

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

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جامعة 8 ماي 1945/ قالمة
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**The Exploration of Childhood Trauma and Social Alienation in
Individuals' Dysfunction: A Study in Ian McEwan's *The
Cement Garden***

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master in Anglophone Languages, Literatures and

Civilizations

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2016-2017

Dedication

In the name of Allah, the most beneficent and the most merciful, it is by the will of Allah this work comes to an end. First of all, I dedicate this work to my beloved parents AHCEN and DALLILA. I really thank them for their financial and moral support. I really appreciate their sacrifices, patience and guidance in order to provide me with the entire suitable environment for studying. I also dedicate this thesis to my dearest sisters, Fatma and Selma, the best I have ever had. They were always pushing me not to give up whenever the circumstances were harsh. From the deep of my heart, I thank the whole family without exceptions. At the end, special thank goes to my uncle, Ghani Bouguatouche, for his support at the harsh times and for his readiness for giving assist each time.

Acknowledgments

I am really grateful to my supervisor, **Miss. Chihi Soraya**. Without her help, this work would never be accomplished. I am really grateful for her efforts in guiding me and for her persistency each time in order to fulfill this paper. I appreciate her patience, her valuable advice and above all her kindness.

Abstract

The Cement Garden by Ian McEwan (1978) turns around the life of four siblings who are socially distanced. In the novel, the children's loss to their mother due to a mysterious disease after the father's death because of a heart attack stands as a turning point in their lives. The traumatized children decide to bury the mother secretly in the house basement out of fear from the unknown scary society. Their purpose is to protect themselves from being taken to care and losing their home. This thesis reveals all kinds of children's deviations and dysfunction which Ian McEwan wants to transmit through his work. The children's trauma, loneliness, depression, and living without parental authority along with the lack of knowledge are all the pre-requisites of the non-accepted social behaviors. Without exception, all the characters behave in socially wrong manners. The most notable dangerous one is the developed incestuous relationship between the two older siblings. The siblings' shocking action demonstrates the possible deviations that the alienated and traumatized children may fall in.

List of Abbreviations

PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

DSM: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

APA: American Psychiatric Association

AT: Attachment Theory

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Introduction

Ian McEwan is a novelist who established his place among the best English writers, and he is well-known with his postmodern style. In his novels, the writer is passionate in presenting the psychological state of his characters. Also, he is fascinated in representing the British society's notable speedy change which creates a parallel challenge between the traditional cities and the modern ones under the intensive questioning morals and responsibilities in relation to society, economy and culture. He is precisely identified with the human life over the social disturbance and the cultural boundaries. Ian McEwan is a controversial phenomenon. His style, the shocking realism, mostly is not favored to be read, but at the same time it is the most valuable to be analyzed because of its richness.

Similar to his other novels, the unique narratives of the novel makes Ian McEwan the international nickname, McAbre. The novel is also holds some background aspects of the author himself. Throughout his writings, McEwan confronts many of his fears as being raised in a family whose father is a leader in the army forces. Thus, due to his previous childhood experiences in different countries he depicts how the individual can exceed the limitations through breaking the moral and social taboos.

The main themes which highly come into view in *The Cement Garden* are the familial and the social alienation of four children in addition to trauma. Two sisters and two brothers. The children are raised in a house where the father does not accept any contact with others around. They do not only live in alienation, but they also witness the death of the mother that follows the death of father. Actually, these two major factors involve in a great part in shaping the children's behaviors when they are left alone at home without receiving any kind of support neither from their relatives nor from the society around them. The lonely siblings hide the secret of the mother's death and decide to bury her at the cellar and cover her by the cement that the father bought in order to build a great wall around his garden. The youngest girl, Sue,

becomes obsessed with reading books and greatly attached to her diary which includes various memories with the mother. Tom, a six year child, starts to behave like a girl then like a baby to gain more attention. Meanwhile, Jack and Julie, the older ones, develop an incestuous relationship as being holding the family issue as the mother and the father used to.

For more details, this paper is going to shed light on the individual dysfunction due to the effect of trauma and alienation through following the psychoanalytical approach. Thereby, this paper is divided into three major chapters. The first one is entitled “Children’s Trauma in Postmodern Literature.” It is the theoretical part of this paper. Under this section, there exist three main sections. The first one is turning around Trauma Theory. It traces the development of theorizing trauma in the psychological field along with its major symptoms, and ways of curing it through time. The second deals with “Childhood Trauma in Parents’ Death”. Here, more attention is devoted to “Child- Parent Attachment” since the novel concerns with the four siblings who lose both of their parents. At this level, an attempt is made to figure out the special tie between children and parents based on the AT that is developed by John Bowl in the 1950. AT reveals the emotional and the psychical security the child enjoys. It also shows the deep grieve the child enters due to a sudden broken of this close relation mainly by death of parents and the different ways the child reacts especially when he is not well followed with the appropriate psychological care.

Following this, the light is shed on how literature tackles the issue of childhood trauma. Thus, the title of this section is “Narrating Childhood Trauma”. Since children cannot note down their traumatic experiences by themselves, many writers hold the duty of doing so. In their writings, authors cover all the biological, social and cultural background of children which are involved in the psychological disorder in addition to depicting trauma within the family that has a great impact on breaking the children’s sense of safety. The last section in the first chapter is about “Alienation as Psychological and Sociological Aspect” that is related

to the individual social and familial broken relationships. It even depicts the estrangement at the level of someone's self. The section shows the alienated state of the individuals' mind because of the economic and social dissatisfactions. The main aspects related to alienation are the dominant feelings of powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement.

Then, the second chapter is the practical part of the research. It is entitled "Experiencing Trauma and Alienation in *The Cement Garden*" by Ian McEwan. This chapter will include four sections. The first two mainly deal with the children's life in the time where both parents are alive. The first one is under the title the "Familial Socio-Cultural Alienation in *The Cement Garden*". It is a close comprehension and examination to the context where the children are raised in. The second one is devoted to see the kind of ties that bind the parents in the novel with their children and the opposite. Thus, the title of the section is "Children-Parent Relationship in *The Cement Garden*".

Meanwhile, the last two sections are to be devoted for following; the children trauma and their options to carry on their lives without their parents. The third section of the chapter is "Children's Trauma under Parent's Death in *The Cement Garden*"; its aim is to reveal the heavy impact of the parent's death on the children, especially, the mother's loss. It depicts precisely the reaction of the children at the moment they come to know about the mother's decease. Yet, the fourth part of this chapter is "Adapting New Homeostatic in the Parentless Family", it deals with how the children manage their own life and how the home structure becomes. It also represents the major erroneous behaviors of the children do due to the lack of knowledge and adult guidance.

In the last chapter, four sections focus will deal with the children's characters and metamorphoses due to the intensive effect of trauma and isolation from the whole society. So the chapter is entitled "Characters Transformation: Macabre, incest sexuality, depression and

individual dysfunction in *The Cement Garden*.” The first character to deal with is the youngest child, Tom. The section which is under the title “Tom’s Search for a Mother” demonstrates his dysfunctional behavior. It lies on his will to transform into a girl because he no longer can bear bullying at school. He also behaves like a baby in searching for attention and care from his sibling mainly, Julie. The second part deals with Sue. Under the title, “Sue’s Internal Fears,” we will discover Sue worries and her total indulge in reading books as a way of forgetting the unaccepted world she lives in.

Then, the third part will tackle the analysis of Jack’s personality alteration. This section is the most important one because we as reader we come to know all the events from Jack’s eye. The section is entitled “Jack’s Powerlessness, Freedom and Puberty”. It will reveal his mental disorder, his behaviors as an adolescent male character under the absence of the parental control, and his desires toward his sister, Julie. Finally, the last section in this paper will concentrate on the character of Julie. Its title is “Mother Role of Julie”. Since Julie takes the role of the mother to keep their unity, she failed in her mission, as the oldest one among the children she proposed to bury the mother by themselves. Later, she chooses her brother to be her partner instead of Derek, her boy friend, which is conflicting with the social norms.

Chapter One: Children's Trauma in Postmodern Literature

As far as postmodernism is concerned with the critical vision of the modern human life, it is curtail to shed light on children as being the basic constituent of societies. This category has gained a part of representation segment in literary works. Consequently, this amount of postmodern literary texts has tackled many themes throughout writing multiple novels that turn around the narratives of children. Those works are mainly to present the origins of the transformation of socio-cultural structure of human beings that the world witnessed after the Second World War. Accordingly, for best description of the current situation; authors wrote about children's loss of innocence, alienation and the impact of the absence of parents' authority.

Furthermore, with the emergence of the psychoanalytical approach, it opened doors to say a lot about children's behaviors in early stages of life as well as in the later stages. Among the wide psychological problems that psychoanalysts agreed upon to explain many adults' misbehaviors are the longer influence of childhood trauma and alienation. For more details about these phenomena, the chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section is concerned with the deep understanding of the theory of trauma in general, due to its important engagement in changing the person's personality.

The second section deals specifically with the trauma in parents' death and how traumatized children in parents' loss are different from their peers. Under this title, there are two other parts. The first one is about an investigation of child-parent relationship. The second one is about how literature narrate childhood trauma. Then, the chapter's third title tries to shed light on alienation as psychological and sociological aspects which are significant in shaping the individual nature of relationship in relation to him, therefore, in the surrounding world that is embodied in the society as a whole

I. Trauma Theory

To examine what are the major effects of trauma on humans, one should know first what trauma is. Scholars define trauma differently. Trauma occurs when an unpredicted event takes place. It is a turning point that changes the regular course of the individual's daily life. It is true that it comes from the outside surroundings; however, it strongly overwhelms the internal state. Thus, it rapidly dominates the mind (qtd.in Blooms 2). In the same context, Barker Graham A. defines trauma as a harmful effect caused by stressful incident. This horrible experience leads to psychological disorder and is accompanied with misbehavior actions. The psychological confusion appears as depression, fear or post traumatic stress as a whole (Barker 1).

Whatever the reasons of trauma are different, it has no specific category to assault. First, it can affect males as well as females. Second, trauma has no relation to age. It can happen to children as the way that it can happen to adults. The traumatic symptoms do not appear always immediately after the cruel incident. However, they can come into function after days, months or even after years. Even though the root causes of traumatic incidents are categorized into main categories such as: Accidental, sexual abuse, natural disasters or family clashes; persons of the same category show different reactions. These reactions are related to their own social and familial background in addition to their biological systems (Barker 5-6).

To juxtapose the same idea in the real life of persons, Rosenbloom, Williams, and Watkins explain that there are certain involved circumstances which make such event a traumatic one. Typically, those events severely assault a person, and they do not stop at that point. However, they are recurrent in the later periods of time. Here, they cause emotional as well as physical hurts. As what is mentioned before, the unique personality has its influence on the way how people perceive such event. The same event is seen differently by two persons. It can be traumatic for a person and trace a deep injury as well as it cannot be alike for another one.

Accordingly, the more the event is significant to the person the deeper the injuries and affects will be (Rosenbloom et al 13).

Commonly, the reactions to trauma are related to the person's personal and social background, besides to the time the traumatic event occurs and the kind of help the victim receives: whether too much or little support to overpass the existing situation. Those reactions are divided into four major categories: Physical reactions, mental reactions, emotional reactions and behavioral reactions. Concerning the physical reactions, the victim may suffer from rapid heart beats, high muscle tensions and having the feeling of numb and fatigue approximately all most of the day. Mental reactions are related to the way the person thinks about himself and the world around him. The victim has the feeling of fear and shows dependency on the others in the sake of safety. At the level of the brain, the person sees disturbing images that represent the unpleasant incidents. At the same time, they cannot be stopped willingly whenever they start. Moreover, the individual is highly aware about what is around him including people or objects. This awareness is defensive mechanism to be ready for any unexpected threat. In other cases, the traumatized person is bodily disconnected (disassociation). As if he externally looks to his body. At this point, the person is partially or completely aware about what is happening around him (Rosenbloom et al 14-5).

In relation to the emotional reactions, the traumatized persons are likely to be the most thrilling ones. They can be summarized in terms of losing security and mistrust. This provokes double hatred sensitivity. The survivor of trauma cannot trust the society any more. At the same time, he raises a self hatred due to the incapability to protect himself from the alleged danger. This reaction is also combined with anger to the level the victim will treat himself harshly. In several times, he undergoes the emptiness that is broken suddenly with a wave of complex emotions which are difficult to understand. Behavioral reactions are those which are considered as a mirror of the internal state. Instability, stress, anger and fear tend to

be reflected in a great favor to loneliness and total avoidance to the spaces where the trauma took place. Under the same category, the individual acquires a new eating behavior (eating too much or the opposite). Also, a traumatized person may be transformed into an aggressive one who involves in clashes and causes harms to others (Rosenbloom et al 16-7).

In the same context, trauma has another set of symptoms. Those symptoms are completely opposite to each other. In one hand, the traumatic memory goes throughout a series of successive flashbacks, returning dreams or the retrieval of the traumatic experienced event. On the other hand, trauma can lead to contradictory reactions. The individual tends for complete forgetfulness of the previous shocking events. Also, trauma provokes an over exaggeration and increase of a number of emotions, such as, the loss of self control most of times; or the greater feeling of fear even in ordinary situations (qtd. in Luckhurst 2).

In the normal state, claims Ruth Cohn in his book *Coming Home to Passion: Restoring Loving Sexuality in Couples with Histories of Childhood Trauma and Neglect*, the cognition includes different processes. Operations like thinking, remembering, reasoning and awareness are to be extremely effected and lose their way of functioning when a person is attacked by a traumatic event. Trauma affects him in two distinguished ways. First, trauma overwhelms the thinking area found in the brain. So, when passing throughout real life situations or retrieving memories, trauma eradicates this area which really puts the individual in a true problem to carry out his life. Here, the memory indulges in a state of fragmentation and chaos. Second, trauma changes the one's own vision and perception towards the surrounding world. In this case, a traumatized person interprets things through a "filter of trauma" that is according to him, each simple ordinary event or thing has an interpretation. In general, trauma controls cognition and shapes the way the brain perceives events (Cohn 39).

In his book, *The Major Symptoms of Hysteria* in 1907, Pierre Janet demonstrates the origins of the hysteric studies, and he provides the way it develops throughout history.

According to him, there are three distinct periods. At the very beginning, people see the disease as miraculous. Such symptoms like somnambulism and physical wounds have no exact logic explanation. People have relied on witches most of time to cure the ill person following mysterious spiritual methods. During this epoch, there is just a little literature which holds some descriptive details about the sickness's real causes. Simply, it is irrational and missing to the sense of logic and scientific explanation. The second period is called 'the clinical period'; it has appeared in the nineteenth century. This period is considered as the turning point in the historical development of the field. From its name, the disease seems to be diagnosed in medical clinics. The physicians have look for the basic grounds of the sickness, and have shown how it differs from the others. The third period is called the 'psychological period' that has witnessed the emergence of many scientific theories and interpretations to the phenomenon. During the last period, it is important to mention Charcot who has paved the way to the next generations in the field due to his clinical interpretations and curing methods (Janet13-6).

Going back to the early nineteenth century, Herman in his book *Trauma and Recovery The Aftermath of Violence from Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* claims that trauma studies have witnessed their beginning during the time of Jean-Martin Charcot, a doctor in the *Salpêtrière* hospital in Paris, as the first try to cure some physical complications. Charcot was the pioneer in discovering the relationship between some physical diseases and the inner psychological state. He has concluded that many illnesses related to the neurological system are resulting from psychological instability. At that time the disorder (trauma) has been called 'hysteria'. Charcot has followed the hypnotism as a way to cure his patients in which he has spent too much time with them to gain sufficient information. Charcot's new studies and investigations have influenced many other influential figures in the field of psychology, among them: Sigmund Freud and Pierre Janet. After Charcot, physicians (psychologists latter

on) have developed many theories in the sake of explaining the phenomenon and the suitable approaches to cure it (Herman 10-1).

In Freud's psychology, the notions of "wound" and "injury" have been introduced to describe the ambivalence of the nervous system. In his work, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he has discussed the major sources of the injury. Unlike anxiety which he has defined as the feeling of terror from something which does not happen yet, he has believed that fear is the real cause of the mental disorder. Fear which seems to be opposite to anxiety reflects the situation of a person who is afraid from something that really exists. Fright is the concept that describes the state of a person who is surprisingly involved in a sudden threatening situation that is without being prepared for it (Freud 6-7). In the early years, Sigmund Freud along with his colleague Breuer has tried to understand more the mental process of a traumatized person. Anna O the patient of Breuer was suffering from trouble in vision and rejecting food, the physical analysis have showed that those symptoms were not related to organic problems; instead Breuer has claimed that these symptoms were due to hysteria. He has cured her through 'talking cures'. After Breuer has left, Freud carries out the sessions with Anna, and during his studies he has proclaimed many mechanisms of defense used by the hysteric like: Repression, isolation and displacement (Boeree 3-9).

In 1913, Freud has brought a new approach into the field of neuroses; he has called it psycho-analysis. For him, the approach is not that fruitful in the area of research, but it also provides a new treatment way depending on the diagnosed symptoms. As the approach has witnessed its beginning with his colleague, Breuer, on their works *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud has opposed Pierre Janet's in relating the psychical dissociation to the mental cognitive disabilities. For him then, the origins of such disorder is originated from the psychic process he has called *verdrängung* which means repression (Freud 2545). In 1943, Freud and through the psycho-analytical method has described the human psyche. He has divided it into a set of

organs that respond to the nervous system and the consciousness. More profoundly, Freud has provided a new description to the mental apparatus typically the consciousness and its developments through time. He has given the name *id* to the oldest part of consciousness; it includes what the entire individual inherited from his parents. *Ego*, is a development of one part of the *id* due to an external stimuli. It has a protective and intermediate function between the external world and the *id*. The ego way of functioning is to store experiences of different stimuli in the memory. Also it controls the demands of the *id* and decides whether to be satisfied or not. The taken decision is according to the surrounded circumstances. Super-ego is the third power that controls ego. It is developed by children due their influence by their parents, other members of society and traditions (Freud 1956- 8).

In his book *Psychodynamic Social Work* in 2004, Jerrold R. Brandell reports that throughout applying the psychoanalytical approach, Freud has explained the major causes of the mental disorders. Based on his individual efforts and previously found results, he has concluded that the origins of the mental illness are due to early experienced traumas which dissociated in later stages of life: "Certain mental illnesses occurred when the sufferer's personality was permeated by the intrusion of powerful and mysterious impulses from deep within the psyche was a radical one and placed him at odds with explanations derived from traditional psychological theories" (Brandell 26). Then, he has discovered that most of hysterical symptoms such as obsession, fear and amnesia are due to repressed powers. These powers already exist within the human psyche, but they are repressed as a defensive way by another power (instinctual power that comes from the unconscious "id") (Brandell 26).

After the death of Freud, his students who are inspired by the psycho-analytical approach carry their research for more understanding of the mental processes. In this regard, Anna Freud; and based on revising Freud's anxiety theory, was capable to understand the mechanism of defense through her focus on consciousness in opposing to Freud whose most

concern is on studying the unconscious. Anna Freud has provided four types of defensive mechanism that stands opposite to the instinctual forces to explain the relationship between hysterical illness and repression. These mechanisms are 'superego anxiety', 'objective anxiety', and 'anxiety about the strength of derived forces' and 'anxiety that come from contrastive intrinsic forces' (Brandell44-5).

In his explanation of the "Memory Processing" for the first time, Pierre Janet as reviewed in the article of Van Der Kolk et al, "Pierre Janet and the Breakdown of Adaptation in Psychological Trauma" has claimed that it is an unconscious process that people do not pay attention to. The memory classifies and stores the different ideas, habits and new acquired skills automatically in the 'cognitive schemata.' This process is called by Janet 'automatism'. According to him, the memory has two ways in storing memories. Generally, the human memory has the ability to store events, ideas...etc in the long life term (from the time of birth until death). However, what creates one's own specific perception is the ongoing process of integrating and categorizing new information with the previous one. (qtd. in Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart 1531).

This subconscious process creates unique personalities. Furthermore, Janet raises a new concept related to traumatized memory. The concept of 'subconscious fixed ideas' explains clearly the way traumatized memory functions after living the event: "Although subconscious, they (fixed ideas) continue to influence current perceptions, affect states, and behavior; they are usually accessible under hypnosis [...] Since fixed ideas originate in a failure to make sense of a past experience, they fulfill no useful current function and lack further adaptive value" Thus, People come to experience the feeling of fear or terror again just because the person cannot convert those stored ideas into a sequence of events. This hard situation has a harmful emotional reflection such as fatigue (qtd. in Van Der Kolk and Van Der Hart 1532).

Throughout his intensive clinical experiments says Elton Mayo in his guiding book *The Psychology of Pierre Janet* that Janet has explained another phenomenon which he has called 'dissociation'. His explanation comes to investigate the skin spots that appear without the awareness of the person. At that time, the only explanation provided by witches is that those spots are 'seals of devil'. Meanwhile, Janet has referred to the fragmentation and the lack of integrity between the nervous systems and the sensory organs of the hysteric (Mayo 27-30). In the normal state, dissociation of consciousness is the capacity to do many tasks at the same time (Bloom 7). A fundamental brain ability of dissociation of a traumatized person is the split of memories from the consciousness and omission of the previous life events. Here, many people create other personalities with new names for them just because they no longer remember who they are (Janet 55). For more details about dissociation capacity in relation to the emotional side Van Der Kolk reports in his article, "The Body Keeps the Score: Memory and the Evolving Psychobiology of Posttraumatic Stress," Pierre Janet has confirmed that when a person has an emotional reaction toward a severe event, it will be integrated in the memory but far from the consciousness management:

Janet' postulated that intense emotional reactions make events traumatic by interfering with the integration of the experience into existing memory schemes. Intense emotions, Janet thought, cause memories of particular events to be dissociated from consciousness and to be stored, instead, as visceral sensations (anxiety and panic) or visual images (nightmares and flashbacks) (qtd. in Van Der Kolk 253).

In a way, such ideas are accumulated in the memory either as feeling as the same as of in the moment of the incident or as successive images appear in nightmares (Van Der Kolk 253).

Historically, during the last part of the twentieth century, the number of traumatized people has increased dramatically to the top due to many events' successiveness and rapid changes. The most noticeable ones are the Two World War aftermath besides to the technological advance. So, the serious number of the traumatized persons leads researchers in different fields to look for the reasons and find a solution throughout following a sufficient scientific approach. After all, these studies show that most of persons who experienced traumatic events end to develop a Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder¹ (qtd. in Wilson 682).

Again, the phenomenon (PTSD) first categorization and diagnosis were after the Second World War by DSM, precisely after the War of Vietnam that dropped heavy psychological repercussions on the American veterans. PTSD is a common predictable reaction to strong event or a chain of events. In their book, Glenn R and Schiraldi reportes that many traumatized people notice a change in the emotional part, in which they consider themselves belonging to different periods of time. They have an ordinary life before they become broken souls or likely to be dead (Glenn R and Schiraldi 3-4). People with PTSD show distinct reactions whenever they are put in a situation. They tend to react rapidly to a certain condition even without understanding it well; this makes them fall miscalculation most of the time; or they react aggressively in which they frighten others just due to unintended frustration from the people around them (qtd. in Van Der Kolk 254).

II. Childhood Trauma in Parents' Death

II.1. Child- Parent Attachment

In society, declares Bogyi in her article "Coping with Grief after Separation and Loss: A Case Study", death is a subject that adults prefer not to tackle in their different discussions with their children. Thus, children come to understand the real ruggedness of it just in the moment of its occurrence. Of course, children enter in a state of deep grieving as a normal reaction to heavy incident like death; which they do not know anything about it. When

one thinks deeply about the phenomenon, it seems clearly that the problem is highly related to adults who remained silent more than to children who are not well prepared to such event which can occur suddenly at any moment. Hence, grieving is not the only feeling overwhelms children. They also no more tolerate the betrayal of adults by hiding this central fact (Bogyi 75).

In his book, *A Secure Base Parent-Child Attachment and Healthy Human Development*, John Bowlby notes that children develop a sense of attachment to their caregivers (mainly parents) throughout their experience in the familial milieu. Thus, although they grow up they still in need of their parents attention and care as the same as in their first days. In this respect, Bowlby when introducing his attachment theory² he gives a precise description to the tie raised between the child and his caregiver (mainly parents). This relation is constructed through different emotions depending on the surrounding circumstances. In case of smooth and harmonic relation, the child feels pleased and safe; however, he shows negative emotions whenever he feels that his caregivers are no longer close to him. As a reaction, he becomes aggressive or worried. To sum up, according to the parents' action, there is always an emotional reaction from the part of the child (Bowlby 2-3).

In the age of adolescence, children go out of home and interact with the external world. During this new experience, they may feel uncomfortable and oppressed, but they still believe in having all sorts of security and relaxation. This phenomenon is called by Bowlby "the secure base." The emotional and physical supports they get at home push them to build a strong trust on their parents as their protectors and supporters at hard situations, but this feeling starts to shake in the time of the illness or the death of one of their parents. Bowlby calls this feeling 'Separation Anxiety'. Children's anxiety appears not because they already possess pain and risk inside. Instead, it is just an indicant of coming danger in the future. In relation to mourning, it is a natural reaction by any ordinary individual after the incident takes

place. However, in most times, children show anger and total refusal to the idea of losing parents (Bowlby 10-30).

In his other book, *Attachment and Loss*, based on many records of children who lose either their mother or father, they are deeply touched with the loss of one of parents. Children of four years old always tend to keep hope in father/mother return. Therefore, when they lose hope and they will never return, they become angry and unhappy. Others like to maintain photos to remember their memories with them. Also, they are persistent and curious to know everything about them when they grow up. They are attracted with every single good detail that makes them complete the ideal image of them. In contrast, they are not interested in knowing their negative actions in order not to disturb the good image constructed for them. Bowlby also refers to previous studies done by Kliman and Marris. They respectively point that: children up to ten years find it hard to show any reaction and favor to be isolated. Also, they get an unbearable pain whenever they encounter with life's difficulties without the help of their parents; as a result, they fall in hysterical cry which may last for weeks (Bowlby 218-9).

Concerning adolescent, their case is very complex and sensitive. Their defensive mechanism which is embodied in the rational thinking creates the idea of adults are not supposed to behave weakly like children (help is a sign of weakness). Therefore, in the process of detachment, they go through a painful experience alone and reject any sort of assistance provided by others. Even their relation with the father (in case of the mother's death or the opposite) shakes due to misunderstanding discussions. Hence, a lack of communication and refusing help to make the pressure becomes stronger than their capacities, until they start thinking about suicide as a solution to end their suffering (Bogyi 78).

The main danger that can dominate children is the traumatic grief³. Childhood traumatic grief is a reaction to the death of a loved one, whether suddenly like natural disasters or due

to expected reasons such as illness. In normal situations, children who deal normally with death grieving are more likely to have a discussion on the dead person and do everything reminds them with him. In contrast, the loss of the loved one provokes some children to develop traumatic grief. Those reactions are different depends on the age of the child.

Younger children suffer from repeated nightmares so that they do not sleep alone; however, old ones may have the feeling of hurtful and pain so that they tend to avoid all what have connection to death. Otherwise, the symptoms appear in form of fear, mainly thoughts and memories that are related to the way and the place the loved persons died. Also, they may change eating behavior and show no interest on others or to have physical and emotional problem. On the social level, besides to their loss of parents, for instance, children try to cope with social changes and the distressful questions about the death either from authorities or from peers which is considered as a painful situation for them (Goodman et al 5-6).

Before the parents' death, mentions Bowlby-West in here article "The Impact of Death on the Family System", the family members live in "homeostatic." However, after the death's occurrence, the family starts to identify a new homeostatic. The new created system depends on the persons themselves and the degree of grieving. The decision taken by the family, most of the time has negative results on the familial and the societal level. Consequently, and in the trail of looking for the maintenance the same old family structure; there would be a deficiency in transmitting the cultural behavior of the previous family which cope with the social norms that is falling in the danger of developing post-traumatic symptoms or in "transgenerational dysfunctional consequences" (Bowlby-West 279- 82).

Because loss and death trace emotional and physical disrupts on children belong to different ages, it is important for all societal categories to involve in helping those victims to overcome their grief. Including parents, teachers' and friends' support can handle the traumatized children with the situation; hence, they can carry on their lives easily. The most

suitable sustain for them is to tell them the whole truth about the death incident and to be good listener for them, in which parents or teachers listen to them whenever they want to talk about the death event. Giving them the space to express their emotions will provide clues that enable people around them to provide help. Another important thing is that people have to bear in mind that grieving can last for a long time so that they have to be penitents with them and try to understand their special cases (qtd. in NASP 1-2).

II.2.Narrating Childhood Trauma

The psychoanalytical theory that emerged as the Freudian tradition has allowed readers to read literature from another angle. As far as the theory is concerned with analyzing the human psyche, this provided the opportunity to expand the theory founds on the social scale. At the very beginning, psychoanalysis allowed critics to understand the author's psyche throughout his writings. Later on, in modern time, theorists tackled the trauma in literary works as one dimension of psychoanalysis. Experiencing the traumatic event is different from the other in the way that the individual cannot remember the event as it occurred which reoccurs as a form of repeated nightmares and flashbacks. By projecting the nature of trauma on literary narrative's style, writers depict the individual and the collective trauma major symptoms throughout repetition and adapting a mysterious language structure most of the time (literary Theory 304-5).

'Trauma', says Anne Whitehead in her book, *Trauma Fiction*, is the concept that emerged in the medical field at first place, has been included in the literary field when the prominent writer, Cathy Carth, along with Shoshana Felman and Geoffry turn their focus on trauma studies. The rise of the new theory led to the raise of many questions. Anne Whitehead wonders if trauma which is a result of such a painful event which causes distortion at the level of memory how it could happen for writers to narrate such experiences. As an attempt to answer this important question, whitehead goes to the idea of representing the traumatic

incidents based on imitating the symptoms. Literature which witnessed the raise of trauma theory has provided a new technique to adequately narrate events and to reflect their authenticity by avoiding the chronological order and depending on repetition (Whitehead 3-5).

Literature has amazing portrayal ability. It gives the chance for the human being to correlate the different aspects of life such as history, sociology, religion and psychology with the human memory in each moment through the long life time: “Literature and film can vividly portray individual and collective memory—its contents, its workings its fragility and its distortions —by coding it into aesthetic forms, such as narrative structures, symbols, and metaphors” (Erll 2). Literature holds in its texts all the memories and expresses them throughout fictional pieces. What makes literature special is the writers’ intelligence in constructing narratives that figure out the memory of the individual as well as the collective. Therefore, writers can transmit the memory content, its process of working even in the individual’s abnormal state. The authors succeed in portraying the distortion of memory between forgetting and remembering events throughout innovating marvelous narrative structures full of rhetoric style and symbols (Erll 2).

In narrating childhood trauma, Schönfelder claims in her work entitled *Wounds and Words Childhood and Family Trauma in Romantic and Postmodern Fiction* that post modern texts tend to depict the traumatic experiences of children’s characters. The main focus of these literary scripts is to shed light on the psychological side of the character after his experience of trauma within the family. Writers with specific words’ choice, and throughout the development of the novel; they provide a detailed description of the protagonist’s psychological disruption. The authors come to present trauma through narrating the past events in which trauma occurred. At the same time, within the created narrative structure tend

to illustrate the deepness of the wound and to what extent the character can be cured and find meaning to his life (Schönfelder 9-10).

Trauma, as being a concept used in the medical field then in the field of literature that is characterized by its complexity, has received a harsh criticism as being meaningless and that the concept should be eliminated from the body of literary studies. In her suggestion, Schönfelder points there should not be a complete removal to the notion of trauma, instead it should be replaced at least by some perceptions, such as, 'shock' or 'crisis,' but she still insists that none of these new terms can powerfully describe the state of suffering as trauma does. Although there are many postmodern works that depict the concrete aspects of trauma, Cathy Caruth's theory focuses on the abstract aspects. Caruth sees narrating trauma is challenging to the previous narrative norms. As a new theory in literature that emphasizes on depicting the human mental and psychological disorder, it is then; representing the history in an indirect figurative language. At the second place, the specialty of trauma's nature as a disruptive and destructive to the individual fortunately is reflected throughout the broken pieces of language (Schönfelder 10).

As Harry Hendrick states that children cannot note down their history, and what is written about them is always shaped from the adult's perception. Likewise the women who are out of sight for a long time, children also were not the major study subject of the English language productions before the period of 1970. Even though, for those who have showed interest in exploring children specific cases, they provide just limited and insufficient productions although they have focused on several topics, like, immigration, literature and childhood labor (Hendrick 1). Also, Lassén-Seger mentions the idea of seeing childhood from adult's perception which seems simple and reveals in the process of growing up mentally and physically through stages. Instead, many social and psychological constructivists change the

adult's perception. They believe it is more than a biological process, but it is indeed an inclusive one to the historical and social background (qtd. in Lassén-Seger 10).

Many fields show interest on children due to their special psychological and cognitive development (qtd. in Schönfelder 17). In addition, literature does not ignore such rich field of study. In the article, "Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History" Shoshana Felman states that narrating trauma is not just an indication to peoples' life, but it has in a way; the ability to blend and express the traumatic testimonies with the human's real life: "A life- testimony" is not simply a testimony to a private life, but a point of conflation between text and life, a textual testimony which can *penetrate us like an actual life*" (Felman 2). Here in the study about narrating childhood trauma in postmodern texts, Schönfelder proposes to relate narrating childhood trauma with family trauma due to the reciprocal relationship between childhood trauma and family trauma. According to her, the individual trauma changes the familial ties in the way that breaking the constancy and the security of the family and the whole community as well. Along with presenting children-parents relationships, literary texts narrate the disorder caused by loss, separation and death (Schönfelder 18).

In narrating trauma, various literary works do not aim at presenting how the traumatized character escapes from his real life and lives in the world of dreams. Instead, the character and due to his abnormal state has to live the same accident "twice." He lives the time when the awful event occurred, and the time when it reoccurred in his mind as dreams or series of flashbacks. In this regard, Cathy Caruth raises a debatable question about the way a character suffers from trauma in her book, *Unexplained experience: Trauma, Narratives, and History*: Is it resulted from encountering the event of death for example or is it resulted from passing through the awful moment? Caruth suggests that it is 'double telling.' Primarily, it is the story of confronting death of the beloved; then the story of the aftermath of it and the trial of the

individual to carry out his life once again. The character goes through such unpleasant life just owing to the arrangement of two different natures. In one hand, the character faces the nature” of the event itself as being harsh; in the other hand “the nature” of living it (Caruth 7-8).

III. Alienation as a Psychological and Sociological Aspect

In his article, “Social Alienation: A Review of Current Literature,” Lystad asserts that one of the prominent developed concepts in relation to contemporary life is alienation. In studying alienation, scientists’ major focus stands on the human relationships. As the term is primarily used to report the state of the individual unaccepted structures in politics and economy inside different societies, it also accedes to express the sociological and psychological situations whether in an industrialized or non-industrialized society of mankind during the rapid growth which the period of the eighteenth and nineteenth century has witnessed (Lystad 90).

Bottomore et al in their comprehensive book, *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*, assert that before it is included in the philosophical dictionaries, the term, alienation, is originally used indifferent fields with different connotations. In the daily life, alienation is used to describe someone who is no longer in contact with his old friends. In economy, the term is used to show the transference of properties from one owner to another. In psychology, alienation is used to express the mental state of a person (insanity). Alienation as a Marxist revolutionary notion does not gains its recognition just in the second part of the nineteenth century, when it is included as a concept in the philosophical dictionaries. In fact, Karl Marx uses the term to refer to the state of isolation of individuals, societies and institutions as a result of many circumstances, such as, the nature of both the social activities and the production. Generally, in its implementation, alienation is used to portray those individuals who cannot cope with their social state. However, others illustrate that if a person cannot adjust with a certain society. This does not justify his sickness but the probability of the society’s sickness (Bottomore et al 11-5).

In a trail to understand Marx's alienation, Wallimann reviews in his article, "Alienation — In Marx and Modern Empirical Sociology" that Karl Marx's alienation is typically discussing the lives of people within the capitalist society. He argues that capitalism which stands on exploiting the power of man in overproducing is dramatically and automatically leads to estrangement of the individual from his nature first, then from himself as a creature gifted and differentiated from animals by consciousness in addition to his alienation from his species. In this regard, alienation is just an inescapable result to the inability to cope with such system that is in its core is contradicting nature (Wallimann274-5). In another way, the state of the alienated mind of people in capitalist societies does not reflect the objective reality that really proves people's alienation. Even though people express their satisfaction, actuality they are just expressing their 'false unconsciousness' (Nelson and O'Donohue 6).

For much concern about Marxists' individual alienation especially self estrangement from others and the estrangement of one person from his self, people and without exception are engaged in a process of alienation through getting away from their natural situation as being a social creature: "Alienation from others, or from society, is hence the detachment of the individual from that which is part of his own nature, the splitting of society into a mere set of individuals" (Jackson 31). He argues that from the time of primitives, societies are formed in accordance to law of nature; where social life is characterized by unity and harmony. In another way, the integration of each individual is an essential part in forming what is so called the true society. Meanwhile, he considers alienation as a process of getting rid from his nature. As a result, the notion of society is vanished, and it becomes just a set of a disconnected individual (Jackson 31-2).

Thus, as a clarification to Marx's widespread idea which most of people relate it to economy, Fromm confirms in his book *Marx's Concept of Man: Milestones of Thought* that the major concern of Marx is more than an economic exhaustive misuse of labor force.

Instead, the issue's major concern is about man's existence as a free creature by nature. Marx sees capitalism as a destructive tool of individualism through making him a slave to which he is producing. Accordingly, Marx's talk about alienation within the capitalistic civilization has a noble aim. The aim tends to awaken people (not just the working class) and to turn into their real nature far from being slaves to capitalism. So, the process will be the "emancipation of the humanity as a whole" from the evil of capitalism that treats individuals as the same as machines they use in their work place (Fromm47-9).

To tackle the situation of modern societies from another angle, Durkheim, a sociologist, declares in his studies that there exist complementary forces that preserve the society from breaking down. "The social integration" manifests through the pre-established norms and values that maintain the social unity; along with "the social regulation" which consists of the laws and restrictions that work in limiting the individual's endless desires. However, the raised question is that what will happen if those forces no longer function within these societies due to one reason or another? Of course, Durkheim provides an answer to the inquiry, the inescapable results are: "excessive individualism" in which individuals enter in a state of isolation and do not care about the social ties. In the other part, individuals feel depressed and disappointed due to one reason or another which ends most of the time by committing suicide (Maskill et al 9). Durkheim points out the increase of the voluntary death in the industrialized societies in spite of spreaded democracy, and modernization is just a reflection to the status of great dissatisfaction which has no solution just in committing suicide (Lystad 91).

Furthermore, Seeman, one of the most prominent figures concerns with alienation, in his article "On the Meaning of Alienation," introduces another division or multiple dimensions of alienation. These are: Powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and Self-estrangement. Based on Marxist's view, powerlessness in these industrial communities

refers to the isolation of the individuals from each other and their transformation into products (objects). Powerlessness in its sense embodies the failure of the individuals in taking the right decisions in case of facing serious problems. Meaningless is the state of uncertainty or complete loss of confidence in terms of the already existed beliefs. Individuals have no more trust in beliefs as a source of alternatives in the hard times. Normlessness is not just a term used to report the anarchy and the breakdown of the social norms that organize the life of persons within societies. It also expands its meaning in the psychological side. In this situation, normlessness leads to the lawlessness, losing confidence on society members then the collapse of civilizations as a whole (Seeman 784-7).

The other dimension included under alienation is isolation. Actually, isolation is seen as the absence of the feeling of belonging and relatedness to a place or person. It is the disconnection either physically or psychological from the social group. Thus, the person loses his position as a component of this society. There are two different causes to isolation. The first is when a person isolates himself by his free will. It is not considered as a problem because the person's aim is to gain more private space. The second type is an involuntary isolation; it is imposed by the social conditions around the person who in fact in a need to support and solidarity. Thus, it has a negative psychological effect on the individual (Biordi, Nicholson 85). Seeman views isolation as a complementary in its sense with normlessness. Accordingly, isolation demonstrates that the person's failure to adapt the right choices which are not helpful to reach the pre-established goals. Seeman adds that the isolation sense appear when a person creates a new cultural adjustments that finally changes the person himself hence the social structure (Seeman 789).

Seeman sees self-estrangement as the same as self-alienation. The phenomena's origins come from the individual internal part when he starts thinking negatively about himself. The major dominant thoughts are embodied in devaluing one's own work at first place and the

absence of “self-rewarding.” In the same context, Hajda adds that self-exclusion is the result of having a sense of non-belonging to the society, and in the other part, the other members do not welcome him. This sense of discomfort provokes the individual to not include himself in the cultural and social activities. This dimension of alienation can take place within the large groups as well as in the small groups depending on the nature of the event and the extent of the individual to his self perception (Hajda 758-9).

The development of trauma and memory studies in the medical field has taken its long journey throughout history until arriving to the latest classification in trauma studies which is PTSD. It explains the long term effects of traumatic events. The researchers’ finding do not make a revolution in the field of medicine, but also the other domains of research, such as, philosophy, history and cultural studies are profoundly and closely affected by trauma studies. These fields are interested by new interpretations that touch directly the human life in the individual and societal scale. Trauma studies remove the ambiguity on the source of many mental illnesses. It clarifies its major symptoms and the way of changing the human behavior, and of course it provides many therapeutic approaches to overcome the damages of the diagnosed problems.

Like trauma theory development, alienation also is developed by many theorists in different fields. It has started as an economic theory then it is adapted in the social and psychological areas. The nucleus of the theory is its explanation of the alienated state of the contemporary individual within societies which are characterized by a miraculous industrial and technological advance. The theory mentions the dramatic fall down of modern societies and originates it to the individual powerlessness, false consciousness and social isolation. The accumulation of all these dimensions increases the individual dissatisfaction and suffering as a result the person chooses putting an end to his life.

To conclude, as literature produces its contents from and upon the human private and social life, many texts written by professional writers depict the state of trauma and alienation. Their works are not just a kind of reporting the recent life style, but they are also beneficial in the way the writers depict those metamorphoses through the use of symbolic and metaphorical style which really expresses such scenes. Since literary works are well-known of their vagueness, tackling childhood trauma and alienation is not surprising. The representation of such themes is crucial and due to their noticeable impacts on changing the children psyche which is reflected through their deviated behaviors in the future which leads to changing the social cultural structure.

Therefore, *the Cement Garden* by Ian McEwan is a best example in presenting those individual alterations. The novel is depicting perfectly the life of alienated middle class family. It composes of parents and four siblings. Particularly, the family in McEwan's novel does have a unique life style which makes them distinct from other families. As the first authority at home, the father emphasizes not to contact any of the society members. Things do not stop here, but the whole family structure changes when both of the parents have die leaving there young children having no idea about how to continue their life. Experiencing alienation and trauma of loosing parents are the main factors that lead to chaos spread at the family's house.

Chapter Two: Experiencing Trauma and Alienation in *The Cement Garden*

The Cement Garden takes a newly unique direction to show the impact of alienation and trauma on children misbehavior, and to what level these two major factors lead to individuals' dysfunctions. What is good about the novel to be analyzed is the combination between trauma and alienation in a familial context due to the father's imposed rules and to see the reaction of innocent children in the case of the absence of parents' wise guidance. Thus, this chapter's focus is about the children life without their parents. But before moving directly to children's life during the absence of the parents, the first section is going to deal with the familial socio-cultural alienation in *The Cement Garden*. It is important to have a look about the isolated environment in which those siblings grow up. In addition to a deep analysis of their relationship with their parents and mentioning the major differences between their tie to the father first and to the mother second.

Meanwhile, the third section is about children's trauma under their parent's death; here the learner tries to concentrate on the degree of effects of such a heavy experience on the lonely children whom they forced to be alone at home. Based on trauma theory and AT, the chapter will reveal the children's reaction under these two compulsive powers (attachment to the mother then the trauma of losing her). Finally, the last chapter's section is going to deal with the way the children adopt a new homeostatic in the parentless family. This section will show the major deviations and unacceptable behaviors the children committed in their attempt to maintain their home and to keep it as the same as the others' home which hold the family all together.

I. The Familial Socio-Cultural Alienation in *The Cement Garden*

Although *The Cement Garden* by Ian McEwan is a story of an ordinary family narrated by the protagonist Jack, it is the concern of the scholars due to its representation to social taboos. In reality, the novel is about a lack of morality and the absence of mainstream social behaviors, its arrangements of events are not those favored by readers at all. However, what makes it special from the previous traditions is its narrative to these events from the “I” of a child perspective that is different from the classical one such as the one of *David Copperfield* of Charles Dickens in terms of expressing values and principles (Malcolm44-6).

Throughout the novel, one can observe the state of social distancing of the family within society. In one hand, the family’s house is situated in an unknown urban area that is of course belonging to the industrial and modern built cities (Mitra and Shrivastava 166). The house depiction is always providing an image about its isolation from the rest of the society and transfers the idea of non-integrated part to the whole. The house is far away from the neighborhoods that live in block towers. From Jack’s declarations, the house was old and all about to collapse and they were living in a mess. Unlike other organized houses which he imagines, everything is smashed: the kitchen pipes, ceilings and the room walls. Actually, everything is disturbing and annoying, and there were no suitable places for a person to have a rest in (McEwan 15).

The family seems to belong to the middle class living in the suburban area; the leading streets to their home are full of scrambling around. One can feel how it is miserable and disturbing to live there, just from Jack’s naming the region as the ‘wasteland’. This is the foremost represented image of the place where he lives in the novel through his description. Everything is in a mess including the old towers surrounded by wrecks and the hard road to

their house. In the over all, the novel is a reference par excellence to the economic depression plus to the non-social reforms that are normally devoted to rebuild what has been destroyed by bombs during the Second World War (Popović 185-6).

Moreover, the novel's writing time is during the 1970's, the period when the world has witnessed the global financial crisis. The current difficult state spread all over the western countries. Governments, in the heart of this disaster, have not been able to provide its citizens with enough social security through the present welfare programs. Consequently, the people's life has changed to the worst. The transformation appears at the level of individual's instability and the highly alteration of the personal life style (Spini et al 2). The concern of this study is to reveal the negative aspects that cause the spread of individual's vulnerability. In certain points, vulnerability is a result of some psychological factors such as: depression, personality disorder and stress besides to some sociological factors that include: family construction, education, health and single mother family (Spini et al 6-7).

Of course the middle class family in *The Cement Garden* is not excluded from the imposed conditions. One can confirm the social and psychological vulnerability of the characters in the novel through the repeated mentioning of the prefabs and ruins inside and outside the house which do not ensure a proper place for living. Later on, the children witness a change in the family structure once after the father's death and second the mother's fall in bed due to an illness that causes her death as well. In this regard, the children left without protection and at the same time apt to all sorts of vulnerableness.

Coming back again to the social isolation in the first part of the novel, Jack keeps describing the neighborhood, he does not come to mention neither the name of the town nor the inhabitants. There is no even just a little information or hints about who they are or how they look like. Actually, they are all isolated from each other. Thus, no one cares about the others: "People are estranged from one another and although there are two other houses on the

street, Jack never informs of their inhabitants nor do they show any interest for the family of four children living next door” (Popović 187). This socially dominant way of life provides suitable conditions that give the children the opportunity to accomplish their plan of burying the mother’s dead body with success. From the children’s perspective, the idea is to keep introversion on them and avoid the social toughness once of all. Actually, the aftermath of this estrangement has encouraged the children’s dysfunction due to breaking the social norms by having a sexual relation in the late stages of the novel (Popović 187).

The family members follow the father’s imposed rules. In accordance, no one of the children dares to bring his friend into the house: “none of us ever brought friends home” (McEwan 6). Even though the youngest son, Tom, cannot exceed the rules and tends to play with his friends just on the street. Being more close to the familial daily routine, it is noticeable that not only the neighbors and friends are not welcomed into the house, but also the other relatives had never been there. Also, the mother has never seen her family members of Ireland since her childhood.

The situation probably does not make a problem for her within her husband’s house. The relatives also have never come to visit them. The father also has no friends to make contact with. In this socially isolated environment where the children grown up, the situation notably reaches its peak when Jack tells they are not interested in the funeral the parents went to before their death. Such event does not touch the children. This is due to the parent’s habit of not tackling such subjects with their young children mainly because they themselves did not show any effect about the death of the last relative (McEwan 28).

More profoundly, the father also favors the state of being alienated. As a person, he does not have any friends. He wants to build a great cement wall around the garden in order to have more privacy and to enjoy his special world. Once Jack mentions how the father is persistent concerning the coming of others to the house during their absence. What is noticeable is the

certainty of Jack when he says directly that as the other members of the family the father also is absolutely aware that no one dares to come nearer to the front door before. Another strict order of the father which marks his preference to not come to contact with others is when he orders the children to run directly to the telephone kiosk in case of having fire at home that is not to ask help from the neighbors (McEwan 28).

II. The Children-Parent Relationship in *The Cement Garden*

The novel's depiction to the children-parent relationship goes hand in hand with interpretations of psychologists. Lowenstein asserts in common that all children tend to build a close relationship based on seeking security with caregivers. The mother is the first closely person the children attached with, then the father in the second place (Lowenstein 161). Accordingly, *The Cement Garden's* children seem to be more or less in favor to their mother whom always shows interest especially the youngest Tom. As the mother who is described as a quiet and kind person in comparison to the father's tuff personality, she is always caring about her children, all of them without exceptions. She knows what they need and provide advice and support to them whenever it comes the perfect occasion.

Jack and the other siblings grow up in a traditional family. It is dominated by the patriarchic father. His orders are unquestioned and he is moody all most of time. He is also very organized and imposes his ideas. Everything at home is arranged according to his taste. Jack says that the father does not plant any kind of flowers, he favors tulips and he does not want to see some scrambled plants like bushes, ivy or roses. The mother, unlike the father's unbearable personality, is gentle, calm and tender. Her softness and flexibility helps her to cope with the tyrannical personality of the father, thus to ensure a kind of security to the children and balance at home (Mitra and Shrivastava 166).

Concerning the mother's relationship with Tom, one can say that he gains a special interest from his mother due to his position as the youngest son in the family. The mother

argues when the father bought the cement sacks and told him to buy new clothes for her child instead. As usual the father refuses all sorts of objection and said ‘out of the question’ (McEwen 1). She is also eager to overwhelm him by all sorts of emotional interest especially when he is mistreated by the father. The father is always giving orders to Tom to show him how to behave in front of his mother. Hence, she remains silent and after he leaves the kitchen the mother “would smile briefly at Tom or tidy his hair with her fingers” (McEwan 3).

Despite the fact that her illness requires her to reside at her bedroom, Tom does not miss the mother’s attention. He always goes up stairs to the mother’s room to see her and at the same time to enjoy sleeping besides. She is proud of him when she receives the letter from his teacher which holds a praise expression about Tom: “Tom is a pleasure to have in the class.”The mother reads this line over couples of times with great satisfaction. Also, she liked when the teacher adds: ‘He is a gentle but spirited child’. This letter lets her to not get bored from rereading it again and again with expressing a great satisfaction on him due to his well behaving (McEwan18).

In contrast, the father is not gentle with Tom at all, and he shouts on him whenever it comes the occasion that is why Tom fears him. Weirdly, his relationship with his son is a competitive one upon the mother’s attention. This is due to the fact of sharing the same state of weakness: the father is still suffering from the first heart attack and Tom is the just six years old boy that still in need of the mother’s care. All the time the father is strict with him and complains on his action. Unlike the other sons, the father never makes a birthday party for his youngest child (McEwan 2).

The father’s weakness also shapes his relationship with his eldest son, Jack. Each day, the father sees his son growing up. For him, jack is a symbol of danger in the time when the family members really do not recognize him as he wants. This state of disability is transformed mostly through waves of anger and violence. The position of Jack as of

competent does not make the father in favor of him. Jack too does not like his father, but he sometimes likes some of the father's comportment that reveals the real men personality:

He is aware of the fact that nobody looks up to him.

His oldest son, Jack, symbolizes the threat for his family status and therefore he does not like him very much. Not always, however, is the hate mutual. Jack, the one who forms his identity, likes some of the father's manners and sometimes looks up to his manly behavior. Moreover, a kind of cooperation and male bondage occurs time to time. (Smejkalová 16-7)

Jack shows his impression to his father mostly during times of work when the father shows his masculine strength for instance, when Jack sees the father offload the cement from the lorry: "My father counted them, looked at his clipboard and said, 'Fifteen.' The two men grunted. I liked this kind of talk" (McEwan 1).

In order to put out of sight his sickliness, the father starts to look for others' slips and mock them. He always makes jokes on his sons and his wife, which is totally abnormal. He laughs on Sue's unseen eyebrow and eye lashes, he makes jokes on Jack's spots on his face, and on Tom's pissing in bed. He does not take Julie's talent in running seriously and makes fun of her dream to become a famous athlete that is why attending to support her in sports competition is not much of his concern (McEwan 6). The mother, the fragile one, is the one whom the father enjoys humiliating her in addition to pouring all his anger on her (McEwan 3). When he organizes birthday parties, again he is the one who controls everything and eventually he ends it by losing his temper each time (McEwan 12).

The father's moodiness, anger and violence which take over his personality may trace a negative impact on his children. In a study made on the children who witness a domestic violence with all its types (emotionally, physically, psychologically), they are depicted as "the forgotten victims." More focus is put up on the psychological one which includes verbal assault, showing envy and distancing children from the outer world. This phenomenon has a high degree of negative influence precisely on the youngest children. The deficiencies mostly appear as having problems in developing the social skills, wrong behaviors, high level of panic and depression adding to all that experiencing the most painful suffering in silence (UNICEF, The Body Shop International 3). In *The Cement Garden* violent domestic life, it can be seen how Tom fears his father, and how Jack says that he has the right to ask his father just after helping him putting the cement sacks in the cellar (McEwan 3).

Karr-Morse and Wiley argue that when children grow up in a familial environment that is dominant by accumulated stressors mainly violence and neglect, it leads to the central apparent dangers. In such context, children easily lose trust, and sympathy; a key element which they consider as a defensive armature against all what can cause psychical instability. Therefore, the continued violence and neglect maltreatments hinder the children's ability to deal with the difficult conditions and more prominently not survive with the encountering traumas in later stages of life (Karr-Morse and Wiley 19). This explanation provides a clear understanding to the children's specific behaviors. In almost of Jack's narration, he portrays his father as non-talkative, obsessive in taking decisions without negotiations because: "he was so convinced of the sanity of his ideas" (McEwan 4).

The father always abuses and focuses on their mistakes not on the purpose of guiding and correcting them, but to lessen their standing "my father stopped at the foot of the stairs and reminded me sternly to turn off all the lights before I came up" (McEwan 3). To sum up, the father never encourages them and does not include them at any of the familial tasks. Due to

these wrong parenting manners, the children behave randomly when they left permanently lonely at home because of the lack of experience.

In many of Jack's portrayal to the mother, she seems willing and persistent to take care of her sons and daughters and to have discussions with them. Unfortunately, this role has about to diminish one day after the other due her bad health situation. Right after the death of the father, the mother becomes sick. The sickness obliges her to stay at her bed room all the day without doing any of the house works and now she spends her day only in reading books. Here, and by projecting the view of Sands-O'Connor mentioned in her article, "Shackled by Past and Parents: The Child in British Children's Literature after 1970," that illustrates how the children hold the task of arranging their life from different angles (financially and emotionally) on the story of the children in *The Cement Garden*, it is clear that they are also forced to take responsibility and care of their ill mother and themselves as well (Sands-O'Connor 225).

However, for the children it is somehow a partial responsibility. Although the mother becomes frail and helpless, she keeps maintaining her presence as the authoritative power at home. Being at her room does not prevent her from keeping away from her children. In fact, her room becomes "the center of the house" (McEwan 16). They always eat all together there beside her bed which provides them with the opportunity to discuss different issues. The room is also the place when they organize Jack's birth day. The mother mentions the different works for each. Thus, indeed, she up holds the house smooth organization by asserting each one's mission for each day.

In the same context, the familial picture in the novel still imposes many questions to be asked on the family structure by many scholars about the switched roles between parents and children. After all, it leads to the children's deviations in its fullest sense of the **WORD**. All

sorts of confusion spread all over the house due to the absence of the parental authority in addition to the emotional instability that affected the children's psyche (Sands-O'Connor 227).

Previous to the father's death, as a housewife, the mother is holding the responsibility foremost of all the house jobs. In reality, the mother's existence in the children's life provides them with a kind of comfort and stability. As all mothers, Jack narrates how their mother cooks for them and tells them what and how to eat in case of leaving them alone at home. However, from the moment she becomes ill, they are obliged to manage the house tasks by themselves: "Julie shopped on the way back from school. Sue helped her cook and I washed the dishes" (McEwan 15).

Emotionally, the relationship between the family members is numb. Both mother and father never come to express any feeling in the presence of their children. In one of their conversation they show uncertainty and wondering about whether they really love each other or not. They suppose much more that the mother hates the father and she becomes rested after his death. Whether hatred or anger as Julie has answered with hesitation (McEwan 12), the house is also sad (McEwan 7). However, the siblings are not like "Mother" and "Father," Jack mentions a moments when they express their feeling to each others as a family members. Once when Julie has won her competition, they hug one another other: "Tom, Mother and Sue running across the enclosure to cover Julie with kisses when she took her third race" (McEwan 6), and the other one is when they take Tom for having a bathroom "Julie, Sue and I pressed around him" (McEwan 17). These are not the only moments when the children reveal their happiness to each other, but they cried a lot when the mother has died.

III. Children's Trauma under Parent's Death in *The Cement Garden*

The first part of the novel is about the father's death. The father has died due to heart attack when he is cementing the garden. Jack, an adolescent boy who is about to reach his

fifteen years, declares that the father's death has not meant a lot for the family: "his death seemed insignificant compared with what followed" (McEwan1). Jack's confession about this unusual and unbelievable reality has its roots.

In the article "Mourning and the Transformation of Object Relationships Evidence for the Persistence of Internal Attachments," the psychologist, Baker, emphasizes the role of the parents in creating a good image besides to memory that indicates the degree the child in accepting and making value for him/herself. Consequently, the children show a deep bereavement⁴ when the parents die. If one child does not deeply affected by the death, this is explained either with having a tense relation with parents, or there exists a problem that hinders the grieving process (Baker 66).

As what is mentioned before, the father has an obsessive, authoritarian personality which stands as an obstacle to be close to or to create a harmonious relation with him. Therefore, in this shocking scene one cannot really feels the degree of fear about losing the father once for all because the way Jack is talking about it seems to be so calm and even not interested in. Jack is not the only one who is not deeply touched. Indeed, he does not refer to any sign of worrying from the side of the family members. "While the death of a family's head would normally have a tragic tone, influencing the remaining members in a significant way, in *The Cement Garden* there is no such excitement, nor great emotions. The death is accepted rather calmly and unemotionally, possibly revealing the first signs of unnatural and cold relationships amongst these particular family members" (Vlachová 12). He just reports Sue as the only emotionally affected one when she falls crying during the time the ambulance comes to take the father to the hospital. Accordingly, the death of the father indicates a kind of liberation from all his abuses not only for the children but for the mother as well.

By contrast, the moment when the mother died is a moment when the children are truthfully broken down emotionally. That is due to the importance of the last moments

surrounding the parental decease. In this context, Harris in her paper, “Adolescent Bereavement Following the Death of a Parent: An Exploratory Study,” signifies how important those moments preceding the death for teenagers. They are the one last in head, all of them: discussions and memories. For that reason the bereaved one passes through out a painful experience whenever he tries to recall those pleasurable times. Another concern of them is “saying good bye”, almost of adolescents who prevented unwillingly from saying good bye demonstrate anger blended with regret and dissatisfaction (Harris 274-5).

Apparently, this is exactly the case of *The Cement Garden*'s children; the mother died just after three days of Jack's birthday party. The party is in her room when they have a nice moment with her. In the party, they eat, laugh and sing. They get enough entertainment in this day (McEwan 14). However, when the mother died no one is there except of Julie. When Jack and Sue recognize what happened to the mother, they cry a lot: “For a moment I perceived clearly the fact of her death, and my crying became dry and hard [...] When Sue came in and Julie told her the news, both girls burst into tears and embraced each other” (McEwan 21).

Quickly, the children remember their little brother, Tom, and how to introduce the idea of death for him. They all know to what extent Tom is attached to the mother. So that they find it hard to let him know about the mother's death. The siblings try to make him accept the mother's death by introducing him to the notion of death by saying: the mother is in a deep sleep which made him feel suspicious and something weird is taking place which pushes him to be more persisting to see his mother. Tom cries loudly and the children had no option just to let him see the mother and sleep besides her dead body. Tom is in his six years. In one of Piaget's famous child developmental stages is the Preoperational Period, it is related to children at age of two to seven years. In this period, children cognitive ability is limited in representing ideas mentally which are mostly lack consciousness that is why they cannot make use of them correctly. Hence, children make use of those symbols according to their

own perception. Piaget names it “egocentricity.” Here, the word is merely used to describe the children perspective and not to refer to self egocentric. For that reason, one may notice how the ideas are confused, naïve and lack organization (Fleming15-8). Of course, Tom, the poor little boy who is not cognitively aware, does not recognize his mother’s death in addition to the pitiful situation he is in (McEwan 22).

In the overall, traumatized children mainly lose the ability either to remember the incident or to realize the real meaning of what is happening to them. Consequently, they enter in a state of complete confusion, thus they cannot express their exact emotions (Hall 69). In chapter five when Julie announces the mother’s death, all the children fall in hysteric cry even Jack who has tried to not appear weak in front of his sisters as it is mentioned in chapter one that many male children do not like to seem weak and to remain silent. Later on, Jack tells us about his reading comics and Julie wearing Bikini just right after one day the mother died (McEwan 23). The children’s action in a day after the mother has gone forever seems to be confusing: so instead of showing sadness and mourning, they are having pleasure each in his way.

More than screaming and crying, as Miller says in her book, *Breaking Down the Wall of Silence: The Liberating Experience of Facing Painful Truth*, the powerless children(because of trauma) express their dreadful moment throughout different ways at least as a kind of creating a survival space for them. However, this next step of looking for new ways to survive is accompanied by a lot of symptoms (Miller 18). Likewise, in *The Cement Garden*, children attempt to carry on their life as the same as the other families around them. But nothing went well with them. All children start to behave in a wrong way. Julie, the older girl, starts smoking a long with arranging a relationship with her boy friend that is called ‘Derek,’ Jack, the fifteen years boy, does not care at all about his appearance and the youngest Tom starts to behave like a baby girl in an attempt to gain more attention within the parentless family.

What worsens the situation more is when the children propose to bury the mother's dead corps in the garden and to keep her death a secret shared only between them. The children's decision does not come out of their will. The absence of security, fear of taking the house's objects and above all separating the siblings from each other by being taken to the orphanage are the main reasons that prevent them from declaring the mother's death to the whole society. Actually, the mother holds a great part of responsibility because before dying she is the one who has told Jack not let anyone know about the parent's absence otherwise they will destroy everything in the house:

They'll come and put Tom in care, and perhaps you and Susan too. Julie wouldn't stay here by herself. So, the house would stand empty, the word would get around and it wouldn't be long before people would be breaking in, taking things, smashing everything up. (McEwan 18)

Based on the AT, psychologists do not stand opposite to the idea of promoting children self-reliability and taking care of themselves. In contrast, they see it as a way of guiding children to control, guard and defend themselves. After all, it leads to their well being in the future. But if those children are prevented to discover the environment around them then they suddenly and forcibly become independent, it absolutely hinders their capacities to learn in a correct way about the society they live in (Gearity et al). This is what exactly the novel *Between Hands* reveals. The mother before going to the hospital, she mentions the different jobs for each one of the children and she told Jack to be careful of letting anyone to know about their staying alone at home. In reality, the mother's words hold a tone of threat more than advice for children at this age. Basically, the children thinking of burying the mother's corps by themselves is just a normal reaction for young children who know little about the

external world in one hand and being threatened from their mother in the other hand. Thus, the mother is wrong in the way she guides her children in taking care of themselves.

“We have to tell someone so there can be a funeral” (McEwan 23), those are Sue’s words when she realizes her mother’s death which contradicts Julie’s way of thinking. The moment the mother lost her life, Julie proposes not to draw the curtains as a first step to “avoid suspicion.” Through this controversial depiction, we come to confirm Ian McEwan’s utterance in his interview with Adam Begley when he says: “I was toying with ideas about children trying to survive without adults”. In reality the conversations between the lonely siblings demonstrates clearly they don’t know what to do exactly. Jack and Julie refuse the idea of Sue and suggest burying her in the basement out of fear of the outsiders who have the ability to take care of them with high probability of separating them. Sue does not expect to hear such idea. Many of sentiments overwhelm her. She becomes choked, frightened and above all very annoyed. What confuses her is that she wants a public funeral, at the same time she mistrust the society which oblige her to accept the plan forcibly:

She was not angry or horrified by my idea. She was too miserable to care, and shook her head slowly like a sad old lady.” To accomplish their secret plan, the children are very careful in order not to be seen. They do not dig the tomb at night and do not forget ensuring to keep Tom away. (McEwan 24)

The scene of burying the mother is also puzzling. Jack’s description to the burial of the dead corps seems as a comic scene. After a severe suffering from the unknown dangerous disease then dying alone in her bed, the children decides to make a private funeral for her to avoid being taking away from each other. Ian McEwan describes the moment oddly. The children are laughing, all of them, when they took the mother’s dead core downstairs to the

cellar. In reality, they do not know what is really has to be done in the ritual of death. It is obviously acquired from the parents' cold reaction when they went to the funeral of the last mother's relatives, which explains the children's true ignorance about social performance in a tragic event like death. Through this depiction, the reader can notice the children's non-distinction between the social behaviors agreed upon in different situations. One can understand that the children also see the mother's loss as just an ordinary event (Čiklová 15).

IV. Adapting New Homeostatic in the Parentless Family

In an article in the Guardian newspaper commenting on *The Cement Garden*, Sutcliffe says that it is natural among people to commit faults under the hard times they pass through. The way individuals behave when living these moments goes back always to the existing circumstances (Sutcliffe). Our case here is not related to adults, but to children who must keep their house protected from strangers. As young children who need to run out the house alone after living the painful moment of the mother's death and taking the burden of burying her without gaining the enough social support. Obviously, what comes next is full of mistakes and deviations.

The children have good intentions to preserve the family as it used to be. However, the way they adopted to do so still questioned. Now the children are not persistent in holding the house works as the way they used to be in the days when the mother was alive. Actually, scholars relate the children' behaviors in terms of total disorder to the "Savage Generation" that appeared in the 1960s-1970 who whether they do not take the social standards seriously or do not care in taking them in to account willingly. In another explanation, others go to the idea of the collapse of the family as the central core in society in the nineteenth century as an opposition to what was known in the eighteenth century about how the family is considered as a place ruled by mothers where simultaneously the children feel protection, interest and learn the social morals. Accordingly, the sibling's reaction is a result to a certain pre-requisites.

First, the mother was not as she supposed to be, she was passive and easy to be domineered. Second, there was a large gap between the two generations because of the lack of communication. So, in a way or another, parents never initiated the strict social norms to the children. Third is that the children become parentless in such an isolated environment due to “The deconstruction of the communication with the outside [...] indicates the worthlessness of the society [...] the child characters are usually in danger of an unknown outsider or confined to a space disadvantageously. As the characters in fairy tales are rushed into a place from which they cannot escape” (Sayim 138-9). Thus, the children metaphorically become actually jailed in their inner world. As a consequence, the newly sphere in the journey of holding the family together is characterized by divergence (Sayim136-140).

It is true the parents in *The Cement Garden* are not perfect in parenting, but under the presence of the father the children are totally restricted and no one has to show objection. His dominance over everything establishes organization and regulations at home. In addition, the mother’s tenderness and softness are effectively helpful in binding the children with emotional support. Therefore, the timing of the parents’ death is not appropriate at all. All the children are in different ages. Tom is still too young for being detached from his mother. Jack and Sue are in the period of puberty. Julie is in the period of being adult. In general, those children are not mature enough for running the house. The house does not shake when the father died because the mother is there, and she took the responsibility of organizing things. The turning point is after the mother’s death. The event has harshly affected them. In order to avoid this reality, they become careless and the house is in a huge mess. Jack abandons his cleanliness. Sue becomes more attached with reading her books about girls who have a better life and Julie finds it hard to mother Tom who wants fill the gap of the mother’s absence (Klimovičová11-5).

The amount of freedom, the children enjoy, lead them to give up the house daily works which the mother has emphasized to each one before she has gone to hospital. Under the parents' control, the siblings know very well that they have to keep the house appropriate, otherwise they will be punished. Exactly, when the parents left them alone at home, they have played together but they are attentive in re-organizing the chaos they have done: "Half an hour before our parents were due back, giggling at the peril we were in, we started to clear up our mess"(McEwan 28). Days after the mother died, Jack describes a total carelessness and abandonment of doing anything:

They did not cook for themselves and the kitchen was stinking and became full of flies that turned around the bottles of milk. Profoundly, the home general atmosphere make the reader feels the total anarchy without adults' close watch, Jack declared: "None of us felt like doing anything about it beyond keeping the kitchen door shut.

(McEwan 28)

More than anarchism, one can consider the children's overwhelming state of loss: they do feel neither place nor time, in this respect "Newly -found freedom, as Williams proclaims in his article, and wanders about the listless around the house. Free of any kind of control, the children are incapable of giving any proper structure to their existence (Williams 218).

In the coming days, Julie's boyfriend, Derek, starts to visit the house of the family. The close relation of both Julie and Derek has not progressed as all relationship because Julie is one who avoids the marriage bondage which explains her refusal of receiving any kind of social help. Derek becomes suspicious about the way the parents died. He does not believe none of the children stories they have created to hide the truth of burying the mother in the basement. At last, he discovers the mother's tomb which symbolizes the breakdown of their

special world. Derek in the time when he discovers the sexual relation he cannot do anything but to inform the police who symbolize establishing rules at home again (Klimovičová 16).

Previous to the parents' death, the siblings play games together. The game is extremely related to sexuality. It is important to highlight the type of this game because of the sensitivity of the children's age. Both Jack and Julie are in a period of adolescence that is prominently characterized by sexual development. The game Jack talks about is examining each other's body as scientists (McEwan 2). Hence, the game leads Jack to have a sexual desire toward his sister. Still, the siblings' relation not that strong as it becomes at the end of the novel. Thus, it takes this orientation permissively when Julie takes the role of the mother. The last scene in the novel that portrays the police coming meanwhile Jack and Julie are laughing indicates how the siblings create harmonious relation that fits the reason of preserving the family more than having the feelings of fright (Žárská12-5).

Whether the children's relation comes to be incestuous or not, the parents as usual do not prevent their children from playing such a game, in the time when they are arguing and their voices are getting louder gradually, the children are up stairs in a closed room playing their common game which is discovering Sue's naked body. After it, Jack says he spends the time in the bathroom masturbating at the same time thinking of his sister's body details. After all, they are children, and they can involve in these games either innocently or to fit the curiosity of exploring the human body. Yet, all the blame should be put on the father who never provides his son with instruction during the time he witnesses radical psychological and physical changes (McEwan 2).

The Cement Garden raises an issue of gender role within society. From the very beginning the society is patriarchal. It is dominated by the father. He is the head of the family and the one who has the final say. As it is wide spread in a society subjugated by the men, in the other part; the mother in the novel represents the female traditional role. She is portrayed as

obedient, so feminine and jobless. The mother's role is a house wife. Basically, she has to conform to the father's will at first rank. Also, she is in charge of taking care of the children in addition to hold the house jobs like cleaning and preparing food for her family. However, this traditional role has changed when Julie is in the position of mother in the new family. Julie has changed her mind in choosing her boyfriend, Derek, to be the head of the family when she recognizes his mother's control total over him, which makes him loose respect as a true man. Julie's reaction indicates her acceptance to the idea of the male supremacy in society. Another point that is highly apparent in the novel is privacy and the separation of the world of males from the one of females. This fact is revealed when Jack says Julie used to discuss secrets with the mother and with Sue later on (Michlová 14-5).

Socially, Julie as female has changed the pre-existed social norms. She does not marry Derek out of her will, which prevents him to be the authoritative power in the family as a male character. She is also capable to manipulate her relation with people around her including her sister, Sue, and the little brother, Tom. She established herself the leader of the family; hence everything at home is run under her surveillance (Tihenea 62). Even the mother has appointed her to manage the financial issues by opening an account at post office for her (McEwan 20). Julie's character reflects the social transformation in the seventies concerning the women's states at that era. As Rubenstein claims that "British women had begun to approach, if not achieve, greater social, legal, and economic parity with men" (52). One can say Julie comes to exhibit her intelligence and the strong woman inside her due to the surrounding circumstances and demands the successive feminist waves succeeded to achieve and reached a certain level in changing the previous woman suffering and precisely from males' exploitation.

Although Julie adopts the role of the mother with its all hardship to maintain the "family unity", she fails definitively in her attempt. Having a sexual relation with her brother, Jack, is

totally conflicting with her goal. This act certainly breaks the social norm which means that these endeavors to uphold the family all together is in fact totally rejected by society. The novel ends with the coming of the police to the family's home due to Derek who finally comes to know about the mother's tomb in the cellar and to witness the incestuous relationship. As a sign to the unaccepted behavior committed by the children, he informs the police which have the power to impose organization (Sgarlata 29).

To sum up, As Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden* is devoted to tackle the social and cultural aspects of life of an ordinary middle class family which composes of parents and four children; it surprisingly includes other notions of macabre and shocking literature. The novel's main concern is to shed light on the unique way living of the family during the parents' life. The turning point in the novel takes place when both of the parents died and left their children alone in an attempt to regulate their life without the inclusion of the social parts. For the children who have grown up in an isolated context in addition to be assaulted by the traumatic incident of the father's death which follow the mother's decease, things do not take the right path. Hence, the alienated, traumatized children become a model of dysfunctional family. According to each one unique personality, age and gender, the reaction is different and the family which belongs to the traditional family structure, now no more exists due to Julie's, Jack's, Sue's and Tom's erroneous behaviors under their trial to survive.

Chapter Three: Characters' Transformation: Macabre, Incest Sexuality, Depression and Individual Dysfunction in *The Cement Garden*

Ian McEwan's in *The Cement Garden*'s first part narrative introduces the children's unique character. Typically, the novel's opening chapters embrace the sense of oddity. From the beginning, the reader feels the abnormality of the children's character comparing to the other ordinary ones. In other words, the reader is faced by the character's special inner worlds they live in. Actually, this exceptionality is what makes *The Cement Garden* worthy to be analyzed. As what is revealed in the second chapter, the children are locked up in the father's house which reinforces the children's already existed behaviors regardless to their straightness or not. It also involves at the first place in hindering the children from developing their own social skills. In the second part, the children are assaulted by the mother's sudden death. Here, the burial of the mother's dead corps in the cellar is the incident that is worthy to be discussed. The children unconscious behavior reveals the real inner psychological state, especially, after the sophistications of the traumatic moment they pass through.

On the light of this, the third chapter will be devoted in tracing each of the children's character before and after the trauma of losing the parents that leads to a catastrophic ending. The first character to be analyzed is the youngest child, Tom, under the title of "Tom's Search for Mother". The second title will be concerned with Sue's Internal Fears. The third and the fourth ones are going to focus on the older sibling Jack and Julie respectively. Here, much to say about them because they are the ones who run the house basing on their own limited perspectives. In the third section, Jack's Powerlessness, Sense of Freedom during His Puberty will be introduced. Finally, a discussion will be about Julie; the girl who emulates the mother's role in managing the house.

I. Tom's Search for a Mother

Since there is a secure base attachment activated with caregivers which ensures physical and emotional stability for the child. (Waters and Cummings 4) It also exists "disorganized infant care giver attachment." It raises the feeling of losing trust and suspicion at the same time (Benoit et al 8), and the special tie of attachment can be broken due to the parents maltreatment. In his article; "The Impact of Violence on Children," Osofsky talks about all domestic violence types which cause psychological injury. According to him, the results are so bad. They hinder the children's abilities of discovering the world around them. Therefore, it involuntarily obstructs their self reliance (Osofsky 80). In the novel, Tom is just a six years old boy. Like all children in his age he seems fragile, innocent and above all dependent on the people around. Although he is curious to know about the newly bought cement sacks, he does not dare to go down in order to see them out of the father's apprehension, and he prefers to be accompanied with his older brother, Jack. In the basement the image of Tom is not less than it is known about children. He makes sounds and waits for the echoes return. Not surprising, he is excited when he sees the old toys and asks Jack to collect them for him. In the basement, Tom is always reported near to his brother as a way of protecting himself from the father's sudden harshness in his coming down to check his recently bought cement (McEwan 2).

Tom is totally relaxed in the time the mother is present. Although he is oppressed by the father, the mother's tenderness and care are enough for him. Jack depicts him close to her: "Tom was trying to push his chair nearer hers. He wanted to sit in her lap" (McEwan 6). After her death, the child is psychologically disrupted. The same problem is discussed by Debra Umberson. After the parents' death, the problem with the bereaved one is how to cope with the lately obligatory situation the individual is living in. The difficulty is foremost related to self-reliance. As a kind of seeking protection, the bereaved person shifts his attention to the social context around to fit his needs (Umberson 80). Based on Umberson's findings, one can

understand Tom's behavior. Tom directs his attention to his sister, Julie, to replace his mother: "Tom had made up his mind that Julie was to take care of him now" (McEwan 29). At first, Julie does not accept Tom's will. Gradually, through his successive attempts, she becomes treating him as her son.

Tom finds it hard to change his old habits. After school, he always goes upstairs to the mother's room and sleeps beside her. He does all his childish behaviors with the mother's consent. When it comes the time to inform him about the mother's death, Sue tells him that their mother is in a deep sleep. The lie which Sue depends on to calm down Tom projects her lack of knowledge. Thereby, this what psychologists do not favor at all. Since children are not born with the capacity of understanding death as a concept, Barnardo's Child Bereavement Service claims that it is better to introduce it directly and honestly for them rather than using other expression such as: he is lost, go away or he is in a better place; otherwise children will show emotional pain such as depression and anger which make it difficult for adult to deal with them (BCBS 3-4). In his bereavement process, Tom gets confused because he is in the need of his mother, but he does not know where she is or what happens exactly to her. Consequently, Tom becomes lost and dissatisfied with the mother's sudden absence: "Tom did not like these evenings without his mother" (McEwan 11), and sometimes he witnesses waves of fear and terror which make him wailing.

In one hand, Tom is also confronted by Julie's anger that comes from her unaccepted role to be Tom's mother. She is annoyed because of his eagerness for being his mother even when she shouts on him, "he went to Julie most often when he wanted attention[...]if he wants to be mothered,' Julie shouted, 'then he can start doing what I tell him. He's going to bed'" (McEwan 29). In the other hand, Julie has limited knowledge in dealing with the children as mothers do. Julie who is also under the trauma of the mother's demise is unfriendly at all with him: "Julie made him eat everything on his plate, and he was not permitted to crawl under the

table or make funny noises” (McEwan 11). Indeed, at this sensitive time, Tom does not receive the correct help to overcome his mother’s loss. Instead, he is left to his siblings’ unintentional ill-treatment.

Tom does not only become the son of Julie. Indeed, he becomes a role player of a baby. In order to gain much more care from his substitute mother, he behaves like a helpless baby. He relies on her even in the simplest things which any boy at his age can do: “Tom was sitting on her lap with his thumb in his mouth” (McEwan 45). When he finishes eating, he waits for her to clean up his face with a bib around his neck. Tom is as satisfied and very happy with Julie as his mother. She does everything to please him. She puts him in the bed in her room which makes Jack wonders about that. Once Jack said: “Other times he tore his bib off and ran outside to play with his friends and would not be a baby again till he came back inside and found Julie” (McEwan 49), Tom’s different actions inside and outside home show clearly Tom’s intention in playing the role of the baby for seeking his target.

Not only after the death of the mother Tom wants to be treated like a baby, but he seems familiar with his obsession of changing his identity whenever he is faced with a situation he cannot stand it. Not only psychologically Tom is disrupted but socially indeed. He is no longer able to be hurt by friends at school. Tom, the gentle kid, is always bullied by his friends. In order to finish his painful experience, he wants to be converted to a girl to finish his oppression as he believes: “Because you don’t get hit when you’re a girl.” And I told him you do sometimes, but he said, “No you don’t, no you don’t” (McEwan 18). Tom’s idea becomes a debatable subject between the two sisters against Jack. In the time when they welcome Tom’s idea, Jack seriously does not like it and opposes them very strictly:

But why?’ Julie and Sue called together, and before I could think of anything Julie said, ‘If I wore your trousers to school tomorrow and you wore my skirt we’d soon see

who had the worse time. Everyone would point at you and laugh.’ Here Julie pointed across the table, her fingers inches from my nose.

‘Look at him! He looks just like ... ugh! ... a *girl!*’ ‘And look at her,’ Sue was pointing at Julie, ‘she looks rather ... *clever* in those trousers. (McEwan 18)

In reality, his view point reveals the sense of patriarchic within him. Nevertheless, the girls react angrily against the negative stereotypes and the common thinking of the superior male against the inferior female.

II. Sue’s Internal Fears

Unlike her negligent brother, Jack, Sue is a girl who likes to be involved in providing help to the other family’s members, essentially when it comes to reduce the mother’s tiredness from working all the day at home: “Sue was taking him to school to save Mother.”(McEwan8) In the novel, Sue is a little bit introvert, she prefers to spend much more of her time reading books, she reads at school, at home and even at the way to leading to their home. Since Sue has not other activities to do out of home, she shows willingness in engaging in the house works, that is why the mother relies on her in many issues ““we’ll redecorate the downstairs room before we put all this furniture back.’ Sue sat on her bed and they talked about color schemes” (McEwan 18-7). Comparing Sue to other siblings who share the same conditions, she seems to be more consistent with the straightfull human nature and the shared social behaviors. She is kind and pays attention to people around her. Even though the father is not good in treating them, she is the only one who cries a lot when he falls dead due to heart attack.

When they were young, Sue's naked body is examined by her siblings, Jack and Julie, in their scientist game which is actually a kind of sexual game. Later on, Sue does not allow this game to be repeated again, Jack recounts "Perhaps she had learned something at school and was ashamed of herself for letting us do things to her. I was never certain because it was not something we could talk about" (McEwan10). At this age, Sue becomes more aware about her individuality and gender difference. It makes her to refuse such game again. While the children lack guidance from parents, readers can suppose that Sue is directed and guided by the books she reads. Hence, what make her different from the other siblings in many occasions are her selections and behaviors based on information she gets from books and magazines. As a cultivate girl who has a close attach to books, one may thinks that she is more socialized than others.

Sue devotes her time in writing every single detail turns at home. In reality she is writing to her mother. Readers can notice how Sue is suffering in silence, and she wants to tell someone about the mother's death, but she does not like to go against her older siblings. She will rather choose to address her mother (Lawyer). From the time Sue knows about the mother's death, she suggests to inform others outside home "Sue said, 'Don't you think we ought to tell someone?'" (McEwan 29). Sue's first reaction signifies her knowledge about the social codes in case of someone dies and what normally should be done. Sue may recognize that from her successive reading books. However, Sue is under the protection if not the restrictions of Jack and Julie whom she considers as the officially permitted substitute for the mother since she is the one who appointed them to regulate home issues during her absence.

The only thing kept stick in Sue's mind is the house destruction by the society members if they tell them what happened to their mother. Jack reports the reaction of Sue as being shocked and frightened: "Sue was horrified" (McEwan 23). The notion of horror is deeply reflecting the real ignorance of the environment where Sue is living. She appears does not

predict that the outside world is to be full of evil as Jack describes for her. Jack's declaration comes to contradict her views, thus she changes her vision toward individuals around her. Sue is in very complicate situation, what is commonly convinced with: it is better to tell other's about the mother's death; at the same time she believes if to tell them everything will collapse. Those two mystifying thoughts let Sue to be in real puzzlement: who is write and who is wrong? "If we don't tell anybody we've got to do something ourselves quickly.' Sue was close to tears. 'But what can *we* do?' she moaned" (McEwan 23). Those entire questions reflect Sue's loss in the times of hardship. They reflect her mistrust and the non-reliability on the society they are raised within which obliges her to change her mind and to keep the mother's demise a secret too.

Consequently, the traumatic news Sue receives about the society let her to be more introvert and isolated. Now she spends lots of time in her room reading books and rechecking events and memories of her mother from her diary. In the stagnant and monotonous life she has, Sue for the first time is fascinated with Derek's personality. He is representing the other better life she always dreams to live: "I could see now that Sue was very excited [...] 'He's got a car, a new one'" (McEwan 37). Actually, she is the only one who is caring too much about him, neither Tom nor Jack are interested on Julie's boyfriend. At the end, Derek is not the person Sue expects to be in their family, a person who shares their secret and tries to protect them. Nevertheless, Sue horribly thinks about his destruction to their home.

III. Jack's Powerlessness, Freedom and Puberty

Jack the adolescent, who is in his fourteenth and encountering his fifteenth, is facing the problem of the transitional phase. A kind of problem highly repeated in McEwan's early works mentions Robert Webb in his article, "The secret of manliness? I read it in an Ian McEwan novel", the disturbing difficulty of that stage leads to identity crisis. At this period,

the persons suffer from the impulsion of two contradicting intrinsic powers: the first is the grown adult in the child versus the child kept in the adult (Webb). Throughout the novel, the reader sometimes sees Jack as the grown male in the family who cares about his youngest brother, Tom, at the same time Jack appears as a weak child who needs care and much more emotional support.

The weakness of the main character stands as a recurrent phenomenon appears in many examples of literary works that represent the masculinity crisis in the British fiction in the twentieth century. "The images of suffering men," says Więckowska "make the crisis corporeal and demonstrate the bankruptcy of the old ideal which bound manhood with dominance, power, and emotional restraint" (Więckowska 107). Previously, males are represented as powerful and adventurous. However, McEwan's male protagonists in his novels are considered as a label of crisis. They never exhibit any of the intellectual characteristics. Instead, they represent flaw, failure, overwhelmed by a sense of guilt and the destruction of the myth of masculinity as a whole (Więckowska 107-9).

In other words, indeed, Jack is a helpless and hopeless protagonist. He is a good image of anti-heroic character in post modern literature. He has no job and he is not sure whether to carry on his school or not. After the mother's death, he spends most of his time in his room looking at him in the mirror or running alone toward the shops without a purpose (McEwan30). Although he is the narrator of the novel, he suffers from nightmares and daydreams, which make him an unreliable narrator for readers at all. In the third chapter of the novel, he confesses of having nightmares, and he gets worst in the chapter sixth mainly after the mother's death. Jack starts to suffer from hallucinations. He sees his mother in another woman although he knows she is dead. Jack loses his physical balance and strength: "I felt irritable after my sudden sleep. My head felt tight and shrunken, the objects in the room seemed too dense, locked hard into the space they occupied and bulging with strain. My

clothes, before I picked them up and put them on, could have been made of steel” (McEwan 31). Since trauma can cause physical ambivalences as it appears in the first chapter, one can explain Jack’s physical weakness. It is due to the intensive impulsion of the mother’s loss that causes his confusion and mental instability.

Through his vision to the timescale, Jack is not interested in the time’s advancement. Rather, he is more stuck to the time slow or stagnant movement: “I’ve lost all sense of time. It feels like it’s always been like this. I can’t really remember how it used to be when Mum was alive and I can’t really imagine anything changing” (McEwan 59). Throughout McEwan’s skilful narrative style concerning the events progression and its relationship to the timeline of the novel, one can find how the children refuse to accept the reality of the family broken structure exactly in the moment of the mother’s demise. Little by little, the children modulate the gap by holding the position of the parents in the newly constructed family (Morrison 68).

Jack is not concerned with self cleaning at all. As a teenager, he becomes as the same as the British landscape of the 1970s. It is full of trash and damaged streets. This period, particularly, Britain has witnessed an economic depression. It is called ‘winter of discontent’. Accordingly, the character of Jack reflects how the British individual becomes under the crisis as being a product of the failed social policies (Summers-Bremne). For that reason, Jack reports the non-valuable life he has. His life is not that exciting and changing one. Thereby, the readers can feel he is less energetic. He is living in a non-stopped series of emptiness, and the reason is having no job. For him, just thinking about that makes him extremely oppressed: “The house was very quiet and I felt oppressed by the empty weeks ahead. I had not found a job yet” (McEwan 20). Repeatedly, Jack each time emphasizes on the void and worthlessness of his own life, in addition to the oppression that has no ending: “As far as I was concerned there was not much point in getting up. There was nothing particularly interesting to eat and I

was the only one with nothing to do” (McEwan 35). Since he is socially and psychologically injured, Jack spends much of his time laying on his bedroom masturbating all the time.

Very little Jack feels comfortable with his father. He never speaks to him or dares to ask him to clarify things for him as any boy with his father. In the novel, there are just two scenes when Jack really gets an opportunity to communicate with his father: “what do you want all this for?’ I felt I now had a right to ask” (McEwan 3). The other one is when they are cementing the garden; here Jack declares that for the first time he does not feel stressful in front of his father (McEwan 4). The father’s coldness with his son evokes the feeling of carelessness if not hatred from the part of Jack toward his father. Thus, although Jack knows very carefully that father has not to engage in such hard works due to his health problems, he never worries about him. He pretends to hold the sacks with him “When we bent down and each took hold of a corner of a sack, I felt him delay, waiting for me to take up the strain. But I said, ‘One, two, three ...’ and pulled only when I saw his arm stiffen” (McEwan 3), and while working he leaves him alone to complete cementing the garden for no serious reasons: “I remembered my father waiting and I hurried downstairs” (McEwan 5).

Going back to the opening of the novel, Jack says “I did not kill my father, but I sometimes felt I had helped him on his way”(McEwan 5), the fourteen years old son is somehow showing a little of regret about the way the father died. In other words, Jack holds the feeling of sorrow, but at the same time he tries to convince us as readers about the entire responsibility of the father in letting this relationship to take this bad direction. However, in a way or another, Jack’s declaration is a leading sign to expect bad things to take place in the future. The reaction of Jack to the ambulance that takes the father away suggests a lot: “I did not have a thought in my head as I picked up the plank and carefully smoothed away his impression in the soft, fresh concrete” (McEwan 5). Sistani et al say that the death of the father is held with a total emotional numbness, not only from Jack, but from the family as

well (Sistani et al 451). Wells assumes Jack readiness in taking the role of his father and to impose his patriarchal supremacy at home. After the mother falls ill and dies, Wells supposes that the roles of genders in the new family will be emulation to the traditional role of the father as the domineering and the mother as the submissive. Yet, with Jack's personality that lacks to all of real masculinity features, he never represents the figure of the patriarchal male. He is, instead, interesting in his sexual development in the puberty period which he seems to not have any of knowledge about it (Wells 35-6).

Once Jack says: "He snatched at words between breaths. 'For ... the garden.' I waited for more but after a pause he turned to leave" (McEwan 3). Unfortunately, this is the image of the father who never bothers himself in explaining things for his child that seems too impatient for knowing. The death of the Jack's father happens simultaneously with the time when he is witnessing his bodily changes. In the novel, the adolescent boy is not just keeping hurting himself throughout masturbating all over the time, but he is also violating all the social tradition by having sexual relations with his sister. Our protagonist has not enough knowledge just because his father does not tackle this sensitive subject with him although it is very important for parents to educate their children about their sexual development in order to protect their health and keep them away from the deviations. In a research made by Uko et al, they emphasize the importance of sexual education. According to them, it raises the child's awareness about the mental, physical and psychological harm caused by the unsafe sexual behaviors. It also raises their awareness about their individuation and their roles as male or female in the society. Significantly, the sexual education preserves both the individual and the social health (Uko et al 53).

Having a strict and totalitarian father at home justifies Jack's saying: "I am only including the little story of his death to explain how my sisters and I came to have such a large quantity of cement at our disposal" (McEwan 1). The expression of "little story of his death" holds

sentiments of carelessness about his demise; contrarily, as Válek mentions in his “paper Sexuality in the Fiction of Ian McEwan” that the family members consider it as a kind of liberation and getting rid of his tyranny forever. Hence, the primary reason of including the father’s uninteresting death story is to make readers get known about the amount of the cement the children will use in encasing their mother’s dead corps in the basement (Válek 28).

The Cement Garden lacks any kind of these conversations. Its problem of having no communication between the parents and sons is still recurrent again and again. It is true that the mother warns her son about his physical and sentimental exhaustion: “There are bags under your eyes even though you’ve just woken up [...] ‘yes, look at yourself,’ she said in a softer voice. ‘You can’t get up in the mornings, you’re tired all day, you’re moody, you don’t wash yourself or change your clothes, and you’re rude to your sisters and to me” (McEwan 9-8), but she does not provide him with the detailed explanation to his biological transitions or the ways to deal with. She only mentions the danger of Jack’s behavior superficially. In her discussion with him, she tells him: “these are things your father would have been telling you” (McEwan 9). However, he says confidently and painfully: “We looked away; we both knew this was not true” (McEwan 9). The father never informs his son about the boys’ sexual development. Consequently, Jack is confused about his emotional attractions to the other sex mainly his sister.

The novel introduces the setting where the family lives as an ordinary one. Gradually, under the daily routine of the family as Byrnes states the reader is not only troubled by the Ian McEwan’s ability in detecting the sexuality from the perspective of the narrator within his novel (Byrnes), but he is also unpredictably shocked by the gothic and the macabre reality inside Jack’s inner psyche. In other words, the novel in its plot is a reference to the novel of William Golding, *The Lord of the Flies*. Besides, to the unknown name of the city to the

general gloomy atmosphere in the novel, Jack narrates his story in a city full of the rest of building demolitions in very hot summer which completely goes with the gothic cities descriptions. In addition to the scary house depiction, “Our house was old and large. It was built to look a little like a castle, with thick walls, squat windows and crenellations above the front door. Seen from across the road it looked like the face of someone concentrating, trying to remember”(McEwan 7). As a result, the reader creates a frightening image about Jack’s house. Summing up, his overall portrayal to their old stink home along with the non-constructed buildings, the isolated neighborhood and the city in general transmit mystery, terror, and pessimistic view which represents the gothic imagery in its essence (Wilczewska 31-2).

The gothic image does not end at the level of describing both of the house and the city. It also appears more evidently in the part when the children decide to bury their dead mother. The children only decide to bury the mother, yet they have not agreed upon the way to do so. Jack is really wondering about the way to hide the mother without paying the neighbors’ attention. If he does it at night, people around will recognize them due to the torches’ light, and if they dig the tomb in the day it will be time consuming and people will see them as well. Lately, Jack is inspired by Tom when he is structuring tunnels in the sand. Jack talk about the burial of the mother seems to be utterances of a professional murderer not a fifteen old boy who tries to hide his mother’s dead body. What is confusing here, is when Jack goes so far in describing his plan with a total delight and showing self- admiration too: “Despite everything, I was enjoying myself. I had always admired the gentlemen criminals in films who discussed the perfect murder with elegant detachment” (McEwan 24).

Going ahead, Jack also kills a little frog in a brutal way. This incident confirms the inner wild nature among Jack. Even though he feels that the small animal is looking at him expecting help, Jack is not affected by its staring and decides to put an end for its life without

any pity or mercy “That’s enough,’ I said out loud and brought the flat stone down sharply on the small green head. When I lifted the stone the frog’s body stuck to it and then dropped to the ground. I began to cry. I found another stone and dug a short deep trench” (McEwan 55). He decides to bury it underground like what he does with his faint mother’s corps. The first experience in encasing his mother has paved the way for him to be very lenient in killing and burring dead bodies, besides to showing the monster like hidden inside him.

In chapter six when the parents have gone to the funeral, the children have played violently. The parents’ absence is just for a couple of hours. At this time, the children have revealed their uncivilized and the wild nature inside them. Before her death, the mother appoints Jack and Julie to share the responsibility at home until she returns from the hospital. Projecting the first parents’ absence with their definitive one, the readers can realize the amount of freedom the children recognize, certainly from the narrator declaration for the first time when the mother tells him that she might be out of home for days in the hospital: “A sense of freedom was tugging at my concern” (McEwan 19). The feeling of total freedom has progressed hysterically after the mother’s death: “strongest feelings was a sense of adventure and freedom” (McEwan 29). The death of parents due their illnesses seems not to be fully identified by Jack. Like this way, he shows the young childr limited way of thinking. Against the reality of being orphan with its fullest meaning, Jack is happy with getting free from the mother’s orders, and to do whatever he desires whenever he wants.

Profoundly, Jack is also afraid about his fate within the family. As much as the roles in family are significant in establishing one own wills and desires, Jack wants to share the family holding matters along with Julie. Unfortunately, he cannot do so because he is not an equivalent rival for Julie, the magnetic and the manipulative girl: “ ‘I’m in charge too,’ I said and began to cry because I felt cheated. My mother had gone without explaining to Julie what she had told me. Not to hospital, but gone completely, and there could be no verification”

(McEwan 21). From the very beginning of the novel, Julie does not like Jack's personality. He is stinking and careless. In the other hand, Julie is clever and she establishes her leadership over her friends at school. With these two opposite personalities, it is clear for Julie not to allow herself to be under Jack's foolishness and lack of management capacities, which is implicitly threatening the position of Jack.

Surprisingly, through his narratives, Jack makes readers aware about his nostalgia to his souvenirs with his mother. His remembering to his days with her demonstrates how awful, empty and meaningless his life is:

When I was eight years old I came home from school one morning pretending to be seriously ill. My mother indulged me. She put me into my pyjamas, carried me to the sofa in the living room and wrapped me in a blanket. She knew I had come home to monopolize her while my father and two sisters were out of the house. (McEwan 8)

Under the remaining psychological injuries effects of death, Keenan mentions the relationship between the impact of parental loss and adolescence. The fact of losing parents at this time is considered as a 'double dose'. In the mourning process of an adolescent, the separation, mainly from the mother activates the feeling of desertion and exclusion (Keenan 32-3). Going back to the novel, Jack is completely vulnerable and spiritually exhausted due the mother's loss. He no longer can bear the void and the emptiness she left behind.

Jack feels sorrow about the life they had and about the days he misses without trying to make efforts in helping the mother since she is also neglected by her relatives. "Because there were no visitors, there was no one to ask what was wrong with her, and so I did not really put the question clearly to myself"(McEwan 16). When Jack notices the diary of Sue he is persistent to know about his mother, maybe he wants to feel her presence again "I said in a

very sad voice, 'I wish you'd let me see the bits about Mum, just those bits. You could read them to me if you like'" (McEwan 41), however nothing is good about his action towards his Mother and with his siblings as well:

Sue spoke quickly. 'You never understood anything about her. You were always horrible to her.' 'That's a lie,' I said loudly, and after a few seconds I repeated, 'That's a lie.'[...] 'You never did anything she asked you. You never did anything to help. You were always too full of yourself, just like you are now.' I said, 'I wouldn't have dreamed about her like that if I didn't care about her. 'You didn't dream about her,' Sue said, 'you dreamed about yourself. That's why you want to look in my diary, to see if there's anything about you in it.

(McEwan 41)

Jack is not a good boy. Comparing to the mother's interest and her successive advice for her son to change his clothes and to show interest on his hygiene, he keeps arguing and goes against her will.

At the moment the mother died, the children are not only under the compulsion of both the trauma of losing the mother and the suffering in silence. The children no longer trust people around. Thus, they cannot make a public funeral for her. At the same time, they are disturbed concerning the mother's dead body. In the midst of this miserable moment, Jack cannot imagine anything worst than being separate to his mother, the only supporter for him: "At the back of my mind I had a sense of us sitting about waiting for some terrible event, and then I would remember that it had already happened" (McEwan 23). As mentioned in the second chapter, many adolescent avoid any thing connected with the death of the loved one such as

the place where the death takes place. The vulnerable adolescent sees his mother in her nightdress, she is weak and yellow, and thus, when he enters her room he tries to avoid looking at her faint body. Due to the lack of the sufficient support, he finds it hard to overcome the pain he is passing through: “the very image that had been presenting itself whenever I closed my eyes” (McEwan 25).

Under the stress of building the tomb for the mother, Jack says they work rapidly. Later on, Jack becomes more psychologically dislocated and mentally distorted. He is unable to make relations to the events. His memory is dissociated to the point he forgets his mother’s facial features: “I tried to think which of us used it last, but now I had no clear memory of the order of events. Thought about my mother. I tried hard to make a picture of her face in my mind. I had the oval outline of a face, but the features inside this shape would not stay still, or they dissolved” (McEwan 36). He also has no sense of time progression from the time the mother died. In this traumatic moment like his siblings, Jack has behaved unconsciously. Then, in recalling the previous events, Jack starts to think about the validity of encasing the mother in the cellar. “At the time it had been obvious, to keep the family together. Was that a good reason? It might have been more interesting to be apart. Nor could I think whether what we had done was an ordinary thing to do, understandable even if it had been a mistake or something so strange that if it was ever found out it would be the headline of every newspaper in the country” (McEwan 39). The questions which Jack keeps asking demonstrate the inner conflict he is facing alone.

Actually, Jack’s failure in hiding the frog body as well as the mother in the grave he has built for her, is a symbol of Jack’s failure and dependency in his life. Derek discovers both of them. Jack never likes him. The man is older, richer, and handsome and above all, he is the boyfriend of Julie whom Jack feels attracted to and noticeably declares his desire toward. In the presence of Derek, Jack, seems stupid and not worthy to pay attention to, essentially from

the part of his sister who never likes his dirtiness and unpleasant odor. When Derek is suspicious about Jack's top secret, he starts to mock him in an attempt to convince Jack with his worthlessness to be the owner of such large house. Once when he mentions the frog burring as labeling to the burial of the mother secretly; and the other time when he reconstructs the tomb of the mother as if it is for the dog of Jack which he apparently is not convinced with (McEwan 54).

The smell becomes intensive day after another, and Derek becomes certain that the siblings have something inside the cellar and he is not totally convinced with the story of Jack's dog. Later on he smashed the tomb and he discovers the hidden body of the mother. Not only that, he also realizes the sexual relationship between the siblings. He terribly says: "It's sick," he said loudly" as a sign to his opposition to the abnormal relationship, as Ambler writes in his essay, in this dysfunctional environment, Julie's reply as "it is none of your business" (McEwan 59), makes the novel upsetting because of decadence and emotional contradictions. The reader is sometimes sympathized with tragic life the children witness. In the other hand he is highly shocked by the children uncivilized behavior that contradicts all the social and religious standards.

IV. Mother Role of Julie

Bradford in his analytical book, *The Novel Now*, assumes the total reverse in the family of *The Cement Garden*. He summarizes all possible types of transgressions. In fact, the parentless family is involved in regression and incest which come to an end due to the mother's intensive spread smell of the decomposed body (Bradford 20). The reality is these entire alterations that take place from the moment Julie becomes the first responsible at home. Thinking about putting the mother in the cellar, makes the readers expect more erroneous decisions by Julie. Thereafter, Julie imitates the mother role in the family. Accordingly, she

threatens the notion of motherhood by her choking decisions she takes each time. A bit by bit, Julie changes the essence of her two brothers, Tom and Jack, then the family's structure as a whole.

As a teenage girl, Julie owns a personality which any person wishes to be alike. She is an athlete, interested on her appearance, and very feminine. All these characters make her surrounded by many friends at school, both of girls and boys. Jack says that she is even a shy girl that is why she is not talkative in her class. However, she has all the characteristics of leadership and skills of manipulating others around her:

Her silence made us all a little afraid of her, but again she would protest, her voice musical with bemusement, that *she* was the one who was afraid. It was true, she was shy – there was a rumour she never spoke in class without blushing – but she had the quiet strength and detachment, and lived in the separate world of those who are, and secretly know they are, exceptionally beautiful. (McEwan 13)

Owning such sorts of personality makes all Sue's attempts and allusions to make a public funeral for the mother does not receive any response or any of logic negotiation; Though Sue's suggestion is the most socially acceptable one. As being the older one and the head of the family, Julie emphasis on burring the mother reflects her ability of management and the skill of effecting people around her.

The contradiction in Julie's personality is leading to ask many questions about her. The ambiguity of her personality stands on her daring style of wearing clothes and her reputation at school as a rebellious girl. All these characteristics logically cannot be found all together in

a bashful introvert person. Durgut in his paper, "Sister, Mother and Lover: the family Roles of Julie in Ian McEwan's *The Cement Garden*" explains this controversial around her character as either she is a self-confident girl at the same time she feels lost in the world she lives in, or she is making use of her appearance i.e. she tries to hide her sensitivity and weakness and projects an opposite image of strength for the people around her (Durgu 4).

Julie is close to her mother more than Sue, the other girl in the family. She shares secrets with her in their conversations. Through this closeness which reflects a good mother-daughter relationship, Julie has acquired the skills and the clues which mothers use to manage their homes. She orders her siblings just as the mother does: "Like my mother, Julie made remarks to me about my hair or my clothes, not gently though, but with scorn" (McEwan 10). Julie is a charismatic character. She is characterized by her flexibility in different situations. Thus, she can change her character from time to time. Sometimes, she appears the strict responsible individual: "Julie appeared serious and efficient" (McEwan 16) , and sometimes she appears taking the burden of spreading delight and happiness, especially in the birthday party of Jack, she wants to entertain her ill mother by asking each one to show them something (McEwan 14). In other times, she shows the tenderness and softness in her treatments to her sibling mainly her little brother Tom. She mothers him perfectly: she feeds him and sleeps with him at her bedroom, and she is willing in defends him whenever jack blames him out of jealousy of taking much of Julie's attention.

Julie is also represents kind of unruly girls. When she is at school, she has boys as friends. But, no one of them dares to get nearer to her. Even after the mother's death, she becomes more independent and free: "usually in the afternoons and for hours on end. When I asked her where she went she told me to mind my own business" (McEwan 30). She is a decisive girl and has the ability to operate people around her. The preservation of the family is one of her priorities, that is why she cuts off her relation with her boyfriend, Derek, when she

has felt threatened from him: “He wants to be one of the family, you know, big smart daddy. He’s getting on my nerves” (McEwan 58).

Thus, when she takes the burden of running the domestic duties, she is really making use of her position. As the supreme power at home, she has gained her supremacy in managing the home owing to the financial freedom she enjoys because of the account which mother opened for her before she died. Actually, Julie is authoritative and dominant over her siblings: “She was suddenly so remote from us, quiet, certain of her authority” (McEwan 11). Through Julie’s character, one can notice how the children can use their position in controlling other children around them. She devotes her time in having a personal pleasure. Under these circumstances, Julie at the beginning refuses to be Tom’s mother. She violates him and shouts on him: “Once he tried to cling on to Julie’s knee and I heard her say as she pushed him away, ‘Go away. *Please* go away” (McEwan 23). Under Tom obsession on adopting Julie as his mother, she finally shows the natural maternal emotions inside here, and becomes tolerant with him to the level that she allows Tom to dress like a girl based on his want.

Nevertheless, the interchangeability of role genders in the family becomes an indicant to the children confusion about what is appropriate for each gender and what is not. Julie and Sue easily and directly accept Tom’s option for being a girl. Meanwhile Jack for the first time seems seriously horrified from the idea (De Coning 93). In this scene, the girls seem very annoyed about Jack’s racist view that reflects the view of the whole society:

Girls can wear jeans and cut their hair short and wear shirts and boots because it’s okay to be a boy, for girls it’s like promotion. But for a boy to look like a girl is degrading, according to you, because secretly you believe that being a girl is degrading. Why else would you think

it's humiliating for Tom to wear a frock?' 'Because it is,'

I said determinedly (McEwan 18).

In this intensive conversation, Julie does not consider the threat over Tom's transformation to a girl, what matters her is the degradation of Jack to females. Julie's reaction demonstrates man/women clash between maintaining males' superiority and females call for equality in the British society.

For many orphans who witness the death of parents, they firmly validate the importance of both the organized and the common familial support. It is helpful to be hold up by an association or by the entourage where they live such as friends and neighbors. It provides them with enough security and becomes ethically directed according to the social norms (Ellis et al 61-2). Julie as McEwan's orphan model in *The Cement Garden* does not accept any of the social interferences. Instead of ending her relationship with Derek with wedlock, she asks him to help them in correcting their mistakes in the right way, and she cuts off her relationship with him and chooses Jack to be her partner to represent the role of the father in the family.

In so many ways, Derek is a twenty three old gentleman; he seems too excited to know about the bad smell in the basement. In this scene, Julie quickly says: "Jack's dog" (McEwan 52). Julie's lie, is a sign of her final decision not to include Derek in the family affairs especially when she knows that he wants to be involved in everything, whereas he is treated as young child by his mother which calls him 'Doodle' and obliges him to wash his hands before drinking a cup of tea (McEwan 58).

Actually, Julie is right when she prevents Derek from being a part in the family. Derek has no good intention of protecting the family. All what matters him are his personal benefits: "He wants to take charge of everything. He keeps talking about moving in with us" (McEwan64). Derek whenever talks to Jack, he mentions how large their home is and how it

is full with needless rooms: "It's a big house [...] it must be worth quite a bit" (McEwan 44). Derek wants to ensure his place within the family as the supreme authority based on his doubts about the parents' death. He is very convinced that the siblings hide a dangerous secret. Julie has told him that her parents died recently (McEwan 44). Jack has informed him they are dead for a long time. This conflict of words makes him skeptic toward them. Finally, he ends their secret by discovering the tomb due to the leaky smell in the house besides to revealing their disgusting relationship then bringing police at home which metaphorically symbolizes the interference of the social authority in adjusting the children's misbehaviors.

To conclude, *The Cement Garden* tries to tackle the dysfunction of individuals who are in a sensitive transitional period which is the period childhood and adolescence under specific conditions such as trauma and alienation. Those conditions in all most of the characters are getting pass through. The parents' death stands as a huge obstacle in the children's life. The children are raised against their nature as being enclosed into the cemented garden once compulsorily and later willingly. As it is hard to manage their own life, the new formed family lacks all the well-known communal criteria of constructing a family. Apparently, the siblings do not distinguish between playing games and the seriousness of constructing a family. With the absence of the parental care, the isolated traumatized children reveal all what is possible for a child can do. The freedom which the children enjoy shows how children can transform to a source of spreading chaos and changing the social structure through playing with gender roles, identity and familial relations.

Conclusion

Ian McEwan has gained his place as a post war writer. He has started his career as a writer in the 1970s and has gained his fame just after the publication of his early short stories. The reason behind his success is his attempts to examine the mystery around the human psyche. He tackles the most controversial themes in his first writing which makes his a large popularity. Actually, the only interest in his novels is his skillful narrative style through the “I” that may make the reader unconsciously involved in the course of the novel or to feel like he is reading about his self. The variety of themes in the novels is a blending between adolescence, trauma, death, sexual and incestuous relationships and the human relations in these modern cities.

Generally, *The Cement Garden* is about the oppression of a socially isolated family. Under these circumstances, there exist all types of dominance. Apparently, the tyrannical domination of the father over his wife and his children reflects the societal male domination over female from one part and adults over children in the other part. In reverse, it also reflects the women’s rebellion and their attempts to dominate the opposite sex through Julie’s strong and daring character. The isolation of the family in this way involves greatly in reporting the complexities of each of the family members. Hence, *The Cement Garden* does never represent the typical image of the united coherent family. On contrary, it represents the shaken family which can be fall at any time.

Basically, the children, Julie, Jack, Sue and Tom are deeply affected by their relationship to the parents and the relationship between the parents themselves. The father has never been the ideal model for his sons. He never attempts to make them feel secure or protected. The only thing he keeps repeating is imposing his non-ending unspeakable orders. Much more of his concern is how to build walls around the garden for more isolation and cementing the garden inside. The mother is also tender and calm, but she is also weak and fragile. She never

reacts seriously against the father's tyranny. In this family, parents never express their love to each other. In this regard, the children are raised in an environment where they are oppressed, learned submissiveness from their mother and finally doubted about the strength of tie which bind them all together as one family.

Definitely, the death of the father does not concern the family. It is a kind of release after being chained by those strict laws. However, the death of the mother is the turning point from which the novel's events take another direction full of pain, loss, identity change and decadence. Based on the mother's threatening they decide to keep her death as a secret between them to avoid being taken to care by authorities. The days after the mother's death are the most difficult ones for them. The house is in a total mess, and the children cannot find what to eat. Julie becomes interested on her appearance, Jack gives up his personal cleanness, Sue is more attached to her books more precisely to her diary and Tom is looking for someone to substitute his mother.

The children under the trauma and the sudden breakdown of their tie to the mother seem to trace a profoundly psychologically hurt for all of them. The youngest Tom is horrified, unsatisfied without his mother. Thus, he cries whenever he wants her. Jack isolates himself in his room doing nothing all day just masturbating. He is powerless and has no job. He suffers from nightmares which become day dreams and hallucinations later on. Julie is out of home all the day, and she starts to smoke cigarettes and arrange a relationship with Derek.

Lately, the traumatized children are fed up from the situation they are in, and they try to manage their life without the parental supervision and the social interfere. The fact of bury the mother in the basement is the first sign to the complication of the upcoming events. Julie becomes the mother of Tom. She allows him to change his identity to a baby girl to avoid bulling at school. This is the first mistake the children fall in. It is not appropriate to tolerate such kind of alteration. Instead, she would better educate and support him to defend himself;

hence, to depend on himself as a strong individual in the society. Sue, the thirteen years old girl is trying to avoid her unpleasant life through reading books that takes her to the other imaginary world when she can feel relaxed and satisfied.

The freedom which the children enjoy besides to the availability of the financial resource establishes the suitable conditions for the children not to rely on people in managing their home. After all, Julie and Jack re-enact the role of parents. By acting an incestuous relationship, the new formed family is not the one which represents the normal one within the mainstream families. From all sides, it reveals the failure of the young children in keeping the structure of the nucleolus family. Through *The Cement Garden*, the author did well in portraying the complexities of the human nature. He portrays what could happen if a mother-child relationship ends suddenly and how can chaos and decadence may spread all over the house due to the lack of knowledge in addition to the absence of the adult's authority and control.

Notes

¹. According to Fourth Edition-Text Revised, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is a result of experiencing a frightening event that causes psychological and physical helplessness. The disorder's major symptoms are those like of trauma. The individual may re-experience the traumatic event through recurrent memories, flashbacks, and exhaustive nightmares. Most of time, these symptoms are accompanied with both of the trial to avoid to everything has connection with the traumatic event and the disability in recalling the whole event series. In addition to intensive arousals in sleeping, lack of concentration and irregular responses (Kennedy et al 897).

². The concept of attachment theory refers to the emotional tie that is developed by the child to his caregivers. It is firstly mentioned by the psychoanalyst and child psychiatric, John Bowlby. The children develop this bond to adults in times of distress when adults are always there to fit their needs. The fact that children receive the sufficient support to feel comfortable and relaxed leads to create a secure base for them. Bowlby starts this kind of studies after the Second World War. In comparison to those children who live with their parents, orphans and abandoned children have deficiencies at the social, intellectual and emotional levels. Finally, at the end of his studies, Bowlby emphasizes the significant role of the mother in child's emotional, social and cognitive abilities due to her consistence involvement to her child (Weeks 2).

³. The death of someone close causes a traumatic grief. The later is classified as a disorder that has many symptoms. Along with bereavement, traumatic grief is the legacy of the separation to a significant dead one. Those symptoms are trauma and stressful breakdown. This shatter affects the person in different areas such as: his social skills, his occupational relations and others. Concerning the addition of the concept of "traumatic" to the name of this disorder is for more description to the phenomenon of grieving. It is related to persons who

are highly injured by the death of the beloved one in all cases and not just for those who witness a traumatic death. The core of this disorder is the incapability of bearing the loss. To obtain the exact classification of traumatic grief, the diagnosis should take at least two months. Traumatic grief may be developed to a PTSD or Acute Stress Disorder (Jacobs 24).

4. Is the loss of some who is significant in the person's life. The word's meaning is "to be robbed." Bereavement comes as an absolute recognition to the absence to the person which the bereaved is highly attached with. Thus, experiencing the missing of the absent one can lead to other feelings, such as, solitude, nostalgia, frustration and abandonment in some cases (Sabar et al 154).

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ملخص

حديقة الإسمنت التي كتبها إيان ماكوان في عام 1978 تدور حول حياة أربعة أشقاء معزولين اجتماعيا. في الرواية، يفقد الأطفال أمهم بسبب مرض غامض بعد وفاة الأب بسبب نوبة قلبية، مما يمثل نقطة تحول في حياتهم. حينها قرر الأطفال المصابون بالصدمة أن يدفنوا الأم سرا في قبو المنزل خوفا من المجتمع المخيف المجهول. والغرض من ذلك هو حماية أنفسهم من الأخذ إلى الرعاية وفقدان منزلهم. هذه الأطروحة تكشف عن جميع أنواع الانحراف واختلال الأطفال الوظيفي التي يريد إيان ماكوان نقلها من خلال عمله. إن صدمة الأطفال، والشعور بالوحدة، والاكتئاب، والعيش دون سلطة أبوية إلى جانب نقص المعرفة، كلها شروط مسبقة للسلوك الاجتماعي غير المقبول. دون استثناء، كل الشخصيات تتصرف بأخلاق خاطئة اجتماعيا. و أبرزها خطورة هي علاقة زنا المحارم المتقدمة بين الشقيقين الأكبر سنا. إن سلوك الأطفال المروع يُظهر الانحرافات المحتملة التي قد يقع فيها الأطفال المعزولون والمصدومون.

Résumé

Le Jardin de ciment par Ian McEwan (1978) tourne autour de la vie de quatre frères et sœurs qui sont forcément éloignés de la société par leur père. La mort de leur mère juste après le décès de son mari à cause d'une crise cardiaque. C'était vraiment un tournant dans leur vie. Les enfants traumatisés ont décidé d'enterrer la mère secrètement dans le sous-sol de la maison par peur de la société dans le but d'être protégés de la prise en charge et de la perte de leur domicile. Ce mémoire révèle toutes sortes d'écarts et de dysfonctionnements sociaux qu'Ian McEwan souhaite transmettre à travers son roman. Le traumatisme des enfants, la solitude, la dépression et la vie sans l'autorité parentale ainsi que le manque de connaissances sont toutes les conditions préalables des comportements sociaux non acceptés. Sans exception, tous les personnages se comportent de manières socialement mal. La dangereuse la plus notable est la relation incestueuse développée entre les deux frères et sœurs plus âgés. L'action démontre les comportements choquant possibles que les enfants aliénés et traumatisés peuvent tomber dans.