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What ARE We Fighting For? An Analysis of the Sociopolitical Non-fiction of Herbert George Wells

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Senior Honors Thesis

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Abstract

The legacy of H. G. Wells' should not be limited to that of a British fiction writer. Wells advocated universal human rights and supported the engagement of broad public policy debate, and he often commented on the British government. His country had lived through World War I, the supposed "war to end all wars." The roaring 1920's arrived next, offering hope after World War I's devastation. World War II was then thrust upon Britain. Wells was incensed that a thirty-year period had elapsed and, despite numerous promises by the British government, no social reform had emerged. For more than a decade *before* World War I, he had been calling for social reform. This reform, as he envisioned, would be similar to Socialism. He published a "Declaration of Rights," defining and calling for universal human rights, and held meetings and correspondence with many important political figures in Britain and other countries. This thesis argues that the restrictive label as H. G. Wells "the fiction writer" limits his success and importance to the contemporary world; further, his philosophies are still relevant and applicable to current society.

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I.

Introduction

Herbert George Wells is often considered the father of modern science fiction. All too often, this title eclipses his other successes. From being a trained scientist to a renowned socialist, Wells was easily one of the most focused, driven, and intellectual minds of his time. Rarely was there a time when he was not involved with some social or mental pursuit. Most of his writings concern past and present sociopolitical issues. Although his science fiction has been repeatedly read, studied and filmed, Wells' non-fiction has yet to enter the academic limelight.

H. G. Wells' works, such as *The Invisible Man* and *War of the Worlds*, aimed to accomplish more than simply entertain the reader. For all of its imaginativeness, his fiction is didactic (the reigning literary value of the Victorian Era), filled with social and political commentary and predictions. *War of the Worlds* is a major criticism of governments, on national and international levels, for not being prepared for possible major crises. For example, Wells was one of few to predict, in part, two World Wars in less than thirty years. Published in 1898, the book anticipated his sociopolitical non-fiction and preceded both World Wars by nearly two decades. The connection between his fiction and non-fiction is overlooked; more, the non-fiction portion of his work is lacking appropriate research and criticism that properly demonstrates its importance among literature.

H. G. Wells' non-fiction, primarily those pieces based on a natural evolutionary process he called "collectivization,"[1] is not only progressive but reactive in its call for social reform. Such reform is based upon Wells' socialistic views and is, in large part, a reaction to the problematic thirty-year period which included World War I, the promising 1920's, and World War II. His theories concerning social evolution and humanity, combined with his scientific training, gave him authority as a key figure in the struggle to enact social reform. Further, this authority was not specific to Britain—Wells interacted with many people from across the globe. Analyzing the early biographical events related to Wells' involvement in socialism and the non-fiction he produced as a result is vital in order to redefine H. G. Wells as not simply a science-fiction author but as a man concerned with the reorganization of society based on the social evolution of humankind.

[1] Collectivization is a term used by Wells to indicate his theory of social evolution. Collectivization suggests that populations of the world are moving ever closer together; I will use the term collectivization to indicate both the evolutionary process and the eventual status of humankind that has dealt with relative issues, such as nationalism.

II.

Biography

The early years of Wells' life—1866 to 1890—contained key events that led him to pursue socialist ideology. The socialistic values he adopted as a result of these events influenced much of his human rights and social reform literature. Wells engaged in many intellectual pursuits, including studying biology under T. H. Huxley at the Normal School of Science in London, England, in order to become a scientist. Rarely was there a time when he was not presenting a paper on scientific theory, publishing fiction, or advocating Socialism; in short, Wells spent much of his life writing progressive and thought-provoking pieces. Late in his life, Wells turned almost all of his focus to social reform commentary. This social reform commentary would be based on a lifetime of experience and learning.

Wells' early life was marked by severe poverty. During this time, he matured, attending schools and attempting apprenticeships. Because he experienced poverty first-hand, he understood the proletariat lifestyle: undernourishment, multiple schools, and hard, underpaid work. Between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, Wells was contracted to two apprenticeships as a draper; he strongly disliked this life and rebelled against it. It was common for an apprentice to be mistreated during this time. Long hours and days, little time off, and virtually no pay defined his—and many others'—life. He did continue schooling, off and on, during this time, but by no means was it consistent. By the age of sixteen, Wells had experienced both poverty and oppression, but he also understood the hope offered by education; with this hope, Wells persuaded his parents to allow him to continue his education.

Wells continued to educate himself throughout his life—first, and most formally, in his twenties at various Academies. Later, he studied independently, publishing papers on scientific theories concerning such topics as sex, chemistry, biology, and other liberally-focused ideas. He also applied his scientific training, particularly the evolutionary biology training he received, to fiction and non-fiction. The new breed of fiction—science fiction—was more than fantasy; it could be read allegorically and metaphorically. A fictional trip through time could introduce contemporary issues by demonstrating how the present molds the future.

Often, Wells' science fiction subtly presented an issue—or issues—that concerned, most generally, society or politics. The issues offered—aliens attacking earth or how society will evolve—were metaphors for events such as major earth crises or an ultimate and critical dichotomy in social classes; further, the issue at hand was one that could not be handled without the restructuring of accepted values and aspects that are vital to society. To illustrate: in *War of the Worlds*, humankind's savior is a common virus to which the Martians were not immune; had this virus not stopped the invaders, the earth's destruction was imminent—Wells' point exactly. In *The Time Machine*, a time traveler visits the year 802,701 AD and finds that social classes have evolved to the point that one class, the Morlocks, hunt another class, the Eloi. Both of these stories, and many others, posit hypothetical questions that force individuals to reconsider the fate of the planet and humankind's effect on that fate. Wells used science fiction to suggest that governments must, most basically, cooperate on an international level to be prepared for both major crises, as well as for social and biological evolutionary processes. While evolution in the biological sense was not overly affected by humans, social change could be manipulated by the world population. Wells' science fiction explored social evolution; his non-fiction attempted to help humankind utilize the process.

In line with his fiction, Wells' non-fiction applied his scientific schooling to social theory, and, eventually, he came to the conclusion that humankind was moving closer and closer toward collectivization. He spent a great portion of his life evaluating and re-evaluating his theories of bringing about the new world through reorganization and education. He continually updated his theories in light of current events, but he always remained focused on preventing humanity from destroying itself and the natural evolutionary process of collectivization.

During his years of formal schooling, Wells became intimate with the Fabian Society and inevitably discovered socialism. The Fabians were an intellectually-based group that preferred gradual rather than revolutionary reform; they were a major influence on Wells and his ideas of social reform, and he became a major figure in the movement for social reform. The Fabians were largely formed around Victorian ideals that rejected major change; this resistance to change can be attributed to the revolution-based Romantic period that preceded it. In his autobiography, Wells discusses the "well-applauded and well-organized" Fabian meetings as a major attraction for his young enthusiastic self. He states that the Fabians were responsible for his "out and out" turn to Socialism (*Autobiography* 193). He was only twenty-five at this time (not officially joining the Fabians until 1903 at the age of thirty-seven) and spent the next fifty years refining his views, even after disagreements with the Fabians—the most important being that over the pace of reform. Wells and the Fabians later split, Wells having come to the conclusion that revolution was necessary to reforming the world—a contrast to Victorian Era ideals.

Possibly the largest influence on Wells was the thirty-year period involving both World Wars and the surrounding, yet empty, promises of peace. Political and governmental ideas concerning the war and a post-war society, such as the war aims of the Allies during World War

I, were thought by Wells to be greatly insufficient and incomplete. For example, Wells helped to form the League of Nations as a British delegate, lending ideas as to what the goals and limitations of the League should be. By the time the League was entirely organized, however, Wells was thoroughly appalled at the outcome. The League was more a world police force, rather than a framework through which humankind could work together.

Apart from President Woodrow Wilson being the architect of the League of Nations and the United States Senate not allowing America's involvement, Wells felt that, foundationally, much more could have been accomplished by the League of Nations. Wells called for a United World, but the League of Nations focused on peace between nations, even advocating nationalism—something he strongly opposed, since it reifies divisive boundaries. Wells wanted a World State (later known as the new World Order)[2]; the League only took a small step in that direction. He wrote of and advocated this World State as well as other goals, such as disarmament and a world currency, until his death in 1946.

Upon realizing the inevitability of World War II, Wells began a struggle for social reform that lasted the rest of his life. In one of his last books, *Mind at the End of its Tether*, he symbolically (the book is fiction) struggles with the fact that his aims for social reform would not come about in his lifetime and might never happen. The book explores his naïve idealism. Wells understood that complete social reform was not an overnight event, but his trust and belief in humanity led him to believe that with enough direction and pushing, the world would voluntarily begin to reform. By the end of his life, though, this optimism was running low.

[2] Wells' term for a world "*post*-collectivization" changes as his theory becomes more developed. Changes in terminology are often for clarification. For example, Wells stopped using the term "World State" because he felt that it allowed for boundaries and exclusions of particular areas.

III.

Early Ventures

Even before World Wars I and II, Wells was a social reform activist. In 1900, at the age of thirty-four, Wells wrote *Anticipations* (published 1901). *Anticipations*, a text that was revised four times (last in 1917, three years into World War I), commented on the social and political issues, such as an exponential growth in populations and fear of war, that worried him. His belief in the necessity of social change led him to join the Fabians in 1903, with the hope that his ideas would receive more backing. In his autobiography, written thirty years and multiple publications later, Wells claimed that *Anticipations* "can be considered as the keystone to the main arch of my work" (*Autobiography* 549).

Anticipations (fully titled *Anticipations of the Reactions of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought*) was an important book for Wells, not because it was a top seller, but because he used the book to lay out and forecast—with his scientifically-trained mind—sociopolitical problems he recognized. When he wrote *A Modern Utopia*—a fictitious companion—he claimed, in a note to the reader, that *Anticipations* was written

> […] in order to clear up the muddle in my own mind about innumerable social and political questions, questions I could not keep out of my work, which distressed me to touch upon in a stupid haphazard way. (*A Modern Utopia* 1)

This "clearing up" of thoughts was Wells' first step towards an endeavor that validates his importance as a world thinker—someone who was concerned with problems larger than his own life. Wells was more concerned with the fate of the world and humanity than with the fate of his

city or country of birth. The book also envisaged a natural collectivization of humankind due to biological and evolutionary processes—a theory based on his scientific background. Evolutionary studies, such as those offered by Charles Darwin, suggested that evolution was a process of advancement. Darwin's theory of natural selection states that the best possible characteristics will help a species to survive; in turn, these superior traits will be passed on to subsequent generations. Wells published *Anticipations* after he recognized that inhabitants, societies, and cultures of the earth were evolving towards collectivization. The book presents the idea of a "New Republic."[3] Wells felt that such a book was critical to informing the world of the natural social evolutionary processes that would eventually better humankind.

Wells begins *Anticipations* with the basis for his theory of social collectivization. The first paragraph states:

> 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. (1)

Wells was perpetually looking forward, concerned not only with the present status of the planet, but with the fate of humankind. The first chapter discusses "Locomotion in the Twentieth Century" and its correlation with social change. "The growth of our great cities, the rapid populating of America, the entry of China into the field of European politics are, for example,

[3] See footnote 2.

quite obviously and directly consequences of new methods of locomotion,"[4] claims Wells (2). He was concerned with a growing world population and the necessity to accommodate this population. After giving a brief history of locomotion and its impact on society, Wells discusses "The Probable Diffusion of Great Cities."

This chapter is vitally important to the social evolution theory Wells posits. He suggests that villages and small towns are increasingly diminishing; contrastingly, cities are becoming larger and larger. With such exponential growth among cities, which is an "essential phenomenon," a method must be found to rigorously accommodate growing cities and populations (21). Without *internationally* structured growth, city, state, and national boundaries will eventually be broken, possibly erupting in war. The interpolation, and diminishing boundaries, of people is a natural process (later, Wells calls this collectivization). More importantly, this process must be recognized and accepted; Wells used *Anticipations* to demonstrate a theory he found essential in order to help the world realize the level of social change he envisioned: a redefinition of the term "human being," an absence of nationality concerning one's country, and a collection of minds that will focus on world progress rather than nationalistic or individualistic progression.

The third chapter discusses "Developing Social Elements" that have been a concurrent cause of social polarization with locomotion. These elements include war, increased private property ownership, a diminishing class system, and, most importantly, scientific progress. The former two elements are contradictory to Wells' theory and are problems that must be resolved.

[4] The term locomotion refers to any method of travel that utilizes something extra-human. Specifically, Wells is discussing trains and automobiles.

The latter two, however, demonstrate Wells' socialistically-based collectivization theory. These changes in society reveal that

> Every country in the world, indeed, that is organized at all, has been organized with a view to stability within territorial limits; no country has been organized with any foresight of development and inevitable change, or with the slightest reference to the practical revolution in topography that the new means of transit involve. And since this is so, and since humanity is most assuredly embarked upon a series of changes of which we know as yet only the opening phases, a large part of the history of the coming years will certainly record more or less conscious endeavours to adapt these obsolete and obsolescent contrivances for the management of public affairs to the new and continually expanding and changing requirements of the social body, to correct or overcome the traditions that were once wisdom and which are now obstruction, and to burst the straining boundaries that were sufficient for the ancient states. There are here no signs of a millennium. Internal reconstruction, while men are still limited, egotistical, passionate, ignorant, and ignorantly led, means seditions and revolutions, and the rectification of frontiers means wars. But before we go on to these conflicts and wars certain general social reactions must be considered. (55-56)

More succinctly, nations must begin to recognize issues outside of their own boundaries. Science merely posits theories; humankind must take the initiative in implementing necessary change by applying and utilizing scientific theories and discoveries. Next, Wells discusses the repercussions of these elements and the extent to which society must change. This discussion

will become Wells' concern through much of his sociopolitical literature. He claims that science will eventually become an important part of every household; therefore, change, on the most basic level, or social change on an international scale, must begin with the family. He predicts and anticipates that parents will realize the importance of becoming socially and internationally aware. This awareness will be of global issues, not just those pertinent to one's home. This also means being more focused on larger problems, and having the enthusiasm to advocate change on a higher level than one's household. In turn, parents will educate their children accordingly, so that the children understand the world in which they will live and govern. In discussing the new scientifically-informed family, Wells aligns sociopolitical awareness with scientific progress. The new *world* will find science, and the accompanied progress, essential to politics and society.

Wells also discusses the quandaries society will inevitably confront. The needs and concerns of the old society will awaken the need for a newly reformed society. At this point, Wells believed collectivization would *naturally* arise for the evolutionary advancement and political relief of humankind. Later, he concedes and advocates a conscious social revolution for reform; this means that an international effort is necessary in order to spur, and guide, social reform.

Since his early theory posits that humankind is naturally collectivizing as a species, Wells believes that socialistic democracy is the best known method to accommodate this new society. He gives a history of democracy and the characteristics it exhibits that will best suit the New Republic. Democracy will best govern a socialistic republic, allowing for individual contribution and structured growth. This participation will allow for an adoption of the best morals, ways of reform, and choices of progress because it will lead to choices made by all who will be affected.

The next two chapters discuss "War" and "The Conflict of Languages," along with their impact on collectivization and social reform. In his early literature, Wells does not believe that war will be the specific catalyst for social reform; later, the outcome of World War I brings Wells to the conclusion that revolution was necessary for collectivization. In his autobiography, he states that another great war will be necessary to spur change; this alludes to the fact that Wells believed war was necessary for revolution. Thus far, he feels that war will hinder progress. Likewise, the myriad of languages found on the earth will also slow advancement; language is one of the definitive characteristics of nationalism—here, Wells is only naïve and inconclusive as to a solution for language barriers. Increased methods, and speeds, of travel have begun to intermix languages at an exponential pace. Wells believes that better methods of communication must be found in order to help society collectivize. His basis for this belief can be found in the next chapter.

Wells begins "The Larger Synthesis" by stating:

> We have seen that the essential process arising out of the growth of science and mechanism, and more particularly out of the still developing new facilities of locomotion and communication science has afforded, is the deliquescence of the social organizations of the past, and the synthesis of ampler and still ampler and more complicated and still more complicated social unities. The suggestion is powerful, the conclusion is hard to resist, that, through whatever disorders of danger and conflict, whatever centuries of misunderstanding and bloodshed, men may still have to pass, this process nevertheless aims finally, and will attain to the establishment of one world-state at

> peace within itself. In the economic sense, indeed, a world-state is already established. Even to-day we do all buy and sell in the same markets… (135)

Wells claims that, throughout time, science and human progress have drawn humankind closer and closer together and that it will continue to do so. Eventually, biological and scientific progress will create a world state and the same progress will advance the world as a whole, not just to establish a world collective. After postulating that a New Republic is on the horizon, *Anticipations* discusses exactly what liberties, morals, and policies must be incorporated in order to fully establish and maintain a functioning unified world. This theme drives the remainder of the book; Wells, having advocated a collected effort for the New Republic, also believed in restructuring the new society as well.

In discussing the need for democratically established "faith, morals, and public policy," Wells claims that

> Since we have supposed this New Republic will already be consciously and pretty freely controlling the general affairs of humanity before this century closes, its broad principles and opinions must necessarily shape and determine that still ampler future of which the coming hundred years is but the opening phase. (153)

He is positing that the New Republic will be in place before the close of the Twentieth Century and that its goals will be to focus on the future. Additionally, this statement encompasses much more: Wells is not simply implying that the New Republic should look toward the future, but that humankind must continuously forecast, predict, and prepare for the future. In the same vein, most of his literature is concerned with the future of the human race. Further, this statement does

not recommend that the world establish a New Republic; rather, Wells inherently implies that the world state will be in place by the end of the twentieth century through a worldwide realization among people(s) of the need for global social reform.

Wells concludes *Anticipations* with a discussion of religion and its place in the socially-reformed world. Religions, he claims, are for faith. A person of the new state will

> not believe there is any *post mortem* state of rewards and punishments because of his faith in the sanity of God, and I do not see how he will trace any reaction between this world and whatever world there may be of disembodied lives. (172)

Faith might be helpful for the direction of moral issues, but it is for the "future [that] these men will live and die" (172). Humankind will work toward the betterment of itself, rather than for a brand of morals established by a corrupt government. Wells believed that morals could be shaped, redefined, molded, created, and destroyed; this means that the rules, morals, and ethics that govern the New Republic will be based on necessity, and a decision of the people.

Two years later, Wells published *Mankind in the Making* (1903)—a companion to *Anticipations*. In the preface Wells wrote that *Mankind in the Making* and *Anticipations* were an

> […] attempt to deal with social and political questions in a new way and from a new starting-point, viewing the whole social and political world as aspects of one universal evolving scheme, and placing all social and political activities in a defined relation to that; and to this general method and trend it is that the attention of the reader is especially directed. (*Mankind in the Making* 1)

Wells realized that, although the world may be collectivizing naturally, the human tendency for ownership, nationalism, and power would be an antithesis to the process. Nations and the power of one person or country over another would be non-existent in the new system; therefore, Wells felt that the idea and responsibility of a sociopolitical revolution—and subsequently a re-structured world—would need to be placed in the hands of a younger (hopefully, the next) generation, for they would be the leaders within the new system. Further, it was the responsibility of people like Woodrow Wilson, George Bernard Shaw, Vladimir Lenin, and Wells himself not only to convey this idea, but to encourage and teach the next generation how to adapt, live, support, and operate within the new system, because it was they who understood the need for a new World Order. These people, among others, had demonstrated an intricate knowledge of the world and its social order, and were capable of effectively educating and directing the collectivization of the new world.

More than a decade before the First World War, Wells was calling for socialistic reform of political systems across the earth. The need for this social reform was ingrained in social and political foundations, inspiring reaction not only from his socialistic non-fiction, but his science fiction as well. Here too, Wells realized that he must take responsibility for the changes he envisioned, since "no one…had handled [the problems] in a manner to satisfy my needs" (*A Modern Utopia* 1). His concerns focused on such issues as nationalism (considered the antithesis of socialism), his unease with the restlessness of an ever-growing population, and, largely, his fears about humanity's capacity for self-destruction; not only was there no room for nationalism and self-destruction with a growing population, but there was no room for them in the new system. Inherent to a socialistically-based, progressive world is the elimination of these ideals—however seemingly impossible their elimination may be.

IV.

World War I

The outbreak of World War I was an epoch-shaping event for every major—and minor—political, social, and intellectual power. Minds around the world used periodicals, fiction and non-fiction, radio, and other methods to convey agendas for the world during and after the war. Wells, hoping for a doorway to social reform, further refined his hopes and predictions while publishing his theories in non-fiction as well as science fiction.

The book *War and the Future,* published in 1917, was based on Wells' visits as a concerned "world citizen" to the front lines of Italy.[5] The book begins with a detailed discussion of the activities of the First World War in Italy, and then moves to "The Western War." This section presents and addresses such questions as the physical and mental toll the war had taken on involved countries as well as the new weaponry, like tanks, that were being used. He was concerned that humankind was developing warfare to such an extent that it would clash with the evolutionary process he theorized. Because of this pending destruction, he, yet again, revised his theory to incorporate "advancements" that had occurred. He states that

> The development of war has depended largely upon two factors. One of these is invention. New weapons and new methods have become available, and have modified tactics, strategy, the relative advantage of offensive and defensive. The other chief factor in the evolution of the war has been social organisation. (35)

And later, with more details that present his concerns:

[5] In 1916, the British Ambassador in Rome, Sir Rennell Rodd, suggested that prominent authors of both the Italians and the English should visit each others' front lines and write an account of their experience. Wells was one of these authors.

> Now a cavalry pursuit alone may easily come upon disaster, cavalry can be so easily held up by wire and a few machine guns. I think the Germans have reckoned on that and on automobiles, probably only the decay of their morale prevents their opening their lines now on the chance of the British attempting some such folly as a big cavalry advance, but I do not think the Germans have reckoned on the use of machine guns in aeroplanes, supported by and supporting cavalry or automobiles. At the present time I should imagine there is no more perplexing consideration amidst the many perplexities of the German military intelligence than the new complexion put upon pursuit by these low level air developments. It may mean that in all sorts of positions where they had counted confidently on getting away, they may not be able to get away—from the face of a scientific advance properly commanding and using modern material in a dexterous and intelligent manner. (40)

Scientific and technological advances, Wells believes, should not be used to commit mass murder. The intelligent method of using science is to help improve and prolong life—not increase death rates. Most participants in the war were trying to find the most effective way to kill the most people. Wells' beliefs concerning science conflict with the "real-world" use of science, something he believed would have a very negative and permanent impact on the new society he is presenting.

Having used the first two-thirds of the book to portray the war as he had seen it, Wells titles the final section "How People Think About the War," with a subheading of "Do they Really Think at all?" He claims that

> […] there is quite an enormous mass of people who--in spite of the fact that their minds are concentrated on aspects of this war, who are at present hearing, talking, experiencing little else than the war—are nevertheless neither doing nor trying to do anything that deserves to be called thinking about it at all. They may even be suffering quite terribly by it. But they are no more mastering its causes, reasons, conditions, and the possibility of its future prevention than a monkey that has been rescued in a scorching condition from the burning of a house will have mastered the problem of a fire. It is just happening to and about them. It may, for anything they have learnt about it, happen to them again. (70)

Countries involved in World War I, Britain included, were too focused on the needs of their particular country (i.e. nationalism) to invest time in major social change. Politicians, war activists, and many others simply wanted to win the war, believing that defeating the other side would be considered a success. Wells believed such a shortsighted mentality would inevitably and undeniably lead to another war (illustrated by World War II); war will continue infinitely should humans not establish viable post-war aims that move toward the prevention of war, the establishment of human rights, and an enterprise of peace (*War and the Future* 107-110). Without positive and progressive change, even those who "won" the war would eventually become "losers." *War and the Future* does not directly discuss Wells' theories, but, in addition to *Anticipations* and *Mankind in the Making*, one can see that he is genuinely concerned with the future of humankind and the need to find a niche in which the entire world can comfortably interact and progress.

Emotionally exhausted by the war, Wells wrote a more focused and organized work, *In the Fourth Year* (1918), which called for a "League of Free Nations." Upon sending the book to Woodrow Wilson, a letter was returned (not *directly* from Wilson) to Wells thanking him for his contribution and asking for further suggestions. Wells' response reflected that of an intelligent, concerned, and hopeful world citizen. He particularly discussed the necessity of America becoming an important leader for the "League of Free Nations." *War and the Future* and its companion letter supposedly affected Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points,"[6] but Wells stated that he, himself, could not find any strong correlation between his writing and Wilson's "Fourteen Points"—other than the idea of a combined body of nations (*Autobiography* 604-605). This disclaimer articulates the fact that Wells was utterly disgusted not only with the United States for not joining, but with the goals of the League of Nations, which were not as focused, as clear, or as groundbreaking as he called for. The League of Nations was established by a large group of people from many nations; because of international collaboration, Wells idealistically hoped that the members would realize the importance of invoking worldwide reform. Wells was disappointed when he discovered that the League was established not to enact change, but rather to prevent the "bad guys" (Austria-Hungary, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire) from instigating another war.

In Wells' view, the "League of Free Nations" should be composed of all governments, backed by the citizens of those governments, and should focus on world peace through control and centralization of *world* power. "…[T]he League of Free Nations shall practically control the army, navy, air forces, and armament industry of every nation in the world," claimed Wells;

[6] Speech delivered by Woodrow Wilson on 18 January 1918 that gave conditions necessary for the surrender of the Central Powers. The speech included the outline for the League of Nations.

furthermore, "the League…must do no less than supersede empire; it must end not only this new German imperialism…but must also wind up British imperialism and French imperialism…" (*In the Fourth Year* 13-14). Again, Wells is tapping into the idea of a "unified world," but a League of Free Nations was only a step towards this; later, he called for a new "World Order"—earlier known as the New Republic—whose goals would incorporate both collectivization and world peace. After World War I, Wells remained critical of the League of Nations, often criticizing Wilson for not having more conviction—especially with the empty and nationalistic voice of the "Fourteen Points"—and other effects of the Great War in his sociopolitical literature.

Following the Peace Treaty of Versailles in 1919, Wells published a pamphlet, *The Idea of a League of Nations*, which called for a

> […]statement of war aims to the whole world," because "Permanent world peace must be a great process and state of affairs, greater indeed than any war process, because it must anticipate, comprehend, and prevent any war process, and demand the conscious, the understanding, and the willing participation of the great majority of human beings. (*Autobiography* 645)

This defines Wells' concept of a "League of Nations"—a body that would be actively pursued and, once achieved, shape itself toward world refinement and collectivization. Publishing ideas of a "process" greater than war directly after "The Great War" was not something to be taken lightly, but Wells realized that his predictions in *Mankind in the Making* were becoming realities—that is, that the world needed to be pushed into a natural process.

The impact of World War I was not restricted to any particular group, state, or nation. In his autobiography, Wells states that "No intelligent brain that passed through the experience of the Great War emerged without being profoundly changed" (769). Granted, *nobody* emerged from the mud and destruction of World War I unscathed or unaffected; but, Wells' commentary specifically alludes to those figureheads of the intellectual community who recognized that World War I was *not* the "war to end all wars," yet who nevertheless made a strong effort to push the war and its outcomes in the direction of world peace. Later, he would refer to these people as "open conspirators,"[7] world leaders such as Franklin Roosevelt, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, and other intellectuals with power and understanding who could inspire and impose a new system.

[7] In 1928, Wells published *The Open Conspiracy*, in which he introduced "open conspirators." He uses the term conspirator to allude to the fact that few people understood the necessity of a reformed society; those who *did* understand the need for change were few in number. For further explanation and context, see pages 20-21 of this thesis.

V.

Post World War I, the "Roaring Twenties," and an "Experiment in Autobiography"

Between World War I and World War II, Wells spent an increasing amount of time working on his sociopolitical literature. This work was a product of World War I's outcome. The non-fiction portion of this literature called for a re-organization of the world as it naturally moved toward collectivization—something Wells had been speculating since *Anticipations*. Rather than forecasting a New Republic, which sounded nationalistic, he called for a new "World Order." The new World Order, whose first goal was directing collectivization in order to avoid total destruction, had the responsibility of implementing an effective education system that would teach "citizens of the new World Order" not only academic subjects, but also the reasons behind the socialistic order (ultimately relying on biology), as well as the citizens' responsibilities to the world society.

Wells found it important to circumscribe the exact materials to be used in the new system; he published three exemplary educational books for the new system. The first work published, *Outline of History*, underwent multiple revisions.[8] The *Outline of History* focuses primarily on telling the story of history in terms of biological, evolutionary, and sociological theories. The book discusses how human beings, and society, evolved to the current status, and were in the process of evolving towards collectivization.

In collaboration with one of his sons, George Phillip Wells (known as Gip), and Aldous Huxley, the son of T. H. Huxley, Wells next published *Science of Life* (1930). The book is a

[8] Published 1920, 1931, and 1940; posthumously: 1949, 1956, 1961, and 1971.

compilation of major scientific discoveries, totaling 1,514 pages, since "time began." The main goal of *Science of Life* was to reaffirm the importance of science and the direction it had given and would continue to give to humankind.

Work, Wealth, and Happiness of Mankind, the last of these three "textbooks," was published in 1931. Again, Wells took a scientific viewpoint in order to introduce the knowledge he found necessary for a citizen of the new World Order. These books were extremely vital to Wells' thought. He wanted to establish a core of the known knowledge and truths that could be accessed by all, not simply those of a given area of study; accessibility of knowledge is the central goal of these encyclopedic works. Though the books have a noticeable socialist aspect, suggesting, again, that socialism is the closest route to a successfully reformed world population, this perspective should not surprise an informed reader. Wells felt that the best method to establish a New Republic was informing the world public in a socialist manner; thus, his texts center on socialistic thought.

While working on *Outline of History*, *The Science of Life*, and *Work, Wealth, and Happiness of Mankind*, Wells also published another important work. This work, *The Open Conspiracy* (1929—later published as *What are We to do with Our Lives?*), introduced the idea of "open conspirators"—those whom Wells defined as understanding the need for social reform in order to stop the world's descent into social chaos. These conspirators were also intellectually responsible for not only advocating a new order but fostering its growth. *The Open Conspiracy* shows the evolution of Wells' thoughts concerning society and socialism; in this book, he moves beyond merely forecasting a natural collectivization of the world by discussing those people who understand the need for structured change in order to successfully achieve it. Whereas his earlier

books served to rehearse his ideas, *The Open Conspiracy* is utterly dedicated to his theories and the need for social reconstruction.

Wells begins the book with a chapter entitled "The Present Crisis of Human Affairs." The chapter discusses, in brief, major advancements such as travel methods, scientific discoveries, and efficient business tactics that created the world's increasing interconnectedness. The growing interactions between the planet's inhabitants were encompassed in his previously-written *Anticipations*, but *The Open Conspiracy* was written to give direction to this collectivization. The next chapter, "The Idea of an Open Conspiracy," discusses collectivization and the need for "open conspirators." "The Present Crisis of Human Affairs" introduces the idea that humankind has yet to realize the impending social change and, further, had not so much as begun to plan for its arrival.

The next two chapters of *The Open Conspiracy*, entitled "We Have to Clear and Clean Up Our Minds" and "The Revolution in Education," prepare the reader for what is needed to begin understanding and changing the world. Wells does not explain how, precisely, to "clear and clean up" one's mind, rather he claims that mental clarity is necessary to start the revolution. One's mind must be clear of the socially-learned ideas of individualism and nationalism, and, instead, focus on the advancement of the human race. Wells claims that "Some sort of reckoning, therefore, between people awakened to the new world that dawns about us and the schools, colleges, and machinery of formal education is due" (61). Education is the key to informed and positive citizens that will understand social reform; the open conspirators should direct this reform, thus recruiting and educating so that more people become open conspirators. Wells claims that a "vigorous educational reform movement arises as a natural and necessary

expression of the awakening open conspirator." Although he is now advocating a revolution, he still believes that progressive science and technology, along with natural biological processes, will help guide humankind.

The following two chapters discuss religion, its current place, and its place within the new World. Although his tones and beliefs do not vary from *Anticipations*, he does believe that religion can play a useful role. This includes the perpetuation of morals, but religion could also help direct those who need faith apart from faith in humanity. Although Wells believes religion *could* be helpful, he also writes that "it is possible now to imagine an order in human affairs from which these evils[9] have been largely or entirely eliminated. More and more people are coming to realize that such an order is a material possibility" (68). Utopia will exist during one's life, not *post mortem*. Each person will understand that all people are working together to advance the earth, without the goal of eliminating each other.

As far as Wells' goals are concerned, "What Mankind Has to Do" is the most important chapter of *The Open Conspiracy*. Here, he defines what an open conspirator must do in order to enact social reform. The change must be conscious: "The new world as a going concern must arise out of the old as a going concern" (70). The new citizen must be well-informed, educated, and active. "The fundamental organization of contemporary states […] is exactly what a world organization cannot be," says Wells; leaders, teachers, and parents must focus less nationally and more globally. The new government will have two very important goals: "(1) an effective criticism having the quality of science, and (2) the growing will in men to have things right" (73). The new world must be scientifically, intellectually, and consciously based.

[9] Wells is referring to any evil that is a product of xenophobia, nationalism, that detracts from a progressive and scientifically-based society.

A scientifically-based world government should focus on, as stated in his previous work, the advancement of humankind. Too often, advancements are used for purposes of destruction; advancements, of any kind, should promulgate positive progress, not progress through war and destruction. But, Wells does claim that "Life which was once routine, endurance, and mischance will become adventure and discovery […] We have still barely emerged from among animals in their struggle for existence" (82). Life in the new world state is not conceivable without education and open conspirators.

Further, Wells claims that "The open conspiracy is not to be thought of as a single organization; it is a conception of life out of which efforts, organizations, and new orientations will arise" (84). He posits that the new world will not be an organization that adopts new members, but rather a movement that will simultaneously take hold of the world. Throughout the world, self-definition is primarily based on nationalism, a concept fostering an "us/them" dichotomy or divisiveness. People are defined by their country of residence, their job, and their friends. New world citizens will define themselves as world citizens, because the current, functioning world is antagonistic to the necessary collectivization (89-93).

Wells moves to "Resistances and Antagonistic Forces in Our Conscious and Unconscious Selves" after discussing the world politics and beliefs that inhibit progress towards the new world. The most important psychological change must be the absence of the term "we," because "The Open Conspiracy is in partial possession of us, and we attempt to serve it" (105); thus, just as humans are slaves to the biological forces of life and death, they are captives to the biological forces of evolutionary collectivism.

Drawing away from linguistic theory, the next two chapters reiterate the importance of education in order to have competent open conspirators. Titled "The Open Conspiracy Begins as a Movement of Discussion, Explanation, and Propaganda" and "Early Constructive Work of the Open Conspiracy," Wells outlines three "fundamentally important issues" that must be present to acquire "unanimity":

> *Firstly*, the entirely provisional nature of all existing governments, and the entirely provisional nature, therefore, of all loyalties associated therewith;
>
> *Secondly*, the supreme importance of population control in human biology and the possibility it affords us of a release from he pressure of the struggle for existence on ourselves; and
>
> *Thirdly*, the urgent necessity of protective resistance against the present traditional drifts towards war. (111)

After defining unanimity of purpose for the open conspiracy, Wells outlines seven principles that society must put into place in order to achieve successful collectivization:

> (1) The complete assertion, practical as well as theoretical, of the provisional nature of existing governments and of our acquiescence in them;
>
> (2) The resolve to minimize by all available means the conflicts of these governments, their militant use of individuals and property, and their interferences with the establishment of a world economic system;

(3) The determination to replace private, local or national ownership of at least credit, transport, and staple production by a responsible world directorate serving the common ends of the race;

(4) The practical recognition of the necessity for world biological controls, for example, of population and disease;

(5) The support of a minimum standard of individual freedom and welfare in the world; and

(6) The supreme duty of subordinating the personal career to the creation of a world directorate capable of these tasks and to the general advancement of human knowledge, capacity, and power;

(7) The admission therewith that our immortality is conditional and lies in the race and not in our individual selves. (113-114)

Previously, Wells demonstrated the need for the world to have a concerted direction in order to establish a competent system that could avoid obliteration through war (particularly through new military technologies) and achieve success. These seven guidelines constitute the foundation for a competent system. Later, Wells outlines the social contract of the new world with the "Declaration of Man." These guidelines helped to "lift the oppression of incessant toil […] and the miseries due to a great multitude of infections and disorders […]" (135). Wells advocated a world utopia: one seemingly out of reach, yet practicable because of its looming necessity due to population growth, scientific discoveries, and technological advancements.

Despite H. G. Wells' personal and public engagements, he found time to write an autobiography that amounted to over seven hundred pages. He began writing the book in 1932 and finally published it in 1934—a mere five years before World War II. *An Experiment in Autobiography: Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (since 1866)* allowed readers an insight into Wells' childhood and years of schooling. Only four-hundred pages of the autobiography address his personal life; Wells' purpose was more political than personal. The title expresses Wells' aim to portray his scientific mind while also demonstrating his belief in the avenues of science. As with much of his work, his autobiography addresses social reform. Not only does the work illustrate his struggle to enact social reform: it also calls for collectivization.

Wells continued to argue for collectivization even while telling his life story; in fact, he uses more space discussing his ties to Socialism and his undertaking to ascertain a world government than he does discussing his science fiction. Therefore, it is ironic that the world has chosen to remember H. G. Wells the "science-fiction author," rather than H. G. Wells the "sociopolitical activist." Possibly, Wells' non-fiction is too naïve, and his science fiction more fun. Clearly, Herbert George Wells thought of himself more as a Socialist and utopian-forager than a science-fiction author.

In this same vein, most of Wells' science fiction was clearly casting the same line as were his socialistic publications. Blatant examples include *War of the Worlds*, *A Modern Utopia*, and *The Time Machine*; he opens *A Modern Utopia* by stating that

> *Anticipations* did not achieve its end. I have a slow constructive hesitating sort of mind, and when I emerged from that undertaking I found I had still most of my questions to state and solve. In *Mankind in the Making*, therefore, I tried to review

> the social organisation in a different way, to consider it as an educational process instead of dealing with it as a thing with a future history […] I ventured upon several themes with a greater frankness than I had used in *Anticipations*, and came out of that second effort guilty of much rash writing, but with a considerable development of formed opinion […] This book has brought me back to imaginative writing again. In its two predecessors the treatment of social organisation had been purely objective; here my intention has been a little wider and deeper, in that I have tried to present not simply an ideal, but an ideal in reaction with two personalities. (1)

Wells believed that science fiction was as effective as his non-fiction. He used science fiction to capture an audience and provide an income; Wells' true passion had roots in socialism and the implementation of a new World Order, and these beliefs and hopes are traceable in all of his writings.

VI.

World War II

To Wells, possibly the most important aspect concerning the onslaught of World War II was the fact that it called into question the absence of clear war aims and the unsettled outcomes of World War I. In turn, people beckoned a re-evaluation of the mindset of the intellectual community, who demanded stricter and better defined goals for the end of the war. Upset at re-entering war, especially since World War I had only recently ended, H. G. Wells found a doorway—the light of the other side being that of a reformation of the world's population: one that remembered the devastation and negative impacts of World War I and World War II. In remembering, they would be more eager to collaborate in order to progress and avoid war. Wells believed that World War II was the war he prophesized in his *Experiment in Autobiography*, and he did not lose any time shifting his thoughts almost entirely to literature focused on the sociopolitical outcome of the war.

Wells' most important political writing in this era was a short, 128-page pamphlet entitled *What Are We Fighting For?: H. G. Wells on the Rights of Man*[10] that he published first in 1938. The ideas contained in the booklet are the core of his socialistic thought concerning a successful world revolution that established collectivization; more succinctly stated, this book is the principle product of Wells' life as an advocate of social reform. The "Declaration of Rights" is intentionally and methodically intricate. The goal of the book was to advertise and elucidate a document integral to Wells' ideology: the "Declaration of Rights." The book begins with a letter written from himself to the editor of the booklet; subsequent chapters discuss each section of the

[10] This work will be referred to and cited as *The Rights of Man*.

Declarations, generally with a suggestion of amendment to a particular area or idea. The final chapters recap the entire document with aforementioned changes, introduce a French document with the same intentions, discuss the German goals (or, rather, the lack of Allied goals), and call for more stringent and worthwhile war aims for the Allied Powers.

After claiming in the preface (letter to the editor) that the League of Nations was "too conservative" and failed to accomplish its goals, Wells re-suggests social reform (9). He discusses precisely how the outcome of World War II could be a potential success. This was through war aims that accomplished "true" social echelon change so as to avoid later destruction, as well as to call for social collectivization with the implementation of a—though *not* necessarily *his*—"Declaration of Rights" (*The Rights of Man* 12-14). Wells writes:

> Nobody and no group of people knows enough for this immense reorganization [of the world], and unless we can have a full and fearless public intercourse of minds open to all the world, our present enemies included, we shall never be able to establish a guiding system of ideas upon which a new world order can rest. (9-10)

He was calling for help with his document—this is, in part, the initiative for the *The Rights of Man*. Textually, he discusses with the reader how a certain section should be read or worded. For example, Wells reports that a previous reader suggested that the use of the word "men" is too restrictive and must be broadened so as not to eliminate women from the scope of the arguments presented (90). Wells wants international social input because the new World Order was to be for everyone. Consequently, having people enlist his argument helps give his theories social validity and political notice. Even the last thoughts of the book reiterate this point:

> There is no time to lose if that body of constructive opinion is to come into operation. There is no time to waste. Do not wait for 'leaders.' Act yourself. Spread this idea of *world collectivization plus the Rights of Man*. We do not want 'leaders'; we want honest representatives and missionaries to embody that idea and carry it everywhere on earth. (127)

This book calls people to action. Wells knew, from the experience of World War I, that the leaders could not be relied on to make proper decisions; the new "World Order," with its "honest representatives and missionaries" would focus on establishing the will of the people—this can only be accomplished by those who want it.

The core of the book—the "Declaration of Rights" [11]—is, as stated, central to Wells' discussion of social reform. Each section of the document is scrutinized for its defects as well as for its value. He begins with a preamble that states exactly why the document is necessary and the goals at which it aimed (18-20). Wells describes the current world as being too intent on the growth and structural well-being of its individual communities, states, and nations to recognize the need for global social reform and the need to direct this reform accordingly. The current state of the world and the future of a world that did not attempt to successfully collectivize was, as Wells describes, one in which "the behaviour of people degenerates towards a panic scramble, towards cheating, over-reaching, gang organisation, precautionary hoarding […]" (19). Simply put, morals have been sacrificed in order to better accommodate the natural collectivization of the world. Wells wants to establish a way to better organize this collectivization in order to maintain—if not increase—moral standards and avoid total chaos: "The choice is not between

[11] Wells' organization of the booklet incorporates the "Declaration of Rights" before the preamble, but discusses the contents of the document following Chapter I, "IMPERATIVE NEED FOR A DECLARATION."

accepting revolution and keeping on as we are, but between accepting revolution or destroying [the world] and ourselves" (22).

The first chapter discusses the "need for a declaration." As stated previously, "the whole world is asking for the War Aims of the Allied Powers" (23). Wells points out the fact that not only had the Allies not given lucid war aims to their citizens, but they were intent on waiting until the end of the war—as if winning the war was the only aim. Wells then moves to the idea that modern "men" do not want war; in a sense, the modern world had moved past war. Not only were people tired of war, they were ready to find peace. "Most modern men," Wells states, "have no set craving for fighting, and they are asking now with an increasing querulousness why their private lives are being disorganized […]" through the agendas of their government (23). Wells ends:

> We want to draw up a document and demand of Mr. Chamberlain and his friends abroad and at home: "Is this what we are fighting for? And if not then please tell us what you imagine we are fighting for?
>
> "Or better, perhaps, get out." (30)

Wells was being quite literal. The leaders were not fighting and dying in the war, yet they were the law makers in control of World War II and, possibly, its outcome. Democracy purports to be the will of the people; thus, it should be the people who decide the outcome, since they are the ultimate victims of the war's devastation and final effects.

The first step of organization would be to implement the "Declaration of Rights." Wells asserts ten rights within his document that cover such areas as "Security from Violence,"

"Habeas Corpus," "The Right to Subsistence," "The Right to Work and to Have Possessions," "Free Market," and "Profit Seeking." Each chapter discusses one or more of the given rights and explains its usefulness within the document, and, consequently, the new system. For example, the first right discussed is "Security from Violence"; this clause, found ninth in the first draft, is moved to first in the new draft. After talking to numerous soldiers, Wells found that the destruction of 1914 and the growing destruction of World War II had tremendous psychological and physical effects on both soldiers and citizens. As a result, any radical document that called for an immense amount of change needed to start with a statement of security for the world's citizens. He also suggested the deletion of the section, stating that the citizen

> shall not be subjected to imprisonment with such an excess of silence, noise, light or darkness as to cause mental suffering, or to imprisonment in infected, verminous or otherwise insanitary quarters, or be put into the company of verminous or infectious people. (35)

He felt that this statement, found in the Ninth Clause, was redundant to the rest of the section and overall document. Subsequent clauses receive the same scrutiny, as does Right Nine.

When discussing Habeas Corpus, Wells states that, "The community is something to which we look for the protection of our rights indeed, but it is also something we have to take care of and serve" (40). Every citizen is entitled to these rights and must help to maintain these rights. He suggests adding, "Nor shall he be conscripted for military or any other service to which he has a conscientious objection," to Clause 8 (41). This claim calls into question the entire draft system of many countries, but this statement is critical in beginning a new system in which citizens are active role-takers.

The next chapter discusses "Democratic Law," or Clause 10 of the original document. Wells breaks democratic laws down into three sorts:

> (*a*) the law of fundamental rights, (*b*) conventional law, to establish necessary conventions, and (*c*) administrative law [the most important and vital to human collectivization]. (45)

The first type is known among all citizens; the second to those to whom they apply; and the third is beyond the knowledge of any single individual (45). Administrative law is to be the law of the new world, thus these laws must be "clearly codified and made easily accessible, so that anyone affected can easily inform himself upon the issue that concerns him" (45). He ends the section stating, "There is no source of law but the whole people […]" (47); democracy claims to be the will of the people, but often this is not true, thus the new World Order will abide by the standard of listening to the people even at the most simplistic level.

The fifth chapter introduces Clause 4. It is the only other clause, apart from Clause 8, that is directed towards personal liberty; thus, Wells relocated it from fourth to directly after Clause 8 (ninth) in the final draft. He states, "Any fool can tell a lie and too many fools like doing so" (49). This summarizes the fourth clause. The quote follows:

> That although a man is subject to the free criticism of his fellows, he shall have adequate protection from any lying or misrepresentation that may distress or injure him […] There shall be no secret dossiers in any administrative department. (48)

Wells explains that a secret dossier is simply a "memorandum" that "cannot be used in court" (49). Near the end of the chapter, Wells reiterates his motivation for publishing the "Declaration of Rights":

> The primary objective of every sane social order is to banish fear—not necessarily to abolish danger, which by itself can stir men very pleasantly—but fear, from human life. Confidence and assurance are the essence of brotherliness; there is no ease in intercourse, no civilisation, without them. (53)

Wells claims, very early in the booklet, that humankind had lost its confidence. He believes that regaining this confidence was the first step towards rehabilitating the world to a state able to successfully reorganize, collectivize, and collaborate.

The sixth chapter, titled "The Right to Subsistence," discusses the original first clause; Wells used less than one-third of the chapter to discuss the clause specifically. Declaring a right that is necessary to sustain human life might account for the clause being first in the original document. Because this right is necessary to human life, Wells makes little revision. The chapter starts with a discussion of the escalating fight for power that has erupted—and corrupted—since the Middle Ages, be it between the church and state or the Allies and the Axis. Though the fight for power has been necessary to "wake mankind up," the British political class has failed to see that "Socialism is being forced upon mankind everywhere […]" (58). War must become less and less a part of life as humankind moves towards centralizing itself:

> The abolition of distance and the overwhelming development of power in the world during the past century have rendered uncoordinated political and economic

> controls more and more monstrously wasteful and destructive. They have to be brought together under a collective direction, a political and economic world order, or our race will blunder to complete disaster. The whole drift of things is towards political and economic collectivisation, or disaster. (59)

This statement crystallizes Wells' core theoretical argument. Though humankind has struggled to obtain power in the past for individual nations, nations must now focus on nurturing confidence and mutual trust in one another, rather than in ruling power.

The original second, fifth, seventh, third, and sixth clauses—"The Right To Work And To Have Possessions," and "Free Trade and Profit-seeking"—are discussed in chapters seven and eight. Clause Two and Clause Five allow for the right to work for profit and the right to property; these two clauses are protected by Clauses Seven and Three (this is the final grouping of the clauses). Wells did not propose much change to these four clauses. Rather, he writes of their importance in stabilizing, growing, and protecting the new world's economy. Perhaps the most intriguing part of this chapter is that Wells allows for gambling, because "no revolution will rob life of its minor parasitisms, its comedies and petty injustices" (75). Again, this demonstrates both the need for revolution and Wells' attention to detail. Also, by allowing gambling, the reason being the inability to prevent it, he acknowledges the difficulty of achieving a truly forward-looking society. The final page of the chapter casually notes Clause Six and its minor word changes.

The next chapter introduces the recast "Declaration of Rights" in full and includes the most important addition thus far: a preamble. Wells' decision to include a preamble comes from

criticism that readers did not seem to "realise either its [the "Declaration of Rights"] necessity or its far-reaching scope" (77). The first paragraph (the most succinct) reads:

> Within the space of little more than a hundred years, there has been a complete revolution in the material conditions of human life. Invention and discovery have so changed the pace and nature of communications round and about the earth that now the distances that formerly kept the states and nations of mankind apart have been practically abolished, and at the same time there has been so gigantic an increment of mechanical power that men's ability either to co-operate with or to injure and oppress one another and to exploit, consume, develop or waste the bounty of nature, has been exaggerated beyond all comparison with former times. This process of change has mounted to a crescendo in the past third of a century and is now approaching a climax […] (78)

After introducing the reason for the document in the preamble's first paragraph, Wells spends the next few paragraphs compressing the book's discussions into a couple of dense paragraphs before reaching his own crescendo:

> To that expedient of a Declaration of Rights, the outcome of long ages of balance between government and freedom, we return therefore, but this time upon a world scale […] (80)

This claim is followed by the reformed clauses of the "Declaration of Rights," and does not demand, but demonstrates the start of a new World Order.

Concluding his final draft of the "Declaration of Rights," Wells introduces two documents: a French document entitled "*Complement a la Declaration des Droits de l'homme*" and a document similar to his, the "Charter of the Rights and Duties of Modern Man," by Robert Jordan. Wells refers to the first document as "A French Parallel," claiming that did he not know of its existence prior to the completion of his and that its ideas are much in line with his. The second document was included for discussion (which was what he expected of the "Rights of Man"), but also to make obvious the need for broad social reform. The inclusion of these documents was not to prove that he was right, but to supplement his argument for a reformed world order. The addition of "*Complement a la Declaration des Droits de l'homme*" and the "Charter of the Rights and Duties of Modern Man" in the *Rights of Man* demonstrated that Wells was enthused about the opportunity to exchange intellectually with other "open conspirators." These documents add to the credibility of his argument because they show that he is not the only person calling for social reconstruction. Wells encouraged any respectable struggle for a socialistically defined world, although he ultimately claimed "[I] believe [my] [declaration] is the tougher, more practicable instrument" (93). The other documents were exemplary additions to his work because they called for the same type of reform Wells had been advocating. He had been paving the way for a world "utopia" since 1900 and could not find an acceptable substitute for his life-long work.

The final two chapters of the *Rights of Man* discuss the German front. The first, titled "The German Answer," was satirically tied to his most general argument for social reform. While Wells was calling for socialistic reform, including such documents as the "Declaration of Rights" and ideas situated around human rights, the Germans were engaged in genocide to reach the same goal. In presenting this parallel, Wells rhetorically submits that the world needs change

towards collectivization, and that the German method was quickly becoming the world's greatest tragedy.

The last chapter is a letter from a German intellectual responding to Wells' inquiry concerning German thought outside of the Nazi party. The writer, not named, gives surprising claims—perhaps the reason for not having included his name. These claims include a prediction of the Nazis' defeat, the failure of Versailles to prevent war, and the need to establish a "working" treaty at the end of the War. Generally, the letter aligns with Wells' thought, not to a specified degree, but to the extent that world reorganization must be in sight (124-126).

The *Rights of Man* is, perhaps, the most important book on social reform published by H. G. Wells; it rivals many other socialistic writings. The book is certainly the most important publication by him during World War II. Nearing the end of his life, Wells knew that he had to write something that would be useful in future attempts to reorganize and socially collectivize. His influences are not only still applicable to today's world, but can be found in a myriad of contexts—socially and literarily. These influences should be recognized, studied, cherished, and applied.

VII.

Conclusion

Herbert George Wells' pioneering thought in the area of science-fiction was tremendous; all too often though, this title overshadows his contributions to areas outside of science-fiction literature. Wells' sociopolitical literature is more straightforward and problem-solving than is his science fiction. Though his fiction is of a superb quality, it survives because it is fiction—people are not called to action as with his sociopolitical nonfiction. Those considerate of his legacy should remember H. G. Wells not only as a man capable of producing thought-provoking and didactic literature, but as a man who wanted to perfect this world—a place that humans must appreciate and respect. Though the term "socialist" is generally viewed negatively, and erroneously, because of its likeness to communism (and the atrocities associated with communism in the early half of the Twentieth Century), this connotation should not limit perceptions of Wells. A man so passionately committed to with reforming society before, rather than after, life becomes a physical struggle to survive should not simply be thought of as someone who accurately portrayed the future through fiction, but as someone who should have his non-fiction read with as much—if not more—care than his science fiction.

Having affected such organizations as the League of Nations and given direction to such documents as the United Kingdom's Human Rights Act, H. G. Wells' social-utopian writings deserve far more attention than they have received thus far (Klug). Many newspaper articles, pamphlets, and books written by Wells exist to help strengthen and possibly rejuvenate his hopes. A call for a renewed view of the world does not mean that H. G. Wells did not exhibit signs of naïveté within his sociopolitical literature. Flaws exist—as with any argument.

First, and foremost, one must take into account the idea that Socialism has yet to work without dictatorship: this is just as true now as it was in Wells' time. Throughout time, people have tried to establish "utopian-esque" colonies; all have ended, preserving nothing but the socialistic ideal and hope. This is, perhaps, Wells' most tragic realization. In *A Mind at the End of Its Tether*, he comes to the conclusion that he will not see his new Republic. This conclusion is not based on a single set of premises, but on the fact that he had struggled for years to find open ears and hearts and was lying on his deathbed still advocating international social reform, and yet to be widely understood and accepted. However promising, morally and ethically, socialism may be, the barriers society has raised against a socialistic society are overwhelming. The Western world is founded on individualism, capitalism, and nationalism; the presence of these, among other, ideals demonstrates a rocky path for socialistic reform.

One of the largest blows to Wells' theory of collectivization is that it is only a theory (further, a theory based on another theory: evolution). This leaves room for the possibility of the concept being untrue. Possibly this is the point at which his science fiction dominates his non-fiction: people understand that fiction is not *entirely* based in reality and are, therefore, willing to read and study it—his non-fiction has a inherent sense of fantasy that contradicts the skepticism of today's world. Many people advocated collectivization and utopianism, but having "enough votes" is not the defining factor of scientific knowledge. Because of this relationship, many people, perhaps, found Wells' scientific hypothesis absurd, and believed that he was simply inventing a science to back his hopes. Similarly, the idea of applying science to society was still relatively new and received little backing from the scientific community—something that often happened with forward-thinking intellectuals.

Another disappointing aspect of Wells' work is its naiveté. Social reform, at any level, has not been performed globally, ever. Reform is difficult enough at the community level; reform at the global level seems insurmountable. Perhaps, the fact that he did not recognize the colossal nature of this task was Wells' downfall. Next, Wells does not take language into account: how are people to interact in an international community when thousands of languages exist? Further, language is important in defining one's country, and, thus, gets bound up in the nationalism issue. Wells also does not specify how people will perpetuate their individualism in a socialistic society. Even though individualism is a construct of the current world, why would people change if they must sacrifice boundaries, language, and individuality, among many other ideals? These are pertinent issues that Wells does not address.

Ironically, the largest detriment to Wells' non-fiction is his science fiction. Many of his fiction works have been made into movies; more have been translated into myriads of languages. Wells wrote his fiction with the same ideals as his non-fiction, yet today his non-fiction has been eclipsed by his fiction—interesting, seeing that he used nearly all of his writing to advocate socialist theory. Both fiction and non-fiction are an aspect of the man H. G. Wells. While the general public may enjoy watching Tom Cruise in a movie loosely based on *War of the Worlds*, the intellectual community must come to an understanding of his importance to human rights and social reform in order to establish Herbert George Wells as more than an author of fiction. Although he was ahead of his time as a writer, he is still, even today, beyond contemporary standards as a man committed to the fate of humanity for the better.

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