

The Mad Scientist's Manipulation of Nature: A New Historicist Reading of H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*

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ABSTRACT

The figure of the mad scientist pervades H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. In the novel, the boundaries of human knowledge are frequently presented. Undeniably, what once seemed like a gothic scene is now an inevitable scientific certainty. For example, animal cloning is not a mere literary tale anymore. A scientist uses science for shaping our lives to a better form while a mad scientist uses science to threaten our lives. The mad scientist is still a scientist but with unusual and vast ambitions. They are irresponsible physicians who follow their unethical inquisitiveness. In *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, Wells attempts to illustrate the danger of misusing science, man's manipulation on nature which is animal in this case, and the expected consequences of exploiting knowledge for the immoral procedure of vivisection. Charles Darwin's theory of Evolution highly contributed to people's mental instability and uncertainty during the Victorian era. It has caused a kind of pessimism as people become doubtful of what once used to be fixed and firm. Since Darwin's theory pervades *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, the same unsteadiness and fluidity of character is reflected in the novel. The same disappointment is reproduced. As a writer of science fiction, H. G. Wells aims at presenting an imaginary society and depicts a fictional island where it could be real anytime soon.

KEY WORDS: Darwinism, H. G. Wells, *The Island Of Dr. Moreau*, *The Mad Scientist*, Vivisection

1. INTRODUCTION:

Human beings have always endeavored to consider and interfere about the things around them, including other creatures. Man has manipulated his surroundings of the natural things for different reasons such as clothing, foods, shelter, protection and defense. He/she has not hesitated to use plants and animals for his service. With the passage of time, man has also manipulated on his own genetics for the sake of testing, surgery, curiosity and improving his race. The early attempts of the manipulations were on animals to experiment and meet the scientist's expectancies.

However, with the advancement of technology things took a rapid course of actions. Although due to certain ethical limitations, the physicians have not usually had sufficient chance to go beyond the moral frames. Animals have sensations, they can also feel pain and pleasure, therefore, inflicting pain on them is highly amoral.

A distinction should be made between the concept of nature as a model and nature as an object of manipulation. Nature within the previous sense is caught on as human nature taken as a whole, something that directly indicates the spirit of God and thus is a proximate pattern of morality. Nature, however, in the latter sense implies anything that God has called into being, creation in its incomplete state which can be perfected by man's activity within the divine frames and not to trespass the moral constraints. Evidently, the Creator's designs and structures are unchallengeable while man's understanding of the progress is mutable (Garrigan, 2012, p.135).

There are two contrasting ideas about man's intrusion of nature. On the one hand, there are those who admire

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nature as sacred and believe that nature should be particularly untouched. On the other hand, there are those who are enthusiastic to manipulate nature to discover more about the nature of being. The two groups certainly validate their tendencies. In other words, the first group stands against man's intervention of nature whilst the second group reinforces man's manipulation of nature.

George Herbert Wells (1866-1946) is a well-known English novelist. After establishing a name for himself as a writer of scientific romances in the 1890s, he shifted his focus to developing a bold and unique socialist worldview. There is a strong presence of science in most of the best-known works by H. G. Wells even when the titles are free from science allusions. His fertile imagination guided by reason and rationality, his originality, his moral responsibility, aided by his delightful style, enabled him to draw attention to the issues that really mattered to the majority of people in his lifetime. His works continue to send important and alarming messages to the general public even today. Wells provided the context of his alarming predictions and disturbing questions with the semblance of scientific investigations. Rather than producing bizarre futuristic visions, his narratives speak of the real challenges facing the entire life forms on the planet. He was always aware of the social milieu.

The gradual changes of the late nineteenth century highly inspired writers to produce distinctive literary works. Charles Darwin's renowned works such as *On the Origin of Species* (1859) contributed to this new mode of writing and thinking. His theories are condemned for being written to encourage vivisection rather than protecting animals and their right. The concept of vivisection was a debatable topic during the 1870s. Some of the prominent pioneers who have written against animal experimentations include Samuel Johnson, Joseph Addison, Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, and Henry Fielding (Preece, 2003, p.411).

The etymology of the word 'vivisection' is derived from Latin: 'vivus' which means 'alive' and 'sectio' asserts 'cutting'. In other words, vivisection refers to a specific experimental surgery that is operated on living creatures, animals in particular (Rowan, 1984, p.23). The surgical process of vivisection is mostly done with the intention to explore a treatment for a disease or generally with the ambition to profit human being's life. Experiments done on humans are moderately constrained, hence animals are tested and vivisected instead. To most scientists, vivisecting animals is as valid as using animals for food and clothing to serve humans. However, its practice from ethical perspectives have long been arguable and a matter of concern. The simplest reason for its illegitimacy is the great pain

which is imposed on the living animals that is considered to be inhumane.

The current study examines *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896) from a New Historicist approach. According to New Historicists, literary texts are the results of social production and they are part of historical processes. They represent a moment in history in every moment of composition. This method emphasizes on the historicity of literature. Stephen Greenblatt, a Harvard University professor and a superb Renaissance scholar, is one of the founders of new historicism.

2. DARWINISM AND VIVISECTION

Charles Darwin's secular ideologies regarding man's kinship with animals have stayed as an argumentative subject among the religious and secular scholars. Darwin's theory of man's origin of animals urges people to be more responsible towards animals instead of using them for their service. Due to its publication period, a conventional Victorian society, his ideas were not instantly accepted. They were welcomed by most of the scientists though. His theories progressively urged the society to rethink of their understanding of the concept of animal and their responsibilities towards the so-called inferior creatures. Peter Singer, an Australian moral Philosopher, believes that Darwin's theories functioned as a kind of intellectual revolution declaring, "[I]ntellectually the Darwinian revolution was genuinely revolutionary Human beings now knew they were not the special creation of God, made in the divine image and set apart from animals; on the contrary, human beings came to realize that they were animals themselves" (2002, p. 206). Darwin dusted away the universally approved thought which prioritized and sanctified the biological process of human beings.

Darwin's ideas have not been preferred by the Christians and they have usually rebutted his ideas. Nonetheless, they were not the only group who have stood against Darwin's claims, but also the non-religious scholars and philosophers. For instance, Peter Kropotkin as a philosopher and a zoologist, accuses Darwin's ideas of being violent and brutal. To Kropotkin, Darwin was mistaken in the concept of surviving through struggle and fierce competition. Darwin, according to Kropotkin, encourages the concept of selfishness to survive and this exterminates tolerance, kindness, assistance, and fairness (Preece, 2003, p.403).

Since its emergence, many religious, scientific and literary scholars have explored the issue of vivisection. Vivisection has been considered as a cruel procedure through which experiments are conducted on live animals. With the emergence of vivisection, soon a group of writers castigated it and they formed the Great Vivisection Debate. The members of this group pointed

out countless brutalities of vivisection and demanded legislative controls regarding vivisection. It is worth mentioning that these disputes were occurring only two decades before the publication of *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (Preece, 2003, p.414).

Animal studies have played a vital role in improving man's life. They are used for medical purposes. Almost all medicines are initially tested on animals prior to applying them to humans. In this process, many animals have died to prove the right way of creating or using a specific medical substance. Significant progress in human healthcare is the trophy of vivisection. Nevertheless, the pain of the animals is an inevitable part of the experimental process but the scientist should be detached from emotions and should be indulged in his scientific quest. A physician is obsessed with his scientific ideas and this urges him not to care for the emotions of his objects, that is the animal in this case (Mukhopadhyaya, 2018, p.162).

To clarify and expand his thoughts on vivisection, Darwin does not rebut it. His explanation in his correspondence clearly shows his support of vivisection if only used for the sake of knowledge as knowledge mattered more than anything else to Darwin, even animals. However, he disapproved vivisection that is merely conducted for curiosity. He admits that a vivisector should have "a heart of stone." Consequently, Darwin's thought on to what extent scientists can ignore ethical limitations is that it displeases him although vivisection is admissible in the search of knowledge (Darwin, 1887, p.71). H. G. Wells mainly focuses on the brutality of vivisection and the manipulation of nature.

3. THE ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU

H. G. Wells is well-known for his celebrated *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. As its author admits, the novel is written in a hurry but he considers it to be his best work (Hammond, 1980, p.4). The novel tackles the hot topics of his day such as ethics of scientist, dangers of vivisection, mortality, and Darwinism. Wells' work is considered a hit because it dealt directly and indirectly with subject matters of his time. On the surface, readers easily recognize the issue of vivisection and genetic engineering while between the lines they can perceive the novelist's implications regarding Charles Darwin's theories that were popularizing during Wells' time. Wells presents the pessimistic aspect of using science in the wrong method. The novel describes a dystopian nightmare which might occur due to reckless experiments.

The novel revolves around a mad scientist and vivisectionist named Dr. Moreau on an island. This lunatic doctor operates on living animals aiming at implementing human qualities and eventually creating

men out of beasts. The story is narrated through the protagonist of the novel Edward Prendick who is a shipwrecked and Educated English man.

The Island of Dr. Moreau falls into the genre of science fiction, but not the typical type that we expect. Science fiction texts do not necessarily mean the existence of aliens from other planets, time travel, prophecies and advanced technologies. They can be mere speculations on social changes, usually undesirable ones. The hints or the bases of these speculations, however, have to be seen in today's world. In this type of science fiction, today's policies of the authority or any other social forces and institutions can be seen as a base for future consequences.

3.1 The Mad Scientist

As defined in *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, a scientist is someone who "studies one or more of the natural sciences such as physics, chemistry, and biology" (Hornby, 1997, p. 1358). The mad scientists seek for a certain type of knowledge. It is a problematic motivation to undertake something that will bring bad luck and miserable consequences upon its conductor. Although the outcomes are usually unintended and unwanted but still unavoidable. The scientists, in the first place, may have good intention in pursuing the experiment, but then what they obtain are threatening conclusions. To take Marry Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) as an example, although Victor Frankenstein's purpose is not certainly wicked, as he wishes to find a cure for death so that he does not suffer from the death of his beloved ones as his anguish for the loss of his mother, yet he faces his despair by violating what is meant to be natural. Additionally, he has trespassed his powers and gone beyond man's limits.

Christopher P. Toumey believes in three categories to indicate what contributes to forming the character of the scientist. Firstly, the intention of the scientist is crucial. Some mad scientists are willing to revenge on the people who have hurt them or animals to reflect his vengeance. Some others intend to intrude the boundaries of knowledge often for no logical reason other than showing off their irresponsible pride. Their intentions specify their madness and carelessness (1992, p.419).

Another feature that portrays the moral character of the scientist is regret and responsibility. Some mad scientists are well aware of what they have done and they admit their demonic deeds. Thus, they endeavor to reflect their remorse and take the responsibility. However, some other mad scientists feel less guilty of their wrongdoings. The final one according to Toumey is the scientist's level of maturity. It can be divided into two types naivety and experience. The experienced scientists know the consequences of their experiments, they often predict the outcomes. The naive scientists or

the ones who are not experienced enough are more likely to confront the unpleasant results due to their ignorance (1992, p.419).

Many literary writers have focused on the mad scientist, many due to their urges for science. H. G. Wells is one of them. He was a biology teacher himself. In literature, the mad scientists are generally portrayed as outsiders. They are either socially rejected, or they have other difficulties and issues. The mad scientist of H. G. Wells' *The Island of Dr Moreau* is an outcast, The mad scientist stories have played vital roles in reasonably denouncing science as they have befuddled the brainy term of scientists. The mad scientist fictions offer readers a bleak situation where it is generally surrounded by fear, terror, unfamiliarity and pain. This typically condemns the occupation of scientists and their institutions as a whole and accusing science for being responsible for the calamity present in the mad scientist stories. Consequently, scientific knowledge is not evil but the way it is practiced can be diabolical. The mad scientist stories are vehicles for condemning science.

3.2 Dr. Moreau's Manipulation Of Nature

The Island of Dr. Moreau is inspired by two main ideas. The first one is a case report from a newspaper that Wells read. The report describes the failure of a scientist. This idea is obviously evident in the novel. In fact, T. H. Huxley's ideas are chief inspirations for Wells' novel. He regarded Huxley as his teacher and hero. In 1894, Huxley presented a lecture at Oxford university under the title "Evolution and Ethics." This particular lecture played a vital role in composing *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. The main focus of the lecture was on the cruelty of cosmic process in evolution. He also affirmed that social and ethical progress cannot be proceeded by mimicking cosmic process. The novel proves the cosmic pessimism pointed out by Huxley. *The Island of Dr. Moreau* presents the nastiness of cosmic evolution and man as a creation of cosmic process and as a fundamental beast (Dickson, 1969, p. 68).

H. G. Wells wrote a preface to the book in Atlantic Edition and he affirmed Huxley's pessimism concerning cosmic evolution, he stated, "[T]his story was the response of an imaginative mind to the reminder that humanity is but animal rough-hewn to a reasonable shape and in perpetual conflict between instinct and injunction. This story embodies this ideal" This Huxleyan view is evident throughout the novel in which man functions as an advanced animal (Harris, 2009, p. 180).

One noticeable textual evidence at the beginning of the novel clarifies Huxley's concept of man as beast and product of cosmic process. Dr. Moreau, as a depraved scientist, has turned the island to a laboratory to practice his cold-hearted surgeries. He tries in vain to vivisect

animals in the hope of creating man out of the animal. Edward Prendick describes the pain of the animals and declares, "[T]he crying sounded even louder out of doors. It was as if all the pain in the world had found a voice. Yet had I known such pain was in the next room, and had it been dumb, I believe - I have thought since - I could have stood it well enough" (Wells, 2019, p.56).

H. G. Wells in different passages conveys the pain of the animals and Prendick attests to the pain, "I found myself that the cries were singularly irritating, and they grew in depth and intensity as the afternoon wore on. They were painful" (Wells, 2019, p.56). The phrase "singularly irritating" implies every single cut of the surgical process. The readers sympathize with Puma's pain during the vivisection without any numbing or painkillers. The awakening sensations of the animal reveal the intensity of its aching.

The throbbing howls gradually increase to an extent that Prendick feels like he is the one who is experiencing the cuts and the pain. It is merely through oral sensations that the animal's howl is conveyed to him. This shows the strength of its discomfort. It highly bothers Prendick to an extent that he decides to approach the place where the painful voice is coming from, "[T]he emotional appeal of those yells grew upon me steadily, grew at last to such an exquisite expression of suffering that I could stand it in that confined room no longer" (Wells, 2019, p.56). This strong connection he feels for the puma is crucial.

Surprisingly, the extreme pain sounds somehow artful to the scientist. Dr. Moreau admits this to Prendick that he is not sympathetic to the animal as he does not consider them living creatures while vivisectioning them. He acknowledges:

You cannot imagine the strange, colorless delight of these intellectual desires! The thing before you is no longer an animal, a fellow-creature, but a problem! Sympathetic pain, – all I know of it I remember as a thing I used to suffer from years ago. I wanted – it was the one thing I wanted – to find out the extreme limit of plasticity in a living shape (Wells, 2019, p.108).

In addition to his indifference, he is not regretful for the pain he is causing the animals, he mentions this to Prendick when he says, "[T]o this day I have never troubled about the ethics of the matter," he continued. "The study of Nature makes a man at last as remorse-less as Nature. I have gone on, not heeding anything but the question I was pursuing; and the material has – dripped into the huts yonder" (Wells, 2019, p.108).

Although the intentions of Dr. Moreau were to change the animals to human beings, but the result was ridiculous. Beasts were all he received as the result of his countless vivisections. He was unsuccessful in his experiments regardless of the innumerable pain the animals had undergone. When Prendick meets these

beasts for the first time, he is dazed with their unpleasantness. Their deformed and distorted faces and legs shock him. He describes them as, “[E]ach of these creatures, despite its human form, its rag of clothing, and the rough humanity of its bodily form, had woven into it, into its movements, into the expression of its countenance, into its whole presence some now irresistible suggestion of a hog, a swinish taint, the unmistakable mark of the beast” (Wells, 2019, p.61).

Dr. Moreau’s irresponsible experiments have resulted in a tragic life for the vivisected animals. The tragedy lays not only in their appearances but also their lifestyles. They are animals in human-like shapes. This pessimistic outcome has caused the animals not to evolve to be better beings but to be lost in between their animal instincts and their humanistic features. They are merely a travesty of man. Dr. Moreau has played the role of the mad scientist who has ill-treated science and manipulated on the animals. In fact, Dr. Moreau is “a Frankenstein in a post-Darwinian guise” (Bergonzi, 1961, p.108).

Dr. Moreau intends to go beyond the limitations of vivisection which only targets at changing the anatomy and biological structures of a creature. On the contrary, the scientist has mingled an extra element to vivisection that others have not tried it before which is changing their mental structure. In other words, the beasts undergo a new chemical rhythm which belongs to man. He admits:

In our growing science of hypnotism, we find the promise of replacing old inherent instincts by new suggestions, grafting upon or replacing the inherited fixed ideas. Very much, indeed, of what we call moral education is such an artificial modification and perversion of instinct; pugnacity is trained into courageous self-sacrifice, and suppressed sexuality into religious emotion. (Wells, 2019, p.105).

Intelligence and intellectuality are two distinguishing features of man, Dr. Moreau has somehow infected them in their brains. The fact that the beasts obey him and imitate man in their daily lives is a proof that the scientist was partially successful in his experiment. Although the outcome is a misery for the beasts as they have lost their true identity and are obliged to behave as something that is not them. Once Prendick meets the human-animal hybrids, he thinks they are vivisected men not the vice versa. Thus, he asks the beasts to stand against Dr. Moreau and Montgomery but they reject. Prendick is dazzled with their capacity of approval or refusal, he states, “[T]hey may once have been animals. But never before did I see an animal trying to think” (Wells, 2019, p.100).

Monstrousness is a common characteristic of man-made creatures throughout cultural history. The reason is that the artificial human beings signify the shapes and attitudes of two beings in one at the same time. In

simper words, they are simultaneously human and nonhuman. This unsettled balance and dual representation is resulted in disgrace and evilness of the artificial creature. On the one hand, in the novel, one might notice a human behavior of the beast people yet their shapes distort this peace of mind. On the other hand, some of their bodily organs may look like human but the way they animate or articulate them is non-human and weird. A subtle identity is not reinforced, “[I]t may seem a strange contradiction in me—I cannot explain the fact—but now, seeing the creature there in a perfectly animal attitude, with the light gleaming in its eyes, and its imperfectly human face distorted with terror, I realized again the fact of its humanity” (Wells, 2019, p.135).

The reversion of familiarity and strangeness creates a malicious atmosphere where the readers do not feel at peace and ease. Prendick gives a demonstrative account of this duality which has caused outrageous feelings, he states:

Suddenly as I watched their grotesque and unaccountable gestures, I perceived clearly, for the very first time what it was that had offended me, what had given me the two inconsistent and conflicting impressions of utter strangeness and yet of the strangest familiarity. The three creatures engaged in this mysterious rite were human in shape, and yet human beings with the strangest air about them of some familiar animal. Each of these creatures, despite its human form, its rag of clothing, and the rough humanity of its bodily form, had woven into it, into its movements, into the expression of its countenance, into its whole presence, some now irresistible suggestion of a hog, a swinish taint, the unmistakable mark of the beast. (Wells, 2019, pp.61-2).

Prendick finds the beast people community disturbing. Due to their dual appearances and identities, the beast folks urge him to doubt his humanity and concurrently he is uncertain of their animality. As Kelly Hurley observes, “the novel continually, and with varying degrees of subtlety, makes the point that the beast-community is a mirror of the human community at large” (1996, p.105). Prendick’s ambivalence is not resolved throughout the novel. Especially at the end of the novel when he leaves the island to England, he cannot bring himself to normally communicate with other people. He stays hesitant about their origins and their gradual reversions as he has already witnessed the transformation and reversion of the animals on the island. The terror of the island grotesque incidents and human deterioration do not leave him. He fears the society might turn into a plain jungle at any point. He admits:

I could not persuade myself that the men and women I met were not also another, still passably human, Beast People, animals half-wrought into the outward image of human

souls; and that they would presently begin to revert, to show first the bestial mark and (Wells, 2019, p.188).

The beast people on the island stay as “it” and they are unsuccessful in achieving human identity. Intriguingly, they are not animals and human suffixes are attached to their names, this is along with their attitudes, “the Fox-bear woman”, “a Swine-woman”, “a Wolf-woman”, “the ape-man”, “the leopard-man”. Even after recognizing human attributes among the beast people, the skillful narrator does not identify them as his species. In other words, they are Dr. Moreau’s human creatures while Prendick considers them animals. Thus, the beast folk’s dual identities are undetermined throughout the novel.

One of the controversial ideas of contemporary evolution is the origin of beings. It is a pursuit to find out the decency of human beings and animals. To answer whether animals are basically human beings or the other way around, H. G. Wells envisions this destiny in his novel. By creating artificial human beings out of the figure of animals, he urges the reader to think what is shared between the two species. This idea is obviously reflected in the novel. According to Huxley, the question of the origin of man and his interactions with his surroundings is “The question of questions for mankind—the problem which underlies all others, and is more deeply interesting than any other” (1910, p.52).

Dr. Moreau’s scientific investigations and his knowledge arise a problem in which it is uneasy to differentiate which trait belongs to who. In other words, sometimes the beast men act as men and when Prendick is all alone by himself with the company of the beast men, he starts to behave like them. It is pessimistic how one cannot distinguish between who is a monster and who is man.

The narrator finds it hard to distinguish between the human and the bestial. As B. D. B. Asker (1996, p.155) states, “the distinction between man and beast is as unstable as Dr. Jekyll’s personality”. Dr. Moreau’s twisted kind of evolution has brought about fear and confusion instead of the victory of an invention or a scientific advancement. He encounters the ape-man and he finds physical similarities. The beast man points out to Prendick’s hands and asserts, “He is a five-man, a five-man, a five-man ... like me,” said the Ape-Man” (Wells, 2019, p.87). Prendick is unsure whether he is the weird creature there or the ape-man. Distorting the animal-human boundary is very confusing to the narrator. He is bothered by their familiar looks that they were half animal and half human.

The sympathy Montgomery, as a man, has for the beast people is evidently represented in the novel. Prendick describes him as someone who “did not like men” (Wells, 2019, p.120). This kind of intimacy for them has helped him to survive in such a chaotic island and to also enjoy the company of the beast folks. Nevertheless,

Prendick does not identify himself with the transformed animals as he cannot find genuine shared features of civilization in that relationship. Thus, he does not consider them “islanders”. When he meets them for the first time, he finds them to be “a strange crew.” His loathing in describing of them remains unchanged, “I saw only their faces, yet there was something in their faces – I knew not what – that gave me a queer spasm of disgust. I looked steadily at them, and the impression did not pass, though I failed to see what had occasioned it” (Wells, 2019, p.40).

In contrast to Prendick’s opinion of the beast people, Montgomery recognizes common attributes of them. For example, after Dr. Moreau’s death, Montgomery feels lost. He acts as a family member of the beast folks. Prendick confesses it is difficult to classify him as man, “I felt that for Montgomery there was no help; that he was in truth half akin to the Beast Folk, unfitted for human kindred” (Wells, 2019, p.157). Even after his rescue and returning to England, Prendick finds it hard to naturally communicate with other people and he is always doubtful of who the monster might be, he or his surroundings:

I had to act with the utmost circumspection to save myself from the suspicion of insanity... unnatural as it seems, with my return to mankind came, instead of that confidence and sympathy I had expected, a strange enhancement of the uncertainty and dread I had experienced during my stay upon the island. No one would believe me; I was almost as queer to men as I had been to the Beast People. I may have caught something of the natural wildness of my companions. They say that terror is a disease, and anyhow I can witness that for several years now a restless fear has dwelt in my mind, – such a restless fear as a half-tamed lion cub may (Wells, 2019, p.188).

Dr. Moreau is certain that his experiments have not produced a finely behaved creature. However, he is certain of his attempts and his willingness to always make the next surgical process better. In other words, his aim is to create a man out of an animal but after each experiment something of the outcome disappoints him and he does not receive his ideal man. He affirms, “I have been doing better; but somehow the things drift back again, the stubborn beast flesh grows, day by day, back again ... I mean to do better things still. I mean to conquer that” (Wells, 2019, p.110).

One reasonable explanation for his failure is the nature of the animals. Through genetic engineering, their animalistic instincts do not disappear. Especially during nighttime, their inner selves come out and they want to behave as themselves rather than distorted beasts. This results in their deviations from the laws and their imagination of a manly controlled island. Eventually, they act somehow freely or at least freer than their daytime activities which are monitored by Dr. Moreau

and his assistant, Montgomery. No matter how hard Dr. Moreau tries to impose his rules and direct their brain, the beasts always find a way to go back to their true nature. This contrasts with Dr. Moreau's certainty regarding the beasts' obedience. While describing the surgical processes and his intentions regarding the vivisections to Prendick, Dr. Moreau admits that the animals "were really hypnotized, had been told certain things were impossible and certain things were not to be done, and these prohibitions were woven into the texture of their minds beyond any possibility of disobedience or dispute (Wells, 2019, p.116).

Another textual evidence can be taken from Prendick and Montgomery's conversation regarding the fate of the beasts after Dr. Moreau's death when Montgomery says, "I don't know. I suppose those that were made of beasts of prey will make silly asses of themselves sooner or later. We can't massacre the lot. Can we? I suppose that's what your humanity would suggest? But they'll change. They are sure to change" (Wells, 2019, p.154). He assures that they are prone to change which shows the certainty of the experiment's failure. Even Dr. Moreau confesses this in a conversation with Prendick, "they revert. As soon as my hands are taken from them the beast begins to creep back, begins to assert itself again" (Wells, 2019, p.112). This reversion does not only include their appearances but also their imposed human qualities. He is clearly aware of his limitations that his boundaries are restricted, therefore he states that he "cannot touch, somewhere - I cannot determine where - in the seat of the emotions. Cravings, instincts, desire that harm humanity, a strange, hidden reservoir to burst suddenly and inundate the whole being of the creature with anger, hate, or fear" (Wells, 2019, p.112).

In the Guardian, an unsigned review which is dated 3 June 1896 describes the novel as a "blasphemy" and affirms the fragility of man-made creations of the humanoids as follow:

Sometimes one is inclined to think the intention of the author has been to satirize and rebuke the presumption of science; at other times his object seems to be to parody the work of the Creator of the human race, and cast contempt upon the dealings of God with His creatures...The inevitable reversion of these creatures to bestiality is very well described; but it ought to have been shown that they revert inevitably because they are only man-made creatures (Parrinder, 1972, p.53).

In fact, at the end of the novel, the humanoids revert to their bestialities not only their shapes but also their animalistic instincts return. The mad scientist continues on his ongoing experiments regardless of the animals' pain. He cannot bear the thought of failure as a result he does not stop after an experiment's disappointment. The moment animal traits control the beasts, he realizes his failure and prepares for the next vivisection. This type of

denial causes his and Montgomery's downfall. He is killed by one of his half-operated beasts, a puma. Prendick describes the violent scene as, "[O]ne hand was almost severed at the wrist and his silvery hair was dabbled in blood. His head had been battered in by the fetters of the puma" (Wells, 2019, p.151).

Pain has driven the puma to insanity due to Dr. Moreau's inhuman experiments. The entire process run by the scientist is entirely self-destructive. His experiments could neither make him a master nor could he alter the animals to men. Man cannot control cosmic process and evolution is more dejected than it may seem. His defeat seems to suggest nature's punishment for manipulating it and does not reinforce man to play the role of the Creator or God.

As an attempt to attack vivisection, H. G. Wells personifies Dr. Moreau and his assistant Montgomery as outcasts. They are the insane characters who are capable of such notorious experiments. As a vivisectionist, Dr. Moreau is forced to leave his country because of the danger of his "wantonly cruel" experiments (Wells, 2019, p.52). He is seen as a threat to the society as he has forgotten the ethical limitations of scientific investigation. Prendick narrates, "[H]e had to leave England ... The doctor was simply howled out of the country" (Wells, 2019, p.51). Montgomery, likewise, is an outsider who is obliged to flee from England. Although his crime is not clearly mentioned but he admits that the reason of his leaving the country was "that infernal stuff which led to my coming here, - that, and a foggy night. I thought myself in luck at the time, when Moreau offered to get me of (Wells, 2019, pp.53-4).

Although this novel was written a century ago, it still questions the ethics in experimentations on animals and humans. It also urges the readers to think about the role of pain to draw the limitations between ethical and unethical researches. Accordingly, Wells presents convincing arguments through science fiction writings during a time where the topics of evolution and vivisection are disputable. Wells does not only work on the readers' compassion for animals but also integrates chief matters concerning vivisection. As for the embodiment of Darwinian theories in *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, it pervades the entire text.

4. CONCLUSION

Although vivisectioning animals is a painful experiment, yet it is not considered unethical if the purpose is to improve human beings' healthcare. The tragedy, however, begins when the purpose of vivisection is no other than the scientist's curiosity. This cannot be conducted by anyone but a mad scientist who is irresponsible and unfaithful to his science. Through Dr. Moreau, a mad scientist, H. G. Wells as a prominent

science fiction writer presents the manipulation of nature in his novel *The Island of Dr. Moreau*. The text is evidently inspired and influenced by Darwinism. New historicism as the analytical method of this study finds the text's historical context of great importance in which the novel is written during ideological turbulences and disagreements of late Victorian period. The novel tackles the themes of science as a manipulating tool controlled by the mad scientist.

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