



## ***The Time Machine as a Dystopian and Apocalyptic Fiction***

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### **Abstract**

**Aims and Objectives:** *The present paper Time Machine as a Dystopian and Apocalyptic Fiction is a modest attempt to explore and analyse H.G. Wells' extraordinary work of science fiction namely The Time Machine (1895). This paper also aims to synthesize its predictions about a gloomy and apocalyptic future and retrospection over the checks and balances of rampant use of industrialization, science and technology i.e. Frankenstein's monster.*

**Methodology and Approach:** *The study is based on the primary text supplementing with secondary and web sources. A short comparison is also being made with some very powerful dystopian fictions. The methods and approaches adopted for writing this paper are analytical, observational and critical.*

**Outcome:** *This paper offers a profound critique of unchecked capitalism, consumerism and the class divisions that stirred up the late 19th-century Victorian society and the contemporary era as well. The Time Machine is, in many ways, a vehement attack to the popular utopian fiction of the period. Wells also reverses a core belief that scientific and technological advancement would, inevitably, lead to a better future.*

**Conclusion and Suggestions:** *HG Wells is not completely against the use of modern tools and machinery for progress and advancement rather he argues that the technological innovations and progress can lead the humans to the new height but it would not be able to prevent societal degradation and degeneration. Hence, to prevent the further damages and dangers, the modern world needs a comprehensive self-analysis, sustainable techniques and a mutual agreement between ecology and technology to build an ideal and healthy society.*

**Keywords:** Dystopia, Utopia, Science, Technology, Ecology, Checks and Balances, Capitalism, Society, Frankenstein's Monster.

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Science and its twin products, industrialization and technology, have always been fascinating subjects for historians, philosophers and researchers. Science fiction is a genre of literature where an amalgamation of fact and fantasy can be envisaged.

One of the most important features of science fiction is to predict the gloomy and apocalyptic future. In fact, technological advancement and its effect on human beings are one of the dominant forces of most utopian and dystopian narratives. It must be noted that the term dystopian fiction is a subgenre of science fiction. The setting of dystopian fiction is extraordinarily bleak and it also abstains from using abstract ideals that can be found in novels of other genres. Contrary to the fiction of other genres, the setting and plot of dystopian fiction appear to be real as well as quite a modern. A dystopian fiction portrays the results of blatant misuse of technology in a social milieu. It makes the readers visualize the apocalyptic future of the world.

A dystopian novel, thus, acts as a literary tool for criticism of technology highlighting the negative tendencies and outcomes of technological advancements. A dystopian fiction foresees that the establishment of a technical world produces a drastic change not only in human lives but in human-environment relations as well. The consequence of such change is that mankind does not only benefit from the progressive technology but it also endures mass damage in the long run as well as in everyday life.

Dystopian science fiction has the quality of having a direct appeal to the minds of its readers and it is this incredible feature of dystopian fiction that fascinated me to probe into it. The novel taken into account for this study is H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* (1895) which is considered an archetypal work of dystopian fiction. Through this masterpiece, H.G. Wells depicted a gloomy side of the rule of totalitarianism, technology, and globalism, the total alienation of human beings from nature, the vanishing of traditional cultural values, and the freedom of an individual.

No matter how bleak the depiction of a dystopian world but the primary motive of his literary corpus is that they have a critical function through their social-philosophical, referential, and ideal meaning. The aim of this research

paper is not only to reveal the bleak side of a dystopian work but also to focus on its brighter aspect that warns future generations about the ill effects of too much dependency on human beings on technology. The coterie of dystopian writers like H.G. Wells, George Orwell, Aldous Huxley, Ray Bradbury, and Frank Herbert have very skillfully used their works to raise their voice that if technology is not used wisely then it would lead the future society to sink into a technocratic dreariness. Overall, this paper suggests that dystopian narratives depict repressive states' strategies of domination and they also offer avenues of liberation through admonition.

It is very difficult to find out famous scientists who also touch the main thread of literature. The scientist is almost unknown in mainstream fiction as the path that a scientist and a writer follow are different. But the progenitor and the patron saint of one such band of writers is Herbert George Wells and his innovation in the field of literature was science fiction i.e., fiction based on scientific logic and techniques.

As an illustrator and innovator, Herbert George Wells was both a celebrator and a propagandist of the modern age. Harold Bloom in his book *Bloom's Modern Critical Views: H. G. Wells* quotes the words of Brian Aldiss and proclaims Wells as "the Shakespeare of science fiction" (1). Wells considered himself a tale fabricator who was unexpectedly a student of science. Steven Mclean in his book *The Early Fiction of H.G. Wells: Fantasies of Science* quotes the words, Wells, as, "I am simply a storyteller who happens to be a student of science. If a man writes the best that is in him, he cannot help some of his serious speculations appearing" (1). Before dealing with the genius of Wells, the paper discusses a brief biographical overview of his life.

H.G. Wells was born on September 21 in the year 1866 in Bromley, England. Wells was the son of Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Sarah Neal Wells. In his childhood, Wells voraciously read a lot of books that played a curious part in

expanding and developing his imaginative world. His ideas of political and international relations were shaped greatly by the various characters in the books he read. At Midhurst Grammar School, Wells became acquainted with science as a subject; he also won a scholarship to study at the Normal School of Science in South Kensington, London. It was a college for the training of science teachers. Normal School of Science, which was later known as the Imperial College of Science was founded in part by the respectable biologist T.H. Huxley. During his first year in college, Wells got a chance to study under Huxley. Huxley's lecture of 1893 named 'Evolution and Ethics' had an indelible effect on the main tenets of Wells' philosophy. Wells owes a lot to T.H. Huxley for his interest in science and evolution. Critic Krishan Kumar in his book *Utopia and Anti-utopia in Modern Times* remarks, "Evolutionary theory, as interpreted by Huxley and modified by the law of entropy, came closest to providing the unifying framework that he [Wells] always sought in all his speculations" (177). Huxley provided an altogether different view of humanity to Wells and this is asserted by the well-known critic Robert Crossley in his book *H.G. Wells* through these words, "Providing an antidote to the stifling Christianity in which Wells had been reared, Huxley equipped Wells to construct an alternative view of the universe and to ask the questions that generated the fictional masterpieces of the 1890's" (13). This ascertains that Wells was highly impressed by Huxley's teachings. In fact, in his autobiography, Wells recalls the time he spent with Huxley as: "That year I spent in Huxley's class, was beyond all question, the most educational year of my life" (161).

Wells followed the footsteps of T.H. Huxley by being a professional teacher of science and author of successful textbooks on biology and physical geography. Wells also took his bachelor's degree in science stream from London University in the year 1890. Thus, during his formative years, Wells acquired the mindset of a scientist. In the meantime, the continuous efforts and transparency

of Huxley's prose aroused a literary faculty in Wells' scientific mind and temper which helped him to analyze modern society through a realistic approach. This rare combination of science and literature forced him to become a sociologist and a rational prophet of upcoming events and years. After leaving the Normal School he serialized a novella in the same journal titled "The Chronic Argonauts" which was the remote archetype of *The Time Machine*. In the next few years, many more stories and essays appeared in his South Kensington journal.

H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine* brought about technological innovation in the genre of science fiction by introducing the notion of the time machine. Admiring Wells' novel, Issacs Asimov, a well-known science fiction writer, remarks in the introduction of the novel that: "*The Time Machine* marked something new in the history of science fiction. As far as scientists knew, in 1895 or 1968. . . The notion of a time machine was impossible" (8). The three powerful scientific romances namely *The Island of Dr. Moreau* in 1896, *The Invisible Man* in 1897, and *The War of the Worlds* in 1898 were published by Wells. These works have been recognized as classical texts and have remained in print for years after their publication. In the year 1899, the novel *When the Sleeper Wakes* was published which provided the basis and raw material for the great dystopian fiction of the twentieth century. Mark Hillegas in his book *The Future as Nightmare* commented about H.G. Wells in the following manner:

There is nothing new, of course, in the idea that a relationship exists between H.G. Wells and the anti-utopias of the twentieth century. . . but none of those who have commented on this relationship have done more certain anti-utopias are counter Wellsian or that their general scheme is foreshadowed by Wells.

(4)

Many dystopian writers adopted ideas from the novel *When the Sleeper Wakes* to produce their dystopian works. The Russian writer Yevgeny Zamyatin's

novel *We* was influenced by Wells' story 'A Story of the Days to Come' and his novel *When the Sleeper Wakes*. The theme and the plot of *We* share a good deal of similarity with the above-mentioned works of Wells. The plot of the novel *We* is analogous to the plot of *When the Sleeper Wakes* as it depicts the revolt of D-503 against the restraints of the state which is similar to the Sleeper's struggle to free its province from the clutches of Ostrog. In the opinion of Krishan Kumar, "Zamyatin's attack on the scientific utopia drew on the early Wells. But he went beyond Wells in his stylistic innovations and the depth of his critique of the scientific rational mode of thought and existence"(229).

Wells' ideas in his later fiction were mostly utopian. After 1900 Wells shifted his attention to his second career and that is as a social philosopher. As a socialist, he decided to give his services to the work of world reconstruction. His book *Anticipations of the Reactions of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought* published in 1901 is a product of the socialist Wells. Just like an astrologer, Wells forecasted much earlier in 1901 that the whole world would be under the control of a single state following its rules and regulations which he called as 'World Order'. The concept of Wellsian 'World Order' is not only followed by a large number of utopian writers but many mainstream scientists too. Wells explains in the first chapter of *Anticipations of the Reactions of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought* his motive for writing this book is:

It is proposed in this book to present in as orderly an arrangement as the necessarily diffused nature of the subject admits, certain speculations about the trend of present forces, speculations which, taken all together, will build up an imperfect and very hypothetical, but sincerely intended forecast of the way things will probably go in this new century. (2)

The present and future generations look up to H.G. Wells not only as a great writer but also as a utopian who led to the development of future studies. Wells had in fact set very high standards in the genre of science fiction on which the performance of the upcoming writers can be measured. He can be called the most influential utopian voice of the twentieth century. His book *Anticipations of the Reactions of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought* can be considered a landmark in the history of predictive writing since the subject matter of the book incorporates all the possible technological developments which were expected from the progress of science during the twentieth century. H.G. Wells was a versatile writer. He wrote not only fiction but also explored his art of writing in non-fiction, screenplays, textbooks, essays, articles, etc. According to W. Warren Wagar, “. . . H.G. Wells was a merchant of ideas. From beginning to end, he traded in ideas, most vast and grand” (2).

Being a missionary of modern science, Wells started his writing career by writing sciencefiction. The early science fictions of Wells portray the features of dystopia while his later novels were based more on the lines of utopia or ‘constructive socialism’ as he called it. This paper deals with the portrayal of dystopia in the novels of H.G. Wells, focusing mainly on the novel *The Time Machine*. H.G. Wells was also known by many names, ‘the man who invented future’, ‘father of science fiction’ and such tags suffice to tell his importance to the modern literary world. *The Time Machine* and *The War of the Worlds* were the works that can be said to havebrought credit of popularity to Wells. Although Wells can be called a utopian writer, his books *The Time Machine*, *The War of the Worlds*, and *When the Sleeper Wakes* tend to be more inclined towards dystopia. Some other genres into which his first two novels can be categorized are speculative science fiction, social critiques and invasion literature.

Both the genres, utopia and dystopia, seem to have been inspired by the discontent prevalent in the society during the nineteenth and twentieth century.



However, the roots of dystopian literature can be considered to be in the specific social and political conditions prevalent during that period. Much of Wells' writings also seem to have been stimulated by the economic, political and social scenarios existing in contemporary society during his time.

The novel of this study *The Time Machine* was published in 1895. This novel can be regarded as the first step Wells toward the genre of dystopian fiction. The novel is more a social critique rather than a scientific work. The concept of time travel by using a machine was an innovation in the realm of literature. Wells was the pioneer who introduced time traveling through a machine in the fictional world. In fact, Wells established the notion of time travel by ascertaining time as the fourth dimension along with length, breadth and height. One of its main characters, the time traveler, explains it in the following words:

There are four dimensions, three of which we call the three planes of Space, and a fourth, Time. There is, however, a tendency to draw an unreal distinction between the former three dimensions and the latter because it happens that our consciousness moves intermittently in one direction along the latter from the beginning to the end of our lives. (Wells 22)

Even though Wells' explanation of time as the fourth dimension was faulty according to Einstein's theory of relativity but how it was offered in the novel was so good that it sounded plausible. In the introduction to the books, *The Time Machine* and *The War of the Worlds*, Issac Asimov comments on Wells' explanation of time, "Wells found that the reader will accept fantasy for the sake of the story as long as that fantasy is given at least a partially scientific cloak" (9). These ideas make the fantasized notion of time given by the time traveler in *The Time Machine* sound scientific.

From the perspective of modern utopia or socialism, the novel appears to be more a social novel than a scientific one. At the beginning of the novel, the time traveler assumes the future society to be a utopia but gradually when he becomes acquainted with Elois and the Morlocks and the suppression of Morlocks by Elois, then his view of the utopian society turns into a dystopian one. It has been observed that Wells was always obsessed with the class struggle and he had shown the same in the novel *The Time Machine*. In fact, Wells grew up with that class distinction in his childhood. His mother used to do household work in an elite house and his father also struggled to make the ends meet. According to Caudwell, Wells presents the proletariats that are the (Morlocks) as animalistic in *The Time Machine* since "Wells comes from a class that regards the proletariat not as passive inferior brutes but as something dirty and evil and dangerous and near" (93). The difference between the rich and the poor was always known to him. Wells has argued in his articles that privilege should be given to an individual based on the intellect of the person rather than his fate of being born in a bourgeois or proletariat society.

The obsession with the class difference in Wells is apparent in *The Time Machine*. The future society of *The Time Machine* is dichotomized into a pseudo-utopian and a dystopian one. The Elois represents the pseudo-utopian part of the society and the Morlocks are indicative of the dark, gloomy dystopian society. Wells has portrayed a bleak future for the human beings in the novel which gives it a dystopian perspective. The plot of the novel is set in the future which becomes clear from the words of the time traveler when he explains the same, he says, "Eight Hundred and Two Thousand Seven Hundred and One A.D. For that, I should explain, was the date the dials of my machine recorded" (Wells 46).

In Wells' era, England had two classes, aristocratic and working. While the higher noble classes leisured and enjoyed life, the working classes toiled away in questionable conditions to provide comfort to the elite class. This

disparity in the nature of work over prolonged periods coupled with the progressive, or rather degenerative evolution that is (de-evolution) ultimately led to the upper classes losing all their ability to work and the lower classes becoming rather monstrous due to the lack of feasible conditions of livelihood.

Etymologically it can be referred that the word Morlocks sounds a lot like the Phoenician God. Moloch was associated with child sacrifice in the Bible. “Mors” is also the Latin root word for death. As for Elois, it resembles Elohim, which is the Hebrew word for God. Elcis are fragile and childlike, and with all their flowers, feasting and merry-making, they seem a lot like the ancient Greeks or Romans, with their famous festivals of revelry.

A dystopian view of Darwin’s theory of evolution can also be seen in Wells as he has put forward the notion of devolution in the form of the degeneration of Elois. Wells goes to the extent of using divergent terms in the novel to depict the contrast between the worlds of Elois and Morlocks. Elois was the daylight being while Morlocks the underground creatures who preferred darkness in comparison to daylight. Morlocks were carnivorous on the other hand Elois were frugivorous creatures, that is their diet included just fruits. Elois were fragile creatures but the Morlocks were robust. The time traveler describes the Elois as, “He struck me as being a very beautiful and graceful creature, but indescribably frail” (Wells 40).

Thus, from the description of the time traveler, one comes to know that the Elois was beautiful and the Morlocks were ugly.

Morlocks on the other hand, evolved (de-evolved) from the lower classes. They are portrayed as having more initiative power; they were more diligent but had no clothes and they used to eat meat, in contrast to the herbivorous palettes of the Elois. Morlocks have been charged with conjuring images of dread, disgust and loathing in the book, and they do so. They live underground, eat the Elois and are afraid of fire.

Ironically, they resemble the time traveler a lot in their scientific inquiries and desire to eat meat. Yet, it appears that both the time traveler and perhaps even Wells are more sympathetic to the Eloi rather than Morlocks. The apparent bias towards Eloi can be traced back to the fact that the time traveler appears rather rich, and so do all his friends. Eloi (Elois) are the dwellers of the space above the ground however, Wells uses the underground residence of Morlocks as a symbol of domination of Morlocks to bring out a fear that humans have always had the fear of domination.

Wells attempts to fathom the answer to the question of the distant future of human beings in the novel *The Time Machine*. He skillfully draws a contrast between the Eloi and the Morlocks to portray the greatest problem that the world faces today, which is the class difference and the economic gap that exists between the rich and the poor. Wells employs the novel to warn the readers about the consequences that the human race might have to confront in the future if the growth of capitalism is left unchecked. It also seems quite obvious that Wells has purposely used the names as Eloi and Morlocks for the characters in the novel. As the name, Eloi seems to have been derived from the word 'elite' meaning the socially superior class of the society or the ruling class and the word Morlocks can be regarded to have been taken from the word 'morbid' which means characterized by gloomy or unwholesome feelings. Wells has deftly played with words in the novel to bring about the disparity between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'.

Apart from the class struggle, Wells highlights the fact that it is not necessary that advancement in technology may lead to the progress of a particular species but he explains that it can have a rather opposite effect. It is apparent in the novel that the comfort and luxury have made the Eloi weak, fragile and easy prey to the Morlocks. No progress is visible in the Eloi despite the technological advancements they enjoy. In fact, they appear to be had

regressed, rather than progressed and evolved. The degeneration of Eloi serves as a dreadful lesson to the ruling class who believe that they are determined to achieve perfection with the advancement in science and technology.

The story of the time traveler begins with him having an optimistic view of Darwin's theory of evolution. During the commencement of his journey, he had a belief that human civilization is heading toward advancement. But after scrutinizing the Eloi and the Morlocks he had to change his views. After observing their regression, the time traveler comments: "The Eloi, like the Carolingian kings, had decayed to mere beautiful futility. They still possessed the earth on sufferance: since the Morlocks, subterranean for innumerable generations had come at last to find the daylight surface intolerable" (Wells 74). From the resultant degeneration of the Eloi and the Morlocks the time traveler infers that it is not always true that evolution leads towards perfection and advancement of any species but rather it increases the complexity in that species.

The time traveler at the superficial level thinks that the world of the Eloi is full of enjoyment without any struggle at the social or economic level but gradually he discovers the drab behind what he earlier considered to be a 'social paradise'. Astonished at the weak mental power of the Eloi, the time traveler contemplates in the following manner:

You see I had always anticipated that the people of the year Eight Hundred and Two Thousand odd would be incredibly in front of us in knowledge, art and everything. Then one of them [Eloi] suddenly asked me a question that showed him to be on the intellectual level of one of our five-year-old children asked me, in fact, if I had come from the sun in a thunderstorm! (Wells 42)

After studying the characters of Eloi and Morlocks in detail, readers find that Wells feared the dependence of humanity on technology. He believed that if humans were to avoid such a terrible and humiliating fate by their own hands

due to evolution, they will have to change. The Eloi lack curiosity or even fear. They live communally in shared homes and these homes are dilapidated conjuring up an image of long-lost industriousness only to be replaced by an I.Q. of a 5-year-old kid.

The characters of Eloi Wells highlight the actuality that man's triumph over nature may bring about the devastation of the human race. Such destruction may render them physically and mentally weak. The time traveler after analyzing the behavior of the Eloi examines that the sympathy towards fellow beings had alarmingly disappeared in them. Also, interestingly and disarmingly, the sexual distinction that has been for so long the characteristic of any species seems to have diminished in the Eloi. According to the timetraveler:

I felt that this close resemblance of the sexes was after all that one would expect; for the strength of a man and the softness of a woman, the institution of the family, and the differentiation of occupations are mere militant necessities of an age of physical force. (Wells 46-47)

However, in the case of Eloi, as stated above, the process of devolution led to the analogy between the two genders. If all the amenities required to lead a safe life are already available to everyone, there is no need for physical attributes different from one another. This degeneracy and fallacy in lifestyle over an extended period lead to men and women merging unceremoniously into each other and forming one shapeless agglomeration. This did not impress the time traveler and Wells used it as a prophecy to warn against the onslaught of machines on manual labor which was such a controversial issue during his time that he hinted at the second industrial revolution through it. Charles Dickens was the author to portray the effect of the industrial revolution on the psyche of humans and the institution of family, Wells was the one to warn against its physical and evolutionary results.

Wells did not confine himself only to the contemplation of the physical effects of a life lacking in adventure, he was also worried about its emotional, mental and social effects. Wells worried and prophesied about the breakdown of human values like true love, sympathy, curiosity, intelligence, and innovation and consequently the breakdown of the institution of family. With the changing paradigms in the nineteenth century, old and cherished English values began to be questioned.

As is so often the case with the English authors, they resisted any major change in society in their way. Instead of criticizing this change in the present, Wells took to his usual route and talked about what it would lead to in the future. As is evident from the words of the time traveler, "... none made the slightest attempt to rescue the weakly crying little thing [Weena] which was drowning before their eyes" (Wells 59).

The fallout of sympathy as a social value was not the only value degradation in *Elois*, however, they were rather lacking in true love too. It seems Wells wanted to portray the fact that *Elois* could not feel such deep emotions, like love, wonder and amazement. To put it simply, their physical comfort had left them unintelligent and dim-witted. Wells has presented the *Elois* as easy prey to cannibal *Morlocks*. The time traveler remarks, "these *Elois* were mere fatted cattle, which the ant like *Morlocks* preserved and preyed upon..." (Wells 78). Wells implies that the qualities which make humans an intelligent species seemed to have degenerated among the *Elois*. The *Elois*, therefore, serve as examples of the decline of the human race that steadily culminates into the entire loss of faculties like reason, fear, logic and emotions like affection and concern. Wells warns through his novel that a world where apathy rules will be replaced by the world where the qualities which made us human in the first place will be wiped out. Wells highlights the problems of industrial revolution in England and presents them again in a dystopic framework through the characters of *Elois* and

Morlocks. Elois portrays the upper class of Victorian England and the Morlocks project as the oppressed workers. In the opinion of Wells, even the rich or the upper class in England were becoming useless by enjoying comfort and luxury while the workers were trying to revolt against the rich for their survival. Wells through *The Time Machine* in fact conveys the message that every utopia contains its dystopia. Wells prophesied that the end of human race is doomed to come, lest they stop the exploitation of their fellow beings. Critics Norman and Jeanne Mackenzie think that:

The method whereby Wells arrived at this prophecy of extinction was itself significant. It was, to put it simply, the reversal of the Darwinian pattern of evolution the process whereby man evolved was run backward, and, for the story, the stages of the evolutionary process were telescoped. (122-123)

Wells was himself fairly conscious of the uncertainty of growth and man's progress on earth. Thus, he emphasizes the need for the eradication of class differences and equality among human beings. He has also discussed the necessity of the oneness of human beings in his book *Experiment in Autobiography* in which he writes, "In a measurable time mankind has to constitute itself into one state and one brotherhood, or it will certainly be swept down cataracts of disaster to an ultimate destruction" (Wells 505).

In *The War of the Worlds*, Wells carries forward the argument that he had raised in the novel *The Time Machine* that is of evolution or rather devolution which the advancement in technology can cause. Steven McLean wrote in his book *The Early Fiction of H.G. Wells: Fantasies of Science* that Wells explores the theme of anthropocentrism in the novel. The term anthropocentrism refers to considering humans as a superior race in the universe. In this regard Steven comments:



Through the apocalyptic plot device of the Martian invasion, the novel raises concerns about the ethics of evolution, or perhaps, the evolution of ethics. It should be noted here that, in *The War of the Worlds*, the Darwinian precepts introduced in the evolutionary fables such as the critique of anthropocentrism and the establishment of a line of continuity between humans and animals are, to large extent, inextricable from the novel's preoccupation with evolution and ethics. (89)

*The Time Machine* is primarily a warning directed towards the existent social structure and the prevalent ideas about evolution whereas *The War of the Worlds* is more about how fragile and insignificant, how ephemeral and transient human ideas, technology, and structures can be. Critic Krishan Kumar also supports Wells' view of evolution as he remarks in his book:

The fact that man was currently the ruler of the earth was no guarantee of his continued success, still less of his permanence. The evolutionary record was littered with the fossils of species that had been extinguished at the very height of their dominance. We must not let our current ideas of perfection and progress blind us to the nature of evolution, and our place within it. (180)

Krishan Kumar concedes with Wells' view that a species has to suffer extinction if the evolutionary rules of nature are ignored and this according to Wells is also applicable to human race. Therefore, Wells alerts the humans through his novel *The War of the Worlds* by highlighting the superiority of aliens that is the Martians over the Earth's most intelligent race that is the humans. Thus, Wells mocks at the condition of humans in the novel *The War of the Worlds*.

Besides *The Time Machine*, *The War of the Worlds* was the second novel by H.G. Wells and the one that cemented his place in the world of science fiction.

The idea purported in the book was of a contemporary appeal and the tone set by him as the medium to convey the rather unexpected turn of events that took place in the book. Through this novel, Wells gripped readers across the world and continues to do so to date. Wells is indeed most remembered for these two novels, *The War of the Worlds* and *The Time Machine*. Critics sometimes use the terms ‘scientific romances’ to categorize Wells’ works however, *The War of Worlds* does form an important part of what has been rather unimaginatively named ‘invasion literature’.

After a look at the conditions prevalent when Wells was writing and taking into account his learning under the proponents of evolution like T.H. Huxley, it can be easily comprehended why these books were so widely acclaimed. Especially at the time of the publication of *The War of Worlds*, there were rumours and speculations predominant about extra-terrestrial life being present on Mars. The planet which had captured human imagination to date had found another vessel to board in Wells’ mind. The result of this endeavour was a Martian attack on the earth, complete with an utter breakdown of all normal conditions and human rules and a question being raised on the most basic of all human emotions, that is, survival.

To conclude, based on my analysis, it has been observed that the dystopian elements depicted in the science fiction of the era draw the attention of historians, critics and humanitarians as well. The writers of the period are having many reasons to portray dystopia in their works. The policy of colonization, the industrial revolution in England, and the Great Depression in America forced the writers of the era to pen down the repercussions of such revolutions in their works. Besides this, too much dependency of common men on technology and its products provided another reason for science fiction writers to write dystopian stories. It also depicts the emergence of the genre as an innovation in the field of

English literature. It discusses the variations that science fiction underwent since the period its commencement.

The history of science fiction leads us to its various sub-genres. Dystopian fiction is one of the sub-genres of science fiction which has been the main concern of this research. This research paper is an endeavour to draw attention to the fact that the disappointed and fractured endings, hopelessness, fear of death, apocalyptic future, inequality and social class, blatant misuse of technology and the utter futility of human existence depicted in *The Time Machine* are not meant for discouraging people rather it is meant for making them aware of the consequences of neglecting the dystopia in their present. The mission and prophecy of H.G. Wells were not to create or destroy existing systems but it was to draw attention to where the existing and upcoming systems would lead. The purpose of these dystopian and apocalyptic warnings and prophesyings in *The Time Machine* is to preserve and ensure a peaceful, safe and secure present and future as well.

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