BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

THE ROLE OF TIME TRAVEL IN PORTRAYING PERSONAL AND SOCIETAL CHANGE IN *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* AND *THE TIME MACHINE*

Vedoucí práce: Einat Adar, MA., Ph.D.

Autor práce: Pavla Kotrbová

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I confirm that this thesis is my own work written using solely the sources and literature properly quoted and acknowledged as works cited.

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Pavla Kotrbová

Poděkování

Na tomto místě bych ráda poděkovala své vedoucí práce, Einat Adar, MA., Ph.D. za cenné rady, trpělivost a ochotu, které vedly ke vzniku této práce.

Abstrakt

Bakalářská práce se zabývá rolí cestování v čase v zobrazení osobnostní a společenské změny ve Vánoční koledě a Stroji Času. Práce analyzuje, jakou roli hraje cestování v čase, a jak autorům slouží při ztvárnění tématu změny v jejich dílech. Cílem práce je určit, zda se v těchto dílech nacházejí podobnosti ve využití řečených témat. V první části se práce zaměřuje na původ tématu cestování v čase v literatuře a jeho souvislostech s viktoriánským obdobím. Druhá část analyzuje Vánoční koledu, a jak je zde využito cestování v čase. Dále zkoumá přínos Vánočních duchů a Marleyho ke změně Scroogeovy osobnosti a vliv na její průběh. Závěrem, třetí část analyzuje využití cestování v čase ve Stroji času, proces degenerace, který je zde vyobrazen a změnu osobnosti Cestovatele v čase. Přestože se obě díla velmi liší, v některých tématech lze nalézt určité podobnosti.

Klíčová slova: Cestování v čase, Vánoční koleda, Stroj času, osobnostní změna, společenská změna

Abstract

The bachelor thesis focuses on the role of time travel in depicting personal and societal change in *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine*. The thesis analyses the usage of time travel and how it served the authors in portraying the theme of change in their respective works to find whether there are any similarities in the themes and concepts. In the first part, the thesis provides an overview of the origins of time travel in literature and its connections to the Victorian period. The second part focuses on analysing *A Christmas Carol*, its usage of time travel, the contribution of The Christmas Ghosts and Marley in the change in Scrooge's personality and its process. Lastly, the third part analyses the usage of time travel in *The Time Machine*, the process of degeneration of society depicted there and the change in the personality of The Time Traveller. Even though the two works differ in many themes and concepts, they share certain similarities.

Keywords: Time Travel, A Christmas Carol, The Time Machine, Personal Change, Societal Change

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1 Introduction

Charles Dickens and H. G. Wells are both well-known authors whose literary careers produced many memorable stories. Both authors also laid a foundation in their respective areas, which has remained in our culture ever since. Dickens's *A Christmas Carol,* in its festive descriptions, established modern-day Christmas celebrations, while Wells, with his *The Time Machine*, created a new means of exploring worlds within our reach by inventing a special machine just for such purposes. Both works also deal with the theme of change which is portrayed by the usage of time travel.

A Christmas Carol tells the story of the personal change of an old miser with a shut-up heart into a generous, warm-hearted man. This Christmas tale serves as a glimmer of hope for its readers that even those who seem to be doomed can be given a second chance to redeem themselves. *A Christmas Carol* is predominantly known for its festive themes, ghosts and the change in personality. The theme of time travel is, in spite of its originality, scarcely acknowledged. Reading *A Christmas Carol* as a time travel narrative could thus open new interpretations.

In contrast, Wells ventures into the realm of the future, narrating a chilling change of present-day society. *The Time Machine* describes what awaits humanity should its system of class division and ways of living remain unchanged. The amount of research done on *The Time Machine* in terms of its usage of time travel is incomparable to *A Christmas Carol*. Yet, despite their different approaches and themes, both authors incorporate in their stories the concept of time travel as a narrative device through which they explore their respective societal criticisms and convey their concerns.

The thesis aims to analyse how the authors portray the theme of time travel and what role it serves in describing the personal and societal change in each story. Further, the analysis aims to find whether there are any similarities in the usage of time travel in *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine*. However, prior to proceeding with the analysis, it is also important to provide an understanding of how the theme of time travel appeared in English literature and what connections it has to the Victorian period.

2 Time Travel in Victorian Literature

The concept of time travel is now widely used across popular culture. References to time travel can be found in films, series, radio shows, songs, or even art. It has not only surpassed the realm of science fiction but also popular culture, as the theme can be found in biological sciences, specifically neuroscience. Neuroscience explores a phenomenon called "chronesthesia," or mental time travel. Chronesthesia is a form of human consciousness that allows humans to think about life in their subjective time. The expression of chronesthesia is, for example, the ability to remember and think about what happened in our lives in the past. Regarding future events, such as anticipating and planning the future, is a function of the human brain made possible by chronesthesia. (Tulving 313-314)

Time travel being a part of natural science's phenomenon is clearly less known than those time machines of popular culture. Some time travel stories and their machines, such as the TARDIS of *Doctor Who* and DeLorean of *Back to the Future*, are so popular that nearly everybody has heard of them and knows their functions even without knowing their respective series of origins. Time travel fascinates people with its endless possibilities, as newer time machines can bring the audience wherever and whenever in space and time. However, time travel was not a common feature of any works, not even science fiction, before H. G. Wells introduced *The Time Machine* in 1895. Wells's story includes the first time travel with the use of an actual machine, which is also supported by scientific and seemingly plausible explanation (Firchow 19).

2.1 The Origins of Time Travel in Literature

The Time Machine is often considered to be the first time travel story which has been written. For example, Paul Nahin considers time travel to be strictly a matter of science fiction. For a story to be labelled as a time travel one, it must meet certain restrictions. These are, for Nahin, physical time travel made possible by machine and a rational explanation behind its functions (11). Nahin also suggests that it is a "matter of personal taste" what one can consider a time travel story or not (8). But stories including trances, magic, mental time travel, or long periods of sleep as means of travelling to different times do not fit into his definition of what a time travel story is. Nahin then considers *The Time Machine* to be the first time travel story, as it includes a time machine as we picture it today (Nahin 13).

Even though Wells's first scientific romance did not popularise time travel in its time, it laid the foundation for every time travel story which came after. In this sense, the following works either paid homage to *The Time Machine* or tried to step out of its shadow (Gleick 27). There are attempts at finding an even older story that could be considered as the first one to include a travel in time. James Gleick is, in contrast to Paul Nahin, open to broadening the definition of a time travel story and lists several examples in which the traces of the theme could be found.

Gleick goes as far as to the Hindu epic, *Mahabharata*, which tells a story about a king who ascends into heaven to meet with Brahma, but upon his later arrival on Earth, he finds that everybody he knew is already deceased and that many years have passed meanwhile. Another example follows a Japanese fisherman who wanders too far from shore and travels into the future. (Gleick 30-31) Fast forwarding to the 19th century United States, Gleick mentions works including a certain form of time travel

such as Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*, in which the protagonist falls asleep and awakes several years after, or Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, in which Twain's protagonist time travels after a head injury and no explanation of how that happened is ever provided. (Gleick 32-33)

Other research, such as the one by David Wittenberg, suggest that the theme of time travel does not originate from a single work of fiction. Wittenberg argues that the theme developed from another genre, utopian romance. He lists the work of Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*, as an example in which the protagonist travels into the American Boston of the year 2000 by means of a "sleeping chamber," a device whose development and functions are complemented by scientific terms and explanations to boost its impression of plausibility. Nevertheless, Bellamy's attempts to avoid more supernatural means of travel resulted in time travel through a long trance. Although induced by a device, it was still only a long period of sleep during which the protagonist had no consciousness of the travel or his changing surroundings. (Wittenberg 33-34) Wittenberg also mentions Mark Twain or minor American writers of short fiction like Edward Page Mitchell and his "The Clock That Went Backwards" (47) as other stories including a form of time travel.

2.2 Victorian Period

The origins of these works are nevertheless American; time travel in English literature during the 19th century is far less represented. As mentioned earlier, *The Time Machine* is chosen by most critics as the first time travel story, but David Wittenberg also suggests that among others *A Christmas Carol* could be regarded as the first (47). However, he does not further develop this suggestion and concludes that time travel is

more of a result or accommodation to failures of other literary types than an invention of neither Wells nor Twain (48).

Yet traces of time travel in English literature also occur in William Morris's 1890 utopian romance, *News from Nowhere*. It was originally written to counter the impact of *Looking Backward*, as Morris considered Bellamy's idea of utopia repugnant. Nevertheless, its means of time travel are, as in the case of Bellamy's works, secondary to every other aspect of the work. The adventure-like nature is also not found here, as the travel itself is mediated by dreaming and sleeping into the future. The lack of adventure elements in both *Looking Backward* and *News from Nowhere* is what sets *The Time Machine* apart from these two utopian fictions. (Parrinder, *Utopia* 166)

The Time Machine is certainly inspired by other utopian romances, yet it is not a utopia itself. Even though the term "Wellsian Utopia" was already known in Wells's lifetime, and Wells himself was a propagandist of utopian ideas, none of his works reached canonical status in the utopian genre, not even *A Modern Utopia*. His first full-length published book, *The Time Machine*, is then labelled as being a dystopia, anti-utopia, negative utopia, or ironic utopia by critics. However, later in his life, Wells became uneasy with the whole idea of utopia and proposed the term "anticipatory tale" for his works. He perceived utopias as dreams that always start with "if only" and describe better worlds with no regard for reality. On the other hand, his works predict the future and offer explorations of time. Wells named himself a prophet rather than a utopian writer. (Parrinder, *Shadows of Future* 96-97)

Many other influences might have inspired Wells to write *The Time Machine* as well. During his student years, Wells frequently contributed to the *Science Schools Journal* and visited the Debating Society, where he attended a meeting focusing on the

topic of the fourth dimension. The fourth dimension then became a significant feature of *The Time Machine*. Another influence could have been, in fact, Charles Dickens, as Wells admired his work (Hammond 145). Steven McLean further proposes that specifically *A Christmas Carol* could be an influence on *The Time Machine* and its time travel narrative (*Shadows* 8). Additionally, the utopian romances in their structure and narratives also inspired Wells and the contemporary situation in England with its system of class division and social inequality played a significant role too.

Wells started to write the early drafts of what later became *The Time Machine* in the late 1880s. It was first named *The Chronic Argonauts* and appeared in 1888 in *Science Schools Journal* which Wells helped to establish and was its first editor (Hammond 10). The draft underwent seven major revisions until Wells was satisfied with his work. Later, it was serialised in *New Review*, where it appeared under the name *The Time Traveller's Story* in 1894. A year later, in 1895, the story was published as a book named *The Time Machine*. (Hammond 79-80) With the development of the story, even its main character underwent certain changes. In the earlier versions of *The Time Machine*, The Time Traveller had a name. Wells chose for him rather unconventional names, as he referred to the character as "Bayliss" or "Dr. Moses Nebogipfel". Nevertheless, Wells later decided that a given name was unnecessary and called The Time Traveller by his function, similar to the cases of other characters, such as the Medical Man, the Psychologist, or the Editor. (Firchow 20-21)

In contrast to *The Time Machine*, Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* is rarely studied for its time travel theme. The main focus of attention is on Scrooge and his overnight change of personality. Yet, there are critics, like Steven McLean, who suggest that *A Christmas Carol* could be perceived as the first time travel story in English fiction. Though Scrooge is not fully in control of his travel and no modern technology is used,

unlike in the case of The Time Traveller and his Time Machine, Scrooge does travel in time on several occasions and is conscious of his changing surroundings. McLean further states that *The Time Machine*, on the other hand, holds the position of being the most famous time travel narrative. (*Shadows* 7) Even though it was definitely true in the past, today's audience would probably think more of *Back to the Future* or *Dr Who* when asked what they consider the most famous time travel narrative.

Furthermore, *The Time Machine* and *A Christmas Carol* differ in a number of aspects and themes. For example, the travel experience is mediated in very different ways. Scrooge is transported in time by means of The Christmas Ghosts, whereas The Time Traveller invented a machine for such a journey on his own. An interesting aspect in which the two works also differ is their use of chapters. *The Time Machine* is divided into conventional chapters and the epilogue, but Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol* with an actual carol and music in mind. It is then divided into staves, which are named according to what will happen in them. Dickens chose *A Christmas Carol* for his first public reading, and it became the most popular one. The story then creates the impression that it should be performed aloud or heard, not read on its own. (Davis 67)

The main inspiration for *A Christmas Carol* is, similarly to *The Time Machine*, the social problems of the time. In combination with Dickens's personal struggles as an author he was experiencing at the time and the status of Christmas itself, it gave rise to *A Christmas Carol* in 1843. Dickens with *A Christmas Carol* managed to revive some older and nearly forgotten Christmas traditions. His depiction of Christmas served as a foundation for how Christmas was spent in England ever since. (Bloom 16) Since 1843, Dickens published a new book every Christmas until 1848. The books then became a series since they all were Christmas-themed (Bloom 20).

Dickens, known for his sympathies for all classes, wanted to address in *A Christmas Carol* mainly the exploitation of children in factories and mines and support the contemporary effort to end child labour, which is represented by the character of Tiny Tim. *Carol* also appealed to its readers to open their hearts during Christmas and think of others. (Bloom 17-19) Yet the intended main message of *Carol* is not the only thing that caught the attention of contemporary readers. The story showed that no matter how rich the Christmas dinner is or where people celebrate the holiday; everybody, regardless of their social status, could spend Christmas merrily. (Davis 67)

Ultimately, it is the definition of what a time travel story is and what limits we give it that defines the first time travel story or the origins of the theme. However, in English literature, the first time travel story appears either way in the Victorian period. William Morris's *News From Nowhere*, published in 1890, does include a form of time travel, but the appearance is reduced, and the role of time travel is minimal. It serves only as a mediator, a justification for the story to take place in a different time era, and to display its primary themes.

Even though the same can be stated about *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine*, as the main themes of the works are not mainly focused on time travel, the works still significantly differ from *News From Nowhere*. The difference is the physical travel and the travellers' consciousness of it. During the travels, the travellers witness their journey and are able to describe what they feel, hear, and see, which is true for both Scrooge and The Time Traveller. This feature takes on an important role in both *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine*.

Only if we further break down the definition of travel in time can we conclude which of these two works is the first to feature time travel. If by a time travel story is meant a work, which includes travel enabled by an engineered machine, for which a seemingly plausible and scientific explanation is given, then the title is held by *The Time Machine*. On the other hand, if by time travel is meant any travel in time enabled, caused, or provided by magic or any other non-scientific means, then the title belongs to *A Christmas Carol.*

3 A Christmas Carol

3.1 Time Travel via Vision

Charles Dickens named *A Christmas Carol* "a ghost story of Christmas" in its subtitle, indicating its fairy-tale like atmosphere. The main intention of *Carol*, though, was to draw attention to contemporary economic issues (Davis 65). The theme of time travel is mainly overlooked and was not a part of research about *Carol* until very recently. Its main topics, such as personal change, ghosts, and societal issues, were always at the critics' centre of attention. Yet, the theme of time travel plays a significant part in the story. If *A Christmas Carol* is read as a time travel narrative, new findings can be discovered.

The staves of *A Christmas Carol* are set in the past, present, and future. Each time era is visited several times at different levels. Scrooge is taken to five of his past Christmases, to present Christmas in his time's London, and to the future times where both he and the disabled Tiny Tim, son of his clerk, are already dead. Tiny Tim plays an important role in Scrooge's transformation when he and his family are visited by Scrooge and The Ghost of Christmas Present during their travel. *A Christmas Carol* shows how Scrooge, by changing his personality, also changes his present and future. The story then employs several different types of time other than the past, present, or future.

The first type is the calendar time. The time that Scrooge measures by the chimes of the neighbouring church and is dependent on. He takes this time as a fact, according to which he can measure the day's expenses and interest. For a capitalist like Scrooge, time is money. His time is quantitative, represented by numbers while making him older but also richer at the same pace, without any need to be enjoyed or festive.

The money he wants to make is the same whether made in the spring or during Christmas. In opposition to Scrooge stands his nephew Fred. He apprehends time as having qualities and quantity. He sees time as something valuable, ceremonial, and emotional. For Fred, especially the Christmas time has the power to open people's hearts and make them think about others. (Patten 166-168)

Additionally, both Scrooge and Fred also talk about the time of human life from birth to death (Patten 168). Every human being has a specific amount of time on Earth, which should be best spent on making money, according to Scrooge. He, nevertheless, learns that there is another type of time, the one spent after one's death. The ghosts of already-dead people roam the Earth for many years to witness what they had missed during their lives, tortured by the events alive people enjoy without them.

A Christmas Carol further employs historical time and its sub-type. The historical time would be the same of its first readers in 1843, when *Carol* was published, as several instances, such as the character's usage of specific slang words and mentions of real-life people, would suggest. However, the appearances of ghosts and time travel shift *A Christmas Carol* into a different timeline, creating a fictive historical time that is similar to the time of 1843 yet different. (Patten 169-170)

When Scrooge cannot depend on the calendar time, he first tries to explain the situation logically, speculating whether the sun disappeared or if the church's bell is malfunctioning. Any involvement of magic is out of the question for him at that moment. However, he does encounter the ghosts and travels through time, so his belief that such things are possible in the end is crucial to the final change in his personality. He experiences the time travelling through the means of The Christmas Ghosts' magical abilities. Such abilities include invisibility, reading minds, travelling through time but

also space, or seeing into the past and future. These abilities are shared among the Christmas Ghosts regardless of their respected time era.

The Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge on his first journey through time and space. The Ghost is able to transfer its abilities to Scrooge just by grabbing his hand and leads him away from his house and further into the country to his birthplace. That Scrooge is experiencing a magical form of time travel explains why the Ghost is able to leave with him through the wall of the house or why the freezing temperatures outside do not affect him at all. In the blink of an eye, they are floating above a country road and fields. Scrooge is able to smell many odours, which bring him memories of hopes and joys he had forgotten a long time ago.

It seems that Scrooge is actually in the past as he is able to use all of his senses to interact with the surrounding world. However, he cannot connect with or reach out to the people they come across. The Ghost explains to Scrooge that the people around them have no consciousness of them because they are only shadows of things long gone (Dickens 30). Dickens's time travel would exclude many temporal paradoxes that science fiction version of time travel often encounters, as it seems that while travelling into the past, these events cannot be changed in reverse.

Invisible, the Ghost and Scrooge observe several stages of his early life. The individual scenes change in front of Scrooge's eyes in a matter of only seconds, and his surroundings grow older by several years. Scrooge does not understand how it is possible, nor does he seek any explanation of it (Dickens 32). The Ghost does not comply with Scrooge's pleading when he wants to return home forcing him to observe more visions. The Ghost of Christmas Past is fully in control of what Scrooge

encounters during their travel. They part only when Scrooge tries to use physical power to rid himself of the Ghost (Dickens 41).

Scrooge experiences the ability to travel through time and space unseen with his two other ghostly visitors as well. The Ghost of Christmas Present often strikes back at Scrooge with his own cruel words, which he has said before he was aware of the existence of the ghosts. It does so to provoke Scrooge's deeper feelings, which he has locked within himself. The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come provides Scrooge with visions of his possible future, leaving him only to his own thoughts during the travel. Had Scrooge dismissed the whole journey to the past, present, and future to whatever he deemed the most logical, his final change of personality would not have happened. Everything depends on him and his willingness to believe that what happened to him was true. Though his whole experience of the ghosts can be attributed to his imagination, Dickens's narrator warns the reader that Scrooge's imagination is not capable of such a thing already when Scrooge sees the face of his late business partner, Jacob Marley, on the door knocker (Dickens 16).

However, the narrator's reliability can be questioned as well. In order to change himself, Scrooge must believe in what he lives through during the night to be real. The same applies to the reader, who, if they want to believe in Scrooge's change, must believe in what the narrator tells them. They can dismiss the whole story as a Christmas tale, the same way Scrooge tries at the very beginning, or they can believe in the change of hearts and get inspired by it as Scrooge does at the end. The role of time travel in *Carol* is contradictory. On one hand, it makes the story even more of a fairy tale, as Scrooge at first thinks he experiences it while dreaming and talking with ghosts. His time travelling thus can be labelled as magical in a broader sense because he is provided

with the travels to past, present and future by ghosts. On the other hand, the time travel also justifies why Scrooge was able to change himself in such a short time.

In a way, Dickens offers an advanced form of time travel because his depiction enables simultaneous travel through time and space. Furthermore, his version of travelling into the past is free from the possibility of temporal paradoxes. The travellers visiting the past witness and observe past events, but they cannot interfere with or change them. In his version of time travel, Dickens creates a type of second timeline, or a bubble shifted from the timeline of the visited past. The travellers can thus roam through the past freely without fear of disturbing the course of events. Similar conditions apply for the travels through the present and into the future, as the travellers also cannot interfere with the events happening right now or yet to come.

A Christmas Carol further draws attention to humanity's selfishness and societal problems while using Christmas atmosphere, celebrations, and ghosts as a cover-up. The portrayal of poor families and the possible death of Tiny Tim serve to touch people's hearts as much as Scrooge's change into a better man. Additionally, the usage of time travel enables the personal change of Scrooge to happen nearly overnight. *A Christmas Carol*, under the idea that even the coldest and most shut-up heart can be warmed and welcomed back into society by doing what is right, also criticises the higher class for its obsession with money and overlooking problems that do not affect it directly.

3.2 Roles of the Ghosts

3.2.1 Jacob Marley

Scrooge's haunting visitations then start with the appearance of Marley's ghost on Christmas Eve, seven years after Marley's death. The central purpose of Marley's appearance is to warn Scrooge about his selfish and money-driven way of living, which he should change if he wishes for a different afterlife than Marley's. Marley announces to Scrooge the upcoming visits of three other ghosts, dismissing any refusal Scrooge tries to voice. The use of simple tense while describing future events in this scene refers to Scrooge's predetermined near future (Saint-Amour 96). Marley states to Scrooge, "You will be haunted," signifying to his friend that he has no say in the upcoming events of that night. It is set that he is going to be haunted by ghosts, yet these hauntings are going to offer him a chance to alter the future, which would have happened without Marley and the other Christmas Ghosts' visitations.

Though Scrooge does not believe in Marley at first, ascribing the ghost in his room to his imagination triggered by food poisoning (Dickens 21), Marley's presence is made possible by his connection to Scrooge, which they shared when still alive. Marley was a significant part of Scrooge's life. Scrooge carries Marley in mind even after his death as the name of their business, which still bears the surname of both men, signifies (Dickens 9). This connection and the fact that Marley was human before his earthly death distinguish him from the other ghosts who visit Scrooge, as they are symbols of festive time and never were humans in the first place (Orford 149-150).

Marley's intervention in Scrooge's life is an act of caring. Marley is helping his old friend because Scrooge's soul still has the potential to transform itself into a better version. As Marley discloses, this visit is not the first one he pays to Scrooge; he has

sat by him invisible for many days. What or who made it possible for him that day to show himself to Scrooge, he does not know (Dickens 24). In a story that allows for time travel and ghosts, such a decision could have been made by another spirit, maybe even Dickens's version of Father Christmas.

Dickens with his Christmas Books shaped the way the English celebrate Christmas even today (Davis 64). While creating ghosts which represent a time epoch of certain Christmases, Dickens's world can also contain "The Christmas Ghost", the very spirit of the holiday. The role of such a spirit could be to decide about people's fate and whether they get to roam the earth as ghosts burdened by their sins or be allowed to cross over to the other side. Additionally, the doings of such a spirit would explain why Marley appeared to Scrooge on that Christmas Eve and why was Scrooge chosen as a suitable sinner worthy of redemption. A similar experience can be shared among other characters without Scrooge's knowledge as the visitations of the three Christmas Ghosts or at least their other versions could be happening ever since people celebrate Christmas.

3.2.2 The Ghost of Christmas Past

Scrooge's path to the change of his soul and heart then begins the night after Marley's appearance, when the bell tolls one and the Ghost of Christmas Past appears in his chambers. Its claim that it is the Ghost of only Scrooge's past (Dickens 29) supports the idea that Scrooge was specifically chosen, and certain preparations have been made beforehand. For example, a set of Ghosts were created and familiarised with Scrooge's past, present, and future Christmases so they could accompany him on his path in changing his personality.

The Ghost of Christmas Past reconnects Scrooge with his childhood self, provoking nostalgia (Orford 146). It is a symbol not only of past Christmases but also of the human memory in which those Christmases are held. In a single figure, Dickens draws an image of the past and everything the past holds (Patten 175). The Ghost is at the same time old and young, it has one leg or twenty, long white hair, but not a single wrinkle on its face. (Dickens 28-29) In its own words, its business with Scrooge is his welfare and reclamation.

When asked to join the Ghost, Scrooge shows signs of fear and reluctance. He even reminds the Ghost that he is human after all "and liable to fall" (Dickens 29), as the Ghost intended to start their journey right through the window of Scrooge's upstairs bedroom. Such actions show that the Ghost may not be familiar with human anatomy and abilities. This visit can be a first-time encounter with each other's kind for both the Ghost and Scrooge, contributing to the possibility that the Ghost was born only to help Scrooge become a better person, and once its mission is completed, it may disappear forever.

When visiting the past, the Ghost shows Scrooge several scenes from his early life provoking emotions in him and nearly forcing him into feeling something different than just a desire for money. The Ghost of Christmas Past opens Scrooge's process of transformation by showing him what he has lost due to his past decisions. His pleas to be removed from reexperiencing the past indicate that he is still trying to avoid opening up the old wounds and pains in order to heal them properly (LaMothe 859). After parting with the Ghost of Christmas Past, Scrooge finds himself back in the present and his bedroom, where he decides to mentally prepare himself to face everything that could have appeared in his room on the second night of his haunting visitations.

3.2.3 The Ghost of Christmas Present

However, there is no ghost in sight when the bell tolls on that night again. As Scrooge does not celebrate the holiday, the Ghost representing this Christmas time cannot come to visit him. Scrooge must take on an active role and seek the Ghost in another room by himself. (Patten 180) Scrooge may act as a host to the Christmas Ghosts, welcoming them unwillingly into his house, but in the case of the Ghost of Christmas Present, Scrooge's role shifts to that of a guest. Though his guest role is apparent in all of his haunting visitations as he is more of a guest of honour to the Ghosts and their teachings than a host, it is the most transparent in the third stave where Scrooge is invited into his own house by his second visitor (Saint-Amour 96), who does so with the words, "Come in! ... Come in! and know me better, man!" (Dickens 43).

The Ghost of Christmas Present meets with a far more willing version of Scrooge, who is now at least prepared to learn another of his lessons. The Ghost's role is to awaken empathy in Scrooge and show him his place in society. The Ghost does so by taking Scrooge to several places, where they are to witness the happiness and merry atmosphere of the present time of Christmas. (Orford 146)

Scrooge learns that the Ghost comes from a large family of Ghosts of Christmas Present, to which he reacts, "A tremendous family to provide for!" (Dickens 44), showing that at that moment he is in his roots, still keen to observe the materialistic and financial aspects of things first. As a supernatural being, the Ghost of Christmas Present is born each year, and their lifetime spans only across that year's Christmas. They symbolise traditional Christmas, which is underlined by the lavish feast of traditional English Christmas dishes, which appears alongside the Ghost in Scrooge's chambers.

On his second journey, Scrooge goes with the Ghost of Christmas Present around the city of London and other locations unseen as shadows, able to witness how Christmas time is spent among the miners, guards of a lighthouse, or even the sailors, who all celebrate Christmas merrily despite their whereabouts. However, the two visits that impact Scrooge the most are the one to the Cratchits and Fred's Christmas dinners. During the visit to the Cratchits, Scrooge sees the whole family staying at home to prepare the dinner, celebrating, and appreciating the time they can spend together. The Christmas dishes in this scene take on the role of a social class marker. The Cratchits' Christmas dinner, though richer than usual and providing food for every member of the family, has hardly passed the test of belonging to the middle-class family's table. However, the Cratchits are more than satisfied with how their Christmas turned out and continue to celebrate merrily regardless of their poverty or lack of fancy dinner dishes. (Moore 498-499)

The visit to Fred's dinner party opens Scrooge's eyes even more because he gets to know that his nephew will never stop trying to persuade Scrooge to spend Christmas with him and his wife. Though Fred says several painful truths about Scrooge, such as that his actions only lead to him being isolated and hurt in the end, Scrooge starts to reconnect with Fred and his company and enjoy the games together with them. However, Scrooge is only a shadow hovering over the people playing games, meaning he is not truly there to participate and experience the pleasure of sharing time with friends and family. (LaMothe 859)

With midnight approaching, the Ghost of Christmas Present grows older and older, signifying that his time on Earth is nearing its end. As his final act, he shows Scrooge two of the present time's children, Ignorance and Want, who are clinging to him. Warning Scrooge to stay away from both of them, the Ghost uses Scrooge's own

words against him once more, reminding him of his past cruelty. The bell tolls again, and the Ghost, with his last warning, disappears. The visions of present times the Ghost provides for Scrooge do not only show Scrooge his place in society but also the reality of his damned future, which has its roots in the present. However, with this knowledge, Scrooge is also given the possibility of changing the future. In the end, the visions of the Cratchits and Fred's Christmas dinners never happen because, by changing his personality and way of living, Scrooge changes his present and future into another alternative, creating a new future for him and both Cratchit and Fred's families. (Patten 185)

3.2.4 The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come

Scrooge, right after reappearing in his bedroom, is met with "a solemn Phantom, draped and hooded" (Dickens 63), The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come. The contribution of this Ghost to Scrooge's journey is an inducement of fear, repeating Marley's central role. The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come is interacting with Scrooge, who has already undergone a transformation of his personality. Though Scrooge fears his third visitor, he already understands that the Ghost will do him only good (Orford 146). Scrooge approaches the second Christmas Ghost with hesitations, but with the third Ghost, he is fully prepared to face whatever the Ghost has for him "and do it with a thankful heart" (Dickens 64).

The last visitation happens with minimal involvement of the Ghost as Scrooge actively directs the Ghost and tells it where to bring him next. This initiative behaviour is evidence of Scrooge's truly becoming a new person permanently and not only temporarily. It also provides proof of Scrooge's understanding of how to act and behave once his visitations stop. (Orford 147) The Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come brings

Scrooge to the future of next Christmas, accompanying him around London's streets. Scrooge vainly searches for his future self, not fully understanding that his absence in the future means his death. As the Ghost employs its ability of invisibility, both it and Scrooge are disconnected from the future version of the world, again highlighting that Scrooge's future is determined by his present self, as was the case with the visions provided to him by the Ghost of Christmas Present. (Saint-Amour 97)

Scrooge realises his death only when he sees his name on a tombstone. He asks the Ghost why it torments him with the vision of his own death if he has already lost all hope. Scrooge pleads with the Ghost to assure him that he still has a chance to alter his life into a better version while promising, "I will honour Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all the year. I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future. The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me." (Dickens 77). By doing so, Dickens, through the means of Scrooge, suggests that past and present are interconnected, and through confronting his memories, Scrooge was able to gain freedom from his past (Marlow 45). Scrooge's immediate actions after finding himself back in his bedroom for good and on the morning of Christmas Day lead to showing his new self to the world and remedying his previous mistakes.

Each ghost that visits Scrooge has its own role in the path Scrooge takes, without which the change in his personality would be incomplete or would not happen at all. Apart from time-travelling with him and providing him with the respective visions, The Christmas Ghosts also gradually help Scrooge to open up his heart and old wounds. They accompany him while he starts to understand that suppressing emotions without dealing with them solves nothing. The Ghosts of Christmas Past and Present can also be viewed as Scrooge's guides as they explain the situation and guide him through their respective journeys. This aspect cannot be applied to The Ghost of Christmas Yet To

Come, as he remains silent during the whole travel. Its main contribution is the vision of the future it provides for Scrooge rather than any kind of guidance, as Scrooge is, at this point in the process of his change, the active one. Even though he uses no machine as The Time Traveller, Scrooge decides on his own what exactly he sees and witnesses in the future. Thus, the third travel can be perceived as more advanced form of time travel as he is no more at the mercy of the Ghosts and their teaching.

In contrast, Marley does not do anything like The Christmas Ghosts. First, he is not a festive spirit, so he does not possess the ability to time travel and thus cannot provide Scrooge with any type of vision. Second, Marley also does not stand as a guide figure for Scrooge. He, however, provides Scrooge with a sort of first contact with the world of spirits. Given that learning of the existence of ghosts can be an overwhelming or even traumatising experience, Marley appears to Scrooge first to prepare and warn him about the upcoming events. Marley knew Scrooge and was his friend when they were both alive. That way, Scrooge could have better taken in what will happen to him because he learns it from a familiar figure rather than from a real supernatural being he does not know and which would appear out of nowhere in his bedroom, stating that it is able and about to take him into the past.

3.3 Scrooge's Transformation

Throughout Scrooge's experiences in the past, present, and future, several elements contributed to his transformation. Ryan LaMothe believes that Scrooge never allowed himself to undergo the process of mourning after several losses he has suffered during childhood and after Marley's death, and he considers the main source of his miserable life to be his own choice to not grieve and process these losses in a healthy way (856-857). Heather Anne Tilley, on the other hand, perceives Scrooge's process of transformation as a result of awakening sentimentality within him through the means of eyes. According to her, Scrooge is able to change because he is able to see. His own ability of vision is used to evoke emotional responses out of him (5).

James Marlow describes Scrooge's attempt to disregard his past as a utilitarianism (45). For Marlow, Scrooge applies utilitarianism throughout his whole life. The question of whether certain institutions or actions bring him pleasure or pain is always present. He applies such an approach also when considering the past. Since there is too much pain for him, caused by what he has lost and what he has chosen not to, Scrooge denies the past any value. It gives him no pleasure, it is not useful for him, and he cannot make more money with it, so it has no place in his life.

Scrooge becomes what he is in the opening scenes of *A Christmas Carol* because of the pain and losses he suffered in the past, but it is the fear of feeling more pain in the future that terrifies him rather than living with the pain from the past. Scrooge has changed into the worse version of himself because of the fear of the pain, and it is also the fear of dying alone and unmourned that fuels his determination to change himself into a better person after all. (Marlow 45) But only these changes happened of his own free will; the initiation of the change was involuntary.

A glimpse of Scrooge's change into a better man is apparent already in his visits to the past. Though Scrooge is mostly scared of the Ghost and what it can possibly do to him, he also starts to regret his previous behaviour and feels guilty because of it. The grief Scrooge feels inside comes from a series of losses in childhood and early adulthood, be it the death of his mother, his father sending him away right after that or the broken engagement with his former love several years after. Scrooge could have become the same man as Fezziwig, but he chose the path, which promised less pain in life. However, it also comes with less of life's pleasures. (LaMothe 856-857)

The scenes Scrooge reexperiences cause him immense emotional pain because of the realisation of the losses he has suffered due to his decision to stay loyal to a more stable commodity, money, rather than tie himself down into relationships with other people. Through the isolation Scrooge has created around himself, he becomes less vulnerable to the losses he might have experienced had he decided to start a family or keep in touch with people for other reasons than making money. Before the appearances of the Ghosts, Scrooge does not realise his lonely and miserable way of living simply because he does not have time to think about it as he is mainly focusing on his business and whether it prospers. (LaMothe 858) Scrooge's reaction to seeing himself in the past may be interpreted as the first spark of his change because it shows that Scrooge is capable of feeling, or rather, that he is capable of expressing his feelings and emotions again after locking them deep inside himself during his life. Scrooge needs to look at himself first and only then he is able to see others and realise his responsibilities toward them. (Tilley 5-7)

What Scrooge observes with the Ghost of Christmas Present at the Cratchits and Fred's are present-day losses, consequences of his past decisions depriving him of enjoying present time (LaMothe 859). However, Scrooge decided to detach himself

from his past because it carries too much pain for him to consciously bear. He has lost too much on a personal level that he took the chance to be most occupied with money because money unlike lost people can be far more easily retrieved (Marlow 44).

With the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come, Scrooge does not want to waste his time, as it is already a precious commodity for him, and he desires to use it fully now (Patten 186). Though he searches for himself in the future not realising that he is not alive anymore, he must have anticipated his own death even before the ghosts' visitations, as it is an inevitable reality for every human. It is the idea of his life not being lived at all that scares him. He shut himself up in the past, depriving himself of all that life has to offer. The emotional aspect of his living was non-existent. He, in a sense, was dead much earlier than when the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come showed him. (LaMothe 860)

Nevertheless, Scrooge wakes up in his bed alive and knows how to make his life count and actually live it. The process of personality change also included a shift in how Scrooge perceived time. It is no longer quantitative numerical time for him but qualitative time, which he can spend in happiness (Patten 192). To confirm that he is not interested only in money anymore, the first thing he does as a changed man is buying the biggest turkey and sending it to Cratchits without thinking about the price. Then Scrooge proceeds to offer a generous amount of money to charity, which he refuses in the first stave of *A Christmas Carol*. He goes on a walk, appreciating everything he already knew, but now he realises that it can make him happy. He pays a visit to his nephew, where he experiences the dinner and the games he has only observed as a shadow with the Ghost of Christmas Present.

The next day, he waits at the office for Bob Cratchit, who comes late to work. Bob arrives, apologising to Scrooge that he is behind his time. Though Bob meant his working hours, it also means that he still lives with the image of the unbearably evil Scrooge and is unaware of what has happened to Scrooge at night. Scrooge then redeems his past behaviour and works on establishing a new relationship with his clerk while becoming a second father to Tiny Tim who does not die in this changed version of Scrooge's life. (Patten 193)

Ultimately, it was the travels to past Christmases, the experience of how the present Christmas time was spent among others, and the prediction of his miserable future, which was about to be fulfilled had he not changed his way of living, that pushed Scrooge to undergo the transformation of his personality. He has become a functioning member of society, a loving uncle, and a better man to his family, friends, and employees because of the ghosts and their ability to travel through time.

Though *A Christmas Carol* was intended to be perceived as a ghost story, it can also be read as a time travel narrative. The theme of time travel plays a significant role in the story, without which its central claims would not be able to be made. On the one hand, the visitations of The Christmas Ghosts were crucial to the whole process of personal change. Scrooge would have never realised who he had become without them and would not have been able to change. Marley's ghost and his worry for Scrooge also contributed to the process. On the other hand, the time travel made everything possible in the end. Even if Scrooge had met the ghosts without travelling into the past, present, and future with them, he would have never changed his personality in such a scenario.

4 The Time Machine

4.1 Time Travel via Machine

The Time Machine, unlike *A Christmas Carol*, takes place only in the characters' present and future. What The Traveller experiences during his first journey lacks visitations of ghosts or spirits, a festive mood, or anything at all that would give its readers hope that even in the most shut-up heart, there is still a place for love and compassion, as did *A Christmas Carol*. The purpose of *The Time Machine* is to visualise a possible future that awaits humanity while encompassing contemporary scientific theories about the evolution and regression of species. Though the tale is mostly built on anthropological and mathematical descriptions and hypotheses, it also provokes the reader's emotions by dealing with forming new friendships as well as losing them.

The Time Machine represents an innovative form of literary work in several ways. The title itself is new; though the term "time machine" existed before, it was used to describe a machine which was able to measure time (Firchow 30). Wells then implies that everybody is able to "travel" through time; the only difference between us and The Time Traveller is the speed at which we travel, and that is approximately a second per second. Patrick Parrinder calculated the most plausible speed of The Traveller when using his Time Machine to be five hundred years per second, as such a journey to the future of Eloi and Morlocks would only take half an hour (*Shadows of Future* 41).

Wells, however, added a new dimension to the term by naming a machine that could actually travel through time and not only measure it. The means of using an actual machine to travel through time also appears in *The Time Machine* for the first time (Firchow 19). The Time Traveller uses present-day scientific methods and theories to invent his machine and justify his claim that he is indeed able to travel through time, as

he believes that time is just another dimension we should consider adding to the three-dimensional world. He argues that if we can travel through three planes of space consisting of length, breadth, and thickness, then we should also be able to travel through time (Wells 4). Wells's Time Machine, however, moves only in time and not space, which is a feature the future time machines inspired by Wells did not maintain.

Another interesting feature of *The Time Machine* is its two-narrative structure, which is used to enhance the believability of The Time Traveller's story (Firchow 21). The frame narrative, taking place in The Traveller's house in Richmond, includes the lecture in which The Traveller is trying to explain to his guests the science behind the four dimensions and the possibility of time travel, increasing the plausibility of the narrative by using scientific terms and definitions. In this case, the narrator is one of The Traveller's guests and recalls The Traveller's story. He sometimes interrupts the second narrative which takes place in the future and is narrated by The Traveller.

The two narratives signify the possibility of two different timeframes, which The Traveller leaves and re-enters during his journey, hinting that Wells must have been aware of some of the many time paradoxes that surround time travelling. Such a paradox, for example, appears at the end of *The Time Machine* when the narrator comes back to the laboratory and sees a half-transparent Time Machine with The Traveller either arriving or leaving. (Parrinder, *Shadows of Future* 36) More paradoxes would have arisen in the story had it taken place, at least partially, in the past. Dealing with the times already gone creates far more paradoxes than travelling into the future. However, it would be impossible to convey any of the messages Wells is trying to pass on in *The Time Machine* had the story take place in any time era other than the future, as the regressive evolutionary processes could not function back into the past. Such change is noticeable only across a span of years yet to come.

While retelling the journey The Traveller undergoes with his Time Machine, he describes the sensations he has experienced. With the increasing velocity of the Time Machine, The Traveller describes the day and night changing in the blink of an eye and gradually mixing into one. Unlike Scrooge, who was accompanied by the festive Ghosts and who travelled through time and space with their magical abilities in a rather comfortable manner, The Traveller experiences difficulties such as hearing problems and fatigue during his journey. Travelling through only time and not space, The Traveller sees his laboratory disappear, the surrounding scenery change, and other buildings arise within seconds. He ends his journey rather abruptly and arrives in the year 802 701.

Such a number may seem to be chosen aimlessly, but, according to Patrick Parrinder, there is an explanation behind Wells's choosing this particular year. Parrinder dates the party The Traveller holds for his friends to take place at the beginning of the twentieth century, precisely in 1901, supporting his argument with a previous version of *The Time Machine* and another of Well's books, *The War of the Worlds*, which both take place around the same time. He further uses the symbolic value of eight hundred and eight hundred thousand years. He chose eight hundred years for it is enough of historical time to witness the rise and fall of a culture and civilisation, which would take us to the year 2701. The additional eight hundred thousand years of evolutionary time is enough to witness a significant change in the evolution of species, taking us into The Traveller's destination year of 802 701. These two time scales then go by simultaneously. (Parrinder, *Shadows of Future* 42)

However, not all agree with Parrinder's view entirely. Though Steven McLean accepts the idea of the two time scales in which *The Time Machine* takes place, he does not agree with the year in which Parrinder sets The Traveller's party. Given that The

Traveller refers to Simon Newcomb and his speech at the New York Mathematical Society, McLean argues that the party must have taken place already in 1893 or early 1894, disregarding Parrinder's symbolical use of the years and his conclusion on why Wells chose this specific number (*The Early Fiction* 12-13).

Nevertheless, the specificity of the year The Traveller meets Eloi and Morlocks plays a minor role in the course of events. Though it can be perceived as an interesting feature of the story, it does not influence what the Traveller discovers in the future. The number must be high, but it could be easily hundreds of years higher or lower, and it would leave little to no impact on what The Traveller encounters, as the evolutionary processes take a lot more time to occur. What seems for a human being to be an incredibly long time is, in terms of evolution, only a fraction.

The Traveller nonetheless arrives at the distant future, whose society he considers to be a paradise or communistic society. While exploring the gardens and ruins in the future, The Traveller comes across several architectural phenomena with decorations and buildings that resemble museums. In such places, he finds inventions, artefacts, and idols from all over the world known to him. Given that he travelled thousands of hundreds of years into the future, such relics cannot be of the same origin as those he knows from his time. *The Time Machine* can thus present history as a cyclical process in which different historic eras repeat themselves after a specific number of years have passed and that maybe during the time The Traveller has travelled, the long-gone civilizations have risen to reign again and fallen as they did before. It could have been entirely new civilizations with new languages and customs that arose instead of the old ones, but they nevertheless fell as well.

However, this may be only one interpretation of the relics in the future; John Partington and Peter Firchow see these ruins more as Wells's projection of Victorian England or the past, distant already in Wells's time, into the year 802 701. Partington analyses these as "Victorian remains", which Wells used to demonstrate his concerns with the Victorian class division and even more as a warning for his readers who would recognize such surroundings instantly (58). Firchow argues that The Traveller's journey into the future is simultaneously a journey into the past. He identifies as evidence the Phoenician decorations The Traveller finds at one of the ruins, claiming them to be a part of the temporal paradox he finds in *The Time Machine* (31). This paradox also includes the characters' way of talking about the future. Though their present is somewhere in the 1890s or early twentieth century England, they talk about the future in a past manner. The Traveller and the narrator thus create a paradox talking about events yet to come in the past tense. However, for The Traveller especially, they have already taken place.

In addition to the different analyses of what the future may represent, John Huntington argues that it is only "a reduction of the present" (43). He offers a comparison of *The Time Machine* to a pastoral. As in a pastoral, the economic and social problems are resolved in the future, and only idyllic life is depicted, or such is the first impression in the case of *The Time Machine*. However, Huntington further rejects the pastoral idea of the future because, in *The Time Machine*, the main cause of such a change is biological regression, which is a feature not found in pastoral narratives. (Huntington 43) The society of Victorian England *The Time Machine* depicts underwent a regressive evolutionary process, losing many physical and psychological traits or parts of their culture along the way. Their descendants split and devolved into

subhuman species. What The Traveller considers to be a communistic society or utopia is only a remnant of what humanity used to be.

The theme of time travel in *The Time Machine* conveys Wells's warning to humanity about its possible future. To show the dimensions of such a change as biological regression, Wells must have set his tale far into the future to allow natural evolutionary processes to be recognisable, following the contemporary scientific theories of Darwin about evolution and Lankester about degeneration. Ray Lankester was British evolutionary biologist and Wells's friend. His work, *Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism*, inspired Wells for his depiction of degeneration of the Eloi and Morlocks in *The Time Machine* (McLean, *The Early Fiction* 25). Wells then combines the theories and, in the form of literary work, intensifies their pessimistic outlooks on what can befall humanity.

4.2 The Process of Degeneration in *The Time Machine*

4.2.1 Interpretation of the Future

Arriving in the year 802 701, The Traveller meets with small, fragile-looking beings who seem to him beautiful and gentle yet childlike and frail. His first reaction upon seeing the inhabitants of the future is fear; however, once he becomes aware of his physical advantage, his fear disappears and is replaced by curiosity. He is also assured of his safety the moment he realises that the creatures are not afraid of him, and he concludes that they mean no threat to him. The Traveller tries to initiate a conversation with the beings, noting that their language is "very sweet and liquid" (Wells 25). Not understanding the tongue, The Traveller tries gestures and signs; however, these types of non-verbal communication have disappeared alongside the more complicated language structures, and the inhabitants seem to have no inkling of them.

Later, while still exploring the world of the future, The Traveller wishes for a cicerone figure who would translate and guide him through this unknown place (Wells 49). Wells, by having his Traveller struggle with language and proper understanding of the culture he is in contact with, mocks the artificial and advantageously placed characters in other contemporary utopian fictions who serve as a middleman between the main character and the world they get into. Such works would include, for example, Morris's *News from Nowhere*.

The Traveller in *The Time Machine*, on the other hand, must work independently while having no way to confirm or disprove his hypotheses about how the future society functions. (Parrinder, *Shadows of Future* 44) The lacking the guide figure also makes the discovery of the Morlocks so surprising for The Traveller. When he first observes the strange wells in the upper world, he thinks they are a part of the ventilation system,

but it is difficult for him to imagine their true function (Wells 41). Only later does he discover that they are entrances for the Morlocks to ascend to the upper world.

Steven McLean interprets the missing cicerone as a partial cause for The Traveller's fear of the unknown future, as he is stepping into a strange world without any help or guidance whatsoever (*The Early Fiction* 15). According to Peter Firchow, the absence of the cicerone figure also enhances the realistic impression *The Time Machine* tries to set for its readers. This technique keeps the readers in the dark the same way it does for The Traveller, making them formulate the hypotheses of how the world works at the same time (Firchow 22).

By giving The Traveller and readers as little information about the world, its inhabitants, and their culture as possible, Wells also comments on another feature of many utopian fictions, and that is how in these works about future establishments and epochs, detailed information about buildings and other arrangements is given right away (Firchow 23). The Traveller notes on this issue: "In some of these visions of Utopias and coming times which I have read, there is a vast amount of detail about building, and social arrangements, and so forth. But while such details are enough to obtain when the whole world is contained in one's imagination, they are altogether inaccessible to a real traveller amid such realities as I found here." (Wells 41).

4.2.2 The Traveller's Hypotheses about the Future

What The Traveller understands about the future and what he is able to pass on to his guests once he returns home is entirely dependent on his ability to comprehend what is happening around him. His attempts at understanding the future are thus going to remain mere hypotheses (Firchow 23). Neither he nor the readers can be sure whether they are correct or not in the end. Though The Traveller changes and expands on his

hypothesis four times, even the final proposition does not have to be entirely true. The narrator and The Traveller's guests who listen to his story back in Victorian London also add to this confusion as they hesitate whether to believe the Traveller's tale or not (Youngs 113). The hypotheses are also culture-bound and can interpret the future only as far as The Traveller's background allows them (Youngs 121).

The first theory The Traveller formulates considers that the small, frail creatures, whom he learns are named Eloi, are the only descendants of humans. He discovers that they live carefree lives where everything they need is provided by someone or something he does not know yet. The single houses as well as the notion of household itself seem to have disappeared. The differences between sexes are no more apparent. The Traveller has trouble telling apart which Eloi is of female or male sex as they all look alike and wear the same attire. As already mentioned, his first theory then considers the society of Eloi to be built on the foundations of communism. (Wells 30)

However, after spending the night in the future, The Traveller discovers that Eloi are not the sole inhabitants of this new world. He encounters the second species, the subterranean Morlocks, and modifies his theory, in which he now speculates that Morlocks tend to the needs of the Eloi in their underground habitat. He also considers the Eloi the masters of the ape-like and nearly blind Morlocks (Wells 47-50). His third theory describes a society divided by social class, which pushed the Morlockian servants to the edge of revolt (Wells 57-58). Only after he descends through the strange wells into the Morlockian world and identifies the strange meat he finds there to be from Eloi does he formulate the final version of his hypothesis. The Eloi are mere cattle who are provided for by Morlocks, only to be hunted down during the night (Wells 62).

4.2.3 The Degeneration of Eloi and Morlocks

The Traveller thinks that Eloi and Morlocks are descendants of the human race, which must have split due to social causes and adapted their anatomy to their new surroundings. The social cause would be the class division, which was already problematic in his time. The Eloi are descendants of the Capitalist, while the Morlocks are descendants of the Labourer (Wells 48). He notes that even in Victorian London, there were workers of the lower class, living in whole underground towns, who rarely saw daylight. He thinks that living in such conditions caused the workers to gradually devolve into Morlocks.

However, this assumption raises the question of what must have happened to the Morlocks in their subterrain world which forced them back to the upper world at least at nights and push them into hunting the Eloi. The Traveller guesses that their food supplies must have run out, and because Eloi above already lost any sense of responsibility for their servants, they did not bother to find any other food sources for them. Driven by hunger, the Morlocks turn to the only remaining edible thing, the Eloi, as the other species of animals allegedly became extinct.

In addition, the question of Eloi's food sources arises. How is it possible that the food for the Morlocks ran out but not for the Eloi? Given that the Eloi's diet consists of fruit, which is grown above, there might not have been an issue with the quantity or quality of the harvest in the first place, as the Eloi's food supplies are tended to by the Morlocks. When their food ran out, the Morlocks could have tried to adapt their diet to fruit as well, but as cruel as it may sound, the fruit probably was not nutritious enough for them. The Morlocks are larger and stronger, and, more importantly, they work

manually in contrast to the Eloi; therefore, they need a more nourishing diet than the sugary fruit, and the only source of such nutrients are the Eloi.

Though The Traveller does not wonder about the Eloi's food sources, his other interpretations about the relationship between Eloi and Morlocks do not have to be accurate at all. The Traveller spent eight days in the future and was able to explore as much of this world as his legs allowed him. The assumption of other animals being extinct or why Morlocks started feeding on Eloi is not supported by anything other than The Traveller's thoughts of what he deems most probable based on the information available to him.

The social conditions of their lives also affected the natural evolution of the upper class, which, instead of progressing further, turned backwards on the evolution scale and became Eloi. Their bodies shrank in size, and so did their brains. In a world where everything was tended to by Morlocks and their ancestors, the Eloi did not have to worry about anything, and they thus lost what made them human. In an unchanging world without any danger, they lost the connection with their instincts and curiosity. The Traveller feels among them as a schoolmaster with children (Wells 29). He assumes that the sense of fear also vanished. However, once he becomes aware of Morlocks, he realises that the Eloi can still feel fear as they are frightened by the dark and these carnivorous creatures. It is, however, difficult to determine whether they realise that in the dark, there are Morlocks who are there to hunt them or if they are afraid solely of the dark simply because they know that with the night comes death. On the other hand, if the Morlocks started hunting Eloi a long time ago, their fear of dark could be interpreted as a re-introduction of the instincts to their behaviour. Such alteration would be caused by the change of living conditions. The re-introduction would further support the cyclical representation of history *The Time Machine* offers.

If The Time Traveller's hypothesis is correct and Eloi and Morlocks are descended from the same ancestor, it is nevertheless the only thing they share. Morlocks did not lose as much cerebral potential as Eloi did. Their way of life forced them to maintain a certain level of intelligence. Though there are machines underground, which probably helped Morlocks with their duties towards Eloi for many generations, they are not completely unmanned and, therefore, require maintenance, which in turn requires critical thinking and the ability to solve new problems should they arise. Such problems would include repairs or a food shortage. Had the Morlocks lived carefree lives like Eloi, they would have degenerated the same way Eloi did. (Partington 60)

However, it was their role in the society that did not allow them to do so. Even in the year 802 701, the Morlocks are curious about what happens in the upper world and plan their steps ahead unlike Eloi. They actively took the Time Machine and used it as bait in an attempt to trap The Traveller and study him. They even took the Time Machine apart and reassembled it back together in order to find its purpose. (Partington 61) Such advantageous traits would make the Morlocks the masters of Eloi, but the Morlocks are too late. By the time they are above Eloi by intelligence, they have also degenerated into such a low species that they are unable to overthrow the system and change it. (Philmus 75) As such, the cycle of repeating history has been disturbed and cannot function as before, leading to further degeneration. Morlocks would also be unable to rule over the upper world because their physiology adapted to life underground without natural light, making them unable to survive in daytime light on Earth's surface (Partington 61).

Given their separate ways of devolution, both Eloi and Morlocks can be interpreted as the ruling class or the exploited one. Kathryn Hume compares the two species to the duck and rabbit optical illusion. When looking at the illusion, the human

eye recognises only one animal at a time. Likewise, we can determine as the ruling or exploited class only one species at a time. While the Eloi can be seen as the ruling class who do not have to work or generally worry about life, the Morlocks are the servants who were forced to make such a life possible for them. On the other hand, the Eloi are now kept as a food source for Morlocks. (Hume 44)

Such a state to which Eloi and Morlocks devolved must have been preceded by a time in which social balance was achieved. Diseases, societal problems, and other conflicts were resolved, and a period of time when the world truly resembled utopia has come. The Traveller bases this theory on Darwin's theory of evolution, like the ones before. However, according to this theory, a state of perfect utopia is unsustainable. Once achieved, utopia leads to degeneration of body and mind and back into struggles for survival. Such a state of utopian world is a condition of stasis. (Firchow 28-29) Though Morlocks achieved superior status over Eloi as they are in the year 802 701 hunters and not prey, their success does not salvage them from further devolution. They have already missed the point from which they could have come back into the evolution processes and again start evolving into more advanced species. Both Eloi and Morlocks will continue to decline in body and mind.

Once The Traveller escapes the Morlocks and travels into a far-distant future, he encounters enormous butterflies and crab-like creatures, descendants of Eloi and Morlocks, respectively, as they continued to degenerate even further. (Firchow 29) In an attempt to see whether the society would improve and what fate awaits Earth, The Traveller travels even further, into the future of thirty million years, but at this time, the Earth has already stopped rotating. The only sign of life is a slimy creature on shore and one with tentacles upon the red sea. The Earth seems to be dying and there is no sign which would indicate that the society of Eloi and Morlocks has meanwhile

improved. The Earth fell into silence, and this discovery left The Traveller terrified as he lost all hope that there was still a chance for saving humanity.

In *The Time Machine*, Wells criticises the artificiality of contemporary utopian fictions and delves into the problem of social class division. Through The Traveller's adventures, Wells constructs a vision of the future based on scientific theories, suggesting the inevitable end of humanity if a state of utopia is achieved. Wells locates the cause of the potential end of humanity in the problem of class division of his time. *The Time Machine* thus represents a need for social reform in Wells's present, while warning at the same time about the possible consequences should the state of society remain unchanged.

4.3 The Time Traveller

Though the main theme of *The Time Machine* is societal change it also depicts the personal change of The Time Traveller to a certain degree. He leaves Victorian London as a distinguished gentleman, a man of sense and science. However, once he is left alone in unpredictable situations in which his life is endangered, he turns into a more emotional man who acts aggressively and carelessly. The future world awakens in him parts of himself he would have never gotten to know had he stayed in his time's London.

What The Traveller experiences in the future can be seen as a kind of retrogression or even degeneration on an emotional and cerebral level (McLean, *The Early Fiction* 36). Though these processes take thousands of years in nature to be recognisable, as they did in the case of Eloi and Morlocks, what The Traveller goes through is so unlike his normal life that it has an immersive impact on his way of thinking and behaving, making his regression apparent over the course of only days.

He might have intended to approach his journey into the future as a fieldwork report, objectively examining the new culture and social structure; nevertheless, in moments of crisis, he regresses into fearful and hysterical behaviour (Parrinder, *Shadows of Future* 45). An instance of such behaviour is seen when The Traveller finds out that his Time Machine disappeared, and his first reaction is to throw a childish tantrum (Wells 37). Steven McLean identifies The Traveller's regression to be the same as the one that affected Eloi, as his behaviour is also childlike, and he takes on their fear of the dark (*The Early Fiction* 36).

In this change The Traveller undergoes, he not only resembles the Eloi, but in many instances, his regression is similar to that which affected the Morlocks. The Traveller describes the Morlocks as brutes, and the longer he is in the future, the more he fears them. His fear of them is gradually increasing; occasionally, the only thing that prevents him from attacking the Morlocks back is Weena, The Traveller's Eloi friend, as he is worried that his actions would affect their safety and his retrieving the Time Machine (Wells 68). However, Kathryn Hume suggests that the Morlocks have no intention of hurting The Traveller, or at least not right away. She highlights that the Morlocks use no weapons against him, and their first intention is to study him (44). Much alike is his intention upon coming into the future. The Traveller dislikes the Morlocks even more the moment he realises that he was exposed and touched by them at night while still being oblivious to their existence (Wells 58).

Michael Lee, on the other hand, suggests that this fear The Traveller experiences shows his awareness of him being "knowable and edible" to Morlocks, as they want to study him as well as eat him. Lee's interpretation suggests that the relationship between eating and studying breaks down in *The Time Machine*, and the two acts become one (256). Given that the Morlocks are carnivorous creatures forced to eat Eloi because of

a food shortage, suggesting that they would not want to hurt The Traveller but only study him does not seem plausible. The Traveller spends a very limited time in the future, during which the Morlocks try to capture him every chance they get. There is also a possibility that they still possess some form of weapon, but The Traveller has not been there long enough to notice them. The Traveller's fear of Morlocks can also stem from his social class. Though his actions in the future resemble the behaviour of the Morlocks, suggesting that The Traveller has in himself something from the lower class, his fear of Morlocks and lack of any sympathy towards them can also be explained by his affiliation with the upper class.

John Huntington describes Morlocks as "superanimals", highlighting their animal-like appearance and that The Traveller never considers them to be humans (43). Given that Morlocks still possess some intelligence and assuming that they act in certain situations by instinct like animals, capturing The Traveller and subsequently eating him seems more likely to be in their nature. Their food shortage would force them to hunt for anything new that showed up in their world and seemed edible.

However, it is precisely eating that helps The Traveller better understand the world of the future. Through eating, he learns that the Eloi are vegetarians and starts to understand their culture and customs. Once he realises the eating practices of Morlocks, it also results in him attacking them (Lee 254). Then during one of the attacks, Weena is taken by Morlocks and dies. Losing Weena pushes The Traveller over the edge and there is nothing which would stop him from holding back anymore. The Traveller tries to save himself and escape the Morlocks. While attacking them he is also experiencing feelings of pleasure during the fight (Huntington 50). This decline to violent behaviour supports the assumption that the type of regression The Traveller is experiencing is in many ways similar to that of Morlocks. His behaviour is nothing like the passive Eloi,

which he should resemble more as he is a scientist and, therefore, a member of the upper class and their ancestor. His resemblance to Morlocks is, on the other hand, apparent once again when he returns home, as his first request is a piece of meat for dinner (Wells 15).

Peter Firchow explains The Traveller's resemblance to both Eloi and Morlocks in terms of psychological and behavioural traits with a psychoanalytical reading of The Traveller and the future he travels into. The structure of the world in the year 802 701 can be interpreted as ego and id. The conscious level would be represented by Eloi and the light of the upper world, while the id represents the unconscious level of Morlocks and their dark subterranean habitat. Firchow connects the social cause with psychology and argues that the split of humanity was caused by both of them. Once The Traveller descends into the Morlockian underground, he also descends into the unconscious level of his self. Only by doing so does he uncover that he is a representative not only of the passive Eloi but also of the violent Morlocks. (Firchow 24)

The personal change of The Traveller depicted in *The Time Machine* does not have such impact on him as the visitations of The Christmas Ghosts had on Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. However, in both cases, the protagonists underwent their respective changes involuntarily. For Scrooge it was at least at the beginning, as he did not wish to be visited by the ghosts in the first place. Though he changed and became a better person in the end, The Time Traveller's journey into the future should have been primarily about discovering what awaits humanity and how far technological progress has gone. The personal change The Traveller experienced was unforeseen and secondary to his main intentions.

Furthermore, it represents more of an exploration of one's self, and while it might have left some marks on him, it did not change him entirely. Once he returned to Victorian England and was met with disbelief about what he had lived through, he was determined to go into the future again and bring back material evidence so the social reform needed in order to change the future he witnessed could be initiated. *The Time Machine* thus serves as a platform for Wells to convey his concerns about the problem of social class division and human behaviour towards one another, which he considers to be resolvable, but the first impulse for the change has to come from humanity itself.

The Time Machine also enhances its effects on readers by triggering their emotions. It does so by using the death of a character, similarly as *A Christmas Carol*. Though Tiny Tim did not die because Scrooge was able to change himself, his premature death is inevitable in the alternative future Scrooge visits with the Ghost of Christmas Yet To Come, which would otherwise be his reality. In *The Time Machine*, it is the death of Weena that triggers the readers' emotions. The actual death of Weena makes *The Time Machine* more pessimistic and gloomier about its claims than *A Christmas Carol*. However, it also hopes to impact its readers and appeal to them to try and change themselves or the world as *A Christmas Carol* does in its festive and optimistic manner.

5 Conclusion

The analysis of *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine* showed many differences between these two works. The overall mood the stories set is nearly opposite. *A Christmas Carol* sets a festive mood; the story has a happy ending, leaving its readers with a sense of hope that if a man like Scrooge is able to change, then there is a chance for everybody and even the world. In contrast, *The Time Machine* depicts a nightmarish future awaiting humanity should its current system of class division and way of treating one another stay the same while leaving the end of the story open. The means through which the travels in time are mediated also differ significantly. In the case of Scrooge's experience, he is transported in time by ghosts in a comfortable manner, as his surroundings do not affect him. The Time Traveller uses a machine he engineered himself; however, his travel is quite uncomfortable as he is experiencing nausea and has trouble hearing.

Though the works depict both types of change, they are, nevertheless, represented on different levels. Personal change is the central theme of *A Christmas Carol*, but the theme of societal change also occurs here. Dickens implies in his story that societal change is needed, but he also implies that the change is achievable. *The Time Machine* depicts regressive societal change, but the personal change of The Time Traveller is also present. In the case of Wells, both changes are depicted negatively, as society regresses and splits into two distinct and subhuman species, and The Time Traveller undergoes an unforeseen regressive change in personality. What the depictions of personality changes share is that they are both involuntary.

Yet, despite all these differences, there are some similarities between the two stories. One that is not entirely connected to time travel but is nevertheless significant

is food and its role as a social class marker. In *A Christmas Carol*, the richness of Christmas dinner clearly sets apart families of different social classes, for example, the Cratchits and Fred's families. In the end, *Carol*, however, highlights that it is not the food you have that is important but how you spend Christmas time with your loved ones. In the case of *The Time Machine*, the type of diet essentially divides the Eloi and Morlocks. The fruit diet of Eloi can be associated with the higher class of The Traveller's present, while the cannibalistic tendencies of Morlocks can be associated with the lower class. The Time Traveller then stands as evidence that in people of his time, there are qualities of both Eloi and Morlocks. On the one hand, The Time Traveller requests a piece of meat for dinner immediately after his return home, hinting at the later development of Morlocks' cannibalism. On the other hand, his being a scientist and inventor further supports his affiliation with a higher class. Furthermore, it supports the assumption that Eloi and Morlocks developed from a single ancestor.

The similarity between *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine*, which is truly connected with the time travel theme, is its primary usage in both stories. The examination of *A Christmas Carol* showed that Dickens used time travel to justify Scrooge's immense change in personality, which happened overnight. Without time travel and other magic aspects like ghosts and spirits, such rapid change would not be able to occur. Time travel is a significant part of the process of change, as it is one of the many abilities shared among The Christmas Ghosts that enable Scrooge to benefit from them. Scrooge's change in personality is also made possible by several other aspects, such as the involuntarily re-opening of old wounds and learning to process his own feelings healthily. Witnessing the happiness of the present time in other families and seeing his possible and even more miserable future further supports Scrooge's change.

The use of time travel in *The Time Machine* also functions as a justification for the story to take place in the future. However, Wells needed to travel into the far future in order to gain several hundreds of thousands of years of distance to enable the natural evolutionary processes to occur. *A Christmas Carol* must have taken place in the past, present, and future for Scrooge to learn from his past mistakes, gain new hope, and be warned. *The Time Machine* could not have taken place in any other era except for the future because the evolutionary processes that play a significant role in conveying Wells's main intention with *The Time Machine* could not be found in the past or the present.

In conclusion, *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine* may seem like completely different or nearly opposite stories that have at first sight nothing in common. Yet, there are some similarities that can be drawn out. Ultimately, it is the usage of time travel in *A Christmas Carol* and *The Time Machine* which connects the two works.

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