


现代英语语言文学论丛·新锐系列

再现·变形·挪用： 伊恩·麦克尤恩的 创伤叙事嬗变

Representation, Transformation and Appropriation:
The Vicissitudes of
Ian McEwan's Trauma Narrative

黄一畅◎著

 南京大学出版社

现代英语语言文学论丛·新锐系列

再现·变形·挪用： 伊恩·麦克尤恩的 创伤叙事嬗变

Representation, Transformation and Appropriation:
The Vicissitudes of
Ian McEwan's Trauma Narrative

黄一畅◎著

本书得到以下项目资助：

南京航空航天大学2015年新教师进校科研启动金（项目编号1012-YAH15012）

南京航空航天大学2016年中央高校基本科研业务费学术著作出版基金（项目编号NR2016053）



南京大学出版社

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

再现·变形·挪用：伊恩·麦克尤恩的创伤叙事嬗变 / 黄一畅著. — 南京：南京大学出版社，2016. 8
(现代英语语言文学论丛)
ISBN 978-7-305-17338-7

I. ①再… II. ①黄… III. ①麦克尤恩, I. — 小说研究 IV. ①I561.074

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2016)第 173815 号

出版发行 南京大学出版社
社 址 南京市汉口路 22 号 邮 编 210093
出 版 人 金鑫荣

丛 书 名 现代英语语言文学论丛
书 名 再现·变形·挪用：伊恩·麦克尤恩的创伤叙事嬗变
著 者 黄一畅
责任编辑 胡向春 董 颖 编辑热线 025-83592655

照 排 南京南琳图文制作有限公司
印 刷 江苏凤凰数码印务有限公司
开 本 880×1230 1/32 印张 8.5 字数 236 千
版 次 2016 年 8 月第 1 版 2016 年 8 月第 1 次印刷
ISBN 978-7-305-17338-7
定 价 36.00 元

网址：<http://www.njupco.com>
官方微博：<http://weibo.com/njupco>
官方微信号：njupress
销售咨询热线：(025) 83594756

* 版权所有，侵权必究

* 凡购买南大版图书，如有印装质量问题，请与所购图书销售部门联系调换

前 言

英国当代作家伊恩·麦克尤恩(Ian McEwan, 1948—)近年来的持续走俏,应当与其被改编成同名电影的小说《赎罪》(*Atonement* 2001)不无关系。影片女主角——“英伦玫瑰”凯拉·奈特莉的光环,才子导演乔·怀特的人气,麦克尤恩亲任联合制片人的噱头,以及二战烟云下生离死别与遗恨难消的情节很快使得这部电影一时之间风头无尽。身负 2007 年温哥华国际电影节开幕影片,金球奖最佳影片,奥斯卡多项提名大奖的盛誉,《赎罪》在全球范围内的轰动效应也催生了新的原著读者群。小说后现代元叙事背后的人性拷问彰显了麦克尤恩巅峰之作的叙事功力,也使得这位早在 1998 年便获得过布克奖的作家再次成为学术界的热议对象,各种研究成果层出不穷。

纵观麦克尤恩自 1975 年以来创作的小说,一个贯穿始终的叙事主题就是对于人类心理创伤的关注,这与他的个人经历有着千丝万缕的联系。麦克尤恩成长于一个军人家庭,幼年时期跟随服役的父亲辗转海外,居无定所,少年时期被送到寄宿学校,孤僻疏离,第一次婚姻失败后因为孩子的抚养权而与前妻对簿公堂,花甲之年却因为父母当年的私生子丑闻而陷入舆论漩涡。因此,麦克尤恩早期作品中一个显著的文本叙事重心便是亲伦关系裂痕及其对个人成长的深重影响。20 世纪 90 年代以后,麦克尤恩除了继续着墨于个人创伤的再现与平复,也将当代社会文化创伤之于个体的烙印写入了小说之中。这种创伤主题的拓展和书写轨迹的改变导致了他笔下的创伤情景建构存在主题分类上的不同、叙事基

调上的迥异以及叙事意图上的大相径庭,也意味着单一的批评视角无法穷尽其变幻的叙事技艺和深邃的文本内涵。因此,在当前以伦理批评与叙事学视阈为主导范式的麦克尤恩研究中,引入创伤视角来进行融合视阈下的系统考察更有利于探究麦克尤恩对当代西方社会历史的回顾反思和对人类生存困境的伦理思忖。

本书结合了创伤研究、叙事学及伦理批评的交叉视角,以麦克尤恩6部代表性创伤题材小说为研究对象,从叙事手法、主题建构、伦理审视、文化隐喻等方面考察其创伤书写体系,具有较为全面的研究范围和较为新颖的研究路径,也是跨学科研究的一次有效尝试。通过对麦克尤恩创伤叙事轨迹的勾勒,本书旨在探询其创伤叙事意图及疗愈机制,这对于概览麦克尤恩的叙事技艺、创伤书写特征及其对于创伤平复的伦理态度变化都有着一定的探索意义。

诚然,对麦克尤恩创伤叙事体系的全面透视还应观瞻本书讨论范围之外的其他创伤主题小说,这也是笔者未来很长一段时间内努力的方向。同时,因笔者的知识水平有限,书中的错讹之处还请众多学界方家不吝赐教指正。

摘 要

英国当代作家伊恩·麦克尤恩(Ian McEwan, 1948—)自上世纪七十年代登上文坛以来,便以精湛的叙事技艺和普世的伦理关怀而广受好评,他曾将多项欧美文学大奖收入囊中,数次获得布克奖提名,并于1998年凭借《阿姆斯特丹》(*Amsterdam*)摘得桂冠。《赎罪》(*Atonement* 2001)问世以后,麦克尤恩在全球的影响力达到空前,跻身2008年《泰晤士报》评出的“1945年以来最伟大的50位英国作家”之列,更被誉为英国的“国民作家”(“National Writer” Cowley)。多年来麦克尤恩一直努力构建基于人物心理摹写和道德质询之上的文本叙事重心(Courtney 186),尤其拓展了对人类心理创伤母题的伦理探询。他的第一部短篇小说集《最初的仪式,最后的爱情》(*First Love, Last Rites* 1978)和第一部长篇小说《水泥花园》(*The Cement Garden* 1978)便是涉及儿童性心理创伤透视的明证。新世纪以降,麦氏笔下的创伤叙事融入了更多对于当代历史社会文化创伤的伦理探询,其中《赎罪》(*Atonement* 2001)对于战争罪恶的控诉,《在切尔西海滩上》(*On Chesil Beach* 2007)对上世纪60年代性解放运动风暴来临前的反思,《甜牙》(*Sweet Tooth* 2012)对冷战时期政治意识对抗的嘲讽,都隐喻了当代社会历史文化创伤语境下个体心理平复的艰难。

西方麦克尤恩批评中的创伤视阈研究可追溯至拜恩斯(Bernie C. Bynes)关于其早期作品中中性存在主题的探讨(1995)。拜恩斯主要剖析其作品中的创伤“元情节”(“metaplot”),但也因过分附会作家本人与小说人物的遭遇共性而为人所诟病。随后,

斯伯耶(Judith Seaboyer), 斯莱(Jack Slay Jr.), 马尔科姆(David Malcolm)等学者跳出了传记批评的窠臼,从人物心理发展变化的角度考察麦克尤恩“心理小说”的文体特征,将创伤研究与伦理批评相结合。国内学者也注意到了创伤摹写背后的道德思忖,如最早引介麦克尤恩的学者蓝纯对《陌生人的慰藉》中性虐主题的探讨,张和龙、姜晓渤等对《水泥花园》中姐弟乱伦情节的解读都指向麦克尤恩对人性的洞察。上世纪九十年代以后,麦克尤恩将个人的性创伤经历融于时代文化背景的浸淫之中,如何在当代社会历史的时空维度中去考察个人性心理的发展变化成为麦克尤恩新作研究中一个无法回避的问题。有鉴于此,学界对麦克尤恩当代历史社会创伤书写的关注日益增强,以二战为背景的《赎罪》成为当前研究中一个集中的创伤文本对象。克罗斯威特(Paul Crosthwaite)论证了历史宏大叙事对《赎罪》战争创伤基调的影响,莫莱(Swantje Möller)、胡慧勇等人也对麦克尤恩作品中历史文化语境进行了着重考察。美国著名学者J. 希利斯·米勒(J. Hillis Miller)则将《赎罪》文本定义为“罗曼司创伤”(“Romance Trauma”),肯定了主人公通过忏悔写作实现的文学救赎努力。涉及“9·11”恐怖袭击阴影的《星期六》同样引起了学界的浓厚兴趣,图尤(Philip Tew)认为,小说中对“9·11”恐怖袭击的重复性喻指是对当代“泛创伤性”(“Traumatological”)社会的透视,塞巴斯蒂安(Sebastian Groes)、林莉、申圆等学者则在伦敦城市生活印象的摹写中观察到麦克尤恩对于当下人类生存困境的思索。值得注意的是,麦克尤恩还有多部小说涉及20世纪历史大事件,如德国纳粹暴行(《黑犬》),冷战意识对抗(《无辜者》、《甜牙》),撒切尔时代的铁腕政治等(《时间中的孩子》)。但学界对这些小说中的历史文化创伤现象关注还不够深入,对相似社会语境下的创伤动因缺乏比较研究,麦克尤恩对当代历史文化创伤书写的整体特点及脉络透视还有待完善。

近年来随着后经典叙事学的兴起,历史文化维度的创伤研究也呈现出与叙事研究、伦理批评相结合的跨学科研究特点。勒蒂瑟(Georges Letissier)指出《赎罪》创伤叙事建构背后的人性批判,

与国内学者宋艳芳、曾艳钰、邹涛等人的伦理批判维度不谋而合。维克诺依(Laurie Vikroy)和马修斯(Peter Mathews)则分析了主人公“创伤叙述者”(“trauma narrator”)的心理特征,从不同侧面论证创伤叙事中的伦理自省。美国修辞叙事理论家费伦(James Phelan)在对《赎罪》的叙事判断中实现了对麦克尤恩叙事意图的深度探询,通过申丹、唐伟胜、尚必武等学者的引介在国内引起了较大反响。赫德(Dominick Head)出版于2007年的专著《伊恩·麦克尤恩》更是一部系统分析叙事焦点和伦理主题的力作,较之费伦的个案研究在系统性和综合性上都前进了一大步。2009年,国际叙事学权威期刊——《文体》(*Style*)在第3期连续刊发了2篇围绕《爱无可忍》的论战文章,艾伦·帕默尔(Alan Palmer)与詹姆斯·费伦(James Phelan)分别从认知叙事学和修辞叙事学的角度观瞻《爱无可忍》的后现代叙事技巧,探讨文中不可靠叙述带来的伦理及美学批判实践,突破了长期以来流于小说主题分析的局限。时隔两年,《文体》杂志上再次出现讨论《爱无可忍》叙事技法的文章,苏珊·格林(Susan Green)将统筹全篇的第一人称回忆性叙述文本定义为“忏悔之作”(2011:445),首次从心理学的后创伤视阈来观照作为创伤见证者甚至是施害者的叙述者乔的矛盾心理。此外,查尔斯(Peter Childs)、威尔斯(Lynn Wells)的伦理批评力作,国内学者陆建德对《阿姆斯特丹》反讽叙事的研究,王悦对不可靠叙述的系统考察,郭先进对创伤叙事特征的整合归纳,尚必武、罗媛等对麦克尤恩多部小说的伦理学审视都涉及对其叙事技艺的梳理。需要指出的是,作为“技艺最为纯熟的英国现代作家之一”(Winder 49-50),麦克尤恩的创伤叙事策略也呈现出多样性的特点,不同创伤主题背后的叙事策略也凸显了他对创伤再现与疗愈的伦理探询,叙事手法背后所隐匿的创伤疗愈态度还有待进一步厘清。

与此同时,麦克尤恩灵活的叙事调度还服膺于不同创伤主题的语境呈现,他笔下的主人公大都经历过不同类型的创伤事件,具有创伤受害者、见证者或施害者的不同身份,由此表现出迥异的后创伤心理压力表征。麦克尤恩将这种后创伤心理差异融入了创伤

文本的叙事进程之中,将创伤亲历者置归于创伤再现、创伤叙事以及忏悔书写的叙事语境之下,分别赋予他们人物、叙述者、“隐含作者”的主体身份,从而凸显了创伤情境下文本主题和叙事策略相互牵制相互影响的多维叙事伦理。因此,麦克尤恩笔下的创伤图景涵盖了个人的和社会的创伤、历史的和集体的创伤,也囊括了修辞叙事学视阈下“隐含作者”与“叙事读者”的创伤隐喻。创伤受害者的失落绝望,创伤见证者的怯懦愧悔,创伤施害者的自恋狡黠奠定了麦克尤恩创伤小说的叙事心理情境,成为其创伤再现、创伤变形和创伤挪用三个渐进层次叙事框架中的伦理考量主体。麦克尤恩对人性的洞见与批判也在这种层次分明的叙事调度中弥散开来,隐喻了对于创伤经历者获得心灵舒缓可能性的深度质疑。因此,本书将紧紧围绕麦克尤恩创伤小说的叙事建构策略,通过文本分析和综合比较的方式来研究其四十多年来的创伤叙事特征及叙事进程中的伦理批判,探讨相似创伤叙事技艺背后的创伤书写及疗愈可能性态度变化,全方位审视麦克尤恩的创伤叙事体系。具体而言,本书将在创伤研究,叙事学,和伦理批评等交错关联的理论视角观照下,以麦克尤恩自上世纪八十年代以来创作的六部具有相似创伤叙事策略的代表性小说为研究对象,分析麦克尤恩在叙述技法,修辞效果与叙事伦理三个方面的风格演进。通过对具有相似创伤叙事语境小说文本的横向比较,以及麦克尤恩40多年来写作风格和主题转向的纵向考察,本书试图厘清麦克尤恩在话语,视角和结构三大叙事学基本视阈下的叙事嬗变,从而推导其对于创伤救赎可能性的态度变化。

本书的主体部分由三章组成。第一章考察了两部第三人称叙述小说《时间中的孩子》(1987)和《星期六》(2005),探讨同为创伤事件受害者的小说主人公在遭受个人和社会创伤后的意识回溯,指出文本的叙述话语凸显了受害者的后创伤压力。不断闪现的创伤记忆漫布于小说人物创伤情境的再现中,卡西·卡鲁斯(Cathy Caruth)所强调的心理创伤的“延迟性”(“belatedness”)也在叙事时序和心理空间的延展中展现出来。麦克尤恩在叙述话语方面的文体演进,尤其是在对自由间接引语的传统运用到语义混杂的叙

事过渡加强了受害者内在心理状态的摹写。通过对两部作品全景式创伤再现的叙事比较,可以看出创伤罹受者的主体反思取代了对创伤后果的详细铺陈而成为新的文本重心,麦克尤恩的叙事重点也从创伤图景的叙事重构过渡到对宏观社会历史语境的焦虑反思,渲染了“9·11”恐怖袭击阴影下的社会隐忧以及其中个体创伤平复的艰难。第二章以两部第一人称回忆录《黑犬》(1992)和《爱无可忍》(1997)为研究对象,在露丝·雷(Ruth Leys)有关创伤变形的理论观照下,揭示文本的不可靠叙述源于叙述者的创伤见证者身份,其创伤记忆与叙事记忆的严重分歧决定了创伤叙事变形的不可避免。第一人称主体聚焦以外的多重聚焦模式展现了同一叙述维度中的创伤亲历者不同的叙事记忆,暴露了个人伦理向度在叙事建构中的调控作用,表现出叙述主体从自我到他者,从个人到集体的创伤同化的叙事心理历程,麦克尤恩的叙事重心转向也在对创伤的历史性再现到叙事性重构的迁移中显现出来,暗含其对于创伤叙事心理诊疗功能的怀疑。第三章关注了麦克尤恩近来的两部元叙事风格作品《赎罪》(2001)和《甜牙》(2012),探讨创伤挪用在叙事融合中的可能性。借助多米尼克·拉卡普拉(Dominick LaCapra)救赎书写表演性的伦理质疑,本章集中剖析了作为创伤施害者的文本“隐含作者”在以写作赎罪的叙实践中忏悔和自我辩护兼具的矛盾心理,指出文本的嵌套叙事结构暴露了叙事混乱背后的隐秘叙事意图,对人性的批判在麦克尤恩的文本讽喻和读者的叙事判断中一览无遗。《甜牙》在《赎罪》的元叙事风格上既有承继又有衍展,创伤施害者在写作过程中的后创伤心理挪移演化成文本重构的叙事挪用,表现了麦克尤恩对于忏悔书写救赎意蕴的疑虑。

在迄今四十多年的创伤叙事建构中,麦克尤恩始终关注叙述技艺,文本修辞效果,读者阅读体验三者之间的叙事伦理融合。在对其创伤母题小说全景式考察的基础上,本书认为麦克尤恩逐渐从追求真实的后创伤表征摹写走向对创伤文本的叙事伦理自省,其叙述重心也转向不同身份的创伤亲历者在叙事建构中的伦理评判与自我审视,从文本主题和叙事伦理两个层面上再现了对人性

自私与懦弱的道德挞伐,表现出对于当代历史社会语境下人类创伤平复难以企及的悲悯。这种从文本“隐含作者”到“叙事读者”的叙事主体迁移也暗含了元叙事语境下的阅读伦理,折射出麦克尤恩对后现代文学作品阅读范式塑形的尝试。

Abstract

The British contemporary writer Ian McEwan (1948—) has been widely acclaimed for exquisite technique and in-depth inquiry into human nature since his debut in the 1970s. He has acquired with many prizes both home and abroad, the most notable one is the Man Booker Prize for which he has been nominated for several times and awarded with the satiric novella *Amsterdam* in 1998. With the world-wide prevalence of *Atonement* (2001), McEwan was featured on the list of “50 greatest British writers since 1945” selected by *The Times* in 2008, and further applauded as the “National Writer” (Cowley). McEwan has consolidated the narrative focus on human beings’ psychological delineation and moralistic concern (Courtney 186), particularly the ethical inquiry into the motif of psychological trauma. His first short story collection—*First Love, Last Rites* (1975) and first novel—*The Cement Garden* (1978) have exactly exemplified the rendering of children’s sexual trauma. Stepping into the New Millennium, McEwan’s trauma narrative has emerged into more ethical retrospection of contemporary socio-historical and cultural trauma, namely, the accusation of war crime (*Atonement* 2001), the introspection of the cultural trend before the sexual deliberation in the 1960s (*On Chesil Beach* 2007), the sarcasm of the political and ideological confrontation in the Cold War (*Sweet Tooth*

2012), all of which imply the formidability of trauma relief in the contemporary traumatic context.

The western scholarship targeting on McEwan's trauma motif could trace back to Bernie C. Byrnes' discussion of the sexuality in McEwan's early works. Byrnes proposed there was a "metaplot" of autobiographical projection in McEwan's novels, yet later he got criticism for too much far-fetched comparison between the real author and the characters. Judith Seaboyer, Jack Slay Jr. and David Malcolm skipped out of the stereotype of autobiographical approach, inspecting the stylistic feature of McEwan's "psychologicalfiction" from the perspective of characters' psychological development and variations. Consequently they have realized the conjunction of trauma study and ethical criticism. The domestic scholars have also concerned about the moralistic inquiry beyond McEwan's trauma depiction. For instance, Lan Chun, the first scholar who introduces McEwan in China, pays attention to the ethical implication of sexual abuse in *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981) and the interpretation from Zhang Helong and Jiang Xiaobo probes into the tragedy of siblings incest in *The Cement Garden* (1978). Since the 1990s, McEwan has indulged characters' personal sexual trauma experience into the grand background of historical and cultural context, henceforth, how to evaluate personal psychological status within the framework of socio-historical environment has emerged as an unavoidable issue in recent McEwanian study. In this case, the academic has focused on McEwan's contemporary trauma writing with more attention, to which *Atonement* being set up with the World War II attaches as the essential target. Paul Crosthwaite argues the influence of historical grand narrative upon the war trauma keynote in the novel and Swantjie Möller and Hu Huiyong also emphasize on the contextualization

of contemporary historical trauma. The well-known American scholar J. Hillis Miller defines stylistic feature of the novel as “Romance Trauma”, confirming the character’s endeavor of self-redemption through confessional writing. Another novel—*Saturday* (2005), traumatized with the “9 • 11” terrorist attacks simultaneously intrigues critics’ interest. Philip Tew holds the view that the repetitive implication of the flaming airplane image configures the typical characterization of contemporary “traumatological” society. Sebastian Groes, Linli and Shen yuan further observe McEwan’s speculation over human beings’ living dilemma. What is worthy to notice is that except for the two important novels mentioned above, McEwan has more novels bearing the mark of the historical events in the 20th century, respectively, the Nazi Massacre (*Black Dogs* 1992), the political and ideological confrontation (*The Innocent* 1990 and *Sweet Tooth* 2012), the social riot under the leadership of the “Iron Lady” (*The Child in Time* 1987). The recent research calls for more attention to the socio-historical traumatic phenomenon and comparative study of trauma motive incurred by the similar social and cultural context, as well as the overview and the vicissitude in McEwan’s trauma narrative.

With the upsurge of post-classical narratology in recent years, the trauma perspective has exposed the interdisciplinary trend which syncretizes the methodology of narrative study and ethical approach. Georges Letissier points out the humanistic critique beneath the trauma narrative framework, which achieves consensus with domestic scholars such as Song Yanfang, Zeng Yanyu and Zou Tao. Laurie Vikroy and Peter Mathews analyze the protagonist’s psychological status as the “trauma narrativist”, figuring out the ethical retrospection in the progression of trauma narrative. American critic, James Phelan,

the representative of Rhetorical Narratology, probes into McEwan's narrative intention in the process of terming the narrative judgment, whose argumentation has been widely accepted through the introduction of Shen Dan, Tang Weisheng and Shang Biwu in China. Furthermore, Dominick Head's oeuvre—*Ian McEwan* (2007) is a milestone of systematic research on McEwan's narrative focus and ethical themes, which moves further to the orientation of systematic and comprehensive research. In 2009, *Style*, one of the international authentic journals in the field of narratology, published two argumentative articles about McEwan's *Enduring Love* (1997) in the same volume. Allen Palmer and James Phelan concentrated on the postmodern narrative technique to epitomize the ethical and aesthetical practice aroused by the unreliable narrative in the novel, respectively from the angle of Cognitive Narratology and Rhetorical Narratology. Two years later, there was another article about the narrative strategy of the novel in the same journal. Susan Green regarded the first-person retrospective narration as the form of "confessional text" (445), investigating the paradoxical psychology of the narrator who was simultaneously the witness even the trauma perpetrator. In addition, the monographs of Peter Childs and Lynn Wells, the study of irony in *Amsterdam* (1998) by Lu Jiande, the systematic research on unreliable narration by Wang Yue, the analysis of trauma narrative feature by GuoXianjin and the ethical criticisms by Shang Biwu and Luo Yuan all contribute to the catalogue of McEwan's ethical theme and narrative technique. As "one of the most technically accomplished of all modern British writers" (Winder 49 - 50), McEwan's trauma narrative strategy exhibits diversified features and the narrative manipulation behind distinctivetrauma motif reveals his ethical inquiry into trauma

representative and remedy, for which the implicit attitude towards the plausibility of trauma recovery deserves further research.

It should be clarified that McEwan's narrative technique is conducive to the contextualization of different trauma motifs. Most of his protagonists endure various traumatic events with different identities of victim, witness or perpetrator, displaying divergent syndromes of post traumatic stress disorder. McEwan appropriates the divergence of traumatized characters into narrative progression of trauma text, situating them respectively into three-scope narrative contexts of trauma representation, trauma narrative and confessional writing, each correlating to the narrative identity of character, narrator and "implied author". This narrative designation foregrounds the multi-layered narrative ethics with reciprocal reference between textual theme and narrative strategy. McEwan's narrative settings range from individual and social trauma to historical and collective trauma, as well as the metaphorical trauma of "implied author" and "narrative reader" in the perspective of Rhetorical Narratology. The trauma victim's solitude and depression, the witness' cowardice and regret, as well as the perpetrator's narcissism and cunning underlie the narrative psychological settings, while the traumatized characters are contextualized as the subjects of ethical exploration respectively in the three-scope narrative framework of trauma representation, trauma transformation and trauma appropriation. McEwan's insight and critique of human nature disperse in his multi-level trauma writing, indicating his inquiry into the possibility of traumatized people's ultimate psychological relief. Accordingly, this book aims for epitomizing the feature and orientation of McEwan's trauma writing with comprehensive and systematic textual

exploration of trauma narrative reconstruction, to expose the vicissitudes of his ethical attitude beneath the self-conscious narrative in the procedure of diversified trauma restoration. Theoretically backboneed with trauma study, narratological approach and ethical criticism, this study targets McEwan's six novels with trauma motif since the 1980s, and attempts to sketch out his evolvement in narrative technique, rhetorical effect and narrative ethics during the procedure of trauma contextualization. The textual comparison of novels with similar trauma narrative context provides an overview of McEwan's stylistic and thematic transition during 30 years, in which the narrative vicissitudes in narrative discourse, focalization and structure declare his attitudinal change toward the accessibility to trauma reconciliation.

More specifically, this book is composed of 3 chapters. Chapter One concerns two novels narrated from the third-person omniscient perspective, *The Child in Time* (1987) and *Saturday* (2005), in which the protagonists share the role of victim obsessed with individual and social trauma. The post traumatic stress intensifies in various narrative discourses to envisage the victim's reflective psychological conscious. The consistent haunting traumatic memory appears in the representation of traumatic scenes, pointing to what Cathy Caruth terms as "the belatedness of trauma" in the extension of narrative chronotope. McEwan's stylistic experiment, for instance, the grammatical and semantic ambiguity in free indirect discourse, directs to his inward turn to narrative representation of trauma in which the traumatized characters' psychological mediation surpasses the detailed depiction of trauma aftermath. The thematic focus in these two novels shifts from narrative restoration of traumatic events to subjective retrospection on contemporary socio-historical environment, and the change in the traumatic context