Creativity in H.G.Wells: imagining the role of miracles in a secular society

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Abstract
This paper is about the role that creativity plays in life, namely through literary texts in which fantasy is paramount. Textual analysis will focus on a short story by H.G. Wells, a well-known writer of fantasy novels and romances. His books often revolve around the figure of the scientist and the limits of scientific knowledge, to stress the importance of preventing science from replacing religion and, consequently, to avoid the betrayal of the natural order. In this context, the short story “The Man Who Could Work Miracles”, first published in 1898, brings this concern into a new light, since it erases the figure of the scientist in order to test the consequences of the belief in supernatural powers by any person prone to rational argument. Starting with the concept of miracle, the paper will move the role of literary creativity in making sense of life even via narratives in which fantasy prevails to the extent of contradicting natural order and empirical knowledge. As H.G.Wells imagines the role of miracles in a secular society, he reflects on the effects of unlimited power and anticipates Yuval Harari’s conviction that fantasy is essential for personal and collective survival.

Keywords: creativity, fantasy, miracle, literature, power.