

# Critical Perspectives on Resistance in 21st-Century British Literature



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## PREFACE

The 21st-century British literature presents a powerful lens reflecting resistance to social transformation, evolving cultural perspectives and environmental instability that characterise the century. In this context, *Critical Perspectives on Resistance in 21st-Century British Literature*, composed of eleven chapters, explores complex expressions of this transformation, defiance and resiliency, displaying the intricate landscapes of 21st-century British literary works. The collection sets out on an intellectual journey, with each chapter acting as a unique compass to lead the reader through the complex manifestations of resistance waiting to be discovered in contemporary British literature. It appeals to general readers, including academicians, students and researchers who are interested in literary studies, cultural studies, sociology, humanities and particularly resistance and discourse analysis. The book provides an easily accessible approach resource about resistance in 21st-century British literature through its novelistic chapters.

Chapter One, titled “Choices in Winterson’s *Weight*: Personal Retelling as a Strategy of Resistance” by Amy Lee, focuses on Jeanette Winterson’s novel, *Weight* (2005), as a force of resistance opening the new century. It concludes that Winterson’s re-telling of the myth in a personal voice, putting her authentic self inside the myth, is not only bringing the myth to the new century but also provoking the readers to re-read and re-engage with the myth in a fresh context.

Chapter Two, titled “From Mud to Air: Eco-Memories as Environmental Resistance in Graham Swift’s *Out of This World*” by Anastasia Logotheti highlights *Out of This World* (1988), one of Graham Swift’s lesser-known works. The chapter displays that Swift’s depiction of the transition from captivity to freedom, from technology to nature, serves as a canvas for illustrating the importance of environmental resistance and delving into the “spirit of place” and how it affects freedom.

Chapter Three, titled “Resilient Toxic Masculinity: *Boys* and *The Gift* by Ella Hickson” by Belgin Bağlılar, discusses resilient toxic masculinity in Ella Hickson’s plays, *Boys* (2012) and *The Gift* (2018). The chapter investigates the harmful impact of toxic masculinity at both personal and interpersonal levels. Through Raewyn Connell’s theory of masculinity, it

also discusses how toxic masculinity is both reinforced and challenged throughout the selected works.

Another critical perspective on resistance in relation to gender issues is observed in Chapter Four, titled “Negotiating the Feminine Space in a Multiracial Society: Sites of Resistance in Andrea Levy’s *Small Island*” by Farah Ali. The chapter handles the representation of nontraditional female characters in Andrea Levy’s novel *Small Island* (2004) through Luce Irigaray’s mimesis theory. The chapter examines the characters’ rejecting society’s expectations, analysing their battles against the limitations imposed by gender roles and cultural conventions in Britain in the 1940s.

The book presents another outstanding aspect of resistance through Chapter Five, titled “Embodied Resistance through Psychogeographical Literary Moments in Contemporary British City Fiction” by Kai Qing Tan. The chapter explores the emotive enactment of psychogeographical literary moments in modern British city fiction. This chapter highlights the transformational effect of reading, providing evidence to support assertions regarding the socially perceptible implications of ethical realism found in urban fiction.

Chapter Six, titled “Resistance and Identity Formation in British Diasporic Fiction: Bernardine Evaristo’s *Girl, Woman, Other*,” by Leman Demirbaş, situates Evaristo’s novel *Girl, Woman, Other* within the context of black British diaspora fiction and discusses how the novel explores the themes of resistance and identity formation among British diasporic communities. The chapter reveals different forms of resistance employed by the characters in the novel in relation to race, gender and class, with reference to the critical arguments of Hall, Brah and Quayson.

Chapter Seven, titled “No Big Conspiracy: Poetic Humanity and the Fiction of Resistance in *Never Let Me Go* and *Klara and The Sun*” by Malek Hardan Mohammad, delves into Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (2005) and *Klara and the Sun* (2021), revealing the contradictory character of resistance in settings of anxiety around science. The chapter examines Ishiguro’s fiction, in these two novels and in his screenplay for *Living* (2022), as a portrayal of humanity at the crossroads of interminable lines of motion: paranoia, resistance and literature.

Another chapter presenting a critical perspective on resistance in relation to gender issues with a different aspect is Chapter Eight. Titled “Theatrical Rendition of Trauma and Resistance in Martin Crimp’s *The Country*” by Muhammed Metin Cameli, the chapter scrutinises how women are portrayed on stage as resisting both physical and psychological abuse through Crimp’s play, *The Country* (2000). This chapter examines



the playwright's dramatic devices and challenges readers to reflect on their instances of defying social norms and capitalism.

Chapter Nine, titled "Holes and the Whole: Which is Which Witch?" by Nikolina Nedeljkov, provides insights into the shadow of Stewart Home's novels *Tainted Love* (2005) and *Memphis Underground* (2007). The chapter examines Home's rebellious language, illuminating the possibility of disadvantaged voices emerging and resisting injustice. Within the subversive narrative of Home, this chapter examines identity, continuity and borders, as well as oppressive mechanisms of political supremacy based on dominance and subordination toward the potential of the polyphony of pluralist discourse in the key of grassroots resistance.

Chapter Ten, titled "Resistance and Social Change in *The Ickabog* of Joanne Kathleen Rowling" by Selin Turan, examines the story of resistance to inequity and injustice in Rowling's children's novel *The Ickabog* (2020). The chapter demonstrates how social change is sparked by female solidarity and results in political and economic advancement.

Lastly, Chapter Eleven, titled "Scattered Subalternities: Ecological Resistance in Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*" by Sezgi Öztıp Haner, explores how the novel *Animal's People* (2007) by the British author of English and Indian descent draws attention to the evolution and toxification of postcolonial ecologies, which extend even to the bodies of subaltern inhabitants. Specifically, it examines how unyielding colonial and capitalist intrusions influence the inseparable and symbiotic coexistence between human and nonhuman agents as ecological units. The theoretical framework of this study then brings together frameworks from postcolonial ecocriticism and postcolonial literary studies' engagement with disaster under neoliberal globalisation.

With the elaborative findings and discussion presented in each chapter, the book provides an insight into the complex interactions between identity, resistance and social norms in the context of modern British literature, thus contributing to the literature. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to the insightful contributors of the book and the editorial team at Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their guidance during the publishing process.

**Nilay Erdem Ayyıldız**



## CHAPTER ONE

# CHOICES IN JEANETTE WINTERSON'S *WEIGHT*: PERSONAL RE-TELLING AS A STRATEGY OF RESISTANCE

AMY LEE

### **Introduction: Sedimentary Rock Strata as Pages of a Book**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century was welcomed with a lot of different sentiments across the globe: excitement, anticipation, joy, but also a certain degree of anxiety as all faced the unknown future. Advancements in the various aspects of science and technology on the whole have a positive impact on human living conditions, but the different speeds of development across the globe and even across different aspects of life have resulted in inconsistencies that sometimes make life awkward and difficult. While the external material world is changing with every scientific and technological advancement, the inner world of human thoughts and feelings does not always evolve at the same speed, giving rise to frustration, isolation, and loneliness. At the same time that the material world is moving forward and welcoming the new, our internal emotional world is struggling with the loss of orientation. To many, during such times when we are to take a step to enter into the new, a review of and reflection on what has always been the core of the previous times can serve as an important anchor to steady the step and to resist the anxiety while continuing onward.

The Canongate Myth Series may be considered one of such projects on the cusp of the new century. The project is based on the view that “[m]yths are universal and timeless stories that reflect and shape our lives – they explore our desires, our fears, our longings, and provide narratives that remind us what it means to be human.”<sup>1</sup> In 1999, prominent writers from

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<sup>1</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), iii.

different parts of the world were invited to choose and re-tell a myth “in a contemporary and memorable way,”<sup>2</sup> which together form a collection of personal, cultural, and historical responses to and interpretations of these common treasures of humankind. In these re-tellings, a range of 21st-century understandings of the age-old stories from these writers’ individual positions and conditions are seen. Jeanette Winterson’s *Weight* (2005), which is a re-telling of the myth of Atlas bearing the weight of the world and his encounter with Heracles, is a unique voice bearing the tint of resistance, which is very much the spirit of the Myth Series itself.

This voice of resistance is evident right at the beginning of the act of re-telling. Before the introductory chapter, the paratext provides an interesting and symbolic link between the formation of sedimentary rock and the pages of a book. While the layers of sediment pile on top of each other over long periods of time, the formation of sedimentary rock is not simply a process of continuous accumulation, as erosions happen simultaneously. When the narrative voice makes the comparison that the “strata of sedimentary rock are like the pages of a book, each with a record of contemporary life written on it. Unfortunately, the record is far from complete.”<sup>3</sup> It is alerting readers to the on-going process of both erasure and addition of materials when stories are being told. Readers are thus given a taste of the nature and value of the re-telling of the Atlas myth that follows, which will be a resistance to the usual “complete” story with a clear boundary and closure.

Winterson’s re-telling of the myth, involving not only Atlas and Heracles but additional characters from across different genres of narratives, has attracted much critical attention and discussion. Its content, as well as the way it is being told, illustrate in multiple dimensions its resistant nature against conventional storytelling strategies and meanings. Sev Ates employs “palimpsest” as the basis to examine the way the text functions, defining palimpsest as that which “explicates [the] pluralistic, multi-layered nature of the text”<sup>4</sup> and identifying it as a “device [Winterson] uses as a strategy to comment on the nature of storytelling.”<sup>5</sup> This description highlights Winterson’s transgression of one of the most important features of the telling of mythical stories: the third-person “objective” narrator. Here, readers are made aware of the act/art of the storytelling designed by a distinct personality and that “the palimpsest, an oxymoronic structure of

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ix-x.

<sup>4</sup> Anı Sev Ateş, “‘I want to tell the story again:’ The Palimpsests of Jeanette Winterson’s *Weight*,” *RumeliDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, no. 31 (2022): 1359.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

fragmentation and wholeness”<sup>6</sup> being the story structure is the intended result of the decisions of an author behind the scene, unlike the objectivity in the usual myths.

This feature of the hand of a distinct storyteller made visible is also the focus in a critical discussion of Margaret Atwood's *Penelopiad* (2005) side by side with Winterson's *Weight*, both works being the early members of the Canongate Myth Series. Atwood and Winterson are both referred to as trickster-artists, who keep some of the original materials of the stories they have chosen to retell, and add new contents from across different genres and times to create new stories that are recognisable but much enriched in personal and cultural meaning, as well as in values for contemporary readers. Winterson's rendition of storytelling as a geological process, for example, is not only an apt allusion to the lengthy process of re-creating the story of Atlas and Heracles from a Greek myth to a 21<sup>st</sup> century story, but also shows how far the content has travelled from being a straight-forward heroic story of the gods to an intimate personal pondering of “loneliness, isolation, responsibility, burden, and freedom too.”<sup>7</sup> As boldly claimed by the narrator, the “cunning transformer storyteller,”<sup>8</sup> this version “has a very particular end not found elsewhere.”<sup>9</sup> Winterson's *Weight* is a literary sedimentary rock that involves complex processes of layering and erosion, trapping many different lifeforms in between the layers and resulting in unusual shapes and forms because of on-going erosion.

The following is an examination of this literary sedimentary rock, which is the opposite of a natural formation, and takes the expression “I want to tell the story again,” which has appeared in different parts of the narrative, as the central idea around which *Weight* is built. I propose that the key components of this refrain, which include the narrative voice(s) (i.e., “I”), the multiple possibilities (i.e., “story”), and the eternal repetition (i.e., “again”), are distinct and critical manifestations of the authorial decision in this contemporary version of the myth. In her choice to re-write this 21<sup>st</sup>-century version of the Atlas and Heracles myth, Winterson is reclaiming the various possibilities of this cultural treasure of mankind by asking questions about the personal voice, its role in making meaning during the construction of stories, and the limitless freedom that the future promises if one decides

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), xiv.

<sup>8</sup> Leyla Adigüzel and Kuğu Tekin, “Jeanette Winterson as the Trickster-Artist in *Weight*,” *The Journal of Social Sciences Institute* 52 (2021): 256.

<sup>9</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), xiv.

to take up the task of telling stories. Making choices, highlighted in different aspects of this re-telling, is the strongest action of resistance to/of the times, as it enables one to continuously re-create new stories and new meanings from the accumulated materials of our ancestors.

### **Resistance in the Narrative Voice: “I want to tell the story again”**

The strong presence of a first-person narrator in this contemporary version of the myth is felt even before the story itself. On the page for dedication, the author has written “For Deborah Warner, who lifted the weight.”<sup>10</sup> The direct reference to the title of the novella, the weight of the world that has fallen onto Atlas’ shoulders, is unmistakable, and so is the juxtaposition of the author/the narrator and the titular hero. The ostensive presence of an individual narrator’s voice is a deviation from the conventions of myth telling: “[t]he first thing Winterson does is to set her work free from the third-person narrative constraint of the myth tradition.”<sup>11</sup> Free from the constraint, contemporary myth becomes a very different storytelling experience for the readers: the “concrete” presence of a first-person narrator and the decisions made by this narrator to allocate the telling of the story to other characters in the tale at different times. The presence of the “I” in *Weight* is transgressive not only because it ushers in a knowable narrator, but also because this narrator involves other characters in the story to make their own presentations from their own perspectives, making the myth a polyphonic one.

In the paratext, the narrator was explicit about the autobiographical nature of this re-telling, saying that she wrote it “directly out of [her] own situation. There is no other way.”<sup>12</sup> The ancient story of Atlas, who was penalised to bear the weight of the world due to his own fault, and his encounter with Heracles, who similarly has to perform the twelve labours as a punishment, is re-presented in the personal voice of a narrator who reflects on the weight that she is bearing and dedicates the book to someone who lifted the weight for her in her 21<sup>st</sup>-century literary pondering. The narrator told us that she was given away by her mother and later rejected by her adopted mother. Because these two women had made such a decision,

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., vii.

<sup>11</sup> Leyla Adigüzel and Kuğu Tekin, “Jeannette Winterson as the Trickster-Artist in *Weight*,” *The Journal of Social Sciences Institute* 52 (2021): 257.

<sup>12</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), xiv.

the narrator was left to say, "Having no one to carry me, I learned to carry myself. My girlfriend says I have an Atlas complex."<sup>13</sup> Her story is told as a story of punishment, the penalty being the burden of herself, an intolerable and incomprehensible burden.

In narrating this part of her story, the narrator ponders the conditions of human life, the work of fate on how our lives turn out, and how our present is crushed by the weight of our past. She writes, "[w]e lie helpless in the force of patterns inherited and patterns re-enacted by our own behaviour."<sup>14</sup> Despite the fact that she was "good at walking away"<sup>15</sup> due to her long experience of being rejected, she was still burdened by the weight that was on her back, like Atlas. At the end of this section, which is entitled "Leaning on the Limits of Myself," the narrator repeats "I can lift my own weight" three times before closing the chapter with "I will tell the story again."<sup>16</sup> Here we have a glimpse of the meaning of the re-telling: having found in Atlas a similar fate as herself (i.e. who shoulders a burden which is almost too great to carry), the narrator uses this story to explore possibilities to get out of the situation and ways to move beyond those patterns of behaviour that humankind has inherited. The development of Atlas' story is also a mental exploration for an outlet in the narrator's life.

Winterson's response to the question of autobiography in this re-written myth is that "[a]utobiography is not important. Authenticity is important."<sup>17</sup> It does not matter whether the "biographical" information she presents about herself is factual, and in fact, it is generally felt that "[a]longside the revisioned myth of Atlas and Heracles, Winterson fictionalises herself in a new cover version."<sup>18</sup> What matters is that she is using this "authentic" self to "be the molten stuff that welds together disparate elements"<sup>19</sup> of the narrative, which, as she describes, is the incomplete record of life. Side by side with Atlas and Heracles, the first-person narrator becomes part of the story and is in a position to use Atlas and Heracles' encounter as a tool to experiment with the thoughts and feelings of someone trying to get out of

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., xv.

<sup>18</sup> Fiona Hobden, "From philosophy to psychotherapy: retelling the story in Jeanette Winterson's *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (2005)," *New Voices in Classical Reception Studies* 11 (2016): 21.

<sup>19</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), xv.

an immense burden and to give a chance to different responses and outcomes to present themselves.

The opportunity to get into the minds of Atlas and Heracles is another transgression that *Weight* has made through the introduction of a first-person narrator. The presence of this individual voice (in this case, a feminine persona who is accepted as a representative of Winterson, the author) symbolises a breakthrough in the way the story is told. It is not just the appearance of an extra person who tells the story, but a new concept in the rendition of a myth: that the mythic heroes are all individuals who have their own desires, fears, and a range of other emotions, besides being performers of the feats they are famous for. “*Weight* displays such playful crossing of ontological borders between different story worlds. The latter are narrated alternately by Winterson’s alter ego, Atlas, Heracles, and an omniscient third-person narrator.”<sup>20</sup> Due to the active participation of Winterson’s alter ego in the story, Atlas and Heracles are both given a chance to share their thoughts and show themselves to be heroic but human.

This re-presentation of the mythic heroes is not simply a new way of telling their stories. In the traditional context of the third-person omniscient narrator, readers are given the details of the deeds performed by these heroes and are led to admire, sympathize, fear, or pity what fate has prepared for them, mainly based on their behaviour and the consequences. Allowing the heroes to speak for themselves does not change their heroic deeds, but it opens the readers’ eyes to the reason why they perform these tasks and how they view the choices they have made—if they are indeed choices. In other words, when the narrator of an event is different, the meaning and value of that event also change. The stories of Atlas and Heracles become something different from a collection of heroic deeds which exhibit their superhuman strength and stamina when told from their own perspectives.

### **Resistance in the New Contents: “I want to tell *the* story again”**

“My father was Poseidon. My mother was the Earth”<sup>21</sup> is the beginning of Atlas’ own version of the story. Although the “facts” are correct, this narrative reads very differently from the conventional, straightforward tale of the hero that is handed down to us from previous millennia. What follows

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<sup>20</sup> Hilde Steals, “The Penelopiad” and “Weight”. Contemporary Parodic and Burlesque Transformations of Classical Myths,” *College Literature* 36, no. 4 (2009): 111.

<sup>21</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), 11.



from this factual introduction is Atlas's reflection on himself. When he says, "I am as turbulent as my father. I am as brooding as my mother,"<sup>22</sup> he is not referring to lineage but to the intimate characteristics of his parents from his observations and to his understanding of himself. To further describe his personality, he makes references to his brother Prometheus, who stole fire, and juxtaposes himself as the one who "fought for freedom."<sup>23</sup> He was punished because he made a choice against Zeus, and his choice put him on the side of the losers. From this perspective, his story is a story of suffering for a personal choice.

Atlas tells us that his name means "the long suffering one,"<sup>24</sup> as if he was destined to suffer when he was born. Before the decision to fight against Zeus, his life story was simple: "I had a farm. I had cattle. I had a vineyard. I had daughters."<sup>25</sup> This list of material possessions however does not present a complete picture of the hero, for it does not show how he feels about these possessions, both before he lost them and after. In *Weight*, however, readers are invited into the personal world of Atlas during those intimate moments of suffering and to make meaning out of the suffering. When the Kosmos was brought to him, Atlas mentally prepared for the penalty: "I could hardly breathe. I could not raise my head. I tried to shift slightly or to speak. I was dumb and still as a mountain,"<sup>26</sup> but the burden was too great and he crouched silently through time.

Atlas' version of the story successfully renders him to be a poetic, reflective, and introverted character who is eager to observe the world and its beings and experience life in a careful and considerate manner. During his long penalty, he discovered that he could hear everything from the world and began to decode these sounds and conversations, for his love of the world and the beings in it was great. After a long time, he had merged with his burden: "There is no longer Atlas and the world, there is only the World Atlas. Travel me and I am continents. I am the journey you must make."<sup>27</sup> At this point, the voice of Atlas is almost indistinguishable from the voice of the first-person narrator, for both of them are self-consciously referring to the act of storytelling—readers are travelling with them as the reading progresses. Together with Atlas and the first-person narrator, readers are participating in a journey of resistance, one that has many possibilities as the journey proceeds.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 25.

Atlas' story also contains Heracles' story, as readers progress to see their encounter. Against the poetic Atlas, Heracles is presented as a very different kind of person. "Heracles similarly narrates the myth of his own origin and affirms his archetypal identity as the athletic champion who wins glory by performing twelve labours under compulsion, in penance for the murder of his children."<sup>28</sup> While Atlas demonstrates his strength in his silent tolerance of the burden on his back, Heracles' strength is much more of the extrovert kind, as seen in his numerous physical and amorous conquests. His picture of happiness is having "[a] wife, a mistress, plenty of children, plenty of wine, a reputation, and at last some peace."<sup>29</sup> When he saw Atlas, he tried to show companionship through a comparison of their fates, and he said to Atlas, "Your punishment is to hold up the universe. My punishment is to work for a wanker."<sup>30</sup> The more than casual tone and playful language is a very unusual way to describe the twelve heroic labours he performs, as they are handed down from the ancient myth.

The transgressiveness of Heracles in this contemporary myth is not only due to the fact that he speaks for himself, thus showing a very earthly and almost primitive personality. The encounter and the conversation with Atlas add an inner life to the two heroes as they reflect on their own situations. "The mythological drama thus becomes a psychological drama, in which their encounter causes the central characters to confront issues of freedom, fate and personal responsibility."<sup>31</sup> The truly remarkable feature of having the first-person narrator as well as the heroes speak their own thoughts and feelings is that they become three-dimensional characters and have mental and emotional developments through their experiences. Seeing Atlas' fate and during his various interactions with Atlas, Heracles acquires some depth in his thinking; "he inwardly starts to question out why he is doing gods' bidding and falls into a dilemma for the first time."<sup>32</sup> In the duration of *Weight*, even before his death, Heracles undergoes a transformation, from

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<sup>28</sup> Hilde Steals, "'The Penelopiad" and "Weight". Contemporary Parodic and Burlesque Transformations of Classical Myths," *College Literature* 36, no. 4 (2009): 113.

<sup>29</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), 116.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>31</sup> Fiona Hobden, "From philosophy to psychotherapy: retelling the story in Jeanette Winterson's *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (2005)," *New Voices in Classical Reception Studies* 11 (2016): 18.

<sup>32</sup> Leyla Adigüzel and Kuu Tekin, "Jeannette Winterson as the Trickster-Artist in *Weight*," *The Journal of Social Sciences Institute* 52 (2021): 261.

someone whose only goal in life is to satisfy his desires to someone who seeks understanding.

Thus Heracles' story becomes a journey of discovery, which at first was scary and incomprehensible for him. When he went to the Garden of the Hesperides to get Hera's apples, "for the first time in his life, he thought about what he was doing. He thought about who he was."<sup>33</sup> Although he killed Ladon the serpent with his usual bravado, inwardly "some part of him was riven—not by doubt—he did not doubt what he must do, but by a question. He knew *what*, he no longer knew *why*."<sup>34</sup> That is the beginning of his transformation, which gets more pronounced as he gets deeper into the interaction with Atlas. When he successfully tricked Atlas into shouldering the Kosmos again after having obtained Hera's apples for him, he was ashamed to see that Atlas accepted the burden again "with such grace and ease, such gentleness, love almost."<sup>35</sup> Despite his grinning face, inside, Heracles felt respect for Atlas. Unwilling to take over the burden of the Kosmos, Heracles went to help Prometheus as a kind of payback to Atlas.

The transformation of Atlas and Heracles into full-blown fictional characters with the capacity to develop can be seen as a result of the presence of the first-person narrator. When commenting on *Boating for Beginners*, Costa wrote, "Winterson uses quantum theories to subvert history as a patriarchal masquerade,"<sup>36</sup> and went on to say that "she tries to delimit the role of the observer and its influence on the observed, and the narrator states that there is no such thing as 'objective experiment'."<sup>37</sup> The observer always has an effect on whatever is observed; the first-person narrator's chosen observation of Atlas and Heracles presents to readers of the myth a substantially unconventional pair of heroes. If the first-person narrator is Winterson's alter ego, then "Atlas and Heracles do not simply reveal the problems and issues attendant upon abstract philosophical ideas like fate and freedom through their adventures. They represent Winterson's individual psychoses."<sup>38</sup> The nature and meaning of the story change

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<sup>33</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), 43.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>36</sup> Veronica Pacheco Costa, "Science and Time in Jeanette Winterson," *Interactions* 25, nos.1-2 (2016): 25.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>38</sup> Fiona Hobden, "From philosophy to psychotherapy: retelling the story in Jeanette Winterson's *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (2005)," *New Voices in Classical Reception Studies* 11 (2016): 21.

according to the identity of the storyteller—Winterson the trickster has transformed these heroes into aspects of her own personal drama.

### **Resistance in the Eternal Continuity: “I want to tell the story *again*”**

The nature of the Canongate Myth Series is continuity. Each writer is asked to choose a story from the myth and tell it again in a way that is deemed relevant to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Winterson has highlighted this notion in the novella very clearly: “I could not allow my parents to be the facts of my life. Their version of the story was one I could read but not write. I had to tell the story again.”<sup>39</sup> “I want to tell the story again” is the title of the first and final chapter of the book, besides appearing here as a personal reason for writing what she is writing. The story in *Weight* is a story weaving together the stories of Atlas and Heracles, told in the context of a 21<sup>st</sup>-century female writer’s quest to understand her life. She has made the choice to write herself into the story and to give the heroes agency to tell their own stories; *Weight* “illustrates how a dialogue between multiple narratives becomes a productive medium for the meaning-making process.”<sup>40</sup> In this case, the meaning of the myth in our times is choices.

When Atlas was in the Garden of the Hesperides picking the apples for Heracles, Hera appeared and her words to Atlas marked one of the most important ideas in the story: choices. Hera referred to Atlas’ decision to fight against Zeus: “You could not see the changefulness of the world. All these pasts are yours, all these futures, all these presents. You could have chosen differently. You did not”,<sup>41</sup> and this in fact applies to all characters in the story. Atlas, Heracles and the first-person narrator all have a burden to bear, and they all feel that they are destined to bear that burden and that they have no choice. Hera, however, is reminding them all of their own roles in how their lives turn out and that the past, future and present are in fact in the characters’ own hands. The chapter entitled “Desire” opens with the first-person narrator saying, “[w]hat can I tell you about the choices we make?”<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), 139.

<sup>40</sup> Anı Sev Ateş, “I want to tell the story again:” The Palimpsests of Jeanette Winterson’s *Weight*.” *RumeliDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies* 31 (2022): 1361.

<sup>41</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), 75.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

and she goes on to say that telling the story again is the way to seek resolutions. With each re-telling, there is a new ending.

In the same chapter, the first-person narrator claims that "I am not a Freudian."<sup>43</sup> in the sense that she does not believe one's present and future are determined by the past. Instead, one's story is open-ended because at every moment one can make a different choice about the way this story proceeds. As long as one continues to tell the story, there is hope; "[j]ust as telling the story in psychotherapy generates new possibilities for the client, closure for her characters creates new openings for the author to move beyond her personal mythology."<sup>44</sup> True to her intention of creating her own world out of writing stories, "Winterson undermines the implications of power structures intrinsic to myth and adopts a polyphonic, non-hierarchical narrative strategy in *Weight*"<sup>45</sup> and seeks resolutions for herself as the narrator follows Atlas and Heracles in their psychological journey towards their own destinies.

After Heracles completed the task of getting the three apples from Hera, he looked forward to settling down to lead what he considered a good life. As he was preparing for the sacrifice which would in a way bring him to this new stage, "[h]e suddenly thought of Atlas, star-silent. For a second, the buzzing started again, in the usual place, by his temple. He hit his head. The buzzing stopped."<sup>46</sup> This brief moment of disturbance harks back to the equally brief moment of shame that he felt when he successfully tricked Atlas into taking up the burden of the Kosmos again. His encounters with Atlas are moments when unbidden thoughts and feelings surface, in fact opportunities for him to take his story into his own hands, but he chooses to ignore these stirrings and continues in much the same way he has lived before. When his dying shouts were heard far away, Hera, who was wise and saw through Heracles' weaknesses "smiled her ironical smile"<sup>47</sup> because she knew he would miss the chance to find a new ending to his own story.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>44</sup> Fiona Hobden, "From philosophy to psychotherapy: retelling the story in Jeanette Winterson's *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (2005)," *New Voices in Classical Reception Studies* 11 (2016): 22.

<sup>45</sup> Ansi Sev Ateş, " "I want to tell the story again." The Palimpsests of Jeanette Winterson's *Weight*." *RumeliDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies* 31 (2022): 1362.

<sup>46</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), 116.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 119.

For Atlas, the critical moment of growth was the moment he discovered Laika, the dog that was sent to space in Sputnik. He freed her from the capsule, and Laika nested against his shoulder, immediately feeling a bond with this giant. At this point, Atlas was “carrying something he wanted to keep, and that changed everything.”<sup>48</sup> The change includes a “strange thought” that Atlas suddenly had: “Why not put it down.”<sup>49</sup> which he hesitantly put into practice. After he crawled out from under the Kosmos, “Atlas looked back at his burden. There was no burden. There was only the diamond-blue earth gardened in a wilderness of space.”<sup>50</sup> Atlas is free, just as Laika is free. The “new material” Laika, who comes from 20<sup>th</sup>-century history, opens up a new development of Atlas’ story, and it leads to a possible new ending, just as the first-person narrator describes.

### **Conclusion: The Ending that does not Close the Story**

Jeanette Winterson has chosen to re-tell the myth of Atlas and Heracles in the Canongate Myth Series because, in her words, “it’s a story I’m struggling to end.”<sup>51</sup> She has the bits and pieces in hand but cannot find a resolution, and that pushes her to write fiction, which allows her to keep on telling the story in writing. With each re-telling, there is a different end. In this re-telling, she writes herself into the story and finds a personal connection with the two heroes in the burden that they are all carrying. Once again thinking about her own burden, she looks to Atlas and Heracles and gives them a chance to write a new story of their own, with possible new endings. As the first-person narrator reflected, “[s]cience is a story. History is a story. These are the stories we tell ourselves to make ourselves come true.”<sup>52</sup> *Weight* merges various kinds of storytelling into a metafiction that discusses the human condition. With the recurrent “I will tell the story again,” it is implied that “the story may be told limitless times using different genre conventions and forms of discourse”<sup>53</sup> to create new possibilities.

From a story of heroes being trapped in their destiny, Winterson has transformed the story into a journey that opens up new forward movements. The past is over and done with; ancient stories have served their purposes,

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 134.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 145.

<sup>53</sup> Anı Sev Ateş, “‘I want to tell the story again.’ The Palimpsests of Jeanette Winterson’s *Weight*.” *RumeliDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies* 31 (2022): 1363.

but with each new moment, there is a chance to make a choice about how the story will continue from this moment onwards. Thus, the re-telling of this myth is the way “Winterson renegotiates what it means for myth to be ‘universal’ and ‘timeless’, and claims value for her own mythic truths”<sup>54</sup> by writing her autobiographical story into the myth and letting the characters regain their rightful awareness of their own authority. Heracles developed an awareness but did not manage to set himself free before death caught up with him, while Atlas grasped the opportunity of the encounter with Laika and walked out of the previous version of the story into freedom.

Like Atlas, at the end of the novella, the first-person narrator “crawl[s] out from under this world [she has] made”<sup>55</sup> and realises that this version of the world does not need her, and she has no need for it either. Interestingly, it is not because she has found the perfect closure, but despite the “reservations and regrets”<sup>56</sup> she has decided to let it go so that she can “tell the story again”. The value and meaning of the re-telling are exactly that she can start telling the story again once a version is finished, leaving a space for a new one. At the very end of the book, musing on the various possibilities of the dark matter, the first-person narrator ends the narrative, suggesting that perhaps the dark matter is “Atlas and Laika walking away,”<sup>57</sup> a new beginning is in sight.

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<sup>54</sup> Fiona Hobden, “From philosophy to psychotherapy: retelling the story in Jeanette Winterson's *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (2005),” *New Voices in Classical Reception Studies* 11 (2016): 24.

<sup>55</sup> Jeanette Winterson, *Weight: The Myth of Atlas and Heracles* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005), 146.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 151.

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CHAPTER TWO

FROM MUD TO AIR:  
ECO-MEMORIES AS ENVIRONMENTAL  
RESISTANCE IN GRAHAM SWIFT'S  
*OUT OF THIS WORLD*

ANASTASIA LOGOTHETI

**Introduction**

The significance of exploring the environmental consciousness of the literary text has been the focus of “ecocritics”<sup>1</sup> who have paid much critical attention to the uses of place as a construct that suggests the potential for the resistance of norms and conventions typical of anthropocentrism. As Andrew McMurry clarifies, the texts “ecocritics tend to study” exemplify “resistance against anthropocentrism” and “nature’s degradation or its destruction.”<sup>2</sup> Foregrounding the environmental concerns inherent in the relationship between the Earth and its inhabitants, the “modern novel, with its emphasis on private feeling as the source of public action” can be, in the words of Dominic Head, “an appropriate vehicle for a Green agenda.”<sup>3</sup> While in *The Environmental Imagination* Lawrence Buell notes the “anti-environmental” tendencies of

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<sup>1</sup> Greg Garrard defines “ecocritics” as “literary critics with an environmental orientation.” Greg Garrard, “Solar: Apocalypse Not,” in *Ian McEwan: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, edited by Sebastian Groes (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 93.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew McMurry, “Ecocriticism and Discourse,” in *The Routledge Handbook of Ecocriticism and Environmental Communication*, edited by Scott Slovic, et al., (London: Routledge, 2019), 18.

<sup>3</sup> Dominic Head, “Ecocriticism and the Novel,” in *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism*, edited by Lawrence Coupe (London: Routledge, 2000), 240.

traditional practitioners of literary criticism,<sup>4</sup> Greg Garrard explains that ecocritics follow “ecophilosophers in identifying anthropocentrism as the core conceptual problem with Western civilization in its relations with more-than-human nature.”<sup>5</sup> In an essay provocatively entitled “Ecocriticism: What Is It Good For?” Robert Kern suggests that ecocriticism “becomes most interesting” when it helps us “recover the environmental character” of the literary text.<sup>6</sup> In seminal ecocritical studies by Lawrence Buell, Greg Garrard, and Lawrence Coupe, the environmentally sensitive side of the contemporary British novel has already been highlighted.<sup>7</sup>

The profound implications that the local bears on the global as well as the connection between human actions and the environment are also issues of concern in the work of contemporary British author Graham Swift (b. 1949). Swift, the recipient of prestigious literary awards, is viewed as a craftsman rooted in the tradition of the English novel. An established literary heavyweight who became known as a member of the group of authors *Granta* termed the “Best of Young British Novelists” in 1983, Swift is best known for *Waterland* (1983), one of the most critically acclaimed British novels of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, and for the Booker Prize winner, *Last Orders* (1996). In his work, Swift experiments with first-person narratives and polyphony, exploring the human need for storytelling and the interrelatedness between individual stories and the grand narratives of history. His works incorporate elements of modernist experimentation into realist narratives that explore, in their preoccupation with loss and trauma, themes related to history, identity, and the state of the nation. Most

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<sup>4</sup> Lawrence Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 85.

<sup>5</sup> Greg Garrard, “Reading as an Animal: Ecocriticism and Darwinism in Margaret Atwood and Ian McEwan,” in *Local Natures, Global Responsibilities: Ecocritical Perspectives on the New English Literatures*, edited by Laurenz Volkmann, Nancy Grimm, Ines Detmers, and Katrin Thomson (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2010), 224.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Kern, “Ecocriticism: What Is It Good For?” In *The ISLE Reader: Ecocriticism 1993-2003*, edited by Michael P. Branch and Scott Slovic (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 260.

<sup>7</sup> See Buell, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), and *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005); also see Greg Garrard, *Ecocriticism* (London: Routledge, 2004) and Lawrence Coupe, ed., *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism* (London: Routledge, 2000).

significantly, this author's works demonstrate resistance to normative hierarchies and highlight an ecological awareness of nature's significance.<sup>8</sup>

In various studies, ecocritics have already considered the connection between time and place in *Waterland*.<sup>9</sup> The "almost mythic spirit of place" in *Waterland*, as Brian Shaffer remarks,<sup>10</sup> has resulted in drawing the attention of ecocritics to Swift's work. Despite the absence in *Waterland* of an "overtly ecological message," as Dominic Head argues, "the motif of siltation—as both structure and theme—insists on certain connections in the construction of human identity: the necessary coexistence of private feelings and public events, but also the interdependence of time, place and politics."<sup>11</sup> Noting that "*Waterland* was one of the first British novels that ecocritics read as an example of postmodern fiction that can also yield a productive ecocritical reading," Astrid Bracke examines *Waterland* through a "narratology-inflected ecocriticism," which reveals how "narratives and narrativity" shape "our perceptions of the nonhuman natural world."<sup>12</sup> The significance of the natural world is a staple in Swift's fiction,<sup>13</sup> highlighting the need to safeguard the environment and increase resistance towards normative views of nature.

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<sup>8</sup> In the Anthropocene, as Baysal suggests, "writers increasingly began to voice their concerns regarding the jeopardized future of humankind along with the destruction of the nonhuman world, and its devastation through common catastrophes, illnesses, human strife, and savagery." (Kübra Baysal, "Introduction," *Apocalyptic Visions in the Anthropocene and the Rise of Climate Fiction* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2021), vi.

<sup>9</sup> See discussions of *Waterland* by Karla Armbruster ("Ecocriticism and the Postmodern Novel: The Case of *Waterland*," *Green Letters* 10.1 (2009), 19-38), Ronald McKinney ("The Greening of Postmodernism: Graham Swift's *Waterland*," *New Literary History* 28 (1997), 822-32), and Hanne Tange ("Regional Redemption: Graham Swift's *Waterland* and the End of History," *Orbis Litterarum* 59 (2004), 75-89).

<sup>10</sup> Brian Shaffer, "Graham Swift's *Last Orders* (1996)," in *Reading the Novel in English 1950-2000* (London: Blackwell, 2006), 197.

<sup>11</sup> Dominic Head, "Ecocriticism and the Novel," in *The Green Studies Reader: From Romanticism to Ecocriticism*, edited by Lawrence Coupe (London: Routledge, 2000), 239.

<sup>12</sup> Astrid Bracke, "'Man is the Story-Telling Animal': Graham Swift's *Waterland*, Ecocriticism and Narratology," *ISLE: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 25.2 (Spring 2018), 220-237.

<sup>13</sup> Some of Swift's more recent works, such as the novel *Wish You Were Here* (2011), have also attracted the attention of ecocritics. For instance, Astrid Bracke reads this novel as a "pastoral narrative" concerned with the climate crisis. (Astrid Bracke, "Pastoral," in *Climate Crisis and the 21st-Century British Novel* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 49-78.

This chapter will consider the “spirit of place” and its significance for environmental resistance in one of Swift’s lesser-known works, a novel appropriately entitled *Out of This World* (1988), which Swift published after *Waterland*.<sup>14</sup> Although less critically acclaimed,<sup>15</sup> this “unjustly underrated” novel<sup>16</sup> fully demonstrates an environmental consciousness that constitutes a form of resistance to traditional views of nature. An unmistakable sense of place provides *Out of This World* with deep roots into the physical world outside the text but also foregrounds the contemporary novel’s environmental concerns inherent in the relationship between the Earth and its inhabitants. This discussion of environmental resistance aims at revealing Swift’s “ecological conscience,” a term which refers to the “ethics of community, that is, the ethics of living in accord with the welfare of the ecological community.”<sup>17</sup>

*Out of This World* juxtaposes our current ability to remove ourselves from this planet through aerial and space travel and our continuing inability

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<sup>14</sup> When *Out of This World* was published, reviews on both sides of the Atlantic were mixed. Few critics lauded the novel as unequivocally as Philip Howard, who characterised it as “a powerful and exciting book that raises uncomfortable political questions” (*Times*, 10 Mar 1988, 19). Peter Kemp found the novel “disappointingly mundane” despite a “tough meditateness” and a “spectacularly wide field of vision” (*Sunday Times*, 13 Mar 1988, G7) while Jonathan Coe notes that “you can’t but applaud the scope and ambition” of the novel (*Guardian*, 11 Mar 1988). For Hermione Lee this is “a book to respect, but not to fall in love with” (*Observer*, 13 Mar 1988, 43) while for Adrian Poole the novel constitutes a “self-conscious sequel to *Waterland*” (*Cambridge Review* 109.2302 (1988), 111-115).

<sup>15</sup> As David Malcom notes in the chapter “Witnesses” in *Understanding Graham Swift* (Columbia, SC: U South Caroline P, 2003, 111), critics have found *Out of This World* to be “overschematic in story material, too interested in ideas, and not sufficiently concerned to give his characters substantial life.” Nevertheless, Swift’s experimentation in *Out of This World* drew the attention of a few scholars, such as Heinz Antor, who considers it a “postmodern jigsaw puzzle” (in “Graham Swift, the Novelist,” *Anglistik: International Journal of English Studies* 8.2 (1997), 154. As Malcolm Bradbury notes in *The Modern British Novel*, “layers of long, dark, twentieth-century history are set into a postmodern collage” in this novel (London: Penguin, 1994), 434.

<sup>16</sup> David Malcom, “Witnesses,” 132. Overall, the novel has received limited critical attention: it has been considered in scholarship which places this novel in the context of various Swift works (see discussions by David Leon Higdon, Del Ivan Janik, and Wendy Wheeler) or discussed in book-length studies of Swift’s work (see Stef Craps, Daniel Lea, David Malcolm, and Peter Widdowson).

<sup>17</sup> I am borrowing the term “ecological conscience” from Leopold Aldo who coined it (according to the “Glossary of Selected Terms” in Lawrence Buell, *The Future of Environmental Criticism*, 140).

to make sense of our world, no matter how high above it we can soar or whether we have photographed the Earth from space. Technology prolongs stasis in trauma, as Harry, the protagonist and principal narrator, who is a professional photographer, realizes. The novel documents Harry's disillusionment with technology: "[T]imes have changed.... The camera first, then the event."<sup>18</sup> In the novel, the characters seek to escape time and place in order to forget the traumas of the past; they travel, indulge themselves in visual entertainment through television, film, and photography, or even seek out the technology of self-destruction as a means of physical escape. Escaping the burden of history through geography and moving from mud to air, *Out of This World* reconciles technology and ecology. Through a symbolic envisioning of nature's ability to assist in the healing of trauma, personal and global, the characters engage in the making of eco-memories as a form of individual and collective resistance to numbing convention.

### Natural Memory

Set in April 1982, at the beginning of the ten-week Falklands War, *Out of This World* focuses on the troubled relationships of the principal narrator, aerial photographer Harry Beech, with his father, Robert, and his estranged daughter, Sophie. The novel uses a historically resonant present to render all major military campaigns of the twentieth century symbolic of meaningless sacrifice and unquenchable bloodthirst which scar not only humans but also landscapes. Between the founding of the family business, the Beech Munitions Company, in 1875 and the fictional present of April 1982, a century of colonial and global warfare is encapsulated in the novel. References to most keynote events of the greater part of the twentieth century are included in *Out of This World*, creating geographically an immense canvas: these references include the Great War as well as World War II; the moon landing as well as various scientific advances in medicine, aviation, and photography; Nazi concentration camps as well as the Nuremberg Trials; glimpses of warfare in Vietnam, Cyprus, and Korea; the military dictatorship in Greece (1967–1974) as well as IRA terrorism; culminating in the Falklands crisis of April 1982, the event which underscores the novel's fictional present. The implication that individual lives are driven as much by personal choices as by other forces is central to *Out of This World*: coincidence and global crises mark the lives of the

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<sup>18</sup> Graham Swift, *Out of This World*, 13. All subsequent references to this novel are to the 1993 Vintage edition.

characters as well as of the planet indelibly. The ashes of destruction accumulate into a tangible record of natural memory: the earth's remembrance of a scarred environment. The mud of Flanders, the bombed-out streets of Nuremberg, the rocks from the Moon: twentieth-century history is recorded in the mud and ashes that constitute, along with air, a dominant element of this novel.

The novel begins with an eco-memory: Harry remembers watching the 1969 moonwalk on television. The narrator and his father "sat up together all night watching those first moon-men."<sup>19</sup> A self-proclaimed "visual reporter,"<sup>20</sup> Harry is aware that the view of "the earth from the moon" is the "ultimate photo" as it captures "all of it, the whole of it, everything."<sup>21</sup> For media analyst John Hannigan, the photo of "fragile, finite" Earth as viewed from the moon is "the single most effective environmental message of the century."<sup>22</sup> In his youth, Harry rejects paternal authority by refusing to join the family business, Beech Munitions Company, which was founded by his grandfather in 1875 and taken over by his father, Robert, in 1918. Resolved not to produce weapons—turning his confrontation with his father into an ideological stance—Harry decides to be a witness: "[A] photographer is neither there nor not there, neither in nor out of the thing.... Someone has to be in it and step back too."<sup>23</sup> Eventually, he turns his military experience in photography into a career in photojournalism.

As a result of refusing in 1945 to work alongside his father or to take over the family arms business, Harry is disinherited. Harry is caught in a perennial tug-of-war with his father; even as a grown man, he continues to antagonise Robert. When he marries Anna, a Greek translator he meets at Nuremberg during the Trials in 1946, and has his own child, Sophie, Harry's hope is that his new family will fill the gap in his heart and allow him to overcome his past. His wife and daughter, however, develop a loving relationship with Robert; rather than compete with his father for his family's affection, Harry takes himself out of this world. Harry envies and resents the love his father seems ready to bestow on everyone except his own son. Harry's best friend, Frank Irving, becomes his filial substitute in the family business; eventually, Frank replaces Harry in his father's home, his wife's bed, and his young daughter's heart. Harry prefers to travel the world's war zones, photographing other people's misery and forgetting his own. After

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<sup>19</sup> Swift, *Out of This World*, 14.

<sup>20</sup> Swift, *Out of This World*, 114.

<sup>21</sup> Swift, *Out of This World*, 14-15.

<sup>22</sup> John Hannigan quoted by Greg Garrard, in *Ecocriticism* (London: Routledge, 2004), 182.

<sup>23</sup> Swift, *Out of This World*, 49.