



Universidad de Valladolid

FACULTAD de FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS
DEPARTAMENTO de FILOLOGÍA INGLESA
Grado en Estudios Ingleses

TRABAJO DE FIN DE GRADO

"MODERNIST FUTURES: THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN
MEN LIKE GODS AND BRAVE NEW WORLD. A STUDY OF
OPPOSITE VIEWS OF POSSIBLE FUTURES AS IMAGINED
BY H.G. WELLS AND ALDOUS HUXLEY"

José Miguel González Morago

Tutor: Berta Cano Echevarría

2017/18

ABSTRACT

At the beginning of the 20th century the world was changing drastically due to scientific development and certain events like the First World War. As a consequence many authors began writing utopias and dystopias guessing how the world would change. In 1931 Aldous Huxley wrote the dystopian story *Brave New World* as a direct response to the utopic future imagined by H.G. Wells on his book *Men Like Gods* in 1923. Huxley thought Wells' view was too naive and that the technological progress could be used with fatal consequences. Thus, he decided to write a book in response showing a society where the use of science led to a nightmarish future. As a result there is a contrast in both works which show two radically different points of view. This essay focuses on the analysis of the opposite futures through the different descriptions that appear in the books.

Keywords: Utopia, Dystopia, Science, Future, Society, Human

A comienzos del siglo veinte el mundo estaba cambiando drásticamente debido a los descubrimientos científicos y a ciertos acontecimientos como la Primera Guerra Mundial. Como consecuencia muchos escritores empezaron a escribir utopías y distopías para adivinar como podría cambiar el mundo. En 1931 Aldous Huxley escribió la historia de *Un Mundo Feliz* como respuesta al utópico futuro imaginado por H.G. Wells en su libro *Men Like Gods* en 1923. Huxley pensó que el punto de vista de Wells era demasiado inocente y que el progreso tecnológico podía ser usado con consecuencias devastadores. De este modo decidió escribir un libro en respuesta, mostrando una sociedad donde el uso de la ciencia conduce a un futuro catastrófico. Como resultado existe un contraste entre los dos trabajos que muestran dos puntos de vista radicalmente distintos. Este trabajo se centra en el análisis de los futuros a través de las diferentes descripciones que aparecen en los libros.

Palabras clave: Utopía, Distopía, Ciencia, Futuro, Sociedad, Humano.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	7
2. Men Like Gods.....	10
2.1Background and history	10
2.2The concept of utopia and the world of Utopia	12
2.3Analysis of the Utopic future	14
3. Brave New World	20
3.1Background and history	20
3.2 The concept of Dystopia and the World State.....	21
3.3 Analysis of the Dystopian future	24
4. Conclusions	32
5. Bibliography.....	33

Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century technological development and scientific discoveries in different fields like psychology and medicine were stirring up the world. New ways of social organization were emerging and Psychoanalysis changed the conception of the human with the new understanding of the human psyche. Marx, Freud and Nietzsche heavily influenced the way of thinking of the time with their new theories. Also, Darwin with his theory of evolution and Einstein's theory of relativity had a great impact in the perception of the self and its relation with the universe. All these sudden changes have one thing in common; they were born as a response to the consequences of the First World War. It left the world devastated and made people question all the previous things they believed in. "Enlightenment optimism respecting the progress of reason and science was now displaced by a sense of the incapacity of humanity to restrain its newly created destructive powers." (Claeys, 107) These circumstances provoked a change of mentality in society and Modernism was a response to it. This swift in the mentality is reflected in literature where many new genres were born. These were a lot of changes in a short time and there was tension. Society was worried about the consequences of these changes and had a genuine fear for the future. Under these new circumstances a question needed to be answered: where will these new theories and technologies lead the world? This question was answered by many authors who began writing novels about the future world, and the different outcomes they imagined following the new scientific theories. The perfect means to reflect this were utopic and dystopian stories. Although these genres already existed, in this period these concepts became more defined. As it has been said before, certain tension marked this period where two authors had a fight of ideas. Herbert George Wells wrote *Men Like Gods*, there he describes the wonders of a future where technology helped the human to reach an idyllic society. On the other hand Aldous Huxley wrote *Brave New World* as a response to this novel, with the intention of making fun of it. Huxley's story is a dystopia showing the horrors of an industrialized future.

"Nor did Huxley take any special pains to hide the fact that in *Brave New World* he was, among other things, blasting Wells... In at least one letter dating from the period during

which he was working on the novel, Huxley openly avowed his aim to expose the "horror of the Wellsian Utopia." (Firchow, 260)

This connection makes interesting to analyze and compare the possibilities offered by the two writers. Huxley thought that Wells vision of the future was too naive and decided to write a book in response. What Huxley truly criticizes was not the story of the book; he attacked the naivety of the vision and the optimistic view of a technology still developing. Wells was aware of this and fired back to Huxley.

"Wells himself saw clearly enough that Huxley's dystopia was directed, if not at him personally, then certainly at the worldview that he had propounded for three decades and that was inextricably linked with his name. A writer of Huxley's standing, he protested, "has no right to betray the future as he did in that book," which he variously termed "a disagreeable fantasy" and "that Bible of the impotent genteel." (Beauchamp, 3)

This controversy has been studied before by numerous authors, many of the points and quotations used here are taken from these essays. The novelty of this paper lies in the analysis given to both stories. This study focuses on the description of the qualities that represent each future. Here an analysis is achieved by the study of the description given in these two stories. Furthermore the intention of the writer is also important in utopian and dystopian stories.

But when I addressed myself to the problem of creating a negative Nowhere, a Utopia in reverse, I found the subject so fascinatingly pregnant with so many kinds of literary and psychological possibilities that I quite forgot *Men Like Gods* and addressed myself in all seriousness to the task of writing the book that was later to be known as *Brave New World*." (Huxley 1963, 1)

Although *Brave New World* was conceived as a satire of *Men Like Gods*, Huxley said that the final result is pretty more serious. Huxley's ending pretends to warn people as well as making fun of *Men like Gods*, while Wells' is meant to encourage and educate. Although both writers had a similar education and shared a deep interest in science the

futures described are radically opposite. This could be because H.G. Wells was 30 years older than Huxley, in addition the two novels were written with eight years of difference. Given that these two novels were heavily influenced by the changes in the world, the development of theories in that period of time is also a relevant factor for the contrast of opinions. Science was a great influence for these two authors. And the possibilities that science offered change vastly between authors. Science is highly important; it is the motor that fueled these new possibilities. It has a direct influence on society and vice versa. The new societies in the books are the result of the use given to science for different purposes. In Wells' society science purpose is to understand the law of the universe. As a consequence the human race evolved as a species and created a society where people can develop their skills without distraction. On the other hand in Huxley's future, technology is used to create humans through genetic engineering and also modified to perform a concrete function job. The role of science is totally opposite in both works with radically different outcomes.

Keeping this information in mind this paper focuses on the analysis of two books, *Men Like Gods* and *Brave New World*. This is achieved by studying the positive elements of the utopia, the good future, imagined by Wells where technology is used for the benefit of the people, and on the other hand the negative outcome of the dystopia written by Huxley where science is used to farm and control the species. The purpose of this dissertation is to give a description of two opposite futures which are the consequence of the same developments in the world. Also, since Utopia and dystopia are genres without a concrete definition these two concepts are revised in order to help with the analysis.

The controversy presented by these two books gives material for multiple analysis and criticisms. However both works present nearly opposite futures that are the result of the same scientific development and therefore is a very fertile topic write about.

1. Men Like Gods

2.1. Background and history

Men Like Gods is an interesting novel to analyze given that it follows a classical scheme for Utopias where a group of people discover a perfect world. It was written by Herbert George Wells, English writer and journalist born on 21 September 1866. There are some important events that influenced his work and the intentionality behind them. Curiously enough, he studied zoology under Thomas Henry Huxley which influenced his thought and gave him a vast knowledge on the Theory of Evolution. "He had risen from a draper's shop to the company of Thomas Huxley through his capacity for assimilating, teaching and popularizing biology" (Kazin, 1). He was always an excellent student in his academic years interested in science and the human history and biology; thus he used everything he had learned to write his books. At some point, he started to focus in socialist politics and became interested in studying journalism. All these circumstances made him write to educate people.

"Imitating the biologists' maxim that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny, Wells assumed that the life of the individual followed a process of growth and maturity similar to that of the race. If a man could examine his own life and, by will and discipline, shape its course, then mankind could do something similar. The main purpose of Wells' career was to tell men this simple truth and to persuade them to act on it." (Reed, 53)

Wells constructed the idea of this utopian society upon the hope that technology in the service of knowledge could help in the evolution of the human species. It is also relevant that this story takes place not just in a future but in another dimension. It can be assumed that the Theory of Relativity had an impact on him. A novel idea at Wells' time was that of different alternative dimensions therefore this topic was not used before. Behind its didactical nature it presents a harsh criticism of society, where the reader can recognize several known figures of the first half of the twentieth century like Winston Churchill.

The story of *Men like Gods* starts in England in 1921. It follows a common scheme for utopias where a group of people arrive to an advanced future. Eventually, the group comes back to their time with new knowledge and motivations. The story follows Mr

Barnstaple who, tired of his common life goes on a journey. Accidentally he arrives with other Earthlings to a place they called Utopia. Once they make contact with the Utopians, they learn about this society which has eliminated the problems of contemporary society. They also learn that they have arrived at this other dimension due to an experiment. In this society, people dedicate their lives passionately to science and progress. The visitors stay in Utopia more or less peacefully learning about the history of the place until an epidemic starts. After that they are isolated in a castle in order to protect the Utopian people from earthling diseases. There they are joined by another group of Earthlings. While they are in quarantine, the outsiders commanded by Rupert Catskill try to conquer Utopia. At this point of the story the Earthlings reveal their greed and egotism. In the end they are stopped, and sent back to Earth. Mr Barnstaple comes back decided to make the difference in his life and become more like the Utopians.

Through the novel H.G. Wells makes different comparisons of both societies to show the reader a world of possibilities. These comparisons are easy to notice since Utopia seems to be a world just like ours but three thousand years in the future. Our current time is compared with the “Last Age of Confusion” in the Utopian dimension. Although a utopia is described in this book through the journey of the protagonists, the novel has a profound criticism about the society of Wells time. Furthermore, as elaborated on the following section of this essay, the term utopia is relative and it heavily depends on the point of view. The society described in this story is certainly a paradise compared to that of the beginnings of the twentieth century. However it also has its problems and space for further improvement. Thus, the society on *Men Like Gods* is a utopia in comparison with society at Wells time.

2.2 The concept of utopia and the world of Utopia

The word utopia was coined by Thomas More in 1516. However, the concept was not new as previous works dealt with the idea of a perfect world or society like Plato's *Republic* or St Augustine's *The City of God*. "It is thus certain that although he invented the word utopia, More did not invent utopianism, which has at its core the desire for a better life." (Riviera 6) The main difference in More's concept of utopia was the inability for the human to reach that place. "Apart from this aspiration to better life, More's concept of utopia therefore differs from all the precious crystallizations of the utopian desire... as they lack the tension between the affirmation of a possibility and the negation of its fulfillment." (Vieira, 6) To define utopia is not easy. Utopia definition is a troublesome one; it has many different meanings that change through history, although they are correlated. The word utopia can be defined as:

"(1) The identification of that society with the idea of 'good place'... (2) the literary form into which the utopian imagination has been crystallized... (3) the function of utopia (i.e., the impact that it causes on its reader, urging him to take action...(4) the desire for a better life, caused by a feeling of discontentment towards the society one lives in." (Vieira, 6)

Following the last definition, suggest that the utopia is plausible and fact generates in the reader the desire to work to improve the society where they live. This definition coincides with the stories of the twentieth century and it has a more realistic perspective. Taking this into account utopia does not describe a perfect place but a much better and desirable world. "Although the idea of utopia should not be confused with the idea of perfection." (Vieira, 7) This essay focuses on the second definition with utopia as a literary genre, it is important not to forget that all definitions however are related. As a literary genre utopias since its beginnings follow a common pattern most of the times:

"it normally pictures the journey of a man or woman to an unknown place; once there, the utopian traveller is usually offered a guided tour of the society, and

given an explanation of its social, political, economic and religious organization; this journey typically implies the return of the utopian traveller to his or her own country, in order to be able to take back the message that here are alternative and better ways of organizing society.” (Vieira, 7)

In the same description it is found another important characteristic that defines the term utopia in literature. “Another characteristic is that it is human-centered, not relying on chance or on the intervention of external, divine forces in order to impose order on society” (Vieira, 7) Although some authors and critics coincide in some of the characteristics of utopia, the term has always been difficult to define properly and became even more difficult with science fiction as a new genre. By the time of H.G Wells, scientific development and new scientific theories brought a new world of possibilities. Now this tension disappeared since this new knowledge made utopia a real possibility in the future. This fact encouraged many authors to write about utopias accomplished by the means of technology and medicine among others. At the same time, utopias were used to criticize the current society and its problems as H.G. Wells does in *Men like Gods*. Therefore utopias as a literary genre can be used as a didactical tool like Wells did.

“Utopia is thus to be seen essentially as a strategy. By imagining another reality, in a virtual present or in a hypothetical future, utopia is set as a strategy for the questioning of reality and of the present. Taking mainly the shape of a process, refusing the label of an ‘impossible dream’, utopia is a programme for a change and for a gradual betterment of the present; in that sense, it operates at different levels, as a means towards political, economic, social, moral and pedagogical reorientation. At last, utopia has become a strategy of creativity, clearing the way for the only path that man can possibly follow: the path of creation. By incorporating into its logic the dynamic of dreams and using creativity as its very driving force, utopia reveals itself as the (only possible?) sustainable scheme for overcoming the contemporary crisis.” (Vieira, 23)

The world called Utopia by the earthlings is a proper Utopia according the given definition since it follows every point of it. Their inhabitants have physically evolved thanks to their advanced knowledge and development of eugenics and don't need superior

beings to guide them. Apart from these, many other aspects of *Men Like Gods* Utopia are described in the following section.

2.3. Analysis of the Utopic future.

Since a utopia focuses on an improved society, the organization of this Idyllic society is the first aspect to analyze. Ironically, the society in *Men Like Gods* has no concrete organization or government. “No new system of laws and customs, no new method of economic co-operation based on the idea of universal service to the common good, had sprung abruptly into being complete and finished.”(Wells, 76) The current organization of Utopia has developed during a long time and it was not just the result of a revolution or a forced implementation of the new order. “A time came when Utopia perceived that it was day and that a new order of things had replaced the old...” (Wells, 78) This change happened unconsciously in a process of trial and error with no concrete plans in mind but an impulse: “brought into unconscious co-operation by a common impulse to service and a common lucidity and veracity of mind.”(Wells, 76) Thus, this society is driven not by a government but by a goal which all the citizens work for. The political class and governments have disappeared from Utopia; the last politician was treated like a case of mental illness: "As light grew and intelligence spread they became more and more evidently unnecessary... The last politician to be elected to a legislative assembly died in Utopia about a thousand years ago. He was an eccentric and garrulous old gentleman; ... Finally he was dealt with as a mental case." (Wells, 284) As said by the utopians and therefore reflecting Wells thoughts politicians were needed just until every individual learned to behave. Once the population was well educated and abandoned all the ideas of egoism and private property, there was no need for a class to guide the rest. Given that Utopian society does not have a political class to rule, they rule themselves in a democratic way: “No, the Utopians declared, there was no such concentration of authority in their world. In the past there had been, but it had long since diffused back into the general body of the community. Decisions in regard to any particular matter were made by the people who knew most about that matter.”(Wells, 62) Without a political class, there are no longer

social classes in utopia, although the way they organize the world is similar to socialism since everything seems to be democratically organized.

Obviously there must be something more in this society to make things work and not lead the world to chaos. The key point to make possible to live without laws or restrictions is the education. If a person is properly educated there is no need to regulate its behavior. This person would be smart enough to choose the best for the community. “Kindness and civility become ingrained habits, for all about it are kind and civil.” (Wells, 79) Every person in Utopia is educated under the same principles. Thanks to this they are able to choose a work where they can exceed and at the same time enjoy the activity while being useful to the world. “Its combativeness is set to fight disorder, its inherent pride and ambition are directed towards an honourable share in the common achievement. It goes to the work that attracts it and chooses what it will do.” (Wells, 79) The social organization works since following this model every citizen is happy with their function in the community and is encouraged to make the best. Furthermore these principles are further explained in what it is called The Five Principles of Liberty:

“The first was the Principle of Privacy. This is that all individual personal facts are private between the citizen and the public organization to which he entrusts them, and can be used only for his convenience and with his sanction... And the second principle is the Principle of Free Movement. A citizen, subject to the due discharge of his public obligations, may go without permission or explanation to any part of the Utopian planet. All the means of transport are freely at his service. Every Utopian may change his surroundings, his climate and his social atmosphere as he will. The third principle is the Principle of Unlimited Knowledge. All that is known in Utopia, except individual personal facts about living people, is on record and as easily available as a perfected series of indices, libraries, museums and inquiry offices can make it. Whatever the Utopian desires to know he may know with the utmost clearness, exactness and facility so far as his powers of knowing and his industry go. Nothing is kept from him and nothing is misrepresented to him... the fourth Principle of Liberty, which was that Lying is the Blackest Crime... For the Fifth Principle of Liberty in Utopia was Free Discussion and Criticism.” (Wells, 272)

The society in *Men Like Gods* is virtually an anarchy that works because every citizen is well educated to behave properly, living a life in the pursue of new discoveries for the benefit of the community. Closely related to social order, education and other aspect of this society is the economy. The economic model that runs in Utopia like the social organization came after a gradual, long and unintentional process. “Utopia floundered its way to economic lucidity through long centuries...” (Wells, 278) After this long evolution the purpose of economy was to provide everyone with everything they need in their daily lives and their work. ”People ceased to draw coin for their work; the various departments of service, and of economic, educational and scientific activity would credit the individual with his earnings in the public bank an debit him with his customary charges for all the normal services of life.” (Wells, 280) Everyone is given the same amount of money with some exceptions always dedicated to scientific purposes and not for making benefits. "Energetic and creative people are often given big grants if they seem to need the help of others or a command of natural resources....” (Wells, 281) However they do not have private propriety, the only property the “have” and purchase are tools and a space to research:

“We have been through that stage. We found at last that private property in all but very personal things was an intolerable nuisance to mankind. We got rid of it. An artist or a scientific man has complete control of all the material he needs, we all own our tools and appliances and have rooms and places of our own, but there is no property for trade or speculation.” (Wells, 64).

One of the more fascinating aspects of the futures in literature is the futurist technology that presents. There are two kind of technologies described in this Utopia, the first one serves to make easier the everyday life of people. There is little mention of the machines that people use in their daily lives apart from the means of transportation. Many airplanes are mentioned in the novel. “They had Aeroplanes in this world noiseless and swift in their flight as swallows.” (Wells, 34) And they even invented a strange machine used for earthly transportation “A man had come up along the road on a machine like a small two–wheeled two–seater with its wheels in series, bicycle fashion; lighter and neater it was than any earthly automobile and mysteriously able to stand up on its two wheels

while standing still.” (Wells, 34). The second kind of technology is the one used to help in the development of science and the understanding of the universe. In this category we find the machine that dragged the Earthlings to Utopia. The protagonists are forced into another universe by an experiment carried by some Utopian scientists. The characters cannot explain where they are. “Maybe we are in some other dimension of space than those we wot of. But my poor head whirls at the thought of these dimensions.” (Wells, 28) A scientist called Serpentine offers an explanation to the travellers. In fact, they are in the future of another universe, yet one very similar to ours:

“Serpentine proceeded to explain that just as it would be possible for any number of practically two-dimensional universes to lie side by side, like sheets of paper, in three dimensional space... it is possible for an enumerable quantity of practically three dimensional universes to lie, as it were, side by side and to undergo a roughly parallel movement through time.” (Wells, 50)

To make this possible, it is supposed that the Utopians had the technology needed to achieve the travel between dimensions. Although there is no mention of the machine that makes dimension travel possible, there is an explanation of the theory that the Utopian scientists were testing in the experiment that took the Earthlings to Utopia.

“For the daring attempts of those two great geniuses, Arden and Greenlake, to use the (inaudible) thrust of the atom to rotate a portion of the Utopian material universe in that dimension, the F dimension, into which it had long been known to extend for perhaps the length of a man's arm, to rotate this fragment of Utopian matter, much as a gate is swung on its hinges, had manifestly been altogether successful. The gate had swung back again.” (Wells, 50)

All these ideas of different dimensions are based upon the new theory presented by Einstein, The Theory of Relativity. This theory proposes that alternative universes are a real possibility, and Wells introduced this idea in Literature to locate the world of Utopia.

An important part of the utopias is the people who live in it. Utopian people by definition do not rely on superior beings. Wells describes the Utopians as an evolution of the humanity, following the possibilities that he saw in Darwin’s Theory of Evolution. They embody the evolution of humanity, the possibility of a better future with the help of

science; Utopians devote their lives to progress, this is stated in *Men Like Gods* where they are trying to reach the space and other dimensions to expand their knowledge. About their physiology, Utopians are physical and mentally superior with longer lifespans. They are taller, with perfect features and they communicate through their minds. Nevertheless, they are still vulnerable to diseases although they had the technology and knowledge to find a cure. It is not by chance that these Utopians are so superior; science is connected with this perfection. Utopian people have evolved studying and following the concept of eugenic evolution, they knew how to select the correct pairs of humans to procreate to accelerate the process of evolution.

“The Utopians told of eugenic beginnings, of a new and surer decision in the choice of parents, of an increasing certainty in the science of heredity; and as Mr. Barnstaple contrasted the firm clear beauty of face and limb that every Utopian displayed... these Utopians were passing beyond man towards a nobler humanity. They were becoming different in kind.”(Wells, 94)

The evolution of the Utopian is not only physical, they have also changed mentally. First of all, they communicate through their minds, secondly it seems that they are extremely rational and have little or no feelings for their kin. “It was still more astonishing that this other pair who called themselves the brothers of the dead man and woman should betray so little grief or dismay at the tragedy... They were evidently much more puzzled and interested than either horrified or distressed.” (Wells, 34) The attention of the Utopians is centered in the experiment more than in mourning their friends; they behave in a different way than the earthlings who are easily influenced by feelings. Dealing with the way utopians communicate, the character of Urthred explains this matter to the earthlings:

"We think directly to each other. We determine to convey the thought and it is conveyed at once provided the distance is not too great. We use sounds in this world now only for poetry and pleasure and in moments of emotion or to shout at a distance, or with animals, not for the transmission of ideas from human mind to kindred human mind anymore.” (Wells, 59)

The improvement of the Utopians is also reflected in their surroundings. They have taken control of the environment; instead of building cities and big concentrations of populations they live separated integrating their buildings with the nature.

“There were few houses and no towns or villages at all. The houses varied very greatly in size, from little isolated buildings which Mr. Barnstaple thought might be elegant summer-houses or little temples, to clusters of roofs and turrets which reminded him of country chateaux or suggested extensive farming or dairying establishments.” (Wells, 39)

This world of Utopia means a great improvement compared to Wells society. In many ways people have improved their lives and have fixed the problems of the previous ages. With his book, Wells' intention was to encourage people to cooperate and research by showing them the possibilities that scientific development and team work brought. Just like Mr. Barnstaple who returned from Utopia decided to make a better world, the citizens of Wells time by reading the book must feel this same desire to improve life.

3 Brave New World

3.1 Background and history

Brave New World is a dystopia written under special circumstances in 1931 by Aldous Huxley. Huxley came from an educated English family. He has a vast knowledge at his disposal since he was a child. Because of this, he was well aware of the scientific revolution of this time. Furthermore, he was the grandson of Thomas Huxley which granted him first hand education about the Theory of the Evolution. *Brave New World* was conceived as a response to *Men Like Gods*. Huxley said in an article written in 1963:

“To utterances of this kind I have, from earliest childhood, been acutely allergic, and the reading of *Men Like Gods* evoked in me an almost pathological reaction in the direction of cynical anti-idealism. So much so that, before I finished the book, I had resolved to write a derisive parody of this most optimistic of Wells's Utopias.” (Huxley 1963, 1)

The plot story was not the problem for Huxley, the handling of technology and its finality were the problem. “What Huxley questioned in Wells future worlds was not the good intentions, but the bad conclusions. Was it really possible for all men to be equal” (Firchov, 5) Human nature is not easily tamed to be equal and there he saw the main problem of Wells utopia. Wells grounded his utopia trusting that human morality will flourish at due time after a long process of evolution.

“Huxley's chief objections, then, to Wells are that he is unrealistic, that his estimate of human nature is completely out of whack, and that his prophecies about the future are therefore dangerously misleading. Not that Wells alone is to be held responsible; he is merely the most visible exponent of a whole complex of attitudes, linking science with socialism and democracy.” (Firchov, 6)

Huxley was aware of the dangers of the new technology when given an incorrect use. This book makes a double criticism; the first one is directed to Wells Book and point of view as mentioned before. Huxley even caricaturizes Wells in one of his characters. “Dr. Wells advised me to have a Pregnancy Substitute.” (Huxley, 28) The other is centered in society and the current government system at Huxley’s Time.

Brave New World starts with a description of the biological engineering process and how every citizen in this state is produced to fit in one of the five existing castes. Then the plot sifts three different characters having several conversations that take place at the same time. In this way, the personalities of the characters and the society of the World State are explained to the reader. These conversations describe the history of this world and the characters thoughts and motivations. The story then focuses on Bernard Marx, one of these characters, who goes on vacation to a Savage Reserve. There, he meets a Savage called John and after a series of events Marx returns to the World State accompanied by the savage. From then on, the story changes towards John and his experiences in the new city. John moral principles being a savage are incompatible with the rules of this new society; this makes John to suffer an internal struggle between his desires and his faith. He was not modified to live under the rules of a society which is created for manufactured and conditioned people. John's struggle worsens due to his incompatibility to be happy in such society. At the end of the story he has fled from the city into the countryside to be alone. However a multitude of people arrives to his new residence, there he loses his mind and succumbs to the World State sensual customs. At the following day John after remembering this event commits suicide.

This book is considered by many one of the defining books for the dystopian genre, thus the scheme from the book has several essential characteristics for a dystopia "... the key texts that defines the genre, initially by H.G. Wells, but more especially Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, as well as some lesser texts." (Claeys, 109)

3.2 The concept of Dystopia and the World State

As it has been said before, Modernism was a time of confusion and tension in comparison with the optimism of the Victorian age. Above all it was a time of change where new genres appeared to criticize and describe the new society, human behavior and scientific development. One of these genres is the dystopia where the writer describes a frightening future. The dystopia concept was coined in the twentieth century according to

Gregory Claeys: “The term ‘dystopia’ enters common currency only in the twentieth century, though it appears intermittently beforehand.” (Claeys, 107).

However before Modernism the precursor texts of the dystopian spirit traces back to the optimism of Enlightenment. Some earlier texts make fun of the scientific optimism that characterized this period. The third book of *Gulliver Travels* Swift parodies the over-enthusiastic expectations that people held over scientific discoveries. Very much like Huxley does in *Brave New World*. “The flowering of the dystopian genre was preceded by a variety of satirical tropes. Francis Bacon’s scientific ambitions were brought down several notches in Swift’s famous parody in book three of *Gulliver’s travels* (1726).” (Claeys, 107) Back to the twentieth century, the horrors of the First World War supposed a great shift for the world and it flooded the mentality of the people with pessimism and fear. It was a drastic change from the previous mindset. Dystopia appears in contraposition to Utopia, to describe this darker reality. “We emerge from the hopeful, dream-like state of Victorian optimism to pass through what H.G. Wells called the age of confusion into a nightmarish twentieth century, soon powerfully symbolized by the grotesque slaughter of the First World War.” (Claeys, 107)

The term dystopia does not have a completely fixed definition. As it is a concept that was born in contraposition to that of utopia, the meaning of dystopia is related to the later. Gregory Claeys give a first rough possible definition:

“Dystopia is often used interchangeably with ‘anti-utopia’ or ‘negative utopia’, by contrast to utopia (good), to describe a fictional portrayal of a society in which evil, or negative social and political developments, have the upper hand, or as a satire of utopian aspirations.” (Claeys, 107)

It is even more complicated to define considering the ambiguity of the reality that the dystopia and utopia describes. In other words, these concepts depend entirely on the point of view: what is good for someone could be bad for another.

“It is suggested that this ‘turn’ was inherently ambiguous from the start; that is to say, that its two major features, the socialist engineering of human behaviour via the reconstitution of society; and the eugenic engineering of human behaviour via biological manipulation, were viewed widely as both positive and negative developments” (Claeys, 109)

To have a better understanding of the concept, there are certain texts like *Brave New World* or *Nineteen Eighty-Four* which are considered as models for dystopia. These books have some characteristics in common that are useful for developing a better definition of this term.

“Their common theme is the quasi-omnipotence of a monolithic, totalitarian state demanding and normally exacting complete obedience from its citizens, challenged occasionally but usually ineffectually by vestigial individualism or systemic flaws, and relying upon scientific and technological advances to ensure social control” (Claeys, 109)

To conclude dystopia term as literary genre can be defined in a broad sense as: “portraying feasible negative visions of social and political development, cast principally in fictional form. By feasible we imply that no extraordinary or utterly unrealistic features dominate the narrative”

The World State in *Brave New World* is a dystopia imagined by Huxley in contrast to the world of Utopia. Seeing that it is considered as one of the key model for this genre, there is no doubt about this book being a dystopia and many of these characteristics are described in the next section of this article. In addition it contains several defining elements of this genre. The World State is described as: “one in which institutionalized eugenic engineering underpins a rigidly stratified class society... based upon breeding both intelligent rulership and complacent subservience, and governed by a privileged groups of controllers.” (Claeys,115) Following the definition given in the previous page, the World State is a negative vision of both social and political developments. This state is based on the idea of Fordism, it embodies the failure of giving the proper use of technology for the

benefit of the human being. “Fordism represents the subordination of humanity to the machine and to the scientific ideals as such.” (Claeys, 115) Thus in the form of the World State Huxley creates a society to criticize and make fun of many realities:

“There are many targets here: utilitarianism, ‘the horrors’ of Wells’ World State, totalitarianism, utopia itself, historical fatalism and, above all thought- and mind-control. Huxley’s chief concern, then, is much more with how servitude becomes attractive than it is with science or technology as such” (Claeys, 116)

3.3 Analysis of the Dystopian future

Government, economy, technology and education are tightly connected in this society, thus by describing one of these aspects is inevitable to make reference and partially describe the others. The government is based upon a capitalist system, everything in society is a good to trade, and even people are seen as “consumables”. For this system to work it is strictly necessary to educate the individuals. Instead of education in this dystopia there is conditioning, by different means like neo-pavlovian conditioning and hypnopædia. Furthermore this cycle is strengthening since babies are manufactured by a process of ectogenesis to belong to one of the different castes of this society. These classes are created to develop a concrete task and being happy with it. To guarantee the stability of the economy people are given drugs and free time activities to make them easier to manipulate and control.

The society in *Brave New World* is a totalitarian government where people have two functions. The first one is manufacturing goods and the second consuming these goods for different purposes. Everything for one purpose, keep people distracted. In this dystopia the society is organized by a global government, the World State. Basically it is a dictatorship where people are controlled by manipulation and not by force in clear opposition to the anarchy in *Men Like Gods*. It has united all the previous governments of the world after a world war. “The Nine Years’ War, the great Economic Collapse. There was a choice between world control and destruction.” (Huxley, 41) Everywhere in this world is controlled by this state with the exception of a few Savage Reservations. “...a savage

reservation is a place which, owing to unfavourable climatic or geological conditions, or poverty of natural resources, has not been worth the expense of civilizing.” (Huxley, 141) Although these places are not controlled by the government properly, they are constantly monitored to prevent savages to revolt against the World State. This State is divided in ten strategic areas, each of one directed by a World Controller which is the responsible to manage the area that he or she is assigned, they are treated by the common folk as famous people. “The Resident Controller for Western Europe! One of the Ten World Controllers.” (Huxley, 28) The model of the World State is fueled by consumerism. The World State acts as a provider of goods and free time activities, while the duty of the citizen is to produce and to consume. If people are occupied manufacturing new goods and buying them, they have no time to worry about other aspects of life. “Government’s an affair of sitting, not hitting. You rule with the brains and the buttocks, never with the fists. For example, there was the conscription of consumption... Every man, woman and child compelled to consume so much a year. In the interests of industry.”(Huxley, 42) The World State is based upon the principle of the industry that Henry Ford developed: mass production, which it is necessary to keep a consumer society running. He is mentioned several times in the story and is worshiped as a God by the citizens. The principles of industrialism are followed as religious commandments by this society. Thus, the World State leaders are comparable to the clergy. In this way religious belief has been replaced by the belief in the government and thus in consumerism. However he is also referred as Freud which reflects the other theory upon this society is constructed, psychology. “Our Ford-or Our Freud, as, for some inscrutable reason, he chose to call himself whenever he spoke of psychological matters.” (Huxley, 33) There are social classes in this society or castes that will be described in the eugenics section, since eugenic processes are used for the purpose of maintaining these differences in classes.

The next characteristic of this society is the use of different psychological methods to control the population in a pacific way. The equilibrium in this world works by a combination of human engineering, conditioning, drug control and distractions. By those means all the population of the world is controlled and worse, they are programmed to be happy and fulfill a role in society. “In the end,” said Mustapha Mond, “the Controllers

realized that force was no good. The slower but infinitely surer methods of ectogenesis, neo-Pavlovian conditioning and hypnopædia.” (Huxley, 43) The purpose of conditioning people is to keep them running the economy.

The World State’s society is deeply rooted on its economy where as in Utopia there were no economy and no private propriety. Utopians got rid of the necessity of owning goods, they only needed a few tools to keep researching or creating. In the end economy was inexistent and money was just a hindrance. On the contrary, the entire World State stability depends on private propriety. Thus people are literally designed to make their work productive for society. The logic of supply and demand is extended in every aspect of daily life. Furthermore, free time for people is designed to make them participate in different activities, like travelling, sports or sexual intercourse which fuel economy. All these activities have something in common: they make people expend money and buy new machines. New Technology is continuously being developed for these activities and people have the necessity to purchase them. Thanks to this endless circle of consumerism, the World State keeps the economy fueled and healthy.

In the World State people are classified according to its genes. From the Alphas to the Epsilons, every human is created genetically with some characteristics that made them ideal for a certain task. People in *Brave New World* are not conceived by their parents. Humans are created, manufactured like they were goods for consumption following eugenic theories. As a consequence every aspect about reproduction is carefully managed in order to improve the efficiency and profit of the process. This is possible thanks to a very sophisticated technology and years of experiments and discoveries in biological engineering. People are created and conditioned in Hatchery and Conditioning Centres. The process of human creation is extensively detailed in the novel. This complex procedure has several stages and involves all kinds of machines to make it possible. This process starts with the selection of the embryos and the gametes. These embryos and gametes need concrete conditions to be well preserved.

“Begin at the beginning. “These,” he waved his hand, “are the incubators.” And opening an insulated door he showed them racks upon racks of numbered test-tubes.

“The week’s supply of ova. Kept,” he explained, “at blood heat; whereas the male gametes,” and here he opened another door, “they have to be kept at thirty- five instead of thirty-seven. Full blood heat sterilizes.” Rams wrapped in theremogene beget no lambs.” (Huxley, 2)

After they are classified and selected, embryos are inseminated. In this early phase embryos could be divided with the so called Boskanovsky Process that multiplies the productivity, something very desirable in a consumer society.

“Bokanovsky’s Process,” repeated the Director, and the students underlined the words in their little notebooks. One egg, one embryo, one adult-normality. But a bokanovskified egg will bud, will proliferate, will divide. From eight to ninety-six buds, and every bud will grow into a perfectly formed embryo.” (Huxley, 3)

They follow numerous phases of conditioning to achieve the wanted results; this conditioning varies upon the desired results. Or in other words, embryos are modified in order to create the needed caste than can be useful for society at the time. The Predestinators project is in charge of controlling the demand of castes. In the World State social class is connected to profession; each caste develops one concrete job. There are five castes, the Alphas, Betas, Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons, in this order of importance. The Alphas are the highest class they have intellectual tasks, in the other hand Epsilons do the field job and difficult and dangerous tasks. In the other hand, *Men Like Gods* Utopians have no social class system. Although they can perform different professions like artist or scientist mainly, they are equal in rights and free to choose the job they can enjoy the most. The following quotation describes the process of conditioning of a Beta child and describes perfectly how the caste system works:

“Alpha children wear grey They work much harder than we do, because they’re so frightfully clever. I’m really awfully glad I’m a Beta, because I don’t work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don’t want

to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able .”(Huxley, 22)

The election of these classes is achieved by changing the levels of oxygen that reaches the egg as described by Huxley:

“The lower the caste... the shorter the oxygen. The first organ affected was the brain. After that the skeleton. At seventy per cent of normal oxygen you got dwarfs. At less than seventy eyeless monsters.” (Huxley, 11)

To further increase this process for the benefit of economy and society scientists propose to accelerate if the growing rate of the individual. If they reach the physical age of majority fast would be highly beneficial to the government.

“Didn't need and didn't get it. But though the Epsilon mind was mature at ten, the Epsilon body was not fit to work till eighteen. Long years of superfluous and wasted immaturity. If the physical development could be speeded up till it was as quick, say, as a cow's, what an enormous saving to the Community!” (Huxley, 11)

The rest of the process consists of different kinds of pre-birth conditioning, each one personalized for a concrete caste in order to make people fit for their job and to make sure the people is happy with its position independent of the class. “That is the secret of happiness and virtue-liking what you've got to do. All conditioning aims at that: making people like their unescapable social destiny.”(Huxley, 12) However conditioning does not stop with the birth of the baby, this leads us to the following section. Education in The World State does not exist on the other hand the entire world of Utopia depends on it. Once a human is born its process of conditioning continues, neo-pavlovian conditioning and hypnopædia are the methods used to modify the behavior of the individuals. Conditioning has a great importance since the stability of the World Government depends on its success. In Neo-pavlovian conditioning children are exposed to something that they must hate or avoid. When they are enjoying this thing, whatever it is, a strong sound is emitted, followed

by an electric discharge to the infants. Repeating several times this process, the children unconsciously rejects this something because they recall the disgusting sensation that provoked on them before.

“The swiftest crawlers were already at their goal. Small hands reached out uncertainly, touched, grasped, unpetaling the transfigured roses, crumpling the illuminated pages of the books. The Director waited until all were happily busy. Then, “Watch carefully,” he said. And, lifting his hand, he gave the signal. The Head Nurse, who was standing by a switchboard at the other end of the room, pressed down a little lever. There was a violent explosion. Shriller and ever shriller, a siren shrieked. Alarm bells maddeningly sounded. The children started, screamed; their faces were distorted with terror... at the approach of the roses, at the mere sight of those gaily-coloured images of pussy and cock-a-doodle-doo and baa-baa black sheep, the infants shrank away in horror, the volume of their howling suddenly increased.” (Huxley, 16)

The other conditioning method is known as hypnopaedia or sleep-teaching. As its name indicates it consisted in the teaching of concepts in the middle of the sleep. This technique is used to teach moral education. “No further attempt was made to teach children the length of the Nile in their sleep. Quite rightly. You can’t learn a science unless you know what it’s all about... Moral education, which ought never, in any circumstances, to be rational.” (Huxley, 21) The last point of this dystopia is the Savage Reservation, the other society of the World State. In this place, people are free to certain extent. They have no rules imposed by the World State and are more connected to nature. However they are uncivilized and cannot leave the restricted area of the reservation. In the end, they are prisoners who are left alone to rule themselves.

The World State is a dystopia where technology at the service of the government has led to a society totally controlled and tamed. In the other hand with the Savage Reservation Huxley shows the dangers of a civilization led by desires and tribal customs. At the end of the novel Bernard Marx is exiled to an island but still lives following the World State rules, meanwhile John saw in suicide the only possible escape from this society. These two hopeless endings reflect Huxley’s intentionality to warn the reader about

the dangers of being too optimistic and naïve, in contrast to the optimistic ending in *Men Like Gods*.

4 Conclusions

The advancements that led to The First World War was the starting point of Modernism. This war is reflected in both novels. The Nine Years War in *Brave New World* and the wars of the Age of Confusion in *Men Like Gods* are the equivalent in the books. War had a great influence in both authors since both live its horrors. War is seen as a point of inflexion in both works. However in *Men Like Gods* humans led to a democratic anarchy while the World State is a dictatorship in disguise. The way a society organices itself was one of the more concerning points for Wells and Huxley, Utopia is an anarchy where people are self-governed, people works for the common good of society in order to have lives fully devoted to research. On the other hand, the World State is a really appealing dictatorship, where people are created to develop a single job and be happy with it, being the ultimate purpose of this society to keep running the economy. In Utopia every individual can perform the task he feels more comfortable with there are no clear professions since every individual is a scientist or artist of some kind. In the dystopia humans are created for designed works and they are assigned with a profession for life. Eugenics appears in both novels, however the results and method of implementation differ greatly. In *Men Like Gods* eugenics has helped to evolve every human as a species and to make healthy every individual. This is achieved by selecting only compatible individuals to procreate. Meanwhile in *Brave New World* humans are literally born by an industrial process. The purpose in this society is to create differenced individuals in order to create social classes for example the superior alphas, evolution is not a goal in this dystopia. In its place the control of the masses is desired. Education is another element of utmost importance for a society. In the utopia there is freedom of knowledge and expression and people live to discover new theories. In direct contrast the education of *Brave New World* has been substituted by the “Hypnopaedic conditioning” and humans are brainwashed. There is no freedom of speech or investigation and the knowledge is censored and substituted by propaganda. Humans are conditioned to manufacture and buy goods. As a result the World State is a society where consumerism is truly important, everyone feel and urge to consume and have the latest technology available. While in Utopia people have few

properties and economy function is to provide people with everything they need to live and research efficiently with no distractions. Science is the ultimate purpose for every citizen of Utopia in *Men Like Gods*. They live in order to make new discoveries that help people to understand the universe and to help them to know their roles in this universe. For *The World State* science has two roles, the first one is to control society and the second one is to keep them distracted. Scientific discoveries are not important, only the ones that helps to create and control the population.

To conclude, in many aspects the dystopia in *Brave New World* is an opposite reality of the utopia in *Men Like Gods*. It is not a coincidence, as the first book is a response and criticism to the second; both books reflect the mentality of their respective writer and therefore this is the reason for this contrast. The main difference between H.G. Wells and Aldous Huxley was their attitude towards humanity. Wells was confident and optimistic and believed that by encouraging people they will improve and work to achieve a common goal. Huxley in contraposition was more pessimistic and cynical about the human nature. For him new developments could be dangerous due to the indulgent and egotistical nature of the human being. Therefore Huxley criticism was directed to the naive attitude of Wells and not to the quality of his writing. It is impressive how the creative mind of the authors created two feasible future societies with meticulous descriptions fueled by their different motivations. Moreover, both were right in many of their assumptions, as the following decades have many developments very similar to the ones that appeared in their books.

5. Bibliography

- Ashby, Stanley Royal. "The Intellectual Position of H.G. Wells." *Texas Review*, vol. 6, no. 1, Oct. 1920, pp. 12–16.
- Beauchamp, Gorman. "All's That Ends Wells: The Anti-Wellsian Satire of Brave New World." *Utopian Studies*, vol. 2, 1989, pp. 12–16.
- Claeys, Gregory. *The Cambridge Companion to Utopian Literature*, edited by Claeys. Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- Firchow, Peter. "Wells and Lawrence in Huxley's "Brave New World." *Journal of Modern Literature*, vol. 5, no. 2, Apr. 1976, pp. 260–78.
- Huxley, Aldous. *Brave New World*. 1932. Vintage, 2007.
- Huxley, Aldous. *Utopias Positive and Negative*. 1963.
- Hyde, William J. "The Socialism of H. G. Wells in the Early Twentieth Century." *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 17, no. 2, Apr. 1956, pp. 217–34.
- Innes, Christopher. "Apocalypses: Shaw, War, and H.G. Wells." *Shaw*, no. 23, 2003, pp. 37–46.
- Kazin, Alfred. "H. G. Wells, America and "The Future." *The American Scholar*, vol. 37, no. 1, 68 1967, pp. 137–44.
- Levenson, Michael. "The modernist novel." *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*, edited by Levenson. Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 70 – 100.
- Priestly, J.B. "H. G. Wells." *The English Journal*, vol. 14, no. 2, Feb. 1925, pp. 89–97.
- Reed, John R. "The Future According to H.G. Wells." *The North American Review*, vol. 264, no. 2, 1979, pp. 53–54.
- Watt, Donald. "The Manuscript Revisions of "Brave New World." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 77, no. 3, July 1978, pp. 367–82.
- Wells, H.G. *Men Like Gods*. 1923. Dover, 2016.