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“SO OBVIOUS AND SO UNTHINKABLE“: ECO-DYSTOPIA IN MARGARET ATWOOD’S *MADDADDAM* TRILOGY

*We’re using
up the Earth. It’s almost gone.*

(Margaret Atwood,
The Year of the Flood)

ABSTRACT: Themes of Nature and humanity’s abuse of it have long featured in Margaret Atwood’s works: poetry, fiction and non-fiction. The author is an environmental activist herself, taking an active interest in current environmental and climate change issues. From one of her earliest novels *Surfacing* (1972) to her seminal work *The Handmaid’s Tale* (1985) to the more recent *MaddAddam* trilogy (comprising the novels *Oryx and Crake* (2003), *The Year of the Flood* (2009) and *MaddAddam* (2013)), Atwood has commented on and criticized humanity’s treatment of nature as something to be dominated and beaten into submission. In the context of the current cultural and environmental crisis the world is experiencing, this paper will analyze Atwood’s *MaddAddam* trilogy through the lens of ecocriticism and examine how closely her vision of eco-dystopia reflects the current state of affairs in the world.

KEYWORDS: ecocriticism, eco-dystopia, Margaret Atwood, *MaddAddam* trilogy, dystopia

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the much-debated concept of climate change and its effect on the environment and humanity has given way to a new and worrying realization: climate change will not be happening slowly or in the distant future. It is very much present here and now, becoming more evident with each passing year: hurricanes and violent storms ravage coastal regions; flash floods take away lives and livelihoods even in the most developed countries; severe heat spells have crops withering and people and animals suffocating; air and water pollution have grown exponentially; forest fires rage with an ever-growing pace. It seems that natural disasters have never been such a frequent occurrence as in the past twenty years. Moreover, pandemic outbreaks such as the most recent COVID-19 pandemic, have been linked to humanity encroaching upon natural habitats. Human activities, such as poaching and deforestation, make it easier for animal species that otherwise would have never come into contact with humans to transfer the unknown and dangerous pathogens to them. All these phenomena have prompted environmental scientists and activists, primarily in the English-speaking countries, to label the current state of affairs „climate crisis“.

In 2019, some English-language media, such as *The Guardian*, the BBC, and the US news agency AP, announced that “climate emergency” or “climate crisis” is to be used instead of “climate change”, because “climate change is no longer considered to accurately reflect the seriousness of the overall situation” (*The Guardian*, 16 October 2019). According to the UN website (<https://www.un.org/en/un75/climate-crisis-race-we-can-win>), “climate change is the defining crisis of our time and it is happening even more quickly than we feared... no corner of the globe is immune from the devastating consequences of climate change“. The introductory note goes on to describe a nightmarish scenario:

Rising temperatures are fuelling environmental degradation, natural disasters, weather extremes, food and water insecurity, economic disruption, conflict, and terrorism. Sea levels are rising, the Arctic is melting, coral reefs are dying, oceans are acidifying, and forests are burning. It is clear that business as usual is

not good enough. As the infinite cost of climate change reaches irreversible highs, now is the time for bold collective action.

Despite the encouraging final words of this passage, it seems that the world at large still goes on with the business as usual. The U.N. COP26 climate conference in Glasgow ended with calls on governments to pledge to decrease greenhouse gas emissions. More than 200 nations made new pledges to slash methane gas pollution, deforestation, and coal financing. Two largest emitters of carbon, the U.S. and China, agreed to cooperate during this decade to prevent global warming from surpassing 1.5 degrees Celsius and ensure that progress result from the conference. However, China and India, the world's biggest burners of coal, were reluctant to pledge to give up fossil fuels entirely. Climate scientists and activists argue that despite these accomplishments, the final deal out of Glasgow resulted in insufficient progress which will prove inadequate to address the climate crisis (CNBC, 16 November 2021).

The current state of affairs in the world with regard to the climate crisis is unnervingly close to the situation that Margaret Atwood describes in *The Year of the Flood* (2009), her work of speculative fiction dealing with the consequences of environmental degradation and ultimate destruction:

I knew there were things wrong in the world, they were referred to, I'd seen them in the onscreen news. But the wrong things were wrong somewhere else. [...] Everybody knew. Nobody admitted to knowing. If other people began to discuss it, you tuned them out, because what they were saying was both so obvious and so unthinkable.

We're using up the Earth. It's almost gone. (YF², 282)

In the context of the cultural and environmental crisis the world is experiencing, this paper will analyse Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy through the lens of ecocriticism and examine how closely her vision of eco-dystopia reflects the current state of affairs. The issues that the

² *The Year of the Flood*, abbr.

MaddAddam trilogy raises seem particularly apt at the present moment. Before the global pandemic, the climate change or climate crisis was seen as the greatest challenge to humanity and global economy: world leaders and organizations seemed to be addressing the problem of how to reconcile the need for economic growth and progress with the damage it was doing to the biosphere. It is worth noting that at the time very few of them was considering the possibility of abandoning the doctrine of progress, or that there might be something more at stake than global economy. The young climate activist Greta Thunberg remarked in her speech at the U.N. Climate Summit in Katowice in 2018 that if there is no solution to be found within the system, then we must change the system itself (*Democracy Now*, 13 December 2018). That, however, we still seem to be unprepared or unwilling to do. There are things that are wrong, but for most people, especially for those in the developed world, they can go on being wrong, as long as it is somewhere else.

With the world in the grip of a COVID-19 pandemic, and fears of economic recession, job loss, unemployment, and collapse, we have been forcefully reminded of the fragility of our current state and the devastation that our ruthless exploitation of nature leaves in its wake. The paper will attempt to answer the question of the inevitability of eco-apocalypse that seems to permeate the *MaddAddam* trilogy: whether humankind as we know it must bring itself to the brink of extinction before coming to its senses, or whether there is a possibility to curb our destructive impulses and change our attitude towards Nature.

2. Eco-criticism

Over the past thirty years, ecocriticism has evolved from a regional movement of the U.S. literary scholars who were interested in nature writing and environmental literature to an international and interdisciplinary community of scholars and researchers who express an ever-growing concern over the current environmental crisis and agree that this crisis is a material expression of modern culture's understanding of nature and humanity (Gersdorf and Mayer, 2006: 9). According

to Greg Garrard (2004), modern environmentalism's founding text was 'A Fable for Tomorrow', in Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). Using poetic language and relying on the literary genres of pastoral and apocalypse, the author warns against using organic pesticides and goes on to present scientific evidence of the threat they pose both to wildlife and to human health. This amalgamation of literary allusions and scientific evidence is what makes this book a seminal work of ecocriticism (Garrard, 2004: 3). One of the first anthologies of ecocriticism was Glotfelty & Fromm's *The Ecocriticism Reader* (1996), which defines ecocriticism rather broadly as "the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment" (Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996: xvii; qtd in Gersdorf & Mayer, 2006: 11). At the turn of the 21st century, prompted by the sense of approaching environmental crisis, which manifested in the 1980s and 1990s in incidents such as the Chernobyl disaster, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, mad cow disease, and increasingly frequent instances of weather extremes, ecocriticism becomes as relevant and recognized as such established methodologies as feminist criticism, post-colonialism, or new historicism (Gersdorf & Mayer, 2006: 9).

The new century has brought in an ever-increasing number of natural disasters, such as tsunamis, hurricanes, floods, draughts, forest fires, and pandemics such as SARS, Bird Flu, and COVID-19. It has become clear that humanity influences nature in never-before seen and devastating ways. Global warming and increased species extinction have become documented evidence of climate change caused by human interference. In 2000, chemist Paul J. Crutzen and biologist Eugene Stoermer introduced the term "Anthropocene" to describe "the human dominance of biological, chemical, and geological processes on Earth" (Crutzen & Schwagerl, 2011; qtd in Mohr, 2017: 26). Human impact upon the natural world is thus put on a scale of past epochal events such as continent shifts or meteoric strikes. Human hyper-consumption and widespread pollution, along with unevenly distributed consequences of such activities, with less wealthy nations often left vulnerable to environmental threats, pose considerable challenges for human society and culture. Consequently, the interest in ecocriticism has increased, which is evident in a growing number of ecocritical essays and publications. Some ecocritical scholars (Kerridge & Sammells, 1988; Coupe, 2000)

challenge the assumption that literature and art as aesthetically and ethically separate entities, and state that the objective of ecocriticism is to evaluate texts and ideas in terms of their usefulness as responses to environmental crises, and to encourage resistance to environmental pollution and degradation (Gersdorf & Mayer, 2006: 11). It is with this view in mind that Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy will be examined: how this text engages with the environmental crises and what are the solutions it offers.

3. Dystopia as a Literary Genre

The *MaddAddam* trilogy projects a dystopian vision of a future society dehumanized by corporate greed and mass consumerism and threatened by pollution and environmental degradation. A dystopian society is an integral part of literary dystopia, a sub-genre of science fiction, which depicts a world where the quality of life, usually in terms of human rights and liberties, is significantly worse than in reality (Živković, 2017: 89). The common features of literary dystopia are an oppressive, totalitarian state which crushes individuality, separates humans from nature and employs science and technology not to enrich human lives but to subjugate them. Another common feature of literary dystopias is the character of a protagonist who opposes the oppression by more or less successful means.

There can be little doubt that dystopia as a literary genre has flourished in the 20th and 21st century (see Živković, 2014: 18-19), with the unprecedented advances of science and technology on the one hand, and on the other hand, disastrous effects that those same advances have brought about – two world wars, nuclear and chemical warfare, depletion of natural resources, global warming, etc. Societies of literary dystopia also thrive on manipulation of the human mind and language: some rule by oppression, force, and fear, such as those of Orwell's *1984* (1949) or Burgess' *A Clockwork Orange* (1962); others, as seen in Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), by using more subtle means, such as the combined power of propaganda and state-sanctioned drugs distributed to the populace to keep it in submission (Živković, 2019: 110-113).

Clearly, literary dystopias resemble humankind's historical and present experiences rather too close for comfort. From the Puritan vision of the New World as "a City upon a Hill", a theocratic utopia of men in power who had the authority to accuse women (and other men) of witchcraft (Evans, 1994: 180-181), to totalitarian regimes of Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, or Pol Pot's Cambodia, which destroyed countless lives and livelihoods, to modern authoritarian states that rely on media control and propaganda, literary dystopias have constantly been reflected in and sometimes surpassed by real-world events. Throughout history, humankind has witnessed many attempts to create an ideal community or state – a utopia – only for it to degenerate into a dystopian nightmare (Živković, 2017: 90). As Atwood's character Commander remarks, "Better never means better for everyone [...]. It always means worse for some." (*The Handmaid's Tale*, 211). Atwood herself coined a new name for her fictional societies - "(u)topia [...] combining utopia and dystopia", because "each contain a latent version of the other" (Atwood, 2011; qtd in Mohr, 2015: 290).

4. Dystopian Themes in Margaret Atwood's Novels

In Margaret Atwood's works, the complex interrelationship between culture/society, nature, and the individual have always been at the forefront: her protagonists strive to achieve individual freedom and self-fulfilment against the backdrop of indifferent or hostile social environment (e.g., the novels *Surfacing* (1972), *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), *Cat's Eye* (1988), *Alias Grace* (1996), *The Blind Assassin* (2000)). At the same time, Atwood includes a social commentary, sometimes taking the form of a biting satire to rival those of Jonathan Swift, which has been the subject of numerous articles and books (see e.g., Grace, 1995; Palumbo, 2000; Vevaina, 2006; Howells, 2006; Wilson, 2006; Canavan, 2012; Mohr, 2017). As Atwood commented, she thinks of fiction as "a vehicle for looking at society – an interface between language and what we choose to call reality" (Ingersoll, 1992: 246; qtd in Howells, 2000: 139). From one of her earliest novels *Surfacing* (1972) to her seminal work *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) to the more recent *MaddAddam* trilogy (2003-2013), Atwood has commented on and criticized humanity's

treatment of nature as something to be dominated and beaten into submission. Mohr (2017: 55) comments on how Atwood has significantly moved away from her initial view of Nature as a force against which humans must struggle to survive (a survival narrative typical of Canadian literature) to the view that Nature must struggle to survive humankind.

In *The Handmaid's Tale*, her most famous novel, Atwood establishes a direct causal connection between environmental and social degradation, which she only hinted at in her earlier works. The mass consumerism and rampant corporate greed in Atwood's fictional version of late 20th-century North America have caused a widespread pollution of air, water, and soil, which in turn leads to a plummet in birth-rate and increase of sterility. As a result, the right-wing political and religious ideologies became ever more radical, attempting gradually and almost imperceptibly to control the reproduction process, ban abortions, and interfere with private lives and choices of citizens (Howells, 2006: 161). Ultimately, this brings about the overthrow of democracy and the establishment of a theocratic totalitarian regime in which select individuals – men in power – hold privileged positions, while the civil and human rights of everyone else, men and women both, are stripped away, and replaced by a strict hierarchy in which everyone must play their role (Živković, 2018: 431). Thus, one of the consequences of environmental destruction is the disintegration of democratic society and the rise of a totalitarian regime.

This state of affairs clearly alludes to the historical context of the 1980s United States, with the rise of neo-conservative political and Christian ideologies and deep hostility to the feminist movement (Howells, 2006: 162). However, the personal and political dystopia of *The Handmaid's Tale*, engendered by environmental destruction, is also chillingly reminiscent of the situation in our own pandemic-plagued world, dominated by rising inequality, right-wing populism, political extremism and polarization, pervasive state surveillance, post-truths, fake news, and conspiracy theories. *The Handmaid's Tale* represents one type of Atwood's dystopian vision, focusing on human rights abuses and the oppression of women under a fundamentalist regime, in the tradition of political dystopia, represented by Orwell's *1984*. The other vision, less social and political in its agenda, is given shape in the *Madd-*

Addam trilogy, which focuses on the abuse of scientific knowledge and corporate power to ruthlessly exploit natural resources and bring about environmental destruction.

5. Eco-Dystopia in the *MaddAddam* Trilogy

The *MaddAddam* trilogy is often classified as science fiction (Hengen, 2006; Howells, 2006; Canavan, 2012; Watkins, 2012; Mohr, 2015; Mohr, 2017). Literary dystopia itself has been regarded as a sub-genre of science fiction (Živković, 2014: 21). However, Atwood has repeatedly rejected the label, insisting that *Oryx and Crake*, the first instalment, is “a speculative fiction, not a science fiction proper. It contains no intergalactic space travel, no teleportation, no Martians. As with *The Handmaid’s Tale*, it invents nothing we haven’t already invented or started to invent“ (<http://www.oryxandcrake.co.uk/perfectstorm.asp>). Whether we acknowledge the distinction or not, all three novels describe a recognisable 21st-century Western society, focused on hyper-consumerism, obsessed with youth and beauty, disgusted by aging, bent on commodification of knowledge, nature, human and animal life, existing in a profit-driven neoliberal economy (Watkins, 2012; Mohr, 2015). Atwood’s novels offer a model of a dehumanized future that is, nevertheless, more based on the actual reality of post industrialist consumer society than futuristic vision, and therefore, according to some critics belongs not to science fiction proper, but to a specific stylistic area of transrealism, blending realism with sci-fi (Škobo, 2019: 81-83).

Another subgenre of science fiction is the climate fiction, or “cli-fi” (Hughes & Wheeler, 2013: 2), a recent body of work that has proliferated in the past fifteen years, as a literary response to accelerating climate change. Most of these works have chosen to criticise humankind’s attitude of dominance over the natural world, which usually results in global devastation of ecosystems, or sometimes in complete annihilation of humans and other species (Canavan, 2012; Watkins, 2012). Atwood’s *Maddaddam* trilogy undoubtedly describes such a society. These fictional societies, called *eco-dystopias* (Hughes & Wheeler, 2013; Mohr, 2015) ruthlessly exploit natural habitats and species for human consumption and comfort yet fail to realise that this road leads

to disintegration and ultimate destruction of society itself. The focus of these eco-dystopias is the alienation of humans from nature and the use of science and technology to subjugate nature.

The trilogy, aside from the sci-fi and cli-fi elements, works best as a biting satire on the current state of humanity, as well as a warning against the careless exploitation of natural resources. The epigraph of *Oryx and Crake*, the first novel in the series, is a quote from Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726): "I could perhaps like others have astonished you with strange improbable tales; but I rather chose to relate plain matter of fact in the simplest manner and style; because my principal design was to inform you, and not to amuse you." Swift's and Atwood's novels share common themes of social satire, fantastical and science-fiction elements, and are set in a strange new world in which an out-of-place protagonist must learn to survive.

Oryx and Crake deals with the aftermath of a global pandemic, indisputably of human origin – engineered by the brilliant but disillusioned genius scientist Crake. Crake, the apparent antagonist of the novel, is convinced that humanity is close to exhausting its resource base, and on the path of self-destruction through reckless exploitation of the environment. As a brilliant young scientist employed by the Watson-Crick Institute, Crake is given his own institution and freedom to choose his own team, in order to achieve the best results. He creates two simultaneous projects that he thinks will solve the environmental challenges of the 21st century, particularly overpopulation. One is the BlyssPlus pill, a medication that prolongs youth, has aphrodisiac effects, prevents sexually transmitted diseases, and serves as birth control. The other, secret project is the creation of a genetically engineered humanoid species which he dubs the Crakers. While showing them to his friend Jimmy, Crake insists that the Crakers are only exhibits, meant to demonstrate the possibilities of genetic engineering, and that people will soon be able to place an order for a baby of any race, features or personality that they choose. In truth, Crake has bred the new species to replace the human race after the BlyssPlus pill, which contains the virus for "a rogue haemorrhagic" (OC 325), wipes out the human race (Sentov, 2015: 170).

³ *Oryx and Crake*, abbr.

At the novel's beginning, we find Jimmy as "the last man on Earth" in a post-apocalyptic world, a world governed not by whims of mankind, but by forces of nature. Jimmy must attune again to the natural surroundings, as (seemingly) the sole surviving specimen of the human race. He tries to find solace in being a sort of mentor for the Crakers, who call him Snowman (short for The Abominable Snowman – a legendary creature, "the missing link" between the extinct humanity and the humanlike race that has replaced it) and who are much better equipped to survive in the post-apocalyptic world. The climate changes brought on by pollution have resulted in a hostile climate of scorching heat interrupted by violent storms. The genetically spliced animals have adapted to the new surrounding much better than Jimmy, and now pose a threat to his survival, both by eating his food resources and hunting him as a prey. The "Pigoons" turn out to be particularly dangerous, since they possess a nearly human intelligence, due to the combination of pig and human genes. The creatures made by man have turned against him. It is ultimately futile to attempt to manipulate nature, Atwood seems to say; only our own destruction will be the outcome (Sentov, 2015: 170-171). "The rules of biology are as inexorable as those of physics: run out of food and water and you die. No animal can exhaust its resource base and hope to survive. Human civilizations are subject to the same law" (<http://www.oryxandcrake.co.uk/perfectstorm.asp>).

The novel ends with a startling revelation for Jimmy/Snowman. It turns out he is not the last man after all – he comes across three more survivors, two men and one woman. Hidden in the bushes, Snowman debates what to do – should he approach them peacefully, or shoot them and not take any chances? Snowman's dilemma stands for the choice that the human race continuously has to make: should we succumb to our destructive impulses, or restrain them? Still, the novel remains open-ended. Snowman finally comes to a decision: "Zero hour. ... Time to go." (OC 433), but the outcome remains unknown to the readers (Sentov, 2015:171).

The Year of the Flood (2009) covers roughly the same time span as *Oryx and Crake*, and indeed was meant to be a "simultaneous" to the earlier novel (Bergthaller, 2010: 737). Both novels share a similar narrative pattern: they follow survivors of the fatal pandemic. In *The Year*

of *the Flood*, the survivors are two women, Toby and Ren, both former members of a religious sect the God's Gardeners. The plot builds up to their reunion with other surviving members of the sect, until in the final chapter the narrative joins up with the ending of *Oryx and Crake*, revealing the outcome of Snowman's meeting with the three survivors he stumbled upon.

The Year of the Flood gives us a significantly more detailed account both of the larger society, "where all the functions of the state have been devolved to the villainous private corporations" (Bergthaller 2010: 738) and of the organization of the religious sect God's Gardeners. The pre-pandemic society seems to value individual's education and knowledge above all else, regardless of race, religion or ethnicity; however, people are essentially divided into two classes – the privileged class of corporations' CEOs and scientists working for them who live in "Compounds", luxury estates with maximum security, and the underprivileged class of common people living in overpopulated and polluted "pleeblands", former metropolitan cities. the Corporations (capitalised by Atwood, to stress that they make up a single controlling structure) have taken over all authority, and their power is both invisible and omnipresent. The only visible manifestation of their power is the CorpSeCorps, a security company which at first provided its services to the Compounds, but as the local police forces shut down due to insufficient funds, CorpSeCorps took over. Its job is to keep tabs only on the affairs that might interest the Corporations, not to maintain law and order. Thus, CorpSeCorps strikes deals with local criminal groups – pleemafias, which hold sway over pleeblands, to get rid of any disrupting elements; in return, CorpSeCorps turns a blind eye to their criminal activities.

The God's Gardeners cult takes root in the pleeblands, attracting the members from the marginalized social groups, so that at first CorpSeCorps leaves them alone, thinking them harmless eccentrics. Through the protagonists' eyes, we witness the life of luxury that the Compounds can provide to the select few, on the account of mass poverty, aggressive consumerism, and reckless exploitation of natural resources. On the other hand, the Gardeners' way of life, despite "the less appealing features one would expect from religious fanatics" (*YF*, 739), such as rigid code of conduct and extreme asceticism, comes across as

much more relatable, with their beliefs in the equality of all species, preservation of the environment, and strict limitation of the use of natural resources.

MaddAddam (2013) alternates between the present, in which the survivors of the God's Gardeners sect struggle for survival and learn to share their living space with the Crakers, the genetically spliced animals, and the escaped Painballers (hardened criminals who participated in a violent reality show Painball). It recounts the emergence of a more radical wing of God's Gardeners, that eventually splits from the sect and continues to oppose the authorities using ecoterrorism. In the end, this radical wing is enticed/blackmailed by Crake to join his Paradise project – designing the Crakers. A number of MaddAddamites survive the plague and reunite with the remaining God's Gardeners in the final novel. In *MaddAddam*, the devastation the humans wreak upon the natural world is told through a series of episodes and anecdotes recounting the pollution of environment, the replacement of real foodstuffs with synthetic or genetically modified products, the sinking of coastal cities, the climate disasters that force people and animals to move or starve.

The final novel deals with the return to Nature, and the possibility of change of human nature that ultimately brought humankind to the brink of extinction. The survivors contend daily with plants and animals that had taken over the planet, and learn to live together with the Crakers, although the main protagonist, Toby, is concerned about the old humans' influence on the innocent humanoids. Despite that, like *The Year of the Flood*, *MaddAddam* ends on a hopeful note: the surviving humans and Pigoons work together to eliminate the common threat of violent Painballers, with the help of Crakers, acting as interpreters between old humans and animals. After the battle, they honour their dead together, both human and Pigoon, and pledge not to attack each other.

The trilogy concludes with the hope that old humans can and will also learn from their non-human fellows: three human women have given birth to Craker babies, and the whole group is raising them together. Old humans are also adapting to the ways of nature and trying to curb the humankind's more destructive impulses, such as greed and sexual jealousy. Whether they will ultimately change remains open to

interpretation, but Atwood's position on one thing is clear: Nature, in its profound resourcefulness, will survive humankind's abuse of it, and continue to be beautiful, although we may not be there to witness it (Hengen, 2006: 82).

6. Concluding remarks

"Many dystopias are self-consciously warnings. A warning implies that choice, and therefore hope, are still possible" (Moylan, 2000; quoted in Howells, 2006). These words seem to relate particularly well to all of Atwood's *ustopias*. The MaddAddam trilogy can be read as an allegorical call for a radical change in our social relations and a warning against anti-ecological lifestyles (Canavan, 2012; Mohr, 2015). In the first two novels, the ecoapocalypse seems unavoidable, leading to the ultimate extinction of the human race. The final book, however, centres on the post-Athropocene world and the gradual establishment of a new interspecies alliance, composed of "natural" humans (ecocritical Gardeners and MaddAddam scientists), new bioengineered species, the posthumans (the Crakers) and intelligent and sentient transgenic human/animal hybrids (the pigoons or "Pig Ones") (Mohr, 2015: 294). Ultimately, Atwood's trilogy functions both as a dire warning of the looming ecological crisis and "the slippery slope" (<http://www.oryxandcrake.co.uk/perfectstorm.asp>) of hyper-consumerism and environmental destruction that may lead humankind to its doom, and a hopeful invitation to engage with the ecological crisis and inspire a more responsible and respectful attitude towards natural environment.

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