


İNCELEME MAKALESİ

Elif YILMAZ

Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üni.
Lisansüstü Eğt. Enst.
Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Böl.
Doktora Öğrencisi


elfylmz15@gmail.com


 0000-0001-6483-4176

Doç. Dr.
Nazlı GÜNDÜZ

Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üni.
Edebiyat Fak.
Batı Dilleri ve Edebiyatları Böl.

nazli.gunduz@hbv.edu.tr

 0000-0001-8728-0372

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APOCALYPTIC DYSTOPIAN FUTURE IN *THE TIME MACHINE* BY H. G. WELLS

ABSTRACT: This study analyzes *The Time Machine* (1895) by H.G. Wells as a work of dystopian genre, demonstrating its significance in exploring dystopian narratives and Wells' predictions on a possible apocalyptic future. Dystopian works serve both as a warning against the danger awaiting the current societal order in the future and a criticism of the present order. In this regard, Wells' work acts as a key example of the dystopian genre and illustrates an apocalyptic world in which the society is divided into two different groups called the Eloi and Morlocks. The novel describes the Eloi as a community who live above the ground and maintain a simple life. On the contrary, the Morlocks live under the ground, having a darker existence. Through this differentiation, Wells underscores conflicts in the current societal order such as class division, rapidly growing technology, and the unrestrained social progress. Even though the setting of the story is in the far away future, Wells in this work successfully portrays the struggles of his own time and warns his readers against the possible paths these struggles might take them in the future. The Time Traveller travels through time, to an apocalyptic future and witnesses the possibilities which the conflicts in his own society might cause in the future firsthand. Consequently, Wells' work serves not only as a story about the future but also as a warning against the current trends in society such as technological developments and the destruction of environment. Therefore, Wells' work encourages readers to critically approach the present order of the society by portraying the probable dystopia that is awaiting them. Hence, what makes *The Time Machine* an important example of the dystopian genre is the fact that it serves as a warning to make a change and to reestablish balance in the present society. This study argues that Wells' *The Time Machine* portrays an apocalyptic dystopia which warns against the possible conflicts that might be caused by the workings of the present, underscoring the consequences of societal and technological divides. Consequently, Wells' work emphasizes on the need for societal change and balance to prevent a dystopian future.

Keywords: Dystopia, Apocalyptic, Social Order, Time Travel, Technology.

H. G. WELLS'İN *ZAMAN MAKİNESİ*İNDE DİSTOPIK KIYAMET GELECEĞİ

ÖZ: Bu çalışma, H.G. Wells'in *Zaman Makinesi* (1895) adlı eserini distopik bir tür olarak analiz ederek, distopik anlatıları keşfetmedeki önemini ve Wells'in olası bir apokaliptik gelecek hakkındaki öngörülerini göstermektedir. Distopik eserler, hem mevcut toplumsal düzenin gelecekte karşılaşılabileceği tehlikelere karşı bir uyarı hem de mevcut düzenin bir eleştiri işlevi görür. Bu bağlamda, Wells'in eseri distopik türün önemli bir örneğidir. *Zaman Makinesi* toplumun Eloi ve Morlocklar olarak adlandırılan iki farklı gruba bölündüğü apokaliptik bir dünyayı tasvir eder. Roman, Eloi'yi basit bir yaşam sürdüren ve yer üstünde yaşayan bir topluluk olarak tanımlar. Buna karşılık, Morlocklar yeraltında yaşayan, daha karanlık bir varoluş sürdüren bir topluluktur. Bu farklılaşma aracılığıyla Wells, sınıf bölünmesi, hızla büyüyen teknoloji ve sınırsız toplumsal ilerleme gibi mevcut toplumsal düzenin çatışmalarını vurgular. Hikâyenin geçtiği yer uzak bir gelecek olmasına rağmen, Wells bu eserinde kendi zamanının mücadelelerini başarılı bir şekilde tasvir eder ve bu mücadelelerin gelecekte okuyucuları hangi yollara sürükleyebileceği konusunda uyarır. Zaman Yolcusu, zaman içinde yolculuk yaparak apokaliptik bir geleceğe gider ve kendi toplumundaki çatışmaların gelecekte neden olabileceği olasılıkları birinci elden gözlemler. Dolayısıyla, Wells'in eseri sadece gelecekle ilgili bir hikâye olarak değil, aynı zamanda teknolojik gelişmeler ve çevrenin tahribatı gibi toplumdaki mevcut eğilimlere karşı bir uyarı olarak hizmet eder. Bu nedenle, Wells'in eseri, okuyucuları bekleyen olası distopyayı tasvir ederek mevcut toplum düzenine eleştirel yaklaşmaya teşvik eder. Bu nedenle, Zaman Makinesi'ni distopik türün önemli bir örneği yapan şey, mevcut toplumda bir değişiklik yapma ve dengeyi yeniden sağlama çağrısında bulunmasıdır. Bu çalışma, Wells'in *Zaman Makinesi'nin* mevcut çatışmaların neden olabileceği olası çatışmalara karşı uyarıda bulunan apokaliptik bir distopyayı tasvir ettiğini ve toplumsal ve teknolojik ayrımların sonuçlarını vurguladığını savunmaktadır. Sonuç olarak, Wells'in eseri, distopik geleceği önlemek için toplumsal değişim ve denge ihtiyacını vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Distopya, Kıyamet Günü, Toplumsal Düzen, Zaman Yolculuğu, Teknoloji.

Introduction

The clock ticks for humanity as their journey to an uncertain future progress. All our relentless efforts on this journey are to achieve enlightenment and prosperity. However, what if what we have achieved as a result of all our efforts is not a utopia but an apocalyptic dystopia? H.G. Wells' timeless work, *The Time Machine*, explores how humanity's current efforts for a more advanced future may actually lead them to an irreversible apocalypse scenario. Wells' text, which embodies dystopian elements, searches for answers about the consequences that may arise from unchallenged and unasked questions about the relationship between progress, advancement and civilization.

The British writer H.G. Wells was a versatile man, an English novelist, journalist, socialist and historian. He was a novelist of social comedies, a critic of both Victorian and Edwardian England, and the creator of modern science fiction, utopias, dystopias, the writer of social and political books, as well as encyclopedias (Parrinder 1972: 1). He was best known for his works of science fiction *The Time Machine* and *The War of the Worlds*.

H.G. Wells died almost a year before the devastating attack in Hiroshima during World War II which was a war he had predicted two decades before and warned against it. McConnell notes on historian Barker's interactions with a sick, aging Wells and writes that Barker asked Wells how he was, and Wells replied: "Poorly, Barker, poorly [...] I am composing my epitaph [...] Quite short, just this—God damn you all: I told you so" (1980: 176). His work *The Time Machine* illustrates Wells' predictions on the future of the society and the possible dangers regarding the future. McConnell states that his epitaph, although it aimed to be catchy and humorous, it also reflected his *passion for man's survival-and sadness*, as he did in his various works from *The Time Machine* to his last book *Mind at the End of Its Tether* (1980: 176-78).

Wells and his works' influence were prominent in the works of his contemporaries and in the artists of the future whereas the limits were shaped in the Victorian era. *The Time Machine* formed a collective imagination of time travel (Ní Fhlainn, 2016: 1). Before this work, the concept of time travel was just a dream, but this work created a sense of possibility and reality which can be achieved through science and technological means (2016: 2). However, as McConnell also notes, science and technology are useful tools only if they can be used in influential ways for Wells since as McConnell notes: "ideas mattered, and mattered passionately, to him because he believed they were the only things that might save the human race from extinction. But the comfortable niches in which we store our ideas- "science," "aesthetics," "economics," "sociology, -had to go" (1980: 178). McConnell writes that limiting ideas only within the categories of science, aesthetic, economics and sociology is not enough and that we should approach them in a more freeing manner rather than with traditional perspectives and adopt more innovative ways which can be used to address existential conflicts regarding humanity (1980: 178). For this reason, his works are not only influential in shaping both Edwardian and Victorian state of mind, but also in shaping modern day time travel narratives (Ní Fhlainn, 2016: 3).

The Time Machine does not refrain from addressing his anxieties on the survival of humankind's future. It explores the idea of time travel as well as commenting on social and evolutionary implications of class division. Moreover, he makes predictions on the future of humanity, and how it would evolve and address the possible threats to the survival of humankind. In this regard, Wells' work offers a critique of the fears and hopes of contemporary society, which at first glance seems like an idyllic future, but later demonstrates dystopian and apocalyptic characteristics. Hence, *The Time Machine* raises questions about human development, advances in technology and industrialization, and the destruction of the environment.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the depiction of apocalyptic futures of Wells' text and how these elements are presented within the dystopian narrative structure, in order to understand Wells' visions on the future of the Victorian society. Thus, this study aims to answer how Wells depicts dystopia and apocalypse in *The Time Machine*, how the Eloi and

Morlocks symbolize the concepts of utopia and dystopia, and how Wells' illustration of the future in the text reflects Victorian and Edwardian societal anxieties. By addressing these questions, this study seeks to provide a deeper comprehension societal concerns of the Victorian and Edwardian societies and their potential outcomes which are reflected to an apocalyptic dystopian future. In this regard, this study initially will explore the concepts of dystopia and apocalypse and then it will continue with dystopian and apocalyptic characteristics of *The Time Machine* will be analyzed.

Dystopia and Apocalypse

Dystopian genre has found its place as a literary category as a response to the chaotic conditions of the twentieth century. The dystopian genre is considered to be a means of criticism and a tool to reflect the societal, political, and economic structures of the dominant order. A work of the dystopian genre is explained to be reflecting an imaginary society in which a far more oppressive and bleak system is portrayed for the readers, through the illustration of the themes such as “exploitation, repression, state violence, war, genocide, disease, famine, ecocide, depression, debt, and steady depletion of humanity through the buying and selling of everyday life” (Moylan, 2018: xi). Furthermore, writers of the dystopian genre offer a critical perspective to the existence of social order through the portrayal of these themes, while warning against the dangers of what can possibly happen in the future as a result of unchecked power relations and greed of the present (2018: 180-81).

Dystopia's evolution as a genre is a topic of discussion in literary criticism as there are significant amount of research being undertaken to explore and explain its historical development and its relationship with the utopian genre, science fiction, speculative fiction and/or post-apocalyptic narratives, as well as the rise and fall of the impulse behind dystopian literature. Norledge claims: “What is missing from existing research, however, is an extended discussion of that which brings together each of these topics: the language and style of dystopia” (2022: 1), stating that there is a gap in the existing research regarding the detailed examination of the unifying function of language and style within the dystopian literature. This gap is significant because, as Claeys points out, the notion of dystopia evokes disturbing images, recalling ancient myths and stories such as the “Flood”, and the “Apocalypse” of the Judgement Day (2017: 4). Hence, it can be stated that comprehending the ways in which language and style unify these compelling elements can provide deeper insights into the dystopian genre. Claeys adds that the word is derived from the Greek word *dus*, meaning “diseased, bad, fault or unfavourable” and *topos*, meaning place (2017: 4). Additionally, the term dystopia is derived from the neologism *utopia*, according to Fátma Vieira, corresponding “to the need to name what is new” (2010:3). In this regard, she notes on three types of neologisms: “lexical neologisms new words created to name new concepts, semantic neologisms: pre-existing words used in a new cultural context, and derivation neologisms: variations of other words” (2010: 3). Therefore, Vieira categorizes the term utopia as a lexical neologism. She writes that this term was created by Thomas More for his essay with the same name, combining the “two Greek words – “ouk” (that means not and was reduced to u) and “topos” (place), to which he added the suffix “ia”, indicating a place (2010: 4). As a result, More, according to Vieira, creates a dual meaning by the use of the word *utopia*: a non-place and a place of ideal society. Therefore, it can be stated that dystopia is a result of utopia's journey through time since its derivation by More. In this context, if we compare Claeys' notes with Vieira's statements, it can be claimed that dystopia is a derivational neologism which is a variation of the word *utopia*.

For Claeys, the first appearance of the term probably dates back to the mid-eighteenth century, yet it was not highly utilized until the twentieth century (2017: 4). Additionally, Norledge refers to Stockwell and notes that dystopia is not used as an opposite of utopia” (2022: 2). She adds that the opposite of utopia is the reality individuals and societies are experiencing at the present. However, dystopia is the *displacement* of our reality but the opposite. Therefore, based on Stockwell's criticism, she states that dystopian fiction is characterized as “extensions

of our base-reality, closely related to it or caricatures of it, rather than being disjunctive alternatives, determined not simply by their nightmarish quality but by their relationship with the actual world of the reader” (2022: 2). Hence, what makes dystopian fiction is its ability to amplify and distort elements of the existing reality, essentially making it relatable and impactful. Therefore, through a presentation of exaggerated versions of the issues in the society, dystopian genre functions as a mirror which reflects potential consequences of our present decisions in the future, enhances the effectiveness of the genre in provoking thought and caution by connecting the dystopian world and the present order.

Although the word dystopia is often used interchangeably with dystopian literature, according to Claeys, the term itself is not necessarily a fictional form. To clarify Claeys refers to Ruth Levitas and quotes that:

Dystopias are not necessarily fictional in form; neither predictions of the nuclear winter nor fears of the consequences of the destruction of the rainforests, the holes in the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect and the potential melting of the polar ice caps are primarily the material of fiction (2017: 5).

Claeys then adds that the term as an adjective signifies a fearful future in which chaos and ruin are prevailing concepts, “so there are non-literary, empirical usages of the term” (2017: 5). Hence, it can be stated that Claeys statements are aiming to enhance the comprehension of dystopias beyond merely fictional narratives, highlighting that the dystopian stories can serve as predictions for the futures and reflect concerns regarding the present such as environmental destruction and the collapse of the society. Therefore, it can be stated that Claeys claims that the roots of dystopias can be found in actual scientific and social projections rather than only in literature, making dystopia a relevant concept for both fictional and non-fictional context. Additionally, according to him, as a literary genre, dystopia implies a “failed utopia” and the result of twentieth century totalitarianism (2017: 5). Claeys categorizes dystopia as a literary genre under three subgenres: the political dystopia, the environmental dystopia, and the technological dystopia. “Amongst these types, it is the totalitarian political dystopia which is chiefly associated with the failure of utopian aspirations, and which has received the greatest historical attention” (2017: 5). Thus, it can be claimed that Claeys highlights totalitarian political dystopias as the most recognized and historically analyzed themes in the dystopian narratives, emerging from the failure of utopian ideals. Hence, his ideas can be discussed to be suggesting that this helps to illustrate the possible dangers of totalitarianism and the complex relationship of utopian ideals and realities portrayed by dystopias.

Then, Norledge highlights that dystopian worlds in literature reflect a criticism such as “presentation of oppressive or devastated environments, the decline and fall of the urban centre, the fragmentation or division of the state and the threat of advanced technologies on the socio-economic complex” (2022: 61). Gonnermann relates the term dystopia with the concept of post-pessimism and emphasizes the impact of capitalist realism in dystopian discourses, reflecting worlds that are devoid of an alternative to neoliberal capitalism (2019: 27). Gonnermann also notes on the didactic characteristics of the genre, resulting from its pessimistic endings which urge readers to compensate for negative outcomes by becoming politically involved (2019: 38). She claims that dystopia's new symbiosis with more realistic modes of narrativization can have two possible outcomes. The first is a pessimistic reading of the reader's response, arguing that readers are conditioned into accepting the capitalist realism paradigm, which can be explained as the belief that capitalism is the dominant order of the society, making it difficult for individuals to imagine an alternative, because they are convinced that they, too, suffer from similar constraints as the characters. The other is more optimistic: by assigning the readers to the position of the stereotypical dystopian misfit, the novels succeed in waking their readers to political activity. As a result, dystopian novels provide a “negative blueprint” of the current system, encouraging readers to imagine an alternate world while striving for a better future despite the limits of capitalist reality (2019: 38). The dystopian genre also challenges the concept of ‘capitalist realism’, which contends that capitalism is the only relevant political

and economic order. These works, by depicting dystopian civilizations, encourage readers to confront and fight the existing order and power structures, while also defamiliarizing and reorganizing their encounters with the world's current situation (2019: 38).

Finally, Claeys characterizes the dystopian literature as a tool to criticize the existing society, underscoring its negative social and political outcomes. He adds that dystopian as a genre exposes the flaws within the system and the dangers of unchecked power, control, and oppressive forces in society, aiming to prove critical thinking and to raise awareness on the possible results of social trends and actions. Dystopian literature serves as a warning against the abuse of not only totalitarianism but also science and erosion of individual freedoms (2013: 107-108). Claeys also adds that the works of the dystopian genre are often characterized by characters who navigate oppressive and controlling societies. They also might be portrayed as rebels against the existing order and individuals who attempt to resist an oppressive regime. In this regard, these characters serve as symbols of hope as they challenge the status quo and fight for freedom and justice (2013: 107). Moreover, he writes that characters in a work of dystopian fiction undergo personal transformations as they question their existing belief systems and values in the face of a dystopian society (Claeys, 2013: 107). They challenge the order through their personal experiences through encounters with different individuals and groups. These encounters therefore offer the protagonist alternative perspectives which lead them to challenge the validity of the dystopian regime (2013: 111).

The Cambridge English dictionary defines Apocalypse as “a very serious event resulting in great destruction and change” and depicts that in the Bible, it refers to “the total destruction and end of the world” (Cambridge English Dictionary). Therefore, it is the doomsday of humanity. In the Bible, doomsday is described as a day that will start with great disasters like earthquakes and epidemics (King James, Luke, 21:11) and it will be a day in which good will be rewarded and evil will be punished (John, 5:29). Furthermore, to have a better understanding of how this theme is used in literature, Thomas J. J. Altizer's exploration of “apocalypse” can be referred. Altizer suggests that apocalypse is “both an end and a beginning, a revelation of the deepest and most hidden truth” (1985: 1). To Altizer the theme of apocalypse is reflected in literature through several key characteristics that emphasize on the nature of this theme. He claims the roots of apocalyptic literature is in Christian epic tradition. Embodying the characteristics of Christian epic tradition, apocalyptic literature, as Altizer notes, involves a journey from one world to another and hence represents endings and beginnings (1985: 1). Additionally, he states that this mode not only involves a journey between realms but also a journey through darkness and disorder as the mode is related to themes of cosmos and chaos as well. The theme of apocalypse reflects a challenge to established authorities and traditional modes of understanding. So, apocalyptic literature questions narratives on creation and destruction (1985: 3). Finally, Altizer notes that apocalyptic literature integrates subversive and negative elements, reflecting a challenge to established authorities and traditional modes of understanding (1985: 3).

Hence, it can be stated that the apocalypse can be analyzed as a dystopia for humanity as both focus on the themes of revolution and transformation, challenging the established narratives of oppressive and totalitarian societies. Both literary modes can be linked as they are both associated with the theme of chaos and involves a journey from an end to a new beginning or vice versa.

The Time Machine as an Apocalyptic Dystopia

The Time Machine by H.G. Wells can be stated to be as an example of an apocalyptic dystopia as it is about a journey which illustrates an ending and a beginning from The Time Travellers perspective and portrays the transformation of the society and the humanity in the future. *The Time Machine* was published in 1895 and the novel is now considered to be one of the earliest examples of literature exploring the theme of time travel. Wells explores the idea that “there is more than one way to view time” and reflects Darwin's view on the evolution of species (Matt, 2012: 1-3) and it can be stated that Wells achieves this through his time travels,

because the time machine provides insight on different time periods, supporting the idea that time is not fixed. Moreover, through journey of *The Time Traveller*, the narrative provides a portrayal of the evolution of the humankind and how this species was impacted by the changes in technology and environment. In this novel, he not only explores the concepts of time and evolution but also advances in science, geology, naturalism, while also reflecting the literary trends regarding autobiography and biography in Victorian England (Matt, 2012: 5-6).

The novel starts with a group of men, including the narrator, listening to a “Time Traveller” explaining his theories regarding time as the fourth dimension. The Time Traveller explains that he has constructed a miniature time machine and demonstrates an example of what this machine could be used for. At the end of his presentation, The Time Traveller invites the same group to his laboratory to show the final version of the time machine and his findings as a result of his experiments on the fourth dimension. A week after this presentation, the group of listeners including the narrator visit the home of The Time Traveller and find him in a miserable state, looking very tired and displaced. The Time Traveller then reveals that he finally managed to finish constructing his machine and successfully used it to travel to the future, the year 802,701 AD. Based on The Time Traveller’s narration, it is understood that he found himself in a future world far from what he imagined. The Time Traveller to his shock finds himself facing the fall of the urban center, the fall of what we call civilization in the present world. He observes that there are no high buildings in this world and there seems to be no sign of industrialization, as well as capitalism. This world for him seems to be a world of prehistoric times even though it is the year 802,701 AD, without any sign of scientific or technological developments.

And here I must admit that I learned very little of drains and bells and modes of conveyance, and the like conveniences, during my time in this real future. In some of these visions of Utopias and coming times which I have read, there is a vast amount of detail about building, and social arrangements, and so forth. But while such details are easy enough to obtain when the whole world is contained in one’s imagination, they are altogether inaccessible to a real traveller amid such realities as I found here (Wells, 1895:31).

In his first observation, The Time Traveller assumes this world to be a utopia by comparing it to the utopias described in the texts he has read. Additionally, the journey from the present to the future locates the narrative within the apocalyptic literature, supporting the idea that Wells’ text portrays a dystopia which is also an apocalypse.

Through the narrations of *The Time Traveller*, it is understood that the current state of man is described to be both a victory and defeat against nature. The Time Traveller observes that the Eloi are peaceful creatures who seem to have domination over nature and live in harmony with it, while he also observes that there are no animals in this world as they all have become extinct. Additionally, the evolution of humankind puts them in a fragile position against all kinds of possible dangers in their small figures. As his first observations of the future world as an ecological utopia starts to fail, both The Time Traveller and the reader start to develop a sense of dystopia. The Time Traveller, as Hutton also notes, finds out that although the pleasure-loving temperament of the community of the Eloi seem to be a heaven like place at first, it is not sustainable in the long run. Hutton suggests that this pleasure-loving temperament only leads to selfishness and irritability which are features negatively impacting the enjoyment it gives (1972: 36-37). The scene where The Time Traveller meets Weena for the first time can be an example of Hutton’s argument. He first sees Weena drowning in a stream as he is watching the Eloi bathing. The little creature start to drift in the stream because she starts to experience cramps and as she is too small to fight against the stream, she drifts away. The Time Traveller is shocked to see that no one bothers to save her even though she screams in fear. He narrates: “It will give you an idea, therefore, of the strange deficiency in these creatures, when I tell you that none made the slightest attempt to rescue the weakly crying little thing which was drowning before their eyes” (Wells, 1895: 32). Therefore, it can be asserted that although the Eloi live in harmony with nature, while gaining their dominance over nature they lost their sense of empathy and became ignorant towards others’ sufferings. As The Time

Traveller observes, somewhere in their evolution, they seem to have lost some of the emotions which makes them human in the sense of the present world, feeling only joy, curiosity, anger, and fear. In this scene it can also be seen that their physical appearances suggest that, although they found balance with nature, they lost their physical dominance, as they cannot even fight against the dangers of it. In this regard, Hutton's comments can be referred to which states: "If the doctrines of evolution are true, the author argues that man's dominance over nature would only last as long as his ability to fight against the challenges posed by nature. (1972: 36-37). He also adds: "The author argues that if a race or society experiences a decrease in population pressure, the mutual jealousy among those in advantageous positions to secure wealth and ease would increase significantly" (Hutton, 1972: 36-37).

To refer back to Claeys' criticism: "works of dystopian literature are characterized by their criticism on the conditions of the present societies, reflecting the flaws of the society" (2013: 107). Therefore, in regard to Claeys' statements, it can be stated that Wells' dystopia offers a criticism of the condition of his society through the division between the Eloi and Morlocks and explores the outcomes of unchecked social and technological progress. This element of the text once again can be stated to be aligning Wells' plot with the theme of apocalypse as offering a criticism on the society and technological developments is another characteristic of apocalyptic literature. Furthermore, in regard to the exploration of the society and technological developments, Cantor and Hufnagel take the Eloi and Morlocks into consideration in the scope of imperialism and state that the living conditions of the Eloi reflect European colonial fantasies of living in a paradise-like communal world that is full of joy (2006: 39). On the other hand, they analyze the Morlocks as the non-Europeans by adding that the Morlocks serve as the figures of evil in the novel with their "ape-like" features; they are associated with darkness, filth, and decay, further emphasizing their otherness and non-European nature (2006: 42). Thus, it can be stated that Wells by creating a distinction between the Eloi who live above the surface, under the sun in prosperity and the Morlocks who live under the ground in darkness and serve to aid the basic needs of the Eloi, portrays the racial and colonial issues of his time. In the novel, it can be observed that the Eloi are afraid of the dark, which by The Time Traveller is interpreted as not only a fear for darkness but also as a fear for the unknown. Therefore, it can be stated that this fear for darkness and the unknown is symbolizing the fear for the other or the non-European as the other. The Time Traveller asserts:

The Upper-world people might once have been the favoured aristocracy, and the Morlocks their mechanical servants: but that had long since passed away. The two species that had resulted from the evolution of man were sliding down towards, or had already arrived at, an altogether new relationship. The Eloi, like the Carolingian kings, had decayed to a 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. And the Morlocks made their garments, I inferred, and maintained them in their habitual needs, perhaps through the survival of an old habit of service. They did it as a standing horse paw with his foot, or as a man enjoys killing animals in sport: because ancient and departed necessities had impressed it on the organism. But, clearly, the old order was already in part reversed. The Nemesis of the delicate ones was creeping on apace. Ages ago, thousands of generations ago, man had thrust his brother man out of the ease and the sunshine. And now that brother was coming back changed! Already the Eloi had begun to learn one old lesson anew. They were becoming reacquainted with Fear (Wells, 1895: 44).

In this regard, it can be stated that in Wells' dystopia is portraying the present conditions of The Time Traveller's world and the power dynamics between the European/non-European, the colonizer/the colonized have been reversed and the outcomes are the apocalyptic world of the future which is portrayed as a dystopia, or a failed utopia.

In the article "A Man of Genius" from *Review of Reviews*, it is noted that although the invention of the time machine was an innovative invention, it is not pleasurable to see the

possible outcomes of the evolution of a society which is the product of aristocrats and capitalists and the laborers who are “doomed to live in the bowels of the earth in black darkness” (1972: 33). As a result of their living conditions underground, the laborers evolved into Morlocks and developed owl-like eyes to survive in the dark (1972: 33). Thus, it can be stated that Wells in his text can also be criticizing the present condition of the society in regard to class issues. The future condition of the society is not a radical departure but a gradual evaluation of the current conditions (Partington, 2002: 59). Thus, Wells outlines the evolution of the two species of humankind, the Eloi and Morlocks, in different stages. He adds that Eloi are products of pastoral communism, as well as the “lords of a class-divided earth,” positioning the Eloi of the future society are the upper classes and capitalists of the present society. The Time Traveller states: “man had been content to live in ease and delight upon the labours of his fellow-man, had taken Necessity as his watchword and excuse, and in the fullness of time Necessity had come home to him” (Wells, 1895: 46) Hence, the text can be discussed to be reflecting the results of relying on the labor of others and the search for comfort without a need for balance in the society, therefore it can be deduced that in the Victorian conditions the proletariat worked day and night for the prosperity of the capitalist. Additionally, The Time Traveller notes: “at first, proceeding from the problems of our own age, it seemed clear as daylight to me that the gradual widening of the present merely temporary and social difference between the Capitalist and the Labourer, was the key to the whole position” (Wells, 1895: 36) According to Partington, the result of the evolution of the distinction between the Capitalist and the Laborer is the cannibalist community of the Morlocks. Partington asserts that the cannibalism of the Morlocks society can be interpreted as the portrayal of the fear of proletarian revolution in Victorian England (Partington, 2002: 59). The Morlocks as the outcome of the proletarian evolution, still serve to the Eloi who are the product of the upper-class evolution. However, in this dystopian world, they serve the Eloi just like a farmer serving their cows and sheep, to raise them in great conditions and then to consume them, thus, to benefit from their existence, just like how the present day’s capitalists benefit from the existence of the laborers.

The Eloi and Morlocks are the creatures of the future world while The Time Traveller is an inhabitant of the present world. Through an analysis of Wells’ novel, it can be stated that as a dystopian hero, The Time Traveller reflects the fears of his society. On the one hand, Wells in the portrayal of The Time Traveller “embodies the essential embodiment of the turn-of-the-century white man” as an inventor, scientist, as well as a representation of middle-class intelligence of Victorian England (Wackfelt, 2013: 14). However, although he is a representation of a Victorian stereotype, he does not abstain from expressing his criticism regarding his own time in the face of its consequences in the future. He keeps attempting to analyze the future world and understand what caused these negative outcomes. He is shocked to see these primitive creatures for he was expecting to see a more civilized society. As a result, he concludes that this evolution must be the consequence of their mistakes which reminds him of Victorian society and thus he draws conclusions.

Moreover, as a dystopian hero, as Claeys also notes, The Time Traveller experiences encounter with both species in order to construct an idea on the workings of the structure and draw his own conclusions. His journeys in the upper world and to the underworld gives him a chance to analyze the Eloi and Morlocks. The Time Traveller observes the Eloi as lazy and unintelligent creatures. “The protagonist theorizes that the reason for the lack of intelligence in the future Eloi is because of their static lifestyle and total inability to remain curious for a longer period of time” (Wackfelt, 2013: 12-13). In this regard, Wackfelt states that the portrayal of the Eloi is a result of the communist movement and “its extremely centralized system as a threat towards discovery and curiosity” (Wackfelt, 2013: 13). When The Time Traveller was in the underground world, he observed how the “lower” class are the predator and the “upper” class are prey and how, in the future, the predators of the lower class are exploiting the prey of the upper class (2013: 14). Therefore, as a dystopian hero, he rejects a world which can possibly turn into either the Morlocks or the Eloi. He is a seeker of balance and “someone who is in control of his own fate” (Wackfelt, 2013,15). Thus, he rebels against the order of the future and

desires to escape it by constantly looking for his time machine and shows no desire to live in this world. Although he had considered this world as a utopia when he first arrived, he realizes that this world is not a utopia, and his only desire is to leave as soon as possible. He fears that he might be stuck here and never be able to find his machine and go back. This gives him discomfort and makes him feel anxious, encouraging him to enhance his search to find his machine. As a result, it can be stated that, The Time Traveller rejects the apocalyptic future world.

Conclusion

Through an exploration of Wells' novel, it can be stated that *The Time Machine* serves as a compelling example of the dystopian genre in which social criticism and the portrayal of the possible outcomes of an unchecked progress is interwoven. Additionally, Wells in his novel takes his reader to a journey through time and illustrates a future order in which conflict between the Eloi and Morlocks reveals the dangers of class distinction and the traps of an unbalanced society. Finally, it can be claimed that The Time Traveller serves as a mirror through which the author reflects the flaws and fears of Victorian/Edwardian England and its potential evolution into an apocalyptic future world.

Besides, it can be stated that Wells expertly employs the dystopian genre to explore popular anxieties and socioeconomic challenges of the late nineteenth century, including class conflict, imperialism, and the consequences of unchecked industrialization. The novel's protagonist, who first represents the aspirations of the turn-of-the-century white man, evolves into a critical observer who questions and challenges the entire fabric of his society. Thus, Wells' apocalyptic dystopian world serves as a cautionary narrative, exposing the repercussions of exploitation, apathy, and the loss of empathy. The Eloi, originally envisioned as an idealized utopia, falls under the weight of their own flaws, revealing a horrible reality formed by the faults of the Victorian and Edwardian societies.

The Time Traveller's rejection of this apocalyptic future world, his unwavering pursuit of the time machine, and his ongoing examination of sociopolitical factors can be argued to be highlighting his status as a dystopian hero. In this representation, Wells expertly addresses the changing nature of dystopian fiction and its capacity to act as a mirror to modern problems, challenging readers to consider their own societal structures and the potential dismal implications of particular courses taken.

As The Time Traveller confronts the distorted echoes of his own time in the apocalyptic dystopian future, it can be claimed that Wells urges readers to consider the fragility of societal balance, the repercussions of unrestrained authority, and the importance of remaining vigilant against the gathering shadows of dystopia. *The Time Machine* therefore can be stated to be transcending its temporal setting, becoming into a timeless investigation of human nature and social problems, cementing its position in the rich fabric of dystopian fiction.

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