

A Post Humanistic Approach to H. G. Wells's The War of the Worlds

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Abstract

This paper examines the interplay between humanism, post-humanism, and science fiction, specifically through H.G. Wells' The War of the Worlds. Drawing from major theoretical frameworks such as formalism, Marxism, structuralism, and postmodernism, it explores how literature and scientific discourse intersect, focusing on themes like the evolution of humanity, technological advancement, and post-apocalyptic scenarios. The study contextualizes Wells' novel within the broader trajectory of British literature, referencing key authors and the rise of humanist and post-humanist thought. It underscores Wells' use of science fiction to challenge the boundaries of human identity and explores how post-humanism in literature goes beyond the human condition, incorporating technology and non-human entities into the narrative. By analyzing characters like the artilleryman, the Martians, and the human narrator, the paper illustrates how Wells uses foreshadowing, realism, and symbolism to critique colonialism, human flaws, and technological overreach. Ultimately, the study connects post-humanist theories to contemporary understandings of identity, technology, and survival, suggesting that literature can act as a site for exploring the ethical implications of human evolution and technological progress.

Keywords: Humanism, Post-humanism, Science Fiction, H.G. Wells, The War of the Worlds, Evolution

Introduction

The language and literature exist in exposure to periods from Elizabethan age to the postmodern period as poetry, drama, and prose in works. Some notable workers in British literature are Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, William Langland, Thomas Malory, John Bunyan, Francis Bacon, Samuel Johnson, Thomas Hardy, Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, and H. G. Wells. Were all categorized into British ancestry. The systematic sense of literature is analyzed through theories in the literature. Theories give the body of ideas and historical context of interpretation and as well as the relevance of linguistic and unconscious elements of the text. Such theories are Formalism, New criticism, Marxism, Structuralism, Poststructuralism, Modernism, Post Modernism, Humanism, Post Humanism.

Humanism in literature is the instrument to define the emphasized human potential to attain excellence and promote the direct study of the literature. Humanism is associated with philosophy

and seek renaissance with the writing of Francesco Petrararch. 1910 was the period incited the development of Humanism theory. Post Humanism is the concept of beyond Humans and it is a developed context with postmodernism. It suggests to both possible and for best for humans to attempt to surpass these limitations, often through the use of technology to augment human form to its entire potential.

Science fiction is one such genre that anticipates the reader's plot conscience with the writer's thought at the experiment in writing. It is defined as the content of imaginative ideas based on science. Thus it relies highly upon facts, principles, Theories of science for supporting in setting, characters, and themes to differentiate it from fantasy. The relationship between science fiction and post-humanism is the base plot to science at best possible way of anticipating thoughts and impact science with the human mind that functions it with an entire form to bring a change in circumstances that to make imaginative ideas with logic in reality to existence.

Post-humanist theory claims to offer a new epistemology that is not anthropocentric and therefore not centered in Cartesian dualism. It seeks to undermine the traditional boundaries between the human, the animal, and the technological. The postmodern theorist Ihab Hassan coined the term and offered a seminal definition in an article entitled "Prometheus as Performer: Towards a Post-humanist Culture?" (1977). Related terms, with their theoretical nuances, include the Trans-human and the anti-human.

Donna Haraway (1991) has been a key figure in exploring the porous character of these boundaries on the continuum machine-human–animal. She offered the cyborg as a contemporary cultural metaphor to capture the ambivalent condition of contemporary human beings, whose bodies are open to forms of technological modification and intervention.

H.G. Wells first portrays the Martians in *The War of the worlds* as a species so dissimilar and unknown to readers to elicit fear. While creating a sense of foreboding about strange beings observing humans from afar and plotting about the future of Earth, the author undercuts the sense of complete fear of the Martians by repeatedly pointing out how humans are similar to them. Hinting at the damage the invaders will do, the author notes that humankind exercises its powers of destruction over creatures they consider lesser beings, a point Wells uses to criticize British colonialism in places

such as Tasmania. The author also draws parallels between the fate of humans and the Martians, suggesting humans will one day find themselves in a similar position, searching for a new home to escape a dying planet. This statement shows the existence of human and science beyond humanism by postulating the fundamental note to beyond humans.

Wells is a master of foreshadowing. By telling events in a nonlinear arrangement, he gives readers glimpses of future events in the plot, skillfully invoking dread and creating suspense. In this *Eve* shows the beginning of new specimens, he uses the foreshadowing to tell readers he believes that alien creatures have been watching humans for some time and are already on their way to Earth. Wells places the launch of the capsules in the past—"six years ago now" in 1894—to create a sense of inevitability and dread as well as an awareness of the powerlessness of humans to avoid impending destruction.

In the novel a combination of real people, places, periodicals, and events together with fictional ones to create realistic fiction. Wells solidifies the realism of the novel through the journalistic style of the narrator, a man of evident scientific training and quiet but confident authority. As a journalist, the narrator begins with a hook, necessary background information, facts relevant to the events, names of sources and places, and references to times and dates to clarify the sequence of events. Wells uses realism to make the fictional events of the narrative frightening to readers, who are left questioning what may be real and what is not. That concept of thought arise the fiction away from fantasy and shows the science fiction note to it.

H. G. Wells creates a post-apocalyptic scene in that Earth and human civilization have been overthrown, covered in Martian weeds, and again compares humans to animals, subservient to the whims and designs of a superior being. Like rabbits whose home is destroyed as humans build their own home on the land, "the fear and empire of man had passed," and man must give way to Martian rule. The overthrow of human civilization has been accomplished, and the narrator believes he may be the only human alive.

Readers learn that red weed's weakness is a lack of resistance to certain bacteria. Natural selection has meant only plants with resistance have survived, but the red weed, never having

encountered such bacteria before, has no protection. It flourishes for a time, but eventually, it all dies and disappears from the landscape. The demise of the red weed foreshadows the fate of the Martians.

The artilleryman represents the insufficiency and folly of merely intellectual response to threats. The artilleryman is an "undisciplined dreamer," and the narrator sees "the gulf between his dreams and his powers." Even as the artilleryman criticizes religion as a coping mechanism for the weak, his alternative plan of a subterranean utopia without the will to accomplish it may be just as irrational. Still, the artilleryman's plan is strangely seductive to the narrator. The imagined scenes of human safety and triumph and the gluttony of his stash of stolen food and drink temporarily comfort the narrator, but he quickly recognizes them for the follies that they are.

He further explores the idea of evolution through the artilleryman's plans for human survival. He identifies the weak as those unlike himself, those with "no proud dreams and no proud lusts," who do what society expects of them. He argues that "the useless and cumbersome and mischievous have to die" lest they "taint the race." He plans to save human knowledge as well, without which he claims mankind will be no different from rats.

This contains the climax of the story. All of the action and suspense has built rising tension to this moment of confrontation with the Martians. All the foreshadowing pointing toward the cause of their downfall becomes clear. In their death, the problem of the novel is resolved. The invaders are no longer a threat to humanity. Then Wells reminds the readers for one last important aspect of evolution in this Context as everything. Humans have adapted to survive on Earth. While superior in many ways, Martians evolved to survive on Mars and lacked defenses against the "humblest things that God, in His wisdom ... put on this earth."

He also compares the sudden destruction of the Martians to the work of the angel of death in Sennacherib's destruction. This is a reference to the biblical account of the overnight deaths of 185,000 Assyrians under the command of King Sennacherib as they sought to conquer Jerusalem during the rule of King Hezekiah around 700 BCE. When the narrator says he thought "God had repented, that the Angel of Death had slain them in the night," he imagines London as Jerusalem and the Martians as the invading Assyrians.

He imagines God repenting for allowing the Martians in the capital and sending his Angel of Death in the night to kill them, thus saving the city. In this penultimate chapter, the author illustrates the ultimate triumph of humanity, not through a forceful overthrow of the Martians, but in humans' resilience, resourcefulness, and hope. Even with a great number of Martians in central London, some people manage to survive. Even though the Martians systematically target the trains and telegraphs, one person manages to send a telegraph message of their deaths to Paris, and the railway is back up and running quickly. The narrator's wife returns to their home, hoping her husband has somehow survived and exclaims when she's seen him, "I came ... I knew." The Martians were not able to defeat the human spirit.

Through the narrator's trip back home, the author helps readers review important events in the narrative. Readers are reminded of just what a long journey the narrator has taken and of all the people he has encountered horrors he has witnessed and suffering he has endured. At the end of the journey, he finds his greatest hope realized and what has kept him moving forward.

Wells wisely uses the final touch to recap several themes, including technology and fear. Through scientific study of Martian bodies, weapons, and machines after their deaths, humankind has been able to make only a limited number of determinations. The technology of the Martians is so superior to that of humans that it defies a complete explanation.

The author adds a new twist to the theme of fear by showing its lingering effects. Although the event that caused the fear has passed, the narrator still suffers when something causes him to relive those moments. Fear also creates worry about the future and the possibility of another invasion. The author suggests realism in the narrator's final report about what scientists have learned about the Martians through careful study of their bodies, weapons, and machines.

This chapter briefly explains the condition of themes like fear, Power, Technology, and familiar versus strange concept. Wells used symbols like Railway and Telegraph to highlight the development and phase of change in postmodernism to categorize new beginnings to humans and explore new studies. Things like curate suggest the judgment in imaginative condition with relation to realism and science. Thus post humanism elements give rise to explore other theories like racialism, psychoanalysis, and Eco Centralism at the reader's interest.

Thus post humanistic condition involves the techno field of existence to Mankind, such that man on his evaluation from ages to periods plot out the changes and environment on survival in Nature. The place and value seized by Today's Technology paths the condition of development and exploration of Post-Humanism in the present life existence of Humans. The study of existence and exploration takes place at simultaneous condition, such that wells explores the emotional and psychological aspects of Humans in comparative to study and analyses with the new specimen (Martians).

Conclusion

Thus conditions beyond Humanistic things bring out the conceptual and thought of study with Post-Humanism. The experiment of Science with Art and Literature is defined and explored the new condition of living to Mankind. Through the work with proper extract on technology shows the impact of realism and elements of science fiction used in proper manner and balance throughout the work. Wells connects the past, present, and future prediction of lifestyle to Humans with the idea of technology through his science fictional ideas.

Finally the scope of studies in plots like anti humans, transhuman, emotion of new specimens, and life with development in technologies give us the evidence to past for historical trace and research to technological things like 'Cyborg' for further studies and survival condition in literature.

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