# 'I cannot tell you all the story': Narrative, Historical Knowledge, and the Museum in H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*

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In amongst the climactic events of H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine* – the visit to the Morlocks' underground lair, the death of Weena, and the final struggle for possession of the time machine – the Time Traveler visits a museum. The episode is odd, as it does little more than provide the Time Traveler with a new box of matches. Yet, the text is structured to suggest that the episode will provide important information, and the museum's layout and collection only reinforce that expectation. It is the Palace's status as a universal survey museum that marks its importance to the text as a whole. Universal survey museums, the dominant form of museum after the mid-nineteenth century, included all branches of knowledge (a 'universal' collection) and were intended to display "a total representation of human reality and history".[i] In the museum and in Victorian historicism more widely, "total representation" was supposedly achieved through narrative, which transformed history from an "ever-living, ever-working Chaos of Being"[ii] into a linear, teleological progression through time. Historical narrative borrowed the structures of literature, particularly the realist novel with its investment in seriality, causation, and personal growth, in order to construct history as the *bildungsroman* of the world. This narrative was intended to provide complete and universal knowledge of the past, but also to allow "the Present and the Future be interpreted or guessed at,"[iii] according to Thomas Carlyle. A universal collection like the Palace, therefore, should contain vital information about the past, the present, and the future. The fact that it doesn't, I suggest, is key to understanding *The Time Machine*.

Through the presentation of the Palace, Wells's novella expresses a deep skepticism towards the possibility and value of universal historical knowledge. This skepticism manifests in an unstable and fragmented text, which not only moves through time, but between different constructions of time, confronting readers with the impossibility of coherent linear narratives within a modern understanding of history, underpinned by the flux, contingency, and uncertainty of Darwinian theory. For this reason, it is narrative itself that fails in *The Time Machine*, as the Time Traveler struggles to make his story tell. A narratological reading of the novella, then, allows us to unpack its critique of the Victorian construction of history and the fictions that underpin it.

## Narrative Expectations

Throughout his first-person account of the year 802,701, the Time Traveler foregrounds his role as storyteller, beginning by insisting, "I don't mind telling you the story…I will…tell you the story…I want to tell it."[iv] In contrast to the unnamed frame narrator, who seems to directly report the events he witnesses with little interpretative material or authorial interventions, the Time Traveler presents himself as author and editor of his own story. Through his use of direct address, he continually reminds his listeners that he is imposing

narrative structure on the events he recounts, foreshadowing circumstances to come— "as I will tell you" (58), "I shall have to tell you later" (51)—and calling back to those that have already happened—"I must remind you" (49), "of which I have told you" (53). He further overtly shapes his narrative in response to anticipated remarks from his audience: "I dare say you will anticipate" (62), "no doubt it will seem…to you" (62), "it may seem odd to you" (64). These moments suggest that rather than straightforward reportage, the narrative we read is constructed to appear both coherent and convincing. Yet, the Time Traveler also repeatedly reminds his audience of the limits of narrative. He thus emphasizes the impossibility of his story alone providing true understanding of the future, asking his audience "can you imagine", then immediately asserting "you cannot" (52).

The Time Traveler is a classic example of an unreliable narrator, as defined by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan. He operates from a position of limited knowledge and routinely acknowledges his own flawed interpretation of what he experiences in the future.[v] Rationalizing his frequently-shifting theories about the Eloi and Morlocks, the Time Traveler reminds his audience that "I had no convenient cicerone in the pattern of the Utopian books" (63). The earlier *National Observer* version of the novella, published in 1894, expands this reference, as the Time Traveler remarks, "[o]dd as it may seem, I had no cicerone. In all the narratives of people visiting the future that I have read, some obliging scandal-monger appears at an early stage, and begins to lecture on constitutional history and social economy".[vi] The specter of the absent guide looms large over *The Time Machine*, as the Time Traveler struggles to make sense of the year 802,701. In the utopian fiction referenced here, the "convenient cicerone" often came in the form of a museum guide, as in William Morris's *News from Nowhere*, published in 1891. Like *The Time Machine*, *News from Nowhere* details the adventures of a time traveler to future London. In the course of his explorations, William Guest is taken to the "quite familiar" British Museum, where an old man summarizes the contents of the museum's "wonderful collection" and its "enormous library" full of "useful" "genuine records", explaining the history of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that led to the glorious utopia in which Guest finds himself.[vii] The museum serves a similar function in other utopian fiction, such as Edward Bulwer-Lytton's 1871 *The Coming Race*, in which the narrator is taken to "the great public museum" in order to learn of the development of the Vril society.[viii] In both texts, the museum serves as a guide to the new society's history and customs.

Though both Morris and Bulwer-Lytton furnish their travelers with cicerones who explain the museum collections, public museum displays in the second half of the nineteenth century were designed to serve in lieu of a human guide. As access to national museums like the British Museum expanded, it was no longer possible for every visitor to be given a guided tour (as was the custom in the first decades of the nineteenth century). Instead, serial arrangement was adopted so that each display could be 'read' by even the most casual viewer. To understand a series, one did not need formal education, but only to grasp the basic principles of narrative: a beginning, a middle, an end, progression and causation. Thus, it was argued by scholarly bodies like the British Archaeological Association that "no single object is in itself sufficient to fix with any degree of certainty its history, use, or adaptation," but "when put together and viewed in connection, [objects] exhibit with peculiar reality the character of an age or race".[ix] As Roger G. Kennedy insists, it is narrative

sequences that makes museum objects "speak", not "for themselves" but in juxtaposition with each other.[x]

Museums' perceived ability to tell the "character of an age or race" in a concise narrative explains their prominence in nineteenth-century utopian fiction and science fiction more broadly. Robert Crossley thus suggests that museums frequently recur in science fiction because they allow for the repeated "spectacle of an observer examining an artefact and using it as a window on to nature, culture, and history".[xi] Yet, though Crossley goes on to discuss *The Time Machine* at length, what is significant about the Palace is precisely that it *fails* to offer the Time Traveler a "window onto nature, culture, and history", defying both the expectations of the nineteenth-century museum and the genre in which Wells writes. This constitutes a failure of narrative in the Palace's universal collection as well as a failure of the narrative of novella itself, whose structure and genre set up expectations that are not met by the Palace, subverting a belief in the comprehensibility of narrative form more broadly.

Harry M. Geduld describes the structure of *The Time Machine* as a series of "'movements' or 'segments'" which each "consists of a number of episodic substructures".[xii] The first five sections of the novella, Geduld argues, serve to provoke a series of "questions or problems for the Time Traveller (as well as the reader) whose 'solutions' are deferred until later in the narrative".[xiii] The questions or problems are posed using delayed decoding[xiv], a technique that "combines the forward temporal progression of the mind, as it receives messages from the outside world, with the much slower reflexive process of making out their meaning".[xv] The Time Traveler frequently comments that his understanding of some element of the future world came "later" or "afterwards": "later I began to perceive their import"; "Later, I was to appreciate", "afterwards I found" (27, 30). These moments of delayed decoding suggest that readers, too, will find out the import, reality, or truth of these mysteries "later". Geduld suggests that chapter six serves as the "'hinge' or turning pointing" of the novella[xvi]: the Time Traveler's descent into the Morlocks' subterranean world offers the first significant clues into the mystery of the future world. This structure, combined with Wells's use of delayed decoding, suggests that the second half of the novella, including the Palace episode, will provide answers to the unresolved questions of the first half of the tale.

These expectations are heightened by the structure of chapters six through eight, which suggest that the journey to the Palace represents a quest, in line with Wells's categorization of *The Time Machine* as a 'scientific romance'. The Time Traveler first glimpses the Palace in chapter six (Geduld's "hinge"), where he notes that it appears "different in character" and thus potentially "differen[t] in use" from any other structure he has yet encountered (64). His exploration of the mysterious structure is delayed, however, linking it conceptually with the unanswered questions of the first half of the novella. The Palace is next mentioned in chapter seven, as the Time Traveler seeks a place to shelter from the Morlocks. As he does, "the tall pinnacles of the Palace of Green Porcelain and the polished gleam of its walls came back to my memory" (69), and he resolves to set off for the distant structure. The quest-like nature of his journey is emphasized by its difficulty:

> The distance, I had reckoned, was seven or eight miles, but it must have been nearer eighteen. I had first seen the place on a moist afternoon when distances are

> deceptively diminished. In addition, the heel of one of my shoes was loose, and a nail was working through the sole—they were comfortable old shoes I wore about indoors—so that I was lame (69).

Both the distance and the Time Traveler's physical infirmities raise the stakes of the journey. It is also the *only* journey the Time Traveler undertakes in the future; otherwise, he remains "tethered" (56) within close range of the White Sphinx. All this suggests the importance of what he will find at the Palace. When chapter eight begins with the Time Traveler discovering the Palace is a museum, its function as a repository of answers seems confirmed. Yet, unlike in the utopian fiction that Wells ironically invokes, when the Time Traveler enters the library of the Palace, rather than finding the "useful" collection of "genuine records" of Morris's novel, he discovers only a ruin: "The brown and charred rags that hung from the sides of it, I presently recognised as the decaying vestiges of books. They had long since dropped to pieces, and every semblance of print had left them" (75).

The Palace, then, is the culmination of a deliberate destabilizing of readers' understanding of narrative and generic conventions. As Geduld notes, far from providing answers, in the second half of the novella "the interpretative material diminishes"; instead, he argues, "Wells is depicting scenes rather than developing plot".[xvii] As Geduld suggests, the episodes of the novella seem to represent discrete units rather than a sequence of events predicated on cause and effect. Geduld concludes that this is merely another tactic of delay, to keep readers on the edge of their seats. Yet, the structure of the novella places too much importance on the Palace for this to be the case. It is set up to represent a climax in the text; instead it is distinctly anticlimactic, rendering this section structurally odd and narratively unsatisfying. I suggest that it is deliberately unsatisfactory in order to subvert the nineteenth-century association between narrative coherence and historical knowledge, an association reinforced by the construction of history in the Victorian museum.

**Victorian Museums and Victorian History**

In 1990, Robert Crossley argued that, "many commentaries on *The Time Machine* either ignore [the Palace] chapter, or view it as a kind of interlude in the narrative, or give it short shrift as a supply depot out of which the traveller can arm himself".[xviii] While this is no longer strictly true, more recent criticism often fails to engage with the palace *as a museum*, treating it symbolically, similarly to the White Sphinx[xix], or only considering a portion of the Palace, such as the decaying library.[xx] Yet, the Palace contains a vast collection beyond the library, encompassing paleontology, minerology, natural history, mechanical design, technical chemistry, arms and armor, ethnography, archaeology, classical sculpture, and a model of a tin mine. The Palace's failure to provide answers is surprising specifically because its colossal structure and multi-disciplinary collection represents the realization of the ideal Victorian museum: a complete and universal collection.

Wells's Palace alludes to this ideal through its name, its collections, and the Time Traveler's comparison of the Palace to a "latter-day South Kensington" (73). Most critics take this reference to mean London's Natural History Museum, then the British Museum (Natural History), located in South Kensington. In so doing, they perpetuate the critical habit of focusing on one aspect of the collection rather than considering it as a whole. When the

Time Traveler identifies the Palace as a "latter-day South Kensington", he is likely referring to the whole museum complex in that neighborhood, which in the 1890s included the NHM but also the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria & Albert) and the Science Museum. This complex was founded in 1854 with the proceeds from the 1851 Great Exhibition, and Wells's choice of the name 'Palace of Green Porcelain' seems designed to evoke the Great Exhibition's Crystal Palace. Like Wells's Palace, the Great Exhibition brought together paleontology, minerology, natural history, mechanical design, technical chemistry, arms and armor, ethnography, and the fine arts into a single sprawling exhibition. The success of the Great Exhibition and its wide-ranging collection led to the South Kensington Museum (the first in the South Kensington complex), which was founded on the principles of unified universal knowledge and its value in public education.

J.C. Robinson, curator of art at South Kensington, claimed in 1858 that "it will be evident that from the outset this Museum had a different and more methodic direction than most national collections, which in the beginning have been more or less fortuitous gatherings of things rare and curious".[xxi] Here, Robinson contrasts South Kensington with the British Museum, the foundation of which was the private collection of Hans Sloane. In contrast to the "haphazard" collecting practices of the British Museum, South Kensington was to display "methodical series of specimens", "shewing their historical or chronological and technical development".[xxii] This series would not rely only on the original works in the collection, but would be supplemented by "casts, drawings, engravings, and photographs, of remarkable analogous specimens in foreign or private collections, or of complete monuments or objects *in situ*, of which the specimen in the collection may be fragments or details."[xxiii] South Kensington thus adopted what Philip Fisher calls the technology of the series: "The most immediate way we understand objects in time is by placing them within sequences and identifying the essence of the object by means of its position within the sequence or series of which we describe it as a part or member".[xxiv] In the 1850s serial arrangement was not yet the norm in the British Museum, but it was increasingly felt that this form of arrangement was essential if a museum was to play a role in public education, as series were believed to be legible to those without formal education or even basic literacy, simply through familiarity with the rudimentary components of a story.

While South Kensington strove to display a *complete* collection, filling in gaps in the narrative with reproductions, drawings, and photographs, as a museum of art and design, it did not offer a *universal* collection. However, the ideal of the universal museum was still at the fore of South Kensington's vision. Robinson viewed the museum as "but a portion of a great national whole, an integral part of an imperial and universal art collection", which would one day "consolidate the now scattered and disconnected treasures into a noble unity worthy of a great country".[xxv] The role of the Victorian museum curator, then, was to prepare his individual department or institution to "merge itself without disruption into a grander whole".[xxvi] This dream of the "noble unity" of the "grander whole" is also the basis for the Smithsonian's George Brown Goode's conception of "The Museums of the Future", outlined in a government report of 1888. Goode looked to Britain as an example of a "grand whole": "Under the wise administration of the South Kensington staff, an out-growth of the events of 1851, a great system of educational museums has been developed all through the United Kingdom…There are now over one hundred and fifty public museums in the United Kingdom, all active and useful."[xxvii] Most importantly, Goode insisted that a museum, in

order to be "active and useful", needed to merge the library and the museum. Thus, he looked to the British Museum, "with its libraries, its pictures, its archaeological galleries, its anthropological, geological, botanical, and zoological collections" as "an example of the most comprehensive interpretation of the term."[xxviii]

The Palace of Green Porcelain, which covers a broader expanse of disciplines than even the British Museum, represents an even *more* comprehensive interpretation of the term 'museum'. In fact, it represents the "ideal museum", as described by Fisher:

> [E]ach museum is a fragment of one ideal museum. As collections become larger they become more intelligible. National galleries are more lucid than a dozen smaller provincial collections. The ideal museum would be at last the complete history in which the path would go from horizon to horizon, each picture answering the questions asked by its neighbors, each intelligible in the visible society of styles and periods.[xxix]

This 'ideal museum', which displays a complete history organized into a single path or sequence, is synonymous with the ideal of history as it was conceived of in the nineteenth century. For Thomas Carlyle, History "is not only the fittest study, but the only study, and includes all others whatsoever".[xxx] Though a scholar might work in a single discipline or a single area of study, it was his responsibility, according to Carlyle, to always keep "the idea of the Whole" at the fore of his work, "know[ing] that only in the Whole is the Partial to be truly discerned".[xxxi] Each branch of knowledge is a part of a Platonic Whole, and thus each scholar works to "inform and ennoble the humblest department with an Idea of the Whole".[xxxii] Equally, in *The Idea of a University*, John Henry Newman defined a "scholar" as someone who possesses "the clear, calm, accurate vision and comprehension of all things".[xxxiii] This comprehensive vision was made possible through the technology of the series, which incorporated all branches of knowledge into a single sequence. As Tony Bennett argues, the predominant tendency of Victorian history was:

> one in which the different times of geology, biology, anthropology and history were connected to one another so as to form a universal time. Such a temporality links together the story of the earth's formation, of the development of life on earth, of the evolution of human life out of animal life and its development from 'primitive' to 'civilized' forms, into a single narrative which posits modern Man (white, male, and middle class, as Catherine Hall would put it) as the outcome and, in some cases, *teleos* of these processes.[xxxiv]

The series thus constructs history as progressive and teleological in an effort to confirm nineteenth-century Britain as the most 'advanced' of all civilizations. Further, it "demonstrate[s] as dramatically as possible the continuity of the present with the past and, therefore, the universality (i.e. the 'naturalness') of the laws of social experience.[xxxv] The deterministic reduction of history to the outcomes of universal or natural laws, which erase historical and social difference, renders "explanation and prediction…of a piece, logically speaking", as these laws should apply in any time or place (e.g. 'humanity, when at war, will behave in the following way').[xxxvi] This was a core belief of Victorian historicism. The purpose of divining the universal laws that would explicate the past was that this same

system of explanation could then be used to predict the future. This is precisely the understanding of history that underpins the Time Traveler's forays into the future. In the *New Review Time Machine*, the first complete version of the novella, which appeared from January to May 1895, the Time Traveler explains his theory by insisting, "If you knew and perceived the present perfectly, you would perceive therein the whole of the past. If you understood all natural laws the present would be a complete and vivid record of the past. Similarly, if you grasped the whole of the present, knew all its tendencies and laws, you would see clearly all the future".[xxxvii] This is a neat summation of the ideology of Victorian historicism that we have been tracing here. Complete and universal knowledge allows for perfect knowledge of the past, and, furthermore, can be used to predict the future.

This conception of history was reinforced by the display practices of universal survey museums. As Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach argue, the architecture of museums serves to "organize the visitor's experience as a script organizes a performance. Individuals respond in different ways according to their education, culture and class. But the architecture is a given and imposes the same underlying structure on everyone."[xxxviii] Victorian museums sought to replicate the sequence of historical time through their spatio-temporal displays, allowing visitors to move through time as they moved through space, progressing from deep time to the present day in a form of imaginative time travel. It is just this organization that the Time Traveler finds in the Palace of Green Porcelain. His journey through the Palace begins in the deep past, with the paleontological and geologic collections, then travels forward in time and space, through natural history, representing the recent past (as these animals are preserved in flesh and fur, rather than as fossils); machinery, representing the technological age; the library, the peak of human artistic achievements; and finally the gallery of technical chemistry, the peak of scientific achievements.

Serial display of this kind was intended to be legible to the least educated museum goer. The Time Traveler offers a compelling test of this idea; while he is a brilliant scientist in his own age, in the future world he is an illiterate museum goer. He is unable to read the "unknown character[s]" (72) of the future age, and thus can make sense of the museum only through the objects and their arrangement. Like the stereotypical uneducated visitor of the nineteenth century, the Time Traveler does not recognize the majority of the objects within the Palace's collection. Their import, then, can only be conveyed through the Palace's display practices. The universal, chronological, and teleological collection that the Time Traveler finds in the Palace should provide precisely what it is he seeks there: he should be able to "trace the patient readjustments" (73) by which the future world was developed. Even if we take the Palace as a symbol of decay, as most critics read it, within the context of the Victorian understanding of history, it should still hold answers. Even if the collection was abandoned long before 802,701, it was begun after 1895, and so should explicate some of the intervening millennia. And, because it is a universal collection, what holdings it does possess should allow the Time Traveler to extrapolate what came after the collection was abandoned; he should be able to predict the future from his understanding of the past. By Victorian standards, the fact that the Palace contains every branch of knowledge organized into a single linear narrative should make it the most valuable resource the Time Traveler could find for understanding the future.

**Everything, Narration, and Knowledge**

The Palace's failures can be read as a critique of the epistemology it embodies. Fisher argued that "[a]s collections become larger they become more intelligible". In contrast, "*The Time Machine* dramatizes a crisis of intelligibility"[xxxix], a crisis that comes to a head in the Palace. In this episode, Wells reveals the impossibility of the Victorian dream of universal and complete knowledge. The quest for complete knowledge was driven by the desire for a coherent understanding of the past. Yet, as theorists of narrative have argued, 'everything' and 'coherence' are irreconcilable. Arthur C. Danto writes,

> It is, I dare say, true that one could not at once obey the command to give an account of some happening, and the command to mention *everything*. Accounts […] must by their nature leave things out, and in history as elsewhere it is the mark of someone capable of organizing a subject that he knows what to exclude, and is able to assert that some things are more important than others…[if we were told *everything* that happened] the story would get submerged in all these details.[xl]

Danto argues that the goal of complete knowledge "fail[s] through succeeding"[xli]; in other words, including everything actually interrupts narrative and limits our understanding, rather than furthering it. This is precisely what happened in the real museums of Victorian Britain. As W. H. Flower, director of the British Museum (Natural History), noted in 1889, "We all know the old saying that the craving for riches grows as the wealth itself increases. Something similar is true of scientific collections brought together for the purpose of advancing knowledge. The larger they are the more their deficiencies seem to become conspicuous; the more desirous we are to fill up the gaps which provokingly interfere with our extracting from them the complete story they have to tell."[xlii] The desire to tell a 'complete story' ballooned collections to unmanageable proportions and, ironically, interrupted the continuous narrative of the museum, as separate disciplines were moved into their own institutions, like the Natural History Museum, which opened in 1881. Science and art, literature and technology, could no longer be housed under one roof. Completionism led to the collapse of universality.

Thus, in 1895, when *The Time Machine* was published, the Palace of Green Porcelain was as much a fantasy as the Eloi or the Morlocks. The pragmatic concerns of real Victorian museums – the size of existing buildings, for one – are cast aside in the Palace, allowing the collection to stretch to impossible proportions in order to test the actual value of 'complete' knowledge. Upon first entering the Palace, the Time Traveler reports:

> Then I perceived, standing strange and gaunt in the centre of the hall, what was clearly the lower part of a huge skeleton. I recognised by the oblique feet that it was some extinct creature after the fashion of the Megatherium. The skull and the upper bones lay beside it in the thick dust…Further in the gallery was the huge skeleton barrel of a Brontosaurus. (72)

The choice of fossils is striking. In the 1890s, sauropods like the brontosaurus were popularly understood to be "clumsy, lumbering behemoths, barely able to support their weight out of water."[xliii] Similarly, the megatherium (an extinct ground sloth) was seen as an ungainly hybrid monster.[xliv] Formed of apparently incongruous parts, it was believed to be

too large and ill-proportioned to be functional. Such animals were thus used as metaphors of obsolescence, as in George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* (1876), where "megatherium" is shorthand for "an antediluvian point of view."[xlv] These fossils confirm the Time Traveler's "museum hypothesis", but also evoke that which is outdated, overly large, and unwieldy. They are, that is, perfect symbols for the universal survey museum. Wells revisits the symbolic potential of the megatherium in *Mr. Blettsworthy on Rampole Island* (1928),[xlvi] a novel that Robert Philmus argues is itself a re-visitation or revision of *The Time Machine*. In it, megatheria represent "the survival of the unfittest…palpable embodiments of the devastating (but self-preserving) inertia of 'states, organisations and institutions."[xlvii] We can take the choice of fossils, then, as part of Wells's wider critique of museums and their project of universal historicism.

Universal collections are not just inert and unwieldy. They are unnarratable. In the same month (April 1895) that the Palace episode appeared in the *New Review*, Wells published a semi-satirical essay entitled "Of the Fallacy of Museums".[xlviii] Here, Wells argues that the organization of the nation's museums was counterproductive to education; the "labyrinthine" collections were so large that they could not be synthesized into useful information and, like the White Sphinx in the year 802,701, "the specimen becomes the answer to a riddle without the question."[xlix] The object is present, but its significance is lost; it has become "a quotation without its proper context". Wells's use of a literary metaphor here suggests that the role of narrative in museums was on his mind at this moment in time. Thus, in the Palace episode, the majority of the collection is left undescribed, as the Time Traveler merely tells his audience: "I cannot tell you all the story of that long afternoon. It would require a great effort of memory to recall my explorations in all the proper order…As the evening drew on, my interest waned. I went through gallery after gallery, dusty, silent, often ruinous…" (75-6). It is simply too much for the Time Traveler to take in. Crucially, it is *narrative* that fails. He cannot tell the *story* of his visit, cannot organize what he has seen into something of significance.

Here we might usefully turn to the narratological distinction Frank Kermode draws between *Kairos* and *Chronos*. *Chronos* is analogous to Danto's "everything"; it is "simple chronicity…humanly uninteresting successiveness".[l] In order to make sense of "passing time" we need to imbue it with significance. Kermode uses *Kairos*, then, to mean "a point in time filled with significance".[li] Danto argues that it is narrative that provides this significance. "To ask for the significance of an event, in the *historical* sense of the term, is to ask a question which can be answered only in the context of a *story*."[lii] The exhausted forgetfulness of the Time Traveler foregrounds the inherent paradox of a quest for complete and coherent knowledge. Completion interrupts coherence, while coherence suggests acts of selection. No collection can have both. By demonstrating the failure of narrative in the face of a truly complete collection, Wells reveals that narrative is not a benign organizational strategy but rather a *fiction*, which selects and excludes in order to generate apparently universal 'truths'. As Carlyle acknowledges, "[n]arrative is, by its nature, of only one dimension; only travels forward towards one, or towards successive points: Narrative is *linear*, Action is *solid.*"[liii] Narrative produces the kind of history valued in the Victorian period: linear, teleological, and allegedly neutral. Yet this is a fabrication, which disguises the acts of selection and exclusion that underpin its construction.

Carlyle argues that history must be "compressed" into a narrative in order to become "Universal".[liv] Universality, then, is not 'everything' but rather carefully selected events strung together to form "'chains,' or chainlets, of 'causes and effects'."[lv] Historical narrative, Kermode argues, is "a maker of concords between past, present, and future, a provider of significance to mere chronicity".[lvi] By "concords", Kermode means the fictions we employ to make knowledge appear continuous or progressive.[lvii] This is not a case simply of inventing connections, but also forgetting that which does not fit within the constructed linear narrative. In *Amnesiac Selves*, Nicholas Dames describes the Victorian production of "useful" public memory out of the "chaos" of personal recollection as a form of amnesia, which remembers only what is beneficial.[lviii] "Acts of memory in the Victorian novel must be *necessary*—must *signify*—and must signify by standing in a directly causal relation, or an obviously symbolic relation, to the present, to the moment of narrating and beyond".[lix] Though Dames discusses the novel specifically, it is clear that this describes public memory in the Victorian period more broadly. The Time Traveler attempts to use these techniques to narrate and to narrativize the far future, to make it *signify*. His embedded story represents an attempt to establish a chain of events between 1895 and 802,701, to generate a "directly causal relation or an obviously symbolic relation" between the far future and Victorian Britain. Yet, in the end, he fails to render the future coherent. This failure is most evident in the Palace, because the historical narratives the Time Traveler reaches for—linear and teleological—cannot grapple with the vast expanse of deep time or the flux and contingency of evolutionary change represented there.

**Narrative Instability**

Far from being a mere "scene" separate from the plot of *The Time Machine*[lx], the Palace episode is paradigmatic of the novella's main concern: the inadequacy of Victorian historicism. The Palace's conflict between historical narrative and the reality of the 'chaos of being' plays out across the novella in various forms of instability or inconsistency. Elana Gomel notes that *The Time Machine* both ascribes to and undermines a belief in determinism.[lxi] The idea that the course of history is predetermined and can be known in advance is inscribed in *The Time Machine* through the mechanism of time travel, which suggests that the future already exists and is fixed. This is how the Time Traveler explains his theory to his guests in the *New Review* version of the novella: "From the absolute point of view the universe is a perfectly rigid and unalterable apparatus, entirely predestinate, entirely complete and finished."[lxii] Yet, equally, the Time Traveler returns to the Victorian age to warn his society of this potential future, meaning that he believes that it can be changed. Gomel summarizes this paradox: "Determinism requires causality, but causality excludes determinism."[lxiii] Alongside what Gomel calls competing "chronotopes" are the contradictory timescales that Patrick Parrinder identifies in the novella. "The two scales, those of historical time measured by the rise and fall of cultures and civilisations, and of biological time measured by the evolution and devolution of the species, are superimposed upon one another…*The Time Machine* is plotted with both timescales, the evolutionary and the historiographic, in mind, though these are incompatible in certain respects."[lxiv] The ruinous buildings, including the Palace of Green Porcelain, belong to the shorter timescale, while the evolutionary changes wrought on humanity require the longer timescale to be

effected. These inconsistencies, I suggest, enact the conflict between Victorian historicism—represented by the deterministic chronotope and the historiographic timescale—and reality, defined by its contingency and its vastness. This conflict is employed to identify the Time Traveler as an historicist and to invite readers to question his views through the very form of the novella and the marked disparity between his confident theories and his subjective and fragmented narration.

The Time Traveler formulates his theories about the future on the historic timescale and within the deterministic chronotope, using the tools of Victorian historicism: teleology, causation, and universals. In so doing, he ignores the equally present evolutionary timescale and chronotope of indeterminism. Yet, these infiltrate the narrative, undermining his attempts to make his tale cohesive and coherent. The Time Traveler employs inductive reasoning as he observes the future world and builds theories out of his observations. Inductive reasoning is the basis of the scientific method, yet the Time Traveler is far from a careful scientist. He moves from observation to theory almost instantaneously, rather than carefully gathering data and testing his assumptions. In his failure to correctly follow the scientific method, we discover that the Time Traveler is far more of an historicist than a scientist. The tools he uses are those of philosophies of history; Danto points to Karl Löwith's definition of 'philosophy of history' as "a systematic interpretation of universal history in accordance with a principle by which historical events and successions are unified and directed towards an ultimate meaning."[lxv] Here we see the hallmarks of Victorian historicism, especially as it was displayed in Victorian museums: the emphasis on universality and unity, the teleological assumption that history is moving toward something, the reduction of phenomena to universal laws, and the use of these laws to try to understand the future. In this context, we can see that language the Time Traveler uses to formulate his theories is grounded in Victorian historicism. He suggests the reality of universal laws that apply equally to the nineteenth century and to the future world through his assertion that the future is the "logical" (49) and "natural" (62) result of social systems in the nineteenth century. The future is also, in his words, "inevitable" (51), suggesting a deterministic and teleological understanding of history. His language further couches his theories as objective and rational, based on "plainly", "evidently", and "naturally" apparent facts (49, 62, 63). He asserts things "must" (62) have occurred in a certain way, and that he has "no doubt" (51) that his conclusions are correct. It is the confirmation of these views – the "patient readjustments by which the conquest of animated nature had been attained" (73) – that he expects to find in the Palace.

Yet, he simultaneously reminds us of the subjectivity of his impressions: "it seemed to me", (44), "it appeared to me" (44), "I fancied" (46), "I guessed" (51), "I wondered vaguely" (68), and "I could not tell" (68). The reader is constantly confronted with the fallibility of his impressions; he tells us "my guesses and impressions were slipping and sliding" from one theory to another (61). The technique of delayed decoding further undermines the Time Traveler's stated confidence. Rather than discovering a theory is flawed at the same time as the Time Traveler, as new evidence comes to light, we are told outright that each theory is wrong, even as the Time Traveler explains it: "Later I was to appreciate how far it fell short of the reality" (49); "Afterward I found I had got only a half-truth – or only a glimpse of one facet of the truth" (50); "Very simple was my explanation, and plausible enough – as most

wrong theories are!" (52); "It was an obvious conclusion, but it was absolutely wrong" (57); "I very soon felt that it fell far from the truth" (62). This technique draws attention to the fallacy of his confidence and invites us to interrogate his method of arriving at these erroneous conclusions.

Each of the Time Traveler's incorrect theories is based on extrapolation from the social structures of the nineteenth century. Here, he follows the methodology of Victorian historicism, which insisted on the 'chain' of cause and effect, stretching back through millennia. Thus, the Time Traveler suggests that what he finds in the future is "a logical consequence" (50) of the nineteenth century; yet this is only because he constructs all his theories by "proceeding from the problems of our own age" (62). As Kermode argues, "it seems to be a condition attaching to the exercise of thinking about the future that one should assume one's own time to stand in an extraordinary relation to it".[lxvi] Wells called *The Time Machine* "a historical novel the other way round"[lxvii] and here we can see the Time Traveler exhibiting teleological thinking in reverse. He understands all of history as leading up to Victorian Britain, and therefore the entirety of the future as stemming *from* Victorian Britain. Thus, he says his conclusions are "what one would expect" (49). Yet, this is not evidence of universal and natural laws, but is rather a failure of imagination on the Time Traveler's part. As Parrinder argues, when imagining future worlds "[a]bsolute novelty is not in question, since all that the most startling prophecy can offer is a relative novelty, at least once the prophecy is encoded in language…The demands of possibility and verisimilitude…ensure that the future can only be modelled on what we already know."[lxviii] The Time Traveler's construction of the future as a "grotesque repetition"[lxix] of the present allows no room for the "Darwinian interpretation of evolution as a contingent and stochastic process".[lxx]

In contrast to Victorian historicism's insistence on traceable links in a chain of cause and effect, making events of the past and the future explicable, Wells understood the "fitful and uncertain"[lxxi] nature of evolution which proceeded, Darwin insisted, by "no fixed law".[lxxii] Thus, Wells insisted that he wrote *The Time Machine* to counter "the placid assumption" of progressive evolution endemic to the late-Victorian period; he wrote the novella to express his "vision of the aimless torture in creation".[lxxiii] Both the 'fitful', 'uncertain', and 'aimless' nature of evolution and the immense amount of time needed for change to be accomplished discredit even the Time Traveler's final theory, which posits that the Eloi are "mere fatted cattle" (71) for the dominant Morlocks. Parrinder argues that this theory only makes sense within the historiographic timescale: "implicitly, the level at which *The Time Machine* operates as a social fable about class conflict appeals to historical rather than biological reasoning."[lxxiv] Gomel, in contrast, rejects the Time Traveler's understanding of the future outright because it can't function within the longer evolutionary timescale: "An allegory presupposes a stable system of correspondences that enables a consistent decoding of the text"[lxxv], but the vast stretch of 800,000 years disallow that 'stable system of correspondence'. His refusal to acknowledge the evolutionary timescale and the chronotope of indeterminism when formulating his theories demonstrates that his ideas cannot be taken as the final truth; they simply don't fully explain the future world.

The Time Traveler's attempt to make sense of the future by constructing a 'stable system of correspondence' and forging a 'chain' of events from the nineteenth century to 802,701 can

be seen as an attempt to humanize deep time. As Paul Ricoeur suggests, "time becomes human time to the extent that it is organized after the manner of a narrative".[lxxvi] The Time Traveler tells himself a story that makes the confusing world he finds himself in seem "clear as daylight" by positioning the world he knows as the source of all he sees. Yet, it can only be a story. This is because, as Charles Lyell insisted, "In the economy of the world, I can find no traces of a beginning, no prospect of an end".[lxxvii] Narrative, which requires beginnings and endings, is disallowed within the unimaginable scale of evolutionary time, a scale that is staged within the colossal collection of the Palace.

**Human vs. Inhuman Time**

Equally disallowed on the evolutionary scale is the construction of a complete linear series to connect the nineteenth century to the distant future, because, as Wells was well aware, while the dream of a complete understanding of *historic* time might be just plausible,[lxxviii] a complete record of *geologic* time was impossible. This is underlined by the description of the megatherium that greets the Time Traveler when he enters the Palace; rather than a fully articulated series of bones, the fossil is in fragments. The "oblique feet" of the megatherium, "the lower part of a huge skeleton", with its nearby skull seems to deliberately evoke the "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone" and "shattered visage" of Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ozymandias", that ubiquitous nineteenth-century symbol of fallen and forgotten empires.[lxxix] This "strange and gaunt" symbol, then, insists that neither the deep past nor the future can be known in anything but a fragmented form.

As Darwin wrote in the *Origin*:

> I look at the geological record as a history of the world imperfectly kept and written in a changing dialect. Of this history we possess the last volume alone, relating only to two or three countries. Of this volume, only here and there a short chapter has been preserved, and of each page, only here and there a few lines.[lxxx]

It is significant, in the mid-nineteenth century, that Darwin employs the metaphor of a history book. 'History' here represents the ideal of complete knowledge, which within geology is an impossibility. Darwin's metaphor suggests that the methodology of history cannot be extended to the sciences. In deep time, the series is indelibly fractured. Here we may return to the Palace's library, and the Time Traveler's description of "the decaying vestiges of books. They had long since dropped to pieces, and every semblance of print had left them. But here and there were warped boards and cracked metallic clasps that told the tale well enough" (75). Wells makes literal Darwin's metaphor, dramatizing the long expanse of 800,000 through these few remaining scraps of otherwise lost books. Both Darwin and Wells insist that nineteenth-century historical practices, with their quest for completion and universality, cannot extend to the deep time of the geologic record and cannot account for the origins of the earth – or its eventual end.

Several chapters before Darwin compared the geologic record to a history "imperfectly kept", he suggested that "the crust of the earth is a vast museum; but the natural collections have been imperfectly made, and only at long intervals of time."[lxxxi] His expectation of both the museum and the history book is that they will be complete and

coherent; the fossil record, therefore, is an "imperfect" version of each. Yet, as fields like archaeology, paleontology, and geology extended the past further and further back in time, both history and the museums that displayed it struggled to maintain the unbroken sequence of complete, universal knowledge. Thus, later in the *Origin*, Darwin turns from this metaphorical museum, which still evokes the expectation of completeness, to real museums, which were failing to meet that expectation: "Now let us turn to our richest museums, and what a paltry display we behold! That our [palaeontological] collections are imperfect is admitted by every one."[lxxxii] Despite Victorian museums' aims, the fossil record is a series that can never be completed. This is exemplified in the Palace of Green Porcelain's paleontological display, which prominently houses two (formerly) articulated skeletons: a *Megatherium* and a *Brontosaurus* (or something very like each). The Time Traveler notes that "a very splendid array of fossils it must have been" (73), yet in this choice of specimens Wells highlights the gaps in the collection, which reflect the imperfect nature of the fossil record: the *Megatherium* and *Brontosaurus* were separated in history by over one hundred and forty million years.

The developing fields of paleontology, geology, and archaeology forced Victorians to confront "humanity's belatedness in the story of the earth's past".[lxxxiii] Adelene Buckland argues that this generated anxiety about the possibility of authentication without human record: "if the earth was not merely a few thousand but perhaps millions of years old, then most of its history predated human life. Nobody had seen the processes of the early earth in action".[lxxxiv] This is in stark contrast to the conception of 'history' in the nineteenth century. Carlyle, for instance, defined 'history' as "the essence of innumerable Biographies".[lxxxv] It is witnessed, it is recorded, and mankind is its subject. Here we can return to Darwin's distinction between a history book and the geologic record: one operates on human time and the other on inhuman time. If human time is the application of narrative to time then inhuman time, by extension, cannot be narrated. It is incomplete and eschews clear cause and effect. It will not follow the structures of narrative. It is a story that cannot be told.

Wells replicates this in the very structure of *The Time Machine*. The frame narrative operates in human time; it is coherent, linear, and complete. The inner narrative, of the year 802,701, operates on inhuman time. David Shackleton draws our attention to the fragmentary nature of earlier versions of the text, particularly the *National Observer* version, in which the Time Traveler's tale is repeatedly interrupted by objections and questions from his audience, rendering it more of a Socratic dialogue than a cohesive story. Parrinder asserts that Wells "bungled" this version of the story, as the "sheer imaginative power of his tale" is undermined by the audience's interruptions and outbursts.[lxxxvi] Yet, even when these interruptions are removed in the later versions of the text, the tale is interrupted by other forms of fragmentation. For instance, the Time Traveler repeatedly draws our attention to his inadequacy as a storyteller: "I'm afraid I cannot convey" (42); "I do not remember" (54); "I don't know how to convey" (55); "my story slips away from me" (59); "necessarily my memory is vague" (66). These moments create miniature gaps in the text, reminding the audience that they don't possess all the necessary information to understand the future world. The frequent delayed decoding further enacts a form of micro-prolepsis, fragmenting the linearity of the tale with references to 'later' and 'afterwards' and 'soon', jumping the audience forward in time. In the end, when the Time Traveler fails to provide definitive proof of his tale, he enjoins his audience to judge it by the criteria of "a

story" (87); yet, it fails on that count, too. It is left incomplete, as the Time Traveler fails to return to finish his tale for our frame narrator. The story of the 802,701 is also secondhand, coming to us through the frame narrator who equally struggles to make it tell, warning the reader that "In writing it down I feel with only too much keenness the inadequacy of pen and ink—and, above all, my own inadequacy—to express its quality" (41). Thus, we can see the earlier fragmentation carried on in a different form into the final version of the text. Across all versions, Wells is interested in the failure of narrative to humanize the vast expanses of time with which his text grapples, as well as the impossibility of understanding the future through the past.

**Threatened Dissolution**

I suggest, therefore, that the structure of the Time Traveler's tale, which seems to build towards the Palace in chapter eight, is deliberately unsatisfying in order to illustrate the problem with the Victorian application of narrative to history. The Time Traveler imposes narrative structures borrowed from romances and utopias onto his adventures, yet these structures fail, and fail to make sense of the world in which he finds himself. This failure is at its most pronounced in the Palace episode, rendering it a gap in the text, the wider textual fragmentation writ large. It is for this reason, I believe, that the Palace has been overlooked in critical accounts of *The Time Machine*. Yet, I suggest that the Palace chapter *must* be a gap in the story because it is a point of deep instability within the narrative. Each of the contradictory sense-making frames active in the text threatens to come to a head in the Palace. Parrinder argues that the historic and evolutionary timescales of the novella are successfully "superimposed upon one another" but "come into conflict" in the Palace: "The Palace of Green Porcelain, then, belongs to the foreshortened historical scale of future time—as it were, to AD 2701 rather than 802,701."[lxxxvii] Were the Time Traveler to examine the contents of the museum with the curiosity befitting a scientist, the contradiction in timescales would become both obvious and untenable. It is for this reason that he must be curiously uncurious, reporting that he had "little interest" (73) in the majority of the exhibits. Equally, the "conflicting interpretations of temporality" that Gomel identifies in the novella – one deterministic and one contingent—come into conflict in the Palace. Museums are deterministic; as Donald Preziosi argues, the historical museum creates a "syntactical relation between 'present' and the 'past' connected in a causal relationship of *incompletion and fulfilment.*" The past is constructed as a "prologue" to the present, and thus appears to "*pre-figure* our present, which in turn fulfils, completes, or 'proves' what the past imagines as its future."[lxxxviii] In this sense, the museum both should and simultaneously cannot give the Time Traveler what he seeks: it should explain clearly how the world of 802,701 came about; yet its inherent determinism would present this future as inevitable, while what the Time Traveler actually seeks is a way to *prevent* the world of 802,701. Free will is necessary for the moral of the text: the imperative to challenge the status quo of the Victorian age in order to prevent the degeneration of mankind. Thus, it was essential for Wells that contingency remained an active framework of his text.

The museum, therefore, is a potential site of dissolution, threatening to unravel the contradictory elements of the text through its orderly, linear presentation of time. In order to keep both timescales and both chronotopes active, the museum must be a blank, "unknown", "silent", a "puzzle" (72, 73, 74). The discordant elements of the text identified

by Parrinder and Gomel, among others, allow the text to be interpreted in multiple ways, which is encouraged, or we may even say *demanded,* by the novella, which hastens to remind us that even the Time Traveler's final theory about the future "may be as wrong an explanation as mortal wit could invent" (82). Equally, the Time Traveler's challenge to his audience to treat the story as a fiction invites interpretation. Here we can usefully turn to Kermode's distinction between fiction and myth:

> Myth operates within the diagram of ritual, which presupposes total and adequate explanations of things as they are and were: it is a sequence of radically unchangeable gestures. Fictions are for finding things out, and they change as the needs of sense-making change. Myths are the agents of stability, fictions the agents of change.[lxxxix]

What Wells offers us is a fiction, an agent of change. It prompts consideration and action. In contrast, the series as it was employed in Victorian history and the Victorian museum is a form of myth, which forecloses multiple interpretations and reinforces the status quo. The construction of history at the Palace, therefore, must be rejected, a rejection that reverberates throughout the rest of the text in its purposeful incoherence, its conflicting sense-making frames, its gaps, its fragmentation, its narrative dissatisfaction. The questions raised in the first half of the text are left unanswered, or answered only with facile theories that cannot hold up under scrutiny. The Time Traveler's leaps into the future—to 802,701, then some indeterminate stretch further into the future, "stopping ever and again" (85) through millions of years of time—represent a broken geologic record extending in the other direction, equally impossible to complete or fill in, both because the record is fragmented and because the drive for a complete history fails to recognize the randomness and contingency inherent to the "fitful and uncertain" progression of the world. Thus, the narrative of the novella is left incomplete, with the disappearance of the Time Traveler, leaving the future, for our unnamed narrator, "still black and blank" (90). As the Time Traveler warned, "I cannot tell you all the story."

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[i] Eugenio Donato, "The Museum's Furnace," *Textual Strategies*, ed. Josue V. Harari (London: Methuen & Co, Ltd, 1979): pp. 213-238, 221.
[ii] Thomas Carlyle, "On History," *Thomas Carlyle: Historical Essays* ed. Chris R. Vanden Bossche (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 7.
[iii] Carlyle, "On History," p. 8.
[iv] Harry M. Geduld, ed., *The Definitive Time Machine: A critical edition of H.G. Wells's Scientific Romance* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 40. Further references are cited parenthetically in the text.
[v] Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* second edition (London: Routledge, 2002).
[vi] Geduld, *Definitive Time Machine*, p. 163. Geduld reproduces the full text of *The Chronic Argonauts* and the *National Observer Time Machine*, as well as selections from the *New Review Time Machine.*
[vii] William Morris, *News from Nowhere: or, an epoch of rest, being some chapters from a utopian romance* (Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1893), pp. 70-73.
[viii] Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race* (Petersborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2002), p. 100.
[ix] Anonymous, "British Archaeological Association," *Hampshire Advertiser & Salisbury Guardian*, issue 1148 (August 09, 1845), p. 7. Edward Hawkins, "Museum of National Antiquities," *The Morning Post*, issue 22456 (November 22, 1845), p. 3.

[x] Rogert G. Kennedy, "Some Thoughts about National Museums at the End of the Century," *Studies in the History of Art,* Vol. 47, Symposium Papers XXVII: The Formation of National Collections of Art and Archaeology (1996):159-163, 160.
[xi] Robert Crossley, "In the Palace of Green Porcelain: Artefacts from the Museums of Science Fiction," *Science Fiction Essays and Studies* 43 (1990): 76-103, 77.
[xii] Geduld, *Definitive Time Machine*, p. 11.
[xiii] Ibid
[xiv] Wells's use of delayed decoding is also discuss by Firchow (2004) and Cantor and Hufnagel (2006). See note 18.
[xv] Ian Watt, *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 175.
[xvi] Geduld, *Definitive Time Machine*, p. 12.
[xvii] Geduld, *Definitive Time Machine*, p. 13.
[xviii] Crossley, 87.
[xix] Peter Firchow, "H.G. Wells's *Time Machine*: In Search of Time Future and Time Past," *The Midwest Quarterly* 45.2 (2004): 123-136; Paul A. Cantor and Peter Hufnagel, "The Empire of the Future: Imperialism and Modernism in H.G. Wells," *Studies in the Novel* 38.1 (2006): 36-56; Caroline Hovanec, "Rereading H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine*: Empiricism, Aestheticism, Modernism," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 58.4 (2015): 459-485; David Shackleton, "H.G. Wells, Geology, and the Ruins of Time," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 45.4 (2017): 839-855.
[xx] Simon J. James, *Maps of Utopia: H.G. Wells, Modernity, and the End of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 61.
[xxi] J.C. Robinson *On the Museum of Art: Introductory Addresses on the Science and Art Department and the South Kensington Museum No. 5*, Delivered 14th December 1857 (London: Chapman and Hall, 1858), p. 7.
[xxii] Robinson, *Museum of Art*, pp. 8-9.
[xxiii] Robinson, *Museum of Art*, p. 8.
[xxiv] Philip Fisher, *Making and Effacing Art: Modern American Art in a Culture of Museums* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 97.
[xxv] Robinson, *Museum of Art*, p. 29.
[xxvi] Robinson, *Museum of Art*, p. 29.
[xxvii] George Brown Goode, "The Museums of the Future," from the *Report of the National Museum, 1888-89* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), pp. 427-445, 431.
[xxviii] Goode, "Museums", p. 434.
[xxix] Fisher, *Making and Effacing Art*, p.23.
[xxx] Thomas Carlyle, "On History Again," *Historical Essays,* p. 16.
[xxxi] Carlyle, "On History," p. 9.
[xxxii] Ibid
[xxxiii] John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University* (London: Basil Montagu Pickering, 1873), p. 175.
[xxxiv] Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 39.
[xxxv] Elizabeth Deeds Ermarth, *The English Novel in History, 1840-1895* (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 84.
[xxxvi] Arthur C. Danto, *Narration and Knowledge,* new edition (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), p. 225.
[xxxvii] Geduld, *Definitive Time Machine*, p. 176.
[xxxviii] Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, "The Universal Survey Museum," *Art History* 3.4 (1980): 448-469, p. 450.
[xxxix] James, *Maps*, p. 52.
[xl] Danto, *Narration*, p. 131.
[xli] Danto, *Narration*, p. 114.
[xlii] William Henry Flower, *Essays on Museums: And Other Subjects Connected with Natural History* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1898), p. 14.
[xliii] Michael P. Taylor, "Sauropod Dinosaur Research: A Historical Review," *Dinosaurs and Other Extinct Saurians: a Historical Perspective*, ed. R.T. J. Moody, E. Buffetaut, D. Naish, and D. M. Martill, Geological Society, London, Special Publications, 343 (2010), pp. 361-386, p. 370.
[xliv] Gowan Dawson, *Show Me the Bone: Reconstructing Prehistoric Monsters in Nineteenth-Century Britain and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), p. 154.
[xlv] George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda* (New York: Barnes and Noble Classics, 2005), p. 609.
[xlvi] Many thanks to one of my reviewers for bringing this novel and its use of Megatheria to my attention.
[xlvii] Robert Philmus, "H.G. Wells's Revisi(tati)ons of *The Time Machine*," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 41.4 (1998): 427-452, p. 434.

[xlviii] Many thanks to Will Tattersdill for bringing this essay to my attention.
[xlix] H. G. Wells, 'Of the Fallacy of Museums', *New Budget* 4 (25 April 1894) p.18
[l] Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction,* 2nd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 46.
[li] Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*, p. 47.
[lii] Danto, *Narration*, p. 11.
[liii] Carlyle, "On History," p. 8.
[liv] Carlyle, "On History Again," p. 19.
[lv] Carlyle, "On History," p. 8.
[lvi] Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*, p. 56.
[lvii] Kermode, *Sense of an Ending,* p. 59.
[lviii] Nicholas Dames, *Amnesiac Selves: Nostalgia, Forgetting, and British Fiction, 1810-1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 3.
[lix] Dames, *Amnesiac Selves,* p. 6.
[lx] Geduld, *Definitive Time Machine,* p. 12.
[lxi] Elana Gomel, "Shapes of the Past and the Future: Darwin and the Narratology of Time Travel," *Narrative* 17.3 (2009): 334-352.
[lxii] Geduld, *Definitive Time Machine*, p. 177.
[lxiii] Gomel, "Shapes," p. 340.
[lxiv] Patrick Parrinder, *Shadows of the Future: H. G. Wells, Science Fiction and Prophecy* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1995), p. 42.
[lxv] Danto, *Narration*, p. 7.
[lxvi] Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*, p. 93.
[lxvii] Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 9.
[lxviii] Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 13.
[lxix] Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 14.
[lxx] Gomel, "Shapes," p. 336.
[lxxi] H.G. Wells, "Zoological Retrogression," in *H.G. Wells: Early Writings in Science and Science Fiction*, ed. By Robert M. Philmus and David Y. Hughes (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 158 – 168, 167.
[lxxii] Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*, ed. Gillian Beer, 2nd edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 231, 234.
[lxxiii] Quoted by Gomel, "Shapes", p. 339.
[lxxiv] Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 74.
[lxxv] Gomel, "Shapes," p. 343.
[lxxvi] Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative,* vol. 1, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 3.
[lxxvii] Charles Lyell, *Principles of Geology*, vol. 1, 3rd edition (London: John Murray, 1835), p. 91. Here, Lyell paraphrases James Hutton's *Theory of the Earth*, 1795.
[lxxviii] In fact, twenty-five years later, a complete outline of human history seemed not only plausible but possible, as Wells undertook his own *The Outline of History* (1919-1920). As Richard Barnett argues, Wells had "moved on" from the pessimism which defined *The Time Machine*; despite the outcome of the Great War, "his optimistic sense of progress had not, however, entirely deserted him" (Barnett, 215, 224). Yet, as Simon James argues, the history that Wells offers in the *Outline* is far different from that constructed in the Victorian universal survey museum. Rather, he offers a condensed and synthesized polemic that was to help "found a better state" (James, 114). See Richard Barnett, "Education or Degeneration: E. Ray Lankester, H.G. Wells, and *The Outline of History,*" *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 37.2 (2006): 203-229; Simon J. James, "A Prophet Looking Backwards: H.G. Wells's Curriculum for the Future," *English* 57.218 (2008): 107-124.
[lxxix] Percy Bysshe Shelley, *The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, vol. 3, ed. By William Michael Rossetti (London: John Slark, 1881), p. 25.
[lxxx] Darwin, *Origin*, p. 229.
[lxxxi] Darwin, *Origin,* p. 130.
[lxxxii][lxxxii] Darwin, *Origin*, p. 212.
[lxxxiii] Adelene Buckland, "Introduction," *Time Travelers: Victorian Encounters with Time and History,* ed. Adelene Buckland and Sadiah Qureshi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020)*,* p. xviii.
[lxxxiv] Buckland, "The World Beneath Our Feet," *Time Travelers,* p. 43.
[lxxxv] Carlyle, "On History," p. 5.
[lxxxvi] Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 37.

[lxxxvii] Parrinder, *Shadows*, p. 74.
[lxxxviii] Donald Preziosi, "Narrativity and the Museological Myths of Nationality," Museum Studies: An Anthology of Contexts, 2nd edition, ed. Bettina Messias Carbonell (Chichester, Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 84.
[lxxxix] Kermode, *Sense of an Ending*, p. 39.