryson *likens* these two characters to their respective counterparts in the human realm and does not directly associate the characters with proud or deceitful men. The animals may have inclinations which may display their submission to their appetites, but the real criticism is towards humans who are proud or/and deceitful. It is for this reason Henryson warns the reader that "[t]hir twa sinnis, flatterie and vaneglore, / Ar vennomous:" and urges "gude folk, [to] fle thame thairfoir!" (ll. 612-3).

1.2. 2. "The Fox and the Wolf"

Unique touches of Henryson's complex design are again present in the fable of "The Fox and the Wolf". In fact, it could be argued that this fable is Henryson's own creation since there are "two main actions, (1) the fox's confession to 'Freir Volff Waitskaith' and (2) the baptism of the kid … but they are not known to have been combined before Henryson" (Fox, *The Poems* 222). Henryson's intention is to put Lowrence in the complete wrong so that there will be no moral sympathy for him. He achieves this by bringing these two unrelated stories together as "there is the obvious connection that they both have at their centre the misuse of a sacrament" (Fox, *The Poems* 223).

The fable begins with Henryson's intrusion to connect the previous fable with "The Fox and the Wolf" by leaving "this vedow glaid" (l. 614) with Chantecleir and continuing with "the fatal auenture / And destenie that to this foxe befell" (ll. 616-7). Hence, right from the beginning, the aforementioned Fox's unfortunate destiny is implied, and it can be predicted why it is so. The dichotomy between carnality and spiritually is also suggested as the main theme, from the very beginning since Lowrence, now, is scared to go out "[a]ls long as leme or licht wes off the day / Bot bydand nicht full styll lurkand he lay" (ll. 619-20). Light has traditionally been associated with goodness whereas dark has been associated with carnality and evil. As Youngs and Harris point out this traditional assosications come from Genesis in which the "newly created world is described as formless, empty and covered in darkness. To this, God gave light and separated night from day … [and] it was light that was [considered] good" while the dark was considered bad (136). Thus, the traditional battle "between light and darkness

had a key role in the religious writings of influential thinkers of the medieval period" (Youngs and Harris 136). Robert Henryson also benefits from this traditional binary in depicting the inherent vice in Lowrence's character which will be further developed later in the fable. Hence, Henryson shows Lowrence shunning daylight "and it is only when the sun has set and Venus shows her 'lustye visage' that he ventures from his den" (*Morall Fabillis* 145).

In this fable, related with the carnal and spiritual binary, animal and human juxtaposition is developed in detail and placed at the centre when compared to the previous fables. As a natural consequence, the mixture between the animal and human is heightened by Henryson in this fable. This mixture is indicated in the beginning of the fable in the scene when Lowrence goes on a hill "[q]uhair he micht se the tuinkling sternis (stars) cleir" (l. 629). He studies "[t]hair cours and eik thair mouing in thair spheir" (l. 631) because of the fact that "[b]ut (without) astrolab, quadrant, or almanak, / Teichit off nature be instructioun, / The mouing off the heuin this tod can tak" (ll. 642-4) thanks to his "father, that send [him] to the lair (school)" (l. 648). He reads his destiny, and unless he mends his ways "[d]eid is reward off sin and schamefull end" (l. 653). For this reason, he decides to "seik sum confessour / And schryiff (absolve) [him] clene off all sinnis to this hour" (ll. 654-55). The depiction of a fox having the knowledge about the position of planets, deducing his own fate and taking action to counteract the predicament of his death actually function as a humorous effect to the fable since only humans could undertake such actions in reality. However, as much as it is humorous, it also contains a carnal implication of misdeed in itself: Lowrence, according to R. J. Lyall, clearly "misunderstands the purpose of penance, which is to put the soul in a better state of preparedness for death rather than to delay the moment of death's occurrence" ("The Hens and the Pelagian Fox" 90). Thus, he reveals his own self-centeredness which is depicted in detail in the next stanza as he pities the likes of him, thieves, and says "[i]n dread and schame our dayis we indure, / Syne ' Widdineck' and 'Crakraip' callit als, / And till our hyre ar hangit be the hals" (ll. 660-2). In this scene, as John MacQueen points out rightly, theft is regarded by Lowrence as "an ordinary honest trade pursued under conditions of unusual difficulty" (*Robert Henryson* 147). Lowrence's deluded perception of the world results in an "astrologically inspired

panic leading to his own confession [that] was for his own future safety and did not involve any repentance for earlier evil deeds" (MacQueen, *Full with Numbers* 218). His deluded perception of the concepts like theft and his misunderstanding of religion, in fact, come from his innate animality and could be excused, yet comedy arising from this discrepancy becomes gravely tragic for humans who behave like Lowrence in real life. This double-sidedness in the narrative part of the fable is created by Henryson intentionally so that the reader simultaneously could experience the "comic" adventures that befall the character and deliberate on the "tragic" condition of the human kind when subjected to his earthly desires. The depiction of Lowrence is very vivid and human-like as well as animal-like and consequently, the reader suspends her/his disbelief and follows his false logic in trying to save his life.

Lowrence, in the meantime, looks about and sees a friar that suits his desire of repentence. The introduction of the wolf having the complex mixture of human and animal within himself as "Freir Volff Waitskaith" enhances this tragic-comic situation. This mixture is visibly manifested in the depiction of the wolf in the attire of a friar who has "bair feit," (l. 679) "lene cheik" and "paill and pietious face" (l. 680). Henryson blurs the boundary between a vicious animal and a churchman so that such a mingling of worldliness with spirituality, animality with humanity helps Robert Henryson to imply the corrupt nature of the Friar Wolf from the very beginning.

Lowrence goes to this Friar and asks for penance, however, when the Friar asks if he is "contrite and sorie in [his] spreit, (spirit)" (l. (698) Lowrence answers quite blankly saying "'Na, schir, I can not duid / Me think that hennis ar sa honie sweit, / And lambes flesche that new ar letting bluid" (ll. 699-701). After this, the Friar asks whether he will "forbear in tyme to cum, and mend?" (l. 706) Lowrence pleads: "[a]nd I forbear, how sall I leif, allace, / Haifand nane vther craft me to defend? / Neid causis me to steill quhair euer I wend" (ll. 707-9). Moreover, to the Friar's question of whether he would be willing to suffer for his sins, Lowrence again answers with a negative response saying that he is "siekly and waik," (l. 716) but he could, if "not greuand (harmful) to [his] tendernes, / Tak part off pane (penance), fulfil it gif (if) [he] micht, / To set [his] selie saull in way off grace'" (ll. 720-722). Overlooking Lowrence's past answers, the

Friar Wolf, quickly, urges Lowrence, this time, to refrain from eating "flesch vntill Pasche (Easter) / To tame this corps, that cursit carioun, / And heir I reik (grant) the full remissioun" (ll. 723-5). Even the Friar grants Lowrence permission to eat "heid, or feit, or panchis (paunch) (l. 728) in case of extreme need since he knows quite well from his own experience that "neid may haif na law" (731).

It becomes obvious that the Frair Wolf is a figure of satire and corruption as much as Lowrence is. His implied sinfulness in terms of quickly granting remission to Lowrence and having a compassionate approach to Lowrence's desires of eating meat reveal this tendency. However, it should be noted that unlike critics such as Rosemary Greentree who argue that these characters "represent hypocrites of the laity and clergy," (*Reader* 40) it would be wrong to consider these characters as direct representatives of the social strata, rather these characters should be perceived as bi-directional entities conceived by Henryson. They are simultaneously animal and human. They have a degree of rationality that is higher than the animals in the first two fables, but still they yield to their animal appetites as it is best illustrated in the Friar's words: "neid may haif na law" (l. 731). They have the manners, beliefs and attires of humans, but they are naturally, instinctively and descriptively animals. It is this mixture that results in "the Fox's confession [in which Henryson] delicately balances a comic awareness of human (or vulpine) weakness and a tragic realization that one's nature is inescapable," (Khinoy 105) and it is this mixture that results in "the travestied confession" (Mann 281) scene because the fox's need for survival as an animal is the very thing he is supposed to shun in the human sphere. Therefore, they should be seen as characters whose animal natures impel them to do what they do in the story, but also their actions under the guise of churchman or laity should strike the reader as a kind of warning to men who behave like these characters in the real world. Thus, the fantastic natures of these characters function as a demonstration of how the world would be if it was governed with animal appetites and a warning to humans for not giving precedence to their carnal needs over spiritual ones.

After this, "[t]he travestied confession scene is followed by a travestied baptism" (Mann 281). Lowrence goes to the seaside to catch some fish "[b]ot quhen he saw the

walterand (stormy) wallis (waves) woude / All stonist still in to ane stair he stude (he stood like a stone)" (ll. 736-7). He could not venture into the sea nor could find any food and while he is complaining "[v]nder ane tre he saw ane trip off gait (a flock of goats)" (l. 744). He hides himself, steals a little kid from the herd and dips the little kid into water saying "'Ga doun, schir Kid, cum vp, schir Salmond, agane'" (l. 751). Thus, he kills it and eats the "new-maid salmond" (l. 753). Lowrence's second exploitation of religion for his own gain this time becomes the baptism ritual. Hence, the same manner of offence against religion is again repeated with Lowrence's action. Just like Lowrence's belief that "it is the *form* of [the] confession which is effective, and not the spiritual quality of the confessional process" (Lyall, "The Hens and the Pelagian Fox" 91) the baptism for Lowrence is valid enough in its linguistic form. However, the final subversion of the sacrament is actually the one which triggers his doom in the fable. While he is stroking his belly under a bush, quite satisfied with what he has devoured he states, "[v]pon this wame (belly) set wer ane bolt (target) full meit" (760). In the meantime, the owner of the kid who has been searching for the fox, finds him lying on the ground, and shoots an arrow hitting him in the belly and skins him. Thus, the word-play that Lowrence employs throughout the narrative, this time, works against him.

Although it is foreshadowed at the beginning of the fable, the reader who is familiar with the Reynardian tradition does not expect the wily fox to die, but in this fable, Lowrence who is related with the immortal fox character of *Roman de Renart* is killed. The reason for Henryson to include such an ending to his fable is to show that divine justice will finally be upon those who are "[v]incust with carnal sensualitie" (l. 783). In fact, Henryson reveals his intention at the beginning of the *moralitas* by urging "folk to mend / For dreid of sic ane lyke conclusioun" (ll. 777-8). Thus, it actually becomes more of an obligation for Henryson to kill this hybrid character to teach the reader to be aware of "this suddane schoit (arrowshot)" (l.789) and to exhort the "folk to mend their sinful ways and not make false confessions" (McKenna 494). Therefore, as Steven McKenna underlines, only humans have the "capacity to discover profound truths about the self and one's fate and to act upon these truths" (494). As a result, Henryson urges human beings to "[c]eis of … sin; remord … conscience; / Do wilfull pennance here; and [humans] sall wend (go), / Efter … deith, to blis withouttin end" (ll. 793-5).

1.2. 3. "The Trial of the Fox"

"The Trial of the Fox" is the last of these three interconnected fables in terms of source and character similarity. Jill Mann points out the fact that like the previous two fables, the tale is indebted to the beast epics and has resemblances to the "Book III of the *Ysengrimus* and … Branch I of the *Roman de Renart*" (283). The narrative connection with the previous fables is maintained with the corpse of "[t]his foirsaid foxe that diet for his misdeed" (l. 7969) and with the son of Lowrence taking up his place. The fable, unlike the previous fable that deals with religious hypocrisy, makes its object of satire the judicial and governmental corruption, thus, it gives Henryson a chance to delve into the other aspects of medieval society and appropriate ground to situate the characters in the hybrid sphere of animal and human again.

In the beginning, Henryson starts with introducing "ane sone" (l. 799) who was not born "richteouslie," (l. 797) but begotten "purches priuelie (adultery in secret)" (l. 800) which is actually the final emphasis on the dead Lowrence's corrupt nature. The son, however, is worse than the father as it "wes callit Father-war" (l. 801). His evil nature is quite openly described by Henryson in the part where he finds "his father deid" (l. 818). In this scene, the son immediately "[t]hankand grit God off that conclusioun, / And said, 'Now sall I bruke, (enjoy) sen I am air, (heir) / The boundis quhair thow wes wont for to repair'" (ll. 814-16). His joy at his father's death and the prospect of inheritance is unexpected to the reader. What is more, he even takes the dead body of his father and "vnto ane peitpoit gais / Off watter full, and kest him in the deip" (ll. 828-29). Such an atrocious action even leads Henryson into expressing his real intention of the fable prematurely by addressing humans, but specifically to the "fulische man! Plungit in wardlynes" (l. 831) in the following moralising stanza. Henryson advises that the efforts of acquiring goods to gain richness will only endanger your soul and in the end, you would only leave these to those who would not even pray for your salvation (ll. 832-37).

In this respect, Henryson underlines the reason of such wickedness: he argues that "[o]ff euill cummis war, off war (worse) cummis werst of all" (l. 805). This line is best

understood when it is applied to these three sequential fables. “The Cock and the Fox” contains an evil character, Lawrence, who is actually following his nature. However, his malignancy increases dramatically in the next fable, “The Fox and the Wolf” by mocking religious practices and abusing them for his own gain, thereby his increased corruption is situated into a more humanised sphere. Yet, the worst one comes as the offspring of Lawrence who is “behuifit to be fals” because of his “verray kynde” (l. 808). He commits even graver offences such as the mutilation of his father’s dead body, disobeying the sovereign, acting hypocritically or murdering a spotless lamb in the course of the fable. In this regard, except for the last action which comes from his animal nature, Lowrence, in the fifth fable, commits atrocious offences all of which belong to the crimes of the human sphere and especially the mutilation of his father’s dead body makes him the worst character in the sequence.

Parallel to the increasing atrociousness in the characters with these subsequently placed three fables, the pattern of increasing narrative resemblance to the beast epic tradition can also be observed. Therefore, almost fable-like third fable, “The Cock and the Fox” is replaced by a fable, “The Fox and the Wolf,” which resembles more of a beast-epic. The fourth fable, however, now yields to “the narrative of The Trial of the Fox, [which] seems for much of its length to conform to the wandering course of the beast epic” (Mann 283). Hence, the narrator’s argument of consecutive corruption could be the result of the increasing attribution of human qualities to the characters along with the increase of beast epic elements. Thus, the more humanised the characters, the more corrupt they become which is quite a harsh criticism of contemporary society by Henryson. Along with the increased level of humanity within the characters, man-made institutions of sovereing’s parliament, court and the notion of inheritance frequent the fable. However, since they are under the control of hybrid characters, these institutions become disarrayed, managed farcically and governed with whimsical decisions. Hence, when the lion proclaims his decision “[v]pon this hill to hald ane parliament,” (l. 862) it is dubious as to what to “expect from the story, or what sort of justice is likely to emanate from such a ruler” (Gray 78). The Mare’s absence from Parliament on account of being “*contumax*- in ‘contempt of court’ or negligent in her obligations to the king” (Kindrick, *Medieval Arts* 167) is also surprising especially after Henryson pays

particular attention by reserving seven stanzas to recount the animals (both supernatural and natural) that attend the court since the lion king has proclaimed everyone to appear "befoir [his] tribunal," (l. 864). In addition, the court's amusement at the Wolf's head wound inflicted by the Mare's hoof is unexpected and vulgar since the Wolf's only action is to obey the lion's commands and try to bring the Mare to Parliament. In this regard, Parliament's decision to bring Lowrence to justice for the alleged murder of a lamb is the only appropriate decision they make, but this time the punishment is quite severe and quick since they "hangit him" (l. 1096) on account of the "flesche, ȝit stikkis on [Lowrence's] teith" (l. 1085). Because of the fact that these characters are half human, half animal, consistency should not be expected from their actions. In fact, Henryson's main reason of depicting these characters is the display of chaos in a world where animal instincts and pleasures take precedence over charity, good conduct and listening to reason. Still, these animals' endeavour is noble. In this respect, Douglas Gray asks a very important question as to why "should these creatures come together [into a parliament]? One answer introduces a nice double-edged irony, in that these 'brutal beistis and irrationall' are making a political attempt to live according to reason in a way which men conspicuously do not" (Gray 138). Hence, the reader, at least, should learn from the mistakes that these characters make as it is apparent that they are highly immersed in their animal appetites and their actions are mostly governed with these urges. Yet, humans with their reason could perceive their contradictory actions resulting from their animal natures and better themselves by listening to reason.

In this regard, the *moralitas* also emphasises the ills of being fettered to the sensuality, but somewhat differently this time. As argued in detail in the introduction of this study, Henryson was among the fabulists who were "creating variation in three major areas: (1) more specific social applications, (2) more elaborate moralizations that, in certain authors, resemble the point-for-point allegory of exegesis … and (3) a style crackling with vividness" (Henderson, "Medieval Beasts" 40). Henryson is among the few who discovered the usefulness of "the point-for-point allegory" so that he turned "writing that final moralization after the narrative [into] a witty game" (Henderson, "Having Fun" 69). Thus, in this fable and in some of the later fables Henryson tends to apply this "point-for-point" moralisation in order to break from the routine and surprise the reader,

but further analysis of this tradition which has its roots in the exegetical tradition is outside the scope of this study and will not be examined in detail. However, as indicated above, Henryson's technique in these fables is just a different way of conveying his overarching theme of carnality corrupting spirituality. Therefore, in his point-for-point moralisation of "the lyoun" as "the warld" (l. 1104), "[t]he meir" as "men of contemplatioun" (l. 1111), the "volf" as "sensualitie" (l. 1118), the mare's "hufe" as the "thocht of deid" (l. 1125) and the fox as "temptationis" (l. 1132) all comes down to the warning of avoiding sin, temptation and sensuality.

1.3. HUMANS AS ANIMALS

After a three-unit Reynardian originated fables, Henryson again turns back to the Aesopic tradition which signals a relative change in style and subject matter in the work. He uses this change to keep up the momentum he has generated from the beginning of *Morall Fabillis* in terms of adding ever increasing level of humanity both characteristically and physically to the characters in the fables. "The Sheep and the Dog", in this respect, marks the final phase of this slow and smooth transformation of characters to human-like characters and completes, in this way, the first cycle within the work. Generally speaking, the human-like characters in these fables are humans thinly veiled as animals. They are depicted in this manner because of the inner corruption that becomes expressly visible in their external appearance. This idea is the fictional expression of the belief that humans indulging in sins and their earthly desires are nothing more than beasts. Thus, with the help of the fable genre's suitability to the idea of the Great Chain of Being, Henryson invents a unique character type which is underlined in the Prologue with the assertion that "Na meruell is, ane man be lyke ane beist, / Quhilk lufis ay carnall and foull delyte, / … That he in brutal beist is transformate" (ll. 50,51,56). The outright expression of this idea finds itself in these human-like characters that act and speak like humans. Accordingly, these fables are concerned mainly with the issues that are related with humans such as injustice and corruption in the courts or keeping one's promise. The characters are either animals altogether, the choices of whom imply the nature and the degree of innocence of each other or again animals contrasted with humans which point to the obvious corruption in

the representation of the animal characters in these fables. Using human-like characters allows Henryson to comment on the contemporary ills of the society such as the corruption in courts. Thus, he indicates these things with the help of the fable genre and displays how humans degrade themselves and let the powerful reign in the world with injustice over the poor, powerless and the forsaken.

1.3. 1. "The Sheep and the Dog"

As mentioned above, the first cycle in Henryson's character transition from animal characters to the humans under the thin veil of animal entity become complete with "The Sheep and the Dog". The change from the hybrid characters of the previous three fables to the human characters, however, is somewhat fairly recognisable. Henryson's first indication of this change is the ending of "the first triad of beast-epic fables, [and his] return to the Latin fable collection as the source for 'The Sheep and the Dog'" (Wheatley, *Mastering Aesop* 159). This return to the Latin fable collection implies a departure from the comic, but, still mainly tragic adventures of a Reynardian fox and his counterparts to a more heightened level of humanity in the character formation and all the more a grim tone to the fable. As McDiarmid puts it, this grim tone is carried out by the "factualness and bareness of statement that intensifies feeling and has much more than a prosaic effect" (74) compared to the previous fables. It gives a certain level of compactness and immediacy to the fable which leads to minimalism in terms of describing the fable world and the characters so that this apparent "factualness" of the fable relates to humans more than any other fable in the first cycle. On this matter, Edward Wheatley propounds that this particular fable is not "general enough for all times and places: these are medieval characters in a contemporary situation" ("Scholastic Commentary" 83-4). In this regard, the sense of contemporariness is achieved by Henryson with the excessive use of law terminology that presents a real-life simulation of a court scene which is aptly juxtaposed by Henryson with the fable of "The Trial of the Fox". The previous fable's descision to punish the wily fox and the proud wolf incites, at least, contentment to the audience of the court and the reader since justice is served to the Wolf and the Fox. However, in this fable, individuals do not get what they deserve. In fact, the corrupt characters triumph over the innocent, thereby the

fable presents an overall grim tone to the reader. As a result, the innocent Sheep is obliged to sell "the woll that he bure on his bak" (l. 1254) to a merchant in order to pay his debt to the dog and remain naked all winter. Even this contrast implies that the real world and the systems that function to regulate the society in the world become disarrayed under the dominance of the corrupt people, and these institutions have themselves become tools for the powerful to abuse the weak. Thus, the fable itself becomes a harsh satire of the legal system of the period Henryson was living in since the legal terminology and the subversion of the law possibly reflects the similar court verdicts in his time.

The second indication of the change in terms of tone and characterisation of the fable in question is Henryson's minimal use of description in terms of depicting the seemingly animal characters in the fable and his abundant use of adjectives that can be applied only to humans such as a dog who is "pure" (l. 1147) or a "fraudfull volff" (l. 1150) who "has no animal identity" (MacQueen, *Full with Numbers* 116), addresses such as "maister Volff" (l. 1155) or "Schir Scheip" (l. 1158), names such as "Schir Corbie Rauin (Raven)" (l. 1160) or "Perrie Doig, (Dog)" (l. 1166) occupations such as the fox holding the position of a "clerk and noter in the cause" (l. 1174) while "the gled" stood as an advocate (l. 1175). These characters behave and talk just like humans would do. For example "[t]he clerk callit the scheip, and he wes thair" (l. 1181) and the advocates explain that "'[a]ne certaine breid, worth fyue schilling or mair, / Thow aw the doig, off quhilk the terme is gone" (ll. 1183-4). However, the Sheep, perceiving the evil intention behind this court states that "[h]eir I decline the iuge (judge), the tyme, the place" (l. 1187). Throughout the fable, the characters, especially, the Sheep answers questions and behaves quite rationally making the reader to be more and more emotionally attached because unlike the caricaturistic hybrid characters of the previous fables who are constantly yielding to their carnal appetites, the condition of the Sheep is more relatable to humans in terms of the subject matter of the fable since he finds himself before an unlawful court contrived to apprehend him with false accusations.

Thirdly, Henryson's choice of "breid, worth fyue schilling" (l. 1183) as the main catalyst to trigger the events that follow distinguishes "The Sheep and Dog" from other

fables. Unlike the previous characters, the characters in this fable dispute over a material object that is ultimately man-made and neither the dog nor the sheep has diets containing such nourishment. As a result, unlike the previous fables whose morals relate to both animals and humans in their narration of carnal activities, this fable's main concern is the oppression of the weak by the corrupt institutions controlled by the powerful. This shift in the subject matter corresponds to the formation of characters that are human-like in the fable. The characters' names such as the dog or the sheep only represent the power relationship between them in order to suggest how the world of men has become similar to the natural world in which only the powerful are right. In addition to that, Henryson's choice of the loaf of bread as the main issue of dispute signals the actual triviality of the debt of the sheep to the wolf yet, at the hands of the powerful even such a small sum can be exploited and can amount to big sums as in the case of this fable. Consequently, the Sheep's objection to the court is rejected by the Bear and the Badger who dispute with one another and search for the early similar decisions and at last come to the conclusion that "[t]he scheip suld pas befoir the volff agane, / And end his play" (ll. 1226-7). The sheep appears before the Judge Wolf, then the Dog demands his bread or the equivalent of it in cash. Afterwards, the Fox hurries the case to its end, and the Wolf decrees that the Sheep should pay the sum which results in the Sheep's decision to sell his wool to a merchant and pay the Dog. In all this process, the Sheep's "lack of an advocate … symbolises his helplessness" against the powerful which heightens the tragedy (MacQueen, *Full with Numbers* 119).

Henryson's fourth indication of the change with this fable comes with the *moralitas* since it "differs from all others in continuing the tale it expounds, by including the speech of the shorn sheep" (Greentree, *Reader* 43). Henryson, for the first time, includes a character from the narrative part of a fable to express his plea which strengthens the individuality and humanity of the character. His identity transcends through the narrative part's fabulous construction to the moral part's human sphere. However, the grim tone in the narrative part is also reflected to the *moralitas*. The sheep is now shivering from cold "[k]est vp his ee vnto the heuinnis hicht, and said, 'O lord, quhy sleipis thow sa lang" (ll. 1294-5) and continues his speech which goes about

twenty five lines and complains about the corruption, disregarding of “lufe, lawtie, and law” (l. 1301), indulgence in prejudice, bribery and cruelty.

The Sheep criticises the social condition of the time he is living in and the legal system. It is a trait lacking in the Cock in the fable of “The Cock and the Jasp” who searches for his daily food in the barn or Lowrence who takes pleasure from slaying the hens in the fable of “The Trial of the Fox”. The former character types, for this reason, do not even have the chance to learn from or be present in the *moralitas* while the Sheep delivers his plea to God though for Steven McKenna “to no avail” (498). In this regard, Edward Wheatley’s comment on the *moralitas* is also important as he argues that “ Henryson rejects the spiritual allegory available to him in scholastic commentaries, where the trial is allegorically recast as divine judgment of a human soul” (“Scholastic Commentary” 83) and which would be convenient for him in continuing the theme of the body and soul debate, but as he chooses his main character as a humanised entity, he prefers social commentary relating to the social conditions of Scotland so that the Sheep can become “pure commounis,” (l. 1259) the Wolf is “schiref stout,” (l. 1265) The Raven is “fals crownair (Coroner)” (l. 1272). Thus, he offers a harsh criticism towards the legal system of his time.

1. 4. EPILOGUE

Observing the first six fables as a whole, a narrative unity among the fables can be discerned. Henryson arranges these fables into a well-structured whole where thematic unity is realised only when these fables are taken into consideration as a whole. In this regard, Calin suggests that these “first six fables offer a largely comic vision of the world” (101). Yet, it should be noted that these fables are “comic” in the sense that unlike the second part of the work, they offer a certain level of relief to the reader by serving justice to the evil characters in the fables. It is also discernible that Henryson gives particular importance not to harm the guiltless animals brutally as opposed to the second part. Hence, in “The Cock and the Jasp”, the cock leaves the gem, but with the contentment that “ony meit wald do my stomok gude” (l. 95). In “The Two Mice”, the two mice manage to escape from both the Stewart and the paws of the cat. In “The Cock

and the Fox", although Chantecleir is overtly vain in his self-devotion, he is saved by "sum gude spirit inspyrit" (l. 558). Twice in the *Morall Fabillis,* Henryson kills the trickster figure of the fox whose "death is often threatened but never realized" in *Roman de Renart* (Mann 283). Both of these deaths occur in the first cycle. In "The Fox and the Wolf", the Fox mocks the practice of confession and baptism so that he receives a deadly arrow on his belly and is skinned by the hunters. In "The Trial of the Fox", the fox is hanged and in addition to that his companion, the wolf, loses his scalp as well. In the last fable of the first cycle, the situation is grimmer because its similarity to the human realm is much greater, thus, presumably, Henryson wants his readers to find it more striking. Therefore, the sheep is stripped bare of his wool, but, at least, he has the chance of living "out of the winter but not the fox or others" (Calin 96). For this reason, in the first cycle, there is at least a certain level of order present so that the evil is punished and the good, at least, is saved from the atrocities of murder, torture or cruelty.

In the presentation of his cycles, Henryson benefits mainly from two traditions: Aesopic fable tradition and the beast epic tradition. The opening two tales are from the Aesopic tradition. They introduce the work so that the traditional beginning that includes animal characters would familiarise the reader with the work much easier than the two other character types. In addition to that, starting from the animal-like characters up to the human-like would be more fitting in terms of conforming to the Great Chain of Being. In the first cycle, these animal-like characters are employed so that as rational beings, humans could learn from the mistakes that these animals make in the narrative parts and realise how humans can make the same mistakes when indulging in their carnal desires and commit sins.

After the first two fables, Henryson draws on the non-Aesopic tradition of beast tales stemming from a version of the *Roman de Renart* (Goldstein 605). His insertion of the beast epic comes from the fact that as Denton Fox claims "Henryson presumably found the Reynardian material useful because it allowed him to broaden his collection both socially, as for instance with the court of the lion, and morally, since the fox provided him with a protagonist who was clever, deceitful, and evil" (Introduction xliv). Therefore, with the help of the Reynardian tradition, a smooth transition of the

characters from the animal-like to the more human is conducted by Henryson. The characters in these fables display qualities pertaining to both sides that are human and animal. This presents humorous narratives, but under these narratieves lie a bitter satire of the human beings' animal side. By presenting an imaginary situation of how animals assume the roles of humans by disregarding their proper stations and by not only endowing them with human speech but also depicting them in human institiutions and habits, Henryson shows the tendency of everything becoming disarrayed which becomes a kind of warning for humans to follow their proper stations in life and avoid downgrading themselves to the level of animals by indulging in sins. The reason is that if they followed only their instinctive desires, they would not be much different from an animal donning the clothes of a clergyman.

The increase in human-like qualities accelerates with the sixth tale. The Aesopic tradition's verbal minimalism in this fable helps Henryson to produce human-like characters by keeping their descriptions and actions minimal so that these characters appear as humans under the thin veil of their suggestive animal names in the fable. The subject-matter of the fable plays a decisive part as well as William Calin observes in *Morall Fabillis,* there is a basic difference between animal and human: "we find the structure of the quest: an animal-like quest for food or a human-like quest for justice, public or private" (Calin 100). In the first five fables, there is the animal-like quest for food. It is necessary for the Cock to prefer food over gems or for Lowrence, it is quite hard to avoid attacking a kid, when he sees one. However, in this fable, "… the unfortunate sheep [and the other characters are] historicized, with the important difference that [they] occupy the same time and place as the narrator himself" (Wheatley, *Mastering Aesop* 161). It is as if Henryson is describing an event that occurred in his own time. Therefore, by coming very close to the human realm in terms of subject matter and character formation, the sixth fable marks the end of the first cycle only to restart it with animal-like characters in the second cycle.

In the first cycle, out of the similarity and dissimilarity of humans to the animals in the narrative part, the moral part of the fables' messages are re-valued and evaluated under a new light by which the narrative part plays an active role in the moral interpretation of

the fable. In this regard, the pattern of characters shifting from animal-like to hybrids and then to the human-like is functional in terms of suggesting the shifting nature of human between the animal and angelic beings. This is marked by Henryson in the Prologue with the lines: “How mony men in operatioun / Ar like to beistis in conditioun” (ll. 48-49). Hence, such a transition from the animal-like to the human-like within the cycle re-affirms *Morall Fabillis*’s main focus of how sin makes people wander around the borders of animality and humanity.

CHAPTER II: THE CYCLE OF CHAOS: FABLES BEGINNING FROM "THE LION AND THE MOUSE" TO "THE PADDOCK AND THE MOUSE"

2. 1. "The Lion and the Mouse"

The aim of the second chapter is to analyse animal-like, hybrid and human-like characters in the fables of "The Lion and the Mouse", "The Preaching of the Swallow", "The Fox, the Wolf, and the Cadger", The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman", "The Wolf and the Wether", "The Wolf and the Lamb" and "The Paddock and the Mouse". Again, it is argued that Henryson's formation of these characters results from the idea that when humans indulge in earthly pleasures; they are not very different from animals. In this chapter, it is argued that Henryson arranges these fables in an ascending and descending order which resembles a triangular shape and which indicates the human-like characters' centrality in the diagram and also the shifting nature of humans down to the level of animal and back again. The cycle starts with the fable of "The Lion and the Mouse".

This fable marks the beginning of the second cycle of *Morall Fabillis*. Structurally, as George Gopen points out, it is the "the work's numerical midpoint not only because it is the seventh in a group of thirteen, but also because it is precisely 200 stanzas and followed by precisely 200 stanzas" (Introduction 18). In addition, there are several aspects of the fable that differentiate it from the rest of the fables, thereby justifying its position at the centre of *Morall Fabillis*. It has been argued in the first chapter that the first six fables offer more or less a light-hearted vision of the world which is now followed with "the last six a darker, more tragic vision" (Calin 101). However, as Calin points out, right in the middle of the work "we find *The Lion and the Mouse*, a fable which depicts a bond of charity from lion to mice and from mice to lion, charity absent from the other fables" (101). Thus, the theme of charity is one of the primary ideas of the work that Henryson tries to remind the reader throughout the work. Thus, by putting this fable at the centre, he emphasises the importance of the work's themes of charity and mutual mercy. The fable is also unique in the work since "[i]n each tale but the

central one, an animal either is called to obey reason but ignores it, or tries to follow reason but is prevented" (Gopen, Introduction 23).

Thematic and structural centrality signalling a work's most important message is analysed in detail by A. C. Spearing in his article "Central and Displaced Sovereignty in Three Medieval Poems". In this article, Spearing employs Alastair Fowler's theory in the book *Triumphal Forms* in which Fowler argues that in Renaissance poetry, deliberate construction of literary works in terms of numeric and spatial order is quite common. In these poems, especially the centre holds a very critical position as to explain or emphasise the author's intended message. Spearing also points out that Fowler touches upon a few medieval poets like Chaucer, thereby legitimising the endeavour in his article where he stresses the centrality of "The Lion and the Mouse" to the *Morall Fabillis* ("Central and Displaced" 247-8). Subsequently, when looking at the fable's major theme, that is, being generous in terms of showing mercy to one another and listening to reason, it corresponds with the work's ideal of good Christain conduct.

Similar to other critics, Spearing also draws attention to the framing device used in the fable and finds it striking that the dream prologue "mark[s] only the central fable, rather than framing the whole work, or acting as prologue to the collection, as in Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* or the Scottish dream-prologues influenced by it" ("Central and Displaced" 253). This fact again emphasises the centrality of the fable to the whole collection as it offers the only prologue other than the work's original one just before starting the narration of the fables. Henryson employs the dream-vision technique which is, according to Spearing, to establish "authority and authenticity for the whole work" (*Medieval Dream-Poetry* 189). It also enables Henryson to present the charity displayed by animals with their *reason* as a kind of an "[u]topian vision, presentable only as a dream:" a wishful yearning for a place where characters "listen to each other, allow themselves to be swayed by reason, justice, and mercy, and remember their debts to each other with gratitude" (Gopen, Introduction 22) since dream-vision poetry has been traditionally employed in order to convey the poets' "experiences [in dreams] in which [the poet is] freed from the constraints of everyday possibility, and which we feel to have some hidden significance" (*Medieval Dream-Poetry* 2).

Following the conventions of the dream vision, Henryson makes use of various elements of the convention. First of all, the fable begins "[i]n middis of Iune" which is "ioly sweit seasoun," (l. 1321) the land is luminous with light cast by the "fair Phebus with his Bemis bricht" (l. 1332) and it is a time "betuix mid day and nicht" (l. 1325). It is quite obvious from the beginning that Henryson sets a temperate tone, chooses it to be in a temperate season and in the middle of a temperate month, in a temperate time of the day and all of which foreshadows a temperate ending that indicates the common setting of a dream-vision poem. In addition, this temperate atmosphere also discloses the fact that, everything in the narrative part seems to indicate the centrality of the fable from the start since everything in the beginning is inbetween.

The prologue continues with Henryson going into the woods alone that seem to be burgeoning with life. The flowers are "reid" and "[s]weit" (l.1328). The birds are "delitious" (l. 1329). The boughs are "blomit" (l. 1330) and the ground is thick with "gresis" (l. 1331). It is evident that the tone of the fable is quite different from the previous fables in its light-hearted, colourful and optimistic opening. This is also noted by the narrator who states that hearing and experiencing all these as "ane poynt off paradice" (l. 1337) which goes as a beautiful compliment, but also subtly indicates the improbability of such a phenomenon in real life. Later on, he lies under a tree in order to cover himself from "the sonis heit" (l. 1342) and soon falls asleep. In his sleep, Henryson envisions "[t]he fairest man that euer befoir [he] saw," (l. 1348) Aesop. With the appearance of Aesop, it is established that the dream is an *oraculum* which denotes the type of dream vision "in which a parent, or a pious or revered man, or a priest, or even a god appears and gives information or advice" (Spearing, *Medieval Dream-Poetry*). In this regard, contrary to the tradition of depicting Aesop "as an ugly hunchback" who was "first a slave and then a politician, [and] later to be murdered by the Delphians" (Adrados 273) in the classical times, the reason of him being depicted as an old stately man with long hair and in rich robes is justified: his grotesque depiction would not be suitable for an authoritative figure in the Middle Ages. The second possibility concerning Aesop's depiction is given by M. Ellwood Smith who states that the legacy of Aesop came to Henryson through "the Latin elegiacs of the Anonymous

Neveleti," (227) that is, Gualterus Anglicus, because only after Caxton published the "English version of Stainhöwel's Latin and German *Æsop*" (227) which includes Maximus Plenudes' *The Life of Aesop* that the common notion of a deformed Aesop reached England (226-7). Still, the first argument is much more plausible since the degree of Henryson's learning, and the places he had been is hard to determine, therefore it is possible that Henryson may have visited the Continent and was knowledgable about the legacy of Aesop.

All in all, Aesop appears in the dream-vision, and his appearance functions as a skillful re-appropriation of the fable characters back to the classic animal ones. The cycle is, thus, re-enacted by the presence of Aesop who is the revered poet of fables. Henryson, after learning that he is "maister Esope, poet lawriate," (l. 1377) requests "ane fabill / Concludand with ane gude moralitie" (ll. 1386-7). Aesop is reluctant, yet he finally consents to narrating an animal fable. As the father of fables, he narrates the traditional Aesopic fable of "The Lion and the Mouse" which again helps Henryson to return to the traditional animal-like characters. Thus, although in terms of structural and thematic perspective this fable stands at the centre of the work, in terms of character formation its centrality functions as an instigation of a new cycle of fables.

Aesop's reluctance, however, comes from the fact that even he does not believe in the use of mere fictional narrative in this corrupt world because now for the people "haly preiching may na thing auaill" (l. 1390). Yet, the narrator is positive about fables' effect from the beginning of their encounter as he states that although "thay fenʒeit be, / Ar full of prudence and moralitie'" (ll. 1380-81). Henryson's statement of fiction pointing out a moral truth in this fable coincides with the argument presented in the Prologue to *Morall Fabillis*. Thus, his words become a re-affirmation of the idea in the original Prologue for the new one. Henryson actually brings up the common approach to literature in the Middle Ages which is explained quite clearly by Lois Ebin as follows:

> Specifically, the poems [*Orpheus and Eurydice* and *Morall Fabillis*] consider the way in which poetry, by means of its examples or 'fenʒeit fabils' ('fanʒeit' = feigned, invented, imagined), provides prudence and insight in the world. By directing attention away from the transitory and the ephemeral to enduring concerns and by teaching readers to

> distinguish true wisdom from its false imitation, poetry offers an antidote to human blindness (55).

Henryson also reacts against Aesop's sadness and in a wise manner states that people may learn something "heirefter [that] may auaill" (l. 1403) themselves. Thus, Henryson indicates that narrative combined with Christian morality could actually be the right answer since "ane bow that ay is bent / Worthis vnsmart and dullis on the string" (ll. 22-23). However, "[a]mangis ernist to ming ane merie sport, / To blyth the spreit" (ll. 20) may be the answer. As a result, Aesop is finally persuaded and starts telling his fable.

The fable starts with a lion having just stopped searching for "his pray" (l. 1405). It quickly reminds the reader of the cock "[s]eikand his meit" (l. 62) in "The Cock and the Jasp" since both of them are, at first, shown in pursuit of their food. Then, physical description of the lion ensues. He lies down "[v]nder ane tre" (l. 1408) in order to power up "his limmis and to rest" (l. 1406). While he is resting, there comes "ane trip off myis out off thair *nest* (my italics)" (l. 1409) and begin hopping "ouer the lyoun" (l. 1411). They play with the lion's whiskers, and some even dare to "*claw* (my italics) him on the face" (l. 1414-15) until the lion finally wakes up and "with his *pow* (my italics) the maister mous he tuke" (l. 1418). Similar to the cock, in the first fable, Henryson again emphasises the animal nature of his characters by showing them in vivid instances of animal activities or scattering details of their physical descriptions throughout the fable to display their animality. As Douglas Gray points out, even the mouse's plea to the lion after getting caught does not come from "negligence, malice or presumption, but simply from joy at the 'sweit sesoun', 'sic mirth as nature to us leird,' implying that its action was determined by 'kind'" (75). The lion as well as the mouse, however, knows that getting caught is punishable by death in nature. Accordingly, the mouse knows this and states that "for my gilt traistis incontinent / Off lyfe and deith to thoill the iugement" (ll. 1424-25). The lion is also aware of this fact and disregarding the mouse's pleas, he retorts that "thow suffer sall ane schamefull end" (l. 1458) since, in nature, carelessness often ends with death. Yet, the mouse insists on begging mercy from the lion as he is the "king off beistis coronate," (l. 1462) and goes on to say that "[i]n euerie iuge mercy and reuth (compassion) suld be / As assessouris and collaterall (officers); / Without mercie, iustice is crueltie" (ll. 1468-70). The mouse continues his plea for about thirty

lines which ends with the suggestion that if the lion spares his life, one day, he "may peraduenture / Supple ȝour heines beand in distress," (l. 1497-98) thus foreshadowing the end.

The Mouse's reasonable pleas, especially his statement, "[w]ithout mercie, iustice is crueltie," (l. 1470) bring into mind the previous fable's sheep character whose defence in court rebounds from a cruel judge and as a result, justice is turned upside down, but in this frame tale fable, the lion "thocht according to *ressoun* (my italics), / And gart mercie his cruell ire asswage, / And to the mous grantit remissioun" (ll. 1504-6). None of the character types of Henryson so far have shown any sign of compassion by listening to their reason, and will not do so in the following fables, however, this fable, being at the centre is different. Its difference is indicated by A. C. Spearing who states that it is not a coincidence that "we find a tale concerning the 'king off beistis coronate at the centre of the collection" ("Central and Displaced" 256) which is reserved especially for the sovereign. Thus, in a fable related to royalty, Henryson conforms to the decorum of locating the lion, king of the beasts, at the centre and endeavours to show good conduct, that is, being compassionate and listening to reason. Befittingly in this fable, by benefitting from the dream-vision technique, he finds the required freedom to make these animals speak and act as he wants because of the fact that the tale is set in a dream.

Having released the mouse, the lion once again returns to his natural habit which is hunting "[f]or he had nocht, bot leuit on his pray, / And slew baith tayme and wyld, as he wes wont" (ll. 1511-12). The depiction of the lion as an animal is apparent by the emphasis on the lion's brutal actions and how he wreaks havoc on people "in the cuntrie" (l. 1513). Again, Henryson contrasts the animal characters with people by introducing humans in the fable, thereby creating an obvious distinction between the animals and the humans as he does in "The Cock and the Jasp" or "The Two Mice". In this fable, similar to the previous animal fables, animals and humans do not exchange words with each other as in the case of the second or third character types. Their interaction rather reflects a natural encounter of animal and human in a realistic manner. Henryson applies this realism to the vivid depiction of human and animal behavioural

habits in real time and in this case how “the pepill fand the way” to entrap “[t]his cruell lyoun” (ll. 1514-15) by making strong nets out of ropes. As a result, these people tie these ropes between the trees “quhair [the lion] wes wont to ryn, (run)” (l.1517) disperse into the woods and “[w]ith hornis blast” (l. 1520) and call their swift dogs. They steer the lion “throw the ron rynnand” so that the lion at last “[f]ell in the net and hankit fute and heid; / For all his strenth he couth mak na remeid” (ll. 1521-23).

The lion’s state as an animal before and after being captured is depicted with clarity; he struggles to escape while roaring “with hideous rummissing” (l. 1524). He tries to thrash about “[q]uhyle to quhyle fra” (l. 1525) in vain hope to break free. Yet, “[t]he mair he flang, the faster wes he knet” (l. 1527). Realising that he could not get away from the net, he laments his condition as “ligand (lying) heir sa law” (l.1531) and asks himself where “is the mycht off thy magnyfycence?” (l. 1532). He is saddened by the fact that no one will come to save him as he bitterly cries “[q]uha sall me bute (help)? Quha sall my bandis breik? / Quha sall me put fra pane off this presoun?” (ll. 1540-41).

However, it is obvious that Henryson places particular importance to the tale by hinting the centrality of the fable throughout the narrative part, so the grace shown by the lion is significant since this fable is different from the others. Therefore, while the lion laments the condition he is in, the little mouse that he has spared “come[s] near / And off the lyoun hard the pietuous beir;” (ll. 1543-44). Suddenly, she remembers the grace he has shown to her and thinks that “‘[n]ow wer I fals and richt vnkynd / Bot gif I quit sumpart [his] gentilnes / [he] did to me’” (ll. 1547-79) and immediately takes action and calls the other mice to help set the lion free. All of them come and they begin to cut the rope, but they “tuke na knyfe, *thair teith* (my italics) wes scharpe anewch” (l. 1559) which is another detail that Henryson uses to show that they are described specifically as beasts and they do not make use of any human habits or instruments. As a result, the lion becomes free “because he had [shown] pietie” as Aesop rightly observes.

Henryson begins the fable by conforming to the laws of the natural order so that when the lion catches the little mouse; his punishment is pre-ordained by the laws of nature since if an animal is caught by another, it is evident that he is going to be killed. Yet, by

taking advantage of the dream-vision technique, he changes the dynamics of the animal world so that unlike "The Two Mice" in which there is no question of the cat showing pity to the mice, the lion shows mercy to the mouse in this fable. Hence, he imposes values such as mercy and loyalty on these animals so that such an act enables a different way of showing the possibility of a better world from the opposite end, that is, from the animal world to humans. Therefore, when Henryson asks Aesop in a naïve manner, which conforms to the convention of a dream-vision dreamer, if there is "ane moralitie / In this fabill?" (ll. 1570-71). Aesop's answer is more like advice to a "prince or empriour" (l. 1574) who should be the "gouernour / Of his pepill" (ll. 1576-77). He advises that

> Be this fabill, ȝe lordis of prudence
> May considder the vertew of pietie,
> And to remit sumtyme ane grit offence
> And mitigate with mercy crueltie. (1l. 594-97)

After that, with a last wish from Henryson, Aesop asks him to persuade churchmen to pray constantly so that "tresseoun of this cuntrie be exyld, / And iustice regne, and lordis keip thair fay / Vnto thair souerane lord baith nycht and day" (ll. 1617-79). Having said this, Aesop "vanist and [the narrator] woke" (l. 1620). He, then, heads for home. However, the fact that he has woken up from his dream is sad because the following fables are set "in an atmosphere of generally increasing pessimism," (Greentree, *Reader* 44) violence and corruption. Unlike the fable of "The Lion and the Mouse" in which characters display charity to each other and are relatively prudent, later in the work, the characters increasingly become corrupt and what is more, they are triumphant in their deeds of bribery, theft and murder while the innocent characters are brutally murdered, oppressed and intimidated.

2. 2. The Preaching of the Swallow

The second animal fable, in the second cycle, is a contrasting continuation of the previous one. In the previous fable, it is mercy and partially prudence shown by the lion to the little mouse that achieves his salvation. Yet, Henryson deploys such an animal

character only in a dream to underline its actual improbability, but still, he conveys that mercy along with prudence is the key virtue for man's salvation. In this regard, his definition of prudence in "The Preaching of the Swallow", exactly matches with the actions of the lion as Henryson states

> … it is nocht sufficient
> To consider that is befoir thyne ee;
> Bot prudence is ane inwart argument
> That garris ane man prouyde befoir and se
> Quhat gude, quhat euill, is liklie for to be
> Off euerilk thingis at the fynall end,
> And swa fra perrell ether him defend.' (ll.1755-61)

In this respect, Henryson's definition corresponds perfectly with the actions of the lion. He not only evaluates what is obvious to him but also sees into the future and takes action accordingly, which prepares his salvation. Yet, this time, Henryson consciously inverts the progression of the fable by presenting animal characters that fail to observe these values in their lives and consequently experience a brutal end. In terms of the behaviours of the characters, these animals act in symmetrically opposite ways in both of the fables. This helps Henryson to underline the importance of these values from the opposite ends so that different perspectives offer a more effective emphasis on carnality and prudence. Thus, this time, Henryson offers a contrasting example different than the previous fable's characters so that the characters in this fable act and behave like real animals which coul lead humans as reasonable beings to take note of their behaviours for self-betterment. In order to do this, he underlines their animality in a "real" world by making alterations in the conventions of the dream-vision in the previous fable, therefore, in this fable, "the narrator also walks out into the beautiful fields, but this time he remains awake. Again he sees characters reason with each other, but in this non-dream world the Swallow's logic is ridiculed and ignored" (Gopen, Introduction 22).

Another way of underlining their animality is the invocation of the Great Chain of Being. Henryson opens the fable with a comment on the most prudent being in all entireties, that is, God. He is "omnipotent," (l. 1623) "perfyte" (l. 1624) and "[e]xcellent" (l. 1625). Everything is "ay present, / Rycht as it is or ony tyme all be, / Befoir the sicht off his diuinitie" (ll. 1626-28). Thus, His place of utmost imminence at

the Great Chain of Being finds its rightful place as well by being situated at the beginning of the poem. Humans, however, compared to Him have a very minor value since "our saull with sensualitie / So fetterit is in presoun corporall," (ll. 1629-30) that they have trouble in understanding "God as he is, nor things celestiall;" (l. 1632) thus, humans come after Him both naturally in the gradational scale and in the poem.

Animals come after the humans and are subjects both metaphorically and literally to the use of mankind. With the focus on the human, the tale shifts swiftly "from the large perspective of God's providence to the limited human view in darkness and delusion" (Ebin 65-66). This shift is further explicated by Henryson with a "bat" metaphor that Aristotle used in *Metaphysics*. He says just "lyke ane bakkis ee (bat's eye) / Quhilk lurkis still, al slang as licht off day is, / And in the gloming cummis furth to fle;" (ll. 1637-9) human souls are similarly weak and prone to indulge in vices, which brings forth the idea of human's inbetween condition in the gradational scale. This metaphor sheds light on Henryson's manner of writing and once again ascertains, quite effectively, his utilisation of the dichotomies of good and bad, night and day, body and soul or carnality and spirituality. His usage of these dichotomies both literally and metaphorically are located in many places in the work. This metaphorical example, in this regard, acquires a literal meaning in one of the previous fables, "The Fox and the Wolf" in which the evil fox has the habit of not going out "[a]ls lang as leme or licht wes off the day, / Bot bydand nicht full styll lurkand he lay" (ll. 619-20) in order to exercise his evil intentions.

Furthermore, Henryson's paraphrase from *Metaphysics* points at his familiarity with the medieval ideology of God's presence in every level of creation, which is manifested further in the following stanzas. Hence, he develops a dichotomy "with a complex framing device that draws on traditional philosophical and theological ideas to contrast the perfect intellect of God with finite human understanding" (Goldstein 608). However, the contrast is not too harsh this time and although humans are "febill and ouer small" (l. 1644) to understand His ways perfectly with their intellect, Henryson is still hopeful in that "… we may haif knawlegeing / Off God almychtie be his creatouris" (ll. 1650-1). This is the direct manifestation of the medieval ideology of the Great Chain

of Being which "hints at the assumption behind the *Fables* that a study of bestial creatures leads to higher knowledge" (Fox "Henryson's Fables" 349) for humankind. In this way, they can "live in the company of angels" (Fox, "Henryson's Fables" 354).

After the manifestation of God's creations from which people could learn that God is "gude, fair, wyis, and bening" by observing nature's pleasant flowers some of which are "grene", "blew", "purpour" and "reid," (l. 1655) Henryson elaborates on the topic and adds: "[t]he firmament payntit with sternis cleir / From eist to West rolland in cirkill round" (ll. 1657-8) in order to situate the setting of the fable within the cosmos. Then, the description of the planets follows "in [their] proper spheir[s], / In mouing makand harmonie and sound" (ll. 1659-60). After that, the four elements, "[t]he fyre, the air, the watter, and the ground", ensue from top to the bottom. By doing all this, he hints at the established hierarchical order of the universe at the centre of which he puts man "… that [God] maid last of all, / Lyke to his image and his similitude" (ll. 1668-9). Therefore, all creation is "…maid for the behufe / Off man, and to his supportatioun" (ll. 1671-2). This idea finds itself a place in the fable with a human observer placed as the focus of the fable out of which the actions of the animals are observed. This placement of everything in its rightful order benefits Henryson in two ways: first of all, as it is indicated in the lines above that by looking "weill [to] the fische that swimmis in the se / Luke[ing] weill in earth all kind off bestyall;" (ll. 1663-4) humans, and in this instance, the observer, could and should learn both in the fable and the reader in the real world from these characters that present examples with their actions to humankind. Secondly, there occurs a visible difference between the birds and the humans in the fable which indicates the presence of animal-like characters in the form of birds in the fable so that the second animal fable is established in the cycle along with "The Lion and the Mouse". In addition, as Burrow points out, apart from the placement of the observer, Henryson also includes other human characters such as "the farm-workers, sowing corn in springtime in anticipation of a harvest in autumn, and by the fowler, sowing hemp and flax in anticipation of his future need for nets" (156-7) in order to insinuate a certain level of superior intelligence in comparison to the birds which fail to assess the future and the brutal end that is prepared for them.

Henryson's first mention of these workers comes when the observer goes "[v]nto the wod, to se the flouris spring, / And heir the mauis sing and birdis mo" (ll. 1715-6). Regeneration is clearly felt as spring flourishes in Henryson's lines with vivid depictions of both humans and animals engaged in their activities: "[t]he mauis and the merle beginnis to mell; / The lark on loft, with vther birdis smale, / Than drawis furth fra derne, ouer doun and daill" (ll. 1710-2) while some labourers are "… makand dyke, and sum the pleuch can wynd, / Sum sawand seidis fast frome place to place," (ll. 1722-3). Nature and humans' engagement with it can be clearly felt in these lines. Then, again like the previous fable of "The Lion and the Mouse", the observer decides to rest under a tree to enjoy the marvellous sight that nature offers after a long winter. As he enjoys the view, suddenly onto the branch of this particular hawthorn tree "small birdis thair come ane ferlie flicht," (l. 1730). After that, the natural world starts to become *fabulous* as the observer overhears the birds' conversations and comprehends their speech without the ability of interacting with them.

The swallow warns the birds outright about the dangers beforehand and urges the birds to "… weill knaw and wyislie vnderstand: / Quhair danger is, or perrell appeirand," (l. 1737-8). Here, the swallow's difference in terms of displaying prudence is nothing more than a necessary character formation for creating an opposing dichotomy to show one party in the wrong. His wisdom is not more than an inspiration caused by God himself just as in the case of the Cock who was "… with sum gude spirit inspirit" (l. 558) and escaped from the mouth of the Fox in "The Cock and the Fox". In this particular instance, however, "the supernaturally inspired foresight of the swallow is opposed to the earthly and inferior reason of the other birds" (Fox, "Henryson's Fables" 349) so that his insistence on warning the other birds reveals actually how unreasonable the birds are. In addition to this, the Swallow is wise only in terms of knowing the way to escape the doom prepared by man, but he does not know how to persuade the birds or does not understand that the birds would not be interested in such a solution. His role is only to warn the others. As to why Henryson chooses a swallow is explicated by Burrow who states that "[t]he role of Cassandra, assigned [only] by tradition to the Swallow [and] for no very evident reason" so that it "… might better have gone to an owl. Henryson's Swallow is no more than a Wise *Bird* (italics mine)" (Burrow 149).

As a result, in the first gathering, the Swallow shows the Churl who "sewand hemp" (l. 1744) and flax that "will grow in lytill tyme in deid, / And thairoff will ȝone churl his nettis mak," (ll. 1745-46) and suggests that these should be scraped off "with our naillis scharp and small" (ll. 1749-50). Nevertheless, the birds receive the suggestion with laughter and scorn the swallow with a couple of idioms implying that there is still time, then, they leave the Swallow (ll. 1762-72). The observer, seeing this takes his "club, and hamewart couth [he] carie, / Swa ferliand as [he] had sene ane *farie* (my italics)" (ll. 1774-75). In this part, the observer also becomes aware of the fantastic nature of these birds as he wonders if he saw a vision, but the fabulous nature of these animals is not explained in anyway. Thus, this time, though they seem fantastic, the events occur in a real world with an observer fully aware of his surroundings unlike the previous fable of "The Lion and the Mouse" which employed the dream-vision frame.

The second meeting comes in June and now the seeds are "growin [so] hie, that hairis (hares) mycht thame hyde," (l. 1778). The observer again goes out into the woods and comes across the same flock of birds "lychtit doun" (l. 1787) on the same hawthorn tree. This place is hinted as a safe spot during their migratory flight which is a clever way of asserting their animality in a subtle way. Again, the Swallow urges them to "[l]uke to the lint (flax) that growis on ȝone le!" (l. 1793) in a very direct manner and says that "quhill it is tender, ȝoung and small, / And pull it vp, let na mair incres" (ll. 1797-8). However, the birds are only interested in their carnal appetites and retort to the Swallow that "'[ȝ]one lint heirefter will do gude, / For linget (provide) is to lytill birdis fude" (ll. 1802-3). Thus, although the Swallow warns them that the churl caught "[f]ull mony off our kin … / And thocht it bot ane sport to spill thair blude;" (ll. 1805-6) the birds display no sign of learning from the past events and are interested only in the flax in terms of dietary gain.

In their third meeting, the season is winter which foreshadows the gruesome events that will occur in the fable. Now, the woods which were formerly green "wallowit with the weit, / Baith firth and fell with froistys wer maid faw" (ll. 1833-4). Lack of food causes "[t]he foulis fair, for falt they fell off feit-" (l. 1836). Henryson depicts a very grim atmosphere in which the birds are desperate to find food to feed themselves. The

Fowler, in the meantime, watches the birds intently and "[h]is nettis hes he set with diligence, / And in the snaw he schulit hes ane plane, / And heillit it all ouer with calf agane" (ll. 1843-5). In three stages, Henryson contrasts the essential difference between animals and humans with the example of birds and the Fowler. Just like in "The Two Mice", he uses repetition in order to underline the incapability of animals to assess the future before them and take precautions while the Fowler in time prepares a device to capture these birds. Hence, when the birds "… seand the calf, was glaid; / Trowand (thinking) it had bene cornet hay lychtit doun," (ll. 1846-7). The Swallow warns them one last time with the words:

> 'Grit fule is he that puttis in dangeir
> His lyfe, his honour, for ane thing off nocht.
> Grit fule is he that will not glaidlie heir
> Counsall in tyme, quhill it auaill him mocht.
> Grit fule is he that hes na thing in thocht
> Bot thing present, and efter quhat may fall
> Nor off the end hes na memorial.' (ll. 1860-66)

Henryson's emphasis is again on the word "fule" which he applies to the Cock in "The Cock and the Jasp" in order to underline his animality. It is valid in this fable as well. Through the mouth of the Swallow, it is a warning to humankind actually since the birds are animals and they would not hear "[t]he counsall off the swallow" (l. 1869). Yet, those who risk themselves for nothing or refuse to listen to reason are also "grit fules" that are not very much different from these animals. In order to heighten the effect of the message, Henryson depicts the brutal deaths of the birds vividly in the end. The Swallow, however, is heartbroken and flies away and leaves the observer alone. Therefore, the actions of these birds alone mean that as unreasonable creatures, these birds yield to their appetites no matter what persuasion tactics were applied, while humans could learn from their mistakes. For this reason, by presenting animal characters that are in the wrong, the narrative part also generates a meaning. Thus, characters do not "function as descriptive symbols or 'signs' in the narrative, as mere 'signs' of other 'things' but rather as interpretative symbols which are 'things' with an identity of their own as well as being 'signs' of other 'things'" (Bright, "Medieval Concepts 148). As Bright states the *moralitas* only gives "an additional level of

meaning which co-exists with the literal narrative and preserves literal context" ("Medieval Concepts" 148). When the *moralitas* is analysed, it becomes clear that Henryson repeats the story's emphasis on not yielding to the "… delactatioun," (ll. 1903) since when "[t]he wicket thocht beginnis for to breird (breed) / In deidlie sin, quhilk is dampnatipun; / Ressoun is blindit with affectioun," (ll. 1904-6). In the end, Henryson again addresses humans and pleads them to do four things which are to avoid sin, end all strife and war, keep perfect charity and be with angels (ll. 1944-50).

"The Preaching of the Swallow" marks the end of fables that contain animal-like characters. In the following fables, Robert Henryson moves towards the type of characters that are more hybridised in their nature which will be followed by a fable of human-like characters. Then, it will return to fables that contain animal-like characters by slowly having characters with decreased humanity in them. Thus, there will be major changes in the character's behaviour, rationality and depiction in the following fables. This is conducted by Henryson in order to display the ills of succumbing to pleasures in different ways.

2. 3. The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger

In the third fable of the second cycle, Henryson returns to the renowned character from the beast epic, Lowrence the Fox, who "is built on the traditional craftiness and guile associated with foxes in the beast fable tradition" (Kindrick, *Medieval Arts* 225). Similar to the first cycle, the Fox and other characters associated with him are employed to decrease the level of animality within the characters so that they deviate from the traditional character formation in fables to a more hybridised version of animal and human. Strikingly, this diversion to beast epic tradition comes about the same time with the first cycle's diversion to the beast epic tradition, that is, at the third fable. The transition to the beast fable also reminds pieces from the previous mini-beast epic which resonates into "The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger". Once again the fox figure "uses his cunning to outwit the wolf and make him the object of the trick and physical abuse," (Kindrick, *Medieval Arts* 225) but his tricks are outside the normal animalistic behaviour that a natural fox would conduct. In addition, in the fable, characters assume

the titles, addresses, proverbs and traditions humans have in their daily lives and use them to one another, details of animality and humanity are also mixed in the depiction of the characters.

The Wolf is depicted as dwelling in the "wildernes" (l. 1951) and lives on hunting animals or the Fox explains how his pointed "twa eiris and [his] twa gray Ene / Garris [him] be kend (recognised) quhair [he] wes never sene" (ll. 1991-2) by others. Yet, at the same time, the comic descriptions of these characters overflowing into the human sphere abound in the tale as well. Henryson shows how "in the middis off the way" (l. 1959) the Fox sees Russel the Wolf and bows down to him in pretence. This is the first gist which will be further exploited throughout the fable as the comic theme of master and slave relationship is actually reversed. The Fox, then, addresses the Wolf as "Schir" (l. 1969) to please him so that he may dissuade the Wolf from taking him into the position of being a Stewart (ll. 1965-66). As Gray points out, the Fox tries to reject the offer four times by "blandly denying all thought of deceit, and protesting his own disabilities for the post of 'steward' to the wolf" (98). Nonetheless, the Wolf insists on his decision by frequently replying with proverbs such as: "[f]or euerie wrink (trick), forsuith (in truth), thow hes sane wyle" (l. 1987) which, in fact, "turns out to be truer than [the Wolf] imagines" (Gray 110) as he bitterly experiences it at the end of the fable. Lowrence's final denial is important in that first of all, it is rather humorously reminiscent of the fourth fable in the first cycle with the instance of the religious observance of Lent. Lowrence reminds the Wolf that they could not eat meat during this time and because he "can nocht fische, for weiting off my feit," (l. 2001) he explains that there is no means of finding food for the Wolf. Secondly, this denial on the grounds of religious hindrance playfully situates the formation of the characters in a more hybrid sphere. Still, the Wolf is not at all persuaded, in fact, he becomes quite angry. Lowrence, however, understands that crossing him would not solve the problem and changes his tactic and pretends that he did not mean to offend him by stating "I sall fulfil in all thing ȝour bidding, / Quhat euer ȝe charge on nichtis or on dayis'" (ll. 2018-19). Finally, the Wolf wants Lowrence to swear an oath for submission and Lowrence swears "[b]e Iuppiter, and on pane off [his] head," (l. 2026). In this scene, Henryson employs subtle humour since as a "Christian," swearing by Jupiter holds no value for

Lowrence, thus, he engages in his first trick against both the Wolf and the reader at the same time. The dialogue also illustrates in a comical but powerful way "how the taking of vows was frequently less a mark of piety than an opportunistic device" (Owen, Introduction xii).

After this scene, a Cadger on his carriage full of fish comes into the scene. Again, human intervention plays an important role in terms of defining the gradation of these characters as animal-like, hybrid or human-like. Unlike the previous tale of dumb animals that are caught by the fowler's net despite it is being devised quite openly, Lowrence, quite remarkably, manages to outsmart the Cadger with his wit in this fable. Furthermore, Lowrence's suggestion of a plan "[t]o get sum fische aganis thir fasting dayis," (l. 2034) his ironical comment about the Wolf being "siluer-seik (penniless)" (l. 2036), his belief that the Cadger would not give them one fish "thocht we wald kneill" (l. 2039) before him and his dialogues with the Cadger after he steals a large portion of fish from the creel certainly estrange him from being an ordinary animal. Still, the Cadger's treatment of the Fox and the Wolf as ordinary animals, his falling for Lowrence's pretence of being dead "in the middis off the way" (l. 2050) because of their natural sizes and his determination to "make mittenis (gloves)" out of Lowrence's skin take these characters back into animality.

It can be argued that in the first and the second part, Henryson creates types of characters that go in and out of animality and humanity so that this allows Henryson to comment on the human condition in a witty and often humorous way. In undertaking such an endeavour, he benefits from the character creation of the beast epics that "breathe, eat, breed, and alas, fight like humans" (Owen, Introduction ix). The reason mainly comes from the fact that these characters offer a way of reading that is quite different from the reading that you could get from the traditional animal-like characters because unlike animal-like characters, these hybrid characters embody both sides, that is, animal and human. Therefore, they present harsh criticism towards humans about how they are essentially similar with animals when humans indulge in in earthly pleasures.

In this respect, in analysing the characters of Henryson, his depiction of the overwhelmingly violent and corrupt world of fable and its obvious result of the corrupt nature of these animals having human attributes have to be taken into consideration. In line with expectation as Gray asserts, these characters are generally endowed with the negative aspects of humans such as "greed, violence and egoism [which] will present themselves as benevolence and justice" (153). This is not only Henryson's choice because as Robert Temple states in the introduction of the book *Aesop: The Complete Fables*, the fable's norm is the depiction "of cunning, of wickedness, of murder, of treachery and deceit, of laughter at the misfortune of others, of mockery and contempt' (xvi-xvii). Yet, Henryson's skill is observed in the presentation of characters endowed with the corrupt qualities of humans so that these characters become a critique of the humans who are not able to shun these qualities and in a way resemble animals. Therefore, at the end of the fable, when this gluttonous Wolf blinded by the desire for more fish, performs the same trick with Lowrence's advice, he is almost clubbed to death. It becomes a criticism and a warning to those people who are gluttonous in a more striking way because the Wolf is also endowed with qualities pertaining to humans.

The moral part supports this argument as well in Henryson's own style of appropriation of these characters to allegorical ends. He explains each item in the story in detail in order to convey his Christian moralisation clearly. Therefore, Henryson likens the fox to "the warld" (l. 2205) and the wolf to "ane man" (l. 2206). The cadger is "deith" (l. 2207) and the fish are "gold" (l. 2213) so that he explains the desire for gold "makis mony men sa blind, / That settis on auarice thair felicitie, / That thay foryet the cadgear cummis behind" (ll. 2224-26). Henryson's emphasis on avoiding "blind prosperitie" (l. 2228) is also a warning against indulging blindly in the pleasures of the world.

2. 4. The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman

The fourth fable of the second cycle deals with the very popular story of a fox and a wolf in a well. Indeed, its popularity in the Middle Ages makes its possible source uncertain. Klaus Bitterling points out the similarities of the fable which "can be

paralleled [to] the second branch of the *Roman de Renart*" (74). Yet, as Jill Mann aptly shows in her book *From Aesop to Reynard* that there is no mention of "the fox's fantastic tale about heaven being at the bottom of the well" in Henryson's version, instead the course of events "reverts to the *Disciplina clericalis* [Petrus Alfonsi's] version of the story (the ploughman's rash promise of his oxen to the wolf, and the fox's pretence that the moon's reflection is a gigantic cheese" (266). Earlier, Denton Fox also put forward the same proposition with Jill Mann and suspected that "it seems probable, at least, that Henryson was acquainted with the *Disciplina clericalis*" (Introduction xxii). Therefore, similar to the fable of the "The Sheep and the Dog", Robert Henryson again returns to the Aesopic tradition in order to appropriate the characters into human-like compositions.

The fable opens with a very realistic account of rural life and how a farmer goes early in the morning during the ploughing season to work in the field with his oxen. Details of rural life are given vividly: the farmer starts his work first by reciting prayers and local expressions are given when he is goading the oxen. In all these instances, Henryson depicts a "scene that might perfectly express the orderly dominion of man over nature" (Gray 81). Nevertheless, his choice of starting with a farmer who has perfect dominion over his oxen that are irresponsive and are depicted in the way a conventional style of animal would be done is important in his differentiation of the Wolf and the Fox that will confront the farmer in the following stanzas. Unlike these plough animals, the two characters display upper hand in terms of power relations since the farmer "address[es] the fox and the wolf as lords – Sire, Schir – whereas [they] address the farmers as peasant underlings: villain, carll" (Calin 98). Thus, in the fable, when the Wolf crosses the farmer's path and asks "'Quhether dryuis thou this pray?' (Where are you taking these animals?) / I challenge it, for nane off thame ar thyne," (l. 2259-60) the farmer seems to be "agast" (l. 2257) not because of a violent animal he sees, but because of encountering a cruel and oppressive superior of his that he knows of in the vicinity. The farmer's treatment of him clearly illustrates this since "in ane felleun fray (deadly fright)" he answers: "*Schir*, (italic mine) be my saull, thir oxin ar all myne: / Thairfoir I studdie quhy ȝe suld stop me, / Sen that I faltit (fault) neuer to ȝou, trewlie" (l. 2263-65).

In fact, in this fable, from the very beginning, the Wolf's and the Fox's descriptions are somewhat different from the descriptions of the Wolf and the Fox in the previous fable in which there is the obvious human dominion over these two characters so that they hope to reach their aim only by using Lowrence's unending trickery. However, in this fable, the power relations are subverted in order to hint at the idea that these characters are only humans whose appearances are reduced suggestively to the animal state because of their obviously corrupt nature.

Sin and malignancy which are reflected in human appearance in terms of animalistic comparison are also hinted by Henryson in the scene when the farmer loses his temper and becomes "angrie as ane hair (hare)" (l. 2242) so that he utters the unfortunate curse on the young ox to be taken seriously by the Wolf which sets the fable going. His momentary inability to remain calm is described as a temporary transition to the animal sphere, yet the Wolf and the Fox characters are in permanent state of animality because of the deep-seated corruption they have in themselves. In this regard, his creeping style of walking, dislike for daylight or Henryson's depiction of the Wolf as "hirpilland (limping) in his gait" (l. 2255) are not coincidences.

The common belief of the Middle Ages that the "link between body and soul found its expression in physiognomy … where the character of a person and their physical appearance was seen to be connected" (Metzler 54) is also utilised by Henryson. Actually, the human-like characters' presence in the work is an obvious example of how the natures of these characters are reflected in their external appearances. Still, bodily malfunction plays an important role in terms of hinting at the corrupt nature of these characters. As an example to this, in "The Paddock and the Mouse," the mouse observes the paddock's ugly physical features and comments that "'[g]if I can ony skill off phisnomy, / Thow hes sumpart off falset and inuy" (ll. 2824-25). Hence, Henryson's emphasis on the deformed walking styles of these two characters is an additional hint at the corrupt natures of these characters. Henryson's inclusion of these details in the fable comes from his intention to increase the level of humanity in the fable characters to a degree that is almost human-like just like the characters in "The Sheep and the Dog" in the first cycle. The main motives are also similar in these two fables: rather than

focusing mainly on the animal motive of search for food or succumbing to appetite, the human motive of seeking justice comes to the fore. Therefore, similar to the Dog's false accusation of the Sheep, the farmer also seeks justice out of the absurd accusation directed to him by the Wolf. The sheep gives his wool as compensation; similarly the farmer gives his hens. Just like the Dog in the first cycle, these two characters become the stereotypical cruel humans veiled under the guise of animal forms and try to gain unlawful possessions. These characters become the overt examples of rich people who are terrorising the peasants ruthlessly with their power. They become the foreshadowing of the people who are condemned as "wolves" in the moral of "The Wolf and the Lamb". Henryson identifies them as "men of heritage" (l. 2742) in the moral of that fable who with an ever increasing urge to have more take their "hors, [and their] meir" (l. 2749) from the poor so that these people are left "[t]o leue vpon dry breid and watter caill" (l. 2755). These people use everything in their power to suppress the poor and gain wealth through malice. Actually, the existence of these people makes the world a corrupt and cruel place.

For this reason, the farmer's fear of the ruthless "wolfs" and their terrorising the peasants is reflected on the farmer's plea to the Wolf on grounds that "'ane man may say [things he would not do, while he is] in greif" (l. 2273) is received with anger by the Wolf who frightens the farmer with his ferocity. He, then, ironically mentions the *Proverbs* and complains about the current state of things since "'[b]ut lawte (without loyalty) / All vther vertewis (virtues) ar nocht worth ane fle'" (ll. 2285-86). His overt hypocrisy of using religious sources in an attempt to overpower his opponent for his own gain degrades the Wolf's character for the reader even more. The farmer as a last resort asks him at least to present a "witnes that hard [him] hecht thame hail? (promised them all)" (l. 2290). As a result, the Wolf calls Lowrence who comes "lourand, (lurking) for he lufit neuer licht" (l. 2294). The farmer is not at all pleased to see "that sicht," (l. 2296) but, nevertheless, when the Wolf asks Lowrence to tell what he heard a while ago, Lowrence is hesitant to "gif [his] sentence finall;" (l. 2302) but instead proposes to be "iuge amycabill" (l. 2310) to give his verdict if the sides abide. Both sides agree. In the meantime, Lowrence goes to the farmer and implies how bribe can "garris crukit materis hald full euin" (l. 2323). Understanding the hint, the farmer even promises "sex

or seuin / Richt off the fattest hennis off all the floik" (ll. 2326-27). Thereupon, Lowrence goes to the Wolf and expresses the hopelessness of his case if he persists, but tells him that if he "[q]uyte off all clamis," (l. 2352) the farmer promises him a large cheese that weighs "ane stane and sumdeill mair" (l. 2356). A normal wolf would not be tempted by the prospect of cheese instead of an ox, but since Henryson's Wolf is quite human-like, he is easily tempted. The Wolf "bid na mair to flyte, (argue) / Bot [he] would se ȝone cabok off sic pryis" (ll. 2368-69). Thus, they "*hand in hand* (my italics) … held vnto ane hill," (l. 2371) leaving the farmer behind and "[t]hrow woddis waist thir freikis *on fute* (my italics) can fair, / Fra busk to busk, quhill near midnycht and mair" (ll. 2376-77). At last, Lowrence brings the Wolf to a well. In its bottom, the full moon is reflected and Lowrence goes down into the well via the bucket; but complains that "[i]t is sa mekill (heavy)" (l. 2408) for him to carry the cheese up and requires the Wolf's assistance. The greedy Wolf immediately jumps into the other bucket and comes down while the Fox goes up. He asks Lowrence why he is going up while he is going down and the Fox answers: "'thus fairis it off fortoun: / As ane cummis vp, scho quheillis ane vther doun'" (ll. 2418-19). At least, one of these wicked characters is punished in this way and the fable ends with the fox jumping on the ground out of the well. Lowrence's trick against the Wolf is by no means a trick that a natural fox would undertake, but an action and wit that is on par with a human. The Wolf, in this regard, is also not a normal wolf because of his choice of a cheese over an ox. They are just stereotypical human figures who are witty and greedy.

For this reason, in Henryson's moralisation of the fable, just as the Sheep was transported into the moral sphere of the fifth fable, Henryson transports three characters into the moral sphere as they are so that the farmer remains as "ane godlie man" (l. 2434) both in the fable and in the moral, the Wolf becomes "ane wicket man," (l. 2427) and the Fox as "the Fiend" (l. 2435) probably in the sense of an evil trickster figure. However, the rest is moralised according to "both act and setting – the cheese of covetousness, the wood of wicked riches, even the chickens of good works" (Henderson, "Medieval Beasts" 42). This may seem unusual, but as Hendersen asserts it, in this period whether for "social relevance or stylistic innovation, medieval fabulists sometimes varied the explicit meaning they assigned to the beasts and actions of their

inherited, traditional fables" ("Medieval Beasts" 43). Therefore, these equations "must be, not the necessary meanings of the characters and plots in question, but possible meanings that the author chooses at the moment to develop" (Henderson, "Medieaval Beasts" 43). As a result, the chickens are interpreted by Henryson as "good works by which we humans drive off the devil come to claim our souls" (Henderson, "Having Fun" 80) and the cheese as covetousness because it incites appetite in individuals which would "dounwart drawis [us] vnto the pane of hell" (l. 2453). Thus, the fable's moral becomes a warning against indulging in earthly pleasures as in the figures of the Fox and the Wolf.

2. 5. The Wolf and the Wether

"The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman" marks the end of the increasing level of humanity back to animality. This is emphasised with the subject matter of the fable of "The Wolf and the Wether". It narrates the brutal death of the Wether that assumes the appearance and the role of a dog, and chases the Wolf in an attempt to protect the Shepherd's flock. In the end his trick is unveiled when his attire is torn open in pursuit. The Wolf finds out that it is only a Wether and kills him brutally. Thus, the Wether, quite painfully, experiences the "realities of his own character and the results of attempting to exceed those limits" (McKenna 91). As a result, the fable becomes a warning against leaving one's own station and pursuing another's be it species-wise or social-mobility-wise.

In the fable, the decrease of humanity within characters is conducted firstly through the change of power relations that are reduced to a normal state since neither the Wolf nor any other characters including the Wether in the flock considers the Shepherd as his equal or behaves in the way the Fox and the Wolf did in "The Fox, the Wolf and the Husbandman". In this respect, the Shepherd figure is likened to the farmer figure in the beginning of the previous fable that has utmost dominion over all his animals. Still, though the Wether and the Wolf may not be human-like, they are not completely animal-like, either. Just like the hybrid characters of the Fox and the Wolf that talk back to the Cadger in "The Fox the Wolf and the Cadger", these characters are able to talk to

humans as well. In fact, it is the Wether who proposes to the Shepherd to sew the skin of the dead dog on his "heid and crag, bodie, taill, and feit" (l. 2482) so that he will "follow him as fast as" the dog (l. 2488). What is more, the exchanges between the Wether and the Wolf as "maister" (l. 2565) and "[s]chir" (l. 2574) are common just like in the hybridised characters' fables. However, the most important factor is the fact that the characters, especially the Wether behaves contrary to his own nature unlike the animal characters that "tend to act according to their 'kind' [such as] the cock [that] wants its dinner" (Gray 139).

By doing this, the Wether represents the essence of what Henryson is trying to criticise through these hybrid characters. Throughout *Morall Fabillis*, the virtues of "knaw[ing] thame self" (l. 2610) and having a "merry hart with small possessioun" (l. 388) are constantly emphasised. The hybrid characters, however, by reacting first and foremost to their own kind and standing in the middle violate this essential doctrine. Therefore, by simply demanding more, they become corrupt so that through these examples, at least, humans should learn the folly of excessive desire in these creatures. Hence, The Wether's motivation to replace the Dog is a clear sign of corruption. After the Shepherd sews the skin of the dog, he says "'[n]ow off the volff' … 'I haue na dreid'" (l. 2496). As it can be clearly seen, in his motivation to chase the Wolf, his desire for brute force comes to the fore more than his compassion for the Shepherd's flock so that his priority becomes "not merely to protect the flock, but also to hound the Wolf into a state of utter terror (McKenna 491). Therefore, he quickly "[i]n all thingis he counterfeit the dog," (l. 2497) but he does not understand or care to think that his mimicry on the outside does not provide him with the necessary force on the inside. In addition, he has little clue as to what he would do if he caught the Wolf. He just wants to be seen as someone who has the strength to catch a wolf.

The fact that he manages to keep the foxes and the wolves away from the herd for a while fills him with pride which misguides him into believing that he could even overpower these creatures. This becomes especially apparent when the Wether chases the Wolf who in his hunger, desperately catches a lamb from the flock and makes a run for it. Seeing this, the Wether pursues him relentlessly, the Wolf, however, in order to

“mak him lycht, he kest the lamb him fra” (l. 2532). Even if the Wether sees this, he continues his pursuit and says “[i]t is not the lamb, bot the (you), that I desire” (l. 2535). As it can be seen, his excessive confidence actually prepares his downfall: he is blinded by success which as Benson puts it “is only illusory … and once his false skin is stripped away his only defense against the indignant is the lame one that he was not in earnest but only playing” (225). In his final moments, his “humility and the acknowledgement that the wolf is his ‘maister’ both show that the sheep realizes his transgression,” (Kindrick, *Medieval Arts* 125) but it is to no avail. The angry Wolf breaks his neck and eats him. Henryson’s choice of the graphic depiction of the Wether’s death somewhat heightens the effect of the moral that Henryson prepares for his reader.

The moral part, expectedly, urges the reader “[t]hrow similitude of figuris” (l. 2593) to understand the message which “wes fructuous and agreabill” (l. 2690). Thus, Henryson implies that through the narrative part’s main character, that is, the Wether, the moral is hinted for those who are “prudent” (l. 2591). The moral tells that rich garments or splendid appearance make man vain, thus, the moral says avoid “counterfute[ing] ane lord in all degree,” (l. 2598) instead, “knaw thame self” (l. 2610) and “think vpon the wolf and on the wedder” (l. 2615) because in Middle Ages, the belief that everyone’s place is fixed was an established notion and the moral in this regard re-emphasises this doctrine.

The Wether’s character defies his nature and tries to become something that he is not born for. This trait is the essential characteristic of hybrids that determine the actions of this type. As a result, in these fables, these characters desire to assume things outside of their natural capacity and become monks as in the case of the Wolf in “The Fox and the Wolf” or as in this case, a dog. However, they cause only disruption and disarray in the natural order of things and in man-made institutions. In this regard, the moral’s message of “knaw thame self” (l. 2610) becomes the ultimate advice Henryson endeavors to give the reader with this hybrid type.

2. 6. The Wolf and the Lamb

The decrease in the human characteristics attributed to the characters continues with the fable of "The Wolf and the Lamb". In this regard, Henryson's shift back to the Aesopic fables helps him return to animal-like characters. The smooth transition is conducted again by the subject matter of the story similar to the previous fable: the narrative part relates the conflict between the wolf and the lamb by the river. The lamb tries desperately to "reason" with the wolf by presenting logical answers to the wolf's accusations of him polluting the river; the wolf, however, ignores the reasoning of the lamb and in the end devours him. The fatal mistake of the lamb, however, is the fact that he does not understand the premises are, now, the classic animal world of the fable and [r]eason here … can potentially be seen as meaningless" (McKenna 501).

In order to underline the Aesopic fable's classic animal-like characters, Henryson, despite the fable's relative shortness, narrates the animal world by a detailed depiction of natural life similar to the previous animal fables such as "The Cock and the Jasp" or "The Preaching of the Swallow". The "rauenous" (l. 1616) wolf's "[d]escending from ane rotche (cliff) vnto ane well; / To slaik (quench) his thrist" (ll. 1618-19) is described with precision about how a deadly animal, powerful enough to overcome almost every enemy of his is confident in his steps down to the river. Just about this time, a lamb comes without the knowledge of a wolf being there and "in the streme laipit to cule his thrist" (l. 1622). Natural dispositions of each character are reflected in the way they move as well as in the verbal sphere of these animals: the wolf comes to the stream "[t]o slaik (quench) his thrist;" (l.1619) but the lamb wants only to "cule his thrist" (l. 2622). These are expressions that are appropriate for their character in the fable which imply the juxtaposition of strength dominant in the natural world. In addition, unlike the upper-case letters of the characters' names such as Lowrence or Waithskaith, Henryson's use of the lower-case letters in calling "lamb" or "volff" in the fable designates that these two are just regular animals that come down to a river to drink some water.

In the natural world, however, it is not possible for these two animals to stand next to each other and drink in peace. Jill Mann perceives this, and states that "[f]rom the moment that the wolf and the lamb appear side by side, a narrative expectation is established" (Introduction 39). Indeed, at the beginning of the second stanza, Henryson depicts how they drink from the same stream "bot not of ane intent:" (l. 1623) the "innocent" lamb does not have in mind anything but drinking water, however, once the wolf sees him, he plans nothing but attacking the lamb.

The juxtaposition of the "meik" lamb against a "cruell" wolf is also important on the religious level. As Rosamary Greentree notes "[o]f all the creatures of the *Fables*, the lamb is the one bearing the heaviest burden of symbolism in Christian tradition" (*Reader* 25). Apart from the religious signification of the lamb as the symbol of Jesus Christ, as an animal it is also perceived as holy in the Old Testament. A spotless lamb would be sacrificed in the mornings and evenings for the sins of the Israelites and more importantly in the events of God's deliverance of them from Egypt, every household sacrificed a lamb and put its blood on their doors so that God would know that they are Israelites. This event would be later on celebrated as the Passover feast (Wellmann "Lamb of God"). Therefore, the animal itself, contrary to the general conception of animals, was seen as a good, meekly figure and the redeemer of the sins of humans and devising to eat an animal that is laden with religious importance makes a wolf automatically a "rauenous" (l. 2616) figure. This is especially hinted by Henryson in the sixth stanza. In order to indicate the lamb's sinless nature unlike any other animal in nature that scavenges, murders or steals, the lamb states that his "lippis, sen that [he] we sane lam, (since he was born) / Tuitchit na thing that wes contagious, / Bot sowkit milk from pappis off my dam" (ll. 2651-53). The reason for the lamb's speech, however, is the fact that the wolf becomes quite "angrie" (l. 2630) at the lamb's tenacity to come and drink from the same stream with him. Hence, the wolf accuses the lamb "with [his] foull lippis wyle / To glar [the wolf's] drink and this fair watter fyle" (ll. 2635-36). The false allegation, however, is received by the lamb in earnest and as a result, he tries to reason with the wolf. With all due respect to the lamb, Henryson acknowledges his meekness and innocence, but he also does not refrain from using the adjective "selie" (l. 2620,25,37) for the lamb in various instances to indicate his naiveté. The lamb does not

realise that the wolf is actually "his fa (foe)" (l. 2621) in nature as indicated by Henryson. Instead, he is silly enough to believe that "[t]hoct [he] can nocht, nature will me defend," (l. 2644) yet "the logical laws of nature offer no defense" (McKenna 497). Actually, it is nature that will prove him wrong because in a natural world, lambs are the prey for the wolves. Hence, four times the wolf accuses the lamb with false allegations and four times the lamb refuses these allegations by refuting the wolf's argument with reason. However, the lamb does not realise that in the world of animals reason is not required. Even the wolf states this fact to the lamb: "'thou wald intruse ressoun / Quhair wrang and reif (ill-doing) suld duell in propertie'" (ll. 2693-94). In the natural world, violence and power rule, and reason is not required in order to be the right one. This is confirmed with the action of the wolf: he takes the lamb by the neck, [s]one wes he hedit; the volf wald do na grace; / Syne drank his blude and off his flesche can eit / Quhill he wes full; syne went his way on pace" (ll. 2701-03). Thus, the fable ends with the brutal death of the lamb at the hands of a wolf.

Henryson's vivid depiction of the lamb's murder is an intentional act of trying to remind how brutal the natural world is. It is a cruel world where there is no justice or rationality. Hence, only the physically powerful have their say. The fable's bitter satire is that the contemporary world is not very different from the world depicted in the narrative part of the fable. In this respect, this tale becomes the perfect example of Henryson's figuration process: the transposition of the lamb to the "pure pepill" who are "mail men, merchandis, and all laboureris" are living in a world that is not very different from the world of the animals in the narrative part. The wolf also transforms into the "fals extortioneris / And oppressouris of pure men, as we se, / Be violence or craft in suteltie" (ll. 2711-13). Therefore, the degree of similarity in Henryson's figuration between the literal and the symbolic is unique in that the world in the narrative part is not only important in terms of connoting the moral counterpart which is set in the human world, but it is important in its own right in terms of its similarity to the human world. For this reason, the human world that is not very different from the animal world in terms of imposing cruelty by the powerful onto the powerless offers the harshest social criticism of the human condition that can be directed in Henryson's time. Therefore, just like the wolves in the animal world, Henryson identifies "[t]hre kind of

wolfis in this warld" (l. 2714) who make the world an inhabitable place for the people. Their corruptness and indulgence in sin make them animal-like, and the world around them also abides by the rules of the animal world, that is, the powerful oppress the powerless. The first kind are those people of the

> … fals peruerteris of the lawis,
> Quhilk vnder poleit termis falset mingis,
> Lettand that all wer gospel that he schawis;
> Bot for ane bud the pure man he ouerthrawis,
> Smoirand the richt, garrand the wrang proceed (ll. 2715-19).

These people are shown in the fable of "The Sheep and Dog" who subverts the law and with bribe and oppression make the courts give false verdicts about the poor. The second kind are those people of might who are rich but still they are so greedy that "[s]uppois he and his houshald baith suld de / For falt of fude, tharof thay gif na rak, / Bot ouer his heid his mailling will thay tak (ll. 2732-34). The third kind can be adjoined to the previous group since they are the "men of heritage" (l. 2742). These people make the poor people "swing and sweit withoutin meit or wage" (l. 2752). By openly addressing the cruel lords and wealthy people in the society and their treatment of their subjects, Henryson boldly criticises the way of the world. At the end of the moral, Henryson urges the reader to [b]e nocht ane wolf, thus to deuoir the pure!" (l. 2764) and the advice's literal and figural meaning's applicability to the reader is what Henryson tries to achieve throughout the work.

2. 7. The Paddock and the Mouse

The last fable in *Morall Fabillis* is a popular Aesopic animal fable whose immediate source is the Gualterus Anglicus's version of the elegiac *Romulus* (Schrader 183). Briefly, the fable talks about a mouse whose journey is interrupted by a stream. A paddock comes and persuades him to ride on his back to reach the other side, yet in the middle of the lake the paddock tries to drown the mouse. In their struggle, a kite suddenly appears and kills them both. Again, the significance of Henryson's choice of the fable comes from the subject matter and its moral application. For this reason, though this fable "is usually an early tale in fable cycles; and in several collections,

including those of Walter and Caxton and some of the French Isopets, it is consistently the third fable. Henryson places it last in his series after the preparation of the lessons of the preceding fables" (Greentree, "The Debate" 483). The fable is situated at the end due to the fact that in the moral part, Henryson, in his occasionally employed allegorical technique, identifies the paddock as "mannis bodie" (l. 2937) and the mouse as "[t]he saull of man," (l. 2949) thereby displays the main theme of how the soul of man when fettered to the carnal body gets its punishment in this concluding fable and concomitantly brings the work to end.

In order to achieve such a moralisation, however, in creating the characteristic of the mouse, Henryson adds an excessive desire for carnal appetite. This addition helps him to moralise these characters in a more appropriate way because in Gualterus Anglicus's version of the fable, the moral ends with a comment that "those who claim that they are useful [but are not] … perish / One may learn that suffering returns to its author" (qtd. in Schrader 183). Such a moral may justify the death of the paddock but does not account for the death of the seemingly innocent mouse. In order to solve the problem, Robert Henryson forms a different mouse characterisation that has a passionate desire for food. Accordingly, its identification with the soul in the moral part fits more properly with its indulgence in the carnal pleasures of the world.

The narrative part begins with "[a]ne lytill mous come till ane reuer syde:" (l. 2778) trying desperately to reach the other end of the river bank. Nevertheless, her small stature as a tiny animal "force[s] behouit hir to byde;" (l. 2781) since "her schankis (legs) wer sa schort; / Scho culd not swym" (ll. 2779-80). Her animality is further emphasised with the noise she produces as "[s]cho ran, cryand with mony pietuous *peip* (my italics)" (l.2783). In the meantime, "[a]ne paddok, in the watter by, / Put vp hir heid and on the bank can clym" (ll. 2786-87) and asks the mouse "[q]uhat is ȝour errand heir?" (l.2790). To this, the mouse replies: "'[s]eis thow, … 'off corne ȝone iolie flat, / Off ryip aitis, off barlie, peis, and quheit? / I am hungrie, and fane wald be thair at (ll. 2791-3). Thus, with these lines, it is revealed that her intention of reaching the opposite side of the river comes from her desire of the food there. Actually, it is normal for an animal to yearn for food, but what is important here is the mouse's apparent folly to

want more which is criticised throughout *Morall Fabillis*. In fact, Henryson frequently depicts animals as having tendency to follow their carnal needs continually. It is because of this reason that brutal deaths and punishments occur in these fables. For example, Henryson introduces an additional cat figure to the fable of "The Two Mice" so that when the country mouse returns to eat after the steward leaves, the cat figure comes unexpectedly as a punishment for these characters' lust for seeking more food. In this fable, the lust for more food is highlighted especially in the lines when the mouse says "on this syde I get na thing till eit / Bot hard nuttis, quhilkis with my teith I bore" (ll. 2795-96). Hence, it is evident that the mouse is in the wrong not for yearning food but for trying to have more. What is more, her desperate desire to reach the other bank of the river even leads her to listen to the deceitful paddock despite "the frightening physiognomy of the paddock [which] bodes ill for any alliance between them" (Gopen, Introduction 22) and despite the fact that in nature such an alliance is not possible. In their conversation, the "hungry" mouse is so impatient that she even interrupts the paddock's elaborate speech about the physiognomy of every kind in nature with the words: "'Let be thy preiching,' (l. 2851) and asks the paddock how he "wald gyde [her] to ȝone ȝonder land" (l. 2853). According to Douglas Gray, this "is another revealing moment in 'The Paddock and the Mouse' where the little mouse's obsessive desire grows restive during the Paddock's lengthy and learned speech of self-justification" (103). Immediately after this scene, she signals her reconciliatory attitude with the paddock just for the sake of reaching the other side. The paddock, however, makes the most unreasonable suggestion in return when he offers "ane doubill twynit thread / And bind thy leg to [his] with knottis fast:" (ll. 2856-57). Even the mouse doubts such a solution by stating that "'Suld I be bund and fast, quhar I am fre, / In hoip off help? Na than I schrew vs baith, / For I mycht lois baith lyfe and libertie!" (ll. 2861-63). Yet, as Gopen points out she is quick to "allow her appetite to overwhelm her good sense" (Introduction 22) so that after only three lines of such deliberation, the mouse consents to the suggestion only "gif thow [paddock] sweir to [her] the murthour aith" (l. 2865) to safely bring her to the other side. The paddock swears by "Iuppiter, off nature god and king" (l. 2869). Yet, it is a false oath that the reader is now familiar with from the example in "The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger" and a clear sign of the paddock's ill intention. Nevertheless, the urge for the mouse to reach the other side is so strong that

she lets her doubts be "overcome by the toad's superior forensic skills and her own failing greed" (Greentree, "The Debate" 485). Hence, they bind themselves "fute for fute" (l. 2875) and begin to swim. Henryson's description of how these animals "in thair myndis … wer rycht different: / The mous thoct na thing bot to fleit and swym; / The paddok for to droun set hir intent" (ll. 2876-78) is reminiscent of "The Wolf and the Lamb". This is employed by Henryson to reveal the true intention of these animals so that it does not come as a surprise to the reader when they come to the "midwart off the streme," (l. 2879) and the paddock with all his might "preissit doun, / And thoct the mous without mercie to droun" (ll. 2880-81). Henryson describes their struggle in the water with vivid details of animal behaviour: in fear of losing her life, the mouse "forcit hir defend with mycht and mane. / The mous vpwart, the paddok doun can pres; / Quhyle to, quheyle fra, quhyle doukit vp agane" (ll. 2890-92). In the meantime, a kite that "set on ane twist" (l. 2896) takes notice of their ruckus and "with ane wisk, or owthir off thame wist, / He claucht his cluke betuix thame gude speid" (ll. 2899-900) and devours them instantly. The intervention of the kite once again reminds the readers of the brutal quality of nature where the powerful overcome the powerless without a single moment of hesitation. Thus, Henryson ends the tale by nature closing in on these creatures at the end and finalising "thair debait" (l. 2907).

On the subject of the debate, although Henryson states in the Prologue that these "brutal beistis spak and vnderstude, / And to gude purpois dispute and argow," (ll. 44-45) this is nothing more than a quality bestowed by the fable genre. Jill Mann elaborates on the speech issue in the fables and states that it plays only the role of transforming the action part "into a fable rather than the banal recital of an everyday occurrence" (Introduction 40) in nature. It does not help the animal characters to behave differently from the way they are created to behave "because their actions can be assumed to be dictated by nature, and this lends a quasi-inevitability to their actions" (Mann, Introduction 39). Therefore, the function of the ability to speak is mostly to create "tension between the procrastinating conversation and the inexorable forward pressure created by the confrontation of predator and victim [so that it] dramatizes a divergence between words and deeds" (Mann, Introduction 40). Hence, the Cock may or may not elaborate in "The Cock and the Jasp" about the uselessness of the gem for him, either way he will leave it.

The fowls will disregard the advice of the Swallow no matter what and perish by the net of the fowler or the mouse, in this fable, that is the mouse who is determined to reach the other bank in pursuit of her carnal desire will do whatever it takes to get there. In all of these instances, speech is just an element delaying the inevitable end. However, this determinism in the animals is what Henryson is trying to point out. Thus, in the moral part, when he addresses the reader as "[m]y brother," (l. 2910) he expects the reader to have the capacity to learn from these characters' foolishness and "tak aduertence, / be this fabill [so that] thow may persaue and se" (ll. 2910-11). Therefore, during the figuration process, when the final shape of the story yields a meaning for humans, the dissimilarity as well as the similarity of the narrative world and its characters affect the meaning in the moral part. Thus, Henryson's reference to the action of the paddock to urge humans to "be war … with quhome thow fallowis" (l. 2914) because it is better to be alone "[t]han to be matchit with ane wicket marrow" (l. 2917) is important in that the action is similar to what can be observed in human world and dissimilar in terms of the incongruity between an animal and human and their respective potential to better themselves. As a second moral, Henryson also expects the readers to learn from the mouse and the paddock that "[g]rit folie is to gif ouer sone credence / To all that speiks fairlie vnto the" (ll. 2920-21).

Henryson is not satisfied with only one type of moralisation. Because of the fact that it is the final fable, he also supplies his occasional religious allegory to complete it in a unified way. Thus, "each member of the audience from the status of beginner to a standard of proficiency" could enjoy it (Greentree, *Reader* 38). As Edward Wheatley observes, the change from figuration to religious allegory is indicated by the end of "the three ballad stanzas" and the poet's return "to the rhyme royal form" ("Scholastic Commentary" 95). With the change, Henryson identifies the paddock as the "mannis bodie, swymand air and late" (l. 2937). The mouse, however, is identified as "[t]he saull of man betakin may in deid - / Bundin, and fra the bodie may not twyn" (ll. 2949-50). The water, however, is the world "[i]n quhilk the saull and body ewer steirrand" (l. 2957). In this respect, Jamieson "interpret[s] the water as the world of sin into which man is immersed" (qtd. in Moses 48) and accordingly, the body and soul that struggle, in the water, takes on a more appropriate meaning. Lastly, the kite is "deith, that

cummis suddandlie" (l. 2962) and with this identification, Henryson once again urges the reader to "[b]e vigilant … and ay reddie / For mannis lyfe is brukill and ay mortall" (ll. 2964-65) because only "gud deidisi for deith will the assay" (l. 2967). He ends the work by addressing the reader one last time with an "[a]dew," (l. 2969) by expressing his intention to leave the work "vnto the freiris, / To mak a sample or similitude" (ll. 2971-72) which explains the reason of his overtly religious fable and with a prayer to Christ for the salvation of the soul of humans.

2. 8. Epilogue

Morall Fabillis ends with an Aesopic animal fable that "offers several layers of meaning in the tale and its lengthy *moralitas*" (Greentree, "The Debate" 481). As the last fable, it ties the work by dealing especially with "a premortal body and soul debate, which shows the spirit's inability to control the corruptible flesh, the body's longing to destroy the soul, and their mutual loathing" (Greentree "The Debate" 486). This gives us an indication of Henryson's vision of the human condition as a pessimistic one. In fact, this idea is reflected in the whole of the second cycle as opposed to the first cycle of fables, the second one, "[w]ith the exception of the central dream vision, … is not a happy one" (Gopen, Introduction 23). It has been argued that as the numerical, and structural mid-point of *Morall Fabillis*, the "The Lion and the Mouse" offers the central object of the work, that is, the "triumph in favour of mercy," (Spearing, "Central and Displaced" 256) good conduct and prudence. However, after this fable, Henryson makes a sharp turn as if to contrast the utopic world with real life so that in the last six fables, he displays "a world of deadly sins, with sadness overcoming joy and depravity overcoming innocence, ... It is filled with persecution, suffering, irresponsible trickery, studied injustice, and sheer gratuitous malevolence" (Gopen, Introduction 23).

For this reason, the fowls are brutally killed in "The Preaching of the Swallow" and the swallow flies away in sadness. In "The Fox, The Wolf, and the Cadger," the wolf may come to the point of death, yet he is still saved. On the other hand, the Cadger is cheated out of his fish, and Lowrence triumphs at the end of the day by means of his tricks unlike in the first cycle. "The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman" follows the same

pattern: the wolf is left in the well, yet he is not killed, the Husbandman is cheated out of his hens in pursuit of justice, and Lowrence gets away with his trickery. The last three fables depict an even grimmer atmosphere. The Wether is viciously killed by the wolf in "The Wolf and the Wether", the lamb's death at the hand of the Wolf is graphically depicted in "The Wolf and the Lamb", finally, both of the characters in "The Paddock and the Mouse" fall prey to the kite.

Henryson's pessimistic vision is reflected in the formation of the cycle as well. Similar to the previous cycle, the second one starts with two fables that contain animal-like characters which are "The Lion and the Mouse" and "The Preaching of the Swallow". They are followed by a fable, "The Fox, the Wolf and the Cadger", whose characters are hybrids. The tendency towards the human-like reaches its climax at the centre of the cycle with "The Fox, the Wolf, and the Husbandman". Again, the importance of centrality comes to the foreground since only this fable focuses on the human quality of justice in this cycle which has a crucial role in situating the characters more on the human side. After this fable, symmetrically, human qualities begin to decrease in the characters again. As a result, "The Wolf and the Wether" contains characters that are more hybridised in nature and finally Henryson finishes the work with two fables that contain animal-like characters which are "The Wolf and the Lamb" and "The Paddock and the Mouse". In this regard, the last two animal fables not only end the second cycle by forming a "circular pattern" (Calin 101) within the cycle, but end the work that starts with two animal fables as well so that it becomes an act that unifies *Morall Fabillis* into one whole by making it a large circle. However, the circular pattern as a geometrical figure offers no progress but endless repetition. Therefore, it could be argued that Henryson's pessimistic view in the last *moralitas* in which the soul and the body go up and down in the world finds an expression in the circular pattern of animal-like, hybrid and human-like fable characters that sway from one type to another endlessly. However, there is still a glimmer of hope for humanity and this could be achieved only by the *moralitas* laden with religious guidience "may leir and beir away / Sum thing thairby heirefter may auaill?" (ll. 1402-3) because humans have the capacity to use their reason and direct themselves to good conduct. For this, Henryson's intention of leaving these fables "vnto the freiris, / To mak a sample or similitude" (ll. 2971-72) shows his

eagerness to elevate the condition of humankind. His prayer to the Lord for our “saull and lyfe” (l. 2974) in this respect, indicates this attitude.

CONCLUSION

Morall Fabillis is Robert Henryson's collection of fables that have one prologue and thirteen interconnected fables which are derived from the tradition of Aesopic fables and beast epics. It stands distinct from the traditional fable collections in terms of its quantitatively low number of fables. The reason comes from the fact that unlike the tendency of perceiving fables as a repertoire of ethical narratives out of which a suitable fable is recounted for a certain situation, Robert Henryson endeavors to create a unified work by intentionally selecting a limited amount of fables all of which illustrate the work's main theme of humans indulging in earthly temptations. In order to achieve this plan, Robert Henryson creates three types of characters namely animal-like, hybrid and human-like, and the fables of these character types are arranged in an orderly fashion that invokes structural and thematic unity.

For this reason, the purpose of this thesis has been to analyse the characters of Robert Henryson in *Morall Fabillis* in the light of the main theme of carnality which ties both the work as a whole and the narrative and the moral part of each fable within the work, and to illustrate how he employs the genre for Christian moralisation. In this regard, the work has been analysed as a unified whole which is a quality that differentiates it from the previous fable writers and their collections in the Middle Ages. The Great Chain of Being has been regarded as the primary concept that inspired Robert Henryson to produce a work which combines the overall theme of carnality with the Great Chain of Being's popular notion that when humans indulge in sinful actions, and neglect using their reason, they lower themselves down to the level of animals. Hence, it is argued that, the combination of these ideas is reflected on the character formations in the fables as animal-like, hybrid and human-like, and the arrangement of these characters with their respective fables in the work is reflective of the idea of the place of man in the Great Chain of Being in his transition from animal to human and back to animal in an ascending and descending order.

From the classical times to the Middle Ages, the fable as a genre was actually regarded as an aid for teaching Latin because of its suitability to endless paraphrasing and re-

phrasing. However, after the twelfth century, the genre attracted the attention of a growing number of authors outside of its general use as a school text. Especially the newly arising Franciscan and Dominican orders helped fable reach large populations since they "had given an enormous impulse to preaching and greatly modified its character [so that] it became [increasingly] necessary to interest and amuse the common people and the preachers soon had to have at their command repositories of stories" (Crane 327). The change in the preaching tradition popularised the use of the genre in the churches throughout Europe and after the twelfth and thirteenth century, authors began to take these classical fables and appropriate their story and moral parts to the time period they were living in. This became an act which opened up new possibilities for the fable genre so that they were used to comment on the social and religious malpractices in the late Middle Ages.

In this regard, Odo of Cheriton wrote a fable collection in the early thirteenth century in which he criticised the clergy of his time as a monk. He was also one of the first fabulists to use allegorical exegesis to the fictional animals in the same manner employed in *Physiologus* and bestiaries. His work is important in that it is considered as a "constituent in the development of narrative and rhetorical possibilities for the form" (Kretzchmar 416). Other than that, his fables lack the narratorial wit, and liveliness of characters when compared to Robert Henryson and their morals are highly reminiscent of the style of a monk's preaching seriousness and dullness whereas Henryson manages to keep the tone and the style elevated even in his morals, thereby offering a more consistent and lofty style.

Another important fabulist of the Middle Ages is Marie de France. In her fable collection, she uses these narratives for "topical courtly rather than generic moral ends" (Kretzchmar 416) that does not focus on religious subjects. In her fables, animals are no longer merely strong or weak in the physical sense, but display superiority over one another in terms of their hierarchical status as lords or barons. This indicates her appropriation of the fable genre for social criticism, however, as Burçin Erol rightly observes, her criticism towards the nobility is generally mild, and though she criticises cruel and unjust lords, she does not attempt to challenge the status quo (76). Therefore,

her fables may be superior to Odo's, but when compared to Robert Henryson's, criticisms of kings, barons and the clergy are more specific and detailed in the latter one. For example, Henryson uses his knowledge of law in order describe scenes in judicial courts as reallistically as possible, also his criticism of the clergy and laymen are harsh and to the point.

Although there were other fabulists such as Gualterus Anglicus whose fables from the Romulus tradition were the major source of Henryson's, or Berechiah ben Natronai, who was a Jewish fabulist in the thirteenth century and had written a collection of fables with religious morals, or Nigel de Longchamps, who experimented with the narrative part and expanded it dramatically in his *Speculum Stultorum* (Kretzchmar 416), Robert Henryson emerges as one of the finest examples of these fabulists who appropriates and expands both the narrative and moral parts of his fables. However, it should be noted that "this expansion is by no means a simple elaboration of the incidents narrated in the original, but is instead a highly selective process in which those elements, and only those, which Henryson regards as central to … the tale are expanded" (MacDonald 101). Hence, the narrative parts are embellished with lengthy dialogues, character details, references to the social, economic and political institutions of Henryson's time all of which contribute to formation of characters with varying degrees of animality and humanity in them. The moral part's focus is also shifted from mostly secular and practical advice to an expanded study of "encyclopaedic exploration of human sin" (Lyall, "A New Maid Channoun" 19). As a result, the notion that carnality makes humanity bestial becomes the main theme of *Morall Fabillis*. In this respect, Henryson's combination of the idea of the Great Chain of Being with the fable genre's bestial characters emphasises this overriding theme in an unprecedented way. By making use of this idea, Robert Henryson intends to show that when Christian virtues are neglected, and human rationality is forsaken, humans downgrade themselves to the level of animals. They neglect their angelic attributes, and indulge in carnal appetites so that they become "indistinguishable" from animals. This view is reflected in the formation of human-like characters that are veiled under the thin guise of animal appearance whose outer appearance implies their sinful nature and indulgence in carnal pleasures.

Along with human-like characters and the animal-like characters, Robert Henryson creates another type of character which embodies qualities pertaining to both the animal and the human side as a result of which they are called hybrids. Their formation as character type has been perceived as holding a double-sided perspective for the reader. First of all, through them Henryson displays a fantasy world similar to the real world, yet in this world chaos, corruption and sin reign over society, and religious and social institution are disarrayed. This is taken as an implication that when irrational animals assume the role of humans, only chaos could ensue. Secondly, such a representation works as a criticism towards humans since the similarity of the conditions in these fables to the real world is an indication that the contemporary world is full of corrupt and sinful people giving priority to their carnal appetites, thereby making the world an abominable place.

Robert Henryson's creation of these two character types along with the animal-like characters offers a new way of emphasising the work's general theme how humans indulge in earthly temptations. Normally, in fables, animal characters and their actions in the narrative part are transposed into the human sphere with a reduced value since the narrative part is only a tool for a human-centred moral to be pointed out. The morals are referred by the narrative part's overall account of events, yet any story containing the same point might replace the story in question. However, in Henryson's fables, the general theme of indulgence in earthly pleasures ties the fables' narrative parts and their respective characters to their morals since whether they are animal-like, hybrid or human-like is indispensable for the moral analysis Henryson offers in these fables. Therefore, the creation of three types of distinct character types and the placement of humans to the narrative part re-emphasise the moral's point in the narrative part by offering a human point of view in the narrative part. Henryson's usage of human character type along with the hybrid and animal-like character types signify that humans are not very different from these character types when they are sinful. Thus, the introduction of these new character types bring the emphasis of the morals to the narrative part and enabled the narrative part to be as important as the moral part.

In addition, in *Morall Fabillis*, the fable of each character type is positioned in a way that is reflective of the Great Chain of Being and human's inbetween nature. The work is partitioned into two in terms of thematic unity which reveals in the first part a gradational scale from the animal characters to hybrids then to human characters that is reminiscent of the works of the clerics in whose *exampla* "humans were included within the chain of beings, either at the beginning or at the end, depending on whether the classification was carried out in ascending or in descending order" (Resl, Introduction 22). Thus, the first cycle's gradational scale from animal-like to human-like in an ascending order is reminiscent of the Great Chain of Being. The second part, however, puts the fable with the human-like characters at the centre so that the cycle starts with animal-like characters, reaches to human-like and then goes back to the animal-like characters. This triangular shape at the centre of which human-like characters stand also manifests the Great Chain of Being, and the upward and downward movement becomes an additional tool to suggest the work's main theme of human's inbetween nature in terms of human's quality to quickly shift his nature from animal-like to human-like or vice versa. Thus, the work's main theme is reflected in its character formation, in its story, in its moral and in its arrangement of the tales, thereby it forms one unified whole encapsulating and emphasising the theme within its structure.

It has to be noted, however, that in the process of grouping the characters under these three types in the fables, characters are observed under a certain category if most of their characteristics are found to correspond with that category. Yet, Henryson is intent on blurring the lines and occasionally ascribes to the characters human qualities that are mostly animals or animal qualities to characters that are mostly human. Henryson has various reasons for this depiction such as for comic effect or social criticism when it is appropriate. Still, such a shift does not hinder the ultimate animality or humanity of these characters.

In conclusion, unlike his predecessors such as Gualterus Anglicus, Odo of Cheriton or Marie de France whose works were random compilations of fables, Henryson's *Morall Fabillis* is a unified work of literature whose fables are consciously selected, arranged and tied together by the theme of human's indulgence in earthly pleasures and vices.

This is a clear indication that Henryson treated the fable genre as a serious form of expression and utilised it, made additions and appropriated it in order to convey his thoughts about the general human condition in the period he was living in. In this regard, he has used his poetic gift in order to convince his readers and contemporaries about the importance of following reason, being graceful, merciful and just. As a poet, he points out the ills of the society, "[a]s a countryman, he knows his animals [and] as a Scot, he knows his fellow-men" (Wood 19). Therefore, by combining them altogether, he creates a literary work that offers new interpretations.

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APPENDIX 1: ORIGINALITY REPORTS

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
YÜKSEK LİSANS/DOKTORA TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ORJİNALLİK RAPORU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih:14/07/2015

Tez Başlığı / Konusu: İnsan olan Hayvanlar mı yoksa Hayvan olan İnsanlar mı? Robert Henryson'ın *Morall Fabillis*'indeki İnsan ve Hayvan İlişkisi

Yukarıda başlığı/konusu gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 117 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 11/06/2015 tarihinde şahsım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda belirtilen filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı alıntılar hariç %1'dir.

Uygulanan filtrelemeler:

1- Kabul/Onay ve Bildirim sayfaları hariç,
2- Kaynakça hariç
3- Alıntılar hariç
4- 5 kelimeden daha az örtüşme içeren metin kısımları hariç

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Çalışması Orjinallik Raporu Alınması ve Kullanılması Uygulama Esasları'nı inceledim ve bu Uygulama Esasları'nda belirtilen azami benzerlik oranlarına göre tez çalışmamın herhangi bir intihal içermediğini; aksinin tespit edileceği muhtemel durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

14.07.2015

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

Adı Soyadı: Ulaş Özgün
Öğrenci No: N11237989
Anabilim Dalı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Programı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Statüsü: ☒ Y.Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐ Bütünleşik Dr.

DANIŞMAN ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

Prof. Dr. Burçin Erol

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
THESIS/DISSERTATION ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Date:14/07/2015

Thesis Title / Topic: Animals as Humans or Humans as Animals? A Study of Human and Animal Relationship in Robert Henryson's *Morall Fabillis*

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Name Surname: Ulaş Özgün
Student No: N11237989
Department: English Language and Literature
Program: English Language and Literature
Status: ☒ Masters ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Integrated Ph.D.

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED.

Prof. Dr. Burçin Erol

APPENDIX 2: ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORMS FOR THESIS WORK

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
TEZ ÇALIŞMASI ETİK KURUL İZİN MUAFİYETİ FORMU

HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih:14/07/2015

Tez Başlığı / Konusu: İnsan olan Hayvanlar mı yoksa Hayvan olan İnsanlar mı? Robert Henryson'ın *Morall Fabillis*'indeki İnsan ve Hayvan İlişkisi

Yukarıda başlığı/konusu gösterilen tez çalışmam:

1. İnsan ve hayvan üzerinde deney niteliği taşımamaktadır,
2. Biyolojik materyal (kan, idrar vb. biyolojik sıvılar ve numuneler) kullanılmasını gerektirmemektedir.
3. Beden bütünlüğüne müdahale içermemektedir.
4. Gözlemsel ve betimsel araştırma (anket, ölçek/skala çalışmaları, dosya taramaları, veri kaynakları taraması, sistem-model geliştirme çalışmaları) niteliğinde değildir.

Hacettepe Üniversitesi Etik Kurullar ve Komisyonlarının Yönergelerini inceledim ve bunlara göre tez çalışmamın yürütülebilmesi için herhangi bir Etik Kuruldan izin alınmasına gerek olmadığını; aksi durumda doğabilecek her türlü hukuki sorumluluğu kabul ettiğimi ve yukarıda vermiş olduğum bilgilerin doğru olduğunu beyan ederim.

Gereğini saygılarımla arz ederim.

14.07.2015

Adı Soyadı: Ulaş Özgün
Öğrenci No: N11237989
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Programı: İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Statüsü: ☒ Y.Lisans ☐ Doktora ☐ Bütünleşik Dr.

DANIŞMAN GÖRÜŞÜ VE ONAYI

UYGUNDUR.

Prof. Dr. Burçin Erol

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORM FOR THESIS WORK

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE TO THE DEPARTMENT PRESIDENCY

Date:14/07/2015

Thesis Title / Topic: Animals as Humans or Humans as Animals? A Study of Human and Animal Relationship in Robert Henryson's *Morall Fabillis*

My thesis work related to the title/topic above:

1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people.
2. Does not necessitate the use of biological material (blood, urine, biological fluids and samples, etc.).
3. Does not involve any interference of the body's integrity.
4. Is not based on observational and descriptive research (survey, measures/scales, data scanning, system-model development).

I declare, I have carefully read Hacettepe University's Ethics Regulations and the Commission's Guidelines, and in order to proceed with my thesis according to these regulations I do not have to get permission from the Ethics Board for anything; in any infringement of the regulations I accept all legal responsibility and I declare that all the information I have provided is true.

I respectfully submit this for approval.

14.07.2015

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ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL

APPROVED.

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