Tribhuvan University

Critique of Scientific Optimism in Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*

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By

Saroj Kumar Mandal

Central Department of English

Tribhuvan University

Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

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Tribhuvan University

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Critique of Scientific Optimism in Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids"*, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Saroj Kumar Mandal, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

_____

Internal Examiner

_____

External Examiner

_____

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

Tribhuvan University

Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Saroj Kumar Mandal has completed his thesis entitled ‘‘Critique of Scientific Optimism in Wyndham's *The Day of a Triffids*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from April 2014 to March, 2016. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voice.

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Supervisor

Date:

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Date: 2016-03-23 Saroj Kumar Mandal

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Abstract

The major thrust of this research is to show how unlawful use of innovative scientific ideas incurs doom and devastation in the lives of human beings. Unlawful and unethical scientific experiment brings catastrophic consequence whereby entire human beings can feel threatened. In Wendham's *Days with the Triffids,* immoderate and reckless technological innovation and scientific experiment give birth to plants named triffids. These plants can walk and throw poisons. Stung by the poison, thousands of people became blind. Triffids multiplies its progenies abundantly posing permanent threat to the safe existence of mankind. Unguided and extreme experimental interest in science puts humanity in hazard. The perspective of postmodernist conception of science and anti-enlightenment is used to probe the issue. An abuse of the scientific thoughts and genetic technology leads to the catastrophic consequences. With the expectation of getting miraculous power, Masen conducts an investigation. Unfortunately he creates a serious trap for whole human beings. Alienated and ostracized from the circle of common people, he falls into the matrix of misery. He ultimately finds himself landed in the state of degradation and untimely disasters.

I. Uses and Abuses of Scientific Innovation in John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*

This study examines critically the impact of scientific advancement and innovation in humanity in John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*. It is widely believed that the constant innovation in science and technology would brighten the prospect of humanity. The violation of the laws of nature that nobody should cross the limit set by nature by exploiting the power of science is portrayed in dark and corrupted practice. The novel deals with the issue of scientific optimism and its underlying factors.

Scientific disciplines like genetic mutation and bio-technology have witnessed fresh innovations and inventions like reproduction of clones, test tubes babies, manipulation of genetic code and others. These new techniques are supposed to bring relief and comfort in man's existence. Human lives should have been enhanced by the latest scientific inventions. Most of the characters in the novel are usually optimistic about the progress which science can bring in human life. But the same scientific ideas and innovative concepts begin to rule over human life. Product of genetic mutation are brought up in such a way that they will have to donate their organs to the wealthy business tycoons. Scientifically manipulated beings are actually no less than human beings. But they are so manipulated and brainwashed that they will agree to donate their organs. If science enables men to cross the limit of the natural, it would be the disgrace and dehumanization of humanity.

Science cannot exist without inventing and innovating new things. If those new ideas and expertise do not stand in favor of the promotion of humanity and

compassion, it would have to face setbacks. When science begins to rule over life, its scope and domain begin to shrink and the tussle arises between science and human beings. The researcher focuses upon the demerits and disadvantageous aspects of scientific disciplines like bio-technology, and genetic engineering. All the scientific areas are not chosen. Only the biotechnological areas like genetic mutation and politics behind the reproduction of clones are chosen. This research moves round why, how and whom genetic code is made. The exploitation of genetic code and the dwindling aspects of scientific optimism are the major areas in which this research is confined.

People who have total belief in the redemptive power of science begin to develop the critical consciousness about science and technology. Those who want to conduct research about the interrelationship between science and humanity can find this research significant. The exclusive significance of this research is that it compels people to think about the ways to avoid impending disaster brought by science. The scientific project of bioengineering and the genetic codes of plants leads to the creations of triffids. Triffids are dangerous plants. They can walk on their roots. Worst of all, they throw venomous poisons. If human beings are stung by the venom of triffids, people lost eyesight and become blind.

The growth of dangerous triffids makes millions of people blind. As millions of people became blind, civilization and culture crumbled gradually. The blind people need guides and assistants. Even those who are alive had to look after the blind. At that time, the beams of meteor turn several people blind. Those who are alive are divided into two camp- one camp sought to invent measures to save mankind from the universal catastrophe posed by the venomous triffids and the other group sought to utilize coercive measures to subdue the remaining people with eye sight. Those who

utilized the punitive measure tried to establish tyrannical rule. The loss of socio-cultural order inflicts pang in people who are alive. The crumpling foundation of civilization and formidable threat of triffids inflicted severe wound in the collective memory of people.

The dreads created by triffids are pervasive. Josella and Mansen's efforts to reclaim humanity with the invention of superior counter-triffids knowledge fails as humanity is sinking. Some selfish and corrupted leaders like Beadley and Wilfred Cooker initiated polygamous practice to reproduce greater number of people. Despite this project of emancipating and reclaiming humanity from the impending doom and catastrophe, human beings continue to languish. The languishing prospect of humanity and the formidable onrush of triffid terror launch onslaught on the culture of that time.

When Bill Masen wakes up in his hospital bed, he has reason to be grateful for the bandages that covered his eyes the night before. He finds a population rendered helpless by the blindness that followed the spectacular display of bright green lights. With their ability to move, the triffids are just botanical curiosities. But now, with humans so vulnerable, they are a potent threat to humanity's survival. It is up to people like Bill to carve out a future and discover a way to destroy the Triffids and reclaim the world for human kind. Bill Masen bandages over his wounded eyes, misses the most spectacular meteorite shower England has ever seen. Removing his bandages the next morning, he finds masses of sightless people wandering the city.

The protagonist is Bill Masen, who has made his living working with triffids. Triffids are tall plants capable of aggressive and seemingly intelligent behavior. They are able to move about by walking on their roots. They appear to communicate with each other, and possess a deadly whip like poisonous sting. Their stings enable them

to kill their victims and feed on their rotting carcasses. Due to his background working with triffids, Masen has developed a theory that they were bioengineered in the Soviet Union. He also pointed out that they are accidentally released into the wild when a plane smuggling their seeds was shot down. Triffids begin sprouting all over the world. Their extracts prove to be superior to existing fish or vegetable oils. The result is worldwide cultivation of triffids.

The narrative begins with Bill Masen in hospital. His eyes are bandaged after having been splashed with droplets of triffid venom in an accident. He awakes the next morning to a silent hospital. After fearfully unbandaging his eyes, he wanders through an anarchic London full of almost entirely blind inhabitants. He witnesses civilization collapsing around him. The narrator witnesses that Masen meets a sighted woman, wealthy novelist Josella Playton. She is being forcibly used as a guide by a violent blind man. She and Masen begin to fall in love and decide to leave London. They are lured by a single light that they see shining in an otherwise darkened city. The narrator is of the opinion that Bill and Josella discover a group of sighted survivors at a London university building. The group is led by a man named Beadley. He plans to establish a colony in the countryside.

European culture and history are the main focus of Wyndham. Apart from historical subject-matter and socio-cultural issues, the novelist has managed to introduce fresh issue of radical scientific innovation and technological break-through. Wendyham's novels dramatize genuine concern for sufferings of mankind. There is no unanimous agreement with the claim that Wyndham is a humanist. He brings into light the optimistic atmosphere generated by scientific quest. He often uses the first person narrator; he has done his best to maintain objectivity of his narratives. It shows the confidence of western Europeans after the Second World War. In this novel, the

novelist has pointed out the alternative solution to the modern malaises like alienation and inner injury. The crisis in consolation is described and the growing skepticism of religious metaphysics is praised. The permanent solution to the growing crisis is also pointed out. The novels are written in the first-person narrative style and the narrator often shows human failings. Wyndham's technique is to allow these characters to reveal their flaws implicitly during the narrative. The author thus creates a sense of pathos by allowing the reader to see the narrator's flaws. This pathos is often derived from the narrator's actions, or, more often, inaction.

Wyndham's novels often end without any sense of resolution. The issues his characters confront are buried in the past and remain unresolved. Thus Wyndham ends many of his novels on a note of melancholic resignation. His characters accept their past. Lynn Nutwell is the leading critic of John Wyndham. He has analyzed the diverse aspects of Wyndham's novels. According to Nutwell, Wyndham's *Day of the Triffids* is fraught with plenty of crucial issues which have direct bearing upon our present day notion of freedom, particularly individual freedom. Nutwell has delivered the following views about this novel, *The Day of the Triffids*:

> Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids* is a futuristic story about cultivating dangerous plant, triffids that are raised for the sole purpose of oppressing normal human beings who come down with incurable diseases such blindness. The dangerous plants triffids are raised without fully being aware of their roles in life. They suspect that they might be different from those of the outside world—the world outside of the schools in which they grow up. (10)

Nutwell advocates for those who are haunted and made insecure by the dangerous inventions of bioengineers. He has simply dismissed the trend to treat clones as

subhuman figures. Such a treatment would incur further problems for the collective well-being of the people. Wyndham's art of character portrayal is directed by his genuine care and concern for the human status of clones. He presents himself as an activist in this direction. According to Wyndham, such an inhuman treatment is not abolished. It can jeopardize the entire creative and innovative potentiality of human beings.

Sorren Hellerung has also criticized Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*. He extends pity to those who are inert and passive. They came to know that they have been living for the sake of somebody else's. The triffids are made to exist to secure and enrich the lives of other. He has penetrated the subconscious level of those helpless human beings. Hence, it can be said that the realization of the sole motive of the creation of poisonous plants has made all those insecure victims fatalistic. They are inert and lethargic. The following citation clarifies Hellerung's view regarding to the pathetic plight of mankind trapped in the chaos created by triffids:

> The novel, essentially, belongs to the science fiction genre although this is hardly the thematically focus of the book. Life revolves around art and usual teenage concerns, creating what is apparently an almost normal upbringing for Bill Mansen and her Stella. The gradually unraveling truth behind the matter is that they at Hailsham are haunted by the post-apocalyptic devastation, brought up to witness the post-apocalyptic disorder. Stella is at the point of telling the story to Mansen, tending to active donors and waiting to become a donor herself. (5)

Last survivors are perfectly happy and blissful. They come to know that they are made to help the lives of those human beings who suffer from incurable diseases.

They begin to realize their tragic destiny. They decline to cultivate the radical sense of revolt against the dehumanization of helpless human beings. They simply and languidly accepted their tragic lot. The realization of inevitable destiny has made them highly susceptible to their own fragile conditions. In a sense, it can be argued that Hellenrung has elucidated and explained a new kind of fatalism. This new kind of fatalism is created by genetic engineering. Has science really overcome fatalism? This query is serious. Even in the age of scientific innovation and discovery fatalistic mindset is afoot.

Cecilie Skaarup makes the following remarks about Wyndham's The *Day of the Triffids*:

> Wyndham deals with the notion of memory on several different levels in the two novels. On an explicit level, both novels contain several remarks that tell about how the narrators feel about the way they remember, or have started forgetting, their past. Implicitly, the novels are structured around the way that memory works. Both novels are essentially stories that are being retold through the eyes of the narrators/protagonists. Therefore their individual ways of rewriting their past is directly reflected in the structure of each novel. (7)

Characters of this novel long for the blissful moment of the past. If they have any courage to think, that is their past. They vulnerably exist for the betterment of other human beings. This dream created alienation in their lives. That is why they go to take refuge in memory. In this sense, it can be called the mode of survival.

John is immensely dissatisfied with the way the novelist has handled it. Harrison's approach of analysis is strictly consequential. He has not dithered about appreciating the unique thematic issue of the writer. Harrison has mentioned his view

regarding to the novel in the following way:

> Wyndham's contribution to the post-apocalyptic struggle for the emergence of humanity turns out to be sleight of hand, eye candy, cover for his pathological need to be subtle. It's about the steady erosion of hope. It's about repressing what you know, which is that in this life people fail one another, grow old and fall to pieces. It's about knowing that while you must keep calm, keeping calm won't change a thing. Beneath Bill Mansen's flattened and lukewarm emotional landscape lays the pure volcanic turmoil, the unexpressed yet perfectly articulated, perfectly molten rage of the orphan. *The Day with the Triffids* makes readers more alive, more determined, more conscious, more dangerous than any of these characters. (17)

Scientific optimism is called into question by Wyndham. Science comes into being with the sole intention of putting an end to all the discomforts and hurdles of life. *The Day of the Triffids* has projected a kind of fantasy that life is really threatened by the tall innovative claim of science. If science clips the wings of individuals, how can it boost the collective aspiration of human beings for betterment and salvation? Hence, it can be concluded that the genetic engineering has nothing to do with the collective ambition of human beings at large.

Jeruen Dery is the prominent critic of Wyndham. He is interested in analyzing the texture and structure of *The Day with the Triffids.* He agrees with the conviction that this novel belongs to the category of science fiction. Dery's view is presented below so as to reinforce the dystopian view:

> In the novel *The Day with the Triffids*, other crucial facts are slowly revealed to the reader. This slow-moving revelation is the crux of the

> novel. But no, the focus of the novel is actually not on this dystopian and dysfunctional fact. Instead, the focus rests on the social dynamic between Mansen, Stella, and Tommy. Early on, Stella is one timid girl, who seems to be more of a follower than a doer. She is content with observing her surroundings instead of doing things. Stella is one feisty girl she befriends, and Tommy is a boy with a temper, but things lead to Bill and Stellabeing close to each other. (32)

The social dynamism is of immense importance to those who are on the way to understanding the core content of this novel. Individual realization has nothing can change the destiny of clones has provoked different kinds of psychological conditions. Slow-revelation has really harmed the major theme which makes sporadic outburst of passions.

The text's power of using all the other available resources is celebrated by Keith. His view is presented below:

> Wyndham's dystopian novel *The Day of the Triffids* is a text which utilizes memoir as a means of presenting a possible future where human rights are decimated, but where human stories remain. The novel is considered as an example of an ongoing science-fictional model where life-writing acts as a window into a world where the individual's experiences guide the reader through the speculative world. (43)

This novel is a window to view and interpret the world of science, chiefly bioengineering. Science has rather intensified the fundamental hurdles of lives. Modern science contributes to human sufferings and agony. Thus Keith's view is really identifiable, no matter how contentious it might be.

Frank Kermode is the powerful critic of modernity. He is highly suspicious of the logic of modernity. Kermode does not give wholehearted support to the logic and claim of modernity. His view on the total literary oeuvre of Ishiguro is disclosed in the following citation:

> All of Kazuo Wyndham's novels are first-person narratives. For the most part the voices of these narrators are quiet, civilized, and rather formal. Indeed this way of speaking seems appropriate to the public conversation, to the talk of a society in which manners are always important, and in which they might sometimes take precedence over candor. The characters do a lot of deferring and apologizing, and even when they aren't expressly said to be bowing gently to one another you can easily imagine they are. (21)

According to Kermode, the characters employed by Wyndham are representative of the typical British characters. Even their tone of conversation is reflective of the British style of conversation. Most of post-apocalyptic people cross the limit of frankness and candor. This is the most important trait in the personality of characters in the post-apocalyptic world. Wyndham attends to socio-cultural realism so as to create the illusion of reality.

Emily Cappo has looked into the very title of this novel. She is determined to demystify the conscious choice of title for this science fiction novel. Her view is expressed in the following excerpt:

> Wyndham mentioned that he was not interested in the possibility of escaping and rebuilding lives. He was after exactly what he wrote, an exploration of a life doomed to disintegrate. That one may only have scraps for a life, and to want more will just break a person apart.

> There's something endearing about the title of this novel. It sounds like the ultimate request of someone who is deeply in love, which when not granted, would render the person incapable of going on. This novel spurred a lot of attention by holding the reputation of being the most recently published book. (15)

This vision is provocative of fear of life. Actually, clones are always supposed to live with the least hope of survival. Life is circumscribed by the limited options given by the subhuman life. What provoked men to categorize lives into human lives and subhuman lives are really difficult to surmise? A kind of lingering anthropomorphic pride is entirely accountable for the inception of negative vision almost verging on despair and fatalism.

Arianna Vailas seeks to establish the triangular relationship amidst dystopia, present and future. His view about the power of *The Day with the Triffids* to set up link amidst these three things is straightforwardly mentioned below:

> Dystopian novels incriminate the present in their distorted representations of an imminent future. Wyndham recounts the story of a clone, Bill Mansen, reflecting upon his prescribed life within a confined community. Her experiences take place in a world that is uncannily akin to our own, the only major difference being that human cloning is at the forefront of modern medicine, an issue over which scientists and ethicists of this world are still debating. (23)

Ethics is enhancing the lives of those who are affected by incurable diseases like cancer and other diseases. This novel has raised several questions like whether is it ethically admissible to treat triffids as subhuman beings or not. It is anti-humanistic to compel triffids to smother human beings. The notion of humanism comes to be

intermingled. Hence, the voice raised by Wyndham is undoubtedly uplifting and educational.

Tiffany Taso maintains that many readers have failed to explore their similarities in a more in-depth manner. He propounds his view in the following way:

> A detailed and sustained comparison of the two novels reveals further connections between Wyndham's novel and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, yielding surprising insight into the deeply theological nature of *The Day of the Triffids* and what it has to say about religious life and biotechnological creation. As it turns out, many critics may be sorely mistaken about the very features of religion and biotechnology that we tend to perceive as merits: namely, religion's ability to provide its adherents with a sense of purpose, and the benevolent purposes for which biotechnological research is undertaken. (26)

According to Taso, the pros and cons of bioengineering is explored in Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids.* The definition recognizes two types of trauma- physical wounds that an emergency room might treat after an accident. Emotional wounds may afflict a person long after to the single shock that comes with an assault. Some people suffer trauma is not confined to the suffer trauma from continuing attacks on their emotional stability. Physical and emotional wounds may be products of the same experience.

Although all these critics have raised different issues in this novel, the issue of scientific optimism is totally absent in their reviews and consistent commentaries. Science has robbed man of his manhood. Science is expected to enrich human comfort and minimize labor. But science has denuded the humanity of human beings. It has denuded the manhood of man. The role of ethics should be intensified to

minimize the dread resulting from the abuse of man. The issue of scientific optimism and implicit view on the systematic denudation of manhood is increasingly new and untested issue. The use of different perspectives like postmodern conception on technological innovation and anti-enlightenment stand on science yield fruitful findings. Hence, it is relevant and sensible to argue that the issue of eroding belief in the creative power of science is the fresh and distinctly original issue over which research can be conducted.

Lyotard says that science and technology has become the tool of exploitation and deception in the emerging world of post-modernity. Because the prospect of human beings has decreased, the perspective of ethical humanism will be used to conduct the research. Emmanuel Levinas' theory of the ethics of compassion can be used. Brief survey of the innovations in the scientific disciplines becomes necessary to build up the theoretical concepts. In addition, suitable and pertinent suggestions will be collected from other professors, researchers and teachers. Different sorts of proper websites and external links will be consulted. Extensive and intensive reading and occasional library visit will play key role in bringing this research to the logical end.

Immanuel Levinas says that any creative venture and achievement of mankind be it scientific and spiritual, "should be used to boost the prospect of humanity in distress. If ethics of liberating mankind from the hardship of life is applied while using innovative achievement of human beings, it would further ensure the fate ad future of mankind" (64). This view of Levinas sets the stage for the constant progress in the lives of mankind driven by the idea of higher level of progress. But the present circumstance of life has grossly violated this ethics and spirit of Levinas. In the contemporary era, the innovative breakthrough in the field of scientific quest has

been taking place. As a result, there is a chance for the growth in each and every sphere of life. But there is equally a sense of dread and degradation as well. Recently, many postmodern critics of science and technology argue that if the use of scientific knowledge is not dictated by humanistic principle and ethics, mankind would have to face unanticipated consequences.

Even in his famous work, *The Gay Science*, Friedrich Nietzsche laments that "the onrush of science and technology has rendered human life robotic and mechanical. Human beings have gradually lost basic vitality and the creative sense of dynamism"(15). Due to the encroachment of science into most of substantial sectors of human life, people have been losing their dynamic nature. Nietzsche is the pioneering figure in the school of thought that cautions mankind of the hazard that can arise from the haphazard use of science and technology.

The normal moderate culture dwindled down gradually and it gave way to dependence on technology. It is obviously true that technology, and technological innovation exists to "upgrade, facilitate and invigorate human beings. Technology seeks to minimize human efforts and maximize the outcome of their efforts. But in the postmodern era, all such naïve illusions and expectations fell flat"(David Crooker 72). Contrary to the collective expectations and assumptions of human beings, techno-culture, let's say machine culture, colonized human bodies. In this context, it can be affirmed that fanatical disciples of digital innovation also came under the colonizing grip of machine and technological device. Beset with the impact of machine culture and technological dependence, human beings had only one option to assert their individuality. The intensity of experience is instrumental in compelling human beings to break all the existing codes and conventions-sporadically.

In the essay, *Signs of the Times*, Thomas Carlyle says that men are grown

mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand. They have lost faith in individual endeavor, and in natural force, of any kind. Critiquing the pervading forces of technology, scientific innovation and their parallel effect in human life, Carlyle makes the following remarks:

> Consider, for example, the state of science generally, in Europe, at this period. It is admitted, on all sides, that the metaphysical and moral science are falling into decay, while the physical are engrossing, every day, more respect and attention. In most of the European nations there is now no such things as a science of mind; only more or less advancement in the general science or the special sciences, of matter. The philosophy of mind fell suddenly into decay, languished and finally died out. (139)

Carlyle goes on to say that excellence in the use of innovative knowledge depends less on natural genius than on acquired expertness in wielding its machinery. The outward orientation towards knowledge must be guided by the sense of ethical concern and humanistic sense. Only in the right coordination of ethics and the spirit of science, the last hope for the redemption of mankind can be seen.

The proposed thesis will follow the extensive planning. The first chapter of this research deals with the introduction of the topic. Topic is discussed and the essential tool will get brief coverage. Different views of the critics will be examined and the proposed topic will be contrasted. The design of the proposed thesis gets mention in the first part of the thesis. In the second chapter, the researcher analyzes the text by using Lyotard's view the advancement of science and technology. In the last chapter, the researcher projects the conclusive finding of the research.

II. Critique of Scientific Optimism in Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*

This research examines how scientific optimism is called into question in John Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*. The random application of innovative knowledge of genetic engineering and biotechnology harm human beings adversely. The haphazard and reckless utilization of innovative knowledge of biotechnology has created unexpected situations in which human beings have suffered. Science and technology exist to uplift the prospect of humanity. Innovation and experiment in different branches of science aim at bring comfort and happiness in human life. Rather such an abuse of innovation in science hinders the growth of harmony and happiness in society.

The novel deals with what happens if innovative and experimental knowledge is used wrongfully for the gratification of the ambitions and impulses of a handful of selfish people. The utilization of scientific and innovative knowledge needs genuine purpose. But the major character of the novel makes a false use of science. The latest innovation in genetic engineering has created the possibility of genetic modification. Actually the modification of genetic structure is practiced in animals and foods so that cereal crops and meat can be produced abundantly. Only to meet the growing demands for food, such a practice of genetic modification is used.

To overcome the food scarcity, in animals and plants, the technology of genetic modification and manipulation is used. Triffids are seven feet tall. They can walk on their root. So long as they began to walk on their roots, they continued to remain sources of curiosity that needs to be mastered by human beings. The

moment they began to throw venomous poison, causing millions of people blind, human beings began to take triffids as the insurmountable threat to humanity. Stung by the venomous poisons of triffids, millions of people have to suffer from sightlessness, insecurity and terror. Moreover, triffids grow virulently. Actually, triffids happened to be created out of soviet scientists' haphazard plan to bioengineered peculiar kind of plant which possesses intelligence. But the consequence turns out to be contrary to the expectation of people. Rather, human beings lost sight. They suffered from blindness.

Countless number of people is threatened by the pervading terror posed by the dangerously growing triffids. One after the other, people lost their lives. The rest of the people had to think about saving humanity from the pervasive terror posed by triffids. In addition, some corrupt and tyrannical rulers tried to establish colonies so that trapped human beings can be relocated. Threat against humanity had to be tackled at any cost. Different kinds of ambitious rulers and power mongers came into power to get their dream and lust for power fulfilled.

As civilization found itself in disorder, all the people of Britain feel traumatized. They are traumatized by the blindness created by triffids. The shock felt by the victims of triffids and the threat posed by the poisonous plant are experienced equally and unanimously by all the inhabitants of London. The trend to seek alternative settlement free from the attack of triffids is a shocking disaster. This shock reflects the culture of post-apocalyptic nightmare. Rather than the danger inherent in triffids, the danger of triffids created by and highlighted by the victims posed the real threat. After a huge number of people lost eye sights, the remaining number of people tended to exploit the eyeless victims. The callous and selfish people sought to establish their political dominion. In the novel, a blind man

is forcing Josella to be his guide so that he will succeed in establishing a separate colony. The following lines suggest how the victims of sufferings are forced to live in a state of inhumanity:

> Josella is trying to seek an escape route from the compulsion created by the man who himself is blind. The blind man is audacious and committed to the reality. However sightless he might be he is not going to lose his heart. By getting the guidelines of his guide also, he is bent upon saving human beings from the terror inflicted by poisonous triffids. Josella, do not forget that you are the only living hope I have found in London ever since I fall prey to the venom of triffids. Venom is nothing. Triffids are nothing just the bad outcome of haphazard human efforts. (67)

Josella is representative of conflict and chaos created by triffids. She lost all of her family members. None of her neighbors and relatives is alive. She is living hopelessly in the group of people whose eye-sights are badly damaged by the venoms of triffids. The society in which she used to live is now in the state of virtual disintegration. The striking norms and values she had assimilated are crumbling one after the other. Being a woman of eye-sight also she is bound to depend upon the direction of other blind people. The disintegration of custom, culture, family and social values is traumatizing her. The trauma felt by her is the trauma experienced by those who are facing similar kind of torture and terror.

This research is conducted from the viewpoint of anti-enlightenment philosophy. Insights of Nietzsche, Levinas and the postmodern critique of science and technology are used. The anti-science view of Lyotard and other postmodern critics of undue innovation in science and technology serve the methodological basis

of this research. There are plenty of postmodern concepts and insights which exemplify and justify that the doctrine of the undue innovation of science and technology bring harmful effect in human beings. Science liberates human beings from the discomforts and hardships.

The postmodern conception of science has facilitated the wider and broader angle of observing the thoughts and activities of people. Nietzsche, in *The Gay Science*, maintains that the undue reliance on science and technology makes human beings mechanical. He says "uninterrupted dependence and undue exploitation of scientific knowledge renders mankind as cog in machine. Human beings lose their dynamic nature. The fusion of the dynamic and mechanical nature is key to liberation"(65). The nobility of purpose has to be the motivating force behind the rapid use of the objective knowledge of science and technology.

With this sort of theoretical view, the researcher proceeds ahead in the analysis of the text by enumerating more textual clues and evidences.

Triffids appear mysteriously one day and quickly became a garden favorite. They are tied to a stake and docked, of course. Masen worked on a triffid farm. This farm has built up immunity to their stings. This farm has merely landed him in hospital for a week. Triffids are soon forgotten. Bill realizes that everyone else in the hospitalis blind. Bill Mansen's redemptive effort to survive by saving the traumatized victim is noticeable in the following lines:

> Removing his bandages and leaving the premises, he wanders about London, watching as it begins to devolve into your typical looting-filled post-apocalyptic chaos. He rescues a young lady named Josella, who was fortunately in bed with a wicked hangover during the meteor shower, and thus can also see. As they encounter other sighted people,

> it becomes apparent that something must be done, and opinions differ: one party feels obligated to assign sighted people to groups of blind people to guide them to food, water, and shelter; another feels that this will just prolong suffering, and plans to set up a breeding colony to restart civilization. (80)

The attack of the triffids in areas of human settlement puts an end to peace. The delicate and normal psyche of the common people is perpetually haunted by the threat of annihilation. Those who survived the devastation and nightmare are desperate to seek protective methods to save themselves from the harms of triffids. On the other triffids terror continues to haunt and horrify the survivors. Bill and Josella struggle to survive.

Emanuel Levinas says that humanity has to be extended in order to deal with the eruption of the adverse and detrimental effect of science and technology. He adds the following view in this regard:

> The nobility of purpose, ethical sense of responsibility and the principle of moderation should be taken into account while exploiting the ethos and spirit of science. The random and haphazard use of scientific knowledge is likely to hamper the harmony and grace of interpersonal relationship. So long as science is used for the collective benefit of mankind, it hardly incurs the adverse circumstance. (128)

Levinas's idea of ethical concern and the concern for humanity are to be taken as the key to extending the future of human being on the globe. He says that science and technology exist to promote the happiness and prosperity of people. That is why people are optimistic. But the abuse of scientific knowledge creates the wretchedness of human lives.

This idea of Levinas gives further clue to the exploration of the suitable evidences from the text.

Characters like Wilfred Coker, Beadlay, Susan and others are engaged in the mission to re-establish a kind of society and settlement. The loss of civilization and the universal blindness, generate terror and trauma amidst people. When civilization collapses, human psyche surely fragments. How can they reconcile themselves to the constant process of bringing deviant life back and track? Bill and Josella run into people with various ideas about how to re-establish civilization.

There is plenty of need for sacrificing the few to save the many. It's contrasted with the inevitable and kind of sweet romance between Josella and Bill. The triffids are woven into the plot gradually. After Masen's initial narration of what they are, they vanish for a while. Then they kill Josella's family, having "apparently broken into their country house, prompting Bill and Josella to acquire anti-triffid gear. Back in London, though, this precaution is laughed at—there are no triffids in sight. Eventually, the triffids start to encroach" (135). As humanity dwindles in number, the triffids congregate around the last groups of survivors. In large enough numbers, they can break down fences.

An experiment with the genetic codes leads to the origin of detrimental plants. These plants can make millions of people blind. When millions of people are left in the utterly helpless conditions, the remaining groups of people are also in a difficult situation. Bioengineering is supposed to herald progressive transformation in the living conditions of people. But it brought forth hostile consequences which ultimately called into question the very foundations of human civilizations. The root cause of trauma felt collectively by people is the intensification of the traumatic agony posed and felt by triffids and last survivors of civilization. In the following

lines this sort of situation becomes crystal clear:

> The bole, which I now saw for the first time, was shaggy with little rootlet hairs, It would have been almost spherical but for three bluntly tapered projections extending from the lower part. Supported on these, the main body was lifted about a foot clear of the ground. When it walked it moved rather like a man on crutches. Two of the blunt legs slid forward, then the whole thing lurched as the rear one drew almost level with them, then the two in front slid forward again. At each step the long stem whipped violently back and forth; it gave one a kind of seasick feeling to watch it. (17)

Entire existence of mankind is overruled by the venous plants triffids. The dread and danger which triffids are capable of posing is revealed. Triffids stung those who came beside them. The flowing venom affected the eyes of people. They became permanently blind. The loss of the bright world and the constant threat of triffids changed the living world of human beings traumatized. As a method of progress it looked both strenuous and clumsy-faintly reminiscent of young elephants at play. One felt that if it were to go on lurching for long in that fashion it would be bound to strip all its leaves if it did not actually break its stem. Nevertheless, it is contriving to cover the round at something like an average walking pace.

Lyotard defines postmodernism as incredulity toward meta-narratives. Metanarraive is the narrative of progress and emancipation. It reveals how knowledge has been legitimated by the metanarratives of science. He examines developments in the nature and circulation of knowledge since the end of World War II. He sees a distinction between scientific knowledge and non-scientific narrative. Furthermore he holds that because science has no universal sense of acceptance.

Since both narrative and scientific knowledge have a common foundation of legitimation in narrative, they are equally valid. Lyotard goes on to make clear that "what legitimates knowledge in the postmodern condition is how well it performs, or enables a person to perform, in particular roles" (*The Postmodern Condition* 14). The writings of Lyotard were strongly influenced by the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. This short quote bears out Nietzsche's own incredulity toward an understanding of truth as universal-"What is truth? It is a mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms. Truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that they are illusions" (198). Lyotard sees reason not as a universal and immutable human faculty or principle but as a specific and variable human production. Reason, it is believed, is a product of human intelligence and not as something that inevitably leads to an apprehension of the truth. It is preferable to view ultimate legitimation of all actions, scientific or otherwise, as understood through a variety of faculties, including reason.

Mansen is running away from haunting triffids which are harmful to human life. The pervading influence of triffids narrowed down the scope of humanity on earth. Mansen is running away with a view to land himself in such a place from which he can think about reclaiming humanity on earth. When he is on the rush to save his life, he happens to meet Josella. She is compelled to be the guide of a man whose eyesight is damaged by the venom of triffids. Though they are in a difficult quandary, they are not as selfish as they should be. Even in the difficult time, they think about relocating human beings. Josella tells that Sussex is the place which can be suitable for relocating human beings. But this process and program of relocating human beings is hindered by a handful of people. They establish a society based upon the principle of feudalism. The subjugation of innocent people by crippling their individual freedom is the fresh phenomenon. The following lines describe how victims of disaster managed

to maintain the happy and harmonious social order:

> What about the Sussex Downs?" Josella suggested. "I know a lovely old farmhouse on the north side, looking right across toward Pulborough. It's not on the top of hills, but its well up the side. There's a wind pump for water, and I think they make their own electricity. It's all been converted and modernized. Desirable residence it is, in fact. But it's a hit near populous places. Don't you think we ought to get farther away?" "Well, I was wondering. How long is it going to be before it'll be safe to go into the towns again?" "I'd something like a year in mind-surely that might to be a safe enough margin? (51)

On their way to saving humanity are plenty of hurdles and setbacks. But they remain adamant in their program and mission. The rise of tyranny disturbs their programs. Josells and Mansen are highly affected by the terror posed by the haphazard consequences of random experiment with the genetic code of plants. Both Josella and Mansen dropped the matter of our final destination. In the morning, they decided, they would first of all acquire a truck-a capacious truck-and between them.

Lyotard defines postmodernism in a somewhat different way. His version of postmodernism differs substantially from other postmodernists. To Lyotard, postmodernism is the collapse of grand narrative. Science as a grand narrative appeared to be the means of domination. In his famous book *The Postmodern Condition,* Lyotard presents postmodernism as the stepping stone for modernism. Consumers are simply cheated and exploited by the ongoing advancement and innovation in science and technology. This idea of Lyotard is further explained by Andrew Benjamin. Benjamin makes the following observation:

> The postmodern condition resembles the bulk of postmodernist

> writing. One could say that, often in spite of itself, much postmodernism remains pre-political. Its political credentials –its implication for the existing distribution and legitimacy of power crystallized in state and non-state institutions-remain wholly ambiguous. Postmodernism is said to involve the practice of resistance; challenging master narratives with the discourse of others; questioning rather than exploiting cultural codes; opening closed systems to the heterogeneity of texts; becoming more sensitive to difference; emphasizing discontinuity , incompleteness and paradoxes. (89)

In the era of postmodernism, science struggles to gain legitimacy via narrative. To Lyotard, science appears as a separate sphere that is no less than grand narrative. On the one hand, science achieves power and legitimacy through narrative. When scientific discourses and claims tend to take the form of grand narrative, those who pursue science began to feel adversely affected by it.

The England is affected by the endemic venom of tall plants triffids. Triffids grow luxuriantly. The harmful effects of triffids spreads like wildfire. Those stung by triffid venom are weakened and paralyzed. The powerful venoms spoiled the eyesight. At the same time, the meteor lights fell on the earth. The beams of meteor light spreaded the earth. People became blind touched by the beams of meteor lights. Meteor lights disseminated throughout the earth and made millions of people blind. Within a fraction of second people are rendered sightless and blind. The uproar and terror created by meteor beam and triffid venom unleashed traumatic blow on people. The following extract cited from the text highlights the point:

> I lay awake for an hour or more. Night magnified the quiet of the city, making the sounds which broke it the more desolate. From time to time

> voices rose from the street, sharp and brittle with hysteria. Once there was a freezing scream which seemed to revel horribly in its release from sanity. Somewhere nor tar away there was a sobbing that went on endlessly, hopelessly. Twice I heard the sharp reports of single pistol shots I gave heartfelt thanks to whatever it was that had brought Josella and me together for companionship. (53)

The pathetic outcry of victims is heard on the street of London. Both meteor and triffid have brought devastation among people. Those who have lost eyesight are utterly helpless. They have no support and shelter. Even those who are alive are equally afraid of being lonely and alienated. The pathetic outcry and the harrowing experience of living in the world of darkness brought forth terror and tension on the part of people. Such plight appears to be the root cause of their traumatized psyche.

The trend of exploiting biotechnological knowledge is the trend of transgression. Postmodernism is not a gesture of the transgression. Whatever transgression takes place, it would further reveal latent primitive instinct in its crude and raw form. David Cook makes the further disclosure:

> Transgression is not limited to the limit as black to white, the prohibited to the lawful, the outside to the inside, or as the open area of a building to its enclosed spaces. Rather their relationship takes the form of spiral which no simple infraction can exhaust. Perhaps it is like a flash of lightning in the night which, from the beginning of time, gives a dense and black intensity to the night which it denies, which lights up the night from the inside, from top to bottom, and yet owes to the dark the stark clarity of its manifestation, its harrowing and poised singularity; the flash loses itself in this space it marks with its

> sovereignty and becomes silent now that it has given a name to obscurity. (8)

When the surface of normative and the rationally approved conception are torn to pieces, what arises outside is the dark forces which, if irrupts sporadically, can render entire human life vulnerable and exhausted. The dark forces and instinctive urges put life on the path of anomaly, incompatibility and gruesome track. At the postmodern moment of the eruption of latent primitive and dark forces, people can hover between ecstasy and decay. When the primitive instinct and passion come out in an irresistible way, people will have to live on the violent edge between the body as a torture chamber and pleasure palace. They will have no option other than getting lost between fascination and lament. The calm and tranquil psyche can be rendered violent, restless and hallucinogenic.

All kinds of social lives crumbled. The socio-cultural pattern shattered to pieces. Humanity is trapped in crisis and contradiction. The universal disruption of social life puts a complete end to the existential mobility of human beings. Even the revolutionary agenda of relocation simply came to an end. As a consequence, human beings suffered a lot from the crisis, and huge desperation. Except death and untimely disaster, they had nothing to do with their lives. The following lines make it clear:

> The going was wearisome. Every few dozen yards one had to weave round some derelict vehicle. Occasionally two or three together would block the road entirely so that it was necessary to go dead slow and nudge one of them out of the way. Very few of them were wrecked. The blindness seemed to have come upon the drivers swiftly, but not too suddenly for them to keep control. Usually they had been able to draw in to the side of the road before they stopped. Had the catastrophe

> occurred by day, the main reads would have been quite impassable, and to work our way clear from the center by side streets might have taken days-spent mostly in reversing before impenetrable thickets of vehicles and trying to find another way round. (91)

The vision of saving human beings from triffids looms large out of the mist of hopelessness. Meteor beam is further hindered by the selfishness and ambition of a few handfuls of people. Human beings have been losing each and every precious achievement. But there is not stable political and social order which adds further fuel to the last remnant of people.

Arthur Cooker concentrate on how the postmodern tendency gives birth to the thrill of catastrophe and the ecstatic implosion of technological culture into excess, waste and dis-accumulation. The trend to excess, waste and sense of anarchic jubilation receives momentum in the high days of postmodernism. The following lines cited from Arthur Crooker throws further spotlight on this aspect:

> For who can now speak with confidence of the future of a postmodern scene when what is truly fascinating is the thrill of catastrophe, and where what drives onward economy, politics, culture, sex and even eating is not the will to accumulation or the search for lost coherences, but just the opposite – the postmodern culture into excess, waste, and accumulation. When technology of the quantum order produces human beings who are part-metal and part-flesh; when robo-beings constitute the growing majority of a western culture which fulfills, then excess, Weber's grim prophecy of the coming age of specialists without spirit. (30)

The postmodern trend opens a new avenue for the pathological symptoms of nihilism.

The gradual loss of established norms and the much hallowed cult of hyper-aesthetics as well as excremental culture jointly generate nihilistic impact. To certain time span, the nihilistic cult gives the unique dose of freedom from the restrictive measures of universalistic pretensions and absolutist claims. But in the long run, its adverse impact appears in the prospect of humanity. But it is the constant source of jubilation approved within the framework of postmodern context.

Wilfred Coker takes it upon him to save as many of the blind as possible. He stages a mock fire at the university and during the ensuing chaos kidnaps a number of sighted individuals, including Bill and Josella. Each is chained to a squad of blind people. The ruthlessness is experienced by the characters like Coker and other loves of humanity. The following lines give the glimpse of this kind of reality:

> I began to feel the lightening of spirit that Coker was already showing. The sight of the open country gave one hope of a son. It was true that the young green crops would never be harvested when they had ripened, nor the fruit from the trees gathered; that the countryside might never again look as trim and neat as it did that day, but for all that it would go on, after its own fashion. It was not, like the towns, sterile, stopped forever. It was a place one could work and tend, and still find a future. It made my existence of the previous week seem like that of a rat living on crumbs and ferreting in garbage heaps. As I looked out over the fields I felt my spirits expanding. (87)

There is an inability to sustain the tragic mood. It may be helpful or harmful. It is just a part of the will to survive-yet, also. It has made it possible for us to engage in one weakening war after another. But it is a necessary part of our mechanism should be able to cry only for a time over even an ocean of spilt milk. Under a wide blue sky,

the cities became a less oppressive memory and the sense of living freshen us again like a clean wind.

The shifting notion of knowledge is basic to understanding some of the important tenet of postmodernism in scientific field like biotechnology and genetic engineering. Knowledge has become informational commodity in the wake of postmodern scenario. Manufacturing commodities are replaced by the digitalized or computerized form of knowledge. Hans Bertens has exemplified this kind of postmodernist conception. Bertens elaborates thus:

> The scenario in which information replaces the manufacture of material goods as a central concern in the most advanced economies. This computerization of society will affect the nature of our knowledge. It is not very clear how exactly our knowledge will change, but Lyotard offers the prediction that the direction of new research will be dictated by the possibility of its eventual results being translatable into computer language. Knowledge has become an informational commodity. Science has been forced to abandon its original integrity and has become an instrument in the hands of power. (119)

Bertens subscribes to the conviction that meta-narratives have been replaced by a great number of language games. These language games range from models of discourse, various forms of utterance-denotative, performative, and prescriptive. Narrative language games can accommodate elements such as deontic statements prescribing what should be done with respect to kinship, the difference between the sexes, children, neighbors, and foreigner. Narrative language games have only limited social and historical validity.

Masen nevertheless sticks with his squad until its members all begin dying of some unknown disease. He leaves and attempts to find Josella. His only lead is an address left behind by the now-departed members of Beadley's group. He drives to the place, a country estate named Tynsham in Wiltshire. Durrant has taken charge and organized the community along Christian lines. Masen and Coker fruitlessly search for Beadley and Josella for several days. He sets off in search of it, while Coker returns to Tynsham. Bill is joined by a young sighted girl named Susan. They succeed in locating Josella, who is indeed at the Sussex house. Bill and Josella consider themselves to be married. They see Susan as their daughter. They attempt to make the Sussex farm into a largely self-sufficient colony, with reasonable success. The triffids grow ever more numerous, crowding in and surrounding their small island of civilization. The following lines exemplify this point:

> I was about to assure her that it was, when it began to rattle the little sticks against its stem, just as the one at Steeple Honey had done. As then, I gave it the other barrel to shut it up. "Yes" I said. "It's dead now." We walked across to the little boy. The scarlet slash of the sting was vivid on his pale cheek. It must have happened some hours before. She knelt beside him. "It isn't any good," I told her gently. She looked up, fresh tears in her eyes. "Is Tommy dead too?" I squatted down beside her and shook my head. "I'm afraid he is." After a while she said: "Poor Tommy! Will we bury him-like the puppies?" "Yes," I told her. (116)

One day a helicopter pilot representative of Beadley's faction lands at the farm. He reports that the group has established a successful colony on the Isle of Wight. He also informs th that Coker survived to join them. Masens are reluctant to leave their

home but their hand is forced by the arrival of a squad of soldiers the next day. Masen represents a despotic new government which is setting up feudal enclaves across the country. Masen recognizes the leader, Torrence, as the redheaded man from London. Torrence announces his intention to place many more blind survivors under the Masens' care and to move Susan to another enclave. After feigning general agreement, the Masens disable the soldiers' vehicle and flee during the night. They join the Isle of Wight colony, and settle down to the long struggle ahead. They are determined to find a way to destroy the triffids and reclaim Earth for humanity.

Bryan C. Taylor views the effects of postmodern contemplation in the light of the role of innovation in science in shaping objects, understanding and strategies of survival. Taylor is of the opinion that the burgeoning research industries are largely responsible for putting people's power of perception in hazard. Taylor is closer to Baudrillard in dramatizing the effects of how the productions of objects or simulated objects without reference make people getting drowned in the digitalized reality. Taylor's view is reflected in the following citation:

> The rise of global media systems whose continuous operations breaks traditional boundaries of space and time exerts powerful influence in the psyche of people. In their cumulative effects, the programs circulated by these systems collapse important distinctions that traditionally have shaped modern cultural identities. These systems create a rapidly shifting phantasm of fragmented, decontextualized information, in which people are encouraged to view themselves as the audience of a flickering spectacle that relentlessly stimulates their impulses. (4)

According to Taylor, this stimulation does not, however, necessarily produce

knowledge or wisdom, but rather hyper-realities with no real referents. These environments are populated by simulations, models, and copies of something else that has no single, original, real source. Postmodernists adopt the image of fragmentation to characterize some organizational cultures and identities. This condition is presumed to result from several factors.

This subversive strategy inherent in postmodernism is relevant in the question of reproduction. Only the sexual involvement is allowed within the zone of inspection and surveillance. In addition to stifling the emotive and sexual longing of clones, their lives are fully under constant control. Miss Emily is the teacher who teaches clones. She is in favor of giving clones fair chance to explore different cross-sections of life. She does not believe that clones are subhuman beings. She assumes that clones are no less than human beings.

In the name of innovation and technological breakthrough, the outmoded medicines and military technology are sent by the developed countries to the developing counties. Postmodern subject experiences technology as a part of life. Some theorists highlight postmodern narrative of technology as the redeemer of mankind from their discomforts and hardships. On the contrary, there are some eco-protesters who simply take the aggressive march of technological innovation as the foreboding of apocalypse. As the postmodern theorist, Richard J. Lane explores the impact of technology in lives of postmodern subjects. The pervasive impact of technology is found in the trend towards simulation. Jane talks about three levels of simulation. Lane illustrates the notion of simulation which takes place at three levels. Jane's clarification runs as follows:

> There are three levels of simulation, where the first level is an obvious copy of reality and the second level is a copy so good that it blurs the

> boundaries between reality and representation. The third level is one which produces a reality of its own without being based upon any particular bit of the real world. The best example is probably virtual reality, which is a world generated by computer languages or code. Virtual reality is thus a world generated by mathematical models which are abstract entities. It is this third level of simulation, where the model comes before the constructed. (30)

Simulation around which the modern digital technology moves undergoes three successive stages. The simulate object is just a copy only. Level of copy which blurs the boundaries between reality and representation are no longer important. The simulated object begins to serves itself as the real. It leaves no space for the real. In the third stage of simulation, the simulated object appears to be the powerful reminder of the real. It tends to be as sovereign as the real. The power of simulation has had the detrimental effect in the psyche of people at large. The following extract cited from the text highlights the point:

> We had to be extremely careful about having sex in the outside world, especially with people who were not students, because there sex meant all sorts of things. Out there people were even fighting and killing each other over who had sex with whom. And the reason it meant so much- so much more than , say dancing or table –tennis –was because the people out there were different form us students: they could have babies form sex. And even though it was completely impossible for any of us to have babies, out there, we had to behave like them. We had to respect the rules and treat sex as something pretty special. (39)

To put control and regulatory mechanism over bodies of clones is the prime task. First of all the

distinction between the outer world of normal human beings and the internal secluded world of clones is sketched. Then clones are cautious enough to maintain precaution while doing sex. This sort of view is implanted in the minds of clones. The fruitful way of making clones abide by the technique of manipulating genetic code is to convince them. They are exclusive and special in comparison to the normal human being. Clones' bodies and minds are regulated. The regulatory mechanism has produced the intended effects.

Jean Baudrillard is the major proponent of postmodernism. His notion of simulation is key to describing the psychological effects of undue alliance with the postmodern passion. The postmodern trend sets the stage for simulation. To simulate is more than to pretend to have what one does not have. Of course, pretension is also one of core component of postmodern simulation. But simulation is more than pretending to have what one does not have. In the simulated state there is the danger of the loss of the real.

> The difference between the real object and imaginary object snaps. The growing resemblance between the real and the imaginary puts the simulator in jeopardy. The simulator begins to mistake the imaginary as the real. He or she is totally detached from the real. The imaginary begins to perform as the real. The imaginary no longer serves as the substitute of the real but it works as the real. When the object concocted by the mind, by the fantasy and delusion work as the real, the simulator falls into the unthinkable and unimaginable situation. When the place of the real is taken by the imaginary, the postmodern dreamer is lost in the fictitious world of his fantasy. (67)

Moreover, they become so detached from the real and normal that they are simply under the illusion whether the real exists or not. There are several factors which compel and tempt citizens to simulate. In the late capitalist –consumer society, the excessive domination of technology and

massive dependence on technology create daily lives of people entirely drab and dreary. Fed up with the mundane and monotonous lives, the postmodern consumers isolate themselves from the drab and arid world. They prefer to remain in the world of simulated reality. Confined nostalgically in the simulated world, consumers sometimes try to involve in the murderous acts, dreadful fantasies and formidable delusions. The moment the connection between the real and the imaginary snaps, the simulator's sufferings starts.

Baudrillard is of the view that the identifying feature of postmodern world is its dependence on technology. Technology has largely structured the postmodern world. The postmodern world is defined in terms of its heavy reliance upon technology. The narrative of technological progress contains elements which eulogize the possibility of the collective liberation of mankind from their discomforts through the medium of technological advancement. As a postmodern theorist, Baudrillard dwells upon the darker sides of technological dependence. Baudrillard shows the contexts in which total dependence upon technology turns out to be counterproductive. By manufacturing and distributing consumer objects in abundance, the late capitalist industries try to glut the market and compel consumers buy goods and commodities.

Internally the building had been modernized and reconstructed to a point. It was doubtful whether its previous tenants would be able to recognize a single room. Outside it had become sick. The yards and sheds had a suburban rather than a rural tidiness and had for years known no form of animal life rougher than a few riding horses and ponies. The farmyard showed no utilitarian sights and gave forth no rustic smells; it had been laid over with close green turf like a bowling green. The following lines illustrate the key issue of doom of civilization:

> But the sheds and barns remained in good condition. With its own well and its own power plant, the place had plenty to recommend it-but as I

> looked it over I understood Coker's wisdom in speaking of co-operative effort. I knew nothing of farming, but I could feel that if we had intended to stay there it would take a lot of work to feed six of us. The other three had been there already when Josella had arrived. There were Dennis and Mary Brent, and Joyce Taylor. Dennis was the owner of the house. Joyce had been there on an indefinite visit, at first to keep Mary Company and then to keep the house running when Mary's expected baby should be born. (121)

He soon meets Josella, another lucky person who has retained her sight. To survive in this post-apocalyptic world, one must survive the triffids strange plants those years before began appearing all over the world. The triffids can grow to over seven feet tall, pull their roots from the ground to walk, and kill a man with one quick lash of their poisonous stingers. With society in shambles, they are now poised to prey on humankind.

In the moment of dire crisis, the question of survival becomes a matter of utmost concern. Going beyond the boundary of normalcy brings unexpected challenges and setbacks in the narrator's life. Due to his averseness to the normal reality, he is so preoccupied with the beyond that everything looms as surreal to him. He himself says "everything is surreal. I cannot believe you are actually going to meet my family. I have spent so much time hiding you from my family. Only because i adore you beyond reason am i doing this, so I appreciate you" (165). The real seems surreal. Even his whole life seems to be a figment of fantasy. He has an increasing doubt about if he really exists or not. He has the increasing premonition that the genetically modified triffids hardly exist. The following lines portray this sort of reality:

> In the past I feel much more solid. Maybe the future itself is less substantial? i don't know. I always feel like i am breathing thin air, out there in the future. That is one of the ways i can tell it is the future: it feels different. It is harder to run, there. He says this thoughtfully, and I suddenly have a glimpse of the terror of being in a foreign time and place, without clothes, without friends. That is why your feet. Are like leather? I am a beast of the hoof. If anything ever happens to my feet you might as well shoot me. (167)

It is nauseous and allergic for him to live in the genetically modified body. In the preliminary phase he was rapturous enough to undergo genetic mutation. Now when he begins to feel defeated and cheated by fate, he feels loathsome towards him genetically modified body. He cultivates the fresh longing to return to his own past, which does not exist in the concrete body. The feeling of dissolution wells up at the core of his mind. He is haunted by the feeling of enervation, emptiness and dissolution.

Thus it is safe to say that the abuse of the innovative knowledge found in latest scientific disciplines like genetic engineering, biotechnology and molecular biology has contributed to the outbreak of human being's tragic lot. The plight of some character warns people not to go to the extreme while handling the fresh knowledge of science and technology.

III. Wendham's Concern with the Abuse of Science

The core finding of this research is to show that the abuse of science leads to the doom and destruction of human civilization. In Wendham's novel *The Days with the Triffids,* experiment with trees puts humanity on the verge of doom and devastation**.** Science and technology exist for the betterment of human life. Science exists to upgrade human life. It aims at putting an end to all the hardships and maladies of human lives. But if scientific research and technological innovation are taken heedless of regard for ethics and humanity, human beings will surely have to suffer

If not properly handled, the scientific innovations and breakthroughs would lead to the outbreak of disasters for humanity. The way of using fresh scientific innovations must be governed and guided with a great care. The abuse of innovative ideas and technological knowhow leads ultimately towards the disastrous predicament of human being. The adverse effect of the abuse of innovative knowledge of genetic engineering is portrayed dramatically. The main character is eager to possess miraculous power. He is frantically obsessed with the idea of getting unexpected and unparalleled power by using technological devices.

The protagonist is Bill Masen, a biologist. He has made his living working with trififds– tall plants. These plants are capable of aggressive and seemingly intelligent behavior. They are able to move about by walking on their roots. They appear to communicate with each other. They possess a deadly whip-like poisonous sting that enables them to kill their victims. They feed on their rotting carcasses. Due to his background, Masen develops a theory that triffids are bioengineered in the

USSR. Then they accidentally released into the wild when a plane smuggling their seeds was shot down. Triffids begin sprouting all over the world. Their extracts prove to be superior to existing fish or vegetable oils. The result is worldwide cultivation of triffids.

The narrative begins with Bill Masen in hospital. His eyes bandaged after having been splashed with droplets of triffid poison in an accident. During his convalescence he is told of the unexpected and beautiful green meteor shower that the entire world is watching. He awakes the next morning to a silent hospital and learns that the light from the unusual display has rendered any who watched it completely blind. After fearfully unbandaging his eyes, he wanders through an anarchic London full of almost entirely blind inhabitants. He witnesses civilization collapsing around him. He meets a sighted woman, wealthy novelist Josella Playton. She is being forcibly used as a guide by a violent blind man. She and Masen begin to fall in love and decide to leave London. Lured by a single light that they see shining in an otherwise darkened city, Bill and Josella discover a group of sighted survivors at a London university building. The group is led by a man named Beadley, who plans to establish a colony in the countryside. Beadley wishes to take only sighted men who will take several wives.

Bill Masen is increasingly alienated from the group of his friends. Though others had not treated him as a cast away, he develops the morbid urge to feel ostracized and alienated. With a passage of time, he happens to develop the feeling that he has no control over his life. All the rational power and freewill of Masen evaporate. At last he crumbles disastrously and meets his tragic doom. His tragic fall dramatizes the dreadful consequence of the abuse of science.

Despite his genetically empowered strength, Masen sighs after the days of his

youthful past. But he is compelled to live blurred existence. He is able to travel back and forth to the curve of time. But he needs the aid of memory to link with his disconnected past. The more he struggles to remember his disconnected youthful past, the more confusion and oblivion occurs to him. Slowly and gradually he becomes afflicted with amnesia and oblivion. The state of oblivion puts his life in a state of utter helplessness and misery. Thrown into oblivion, Masen begins to realize that he should not have undergone genetic modification

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