



# Marxist And Scientific Temperaments In H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*: Connection With Universe

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## Abstract

This paper highlights the proximity with Scientific and Marxist temperaments in H. G. Wells' novel *The Time Machine*. Life style of Victorian era, growth of science, its advantages and defects, and the comparison between life of upper class and poor class people. Nature and its universality is the ultimate power which can maintain the balance between man's inventions and its complications to the mankind and the Nature.

**Key words:** Egoistic nature, inequality, class struggle, Darwinism, science and technology.

## Introduction

English has become a world language because of British's enthusiastic nature to spread their language and culture throughout the world. Shakespeare is a literary figure who stands gigantically in the field of literature. Before and after him, there are many more personalities to consider as the unique figures of literature. Milton, T. S. Eliot, Christopher Marlowe, H. G. Wells, Alexander Pope, William Wordsworth, etc. Among these writers, H. G. Wells seems different in his writing style, narrative technique and his view towards life.

H. G. Wells is an internationally renowned science fiction novelist, a great humanitarian who focusses on social, scientific, and natural calamities through his science fictions. His science fiction novel *The Time Machine*, Wells began to study the mind-set of the men, how the universe has made its own rules, and how the men are trying to rule over nature. And social factors like classism, the dark side of life, Marxist theory, temperaments of science etc.

## Marxist Temperaments

In the beginning of the novel, Wells uses the story formation concept by calling some guests for dinner. The narrator invited only aristocratic or high-class people like scientists, doctors, Filby the red-haired man, psychologists, and the mayor. The atmosphere of the dinner hall or house was that of a rich man, with the soft radiance of the incandescent lights and the release of silver that caught the bubbles that flashed and passed through glasses. This is nothing but an exaggeration of the upper-class people's lifestyle.

The very concept of *The Time Machine* is not for low-class people; they can't afford more than their daily needs. Here, the narrator wants fame and a name, which is why he started experimenting and inventing new things. It's not an easy task for the common man.

"Save me some of that mutton I'm starving for a bit of meet."1 When he was going upstairs at that time, the narrator had nothing with him but a pair of tattered, blood-stained socks. The starvation of a Time Traveller and torn socks exhibited through these words of H. G. Wells himself during his experiments with his early life and struggles as a common man.

"...purple tunic girdled at the waist with leather belt and sandals or buskins."2 When he saw them, they were looking pretty with Chinese clothing, curly hair till the sharp end of the neck and cheek, painted faces, minute ears, and a small mouth. Their faces were small with a bright red little chin. They were little, but their eyes were large and mild. But this part seems to be egotism. Through these lines, the Time Traveller shows us how the egoistic nature of the Victorian age was there, and they were reserved and not interested in communicating with him. They were simply observing him, but no one came forward to speak with him.

## Inequality and class struggle

*The Time Machine* shows the great anxiety of the era in which it was published. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are the wealthy eras because the industrial revolution made it possible to earn and store more money for upper-class people only. This situation made people feel inequality. If the wealth has been distributed to both upper- and lower-class people, nothing is going to happen. The words spread of Karl Marx's works on the economic field, and by reading his works and experiencing the problem of being poor or working-class Wells was very familiar with social inequality.

Wells used humans like species called Eloi and Morlocks from the year 802,701 to show the difference between upper-class and working-class people. Eloi is representing the British elite, and Morlock is representing the working class of the British. Eloi are living on earth, and Morlocks are living underground. Morlocks lost their ability to see in the daylight and have been restored to cannibalism. These two social classes show Victorian society, and each one has different types of harmful and dangerous qualities.

We see in the framework of the story of *The Time Machine* that the narrator is in the company of an editor, doctor, journalist, psychologist, etc., which shows that the only rich high-class people are gathered for the dinner and the Time Traveller has stayed more in the house of Elois than Morlock's. He is not so comfortable with the working-class people because he is a reputedly respected scientist, but the company calls him Accentric. The year 802,701 was a dystopian projection into the future based on inequality between Victorian social classes. Simply put, it is an exaggeration of the social condition of the contemporary period. "...temporary and social difference between the Capitalist and the Labourer, was the key to the whole position."<sup>3</sup> Finally, the Time Traveller came to know how social and economic differences are the source of the ape-like creatures' ferocious behaviour.

## Scientific Temperaments

### Darwinism

*The Time Machine* was written and published after the publication of Charles Darwin's "*On the Origin of Species*" (1859). So, we can see the influence of Darwin and his theory of the evolution of humans. We can see much about this in the fifth chapter of the novel. One of the most radical aspects of *The Time Machine* is the question of human beings in history, challenging the notion that women will endure in their present form forever. This novel explores the possible consequences of Darwin's theory through the creatures of nature like Eloi and Morlocks. We can see Elois is helpless and the Morlocks are cannibals, and both have lost their language and intelligence. These characteristics show the present nature of humans.

Many critics and thinkers were trying to highlight that *The Time Machine* has tried to propagate different and sometimes contradictory ideas of Darwin's new theory. Wells adopted some of them, including the idea of natural selection itself and the idea that struggle is what produces social Darwinism, a set of ideas positing that the human species could be improved by selecting only the best humans to reproduce. Wells elaborates on Eloi as the descendants of British elites who gave preference to social division and have generated a silly and helpless species that challenges both the idea of the inherent superiority of the upper classes and the notion that misinterprets Darwin's actual idea that natural selection means that humans will naturally improve forever. The careful observation of Darwin suggests only that a species adapt to the conditions with which it presented itself as *The Time Machine*; the technology, enabled ease of the Eloi leads them to evolve in a way that present-day humans would consider regression an adaptation consistent with Darwin's ideas.

### Science and technology

*The Time Machine* novel depicts the growth of science and technology in the Victorian era. While having dinner with his guests, the Time Traveller talks about the fourth dimension, which is time, and about his great invention of time machine, which is helping him to know about the past and future. This invention shows technological growth and development, but in contrast, the Eloi of the future lack language,

technology, and even physical strength. It is represented as a lazy species that naps, frolics, and eats a large number of fruits. Both Morlocks and Eloi's lifestyles and the consumption daily needs are very different. So, these situations prove to Time Traveller that the realization of technology frees us from worry or deprivation, and the technology has not been a liberating force for everyone.

Many science fiction stories reveal the complex and exciting technology of the future. But, *The Time Machine* takes the opposite approach: the Victorian era is at its peak level of technology, allowed by the decline of both cultural and technological progress.

Wells does not find an easy answer to judging whether technology is good or bad for humanity. Technology progress can improve life, but it can also destroy the very conditions that make humans vibrant and capable, and it can exacerbate social divisions. Through *The Time Machine*, Wells tries to implement science to generate knowledge and bring social justice to the whole community.

## A Connection with Universe

Wells wrote a novel of some ethics, dystopian but utopian scientific fiction, with great concern for human beings and the universe. In *The Time Machine*, Wells shows a future in which humans have evolved into different species and there is no human existence. In chapter eleven, Time Traveller is on a beach in the distant future, where the only signs of life seem to be giant crustaceans and algae that washed Wells' descriptions of the changed sky, there is no moon, the constellations are different, the atmosphere is thin, and the sun is dying, are reminders to humans. Wells says the universe and nature are much older than humans because humankind is one of the species of nature. So, the earth and nature will both remain long after humans are unrecognizable organs. *The Time Machine*, even though it is science fiction, believes in destiny and fate and in a universalism parallel to technology and science, with humans playing a minor role in the universe.

"Then I would fall to rubbing my eyes and calling upon God to let me awake."<sup>4</sup> This line tells us that H. G. Wells was a great follower of fate and God. This life is full of fury, and we can't live in illusion. We have to be aware of for what purpose we got birth on this earth and what we are doing. If we this type of awareness, we can survive everywhere under the sky in harmony. The modern materialistic have man is lagging behind easy and crazy ways to be comfortable all the time. But, he is neglecting the goal of life and ruling over Mother Nature. Science and technology are making man live a life with no sensitivity or sensibility. Wells gave a picture in this novel about the materialistic nature of man; his cruel nature is ruining his life, as are the other peaceful creatures of nature.

So time itself is the path shower and pathfinder; we have to act accordingly in the present time with good intention and intuition, which will help our progress and also our future progress with a secured life. Nature is our teacher; nature is our preacher; if you transcend with nature, you can survive anywhere. Maintaining the balance between haves and have-nots will make our lives easier and more peaceful. Equal rights and

equal chances can make possible a successful life under nature and with the universe, because any social construct or science and technology are temporary, while the universe itself is ultimate. “Life brings one to very odd turns and makes one compromise with the same. Sometimes, in certain conditions and circumstances, man becomes a puppet.”<sup>5</sup>

We can also understand after reading this novel that “Worldly life is continuous experiencing of limitations, pains, and sorrows, now and then uplifted by a false, intoxicating waft of fleeting joy gained from some sense object. Spiritual life is a continuous attempt to live a divine life, with a full realization of its scope and values. The aspirant is now and then encouraged by fleeting glimpses of the real, dynamic bliss-God.”<sup>6</sup>

Nature is our teacher; nature is our preacher; if you transcend with nature, you can survive anywhere. Maintaining the balance between haves and have-nots will make our lives easier and more peaceful. “It was the air, sky, and storm which brought a change in the structure and growth of the well being of the plants. Long lasting is the growth, but everlasting is the earth and its love.”<sup>7</sup> So the equal rights and equal chances, love towards every creature on earth can make possible a successful life under nature and with the universe, because any social construct or science and technology are temporary, while the universe itself is ultimate.

## Conclusion

H.G.Wells’ novel highlights that any position, any lifestyle, any progressive elements, various intelligences, struggles, comforts of life, science and technology, social constructs, the darker side or the brighter side of life will go on changing according to the time. Life is designed to be lived to the maximum, it is brief. Making the most of our time on this planet is crucial because we only have a finite amount of it. We ought to spend our time doing the activities we enjoy, with the people we cherish, and contributing to the betterment of society because life is brief for a variety of reasons.

## Referances

1. Wells, H. G. *The Time Machine*. New Delhi :FINGERPRINT! CLASS!CS (Reprint 2023) 2023. p.25.
2. Ibid. p.37.
3. Ibid. p.71.
4. Ibid. p.108.
5. Dr Madan Disha *Crossing Over...* Parbhani: Mahatma Gandhi Education & Welfare Society and New Man Publication (2020) p. 123.
6. Chinmayanand Swami, *Meditation And Life*. Chinmaya Publications And Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (Reprint January, 2008) 1992:31

7. Dr Madan Disha *Crossing Over...* Parbhani: Mahatma Gandhi Education & Welfare Society and New Man Publication (2020) p. 104.

