



**DENIAL AND DISPLACEMENT IN IAN  
MCEWAN'S ATONEMENT AND ON CHESIL  
BEACH**

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MASTER'S THESIS  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

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## THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that, in my opinion, the thesis submitted by Asem Idrees TAHER titled “DENIAL AND DISPLACEMENT IN IAN MCEWAN’S ATONEMENT AND ON CHESIL BEACH” is fully sufficient in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a Master’s thesis. Aug 1, 2022

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The degree of Master of Arts by the thesis submitted is approved by the Administrative Board of the Institute of Graduate Programs, Karabuk University.

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Director of the Institute of Graduate Programs

## **DECLARATION**

By signing this document, I certify that this thesis is entirely my own idea and that all data was gathered and presented in compliance with the academic standards and ethical guidelines established by the institute. In moreover, I affirm that any claims, findings, and materials that are not part of this thesis have been accurately attributed and referenced.

I accept all moral and legal repercussions of any finding that the aforementioned assertion is untrue, without being constrained by any particular time.

**Name surname:** Asem Idrees TAHER

**Signature** :

## **FORWARD**

First and foremost, I appreciate and praise Allah for His magnificence and for giving me the confidence and fortitude to finish my thesis.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tavghah Ghulam Saeed, for giving me the chance to complete this fantastic project. She also encouraged me to conduct extensive study through which I learned a great deal of new information.

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## ABSTRACT

McEwan focuses on social relationships, thought, sexuality, and the human condition throughout his literary career. His latest works have developed and become more analytical, less startling, and even more difficult due to their complexity. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to explore Freudian denial and displacement in Ian McEwan's both novels, *Atonement* and *On Chesil Beach*. This study demonstrates the influence of the theory on the thoughts and decisions in each character of the novel while facing problem. Further, this study aims to improve our perspective of McEwan's employment of Denial and Displacement by placing his characters in an ambiguous situation whereby they can't distinguish between reality and imagination. The study falls into three chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter of the study talks about Denial and Displacement theory and Ian McEwan's writing style; it shows how Denial and Displacement work inside humans' bodies and influence their decision. Chapter two highlights Denial and Displacement in the main characters of *Atonement*. Chapter three discusses Denial and Displacement in *On Chesil Beach* and explains how the theory impacts the main characters. Finally, the conclusion sums up the main findings of the thesis and compares both novels according to Freudian perspective.

**Keywords:** Denial; Displacement; Atonement; On Chesil Beach; Freud; Ian McEwan; Imagination



## ÖZ

McEwan, edebi kariyeri boyunca sosyal ilişkilere, düşünceye, cinselliğe ve insanlık durumuna odaklanır. Son çalışmaları geliştirdi ve karmaşıklıkları nedeniyle daha analitik, daha az şaşırtıcı ve daha da zor hale geldi. Bu nedenle, bu çalışmanın amacı, Ian McEwan'ın Kefaret ve Chesil Plajı'ndaki her iki romanında Freud'un inkar ve yerinden edilmeyi araştırmaktır. Bu çalışma, teorisinin romanın her karakterindeki düşünce ve kararlar üzerindeki etkisini göstermektedir. Ayrıca, bu çalışma, McEwan'ın karakterlerini gerçeklik ve hayal gücü arasında ayırma yapamadıkları belirsiz bir duruma yerleştirerek İnkâr ve Yer Değiştirme istihdamına bakış açımızı geliştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma üç bölüme ve bir sonuca varmaktadır. Çalışmanın ilk bölümü İnkâr ve Yer Değiştirme teorisi ve Ian McEwan'ın yazı stili hakkında konuşuyor; İnkâr ve Yerinden Edilmenin insanların bedenlerinde nasıl işlediğini ve kararlarını nasıl etkilediğini gösterir. İkinci bölüm, Kefaret'in ana karakterlerinde İnkâr ve Yer Değiştirmeyi vurgular. Üçüncü bölüm, On Chesil Beach'te İnkâr ve Yer Değiştirmeyi tartışıyor ve teorisinin ana karakterleri nasıl etkilediğini açıklıyor. Son olarak, sonuç tezin ana bulgularını özetler ve her iki romanı da karşılaştırır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İnkâr; Yerinden Edilme; Kefaret; Chesil Plajında; Freud; Ian McEwan; Hayal Gücü

## ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

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## ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ

<b>Tezin Adı</b>	Ian McEwan'ın Kefareti ve Chesil Plajı'nda İnkâr ve Yer Değiştirme
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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**Etc.** : Ve benzeri gibi

**ed.** : Baskı

**Ed. By** : Editör

**p./pp.** : Sayfa/sayfalar

**Vol.** : Sayı

**Vs.** : Karşı

## **SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH**

The study deals with the Freudian defense mechanism: Denial and Displacement in Ian McEwan's *Atonement* and *On Chesil beach*, as well as discusses how such theories have an impact on his novels.

## **PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The reason behind the study is to show Freudian theories' impact on Ian McEwan's work and his character's thoughts while facing problems. The importance of the study is that the thesis focuses on Denial and Displacement in Ian McEwan's *Atonement* and *on Chesil Beach* since such studies have not been addressed before. As a result, this study is significant because it is the first study to discuss Ian McEwan's work.

## **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

The study is a thematic one; it relies on the contexts of the two novels to achieve its purpose of comprehending how Ian McEwan used Freudian theories in his novels.

## **HYPOTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH / RESEARCH PROBLEM**

The problem investigated in this study is the negative side effects in Denial and Displacement in *Atonement* and *On Chesil beach*. Both novels used this technique to maintain the main idea of the novel.

## **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES**

This study focuses only on one writer who is Ian McEwan. Also, the scope of the study focuses only on two novels which are *Atonement* and *On Chesil beach*. However, the study does not focus on all parts of the novels; it only focuses on the psychological side of the novel.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. The definition of Denial and Displacement

In the nineteenth century, Freud, famed as the founder of psychoanalysis, started a debate in connection to the defensive mechanisms of identity, ego, and superego. In the 20th century, his daughter, Anna Freud, described and explained these first defensive mechanisms more precisely. She has developed ten primary defensive mechanisms, and since then, the quantity of psychoanalysts has grown (Cramer, 2015, p. 523). Almost every adult has favorite images of himself/herself. In most situations, they are positive self that is significantly more positive than actual facts would indicate, as almost all authors have highlighted the issue. As a result, one of the most continuous issues in human life is how to maintain these positive self-perceptions. Self-deception behaviors can contribute to these exaggerated self-perceptions. However, when an internal or external situation happens, that plainly contradicts the preferred sense of self; a crisis in self-perception may develop. In those kinds of circumstances, the self must have some mechanisms or procedures in place to protect oneself from the dangerous implications of the experience; defense mechanisms are a term used to describe such processes (Cramer, 1991; A. Freud, 1936).

In a collection of work that has had a lasting influence, Sigmund Freud suggested a set of defensive mechanisms (Freud, 1915). His research concentrated on how the ego fought itself towards internal occurrences, particularly urges that were considered undesirable by the ego. He focused on sexual or violent urges that would go against the ego's internalized ideals, such as those which aimed against one's parents. In his opinion, the self's attempts to avoid acknowledging its own sexual and violent urges played a systematic role in the development of the personality (Freud, 1926). The idea that personage is founded on attempts to disguise one's sexual and violent impulses was not largely embraced by modern personality and social psychology. Nevertheless, there is still a considerable demand for defense mechanisms. Fenichel revealed that revisionist ideas are defensive mechanisms that are basically meant to safeguard self-esteem (Fenichel, 1945). This approach is far more consistent than the original perspective of Freud in contemporary social and personality psychology studies.

Id: Instincts

Ego: Reality

Superego: Morality

These defensive mechanisms were stated by Anna Freud as "unconscious ego assets" to reduce internal pressure eventually. These unconscious strategies are typically created by patients to reduce the conflict, particularly between super-ego and id. Therapists utilize the psychodynamic therapy to assist patients with their own unconscious procedures. Patients enhance their own consciousness and get fresh knowledge of their own conduct via their recognition and identification of these procedures. These observations can aid patients with many mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, eating problems, and behavioral disorders. Denial is one of the first defense mechanisms that are available in an adult's life. In addition to primary repression, denial is available over the earliest years of a child's life to provide a defensive function. Although primary repression prevents the child from inborn requirements, denial functions avoid disturbing views of the outside world (Freud, 1940). Besides, Denial was a key element in Sigmund Freud's works in the early twentieth century; it was one of several psychological defensive strategies. (Freud, 1926). Denial, in this perspective, was extremely psychologically damaging because an individual refused to consider what had happened in the actual, physical world as facts (Baumeister, 1998).

Denial was described as a person's complete disregard for what others might confirm to be true. When a person is diagnosed with a terminal illness, for example, he or she continues to accept that life can go on as it was before the illness. Denial, according to Freud, was one of the protective responses to the danger that occurred in adulthood as a result of repressed desires and conflicts from person's adolescence. Denial, like other defense responses to danger, was viewed by Sigmund Freud as a confrontation between a person's unconscious motivation to preserve happiness and the idealistic motive to maintain righteousness, or to do what is good in the eyes of others. As hedonic stability is disturbed, a defensive mechanism is triggered, such as denial, in which an individual believes "This isn't happening" (Baumeister, 1998, p.110).

Displacement involves changing the impulse aim. For example, an unacceptable aggressive impulse to one's dad may turn into hostile behavior toward police officers

or other officials. The aims of the current violence are linked to the purpose of the original inhibited impulse through clear associations (Rajchert, 2015, p.710). The idea of displacement appears to be founded on the widely criticized idea of catharsis, which shows that humans have a clearly defined number of violent impulses, which require release in one domain or another (Baumeister, 1993). If it is not possible to exhibit aggressiveness (or sexual desire in this issue) in its original objective, it needs in this perspective to be diverted to another. In the meantime, of course, no displacement would occur if it could be stated towards the original aim. Because of what is currently known about aggressiveness, these effects seem very implausible. An individual who is aggressive in one circumstance is more likely to be even more aggressive in the next (Baumeister, 1993). Originally, Freud saw displacement as a form of dream manipulation, involving a change of focus from essential elements to insignificant ones, or a simple illusion as a substitute for something (Freud, 1926). The chapter starts with the discussion of different aspects of denial-the mental processes used in its operations, and how this can be presented to explain the complexity of the defensive mechanism.

## **1.2. Components of Denial**

The denial defense mechanism can be easily conceptualized in its simplest form. This theory in its common way is to avoid it, then it will disappear. In this form, denial refers potentially to a mental operation where the focus is diverted from external stimuli, in which psychological suffering or disturbances will occur. Here, the attention is on a defensive mechanism to avoid external facts. The early descriptions of denial were marked by this external emphasis (Freud, 1911, 1923, 1924). In recent books, however, the idea of denial was generalized to include awarding off such inner distractions with a cover or a "screen" that replaced the traumatic thinking (Freud, 1925; Fenichel, 1945; Jacobson, 1957). This idea made it difficult to separate denial from repression. Theoretically, the differentiation was created in terms of denial aiming toward preconscious memories, while repression aimed at unconscious memories that are unavailable in normal situations to the consciousness. In either case, not only the lack of attention but also a number of other mental behaviors have been generalized to include how the "withdrawal" or "disavowal" of events happens in the denial. A study of the denial components as explained in the literature suggests that, as in adults, this defense is more complicated than mere ignorance of the truth (Jacobson, 1957).



One of the first components of denial is to try not to see what is real and fail to see reality. When it happens with an adult, not knowing or not hearing what is 'actually', this suggests a serious failure of reality testing that we connect with a psychotic situation. Theoretically, this "not seeing" may occur by removing attention totally from the case or by a negative hallucination (Moore & Rubinfine, 1969). Denial can also be expressed less extremely by withdrawing from the stressful condition emotionally or psychologically; reality can become dismissed. In this way, denial is less complete and it encourages the denied incident to be brought back to the surface, for instance, a therapist's sensitive questioning (Sjoback, 1973). Another component of denial is to make mistakes in reality testing or misinterpreting the understanding of situations because of misunderstanding the reality as well as the details. Both these Denial components are strongly connected to the functioning of the sensory systems, with the likely exception of the last one. It is this system that offers our first connection of life to the outer world, as well as our only way of defense against it. This is why protection based on the perception system's malfunctioning sounds so primitive (Cramer, 1987). Nevertheless, denial takes place in other ways. An action can be seen but only approved in a negated way, as in "this was not the way it happened". The operation to reduce or ridicule the anxiety-stricken situation is less extreme than simple negation but targeted at avoiding painful discomfort. A similar mental operation is seen as over-exaggeration to a degree that eventually denies the reality of the exaggerated situation. Turning the experience of the event back into its opposite, these manifestations of denying can be also categorized together. Although we think of denial, minimization, exaggeration, and reversal as taking place mainly in the verbal domain, these manipulations on a perceptual level are obviously possible. This technique of dealing with a disruption in psychological changes can in any case be comprehended as a derivative of the perceptual distortion which is the foundation of this defense system.

Denial is often interpreted by "enacted daydreams," in which pleasures can substitute for reality's disappointments (Freud, 1936). even though they are sufficiently popular in children's play, such behavior by adults may be less likely. Instead, as internal hallucinations, these daydreams remain but may keep acting as part of denial. These visions serve denial in a variety of ways. If the unreal can be rendered to look real, then the truth could be moved to the world of the unreal. In this situation, the fantasies without actual circumstances gain a sense that conflicts with external reality.

These visions inevitably become an alternate reality. The denial function is reflected in the external world of this personally formed alternative reality. Real events will only be identified if they are in line with fantasy. In the face of accurate failure, the incidence of unfounded positivity and elation can be comprehended as replaced for objective reality by personal fantasy and is a manifestation of this factor of denial (Freud, 193). These different denial components can be divided into 2 large categories. First, the operations are strongly related to the thoughtful method. They prevent fact by not seeing, ignoring, or distorting what is interpreted. The conflict with the registration of thoughtful experiences is the foundation for these operations.

The second type of denial is more cognitive and includes creating a personal imagination. The involvement of the person in this fantasy challenges the perception of truth and substitutes it for significant sections of the awareness of the individual. Such illusions can be also placed on reality, insisting on the illusion by others and the reality is ignored. The perceptual system can continue to work, but the more desired personalized fantasy takes the second status. In conjunction with any of these two modes of denial, the following components of defense denial-negation, minimization, maximization, mockery, and alteration may exist and provide the connection between them. It can be used to avoid reality by a shift of perception so that the reality is no more dangerous, or to shift the internal meaning of an interpretation so that it fits with the creation of personal fantasy (Cramer, 1987).

### **1.3. Perceptual Denial**

In principle, the denial concept is to watch and not to see. We interpret this not seeing in the lack of physical inability as the result of social attention being taken away from outside the world. As happens in adults, watching and not seeing seems to be the earliest and basic type of denial in which the visual system is literally shut down. While certain shifts or improvements to reality are some components of the denial, the most important element is to totally and completely ignore reality. There should be no pain anywhere. (Sommer, 1998). In the English language, the concept of denial has various definitions, encompassing rejection, refusal, and renunciation. Denial is intimately linked to self-deception in a variety of psychological disciplines. In psychology, denial refers to a variety of strategies used by a person to defend himself/herself from a series

of issues, both imagined and actual. Briefly stated, when someone is approached with a threat, denying the danger may allow the individual to assess the significance and severity of the danger before reacting. Denial comes under the realm of self-defense and occasionally coping because of the perceived time difference between the perceived threat and the real feeling of suffering. Denial is linked to a self-protective attitude rather than a coping skill or a method, according to psychological research. Nevertheless, researchers now have actual information for denial, so it is no longer only a twentieth-century esoteric theory (Crary, 1966)

Denial was a key aspect of Sigmund Freud's work at the beginning of the 20th century; it was one of the psychological defensive mechanisms. Denial, in this perspective, was extremely psychologically disastrous because an individual rejected to accept what had happened in the apparent, physical existence as the fact. Denial was defined as a person's obvious disapproval of what others could confirm as true. When an individual is diagnosed with a fatal disease, for example, he or she refuses to think that life will go on as it was before sickness. Denial, according to Freud, was one of the various defensive strategies against a threat that appeared in adulthood as a result of repressed impulses and struggles from a person's adolescence. Denial, like various defensive responses to threats, was viewed by Sigmund Freud as a struggle between a person's unconscious purpose to protect pleasure and the idealistic drive to preserve justice, or to do what is acceptable in the perspective of others. When hedonic equilibrium is interrupted, a defensive mechanism is triggered, such as denial, in which a person believes, "This isn't occurring" (Cohen, 1963). Psychological rejection, or denial, according to Freud, might range from a person's inability to recognize a dream person as a reflection of one's own mother to a person's rejection to acknowledge the actual feeling condition as unpleasant. Someone tried, perhaps unconsciously, to balance the contrast between what the individual intended and the reality of the actual happening or others' beliefs in denial. In consequence, Freud's concept of denial is comprehensive. It happened without a person's knowledge; as a result, the psychoanalytic therapist would try to help the patient by accepting what the individual had defensively denied (Freud, 1936).

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross reduced the range of denial subsequently in the twentieth century, focusing on personal loss such as sorrow. He believes denial is the first of the five phases of sorrow. When dealing with the death of a close relative, Kübler-Ross

said that people participate in an unconscious or explicit process of denying to acknowledge the actuality of loss, saying things such as, "This can't be happening to me!" Certainly, the movement from life to death can trigger strong feelings of sorrow and even trauma. Denial, according to this perspective, arises naturally as a result of someone or something being viewed as gone, creating a barrier between extreme frustration and a person's sense of self. Kübler-Ross's concept of denial encompassed not only the focus on bereavement, but also the surprise, shock, and immediacy of transition or loss to an individual. The surprise might be caused by news of a loss of someone or something, as well as news concerning oneself, such as a health condition. Denial provides a way to establish a distance between the comfort of the recognized past and the ambiguity of the present and future as an immediate emotional reaction to loss. According to Freud, the disparity that results from recognizing that somebody is living and the distress at realizing that a person passed away are unpleasant, apparently as a strategy of preventing themselves from really uncomfortable sensations. In other words, denial commonly incorporates a person's perceptual delay. Distorted views of time give a person a psychological foundation to try to resolve the emotional conflict.

The current conceptualization of denial encompasses a wide range of behaviors; many of which have been studied empirically. Denial is a recurring subject in behavioral and social psychology studies, whereby people refuse to accept frightening knowledge as true, whether actual or imagined. One popular paradigm of such study is the demonstration of negative feedback or some types of complimenting knowledge that immediately affects the personality of the individual, such as the feeling of self-esteem. For example, it was found that when faced with a psychological danger such as failing a test, many people attribute their loss to external factors criticizing the exam's complexity rather than their personal incompetence or lack of study. When confronted with self-enhancing or self-affirming events, such as passing an examination, people may ascribe their achievements to their own ability or wisdom, despite whether this ability is real or not. Both types of assignments are generally a sort of denial. Based on this perspective, individuals are driven to retain a positive opinion with a better image of themselves to minimize differences that threaten their positive self-views, and to preserve self-consistency when confronted with self-challenging evidence. (Weinstock, 1963). A considerable range of phenomena that fall under the concept of denial has been stated and explored in social and personality psychology studies. The conceptual

and practical connectedness of denial to coping has been highlighted as a key differentiator in such a study. An individual's obvious adherence to reality is one of the most essential psychological factors that distinguish denial from coping. As previously stated, an individual might deny reality in a variety of ways; nevertheless, coping involves an appraisal of a seemingly negative circumstance (Freud, 1920). When faced with personal danger, such as abuse, a denier is likely to take away the danger's personal significance by claiming "He wasn't talking to me." In responding, on the other hand, an individual is able to recognize the personal meaning of the dangerous stimuli and control it: "He was angry and didn't mean to hurt me" (Cramer, 1978). Denial and many coping mechanisms have a convergent feature; in reaction to personal danger, each may assist individuals to control negativity at moments and fail at other times. Coping, like denial, does not always succeed; nonetheless, denial may be a useful technique to deal with negativity sometimes. In the instance of coping behaviors, denial and coping come into a conflict: a response to negativity that causes an individual to keep a physical or psychological space from the dangerous stimuli. Another element of convergence is the information that a person concentrates on. While active coping focuses on a person's concentration on a problem to be addressed and the objectives needed to recognize it, coping and denial can concentrate on the feelings to be dealt with, such as reducing negativity. Denial, in other words, may be a kind of emotion-focused coping, such as maintaining oneself away from prospective or real sources of harm or denying that a problem exists at all (Cramer, 1990).

Likewise, studies have found that some people are more prone to denial than many others. Isolating and denial are linked to dispositional negativity, a typically pessimistic perspective of oneself and the world, according to some research. People who were under stress had such associations. Positive people, like those with other coping focuses, seek support from others and try to figure out what is wrong. Pessimistic people, on the other hand, avoid problem-solving objectives and try to reduce negative by denying the seriousness of the stress. While historical descriptions of denial tended to highlight its damaging nature, a current perspective based on scientific findings argues that denial, like various coping techniques, can be beneficial at times. In terms of information processing, a study reveals that people are more alert to negative information than good information at the moment. Nevertheless, they seem to remember good information better than unpleasant information over time,

particularly information that is important to oneself rather than information about other people. Such memorial biases show a reduction in negativity and an increase in positivity. These cognitive biases may help people regulate their emotions and self-control. The spontaneous rehearsal of unpleasant information is a sign of depression and stress problems; such information is unpleasant, bothersome, and is frequently the subject of psychotherapy treatment. As a result, unequal memory rehearsal of positive information is an indication of mental health and thus is adaptive. The relatively unusual incidence of previous negative experiences and personal information like a reflection on one's own undesirable aspects, which is consistent with previous explanations of denial, implies that this sort of denial may sustain mental health.

Another current perspective argues that denial, along with other defense mechanisms, can occasionally assist people in maintaining the continuity of their personal stories. Denial can protect a person from the anxiety that might otherwise be triggered by recalling bad experiences in the past. Denial may provide the chance to exaggeratedly enhance a prior positive memory in service of a person's current self-concept, thereby resulting in a boost in present self-esteem. By preventing a contamination theme and instead of nurturing a redemption theme, denial may assist a person's personal authorship of his/her life story. People deny many of the undesirable feelings while emphasizing the favorable ones, rather than recounting the past as it truly felt, filled with both bad and good feelings. Rose-tinted retrospection, or a sense of the past as more lovely than it really was, is facilitated by selective denial of previous painful occurrences and the negative sentiments connected with such experiences. In the context of self-and emotion-regulation processes, denial is included. In the psychological sciences, denial appears to have a bright future as a general, legitimate concept that differentiates from comparable constructs like coping. Theorists and psychologists will almost certainly continue to examine particular types of denial, the settings in which denial is beneficial and possibly detrimental to the person and others, and individual characteristics that are crucial to the experience of various forms of denial. To conclude, the age of denial as a general phrase and something to be avoided at all costs is passed (Cramer, 1978).

## 1.4. Displacement

Displacement involves changing the impulse aim. For example, an unacceptable aggressive impulse to one's dad may turn into a hostile behavior towards police officers or other officials. The aims of the current violence are linked to the purpose of the original inhibited impulse through clear associations (Rajchert, 2015). Originally, Freud saw displacement as a form of dream manipulation, involving a change of focus from essential elements to insignificant ones, or a simple illusion as a substitute for something (Freud, p.208). Freud sees displacement in three parts. Object displacement is a sense that is related to one individual and is transferred to another. A person who has had a rough day at his office is going home and screaming at his wife and son, transferring his frustration from the job to his family. He found it to be possible to displace the concerns of their parents on the pet while children have animal irrational fear. (Freud, 1913, p.1-62). Another displacement that is stated by Freud is attribution displacement. Another individual is attributed to an aspect that one sees in oneself, but it appears unacceptable. This is basically the psychological projection mechanism; an element of the person (displaced) is transferred onto another individual. Freud claimed that people sometimes displace their wishes to the will of God (Freud, 1913, p.78).

In body displacement, as Freud stated, the genital feeling may be perceived in the mouth (upward displacement) or an oral feeling may be felt in the genitals (displacement downward). The physical desire toward a human body may be displaced in sexual chauvinism, often onto a specific body part like the feet at certain times onto an inert fetish object. Freud often recognized displacement as happening in jokes and neuroses, the obsessive neurotic being particularly vulnerable to the minute-to-minute displacement technique. If two or more changes of displacement to the same concept arise, the effect is called condensation. Many researchers have discussed the displacement of aggression specifically. In a test by Hokanson, Burgess, and Cohen, subjects were annoyed by the experimenter (or not and then offered the chance to strike the experimenter, the assistant of the experimenter, a student of psychology, or no one (Hokanson, Burgess, & Cohen, 1963). The experiment produced a small primary dissatisfaction effect, as frustrated participants were more violent than others, but there was no change in the target. However, systolic blood pressure tests showed that anxiety levels decreased more among agitated participants when they targeted the experimenter, followed by the manager, and the psychology major. Therefore, the level of violence

stayed the same if it was directed at the initial target, the related displaced target, or the unrelated target, although some physiological data proved that it was more satisfactory to strike the original target (or the similarly related target).

Fenigstein and Buss discussed the probability of displaced aggression (Fenigstein & Buss, 1974). The aggressor was not the experimenter in this analysis, thus excluding alternate theories based on the relationship between the experimenter and subject. Anger and non-angered subjects had a chance to strike either personally or through a mate of their own. As in Hokanson et al.'s (1963) study, anger had a significant impact on violence, but as a feature of the target, there were no variations in aggressive actions. These effects can be perceived in different ways. One may point to them as proof of the high effectiveness of displacement, provided that individuals are similarly hostile against other individuals as they are towards the individual who caused them, suggesting, in other words, that the entire volume of hostility can be easily displaced. On the other side, they may be called mere mood or excitement: angry individuals are usually more violent. The same results of rats were found by Miller (1948) (for example targeting dummy dolls, where there is no opponent, another rat), and it is hard to claim that rats have defensive mechanisms. There is clear proof, however, that excitement can take place from one situation to another. Studies by Zillman and his collaborators have demonstrated consequences of excitation changes in which excitement from one condition can spill over into another and affect violent actions. Riding a stationary bicycle increases enthusiasm despite not being both particularly pleasant or unpleasant; however, in a response to aggression, persons who ride a bicycle are then consequently more violent than persons who have not practiced (Zillman, Katcher, & Milavsky, 1972), compared to moderately excited individuals who slim down their violent reactions when they hear about the same mitigating evidence. Extremely aroused people will reject mitigating situations when someone arouses them (Zillman, Bryant, Cantor, & Day, 1975). Arousal from viewing thrilling movies may also raise violent reactions to aggression, but the arousal itself has no association with the aggression (Cantor, Zillmann, & Einsiedel, 1978; Ramirez, Bryant, & Zillman, 1982; Zillman, 1971).

To further complicate things, the latest research has not confirmed displacement. As a feature of narcissism, Bushman and Baumeister (1998) examined violent answers to an ego danger. Narcissists were more violent against those who had



abused them, but there was no heightened violence against a third person by either narcissists or non-narcissists. This project was clearly intended to investigate displaced violence and failed to discover any evidence of it. One example of displaced aggression has been recognized as scapegoating. Throughout this viewpoint, individuals may become angry or aggressive against one object, but they are expected to resist violence for whatever purposes, and so they transfer their violence to a safer object. The frequency of the lynching in South America has been shown to associate negatively with cotton prices in a classic paper by Hovland and Sears (1939). Farmers faced economic poverty, anger, and aggression as prices fell, due to the scapegoat perception, and shifted their aggression towards comparatively secure aims in the form of Black men convicted of crimes. In another study, Hepworth and West (1988) analyzed and validated the relationship to these results using new computational techniques. However, the proof of scapegoating does not represent a mere example of displacement. There was not really a clear objective for the actual conflict; perhaps the cotton farmers may have been simply upset. Esses and Zanna (1995) created an alternative describing mood-congruent stereotypes which indicate that low moods triggered by musical stimulation (i.e. no danger of appreciation) have made negative stereotypes more available. This accessibility may clarify the ability of Southern farmers to respond harshly to perceived Black citizens' wrongdoings, without assuming that the brutality was borrowed from another cause or impulse.

Inappropriate sexual desires or other desires should be in principle even conducive to displacement. Mann, Berkowitz, Sidman, Starr, and West (1974) subjected long-married spouses to pornographic films and observed that on that same night, this consumption resulted in an increased risk of marital contact. This can be viewed as a transfer of the ambition to the socially appropriate aim of one's partner from the inaccessible film star. Unfortunately, this impact is often conducive to alternate corrections centered on a generalized excitement. However, the study has not provided much in the way of strong proof for it, considering the great sense of the idea of displacement. Few results indicate that displacement is sensitive to alternate explanations, such as general arousal behavior or poor moods to facilitate violence. Some may argue that alternate explanations cannot be accepted for the arousal or mood results, but can instead be subsumed behind a looser interpretation of displacement. If George gets mad at his employer for insulting him, and George soon gets into a fight

with a man because of this rage that he might usually have avoided, does this count as displacement? Even so, it is in no way the same instinct is transferred to a different target. There is no proof, more to the issue, that these arousal or behavior consequences have a defensive style. Displacement can only count as a defensive mechanism if it was stopped from causing any harm to personality (or having an equivalent effect, such as stimulating anxiety) by the original, unacceptable impulse. No proof of any such influence is visible.

### **1.5. Denial as it Appears in Folktales**

The way denial happens in popular folk stories is interesting to be noted. Often the whole plot is founded around the use of this defense by the main character and its use gives the story either a comedic note or a dramatic style. Denial takes place on a perceptual basis in these tales. Instances of these tales are "The Emperor's New Clothes" and "Little Red Riding Hood." Among other cases, the denial is placed on a circumstance that might otherwise be bleak and ugly by a personal fantasy. "Cinderella" and "Snow White" are an example of this type.

### **1.6. Folktale Denial**

Two rogues come to the city with an offer of the most incredible cloth in "The Emperor's New Clothes, so perfect that only individuals with no sin can see it: the Emperor, who was in great vanity, and particularly loving of clothing, asked for a fit of this incredibly good stuff. He told his brokers how beautiful this fabric was and how much personality he wished to see it. The brokers were sent over time to inform on the knitting, and the Emperor finally went to see his clothes by himself (Anderson, 1945). Surely, there was no cloth woven at all. However, the quality of the cloth was honored at any visit of the Royal Court; that is, here something was denied by the royal courts which is the absence of the cloth. Each one of them thought of not seeing the cloth and they pretended their own sin that prevents them from seeing the cloth, and they believed that if they had fewer sins, they could see the cloth clearly. When the Emperor passes by the town in a big parade and wears his new uniform, the denial is carried to a maximum. The citizens of the town applaud the new clothes for their uniqueness. A little boy, who sees the Emperor, yells aloud: "But he has nothing on him", and his notes

turn to the end of the story. The topic of this story was based on the most basic aspect of the inability to accept what exists or, in this case, what does not exist. The story shows the reader plainly that there is no fabric or dress, literally. However, we are asked to assume that the city's people are behaving differently. It is important to note that to achieve this, the author must demonstrate to the reader how such a rudimentary process, such as perceptual denial, will take place in people who are not crazy. This is achieved by introducing the fantasy to people who can see it only without a sin. The author thus draws the portion of a self-serving personal imagination, where every man thinks that he is not that much full of sin for not seeing it that in a crowd of young adults a perception denial might happen. Also, as it placed denial into the sense of vanity and selfishness, the writer is logically right. These people wanted to see themselves with no sins, which makes the disavowal of a fact easier.

When a kid unfrocks the defense, the literary delusion of the tale appears. A young person, who may, in ordinary conditions, be forced to join the defense, reveals the defense of denial as being very unsuitable to rising men. The stupidity of the tale is illustrated by this juxtaposition of the old being tricked by the primitive, while the youth clearly sees through his years. It is difficult to locate stories of pure perceptual denial, maybe because they are too complicated to discuss. The reader must be first tested with the true reality to explain this process, and then a character who misunderstands this fact must be developed. Inevitably, some forms of explanations for the perceptual failure of this character must be presented. In the example of the Emperor, the personal illusion is the reason. Little Red Riding Hood is a well-known fantasy story that uses the scheme of reality representation and reality denied. The reader and Red Riding Hood met a wolf at the beginning of the novel. Red Riding Hood speaks to him briefly, probably allowing her to see how he looks. The denial of reality is clearly mentioned even at this early level in the tale: "Red Riding Hood didn't know that he was a wicked wolf of not, so she didn't be a little bit afraid of him" (Grimm, 1945).

The wolf heads ahead of the grandmother's house while the child collects flowers. The wolf takes on its clothing and moves into her bed after getting rid of the old lady. The child eventually appears, Red Riding Hood; "She seems very afraid of it, but she didn't know why". She systematically looks at her body in bed and refuses to recognize what it looks like. She reflects on the wolf's wide head, his broad eyes, his big hands, and his big teeth; however, she recognizes the purpose of these perceptions;

the wolf is in the room rather than the grandmother. In the end, certainly, all huge denial collapses; the fact overwhelms and the wolf eats her. Then, perhaps for his reader's sake, the writer provides yet another denial to alleviate anxiety: the wolf's stomach will be opened, and the little girl will return wholly and healthy. The dramatic highpoint of the story is accomplished by consistently noting precise perceptive details — in combination with the ongoing lack of understanding of what is seen in many sections of the wolves. That Red Riding Hood really knew that she was a wolf rather than her grandma is ensured from her past encounter with all of them. Although her first meeting with the wolves did not know how to be scared, at the second meeting she experienced fear. There is, however, neither a lack of knowledge of fact nor a lack of anxiety that renders Red Riding Hood oblivious to the dangerous condition of what she is. Instead, her inability to test reality, her rejection of its meaning, can be interpreted as a defensive maneuver: if she could deny the wolf why she could not deny her fear.

### **1.7. Ian McEwan Writing Style**

With his richly illustrated and descriptive literary technique, the greatest British writer Ian McEwan supports his fictional stories; each page in McEwan's book is brimming with visual descriptions, which immediately catch the attention and give the reader longing for more. Two of McEwan's books, *Atonement* and *On Chesil Beach*, share behaviors of McEwan's distinctive style, and all of his books share aspects of McEwan's genius literary voice, despite their discrepancies in plots, themes, or symbols. Although McEwan's writings contain fully defined characters, McEwan writes most regularly from an omniscient viewpoint in the third person perspective. Furthermore, as the characters do not reveal their stories directly, McEwan develops detailed and nuanced explanations of the characters to explain their personality. Such details allow the reader to think as if he or she has an attachment to a character, considering the fact that the characters do not speak straight to the reader. In the book *Atonement*, three characters—Briony Tallis, Cecilia Tallis, and Robbie Turner—reflect on their lives after experiencing a similar event that changed everything. To better help the readers consider the identities, McEwan switches often within a similar paragraph from one character's point of view to another, showing a clever way that not only one but three sides of the narrative are highlighted. Beyond what lingered in memory, in three different and overlapping recollections, there was nothing left at this point

(Atonement, 39). *On Chesil Beach* shows the tale of only two characters, Florence and Edward, who are newlyweds whose relationship, when their romantic night goes horribly bad, suddenly changes for the worst. The couple's different perceptions of each other during engagement are part of the lack of success in the relationship; Edward enjoys his intimacy and Florence likes Edward more than his sister: "She loved Edward, not with the sweet moist love, she read of it but warmly, profoundly, occasionally like the child, sometimes almost motherly" (*On Chesil Beach*, 92).

The explanations of McEwan not only bring to his characters' complexity and authenticity but also provide an important part in the creation of scenery by elaborating sensual definitions. McEwan explains an environment in *Atonement* that passes from light to dark, indicating that something wrong is going to happen soon. The definition, like the predictive, opens the way and environment for the forthcoming incidents: 'In the evening hours high clouds in western sky developed a slim yellow wash that had become wealthier over the hour...small sky and earth were so reddish and the bloated truncations of older oaks were so dark that they started to appear blue...the air was already thick' (*Atonement*, 72). McEwan also builds his scene concerning the future on the very first page of *On Chesil Beach*. Upon arrival at the hotel, Florence and Edward, while going to spend their honeymoon, suddenly, they find in the next room a comfortable white bed. The bed reflects the clean and innocent marriage between the pair and the honeymoon of Edward and Florence. At the same time, by describing their sleeping place in the story so soon, the narrator makes obvious references to occurrences later in the night that the young lovers are aware of "A four-post-size bed, rather narrow in the next room, was obvious through the door; it had a bed of pure white and astonishingly smooth as if it had no hand" (*Atonement*, 102).

To support the reader's care for the plot, McEwan often uses the expected reality that McEwan suggests through the setting of his scenes that use sensual romantic elements to relate to things in the future. By using foreshadowing, the writer will tell the reader what is going to happen. The story is a memoir of 24 hours in the existence of neurosurgeon Henry Perowne and is filled with his ruminations and recollections, all of which are documented in excruciatingly painstaking detail. As a result, his life is dramatically impacted when Perowne gets into a car crash with a reckless street thief with a loose personality named Baxter. In the beginning, the crash seems to be a mere conflict between two individuals, but soon Baxter will play a much bigger role in the

life of Perowne. Perowne has a breath of nervousness during his day, suggesting that he will come home to torture him again, crossing tracks with Baxter and several other incidents that have occurred throughout his life that day: "He's used to being carelessly joyful Saturday and he sifts the aspects in a darker atmosphere here this morning. What are the goosebumps giving him? Not a lost game or the Baxter scratch or even a broken night, while they must both have a certain impact" (Saturday, 276).

Atonement is wrongly accused of having committed a crime by a young and unknown girl named Briony. Briony observed Robbie having a relationship with her sister Cecilia, but rather than just flirting, she incorrectly confronted Robbie, thinking Robbie raped her sister. Even then, she turns Robbie to the police, while lying about his motives, without even telling her sister about the condition that he witnesses. Right before Briony accuses Robbie wrongly, throughout that day, Robbie was discussing the independence of Cecilia's love for him. One word represented everything that he feels. The lack of independence that Robbie will suffer as a result of Briony's mistake is clearly foreshadowed by McEwan: "He will be ripped away from Cecilia, jailed, and driven in World War II to fight" (Atonement, 85). McEwan uses multiple instances of foreshadowing in *On Chesil Beach*, referring to a couple's inability to succeed in their relationship. Along with outlining all the potential pitfalls for honeymooning couples Edward and Florence, the storyteller also implies that there may have been issues from the start. Somewhat different from the brighter expectations of *Saturday* and *Atonement*, the narrator in *On Chesil Beach* demonstrates very early the lack of passion in their marriages to Edward and Florence. Based on Florence's first encounter with Edward, she discovers that she was so affected by the appearance of Edward that she refused to see that there was no link between them. "She has existed in lonely for all these years inside of herself, and she hasn't been able to persuade herself or had the courage to turn around. In the marble echoing room... her issues with him had already taken place during the first few moments in her first interaction" (*On Chesil Beach*, 78). Again, McEwan utilizes foreshadowing to warn the readers of the upcoming incidents and to address the disagreement that the characters will have to experience in the future.

McEwan strengthens more his character by adding opposing aspects in his writing style. While in his works he uses a thorough definition, instances of conflict are not so obvious, and the contrast remains a significant element in the display of McEwan's literary style. The contrast gives the characters of the narrator a subtle depth

by explaining the psychological conflicts that all the characters have to face. In *Atonement*, the writers rely on the personal problem of Briony Tallis when they reach the results and suspect Robbie Turner of an illegal offense he has not committed. However, by letting herself believe a false story, Briony finds it easier to comprehend the situation as though Robbie had attacked Cecilia: "What she saw must have been partly influenced by what she really understood, or thought she knew." Briony is aware in her thoughts that Robbie would never threaten her sister (*Atonement*, 115). McEwan demonstrates to the reader here that Briony is stuck between the real world and the lying world. In any case, she needs to face repercussions for her behavior, but the reality that she always wrongly interpreted what she saw seems to her to assume rather than accept her own assumptions. McEwan takes his contrast to differentiate the truth from what his characters focused on. The similar contrast he has developed between his characters Edward and Florence in his book *On Chesil Beach* further shows this quality in his work. The couples have very opposite perceptions of their relationship, and the two conflict with one another due to the lack of connection in their expectations of marriage. Edward finds romance an important aspect of Florence's relationship, whereas Florence loves Edward's relationship even more than marriage. In contrast to Edward and Florence, McEwan is obvious to the reader that the relationship of the pair cannot succeed until they can meet each other on a similar basis. The writer emphasizes therefore mainly on the personal issues of Florence regarding having a sexual association with him to further highlight the distance between her and him.

Her entire life lived in the rebellion of the thought of tangling and flesh, and now her basic rights to pleasure and dignity were about to be assaulted. Although sex with him could never provide her with the kind of pleasure she desired, it was the price she had to pay for that. "She did so not wish to share this encounter with Edward but could not have envisioned it without a feeling of disgust" (McEwan, 76). In contrast with his novels, McEwan shows the reader the inner struggles that each person aims to overcome and provides greater insights into the lives of his characters. The thoughtful literary speech of Ian McEwan creates the foundation for convincing stories of the life of his characters in three of his books, *Atonement*, *On Chesil Beach*, and *Saturday*. Ian McEwan skillfully attracts the reader into his exciting literary work with a strong depiction, vivid imagery, and detailed character development; all are backed up by elements of foreshadowing and contrast. In most of Ian McEwan's novels, he clearly

focused on personal issues and problems that change personal inner thoughts into others. Most of these psychological issues were highlighted by Sigmund Freud and his daughter Anna Freud. In *Atonement* and *On Chesil Beach*, McEwan focused on two of Freudian most controversial defenses which are Denial and Displacement.



## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.1. Atonement

Since he was a young kid, Ian McEwan's life and career have been controlled by an alluring but terrifying extraterrestrial entity. His father, a warrior in the British military, was constantly affected by the political and cultural changes of the 20th century, thus he grew up in a world that had been uprooted. *Atonement* by Ian McEwan, which is widely considered his masterpiece, has undergone several experts' interpretations. While the first part of McEwan's *Atonement* (2001) is set in 1935 England, the second depicts Robbie during the Dunkirk rescue operation, and the third depicts Briony's understanding as a nurse at a military conflict clinic in 1945. The novel's structure combines both chronological and geographical displacements. Many contemporary British authors view somewhere as related to the legendary England of a bygone era, whether they aspire to live there or fear its pervasive and catastrophic influence on the present day. Through his colorful, scenic, and magnificent storytelling style, Ian McEwan delves into the depths of the human psyche.

### 2.2. Denial and Displacement in *Atonement*

*Atonement* is examined as a piece of metafiction in Brian Finney's (2004) major reading, showing the author's improved grasp of the creative process. His research focuses on how the main character in the author's work, Briony Tallis, makes connections between the real world and the fictional one. *Atonement* has received a variety of original interpretations throughout the years, including Hidalgo's (2005) paper, which explores the link between truth and imagination in the novel by the narrative structure and social history. The study by Peter Mathews (2006) explores the significance of private details in stories, highlighting Briony's wrongdoing as a debt that needs to be paid back. *Atonement* highlights the connection between readers and the book, emphasizing the reader's perspective and interpretation of Briony's atonement according to D'Angelo's 2009 paper. In a similar vein, Jacobi's (2011) noteworthy piece on the book emphasizes the perils of misunderstanding and uses the tragic deaths of Robbie and Cecilia as a prominent illustration of what may occur. He claims that there is no strong evidence in the text that they were dead. In contrast, he claims that the

reader has assigned this meaning to the work by assuming Robbie and Cecilia to be unhappy lovers. The author of Pastoor's 2014 paper feels that Briony is shown in the novel as a deity-like figure whose words raise her to the level of the highest power.

By explaining Briony's perception of reality, this work will seek to fill this essential gap in knowledge by examining the metafictional interplay between the story and the tormented imagination of Briony Tallis. Further, the study aims to highlight certain elements of Freudian theory, namely denial and displacement. The novel discusses the anxieties and frustrations that arise when reality and fiction are obscured. The individuals around Briony are changed by her imagined writings to such an extent that they take on roles in both of her imagined stories "The Trials of Arabella" and the way she describes reality. As a result of this mirroring, she can transfer her own wishes and anxieties onto others, as her tale serves as a reflection that not only confuses but also performs out her own troubled psyche. As Freud stated in his essay in 1890, "Anxiety is caused by the transformation of stored stress." (Freud, 1890). The character of Briony is troubled by her own repressed desire, and *Atonement* could be known as a misinterpretation of reality that explores the painful implications of having a confused sexual identity, like in the situation of Briony. Using Briony's misunderstanding of sexual contact as evidence of rape as its central concept, *Atonement* follows Briony's development and need for atonement during her life, as she sentences an unsuspecting Edward to jail.

Being avoiding during child time causes every possible idea that comes to an individual after growing up. As Briony was far from her parent's good behavior, she started to decide on events according to her own thinking of the situation. In accomplishing so, she connects herself with female personalities such as Isabella in *The Castle of Otranto* and Antonia in *The Monk*; both are followed by violent authoritarian men with lusty and dominating intentions. In the feminist tradition, according to Alison Milbank, "the male attacker turns the monster whose powerful attain as patriarch, abbot, or dictator strives to entangle the heroine, supersedes the grand home, and fears death or rape" (1989, 121). She is well aware of the perils of getting chased by males, much like Ann Radcliffe's protagonists Emily in *The Mysteries of Udolpho* and Julia in *A Sicilian Romance*, whose both struggles resist the authoritarian character. Briony shows Robbie of being a villain in her writings and also her sister Cecilia and her cousin Lola as being hunted by Cecilia's boyfriend, Robbie. Her writing illustrates how her sexual

anxieties are transferred onto other individuals. As Judith stated, "After a traumatic encounter, the human system of self-preservation appears to be placed on high alert at all times, as if the threat may reappear at any time" (trauma and recovery, 1992, p.32). This traumatic situation caused Briony to help her sister and her cousin get rid of Robbie, and without realizing the reality, she puts all her anxiety on Robbie and wanted her family to be far away from him. It is important to note that Cecilia's comprehension of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa, or the History of a Young Lady* (1752), a tale dealing with an adolescent female's challenge and ultimate breakdown to resist male supremacy oppression and sexual assault, is important because examples to the eighteenth-century, and examples to particular types of reading, seem to from the author's earliest sections, where McEwan introduces Cecilia and Robbie as readers of eighteenth- It tells the narrative of a little lady who is taken off from her family by a villain and then raped, resulting in the ruination of the child's future. It is a morality tale that corresponds with the tale of "The Trials of Arabella". Consequently, "Richardson doesn't encourage his readers to join in defining the story's interpretation; rather, his work about the sexual perils that threaten especially the most innocent females works to warn readers" (D'Angelo, 2009, p.20).

Try not to see what is true or failing to recognize reality is one of the first steps of denial. Consequently, following her sexual contact with Robbie, Cecilia is transformed like *Clarissa* in Briony's sight: raped and damaged in the future, which is because neither Robbie nor Cecilia has a future in the story. By accusing Robbie of the crime, Briony thought she may find a way to make another future for both of them without even thinking of the result that she did for them. Briony denied the reality of leading both of them into a big trouble and she decided on her own thinking of the condition. She, subsequently, mixed reality and fiction. These well-known features, on the other hand, are mocked, and rather than evoking tension and mood, the book warns both the reader and Catherine about the pitfalls of attempting to correlate literary storylines with reality. Like Austen, McEwan manipulates his readers' preconceptions, enticing them into forming incorrect judgments about the novel's topic and style, which leads to the novel's conclusion (Mathews, 2006, 151). Beginning with a comparison to *Northanger Abbey*, McEwan informs the reader of the characteristics of the *Fantastical* right from the beginning of the novel.

Briony's story, *Atonement*, might be considered a counterpoint to her own fantasy novel, "The Trials of Arabella," which she dramatized in her play "The Trials of Arabella". When Briony's sister Cecilia informs her that Briony is "lost in her writing dreams," she adds "What looked to be a momentary passion had become a whole addiction" (McEwan 2001, 21). Briony used her writings to protect herself and her family by denying the real world and situations that they live in and thought as if everybody around her were her characters in her story. In her sense of the odd, the fact becomes fiction, and she refuses to embrace reality because she is unable to accept it, which is a key element of the Freudian experience of denial. Sigmund Freud held the following beliefs:

*The writer can make situations occur in her tales that would never, or only very infrequently, occur in real people's lives. She ploys us into thinking we're in the real world when we're not, and then goes beyond it (1919, p.157).*

Briony's peculiar story, which is caught between truth and fantasy, gives her repressed coded desires the freedom to emerge in the most unexpected circumstances. In the same way, Catherine Morland's misunderstanding of General Tilney led to a warning about the dangers of losing villainy and bravery, whereby Briony's misunderstanding of Robbie's personality creates a fictional tale. Both Catherine and Briony view life as if it were a certain kind of literary work, and they expect to follow particular rules of plot and character development according to Jacobi (Jacobi, 2011, p. 66). Misunderstanding the detail of reality made Briony deny the reality in front of her and goes with a fictional one. The act of pushing things away from awareness and keeping them at a distance from consciousness, in Freud's words, is the essence of denial (Freud, 1915, 147). Briony reveals and displaced her suppressed emotions, particularly her affection to her sister's lover Robbie, through how she portrays other people. Robbie's inability to express her enthusiasm is caused not just by her working-class origins and her mother's rejection, but also by Briony's horrible attitude toward her sexual conduct. Briony's nervousness manifests itself in her hallucinatory views of the interactions she meets in her immediate environment since sexuality is consistently linked to fear and criminal activity throughout the book. In the same way that Catherine Morland is engaged in reading in Northanger Abbey, Briony is captivated by literature through "using [messages] as a mirror into the ordinary world around her" (Heiland, 2004, p.92). As Kristeva investigates in her work *Powers of Horror: an Essay on Abjection*, the distortion of crime is associated with the horrible, as is the distortion of

criminality. To avoid being viewed as awful, Briony avoids having sexual relations with other people. Briony's age prevented her from understanding grown-up's relationships particularly sexual relationships. She always tried to deny and avoid the reality of having sexual relationships. By avoiding sexual relationships, she decided to protect others, too.

Briony's amazement at seeing two sexual encounters in the story is painful for her at the age of twelve to the point that Briony repressed her own urges as a criminal, which, as Caruth implies, interferes with her growth into an adolescent and her mind's "perception of time". Moreover, Mathews' belief that Briony suffers from an episode of psychosis is confirmed by the evidence. As Kristeva notes, "what leads to marginalization is anything that affects identity, method, and arrangement, as well as disturbs the natural sequence of things. What disregards boundaries, positions, and regulations. (2006, p. 4). The dialogue of Briony's sexuality consequences in orientation of passion to the abject criminal, as demonstrated by her frequent emphasis on the significance of order: "her hope for a cohesive, arranged world denied her the careless options of malfecance" (Briony's Discussion of Her Sexuality) (McEwan, 2001, p.5). In Kristeva's collection of representations of the abject, she includes "the spy, the dishonest, the criminal with a decent conscious, the disgusting rapist" (1982, p. 4); all of whom are comparable to Briony's portrayal of Robbie.

Briony is described as a naive girl whose behaviors accuse her sister's lover, Robbie, of a crime that Robbie did not do. Briony is portrayed as a youngster at the beginning of the tale. As described by Briony, Robbie sexually assaults her sister Cecilia after writing her an offensive message and subsequently rapes her relative Lola, for which he has been convicted and sentenced to jail simply based on Briony's evidence. Nevertheless, it is eventually revealed that Paul Marshall, a buddy of Emlay's son, Leon, was the one who raped Lola rather than Robbie as previously thought. Even though Lola asserts she cannot remember her aggressor, Briony is positioned in the position of responsibility for determining Robbie's innocence and she denied the responsibility of the situation by justifying it. Briony avoids personal responsibility by justifying the situation; consequently, she took a choice and she attempted to show the decision is okay according to her own perception of what is "right": "and while she lacks sensory surety regarding Lola's attacker, in a nice narrative the attack would be the work of a maniac, such as the Robbie Turner she has now formed in her mind"

(Jacobi, 2011, 60). As a result, Briony's understanding reflects her own wishes, as she condemns Robbie because of a previously suppressed yearning for him. When Briony labels him a criminal, it is her own wish for him that she considers a criminal action. According to Kristeva, "every crime is abject because it brings awareness to the frailty of the legal system" (1982, 4). If you can't see the real event that happens in the world, there will be a big misunderstanding of situations that come to your face. As Jay stated in his essay, "A large number of individuals are living in a fiction world, wishing to deny that aging happens or believing that it is not need to occur. They'll cling to this concept till the day they pass away. "They will finally come face to face with truth" (S. Jay Olshansky, 2001). In this regard, denying the realities of your existence in life will prevent you from presenting any aspect of it effectively - even the ones you like going for. Before she can deal with anything, she has to see everything as it is not from her own imagination.

It is also recommended that Briony's dad is cheating, which her mom is only partially aware of her father's nonappearance in the family and the recommendation that he is having a sexual relationship: "he did not nap at the club, and he realized that she understood exactly this" (McEwan, 2001, p. 148–149). In so far as kids are initiated into a wish from their mother and father, the Tallis' connection "does not obey [the] limits, roles, and regulations" of marriage (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). Similar to what Ellis indicated, "the frequent appearance of terrible parents to criticize overambitious or irresponsible moms and inattentive or authoritarian dads" (1989, 82). Leon, her brother, is also considered to be cheapening himself to sexual urges by Briony because of his "lackadaisical series of women," according to Briony (McEwan, 2001, p. 4). Briony develops her own romantic tale via her writing, which, due to its personal element, maybe also referred to as "The Trials of Briony". Briony's text is a collection of short stories. According to Caruth (1996, 5), pain "resists and demands our witness at the same time," and as a result, Briony's act may be seen as a need for her painful relationship with her own sexuality to be recognized. After realizing that *Atonement* was written by Briony, as proved by the Postscript, it becomes evident to the reader that Briony was the author of the novel; the story chronicles her efforts to resolve her suppressed wish through the transfer of her passion onto other people. She uses her play, "The Trials of Arabella," which will be presented upon her brother's return, as a dramatic release for the feelings she has been holding for so long. It is Briony's own

consciousness of Robbie's improper desire that Arabella, the play's protagonist, suffers from a disease, the "careless desire for a cruel foreign count is punished by sufferings" (McEwan, 2001, p. 3). According to Boag, displacement implies that the "object of a passion may transfer to another" (2012, p. 24). Briony's wishes have evolved not just in respect of her own sought object, as well as in consideration of her own status as a wanting individual according to her. "It was not because she had written the work that she chose to play Arabella; rather, she chose to play Arabella since no option was available since it was how Leon would see her, and so she herself, Briony, is Arabella" (McEwan, 2001, p. 13). Briony meant to present the show for her sibling Leon, who served as an authoritative alternative for her caring father, who is missing from the story across the entire story. Because of its initial purpose as a moral story, the play "was meant to provoke not laughter but dread, pleasure and teaching," (McEwan 2001, 8), which is exactly what Briony has done in her own fiction to express her own worries about desire.

"Her body was white, her head was black, and her ideas were Briony's thinking," as Arabella put it (McEwan, 2001, p. 14). As a result of Lola's persuasiveness, Briony is compelled to let her cousin Arabella take on the role of Briony's cousin, although "Arabella, since her head was as black as Briony's, seemed improbable to have derived from complexioned parents" (ibid: 10). Insofar as Briony is forced to displace her repressed feelings and wants onto Lola, the significance of the performance alters as Lola transforms Arabella under the direction of a new performer. On pages 13–14 of the same book, Briony recognizes: "it was disappearing from her, she realized it, but there was nothing she might possibly speak to return back" (it was sliding apart from her). Having assumed the identity of Arabella, Lola is now the target of Briony's suppression, as she focuses the worries Briony has on her cousin. She reflects on how "the angle of a brain may transform a life!" after achieving her hesitant acquiescence with a shake of the head, she observes. (Ibid., p. 15) With such a dramatic declaration, it symbolizes a drastic transition in one's personality, as Briony displaced her own stress and suppressions on her cousin. It is also penalized by Briony, who depicts their initial encounter as a Garden of Eden-like scene, with Paul luring Lola to engage in sexual activity with him. When Paul gives Lola sweets, it is wrapped in a green wrapper, just like the green fruit that enticed Adam and Eve. In the same passage, Paul says ""You gotta to eat it"" (ibid., p. 62), which clearly has sexual undertones. As Lola

commits the sin of desire, Briony's depiction of this event strongly connects Lola with the broken character of Arabella, who is also represented by Lola.

The whole work revolves around Briony's observation of seeing some actions that she can't understand; she misinterpreted the sexual encounter and treated as a performance, with only her opinion to explain their existence. During the bookstore moment with Robbie and Cecilia, she believes that she found the attacker of Arabella, who has been placed as her sister this round: "her instant idea was that she had stopped an attempt of, a hand-to-hand battle" (ibid: 123). Briony sees the couple's sexual encounters as rape as a result of her portrayal of Lola and Paul, but Briony does not report the occurrence to the appropriate authority person as she should have. Briony, in opposition to Lola and her next husband's sexual experience, does not admit to anyone that she was there in the library when whatever happened there. Briony's perspective is strongly impacted by her own wishes as she dismisses the illegality of this occurrence as something she just does not comprehend. Briony is forced to view her sister's relationship with the guy she adores as rape after seeing it. Briony considers such an encounter to be a terrible event, which is why she shows rape rather than love in her painting. As defined by Caruth, "shock involves an overwhelming awareness of unexpected or catastrophic happenings in which the reaction to the situation [is] commonly postponed" (1996, p. 11). Ultimately, if she recognizes their relationship as it is, she should recognize that Robbie does not really like her and does not adore her sister, but that her sister has also deceived her as well. As a result, Cecilia should keep a passive perpetrator role, with Robbie acting as the major power. Briony is unable to comprehend that they have a relationship, and as a result, she suppresses the importance of this occurrence until it has been replayed in front of her as she observes Lola and Paul's twofold portrayal of sexual relations. Any event that makes you deny the reality "keeps repeating itself, identically and unremittingly" over and over again (ibid: 2). Given that Lola is only 15 years old, although Cecilia is young, Briony has the legal right to allege Robbie's malevolence of having sexual relations with a child and have him expelled from the family. Robbie's "outrageous" message to Cecilia, which Briony detects, provides proof of his evilness, and so excellently fits the character of the villain in her performance. This crime is associated with the abyss as "immoral, menacing, cunning, and [the] dark" according to the narrator (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4).



Briony finds that watching Cecilia and Robbie's sexual relationship is painful since it occurs abruptly and she is too inexperienced to comprehend the implications of the occurrence. Briony's anxiety stems from the understanding that the scenario is a showcase of her suppressed wants, a disclosure that her private, abject longing has surfaced as a result of the discovery. "The sight was so completely a reality of her darkest nightmares that she got the distinct impression that her over-anxious thinking had transferred the persons onto the crammed covers of novels," she explains in her memoir (McEwan, 2001, p. 123). It is her admittance of creative transference onto the volumes in her dad's library that establishes the scene as a fictitious one through her performance, which is performed by her sister and her friend Robbie. As a scenario, like "The Trials of Arabella," it is emblematic of her own destiny if she continues to pursue her wrong wants, and it sends a strong message to her in her thoughts. Because she was denied the right to express her sexuality, she indicates that sexual repression "includes a cognitive assessment and prediction of future negative repercussions" (Boag, 2012, p. 33). When the cops come to catch Robbie, Briony uses her personal play to demonstrate to them "the exact spot of Robbie's assault on Cecilia [...] Briony jammed herself in, putting her backside to the textbooks to tell them exactly her sister was situated"(McEwan, 2001, p.180). When Briony thinks about Arabella, she imagines being in the character of the lost heroine who has acted on her wishes and now must beg for mercy for doing so. She completely displaced all her characters' anxiety on Robbie. Briony's atonement is based on her unreasonable attraction for Robbie, rather than her fault for rejecting him. This ability to exhibit the suspect's position (ibid: 180) in order to explain where Robbie stands implies that the situation is of her own creation, thereby indicating stage instructions like a producer on set and drawing attention to the violation of sexual attraction.

Briony helped cops capture Robbie and made her force her desire and wishes on others. Because of the discovery of the message between Robbie and Cecilia, she has proof of his villainy. "It was necessary for her to be aware of everyone," she says, despite the fact that she agrees that "it was improper to read folk's messages" (ibid: 113). As a private entity, she transforms a private conversation into a public discussion by transferring ownership of the message to the government: "[she] placed the wrapped piece of writing into the hands of the detective officer with the stone expression" (ibid: 177). Briony believes that reading private messages between couples is something

normal and she refused to knowledge that it is wrong. Briony's misunderstanding of the condition made her read their messages though it is illegal and not allowed. Because the message is a declaration of unambiguous wish, Briony considers it to be particularly horrific: "with the message came the introduction of something fundamental, terrible, and probably even criminal" (ibid: 113). As a result of the message, Briony has a villain for her tale; one who represents both her anxieties and her rejection of longing. She is particularly appalled by Robbie's mention of Cecilia's vulva and his wish to conduct cunnilingus, which she finds particularly offensive. Immediately following the message, she experiences a lack of seeing reality: "the word: she fought desperately to keep it from coming up in her mind, but it danced around there obscenely"(ibid: 114). She tries again another time to suppress her desire by preventing the term from entering her mind in the first place. It shows how dumb she is when she says that "no one in her appearance had ever spoken about the phrase's existence". She also says that nobody had ever spoken about an aspect of her whereby the word refers (McEwan, 2001, p. 114).

Briony's protected background is undoubtedly a part of her absolute dread of sexuality and "the risk held by these crudeness" (ibid: 114), since she "couldn't ever accept Robbie his horrible thinking"(ibid: 115). Briony was in denial of fact and she was so sure of her actions because she knew that her family will protect her from Robbie and the cops. Her family's assurance and protection prevented Briony to wait and understand reality as it is and with her lie, she sends an innocent man to jail. Briony is unnervingly delighted after delivering the message to Cecilia: "I'd haven't seen her look so alive, or so strangely pleased in my life" (ibid: 111). In her imagined role, Briony is obligated to eliminate Robbie from her imagined destiny; as a result, he does not continue as a protagonist, even after completing his jail term. We learn at the conclusion of the book that Robbie was conscripted into the army and "passed away of septic shock at Bray Dunes on 1 June 1940". (ibid: 370). Robbie serves as "the offering, the victim who returns her universe to its pre-lapsarian state," according to the novel (Mathews, 2006, p. 155). Robbie represents the criminal in her imaginary world, and as such, she sentences him to untimely mortality, much like Ambrosio in *The Monk*, who is penalized for his rebellious actions by a horrific murder, and she punishes him to an early death.

Briony considers both of the sexual experiences she sees in the book to be indecent and unsuitable. Lola's meeting with Paul Marshall, on the other hand, is seen by Briony as an assault, given that Lola has positioned herself as Arabella. Yet, in another instance of mirroring, Briony puts her own wish for an aged guy onto Lola, who, according to the text, also has a longing for a more senior gentleman. Sexual contact between people above the age of twenty-one and people below the age of 16 has been prohibited until the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885. As a result, because Lola is only 15 years old, Paul is definitely committing a felony by having sexual intercourse with a child. As a result of discovering that Lola and Paul were having sexual relations, Briony feels "nauseous with horror and revulsion" (McEwan, 2001, p. 164). She is shown to have an abject understanding of desires, which causes her to experience physiological changes such as illness, which is normally associated with a distancing from fear. After witnessing an act of sexual violence, Briony is faced with her own anxieties about sexuality. Furthermore, because the act occurs between two girls of the same age, those worries are heightened. Arabella suffers from cholera as a penalty for her excessive passion, while Lola is made bedridden after a claimed sexual assault. She is brought above and "drugged by the doctor" much as Arabella does (ibid: 176). This is an unsettling similarity to Lola's previous act as Arabella on her reception of treatment in bed: "they were recreating the sickbed act, one where the room Arabella initially welcomes the king into her back room" (ibid: 55). Lola is made immovable and missing from the subsequent debate, and she is quiet in the face of Briony's judgments: "her cousin's withdrawal placed Briony in the spotlight" (ibid: 173). Briony assumes the role of her cousin in the absence of Lola, and she directs the course of events according to her imaginations.

Briony, the novel's protagonist, is depicted as a stereotypical order seeker in the traditional sense. It is impossible to be completely annoyed with her since she has a distinctive personality type. The readers may be enraged by her actions at times, but they will be unable to keep their anger from turning to sorrow in the next instant. From the audience, her role elicits feelings of sympathy as well as moral outrage. Readers will be inclined to connect with her once they understand the motivations behind her actions and decisions. Even though she is the villain of the sad plot, as is obvious in the book, her powerlessness pushes one to accept her as the villain. It is her erroneous

interpretation of an occurrence that leads to subsequent issues and ultimately to the horrific catastrophes that befall her and her family.

McEwan is extremely concerned with the task of explaining the actions of his character. McEwan goes on to describe how meticulous and professional a storyteller of a thirteen-year-old girl may be in her narration. Control is a word that is extremely important to her in her daily existence. Her enthusiasm for the upcoming presentation of her drama is evident in her planning. She created her first work "in a two-day frenzy of creation that caused her to skip both breakfast and lunch" (McEwan, 2001, p. 3). Briony and her bedroom are described in detail by McEwan, demonstrating her passion for control. She wants everyone to be in her control and whenever she needs to suppress her desire, she displaces her anger and anxiety on her characters. Her character is described by McEwan as follows: "She was one of those youngsters who was seized by a need to get the world just so" (McEwan, 2001, p. 4). Her room served as a temple to her commanding spirit, and it was the only room in the home that was kept clean. Everything within her place was assigned a certain location and a defined status. They are free of flaws and defects. This pattern of behavior progresses to a disdain for the imperfections in the lives of her fellow human beings. In this regard, McEwan injects a sense of levity into the narration:

*It showed up that her directly toys were under explicit commands not to make contact the door frames in their numerous palace, and the multiple thumb-sized statistics to be discovered hanging around her clothing table – cowboys, depth divers, anthropomorphic rats – recommended an individual's soldiers awaiting commands by their equal positions and distance. (McEwan, 2001, p. 5).*

Briony was far away from reality and she was completely drowned in her imagination that she always makes decisions according to her imagined world. In Briony's resentment against her big sister's bedroom, it is clear that she harbors a grudge toward flaws in her own appearance. She inhabits a domain of control and balance that is more imaginative than the facts of the outside reality. In many ways, her world resembles that of the imaginative realm of the folktales that she has been reading across. The very nature of her texts is intended to impose a specific order in a stimulating world. This point is emphasized by Juliette Wells in her article on the tale, which states "Briony's strategies for her story satisfied her need to assert power over her surroundings; McEwan highlights, excessively, that the method of writing allowed Briony the satisfaction of constructing "a universe [...] in five pages" in something she

can really practice her own ideals of equality" ("Shades of Austen in IanMcEwan's Atonement, p. 103).

However, the image that she watches through the doorway of her crib is stuff that she is unable to imagine or understand. Although she is getting embarrassed by a guy which she has regarded to be the perfect guy in her life, her sister is the potential of upsetting the established structure in her organized universe. As a result, she resolves to re-establish the rule, which is now being weakened as a result of the boy, her sister's boyfriend, and the kid of their charlady. It is in this instance that her erroneous evaluation of a merely adult play serves to push the heinous act that she is going to do. Briony's unsettled state of mind grows even more unpleasant as a result of the loneliness she feels as a result of the breakdown of her meticulously planned performance. She is confronted by a terrifying monster that appears out of nowhere and forces her to confront the terrible truths of the world she has never known. There, she concludes that she can no longer be a participant of the fairytale world of childhood and chooses to compose a plot for a story about it. Even when she is removed from the childlike fantasies, she is unable to separate herself from the concept of order. "A narrative, wherein a guy whom everyone admired, is revealed by her to become the version of evil born because of her conviction that control should be enforced. Briony's organizing mind is in direct conflict with and clashes with her finding of a reality that is far more complicated than the one she is familiar with" (Jensen, p. 7-8)

Briony was in denial of the impact by avoiding thinking about or understanding the harm of her attempt to make everyone in her control which made the situation terrible. Being preoccupied with predetermined concepts of correctness, she is unable to see the reality that is directly next to her. Rather, she participates in personality and is passionate about creating the reality, which she believes is more appropriate for her imagined domain than the fact. This anger against Robbie is the result of Briony's conditioning. Without even hesitating to consider the possibilities of the occurrence, she accuses him and reads his message, which is addressed to Cecilia, without a second thought. She is even more horrified by the library scenario, and she accuses Robbie of being a sex-maniac. Most of those instances lead her to believe that Robbie is the one who attacked Lola, although her cousin has not been able to verify the reality. McEwan explains that the eyes are a reflection of our preconceived conceptions in this passage. "This was not her sight that revealed the reality to her, he explains. She couldn't see

anything since it was no light [...] her eyes affirmed all she already understood and had lately encountered. Indeed, the truth could be discovered in the harmony, which meant that it was established on rational thinking. The truth told her to open her eyes” (McEwan, 2001, p. 169). Consequently, she continues saying "I saw him", thus confirming her previous statement. "I'm certain it was him" (ibid, 170). She was not deceitful when she said that; rather, she was validating her own perception of her own virtue. However, when the truth about the situation is revealed in front of her eyes during the wedding of Lola and Paul Marshall, she is taken aback and chooses to make amends for the mistake that she has done. She spends the final years attempting to atone for her transgressions through the art of writing. Robbie and Cecilia are reunited in her novel *Atonement*, whereas she constructs a fictitious reality in which she brings the lovers back together even though the reality had divided them eternally. As a result, this demonstrates her innocence and powerlessness in the face of her acts. She tried to deny the reality that because of her wrong decision the couple parted away forever. Instead, she wrote a story and reunited them together to make herself out of the bad situation that had happened because of her.

In this way, Briony's morality tale illustrates the effect of the subconscious on individual behavior. In Briony's ego, it is possible to detect the factors that drove her to do her crime. Its origins may be traced back to the bottled-up disappointments of her mind. As a result of the Freudian examination of unconsciousness, it has been confirmed that childhood events or prior experiences have a part in determining an individual's adult behavior. For example, in the instance of Briony, readers may see how her childhood has influenced her current circumstances. Briony, the only kid in a household with a large number of grown-ups, is essentially alone. As a result of her loneliness, Briony is forced to enter a domain of imagination. She adores studying fictional stories and imagines herself to be in a fantastical realm. The fact that she has gained information from her readings appears to have prompted her to view situations from the perspective of that information. As a result, she is directed more by her previous conceptions than she is by the fact in front of her. She is fully aware of the sequence of events that are going to occur, and she is prepared for them. For Briony, the scenario besides the river can be only really interpreted as a wedding request of some sort. It should be noted that there can be a postscript to the progression of occurrences, which is, in McEwan's opinion, "the sinking scenario, accompanied by a

rescue, must have occurred before the wedding proposal" (McEwan, 2001, p. 39). This is the kind of proposal that the lady's creative realm is looking forward to. However, whenever anything surprising occurs, she finds herself in a predicament and ultimately comes to the incorrect decision.

Due to her imminent need for control, Briony feels compelled to write the bad things. This could be the result of her desire for attention. Briony is a classic attention wanderer in every way. A detailed examination of her personality gives a profusion of evidence in support of this claim. Each and every move she takes is dictated by her desperate want for attention, acknowledgment, and compassion. Briony's goal to become a writer is a manifestation of her unmet requirements. The purpose of her writing is to attract the attention of her mother and father and siblings. In her article on Ian McEwan, Vra Kutálková writes the following:

*Her mom is confined to her bedroom suffering to unexpected migraine attacks, and her dad serves in public management and is based primarily in London, which is why Briony is on the lookout for the item. Her brothers and sisters are also considerably grown and have moved away. Despite the fact that Cecilia returns home for the vacations and makes an effort to make up for their mom's inattention to Briony, she is never able to entirely substitute for her absence. As well as missing her father, Briony feels the loss of her mother, whom she views a "fixed value" in the household. His existence was the only thing that "established control and permitted freedom." Briony has been seeking order on her own as a result of her father's disappearance, and she has done so via her writing (McEwan, p. 14).*

As a result of Briony's wish for recognition and adoration from the adults, she goes out of her way to hide from Cecilia as well. The essential protagonists' lives, including Robbie, Cecilia, and Briony, are ruined as a consequence of the failure of the experimentation. Briony's emotions are lifted by the words of gratitude, and she is willing to go to another length to satisfy this unspoken desire. She even fantasizes about her brother's grateful and happy comments on his colleagues concerning his sibling, who happens to be a talented author. All her efforts at forgiveness and at living a life of atonement demonstrate her desire to reclaim the warmth and understanding that she once shared with her sister and Robbie, despite their differences. Avoiding kids by giving them attention and making them feel that they are in control of their family opens a way for the child to decide on situations on their own and be displaced with their own thoughts. Elizabeth B. Hurlock, a well-known child psychologist, discusses the role of the family in the development of responsible and culturally competent persons. "Children create the groundwork for their perspectives about individuals, stuff, and daily life through their interactions with relatives, she explains. They also set the

groundwork for processes of adaptation and learn to believe in themselves in the same way as the other members of the family do” (Child Development, p. 494). As a result, we can understand how unconsciousness influences the way people conduct their lives. Individuals such as Briony must not be held responsible for behavior issues that they have no control over according to the law. Whenever a child, like Briony, feels a lack of parents, she tries to act as grown-up people do but denies situations according to her own small mind and limited thinking. Consequently, Ian McEwan's fictitious character Briony serves as an excellent case study of human behavior, as demonstrated by the author.

Briony was not the only character in the novel who denied reality and also displaced anxiety on others. The element of denial and displacement is also associated with the character of Robbie Turner. Robbie's situation as the son of a lowly charlady leaves him with cynicism in his growth to adulthood. He is very perceptible in his manners in the university. He is resolute to keep coldness from Cecilia and their gatherings end up in gawkiness. His rude behavior towards his juvenile friend coils up from his lack of self-assurance. One may see Robbie's desire to become a doctor in the future as an effort to get what culture has denied him. As a fatherless, low-income youngster, he was without any rights. His survival was constantly reliant on other people's generosity. His lecturer even made all of his choices for him when he was in college. He is resolved to choose for himself; consequently, he chose medication. To illuminate the psychological impacts that people experience, McEwan is thorough in disclosing such minute but essential facts. He argues that Robbie had good reasons for going into medicine. McEwan is precise in how he presents such little but significant facts to shed light on the psychological effects that people experience. Robbie's position was more straightforward and intimate since his practical nature and unfulfilled scientific ambitions would find a way to express themselves. He would possess abilities well beyond those he had acquired via practical analyses, and most crucially, he had made his own decision. In an unknown town, he would locate a place to stay and then begin his exploration (McEwan, 91).

This aspect is emphasized by Laura Vipond in her study of the book. To show how the reader is still in control of the overall meaning, the crucial incident at the fountain is detailed in depth from the viewpoints of Briony, Cecilia, and Robbie. The book excels in accurately capturing every character's deepest thought process. A



detailed study of the book would reveal the specific justifications used to control each individual. A careful reading of the book demonstrates that the Freudian unconscious, the primary influence on each person's conduct, plays a significant role in controlling others. They did not have any reason to believe Briony to be lying when she accused him of raping her cousin. Everyone puts his/her faith in a young child with a vivid imagination, a propensity for making up tales and lies, and a need to always be the center of attention at all times throughout the vital moment. They believed she was telling the truth, and no one, except Cecilia, defended him or said he was innocent. When Cecilia realized she had a bias for Robbie when they were in school together, she mustered the guts to confess her love to him and strengthened the letter that was circulated throughout the living room as proof that Robbie is a "sex-maniac"(Briony, an Order seeker, 662). The depth of animosity that Robbie creates towards Briony is a manifestation of his disappointment as a result of his desires being denied. His urge to become a dad arises from an ambition to give back to the world what he felt he had been denied by fate. As a result, it is possible to see how significant and useful Freudian theories are in comprehending people.

Cecilia Tallis is the older sister of Briony. She has no idea of what she is doing. She returns from college in 1935 and acts like some sort of sick teenager, flopping around the home, moping, and smoking. When her brother invites her to travel to London with him, she hesitates and mumbles. She changes into three different outfits before heading to dinner. She spends the entire day thinking about it when her mother asks her to arrange some flowers in a vase. When she gets into an argument with her childhood friend, Robbie Turner, she subsequently destroys the vase. Cecilia did not understand Robbie and she did not know that Robbie loves her. Cecilia's act was not normal and she got angry quickly after a short argument with Robbie. When the vase broke, Cecilia accused him and she did not take responsibility for it. She displaced the responsibility of the broken vase on him and tried to punish him by looking for broken pieces inside the fountain. "Drowning herself would be his punishment" (McEwan, 2007, p. 54). Cecilia's messy circumstances show her inner state of turmoil and instability, which she is trying to hide. Cecilia's room symbolizes the internal conflict that she is now experiencing. McEwan describes her room as a "stuffing of uncompleted books, unwrapped shirts, an unmade bed, (and) unemptied trash cans" in the novel (McEwan, p. 4-5). As a result of the absence of her father, mother, and brother, she is

compelled to assume responsibility for the well-being of her family and finds herself in a difficult situation.

Time and place were wrong. Cecilia and Robbie had their first kiss at the library while everyone was in the living room. They could just have postponed their kiss and emotional time to another place or situation. Cecilia never mentioned that she made a mistake in having an affair at this moment of time and she denied the fact of being seen by Briony which is her mistake because she let Robbie kiss her with the door opened. After Briony came in and misunderstood the situation, Cecilia just ignored her and let her decide on her own while she knew that Briony is living in her fiction. After the twin missed and Lola got back raped, Cecilia was the only one who protected Robbie and claimed that he is not an attacker, but Danny Hardman raped Lola. Cecilia knows Robbie very well and she knew that he is not such a kind of person but she has no clue about it. Instead, she, just like Briony did, accused Danny Hardman as an attacker for Lola's rape to protect her beloved. The difference between Briony and Cecilia in miscomprehending situations is because nobody listens to Cecilia because she is not much important as Briony.

Cecilia's narrative continues with a protracted epilogue. After the opening chapter of the book, Cecilia's thoughts are never again heard; she is never aware. She is only visible to us in Robbie's letters to her or in Briony's perception. We are aware that she distances herself from her family as a result of their prosecution of Robbie. We are aware that she will become a nurse, and via Briony, we can see both her assurance and her resentment toward the position. We know she never forgets Robbie, so she responded, "I'll wait for you," when the cops took him away, and that she always signed her letters in the same way (McEwan, 2007, p.180). We also know, and this is significant, that she keeps her word and waits.

The shadow of denial and displacement also presents the character of Emily. Emily's character may appear cold and aggressive, but the reader will have a better understanding of the character and her intellect through two chapters told from Emily's perspective. Emily Tallis is a single mother, according to the reader, because her husband, Jack Tallis, spends the majority of his time in the Whitehall ministry. Emily suffers from severe migraines, thereby making it impossible for her to care for the house and her children, particularly Briony. Emily's perspective toward women's roles in society is rather traditional, stating that women are submissive to men and should not

receive education. This affects her relationship with Cecilia, her daughter, whose education and restless behavior appear to be a hindrance. Emily, on the other hand, adores Briony, her second daughter. Emily encourages Briony's vivid imagination, and we can see similarities between them. Briony inherited a need to be in charge of everything as well as a daydreaming personality from her mother. Emily, on the other hand, misses having another child because her daughter has grown up and she feels nostalgic and lonely (Shmoop, 2008).

According to Boag, "the dissatisfaction that leads to suppression is generally associated with parental prohibitions and the dread of punishment" (2012, p. 32). It is apparent that Briony's portrayal of Robbie is influenced by her mom, who is "thinking of Robbie at table while there was something wild and glazed in his eyes" (McEwan 2001, p. 151). In the wake of Robbie's imprisonment, Emily's pleasure is aimed toward her girls: "Unexpectedly, her mom's hands were pushing hard on her arms and moving her toward the home, putting her into Betty's protection. Emily desired her kid to be as far apart from Robbie Turner as possible" (ibid: 183). Furthermore, the reader discovers that Emily seeks "his punishment with a weird intensity" (ibid: 227). Regarding her, her mom's displeasure motivates her want for atonement. Briony's view of the sexual experience involving Cecilia and Robbie as a part of rape instead of voluntary intimacy is influenced by her mother's disapproval of Robbie as a potential husband for her kids' hand in marriage. Emily was happy to see her daughter as a heroine and after Robbie was arrested, she thought Robbie will be far away from her daughter. Emily thought that she may protect her daughter by making Robbie far away from the family and she ignored Lola's speech that she did not see anybody. Emily was able to escape the painful events that occurred in her family, which included Lola's rape and Emily's accusation of Robbie of being the attacker, because of the stress that occurred in her family. Radcliffe finds a protagonist's health might be endangered by a heroine's innocence to an excessive degree. "Understanding, not shielding from the reality, is what she requires" (Ellis, 1989, p. xiii). Emily allows Briony to observe malevolence rather than love. She preferred to displace her lack with her daughter with Robbie and to show that Robbie is the only danger not her lack of presence.

Emily is always inside of Briony and she protected all of her imaginations and ideas. Emily is responsible for Briony's imagination and actions, but she refused to accept the reality that she wanted her girl to act like this. Emily blames her daughter,

Cecilia, for the crime that happened at that night. Emily did not like Robbie because of his class and she desired, one day, that Cecilia marries Paul Marshal. Emily was afraid of Robbie because he was too close to her daughter and she did not like it. Cecilia was very far away from the rape and she took no responsibility for it, but her mother due to the fear, her mother felt from Robbie displaced her fear on Cecilia and blamed Cecilia for not telling them about the message. Emily denies the reality of her life with her husband because her husband was far away from them, but she refused to accept that he is cheating on her. Emily admits that she is aware that her husband is having an affair as she waits for him to call. She does not mind it too much and appreciates his effort to act like he is not cheating on her. "She didn't want to discover why Jack had stayed so many hours in London on days in a row...Or, more accurately, she did not want to be informed" (McEwan, 2007, p.149).

The mindset of Emily's sister, Hermione, who is the mother of the twins, Jackson and Pierrot, as well as Lola, provides more evidence about Emily in the book. Since she was a little child, when Hermione insisted on being the center of attention, Emily has been aggressive against her sister. Based on that defence, Emily dislikes Lola too, mirroring her of Hermione in this regard. Hermione's older sister, who was frowning and quiet, said that she had been acting ridiculously and frantically throughout their childhood by lisping, prancing, and twirling. Adults were constantly around to support this constant preening (Ian McEwan, 2007, p. 147). Furthermore, After Lola got raped, Emily refused to take any responsibility like calling the police or looking for the attacker. Emily's anger and anxiety towards her sister, since her child time, transformed to Lola as she saw her acting like her sister. When behaving distanced from her niece, Emily risks making a mistake because of her camouflaged behavior toward her sister Hermione. For instance, Lola gets reprimanded for wearing lipstick throughout supper because she is too small to do so. The true explanation is that Lola constantly draws focus to herself, just like Hermione does.

Emily Tallis is a fictional character who, by virtue of her absence, becomes more prominent in the narrative. One may describe her as perpetually detached and disengaged from the obligations of being a mother. Following a careful examination of her personality, readers will come to the conclusion that she is also the one who bears responsibility for all the unfortunate events that have occurred in her household. It is her negligence as a mom that has placed her kids in such a precarious position. McEwan,

on the other hand, is highly interested in excusing her unusual behavior by providing the causes for her failure as a mom and as a housewife. Her early recollections suggest that she was also a kid who was constantly mistreated by her parents as a result of her arrogant and anxious flashy sister's pretensions. Even as an adult female, she can't recall the incident without feeling resentment. The thought came to her: "There have always been adults ready to promote this unrelenting preening" (McEwan, 2001, p. 147). She is more accurately described as a "mistreated kid, (and) mistreated wife" (McEwan, 2001, 148). Consequently, she flees into her comfort zone, abandoning her obligations in the process. As a result of her inability to gain focus from others, she creates a propensity to retreat from circumstances that necessitate her participation. Her migraine is the physical embodiment of her psychological turmoil. She tries everything she can to shield the lonely kid who lives inside her by using the defense mechanism of denial.

Leon, Paul Marshall, and Jack are not strangers to the extent that their previous lives have an impact on how they manage their current and future daily lives. As a result of the absence of her father, mother, and brother, she is compelled to assume responsibility for the well-being of her family. As a result, she finds herself in a difficult situation. Lola's actions serve as evidence of the impact that parents have on their kids' behavior. In the words of McEwan, "it was mother whom personality she was trying to keep alive" (147). Based on the novel's protagonist, she, as her mother as well as many other people, is "bound by an unbreakable concept of self-love" (147). Her self-esteem has gotten to the point where she is even cheating others. She, like her mother, achieves happiness at the expense of others in order to achieve her own. Other characters, such as Jack, Leon, Paul Marshall, and others, can be recognized as having been influenced by unconsciousness. Each of them seems to have a different method of ventilating the space. Briony manages to displace her repressed emotions on others and goes on to become a great writer. Other characters, on the other hand, are less effective in transforming their terrible experiences into something positive. Briony represents imperfect human beings who are in desperate need of salvation via transformation. In McEwan's remarkable excursion into the inscape of the human mind, we learn about the fundamental reasons for human behavior, as well as the techniques for overcoming them. In her thoughts, Briony demonstrates how human beings may overcome the difficulties of their life by denying reality and going with fictional life.

If we were to apply the denial and displacement theory to the intimate and their guests, they would be confidently found embarrassed from moral, metaphysical, and misdemeanor viewpoints. The moral guilt is the result of all of an individual's bad deeds. However, everyone in the family—aside from Cecilia—would be ashamed to accuse somebody of doing something for which there is no solid evidence. Briony was a reliable witness for them, perhaps because the family did not believe a little kid could fabricate a lie or foresee the harm that an accusation against an innocent person may do. Most likely, the family were unable to come up with any other explanations for why Briony may have done such a thing than the simple urge to speak the reality about what she had actually witnessed and to assist in offending the assailant. The mother is aware of Briony's nature, but she strangely puts her thoughts above all the household activities, making her an inappropriate person to judge whether Briony is telling the truth or not. In chapter six, she makes this comment on Briony's personality. She had disappeared into a complete inner life, of which the writing was only the apparent top layer, the protective crust that even a devoted mother could not penetrate. Her daughter was constantly preoccupied with some underlying, self-imposed issues in her head as if the worn-out, obvious reality might be reimagined. Emily is biased since she is her mother, which is a flaw, and she does not spend enough time with her as a youngster to understand what she can achieve. During the interview, Cecilia is the only one to bring up Briony's extreme fancifulness and the fact that she might not absolutely trust what Briony claims, but no one listens to her. Because they were covering their own backs, their moral culpability is increased. Jaspers contends that we are absolutely responsible even if we accomplished our crime when facing death. In the instance of the Tallises and their guests, the crime was committed under the fear of embarrassment to the family, destruction of position, honor, and family togetherness. However, this reality does not exonerate them of accountability (Atonement, McEwan, p.68).

Briony Tallis is 77 years old and deals with vascular dementia when the conclusion takes place, and she is a witness to a presentation of her work by the newer grandchildren of the Tallis family. Chloe, Leon's great granddaughter, takes on the role of Arabella for the second time (ibid: 368). When her play is repeated inexplicably, "Briony has an unsettling recall of the event," since the play serves as a memory of the pain she suffered when she was a child. Hidalgo (2005) describes how such a situation "results to harass the sufferer later on" as a result of its eerie recurrence (Caruth, 1996,

p. 4). Briony's story is got to understand as a result of the play, since "for recovery to actually occur, survivors should seek means to communicate their tales and to get some societal attention, if not approval" according to the National Institute of Mental Health (Vickroy, 2002, p. 19). The conclusion of *Atonement* also marks the conclusion of "The Trials of Arabella," or "The Trials of Briony."

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.1. On Chesil Beach

*On Chesil Beach*, one of Ian McEwan's most well-known novellas, was released in 2007. The novel was included in the 2007 Booker Prize shortlist. The narrative began in July 1962. In their early days of marriage, Edward Mayhew and Florence Ponting were living together. Florence plays the violin with a quartet of strings, and Edward has a degree in history. The young couple starts their honeymoon in a tiny motel near Chesil Beach on the Dorset coast. The beach is well-known for the sea stones that wash ashore from a distance of around 18 miles. A pebble's form is thought to be able to identify its location of discovery. According to Jonathon Lethem's essay in 2009 published in the New York Times, McEwan's style of writing is regarded as "microscopic" and his terminology as "investigative". Through the use of scientific jargon to characterize McEwan's approach, Lethem portrays *On Chesil Beach* as meticulously researched, with each word having a specific position and each phrase having a significant purpose in its own right. When it comes to *On Chesil Beach*, this is an appropriate representation because the book's pithy style is what distinguishes it from other love stories. The book encompasses twelve hours, during which Edward and Florence eat together and then try to complete their marriage. Both of them are virgins who happily seek their first sexual encounters on their wedding night. McEwan drops signs that they might be incompatible, particularly for the time in England, where the social status may have been of great significance. Florence was from upper-middle-class parents. Her dad is a wealthy businessman, and at Oxford, her mother lectures philosophy. Edward's father is a frustrated primary teacher who has to handle his home while his wife's brain has suffered from a freak accident.

Edward is 23, still, a virgin, who discovered the "easy" ladies in school undesirable. Both Florence and he grew up in a society of repressed sexuality, which has been largely impacted by the unavailable contraceptives and the shame of unforeseen and hasty marriages. The birth control pill is still a fake story at this time, namely in 1962. The notion of sexual activity was therefore only an illusion for Edward and Florence. As an attentive but again not aggressive suitor, Edward expects the wedding as the venue for his long-wanted sexual relationship waiting impatiently for



his "due". He masturbates every day, but his enjoyment is filled with guilt and sorrow that he has to use such a terrible replacement for the connection and intimacy of people. Since he is a virgin, as the time actually comes, he is nervous about his success and he prepares for his honeymoon by abstaining from lonely enjoyment for a week. Florence has deep emotions of abhorrence toward physicality, behaving very differently about the idea of sex. She attempts to find some advice in the field, but a relationship book is her only source of knowledge which only makes everything worse with words such as "glans" and "penetrate," whereby the latter implies that she is like a house and Edward is going to enter. Florence notices that even with the idea of Edward's lips in her mouth, she is nauseated (*On Chesil beach*, 2007, p. 23).

Florence also feels constrained by a particular era's social code. The moment to consummate the wedding eventually comes. However, when Florence unknowingly overstimulates Edward, it is very short-lived, leading him to cum all over her body before they even have sex. "In the first few seconds of their kiss she was aware of the tension in his tongue, which pushed past her teeth, like a thug pressing his way into a room. he is about to enter her" (McEwan, 2007, p. 27). In several ways, this frustrates Florence and she runs out. To clarify what has occurred, Edward went after Florence and they have a massive discussion. Florence has made it obvious at the end of it that she has zero pleasure in ever having sex at all. Furiously, Edward blames her for being dishonest in fulfilling their relationship vows which include for each other a promise of sexual satisfaction. Florence suggests that Edward change to other girls to satisfy his sexual needs, but this only seems to further anger Edward. Florence accuses him of thinking only about his own desires, and of being cruel and violent. They go on in their different directions by the end of the awful row, and their unconsummated marriage is immediately dismissed. Edward, who outlines the subsequent years of his life, takes the story over. He notices himself mulling over Florence's plan a year after the divorce and admits that it no longer upsets him. However, he is hesitating to reunite with Florence. He attempts affairs with other women, including marrying for a short period, but acknowledges he never loved someone as much as Florence. On the other hand, Florence has been a professional violinist, but with every show, she appears to think of Edward. As the memories they cause are too traumatic, Edward avoids Florence's appearances and any mention of them. Eventually, as he is in his sixties, he acknowledges that if he and Florence had lived together, they would definitely have

made a successful couple, they would have been nice to each other, and they would have gone on to live a happier life together. He murmured over the reality that the life of a human can be changed forever easily by doing nothing as if he had approached Florence that night, and she would not have left his life completely (Ian McEwan, 2008).

### **3.2. Denial and Displacement in *On Chesil Beach***

McEwan is one of the most popular current British writers because he writes for the general public and so avoids being elitist, claiming that he "represents the typical author" (Lynn, "Conversation..."). He readily admits that modernist writers were mistaken in their attempts to be elitist and that their viewpoint was absurd (From "A Conversation..." by Lynn). McEwan is a representation of postmodernism, which strives to incorporate many discourses and influences culture by fusing the high and the low, as it is intended for a general readership rather than a small group of privileged intellectuals (Grenz, 2009, p. 38). *On Chesil Beach* by Ian McEwan is strategically placed, temporally speaking at the crossroads between the emancipated radicalism of the 1960s and the sexual repression that characterized the previous decade. The action takes place on the beach, which serves as a metaphor for the vast divide that exists between the two decades throughout the novel. The author employs the idea of a single instant in time that has a profound impact on the lives of the protagonists. This event is depicted from several angles, whereby the element of denial and displacement between two persons involved inhabit completely separate mental worlds and realities.

As the reviewer Jonathan Lethem writes in *The New York Times*, his tales drive us forward, anxious for the discovery of (imaginary) secrets, although his sentences hold us cold, allowing us to breathe in the air of another human being's (imaginary) awareness. Even when, as in "On Chesil Beach," McEwan looks to have methodically substituted mortal risks — death and its associated horrors — with risks of disgrace, chagrin, and regret, his stories have the air of thrillers (Lethem, 2017). The author refuses to identify black and white, right and wrong and keeps the message grey by presenting a variety of thoughts about love, sexuality, coming to terms with a troubled past, and so forth. The fluidity of the narrative and the difficult nature of interpretation in the sense of denial and displacement are also represented by water and

the seascape as symbols. Thus, McEwan was influenced considerably by Sigmund Freud, whose theories are used in several of his works. McEwan does a psychiatric examination of the human psyche in this one in particular. This is demonstrated in great detail by the impact of previous experiences on both characters' later replies. Both of their families have a history of adversity. Freud frequently asserted "adult characteristics stem from childhood, as well as that one's family background influences one's destiny. To put it another way, history is the bedrock of an individual's life responses" (Freud, 1905).

Florence's reactions are obstinate in their rejection of her dislike for him. Several characters in the story employ Freud's denial and displacement. Edward, for example, creates a wall around himself, namely a cocoon that suffocates him and is unleashed in various ways as a result of his suppressed fury. For example, brawling in public expresses his restrained wrath. "They scarcely knew one another and never could due to the sweeping of friendly close quiet that covered their disparities and dazed them however much it bound them" (McEwan, 2007, p. 19). The characters' lack of understanding of their own circumstances is obvious. Both of them could not understand the situation that they are in. The lack of communication made everything falls apart so rapidly. What is particularly terrible about it is that she is making every effort to reach a compromise, and they make tremendous sacrifices to keep it running and keep them united. However, it just does not work, and Edward is not interested in listening. Edward and Florence could not understand each other and they refused to see the reality of their life that they are couples, and sex is part of marriage. Both of them refused to speak loudly and they hide it in their minds because of the fear and misunderstanding that they have. Florence's recollections of her father are a conscious act of denial. There appears to be a sinister element of violence and abuse that she deceives herself throughout her recollections at various points in the novel.

Another hangover from her childhood boating outings with her father is a continual sense of inadequacy. Her inability to be a sailor like him prompted this. This component, as well as associated variables including heredity and environment, plays a significant influence in molding the psyche. Edward and Florence both lack ideal household models to emulate, which is blamed for their marriage's collapse. *On Chesil Beach* emphasizes the lack of understanding and denying the reality of both characters' thoughts and desires. It discreetly emphasizes the unreliability of an individual's

recollected history, in which repressed memories and unconscious ideas always give a shaky narrative. “Every human being is subjected to the repression of the ‘pleasure principle by the ‘reality principle,’ but for some of us, and possibly for entire communities, the despotism may become excessive and cause illness” (Eagleton, 1996, p. 131). This is especially true in the case of sexual expression repression, which is frequently a taboo topic in many societies. While Florence and Edward recognize that other aspects of life necessarily require practice, analyses, and improvisation, they behave with sex as if it were a completely unknown act: one in which there is only one correct way to do it, where you are expected to get it right immediately, and where you can not say a word about it if anything bad happens. This is prevalent in Florence's psyche and manifests itself in a variety of ways. She has no recollection of her father's alleged abusive behavior, but it has seeped into her subconscious somewhere along the way.

The unconscious, conscious, and preconscious are all divided in Sigmund Freud's mind structure. Certain thoughts, memories, and ‘guilty’ desires are imposed into the unconscious by repression, where they remain out of reach of human comprehension. They create a huge clash of psychological realities that have historical, social, and cultural ramifications. Lacan, on the other hand, considers the unconscious to be structured in the same way that language is. It, like a language, is a system of signifiers with no stable, fixed meaning (Lacan, 1938, p. 12). These multiple realities are all explored in the novel, in which the characters' unconscious influences on their minds have a significant impact on their conscious world. Repression is a predictable part of communal inhabitation, but when engaged to the extreme side, it can cause deeply disconcerting moments. The guilt and repulsion that ascend from this repression fragmented apart the lives of the couple. Because all human urges are linked to sexuality, it is extremely harmful and self-limiting. Edward and Florence's story is a case study in which the effects of repression and neurosis are visible in both characters. Repression can manifest itself in a variety of ways, including aggression and anger, as seen in Edward, or neurosis, paranoia, and deep-seated fears, as seen in Florence. It can lead to a "variety of contradictions in the individual's life"(Sharma, p. 148). Both characters denied the repressed feelings that they have as if it was never part of their reality. The lack of communication between Edward and Florence, as well as their different insecurities, demonstrate the hazardous repercussions of such systems. Even

by the end of the story, these causes are never fully revealed, thereby resulting in irreparable rifts and the end of their partnership.

In other words, sex is the natural, primitive form of the act that serves only to reproduce or gratify, whereas sexuality is the same act mediated through the society, the culture, repression, rules, and taboos. For Sigmund Freud, sexuality is paramount. This implies that *On Chesil Beach* is Freudian because the entire story revolves around the act, as well as the cultural and familial formations that surround it. Edward and Florence are both affected by society's shaping of sexuality. Even among newborns, sex, according to Freud, is not only tied to procreation but is a vital aspect of daily life. It is present in all aspects of human life (Freud, 1976, p. 22) "Genital sexuality, according to Freud, is desirable since it is both a requirement and a truth. It can not be sublimated or suppressed. Because sexual continence is incompatible with human nature, Freud never acknowledges it as a part of life" (Sharma, p. 143). As a result, he allows for the possibility of intricacy in the sexual act, which would reflect the relationship's complexity. Most men's sexuality reveals an admixture of aggression, of the urge to subdue, whereby the biological significance of which resides in the requirement of overcoming the sexual object's resistance by activities other than ordinary courting. While this viewpoint may be rather restrictive, it is undoubtedly reflected in Edward's hostility and Florence's anxieties about having to submit to him. Thus, displacement, according to Freud, is a way of resolving such issues. This entails channeling inhibition into creative endeavors such as art or writing, as Florence's aptitude in music demonstrates.

Bauman proposes the following explanation for the postmodernist need for inconsistencies and paradoxes: "A reader in the postmodern era is a consumer of experience and pleasure. This encounter must be 'thrilling,' 'fascinating,' 'captivating,' and 'ecstatic.' " (Bauman, 78-79) Because postmodernism is a product of the capitalist, materialist, bourgeois, consumer society. This would explain why postmodernist storytelling styles and strategies are so varied and regularly used in unexpected and odd combinations - to create a memorable effect, stimulate and deliver readers from their boredom. The novel makes extensive use of temporal non-linearity, but in such a way, it can be stressful to the reader at times, especially when combined with the hypothetical or imaginary when real-time shifts and hypothetical segments of the narrative become indistinguishable from one another. The past is less troublesome than the future in this

regard. The past can be revisited in one of two ways; both of which are prevalent in each of the novels under consideration: either indirectly, as when a character reflects on the past, or directly, as when a passage from the past is inserted into the narrative stream. This technique of denial and displacement is more widely used in *On Chesil Beach*, where flashbacks are such a prominent narrative device that shapes the entire work. For example, the entire second part of the novel and a large portion of part four are two long flashbacks. There are a lot of flashbacks that prevent Edward from fully understanding the situation as well as Florence. Edward has a lack of sexual encounters, and virginity, and is emotionally parentless. Similarly, Florence's lack of guidance resulted in having troubles with a sexual encounter. Both of them denied the reality in different ways according to their past nonexperience of sexual relationships. "We are social creatures, and relationships are where we exist unless our lives are horribly alone," as reported by Ryan Roberts in an interview (2008, p. 188). In his works, he depicts a variety of connections, including those between lovers, parents, children, and individuals. Conflicts abound in the depictions of the relationships provide a rich subject of critical commentary and research.

By examining the different semiotic signposts that pepper the story, Edward and his new bride, Florence, investigated the multifaceted nature of their relationship's demise. McEwan's early works dealt with "macabre" subjects like murder, incest, pedophilia, and homosexuality, whereas subsequent works dealt with more universal and social issues such as family matters. He concentrated on family strife and conflict, which almost invariably ended badly. He also focused on political and historical topics that have an impact on people's lives, either directly or indirectly. "McEwan's empirical temperament distinguishes him from his contemporaries such as Martin Amis, Salman Rushdie, and Julian Barnes" as stated by Zalewski in the *New Yorker*. McEwan has also been praised for his ability to describe the story in slow motion at its most intense passages, creating a kind of pain that readers enjoy while the protagonists battle with psychological misery. McEwan's depiction of the character's conflict is more subliminal than apparent. His fastidious word choice, and use of adjectives, metaphors, and gestures produce mental images and propose emotional vistas in the reader's mind as a result of his "showing" rather than "telling" his story. Through his story-telling method, he conjures up images in the reader's head. This makes the reader realize the denial and displacement elements of human nature with the blending of thinking,

revolving around the conflict as well admitting the fact that there is a human instinct that triggers the human emotion which can lead towards the development or the coast as McEwan's novel highlighted this factor very successfully.

In an audio interview with Charlie Rose (2007), McEwan notes that *On Chesil Beach* is a spot sandwiched between two places: The English Channel on one side and a lagoon on the other. He explained why he chose such borders to contain them. The final debate between the individuals takes place in *On Chesil Beach*, a location that foreshadows being caught in a tragic situation from which they cannot escape. Edward is filled with dread and anxiety as he awaits his first sexual encounter, and the reader can almost feel his stress and anxiety as "his trousers or underwear seemed to have shrunk" (McEwan, 2007, p. 19). Although Edward and Florence are a husband and a wife, they are referred to as "strangers" since they are unable to express their affections for one another, owing to "unacknowledged rules" or familial restrictions. "They stood on a new summit of existence, almost strangers, strangely united, thrilled that their new status promised to promote them out of their unending youth—Edward and Florence free at last!" (ibid, 6). Even in the apparent solitude of their freedom, they are and will never be free, since they are inescapably constrained by invisible thoughts and the "unacknowledged" rules of their period; hence, they remain "strangers". As a result of their circumstances, Edward and Florence both suffer as they prepare for their first sexual encounter. "Whereas he had ordinary first-night anxiety, she had a visceral dread, a powerless distaste as palpable as seasickness" (ibid, 7). Edward displaced all of his anxiety and anger on his first night on Florence accusing her of not fulfilling his enjoyment. Also, Edward felt ashamed for still being a virgin after his first night because remaining a virgin after marriage is counted as unsuccessful.

McEwan demonstrates how effective it is to utilize language to cleverly associate thought and mental imagery. For example, when he stated, "There you go indeed; there was irritation in his voice" (McEwan, 143), he made a number of motioned signs. Edward's impatience is accompanied by displeasure or rage in his voice. "She astonished herself with the sharpness in her voice," she says elsewhere (McEwan, 143). The term "hardness" refers to a lack of emotion and a decline in friendliness. She could tell when he adjusted his weight because "the stones tinkled under his feet when he shifted his weight" (ibid, 143). The weight of his affliction on his chest is akin to a punch in the chest accompanied by a gruff noise of dissatisfaction.

“She thought she heard him grunt as though he had been hit in the chest” (p. 144). She could hear his footsteps on the pebbles, which meant he could hear hers as well (p. 142). McEwan uses both the auditory and visual senses to heighten a scene's impact. In other words, behavioral shifts are used to explain or demonstrate character problems. In her nervousness, she began to speak quicker, even though her words were crisply enunciated. “She accelerated like a skater on diminishing ice to avoid drowning” (“Italics,” p. 154). Crisp describes how she speaks exactly and professionally, that is a purposeful display of formality that demonstrates their emotional distance. McEwan compares Florence's condition to a skater who skates on “thinning” ice rather than “thin” ice, which is a purposeful alteration of a popular word to emphasize the possible danger's crucial status; a minor, almost undetectable grammatical variation but a big difference in meaning. McEwan wants his reader to feel the certainty of calamity as he builds up the “hazardous” situation. Since Freud's time, science has tended to dichotomize human affection along lines of deviance and normalcy, gentility and platonic love, instead of leaving it as a graduated spectrum of emotion in which love, friendship, sensuality, and sexuality can freely flow into each other as they did in the past (Gray, 283).

Besides, Florence is going through a period of strong and mixed emotions. It is a moment; McEwan is attempting to convey when you burn the bridge behind you only to realize you will never be able to cross it again. McEwan, like in his previous works, uses the example of Edward and Florence's wedding night to highlight how one's life may be completely changed and ruined in an instant. Edward and Florence are a match made in heaven. They are so dissimilar that it is unusual for them to choose to spend the rest of their lives together. Despite this, they find themselves in a hotel room together; both are unaware of and are unwilling to communicate their feelings. Edward, despite his insecurity and self-doubt, is mostly moved by love. Though he is unsure of himself, Edward feels largely love and desire for his young bride, whereas Florence is terrified, suffers from “claustrophobia and breathlessness” (McEwan 2008, p. 29), and must battle aversion and loathing. In spite of her love for Edward, she is unable to see a way to open her heart to him, to “speak up, the way she [does] at rehearsals” (McEwan, 2008, p. 81) in an honest conversation that would benefit them both and clear the heavy atmosphere.



Florence appears to automatically resort to music on her wedding night — an event that is intended to be joyful and unforgettable, but for Florence, it is the opposite. She displaced her fear and anxiety about music. She refers to music as the sole arena in which she feels safe and confident, despite being completely panicked and helpless. This time, however, the music fails her, since the sound she hears does not provide any comfort and just adds to her sense of horror. Florence denied the real world in front of her, and she tried to fulfill her feelings with music. McEwan deftly transposes Florence's feelings from the world of psychology to the world of music to borrow language from music theory. This made Florence feel as if she was living a fictional life. McEwan uses the transposition to reveal Florence's inner life to the reader. It is also a reasonable, credible, and persuasive side effect of creating a character like Florence. What could be more important to a musician at this point in her life than music? What other methods would she be able to express her deepest feelings? When the moment that should have been a happy marriage turns out to be a complete disaster, Florence and Edward, who are full of shame and resentment, finally try to talk to each other, but there is so much pressure, ignorance, anger, and mutual accusation between them that their future together is jeopardized. Then, with nothing to lose, Florence decides to speak her thoughts to Edward and expresses the kind of life she would like to have with him. She gives him sexual freedom in exchange for his love and the opportunity to focus solely on playing the violin. The element of denial is shown when she says to Edward:

*We could be together, live together, and if you really wanted it, that is to say, whenever it happened, which it would, of course, I would understand, more importantly, I would desire it, because I want you to be happy and free. As long as I knew you loved me, I'd never been envious. I'd love to love you and play music with you; it's all I want to do with my life. To be honest, all I want to do is be with you. (McEwan, 2008, p. 89).*

Both characters become at their peak to show the denial and displacement elements of human nature as Edward, who is highly offended and upset, refuses to accept this proposition, and their relationship abruptly ends. Everything can change in an instant. Florence denied the reality that having sex with marriage is normal and it is a completion of marriage. Florence's love of music, however pure it may appear, plays a role in the terrible night and its aftermath. She chooses music, that is the only realm in which she feels completely safe over everything else: Edward, their love, and their future together. As a result, she sacrifices a part of herself unconsciously since her feelings for Edward appear to be strong and genuine. Years later, “as the celebrated

decade drew to a close,” “in the changed circumstances of the day, Eventually, Edward sees Florence's gift in a different light – as "liberated, and far ahead of its time, "innocently generous, a gesture of self-sacrifice that he had completely missed" (McEwan, 2008, pp. 160-161).

On the other hand, Edward refuses to understand Florence and allows her to leave his life. Who knows what would have happened if these two had actually spoken to each other and attempted to understand each other? Florence and Edward, according to Jerzy Jarniewicz (2008), are "innocent lovers" who are "tragically helpless" in their attitudes about sexuality and who both deny reality in their own ways: "both history and music offer to them a safe refuge into the universe which is pure and discarnate". Edward's regrets and conclusion at the end of the story are bitter: "This is how the entire course of a life can be changed — by doing nothing" (McEwan, 2008, 166). *On Chesil Beach* was his first attempt in employing music as a character marker as well as a medium for misinterpretation, as he explains. Their mutual incomprehension stems from Edward's love of rock and roll and Florence's love of the classical repertory (Roberts, 2010, p. 195). This study focuses solely on their psychological barriers to living a fulfilling life. Edward and Florence, a young, educated couple, fall in love and marry as a result.

Several flashbacks in the story depicted Florence and Edward's early lives with their mothers. According to Klein (1975), the operation of the death instinct is a key source of the infant's fear. It manifests as fear of being persecuted or annihilated. In the imaginations of the helpless child, the terror of this destructive tendency within the self-attaches itself to an object that becomes uncontrollable and overpowering. As the newborn receives pleasure and meets its requirements from the mother, his or her confidence and ability to notice and relate to other people in the outside world grows. Every other relationship is based on this fundamental object relationship, which starts with the mother's breast. As a result, having good early connections leads to having satisfying healthy relationships later in life. Edward, the story's main character, has a lack of maternal attachment in his early years. The book contains numerous pieces of evidence that shed light on this topic. The children are filthy, and the mother is unable to care for them; for example, “Edward's fingernails were too long, he had to fix a tear in a frock, and the twins required a bath” (McEwan, 2007, p. 23). When Edward was

fourteen, he discovered that his mother had suffered from brain impairment since he was a child.

Florence, like Edward, is suffering from worry and guilt as a result of her inability to have a meaningful former connection with her mother. She is unable to develop a desired and intimate relationship with others according to evidence. When Florence feels hopeless about sexuality, she conveys her lack of connection with her family by saying, "There was no one she could have talked to" (McEwan, 2007, p. 33). Ruth, her younger sister, was too young, and her mother, while perfectly lovely in her own way, was too academic, too brittle, and a traditional bluestocking. "She tended to assume the public style of the lecture hall whenever she faced a private problem" (ibid, p. 22). She noticed her mother's physical distance: "She had never kissed or embraced Florence, even when she was a small child" (ibid, p. 25). Violet had hardly ever spoken to her daughter. Perhaps it was for the best. Florence was not pining for her caresses because she was frail and bony. It was too late to begin now. She recognizes how difficult it is for her to have a satisfying relationship with Edward. Florence's feelings about a sexual relationship are causing her a lot of trouble, and she feels trapped and preoccupied about how to deal with it: "Florence's nervousness was more solemn, and there were flashes during the journey from Oxford when she thought she was about to summon all her courage to speak her mind" (ibid, p. 42).

"We're descended from generations of people who lived, who acted successfully, McEwan says in a Salon interview with Dwight Garner. But who also succeeded in cooperating; thus we certainly need to save our own skins and look out for our own interests, but we're social animals who rely on other people" (The Salon Interview: Ian McEwan). Starting on the night of their wedding, neither of them can think about anything but sex, but while Edward is excited about the consummation, Florence is terrified and feels "a visceral dread" (ibid, 8). She has no desire and not even a smidgeon of interest. Though she adores him, cuddles him, kisses him (as long as no tongue is involved), and respects him, she can not help but feel disgusted by the prospect of him piercing her; "a term that implied nothing but anguish, flesh divided before a knife". It shows the element of denial and displacement in the personality of Florence. Throughout the course of her life, she did not understand how to have sex and what sex is; she immediately denied of having sex with Edward and she even has no desire of kissing if the tongue is included. Florence blamed him for going too fast

on that while she already does not have any idea of it. Edward, on the other hand, not only adores and respects her, but he can not seem to hold back the yearning he has been suppressing during their relationship. Edward believes he has set her free and that they will confront "this important occasion, this dividing line of experience together" as they make their way to the bedroom, but Florence is frigid and devoid of emotion. His violent tongue licks annoy and irritate her, and all she can think about is "not struggling, not gagging, not panicking" (ibid, p. 36). McEwan indicates that her father may have assaulted or raped her as a youngster by tiny distinctions in the language (ibid, pp. 61-123). If this is accurate, it would explain her nervousness and dislike of sex, since her ego has most likely suppressed any sexual cravings the id would have in order to survive. Intercourse is no longer associated with the gratification of desire, but rather with pain and discomfort, according to the pleasure principle. She tries to gather herself, but she knows she is completely wrong. Even though she understands that marrying Edward obligates her to have sex with him, she is horrified by the prospect. Edward misinterprets her groans of remorse and unhappiness, leading the reader to believe she is just as thrilled as he is. Then she has an unexpected feeling of pleasure and desire, but she wants to take things slowly. Edward refused to take things slowly and he wanted to do it as soon as possible. Edward has been anticipating this moment and leaps on top of her. She is dissatisfied, yet unable to articulate her feelings. Florence, "unable to articulate her primordial loathing," wipes herself hastily with a pillow and dashes to the shore (McEwan, p. 131).

She is ashamed of her conduct and resentful of her own failure. In contrast to Freud's failure, such a reaction is understandable when one considers the central function of guilt in the super-control ego over the ego. Despite the fact that "sexual love – as one of the modes in which love manifests itself – has provided us with our most intense experience of an overpowering sensation of pleasure and so furnished us with a template for our pursuit for happiness" (Civilization and Its Discontents, p. 33) In Florence's instance, the super-ego has integrated the culture's expectations that a woman provides her body for the satisfaction of the man, and Florence's failure to fulfill this obligation has triggered the super-guilt Ego. Because intercourse is no longer associated with pleasure, the ego has little to do with mediating between the id and the super-ego. Edward is left in the room, confused and ashamed, but his embarrassment quickly turns to rage, and he goes down to the beach to face her. She believes she has

acted "abhorrently", yet her shame has turned to frustration and rage (*Civilization and Its Discontents*, p.170). They secretly admit their own role in the events, but they accuse one another and start a quarrel based on past fear and difficulties that have never been expressed. Florence promises to let Edward have anyone else while she remains his wife and companion in every other way in an attempt to reconcile and still believes she is wrong. The offer insults him even more because he only wants her. He attacks her, accusing her of being frigid, and she returns home alone, feeling miserable and worthless (McEwan, p. 195).

The reader is compelled to sympathize with each of them, as McEwan clearly desires. They can not move past their own psychological hurdles at night when they are so pleased to be in love and dedicated to each other. Florence genuinely wants to be a decent wife, but her background has left her scarred. Edward is a completely normal man who only wants to satisfy his sexual desire in a healthy, socially acceptable context, and he does not realize why Florence is being held back. They are deeply in love with one other, but they are unable to understand, express, or fulfill their wishes in a way that allows them to save the relationship. The novel perfectly illustrates why Sigmund Freud believed the society was such a problem for the human psyche: "Displacement of instinct is an especially conspicuous feature of cultural development" (*Civilization and Its Discontents*, p. 51), but one is compelled to participate in a community in order to fulfill instincts and desires like love (sexual and emotional) and aggression. Unlike the characters in McEwan's early fiction, the protagonists are flawed not by overindulging their impulses, but by exercising extreme self-control. They are products of their time, when "respectable" individuals, particularly women, did not engage in extramarital affairs. Edward is a passionate and expressive person, but during their romance, he controls his desires and instincts for Florence. Then, plagued with feelings of inadequacy and embarrassment on their wedding night, he is unable to explain his sentiments to her. After that, his pride prevents him from contacting her for fear of further rejection, and years later, with the sexual revolution of the 1960s, he discovers that her offer was not so unusual after all, but rather "an act of self-sacrifice he had quite failed to comprehend" (196), and she can not reveal her own concerns and follow Edward into the future because she is ashamed and irreversibly scarred by her past. Florence's father gave in to his own desires without regard to society's morals or expectations, permanently harming Florence's sensual side and, as a result, her most

important connection. Florence rejected all sexual connections with Edward because of her troubled background that she had with her father.

The reader will find a new side of McEwan in these latest volumes. A shift from writing intended to shock and astonish to exult in man's and the world's fragmentation and defy any attempt at optimism to works of deep feeling and struggle, infused with strands of hope and sorrow. There is a voyage toward truth via art including both his own and the art forms he incorporates into his novels; a truth that is never defined but always sought. McEwan succeeds in masterfully presenting the human condition by creating characters that are not only entertaining but also heartbreakingly human in their struggles to reconcile their desires with their consciences. *On Chesil Beach* is not only a reflection on the passage of time: "The principal characters aren't ciphers, playing roles imposed by that historical moment". They are more nuanced characters than this implies, with private backgrounds that make the novella's crisis emotional (rather than historical) (Head, p. 121).

What he means is that Edward and Florence are more than the products of their postwar traditional education and upbringing. There are other more personal sources of conflict within them. On the one hand, Florence's tumultuous relationship with her father, and on the other hand, Edward and Florence's tumultuous relationship with their mother. On the other hand, despite being physically present, Edward's mother is mentally and emotionally distant due to a brain injury sustained in an accident (she was hit on the head by a train door when she was pregnant with Edward's twin sisters). Again, the link to *On Chesil Beach* appears to echo with the concluding lines of Arnold's poem, "And we are here as on a darkling plain Swept with confused alarms of battle and flight, where ignorant armies clash by night," emphasizing the precariousness of human existence. The disturbing character of the water confronts the virtually Adam and Eve forms that the two lovers symbolize, connoting a sense of dispersed loss that is part and parcel of the human predicament. The twin nature of the sea has been encoded in the language since Antiquity, as Bjorn Thomasson explains: "The ancient Greeks had two words for the sea". Pelagos was the standard by which the sea was referred to as a simple "fact". Pontos also meant the sea in front of the human person, a test to overcome, a threshold to cross, an open sea to traverse, a hazard, and a task. (Thomasson, P.21). The liminality of the sea appears to summarize the various dimensions present in McEwan's recurring scene: the transition from one state to

another and from innocence to experience, the sense of ephemerality and insignificance evoked by the ocean's immensity, and the arousal of antagonistic feelings towards an unbeatable foe, whether it is the unknown ability. Florence wanted to sprint from her room, over the gardens, down the lane, and onto the beach to sit alone, and the beachscape provided her with an escape route (ibid, p. 32).

When the two lovers eventually have a dialogue about what occurred to them in the hotel room, Edward's divided identity caused by the comments placed on his mother's condition appears to be impossible to reveal. The beachscape and the presence of the water, rather than assisting individuals in discovering their "real selves," appear to reinforce a state of interstitial, liminal being in which one is never fully present. When confronted with the tactile, non-optical environment that the beachscape depicts, the self becomes drained and amplified, and, in a sense, stuck in liminality once more: Edward becomes 'unreadable, [a] two-dimensional shape' (ibid, p. 154).

As a result, vision, particularly vision of the Other, reverts to a transient sensation, emphasizing the other's basic unknowability. Edward and Florence's symmetrically botched visions parallel their failed attempts to comprehend each other in the novel's final scene. As the characters' outlines fade, they lose their three-dimensionality, transforming into 'glowing' or 'gleaming' points, as vision appears to be an impressionistic style of perception. Edward and Florence tried their best to understand and comprehend each other, but both of them denied the fact of the condition and blamed one another for not understanding. However, as Didi-Huberman says, seeing each other across the beachscape includes a loss as well as an amplification of perception, as both characters appear to be caught in a transient yet timeless moment of being. Both psychoanalysis and literature are pictured here as forming themselves through a state of 'not-knowing,' refusing to be classified as either fantasy or reality textually. The importance of this "not-knowing" in terms of "truth" may lie in its fundamental undercutting of positivist distinctions between imagination and reality. This has been characterized by Burgin et al. as follows: Psychoanalysis does not aim to find objective reasons in reality so much as it aims to influence our perceptions of it (Burgin, 2006). This is accomplished by essentially deconstructing as an epiphenomenon of the positivist dichotomy in which fantasy is simply opposed to "reality". Psychoanalysis reveals the ostensibly peripheral dream operations at the heart of our perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors. Contrary to psychologism, psychoanalysis

does not recognize a condition of completely clear and self-possessed clarity in which an external reality may be seen and known for what it is. There is no such thing as an 'end to ideas'. According to Lynn Wells, McEwan's fiction has been most sensitive in its investigation of elemental ethics in its descriptions of literal face-to-face confrontations moments when he pits particular characters against one another at vital points of [ethical] decision, since his "ethical shift" in the 1980s. *On Chesil Beach's* reception "has been defined by continued attention to its setting, the place but also the period, a particular historical juncture in 1962," according to the author. 'The admission to the present must necessarily take the form of an archaeology, an archaeology that... returns to that part of the present in which we are utterly incapable of living,' as stated by Giorgio Agamben. Indeed, McEwan says that *On Chesil Beach* is not a historical novel, but rather an examination of "a human universal," being about much more than sex in the 1960s.

Alain Badiou's views on an event and love illuminate how the unexpected occurs in our lives and how lovers can remain lovers. They said in explaining why the central characters in this novel have such a disastrous wedding night, as well as how the implied narrator inquiries into their failed marriage and what the characters should have done. Situations, according to Badiou, can be found wherever. A circumstance is made up of things that are dissimilar to one another but are presented (or counted) as if they are the same. After that, these elements are represented. "Because scenarios can overlap, a person can be a part of several of them; each of which is organized differently" (Badiou, *Logics of Worlds*, p. 101). A musician, for example, can be a part of both his regular life and the musical context he creates when performing. An unexpected occurrence in a scenario is referred to as an event. Nobody can predict it since people perceive things based on the dominant rules for portraying reality in any given context. Some aspects in each circumstance compose the void because they are invisible according to representational criteria (Badiou, *Being and Event*, p. 87). When an event erupts, it emerges from the space between the imperceptible and the barely perceptible (Badiou, *Being and Event*, pp. 87-175). Immigrant laborers, for example, who are voiceless and hardly visible inside a culture, can erupt in unpredictably violent revolts. Badiou does not take the existence of a subject for granted, as it is only created when it decides to take an event seriously. The event "compel[s] [the enquirer of an event, the subject] to decide a new mode of being" (Badiou, *Logics of Worlds*, p. 452)



since it "makes appear what was before overlooked". A subject investigates an event to stay faithful to it by connecting elements in the situation to it to better understand its nature and cause. In this approach, the subject's view of reality transcends societal representation, and the truth they discover is subjective because only the enquirer of an event can perceive it. No enquirer can exhaust the investigation of these without understanding all of the factors in the case, thereby implying that this subjective truth is a process whose conclusion remains in question. Badiou believes that morality is not a collection of fixed laws, but rather that virtue is defined by a person's ability to keep inquiring about an event, and that interrupting this process of producing truth is evil (Badiou, *Ethics*, p. 85).

McEwan focuses the reader's attention in *On Chesil Beach* on the element of denial and displacement in the form of love and the necessity for lovers to continually recreate it with an occurrence that occurs shortly after the novel begins. On the night of Edward and Florence's wedding, catastrophe strikes. Florence tries to guide her new husband in their lovemaking using a marriage guidebook, but instead of that, it causes him to ejaculate prematurely. When the central protagonists part on the sand in *On Chesil Beach*, something irreparable happens according to Byrnes (Byrnes, p. 10). This unstoppable event occurs when Florence, dissatisfied by her inability to meet social norms in the bedroom, concocts the idea of sexless love, which enrages Edward, who incorrectly concludes she must be cold. Their marriage quickly comes to an end as a result of misunderstanding over what transpired on that fateful night. On the beach, Edward and Florence are aware that a mutual misunderstanding may have occurred, but they fail to take advantage of the several opportunities to correct the situation. After the couple's parting on the beach, the narrator says little about Florence, and there is no trace of her later inquiry into the matter. Florence, according to Byrnes, finds distraction in music on her wedding night because she neither wants to recall nor dares to confront reality (Byrnes, p. 34). Because she is lost in a new setting, she is more inclined to seek comfort from her familiar world of music. Florence's actions are reminiscent of what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari argue about territorializing refrains in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*: a youngster sings a song in the dark to locate "a calming and stabilizing... core in the midst of chaos". Florence thinks about music in *On Chesil Beach* because it is a known and safe area for her, but her reliance on the familiar deprives her of the chance to be with Edward on her wedding night. After that

night, she seemed to seek refuge in music. She goes on to become a renowned violinist many years later, and she never speaks to Edward again, presumably because she does not want to know what happened at that tragic night. Edward also fails to investigate the night of the wedding in any detail. He accuses Florence of failing to fulfill her wifely duties on the beach, and afterward, when he remembers her, he recalls their happy days. Edward blamed Florence for not treating him like her husband. 'This is how the entire course of a life may be changed—by doing nothing' (McEwan, *On Chesil Beach*, p. 202). The narrator of the novel states about Edward's loss in the end: 'He did not know, or would not have cared to know, that as she raced away from him... she had never loved him more...' She would have turned back if the sound of his voice had been a deliverance' (ibid, p. 203).

The narrator is the Badiouean enquirer instead of the primary protagonist, because the narrator is highly concerned with what occurs on that wedding night, and recounts a story to explain why love fails to connect the two individuals. When writing *On Chesil Beach*, McEwan stated he used terms like "wry, tolerant, forgiving, and all-seeing" in his notes on the narrator. This description suggests that the narrator has made every effort to comprehend the major characters' situation. The narrator as an enquirer, on the other hand, is what Edward could have been if he had decided to investigate his wedding night in greater depth. After narrating their wedding night, the narrator enters Florence's awareness, and when the marriage ends, the narrator just talks about Edward's thoughts and actions. The narrator's silence about Florence suggests that he is looking into the past of Edward. The narrator's role as enquirer can also be viewed as a stand-in for McEwan. In an interview, McEwan stated that he views novels as exploratory forms of research into human nature in its broadest and greatest sense. *On Chesil Beach* opens with a circumstance ripe for exploration: "They were young, educated, and both virgins on their wedding night, and they lived in a time when discourse about sexual difficulties was simply unthinkable" (McEwan, 2007, p. 142) McEwan builds a problem-solving structure by building on this predicament and its repercussions, as well as elucidating the primary characters' thoughts and pasts in order to investigate the couple's challenges on their wedding night.

When people are confronted with strangeness, they have the option of either understanding and accommodating the situation or rejecting it by "projecting it completely onto outsiders" (Richard Kearney, p. 22). Because this obsession distorts

their understanding of the past and makes current communication more difficult, Edward and Florence's obsession with identity denies them the opportunity to accommodate the experience of each other's otherness, undermining their efforts to reconstruct their love when Florence flees to the beach and is later found by Edward. Edward tries to talk about the bedroom disaster on the beach, but their conversation quickly devolves into mutual accusations. There are various reasons why they are at odds with one another. To begin, as Peter Goldie points out, one must be of the appropriate emotional disposition to navigate the world and obtain knowledge about it. When Edward and Florence meet on the beach, they have already formed opinions about each other to defend their own self-images, despite their memories' elusiveness and selectiveness. When speaking of the lovers' first encounter, the narrator previously revealed the unreliability of memory, saying "Memory unhelpfully substituted something she couldn't yet have heard—the faint country twang in his speech" (McEwan, p. 75).

Florence, on the other hand, is "ashamed" (McEwan, p. 170) and is unable to confront the reality of their disastrous sexual encounter. 'Shame is the index of an unheard of, frightening proximity of man with himself,' as stated by Agamben (Agamben, p. 24). Fearful of her self-image being shattered and the potential of another person, Florence imagines Edward suffering from "some type of hereditary sickness" (McEwan, *On Chesil Beach*, p. 171) and feels robbed, even if she should have questioned her repulsion at his sperm. When Edward accuses Florence of fleeing the bedroom to disgrace him, Florence remains silent (McEwan, *On Chesil Beach*, p. 181). Instead, she responds, 'It's no less than you deserve when you can't even control yourself,' referring to his ejaculation (*ibid*, p. 181). Each of them blames the other and both of them refused to take the responsibility for the condition while both of them did mistakes on their first night. Edward responds with more verbal attacks as a result of this response. When Edward and Florence split on Chesil Beach, they have no idea what went wrong in the bedroom or why they could not communicate on the beach. Even if Florence, when she can no longer bear the pressure, points out their mistake in being consumed with their identities and proposes a sexless type of love, they are still preoccupied with themselves rather than each other. As a result, their encounter at that night becomes a repressed memory that haunts them because it was never fully explored. Edward discovers, forty years after the catastrophic wedding night, that:

‘Love and patience—if only he had had them both at once—would surely have seen them both through’ (McEwan, *On Chesil Beach* 202–03). Patience relates to the necessity to take pain to comprehend the other's otherness, whereas love refers to the reconstruction of love. The lovers' failure to study the stones in on Chesil Beach is due to their lack of patience.

McEwan utilizes the narrator's inquisitiveness to demonstrate how to reach mutual understanding and deal with the forces that drive individuals. When the narrator examines the overlapping segment, the narrator makes evident components that were previously invisible in the major characters' various situations, thereby putting light on their common struggles. The narrator examines the world of 1962 to show how this cultural context ‘provides “individuals not only with views of how relationships are supposed to develop but also with vocabularies for representing relationship growth”’ in addition to highlighting language's inability to present reality and the distortion of meaning caused by emotions. (Noland, P.48). According to the narrator, Edward and Florence “lived at a time when a discourse about sexual troubles was simply unthinkable” (McEwan, p. 3). ‘It was still the era—it would end later in that renowned decade—when being young was a social burden. Individuals are not truly masters of themselves, hence social settings are important. Edward's passion for Florence [is] inseparable from the surroundings’ while he lives in Florence's house before the marriage. ‘Her ideas [do] not seem her own—they were piped down to her, thoughts instead of oxygen,’ Florence says as she enters the bedroom on the wedding night. Only an external observer may see the uncountried in a situation, according to Badiou, without the eruption of an event (Badiou, *Ethics*, p. 134). Because of the many angles of view used in *On Chesil Beach*, the enquirer might see things from a different perspective.

In *On Chesil Beach*, McEwan concentrates on the couple's failure to accomplish in order to emphasize the hazards of a safety-first approach to love. Because of their primary concern for personal safety, Florence foregoes sexual love for fear of being harmed again, thus privately wishing for Edward's return, while Edward engages in multiple love affairs, “like a confused and delighted child,” reveling in “the sudden guiltless elevation of physical pleasure”. Edward had a brief marriage and is unconcerned with others in the society: he distrusts “the “straight” press since everyone [knows] it [is] controlled by the state”—a notion he subsequently disowns (ibid, p. 197)—and forgets his aim to write history books about minor figures and serious

studies. Edward's failure to notice Florence's otherness on their wedding night echoes his later changed understanding of the press and his becoming a godfather to five children in his old age recalls the importance of caring for socially marginalized people and the difficulties in trying to understand the eclipsed reality.

The fixation with identification, which can impede people's attempts to comprehend one other, is a fundamental barrier to mutual understanding. Because it takes time and love to realize the otherness of others, it is no surprise that the most stunning image in the story is the stones on *On Chesil Beach* that separate Edward and Florence, which are sorted into different sizes by the waves. McEwan highlights the importance of the characters moving past their fixation with identity and seeing one other's otherness by concluding the novel with Edward's failure to call Florence back—and she would have turned back—as she walked away on the shore. Because the major characters' reality connects with ours, the writing of *On Chesil Beach* can be considered as an event as well. When it comes to where the new originates from, Badiou emphasizes the relevance of the uncountried in a situation, because an enquirer makes the reformation of the condition possible by making visible what was previously invisible. When readers take the novel's lesson seriously, they can begin caring for people who are easily forgotten in ordinary life, in addition to considering the folly of safety-first love. What is required at the conclusion of *On Chesil Beach* is not a continuation of the key characters' feud, but a simple proclamation of love by concluding on an emotional note.

The final chapter flashes forward to a future in which Florence has achieved great success as a violinist. Miss Pointing, in the melodic beauty of her tone and the lyrical delicacy of her phrasing, played... like a lady in love, not merely with Mozart, or with music, but with life itself," according to one critic (ibid, p. 198). Edward, however, is unaware of this. Once again, McEwan demonstrates that art contains the truth, a key to humanity, but if it is left unseen or underappreciated, it is rendered powerless in the face of the lover's divine. However, Edward realizes that he should behold his emotion at that time and understand his partner's feeling instead of accusing her of loyalty related to her interest in him.

## CONCLUSION

Unquestionably, McEwan's writings have developed throughout the years, just as people and their relationships do. This study has shown the effect of Freudian theory denial and displacement on Ian McEwan's characters in the novel. Both McEwan and his characters aimed to achieve a psychological balance by tempering their main wants. In both novels, the main characters of the story attempt to use all of their power to solve their undesirable feelings. Both novels were before the sexual revolution and created a condition for the characters to completely miscomprehend the condition that they are in. All of Ian McEwan's characters were looking to find a person or a thing to transform their depressed desires and wishes.

All of the characters in *Atonement* and *On Chesil Beach* denied stations in different ways. Briony, the main character of *Atonement*, misunderstood the conditions around her and she accused Robbie of a crime that in reality he did not do it. Briony's reality changed to such an extent by her imagined texts that the individuals around her become characters that are reflected both in her reality narrative and in her imagined narrative. For the protection of her sister, Briony displaced all her anger and repression on Robbie by accusing him of raping her, and eventually, he was sent to jail. The reason that made Briony deny the reality and go with the fictional world is her lack of attention from her parents and she totally finds herself alone which consequently ends up with her misunderstanding the situation between her sister and Robbie. Furthermore, Briony did every possible attempt to make things right according to her thoughts and as a result, she puts all anxieties on others, and she dealt with other people as her character in her tale "The Trails of Arabella". Similarly, Florence, in *On Chesil Beach*, was in denial of reality because she miscomprehends the situation that she was in. Florence could not understand the idea of sex and she refused to have it with Edward. Just like Briony, Florence was in a high middle class, but she had no mother emotionally and no one there to be her guide to teach her about sex. Subsequently, Florence blames Edward for not understanding her and she puts all her anger and depression that she felt, on her first night by listening to music, but it did not comfort her. Both Briony and Florence failed to understand the reality and they simply ignore it.

Edward, from *On Chesil beach*, loved his wife, but on their first night, they failed to deal with it and end up in divorce. Edward denied responsibility for the situation and blamed Florence for treating him well. Edward displaced all his anxiety

and anger on Florence and blamed her for not treating him like her husband. Also, Edward felt embarrassed if he could not finish it on his first night. Whenever Florence tried to speak, he did not listen to her and refused to accept the reality of not treating her well. Edward had no experience and information about sex and how to get it done. Instead, he blamed her and transformed his inability of the situation to Florence. Robbie, from *Atonement*, was the most oppressed character in the story. He was in a low class and he was accused of committing a crime that he did not do it. Every possible right that he had as a human being is denied because of his class in society. Robbie like other characters in the story suffered a lot but, he was not successful in transforming his anger and anxieties to others; Robbie lived with Tall's family and his mother's work did not let him displace his fear on others.

The time of both stories was before the sexual revolution when talking about sex was not normal among people, especially couples. In *On Chesil Beach* novel, the parent's guidance was completely unavailable. Edward and Florence did not have any information about the sexual encounter and the first night. Their parents did not teach them anything to understand the situation that every couple during marriage will face. The misunderstanding of their condition ruined their marriage, and their parents take responsibility for it. The society totally denied the reality of sex and abandoned talking about sex and marriage time. Robbie and Cecilia, in *Atonement*, spent their most of life apart because of Cecilia's Briony who accused Robbie of raping. Their parents were not with them emotionally. Cecilia's mother always blamed her for her study as she thought girls should not go to school. She completely defended Briony's imagination and fiction and totally refused the reality of her other daughters and her boyfriend. Robbie's mother was working for Tall's family and she was not showing any rules of life and she did not support him. Both couples' fathers were unavailable. In other words, the society denied the reality of couples from the low class and high class to live together.

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