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# The Representation of Masculinity in Postmodern British Literature: the Case of Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love (1997)*

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Master Degree in Civilization and Literature

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# Dedication

This work is dedicated to my beautiful mother first and foremost. Without your constant support and encouragement, I would have never done this. May the All-mighty Allah grant you a long and happy life dear mother.

Father!...I know I can't thank you enough, but I wish this would make you happy and proud of me.

This is dedicated for my lovely sisters, too, all of you.

I would also love to dedicate this to my best friends *Hajer* and *Lilia.* I truly appreciate your love and support.

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# Abstract

By the late twentieth century, masculinity studies have evolved to become a major multidisciplinary field. Today, much of masculinity studies seem to be concentrating on the analysis of cinematic and literary representations of masculinity. In this light, the study at hand sought to critically examine the portrayal of masculinity in postmodern fiction, namely in *Enduring Love* (1997) by the British writer Ian Russell McEwan. The descriptive approach, as well as the analytical approach, were used to conduct this study. The former helped to establish conceptual and theoretical foundations for the study, while the latter helped find adequate answers to certain queries and issues by examining the social, cultural and psychological contexts in *Enduring Love*. The analysis was based on major contributions to men's studies by the most prominent figures from the field like Raewyn Connell and Judith Butler, in addition to other masculinity critics. From psychology, Freud's theory of "the Uncanny" was of paramount importance. The study ultimately revealed that masculinity is transitory, flexible and questionable. It is constructed within particular socio-cultural and historical contexts and changes according to the circumstances within which it resides. It also signified the crucial role of the individual's psychological state in the construction, deconstruction and alteration of the masculine identity. It is, thus, highly recommended to emphasize the psychological elements when examining literary masculinities, to further widen the interpretations.

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# *General Introduction*

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Unlike feminism, masculinity is one the most pressing issues considered to be central to current thinking and research; and studies of men and masculinities are considered a more recent academic field in comparison to women's studies which dominated gender studies for quite a long time. This field drew incredible attention from sociology, psychology, anthropology and history. Accordingly, studies on masculinities have grown unusually and significantly over the past twenty years. Studies on literary masculinities, particularly, grew surprisingly and significantly during the late 1990s, in search of further interpretations for literary texts.

In the 20$^{th}$ century, on the other hand, gender relations and masculinity have become one of the most recurring issues in art, philosophy and literature, mainly in Anglo-American fiction. In tandem with the rise of the revolutionary postmodernist thought in the late 1960s, radical social, cultural and political developments were coming about which granted writers the chance to investigate and explore gender-related subjects from new different perspectives. Novelists and short story writers tackled gender roles as well as modern men relations and examined the changing nature of masculinity in light of the huge alterations in culture, art, politics, economy, and most recently ecology.

Considering the aforementioned world-changing processes, also entailing a sexual revolution and the spread of feminist movements, which led to a different perception of masculinity and men's gender and sexual identity, critics and artists began to pay more and more attention to gender issues, focusing primarily on issues related to masculinity. A number of authors focused on the male subject matter by exploring, reexamining and redefining the changing status of men, their social role, personality and identity in the post-modern world.

Among many novelists dealing with gender politics, namely masculinity subjects, is the British Ian Russell McEwan. As a postmodern author operating in a British socio-cultural context, he eloquently and realistically portrayed turbulent and usually very ambiguous male-

female and male-male relationships in his late twentieth-century fiction, focusing on the depiction of major changes in the psychological and social status of men. Because he typically writes from a male perspective, mostly about male characters, and addresses an inferred male reader, McEwan is invariably referred to as a masculine author, especially for his early fiction.

We may come across a plethora of various themes and issues throughout Ian McEwan's literary oeuvre and artistic career, but they are all somehow closely related to men-women and men-men interrelation, love, desire, and the sexual and psychological worlds of male and female characters. One cannot help but recognize that the author, in the early phases of his literary career, vividly and deeply explores the world of men, their intricate personalities, psyches, troubled lives, and invariably their obsession with love and art, as well as their defiance of British society's expectations and conventions.

Ian McEwan's sixth novel, *Enduring Love,* is hugely relevant to the problematics of masculinity. He certainly appears passionate about exposing obscure aspects of men's lives, both men on the margin and men on the periphery, across his writings, as this novel demonstrates. The novel, in fact, indicates a more mature phase in the author's literary oeuvre.

In *Enduring Love,* McEwan sets various themes that would return frequently in his writing, most remarkably the emphasis on the psychological depth, moral complexities, highly ambiguous male-female and male-male relations in the postmodern world and, most predominantly, the impact of madness on the human psyche, particularly on the mindset of a man. This novel, thus, does offer an exploration of the dilemmas of male identity and the changing gender statuses. However, literary criticism has not yet addressed *Enduring Love* through the lens of masculinity thoroughly. In fact, the little existing literature that analyzed masculinity in the novel was based on a heteronormative approach towards gender and

masculinity. It is, thus, this limited scope in the existing literature that motivated this research, in order to allow for a variety of interpretations.

In this light, the study at hand aims to examine the representation of masculinity in *Enduring Love*, to illustrate the fluid and evolving nature of masculinity as experienced and articulated by the male characters and to emphasize McEwan's attitudes to and points of reference to the male subject matter.

Correspondingly, this study has led to the emergence of this crucial query: how is masculinity presented in *Enduring Love?* Subsequently, this question has generated the following sub-questions that require more investigation: How does the psyche affect the masculine identity? Is the term "masculinity" equivalent to "heterosexuality"? And finally, how does *Enduring Love* encompass the genre of postmodernism?

In seeking out answers to the aforementioned questions, this study contends that masculinity is most probably depicted as an ambiguous, subversive and changing construct since the novel is set within a postmodern context that called into question the universalities. It also assumes that culture and society have a huge impact on masculinity. And finally, because McEwan operates in a postmodern society, he, supposedly, does not affirm conventional masculine constructs but rather questions them.

Literary criticism has given Ian McEwan's writings a great deal of attention. *Enduring Love*, particularly, has been well received and acclaimed by both readers and literary critics, who offered insightful readings and interpretations of it from different angles, to name but a few, evolutionary psychology, narrative unreliability, "madness", and the long-running "two cultures" debate; nevertheless, the literature review indicates that *Enduring love* has drawn very little scholarly attention in the theme of masculinity.

Shafagh Jahanroshan and Zohreh Ramin in their article entitled, “Masculine Crisis in Ian McEwan’s *Enduring Love*” (2015), opine that *Enduring Love* is a representation of what has characterized masculinity in the post-war British society, in other words, it reflects the masculinity crisis men were going through after losing their roles as the only rulers, providers and controllers in the society. Because women were able to hold positions in society as well, men, according to Jahanroshan and Ramin, cannot demonstrate their masculinity by acting alone in it. Joe Rose's partner, Clarissa, is a successful expert on Keats and the study of Romantic literature, which puts Joe Rose's masculinity in jeopardy, as they advance. They explore how the male protagonist’s masculinity goes under crisis and what the result of this crisis is, with a special emphasis on the feminine element in the novel. What they confirm, however, is that masculine crisis exists within men although their lives.

Magdalena Popiel, in her Article entitled “Masculinity versus Femininity: Constructions of Gender in Ian McEwan’s Fiction” (2018), addresses masculinity in opposition to femininity by comparing the depiction of the male and female protagonists. Popiel contends that *Enduring Love* unveils the constant gender conflict by exhibiting a typical male-female opposition. According to her, the way Joe and Clarissa deal with their grief after the tragic balloon accident pushes them to rethink their relationship because it brings their different world views and personalities into conflict, something that brings up the male-female gender issue to the surface. And every time a problem arises, the solution process highlights or exacerbates the gender conflict. She argues that though the incident has hurt them both, almost equally, it has unanticipated effects that seriously damage their relationship. Joe and Clarissa don't just act differently; they also have trouble communicating with one another. This leads them to start viewing one another through the lens of gender stereotypes. Moreover, their marriage is on the verge of disintegrating due to their drastically different responses to shock and their inability to tolerate one another's misbehaviour. She opines that

Joe and Clarissa provide a different take on the male-female conflict that involves divergent worldviews. The "emotionalism-rationalism" confrontation they embody revives the male-female issue as Joe's analytical and Clarissa's emotional responses to the balloon accident ultimately separate them.

In "'Please, look at me': Masculinity, (In)visibility and Vulnerability in Ian McEwan's Tale of Madness," (2021), the author, Diane Gagneret, too, offers a sort of comparison by analyzing heterosexuality against homosexuality. She argues that *Enduring Love* does not merely portray a dominant hegemonic model of masculinity, it does simultaneously give other marginalized masculinities to operate in the novel and, thus, in the real world, through Jed Parry's character. If Magdalena Popiel compares female emotionalism against male rationalism, then Gagneret is more concerned with male-male relations, notably the conflict between male rationalism and male mania. She argues that *Enduring Love* establishes McEwan as a committed writer, who tends to reveal the interrelated interactions between men, however the difference between them is. She further contends that the main protagonist's depiction, Joe Rose as a rationalist man facing a madman, Jed Parry, embodies the invisible presence of marginal masculinity, however, it simultaneously breaks down the binary opposition of the outsiders and the so-called insiders of the society by making alternative masculinities seen and heard.

One cannot fail to notice that the few studies that have directly or indirectly analyzed the representation of manhood in McEwan's *Enduring Love*, and perhaps most of McEwan's literature, have focused almost exclusively and entirely on the heteronormative aspect of masculinity, namely Joe Rose's character. They do neglect the fact that masculinity is a fluid and multilayered construct, as will be explained in chapter one. The present study, however, addresses masculinity as a disembodied phenomenon, outside the confines of biological sex

and sexual desire, and does not restrict it to the socio-cultural contexts only, but rather examines the psychological and mental spheres within which it resides.

The significance of examining the representation of masculinity in *Enduring Love* will help address the current shortage of research in this area, in a narrow sense. However, in a broader sense, investigating masculinity in fiction uncovers the effects of cultural conceptions of manhood on the daily and private real lives of men, by stepping away from analyzing the universal, and rarely tangible, themes.

This study will be utilizing the descriptive approach in order to have an in-depth understanding of McEwan's depiction of masculinity by establishing theoretical and literary foundations. Alongside the descriptive approach is the analytical approach. It will be adopted in order to find adequate answers for certain queries and issues by examining the social, cultural and psychological contexts in *Enduring Love* because it considers the feelings, drives, symbols and their interpretations, empathetic qualities, and other subjective features connected to people's lives. Also, the use of an analytical approach aids in discovering and understanding a set of nonverbal as well as verbal cues in textual analysis. It really engages the researcher in the interpretation of the text being studied.

This research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is an introductory chapter that is dedicated to the theoretical background of the study. It will explain some key terms that are considered crucial for understanding the researched topic. Then it will underline the main theoretical contributions in the field of masculinity studies by major critics and scholars from different disciplinary fields such as sociology, anthropology and psychology; it will be discussing the main ideas of Connell (1995), Butler (1990), Reeser (2010) and from psychology Freud's theory of "the Uncanny" to spotlight the intersection of masculinity and psychology, since the case study is a psychological thriller. Finally, this chapter will provide

other necessary information to help the reader place the subject of masculinity in its most familiar context.

As for the second chapter, it will be an analysis of *Enduring Love* in the light of postmodern theories and notions. It will reveal postmodern elements and features in the novel since the emergence of postmodernism has, directly and indirectly, altered perceptions and representations of men and masculinities.

Exploring the representations of masculinity in McEwan's *Enduring Love* is the main focus of the last chapter, through the lenses of sociology, anthropology and most importantly psychology. Therefore, masculinity will be addressed as a fluid, changing and multilayered construct in order to allow for a set of multiple, flexible and unlimited interpretations of male characters' attitudes and behaviours.

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# *Chapter One:*

## *Conceptual and Theoretical Backgrounds for the Study*

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## Introduction

The critical studies of men and masculinities are considered a more recent academic field in comparison to women's studies which dominated gender studies for quite a long time. Masculinities studies have evolved surprisingly and significantly over the last two decades. This field signalled out for incredible attention from sociology, psychology, anthropology and history. All these disciplinary fields determined that masculinity is historically, culturally and socially constructed. The aim has always been to provide insights into the origins and manifestations of male power and dominance, investigate how masculine identities are developed and performed, and clarify the differences and similarities between men as individuals or as a community with regard to sex, sexuality, identity, culture, and other recurrent social issues within a wide range of disciplinary fields among which literature. This chapter, therefore, is intended to provide a lively, comprehensive and thorough theoretical background. It will provide definitions of certain operational terms first. Then it will tackle the major theories of masculinity and discuss their main ideas. This chapter will contextualize masculinity by explaining the cultural and historical settings within which masculinities reside, by the end of this chapter.

## 1.1 Defining Key Terms:

It is very important to shed light on some operational terms in order to have a better understanding of the study.

**1.1.1 Gender:** is a social concept that refers to the socio-cultural characteristics, norms, behaviours and roles assigned to people based on sexuality; it involves all the attitudes and activities associated with being a "man" or a "woman" and relationships between them. Gender is defined by what an individual feels and does, too.

**1.1.2 Gender Roles:** refer to a society's expectations of people's attitudes and behaviours assigned to one's sex. These are generally considered acceptable, appropriate and standard. Gender roles are usually predicated on the predominant conceptions of masculinity and femininity, although there are some peculiarities and variations. Behaviours, clothing, profession, and social and personal relationships, in addition to other factors, are considered representatives of gender roles. These factors change depending on socio-cultural and historical circumstances. Traditionally, gender roles place men in the public sphere while women are placed in the private sphere.

**1.1.3 Masculinity:** (also called manhood, manliness) is a broad set of attributes, behaviours, and roles associated with men and boys. It also encompasses gender practices and gender relations between men and women. Standards of masculinity vary across cultural, social and historical contexts. It is not related to biological and physical traits only as anyone can exhibit masculine traits. Masculinity is, therefore, a fluid, dynamic and polylithic construct. Todd Reeser (2010) points out:

> By defining masculinity against that which it is not: femininity, effeminacy, emasculation – it then becomes possible to identify non-male masculinities, for when masculinity is 'taken as a disembodied phenomenon, existing on its own outside the confines of a given type of body', then traits previously attributed to manliness such as power and virility 'can be considered on their own terms, without regard for the sex of the body possessing them. (131)

**1.1.4 Hegemonic Masculinity:**

Hegemonic masculinity is another commonly used term besides masculinity. it describes the successful means and manners of "being a man" in specific places at a certain time (Kimmel 1994; Connel 1995). According to Rewyn Connell, hegemonic masculinity is "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the

problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (77).

Conceptually, hegemonic masculinity tends to explain how and why men establish dominant social roles over women, and other gender identities. As its name indicates, hegemonic masculinity is based on power which is a crucial factor, and achievement, or through consensual negotiation; in other words, it refers to the cultural dynamics by means of which a social group claims, and sustains, a leading and dominant position in a social hierarchy. Hegemonic masculine values are embedded within people's structures and practices. Hegemonic masculinity was formulated to include gender hierarchy, geography, social aspects, and the psycho-social dynamics of the varieties of masculinity.

## 1.2 The Study of Masculinity:

The study of masculinity in British universities has increasingly become the focus of attention since 1990. Despite all the doubts and uncertainty regarding the viability of the existence of masculinity, it was largely scrutinized and placed under the "microscope" in an unprecedented way. It has, in fact, become an interdisciplinary field of study as many academic disciplines like biology, anthropology, psychology and sociology grew huge interest in studying and teaching masculinities. Most of these disciplines, if not all of them, have established a great body of theoretical body of knowledge stressing the idea that masculinity is socially and historically, not biologically, constructed as confirmed by several scholars and researchers like Morgan (1992), Sedgwick (1985), MacInnes (1998), Cornwall and Lindisfarne (1994). They underline the fluid, ambiguous, evolving, and multi-layered nature of gender, namely masculinity, as a primarily social construct, which is the very basis upon which this dissertation is grounded. These disciplines contributed to varying the methods and

widening the critical perspectives in which gender studies, particularly masculinity, are analyzed and perceived. Studies on literary masculinities, particularly, grew surprisingly during the late 1990s. MacInnes, for instance, pioneered masculinity studies with his book The End of Masculinity (1998) which had an incredible echo in the field. Masculinity, in comparison to other gender studies, namely women's studies, makes up a more recent incorporation in the academe. Today, much of masculinity studies seem to be concentrating on the analysis of filmic and literary representations of masculinity.

Feminism and the gay movement of the late 1970s and the response towards them are one of the main driving factors in the emergence of masculinity studies. The widespread influence of these liberation movements brought along new ideas questioning the hegemony of the heterosexual man and, thus, the western patriarchal system was no longer taken for granted paving the way for a series of changes both in the perception and practice of gender studies.

### 1.3 Plurality of Masculinity:

To begin with, one thing needs to be made abundantly clear: "masculinity" is made up of various masculinities. The innumerable variations in space and time make it almost impossible to study masculinity as a single definition. Yet even when taking this for granted, masculinity is far from being stable and fixed. In fact, there exists a range of masculinities as, unlike physical attributes which are almost the same among males, there are many different ways to express one's gender: “being masculine” and “being feminine”. Various forms of masculinity are even invisible and unnoticeable although we come across them very often. Masculinity is no longer held to be uniform due to many factors, including culture, history and geography, that intervene in its configuration. Clearly, the plural form is plainly

contradictory to the, almost universally, held belief that All "normal" men fit within a biologically determined standard container: “masculinity” which may even be quantified in terms of psychological and physical characteristics. In the same vein, it quickly becomes clear that in terms of enactment, masculinity is a diverse, fluid, even unstable, structure when related to culture (which, obviously, is hugely divergent). Actually, whenever the term “masculinity” is used, it should be taken to suggest variation and fragmentation rather than uniformity.

Accordingly, Lindisfarne and Cornwall (1994) highlight the ambiguous nature of masculinity and its numerous meanings, rather than accepting notions of a **fixed masculine essence**. John Rutherford reinforces the fluid nature of masculinity by beginning his *Male Order* (1988) with an observation emphasizing that masculinity is not a fixed, coherent, singular construction. It is rather a polylithic concept. Hence, the plural form“masculinities” is considered to be more appropriate and more popular, ( as do, for example, Buchbinder 1994; Connel 1995; Mac and Ghaill 1996).

The plural form “masculinities”, however, is not adoptable by everyone. For MacInnes (1998), for instance, using the plural form only enlarges the ambiguities and multiplies the related confusions instead of solving them. Masculinity, according to him, originated primarily to enable people to organize their life by identifying what a man should be like, hence, it does not change anything when shifting to the plural form.

### 1.4 Masculinity as an Ideology:

Studying masculinity as an ideology implies that it is not really possible to trace back masculinity to a specific period of time or to a particular group of people. Ideologically speaking, masculinity is a set of convictions and beliefs embraced by people, by means of

which their lives are largely altered; though the term ideology is often related to class and politics, yet, it is possible to insert masculinity in an ideological context. What makes this possible is that ideology is quite corresponding with power and domination. It makes good sense to think of masculinity as an ideology since it frequently represents, or is seen to represent a subjectivity correlated with power. Similarly, just like masculinity, we can't attribute the origination of ideology to a specific class or group. Various genres of masculinity are propagated in multiple strategies, by different institutions for self-interests. This, therefore, establishes correlational ties between masculinity as creating institutions and these institutions, in turn, create masculinity.

When considering masculinity as an ideology it becomes very familiar and common to take on its beliefs, within a given cultural and historical setting, without even questioning them. Like any given ideology, masculinity is constructed and propagated on a large scale through images, myths, discourses, advertising and practices. Such tools manifest masculine messages in a very natural and symbolic way that does not provoke any questions within the society in which they prevail. This makes the presentation of masculinity ideologically functional.

Myths, on the other hand, present masculinity as a linear construct by promoting notions of stability, uniformity and fixed essence. And creating a universal masculine model. But for those who perceive masculinity as an ideology, such notions are questionable. The widespread images in culture can turn into myths and thus, they become taken for granted as a narrative of universal masculinity. They even develop to be mythological at the cultural level.

Discourse, too, is even more predominant than myths in constructing the ideology of masculinity. Cultural discourses such as medical, legal, psychoanalytical, religious, pedagogical, etc, propagate among children and adults certain presumptions in their texts

about masculinity. Oral forms like conversations, also, may include explicit or implicit representations of masculinity.

Another way in which masculinity is transmitted as an ideology is through practices. When men tend to practice, sports for example, regularly are most likely adhering to an ideology of masculinity that surpasses language and signs to various practices. This leads to a mutual influence on either. These practices will in turn contribute to constructing masculinity: the more an action is performed, the more it is believed to be masculine and will be, thus, more propagated by the person performing it.

The four categories of ideology: images, myths, discourses and even practices are interrelated, they can co-exist, despite the difference among them. Each influences the other. This, consequently, reinforces the duality in the representations of masculinity via these means: they are reflective of the culture wherein they exist, on the one hand; and constructive of the masculinity they are depicting in cultural contexts.

## 1.5 Shaping, Experiencing and Enacting Masculinities:

Factors that shape the form, experience, and enactment of masculinity include mainly culture and subculture, historical location, age and physique, sexual orientation, education, status and lifestyle, geography, ethnicity, religion and beliefs, class and occupation. Masculinity evolves as these factors change. Being shaped by such factors, the development and expression of masculinity differ from male to male, although they generally share the same biological traits. " the whole diversity of lived masculinities can be understood as specific realizations of a vague set of ideas and demands, images and stories that are defined as masculine, adapted to the concrete situation an individual or group has to cope with" (Trillner 2).

How masculinity is experienced is always, directly and indirectly, related to the social and cultural changes men undergo. In the twentieth century, for example, men went through huge social and cultural changes: the rise of the **suffragette** movement (begun in the 1860s) which granted women more freedom, and more rights and even freed them of the patriarchal system. If this has changed women's lives almost radically, then men's lives have not changed any less. The two World Wars, too, had a great impact on how many things formerly were perceived by both men and women. When millions of men died on the battlefield, notions of patriotism and sacrifice for the country were forever severely questionable. Similarly, this transformation swept into women's lives, who found themselves engaging in accomplishing roles patterned, formerly, for men only, in their absence.

The Great Depression (1929), on the other hand, threw a great change on how masculinity was experienced. In fact, one of the most highlighted markers of traditional masculinity, during the time, was forever lost, as men were no longer the **breadwinners** due to the devastating unemployment. The intervention of new technologies, too, has transformed the nature of work completely, later in the century. The sense of Masculinity was now less related to heavy craft as mass production shifted to short which resulted, in parallel, in more women working. For most men, the nature of work was entirely transformed.

Post-Second World War Western society was highly dominated by the consumerist and celebrity culture. A great transformation was taking place in people's mindset, for what someone was, could be measured by how much he owned and how many consumer goods he buys because this was directly related to one's self-image. Bearing such change in mind, one can tell the modification that swept into the masculine experience.

Similarly, **the gay movement emerged** as a significant subculture in the United States and Britain, after a century since Oscar Wilde was detained and tried. The huge surprising

tolerance shown back to gay and lesbian rights alone testifies to this. The widely believed "normality" of heterosexuality was, therefore, called into question.

In the 1970s, masculinity was not attacked by women only, men themselves started to raise doubts about it, too, the alleged **men's movement** in North America was calling for liberating men from "traditional masculinity" which forces them to disregard all signs of vulnerability and emotions. Writers such as Pleck and Sawyer(1974) argue that masculinity is harmful to men because it does not allow them to experience emotions when they suppress them. This would, consequently, lead men to be power, prestige, and profit-seeking addicts, and obviously makes them unable to express their feelings. Indeed, the foundation on which traditional masculinity is based is rather flimsy, which justifies the call for men's liberation (in parallel with women's liberation). Pleck and Sawyer (1974) urge men to understand masculinity and how it came to be that way by questioning masculinity themselves.

It is not easy to relate the overall impacts of these kinds of changes, however, we can undoubtedly say that the enactment and experience of masculinity in the late twentieth century was largely different from the early twentieth century; the degree of fragmentation of the " masculine text" in 2000 as compared to 1900, is a major difference.

## 1.6 Theorizing masculinity:

When attempting to understand masculinity, it is very critical to bear in mind its fluid, dynamic and polylithic nature which is the very essence of numerous theories from different academic disciplines that are considered to be fundamental within masculinity studies. Thus, contributions to masculinity studies from fields such as sociology, psychology, psychoanalysis, and anthropology have been consulted in order to carry out a more

comprehensive analysis from different theoretical perspectives in assessing how masculinity is represented in McIwan's *Enduring Love*.

### 1.6. 1Raewyn Connell's Theory of Masculinity:

Raewyn Connell is an Australian sociologist who is considered one of the major pioneering figures in the field of men's studies. Her book *Masculinities* (1995) is the most cited and the most relevant in the field. She addresses masculinity as a social construct that generates through performance (78). The male identity is defined by social interactions. She advocates the notion of masculinity's dynamic change under the present social change, for it is constructed fundamentally on a social base. Connell claims that masculinity varies and changes in its relation to femininity. She addresses power relations between men as a major theme in her *Masculinities.* She discusses certain hierarchical gender dynamics that involve male group dominance and subjugation. Using homosexual people as an example of a marginalised group. "gay masculinities are the most conspicuous, but not the only subordinated masculinities" (Connell 79). In this way, male dominance and marginalisation are linked to the patriarchal network because men who do not follow a hegemonic pattern may find themselves on the outside of society. This implies that a patriarchal system of dominance and subordination governs men's decisions and displays of masculinity.

Connell (1995) challenges essentialists' perception of patriarchal ideology because, according to her, the essentialists believe in constructing the male gender role through acquiring masculine attributes that involve individualism, competition and violence as well as domination. Connell, then, recounts the ideological creation of "sex roles" (the males took on the active contributory roles while females were destinated for demonstrative roles), during

the nineteenth century, when resistance to women's emancipation included discussions about the inherentness of sex difference, to the beginning of the "science" of masculinity.

The patriarchal system, as she advances takes advantage of the biological differences between men and women to grant men power and dominance over women. This leads her to further question the objectivity of masculinity studies as being created by the very authority it purports to be investigating it, for any sort of knowledge will be “as ethically compromised as a science of race created by imperialists, or a science of capitalism produced by capitalists” (Connell 7). She points out, then, the emancipatory and domineering nature of masculinity studies itself let alone the society within which they reside.

Connell (1995) opines that standards of “being masculine” and “being feminine,” as a social construct, can’t be taken for granted because they are not specific to either men or women (81). Even non-male genders (women and homosexuals) can demonstrate features of masculinity. She underlines that masculinities are not static character types but rather practice patterns developed in specific contexts within a fluid web of interactions. Connell, thus, concludes that masculinity is a socially produced, flexible, and communal gender identity rather than a natural state.

Connell’s perspectives help this study to break away from the hetero-normative approach of analyzing characters’ display of masculine qualities, on the one hand, and reflect the socio-historical constructs of masculinity, on the other hand.

### 1.6.2 Butler’s Gender Performativity:

Judith Butler, an American philosopher and gender studies writer whose work was very influential in political philosophy, ethics, and the field of third-wave feminism, queer theory and literary theory, is most famous for her *Gender Trouble*: *Feminism and the Subversion of*

*Identity (1990).* The revolutionary ideas she puts forward in this book have had an incredible echo on masculinity studies in the literary arena. By interrogating the viability of heterosexuality's presumed uniformity and stability, she altered the predominant perception of heterosexuality. She "radically" challenges conventional notions of gender and develops her post-modernist notion of gender "performativity" in which she describes gender as a prescribed and acknowledged social role that people perform regularly in an attempt to maintain a gender universality and uniformity through compulsory heterosexuality: "The force of this practice is, through an exclusionary apparatus of production, to restrict the relative meanings of "heterosexuality," "homosexuality," and "bisexuality" as well as the subversive sites of their convergence and resignification" (Butler 31-32).

Contrary to the predominant conceptions, she demolishes the division between heterosexuality and homosexuality, and contends that the former is by no means a coherent model. Like other queer theorists (Carolyn Dinshaw, for instance), Butler maintains that the "normative" and the "aberrant" are inextricably linked and can occasionally even cease to be discernible. She claims that there is no necessary relationship between one's body and one's gender. Butler's point of view suggests that it is not required for a male body to have qualities that are generally considered 'masculine'. The same goes for having a "female" body that does not exhibit characteristics often associated with femininity. In this situation, one can be a "feminine" male or a "masculine" female. It is, therefore, as she concludes, that standardizing heterosexuality is decidedly negotiated.

In the same vein, Butler, like many scholars, affirms that physical and biological traits are by no means definable of gender, the latter is solely and entirely a social construct. She contends that aside from the multiple acts that create its actuality, the gendered body has no ontological status. Gender identity is a performative construct in which identities are not created in a single instant. It is a human construct that varies in given contexts and is

produced by a great deal of repetition of social performance. Butler also contends that the linguistic, bodily, and visual manifestations of gender are not indicators of gender identity. She maintains, thus, that there is no innate gender identity; it can only be expressed via performance. It is in this sense, according to her, that gender resists fixities and universalities since it depends on the cultural context in which it is performed because gender performance is a continuous process that delves into change each time.

### 1.6.3 Stephen Whitehead, Peter Stearns and Eve Kovsofsky Sedgwick:

Stephen Whitehead in his book *Men and Masculinities: Key Themes and New Directions* (1978) deals with masculinity as a general concept and argues that there are no fundamental truths of men. He puts much emphasis on the discursive constructions of masculinity which generates the dominant ideologies. Gender structures "are neither permanent nor immune from subversion," (45), writes Whitehead in reference to the transient nature of gender and identity. The multiplicity of the nature of masculinity is given huge attention as men tend to express their manhood via different masculine ideals in different times and places and contexts. This asserts that the constructions constituting masculinity are time-specific.

Peter Stearns (1979) was one of the first writers to concentrate completely on masculinity as a distinct discipline within gender studies. In his *Be a Man: Males in Modern society* (1979), he advances the idea of conditioned and constructed biological attributes (except for the genitalia with which are born, of course) for shaping "manhood". In other words, " one was not born a man. One learnt to be a man, acquiring characteristics that exaggerated some natural attributes and repressed others" (17).

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Between men (1985),* on the other hand, points out the masculine homosocial desire, as it is portrayed in English literature from the early Modern era to the present. She critiques what she describes as an "unbroken continuum between homosocial and homosexual" that is not predicated on one's biological gender. Her case studies include works of Shakespeare, Dickens and Tennyson. This continuum encompasses all types of bonding interactions between men, whether economic, psychological or familial. She demonstrates how the concept of homosociality is essential to comprehend the dynamics of power relations between men of all social classes, and how these relations are inserted in nineteenth-century literary discourses. Jonathan Dollimore (1991), one of the major pioneers in cultural materialism and gay studies, claims that Sedgwick's radical new interpretations of the works of many artists revealed the homosexual, the homoerotic and the homosocial in numerous works, which in turn prompted far-reaching reinterpretations of them.

### 1.6.4 Todd W. Reeser's Social Masculinity and Triangulation:

Todd W. Reeser, director of the gender, sexuality, and women studies program and professor of French at the University of Pittsburgh and very well known for his widely-cited monograph *Masculinity in Theory (2010).* In this book, Tod W. Reeser advocates the tripartite model of gender and sexuality, that of Eve Kovsofsky Sedgwick (1985) which, unlike binary opposition models of masculinity (defining masculinity in relation to femininity, for example), tends to focus on examining masculinity in the literary and the cultural contexts wherein the emphasis is primarily put on the relations between masculinity and the so-called the love triangle in a special reference to desire, to further understand and expand the possibilities of defining masculinity within innumerable situations in the relationships among men, and what these kinds of relations indicate about masculinity, even in the same triangular

context. The purpose of triangulation in a love triangle is to maintain the problematic relationships between the men rather than to have both men want the same woman.

A triangular relation between two heterosexual men at the base of the triangle and a woman acting as the object of desire is the most recurring model. Far from a simplistic normative approach towards defining masculinity, Reeser, explains how this model is most characterized by rivalry and competition among the male members over the object of desire (the woman), in an attempt to sustain their male subjectivity and domination over the subordinate object (the female member) who acts as a mediator. This kind of rivalry is initially established as an attempt to inexplicitly emulate the rival and try to become like him. However, announcing the desire to emulate would be problematic by bringing forth perceptions of homoeroticism towards the imitator. This would gradually develop into constant homophobic anxiety and threats which sometimes result in an actual erotic desire. This indicates that the triangle itself is created through the interrelations between the subjects (two men) who try to maintain a heterosexual desire.

Hence, whether intentionally or unintentionally, two men who have a shared desire for the same woman are in fact bonding because of that shared desire or love. In the end, the love triangle serves a variety of purposes for masculinity: it eliminates the homoerotic threat and maintains masculine dominance by considering the female love object as an object. In this scenario, sexism and homophobia go hand in hand since men may preserve their subject position while escaping the homophobic risk. The relation between men is, therefore, more determinative than between men and women.

The love triangle, by emphasizing the detours of desire, as Reeser affirms, may have various permutations, transformations and complications which unveil as much about gender, sexuality and masculinity as the original model itself. This model can be successfully rethought in other relatively distinct sexed contexts, for instance, a triangle model in which a

mediator is a heterosexual man on the apex of the triangle, while a gay man and a straight woman, at the base of the triangle, sharing a mutual desire for the mediator; which is the very case in Ian McIwan's *Enduring Love* (1997). Examining tripartite models of relationships reveals much about masculinity since the emphasis is based on the interactions between men rather than between men and women.

### 1.6.5 Freud's Theory of the Uncanny:

Sigmund Freud, the Austrian neurologist and founder of psychoanalysis, provides in his essay *"*The Uncanny*"* (1919), the theory of the uncanny, *"unheimlich"* in his mother language meaning not from home. The unfamiliar, in other words. Humans get afraid of things and people they don't understand. He explains this term using the German phrase: *unbehagliches, banges Grauen erregend,* which translates as 'a discomforting anxiety inducing horror or terror'. The things and the people considered "other" evoke fear and dread within us. It is related to everything frightening, repulsive and distressing. Paradoxically, this term may refer to itself and to its opposite in some situations. We may be frightened not only by the things we don't know but also by the things we do know, however, we do not expect them to appear or to really exist. They may be hidden from us within us. In other words, they are embodied in the things we repress.

Freud wrote that there are many opportunities in literature to "achieve uncanny effects that are absent in real life" (Freud 156). *Enduring love (1997)* as a psychological thriller evokes the sense of the uncanny within both characters and readers. The whole plot, in fact, is circulating around the uncanny effect that McEwan implements in Jed Parry, the antagonist. It is the quality of Otherness demonstrated by him that McEwan successfully uses to give birth

to the "*unbehagliches".* Therefore, it would be very interesting to examine how the uncanny effect in the novel influences the main characters' enactment and display of gender identity, namely, masculine qualities.

## 1.7 Contextualizing masculinity:

### 1.7.1 Masculinity as a Cultural Construct:

If we agree to associate maleness with biological traits, then masculinity should definitely be associated with culture. For definitions of what constitutes 'manliness' must take into account the cultural contexts in which they reside at any given point in time. As a matter of fact, it is almost impossible to talk about masculinity out of a cultural context: the latter is rather masculinity's mother, we may say. Masculinity is not a genetic trait, instead, it is acculturated to males via social codes of behaviour that they replicate in ways appropriate to their mother culture. Class, subculture, age, and ethnicity, in addition to other factors, have a direct influence on masculinity. Indeed, conceptions of masculinity have never been universal; it is interpreted, expressed, and experienced differently depending on the culture, as anthropology has shown. Analyzing the cultural representations of masculinity plays a significant role in understanding its social construct. Therefore, cultural variations result in varieties of masculinity which makes it something really difficult to ascertain.

### 1.7.2 Masculinity in the Historical Context: Masculinity in flux

Examining masculinity through time can be done in two ways: the first is by studying the changes going around the male individual and the changes that happen to him himself. The ideals of masculinity are perceived very differently from a certain era to the other due to

the different quick changes occurring in a specific span of time. For example, in the post-Empire, post-colonial era, the Arnoldian masculine ideals seem incredibly outdated ( although they haven't completely disappeared). What is noticeable, however, is that change can come about very fast. Going through the discourses of **the new lad** of the 1990s, for instance, reveals a significant change from those of a few years earlier (**the new man**).

Approaching masculinity from a historical standpoint proves that socio-historical and cultural factors have a direct intervention in the facts that determine the "true" nature of masculinity (and femininity, of course). For example, the idea that men were innately practical, rational and competitive, unlike their female fellows, came to be naturalized as a result of the patriarchy (men's economic superiority) occasioned by the division of labour as a part of the Industrial Revolution procedures (that is, most women consigned to the home while men work in factories). In addition, in the latter half of the nineteenth century (following the debacle of the Crimea and the trauma of the Civil War respectively) there emerged a call for "re-masculinizing" men through sports and outdoor activities in both Britain and the United States to retain what was thought to be a loss of manhood. This explains why manliness is largely associated with performance in sports.

Among the writers who shed insightful light on the way masculinity has changed over time, is Laqueur (1990). He charts the development of model sex-gender on the basis of biological differences, between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, in Europe. Sexual difference was, previously, based on the degree, not the kind. The single-sex model of human sexual identity was moved to a bipolar one when the ideological distinction between sex and pre-gender no longer applied. Mangan (1997), in discussing this, states: "Galen's anatomical model of the nature of the male and female reproductive organs, which dominated Western conceptions of sexual identity from its inception in the Second Century until the time of the Enlightenment, asserted that women were essentially imperfect men"(Mangan 8).

Hoch (1979), on the other hand, introduces two major themes in approaching masculinity historically, namely: the "puritan theme", and the "playboy theme". They are quite contrary to each other, the latter emphasizes a masculinity that enjoys life, leisure and pleasure. Meanwhile, the former commemorates a masculinity based on duty, hard work, perseverance and achieving laudable objectives.

Finally, for Connell (1995): "dominant, subordinated and marginalized masculinities are in constant interaction, changing the conditions for each others' existence and transforming themselves as they do" (Connell 198). This explains why the history of masculinity cannot be presented in a direct straight way or method.

## Conclusion

As shown in this theoretical chapter, masculinity has drawn significant attention from academics around a wide range of disciplinary fields over the last decades. Various contributions by numerous theorists have established an interesting body of knowledge to help better understand and examine the nature of men and masculinities. As these theories frequently underscore, it is almost impossible to approach masculinity without considering its socio-cultural and historical contexts. The socio-cultural variations, therefore, and the dynamics of history are key factors in identifying the fluid, dynamic and polylithic nature of masculinity.

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## *Chapter Two:*

## *A Postmodern Reading of Enduring Love* (1997)

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## Introduction:

Postmodern literature first appeared in tandem with art in the late 1960s. Being highly influenced by the larger scope of postmodernism, authors were granted the chance to explore a plethora of genres, which is one of postmodern fiction's key qualities. The characteristics of conventional storytelling are no longer maintained by postmodern authors, who instead lean on various narrative structures

This chapter is intended to be a pre-requisite to the last chapter in order to better situate the reader in the literary context within which the novel resides. It is mostly an analytical chapter. It provides brief background information about the larger scope of postmodernism, and postmodernism fiction then it delves into exploring postmodernist prospects within Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* (1997).

## 2.1 Postmodernism: Definition

By the middle of the 20th century, postmodern debates had a significant global intellectual impact on a wide range of disciplines. It is a labyrinthine concept, or a set of notions, one that has only recently become the focus of academic research, since the middle of the 1980s. It can be found across numerous fields of study and disciplines, such as art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology, this makes it really hard to ascertain. As it's unclear when postmodernism officially starts, it is difficult to place it in time or history. Thinking about modernism, the trend from which postmodernism seems to grow or emerge, may be the simplest way to begin considering postmodernism. Postmodernism is "post" because it rejects the idea of any overarching

principles and lacks the so-called "modern" mind's hope that there exists a universally applicable scientific, philosophical, or religious truth.

The paradox of the postmodern perspective is that it acknowledges that even its own principles are subject to inspection because it holds all principles up to scepticism.

Postmodernism is often confused with postmodernity, but in actuality, postmodernism refers to postmodern theory while postmodernity refers to postmodern culture. another way to say this is that postmodernity can be applied to any facet of life in a postmodern society, while the postmodern theory should be used to describe intellectual or philosophical views. Because it has attracted a large number of both opponents and supporters, postmodernism had maintained a large number of both opponents and supporters, postmodernism had grown into an indubitable movement. In this vein, Andreas Huyssen, In *Mapping the Postmodern (1984)*, described postmodernism as:

> what appears on one level as the latest fad, advertising pitch and hollow spectacle is part of a slowly emerging cultural transformation in Western societies, a change in sensibility for which the term 'postmodernism' is actually, at least for now, wholly adequate. The nature and depth of that transformation are debatable, but transformation it is. I don't want to be misunderstood as claiming that there is a wholesale paradigm shift in the cultural, social and economic orders; any such claim clearly would be overblown. But in an important sector of our culture, there is a noticeable shift in sensibility, practices and discourse formations which distinguishes a post-modern set of assumptions, experiences, and propositions from that of a preceding period. (8)

The alteration in several realms has given rise to new aesthetic forms or has simply revived principles from earlier movements by integrating them into a new cultural context. Postmodernism, in most theories, dates back to the 1960s and extends to the present day. The

Cold War, and technology, highlighted by the rise of computers and televisions, marked the early beginnings of the movement. The use of irony, satire, pastiche, and fragmentation characterized the works of art in this period. In philosophy, postmodernism manifests itself in the rise of notions like real and unreal; meaning and truth (Bederina 11).

Postmodernism is often used to describe the various advancements in culture, particularly in literature and arts; it subverts notions of Enlightenment. Some have even regarded postmodernism as a response to modernism. As a matter of fact, its origins can be traced back to modernism, which emerged in the wake of numerous changes to Western culture in the 19th and 20th centuries, especially those brought on by World War I, which set the basis for rejecting ideologies of realism and Enlightenment. Modernism focused on the subjective perspective of the individual, interpreting reality according to one's perspective. While Postmodernism focused on ontological questions rather than perception and knowledge. In another expression, the postmodern writer emphasizes the idea of how multiple realities coexist at the same level, as opposed to modernist writers who examine and explore the significance of one particular complicated reality.

Postmodernism, to sum up, mainly destabilizes the tenets of people's commonly held beliefs in order to expose the meaninglessness, void, and nothingness of existence. Its major concern is to question the surrounding environment of humans and to investigate the core tenets of humanism: religion, philosophy, law, democracy, and a grand narrative that may account for social construction and establishments. Postmodernism also highlights the fallibility of principles of Western conceptions of enlightenment, including the idea that language is an unequivocal means of communication and that the self is homogeneous and autonomous. some believe that postmodern fiction is an ongoing process of problematizing or rejecting realist aesthetic philosophy. (Bederina 1)

### 2.1.1 Postmodern Fiction:

Postmodern literature can be considered as a particular manner of portraying postmodern life and culture and is a product of sociocultural and historical evolution. It demonstrates the human being's (ethnic, sexual, social, and cultural) identity crises and their battle for legitimacy in a hypocritical society. Indeed, Post-modernist writers disregard traditional conventions and look for alternative compositional tenets that are consistent with their existentialist subject matter. In order to fully grasp human existence and accommodate its meaninglessness, purposelessness, and absurdity; they aim to encapsulate the human condition in its most concentrated form. They have used a variety of techniques including fragmentation, paradox, contradiction, questionable narrators, permutation, discontinuity and many distinct features which reflects the chaotic state of the world in an equally chaotic manner.

The "metanarrative" and "little narrative" concepts from Jean-François Lyotard, "play" from Jacques Derrida, and "simulacra" from Jean Baudrillard all have common characteristics. For instance, the postmodern author eschews the prospect of meaning, sometimes with humour, as opposed to the modernist pursuit of meaning in a chaotic world, and the postmodern narrative is frequently a parody of this quest (Rezaei 17).

Postmodern fiction has far too many different styles to be called a genre. It also isn't a historical designation, like "Victorian literature," because calling the latter half of the 20th century the "postmodern 'period'" would be inaccurate and unfair to a large number of contemporary authors whose works cannot be properly connected to postmodernism. It might be better to see postmodern fiction as a specific "aesthetic" - a sensibility, a set of values, or a belief system that unifies particular currents in literature from the second half of the 20th century. (Bran 12)

The postmodern text is no longer composed according to modern criteria, and the process might be disordered and chaotic, giving rise to the new idea of "the death of the author," because postmodernists no longer believed in dominating the texts. Actually, any text can be analysed in contrast to other texts separate from its form because literary writings are no longer judged by their codes and genres but rather by their rhetoric and idiolect.

Postmodern literature can be confusing to many readers. It is nearly inaccessible to many readers due to the use of difficult vocabulary, forms, jargon and phrases, as well as ambiguous explanations. Because postmodernism often rejects any format or simplicity, it does not have the flavour of anything apparent. Indeed, readers of postmodern fiction are faced with a challenge since they must put in the effort to comprehend it, consider their own reactions, and reevaluate their conceptions of what fiction is. But it's in rising to this challenge that postmodern writing becomes so enjoyable to read and fruitful to analyse.

## 2.2 Ian McEwan as a PostmodernWriter:

Contemporary British author Ian McEwan has been writing and publishing during the postmodernist era. His *Enduring Love,* as well as other recent works including *Saturday* (2005), *Atonement* (2001), and *Amsterdam* (1998), strongly evoke postmodern ideas and characteristics. These novels are deeply interested in the problems of postmodern society and life. They are incredibly reflective of the postmodern settings, and the author frequently alludes to postmodernism in his descriptions (such as in *Saturday*, where he makes implicit comments on "hyperreality").

Because of his writing style, it has become challenging to place McEwan in a specific literary movement. Ultimately, though, his complex language has earned him a reputation

among postmodernist authors. The author, Ian McEwan, says the following regarding his writing:

> I have contradictory fantasies and aspirations about my work. I like precision and clarity in sentences, and I valve the implied meaning, the spring in the space between them. Certain observed details I revel in and consider ends in themselves. I prefer a work of fiction to be self-contained, supported by its own internal stratus and beams, resembling the world, but somehow immune from it. I like stories, and I am always looking for the one which I imagine to be irresistible. Against all this, I valve a documentary quality and anengagement with a society tension between the private worlds of individuals and the public sphere by which they are contained. (qtd, in Bederina 24).

In his fiction, Ian McEwan recreates the postmodernist aesthetic. his own narrative voice is influenced by postmodern complications. The author might be seen as a true postmodern figure who alternates between a "return to realism" and the metafictional postmodernist style; McEwan's literature is remarkable for its hybridity, which combines literary realism with dilemmas from the postmodern era in the plots of his novels. Another viewpoint is that McEwan wraps his appreciation of modernism in a blatantly postmodernist package.

Richard Bradford, in his book *The Novel Now: Contemporary British Fiction (2007)*, opines that "[t]he battle between realism and modernism/postmodernism is now, in the early twenty-first century, effectively over. Neither side is victorious but the middle ground of fiction is shared by hybridized versions of both" (78). speaking of hybridization—the process of creating something whose origins or composition are heterogeneous—as a resolution to the conflict between the various literary genres without realising that it is a major aspect of postmodernism.

## 2.3 Enduring Love (1997) as a Postmodern Novel:

The core of post-modern philosophers' thinking is their critique of Enlightenment universal truths. *Enduring Love* examines the rationalism of its central protagonist. The novel's story pits the unifying strategy of modernity against the multiplicity strategy of postmodernity. it reveals McEwan's new fascination with scientific ideas and the rationale that surrounds them. Although the primary character Joe Rose's scientific mind is explored in the novel, McEwan also contrasts various ways of reasoning in other newly introduced characters.

McEwan questions the value and purpose of literature in *Enduring Love* through Joe Rose's voice: “Did the scientific illiterates who ran this place, and who dared call themselves educated people, really believe that literature was the greatest intellectual achievement of our civilisation?” (McEwan 41). This argument makes the claim that creating fiction is a pointless and useless endeavour. Despite how contradictory it may sound, the author critiques literature in his work. Yet McEwan never entirely undervalues his own work (Malcolm 166); he always allows for some latitude. The implicit indictment of the morality of literature will never be fully realised. The author's moral ambiguity is evident throughout this all-pervasive polemic. The hesitancy of McEwan is reflected in his characters. As Childs Peter asserts “[t]he novel ultimately emerges as at least in part a postmodernist novel, because it questions its own fictive status, exposing itself as a construct.” (Qtd. in Bederina ).

### 2.3.1 Postmodernist Notions in *Enduring Love*:

*Enduring Love* comprises bits and pieces of postmodernism. McEwan appears to be deeply absorbed by the counter-enlightenment influence in postmodernism, and its overtly

anti-rationalism: one of the most characterizing hallmarks of postmodernism, as mentioned in the *Routledge Companion* to *Postmodernism* (2001):

> Nowadays, the term postmodernism in a general sense is to be regarded as a rejection of many, if not most, of the cultural certainties on which life in the West has been structured over the last couple of centuries. It has called into question our commitment to cultural 'progress' (…), as well as the political systems that have underpinned this belief. Postmodernists often refer to the 'Enlightenment project', meaning the liberal humanist ideology that has come to dominate Western culture since the eighteenth century; an ideology that has striven to bring about the emancipation of mankind from economic want and political oppression. (Sim, 24)

#### 2.3.2.1 Multiple Viewpoints: the Protagonist's "Scientific" Mind versus Other Minds

In *Enduring Love*, McEwan revisits postmodernism's disillusionment with Enlightenment standards and the critique associated with humanism. In fact, the author's engrossment in scientific thought is highly noticeable not only in *Enduring Love* but also in his *Saturday* (2005). *Enduring love* concerns itself with the tension between rationality, represented by Joe, emotions, represented by Clarissa, and religion, often represented by the antagonist Jed Parry—all three of which, in postmodernist parlance, are regarded as distinct but equally important forms of thinking. Joe tells the story from his point of view, but Clarissa and even Jed Perry join in and offer their own perspectives as well. The novel therefore opposes imposing a big storyline, which is stiff and inflexible. In fact, a number of storylines are provided to us in order to give us different points of view. As Childs (2005) asserts:

> Enduring Love is a novel with one narrator, but it is also a story with three central protagonists who all have different understanding of human reality. Joe Rose is a

> rationalist who thinks science reveals facts about existence and the universe. . . Clarissa Mellon feels that art, beauty, and happiness, not facts, are at the centre of people's relationships . . . Jed Parry believes that God underpins reality. The three of them thus begin from different premises: cognition, emotion, and faith. (15-16)

It's interesting that Rose, the main rational protagonist, has a female counterpart, Clarissa: his long-term partner, who serves as his intellectual antithesis. She is enthralled by emotionalism and sentimentalism, "Clarissa thought that her emotions were the appropriate guide, that she could feel her way to the truth" (150). By shaping such confronting characters, McEwan highlights the predominant postmodern tension between science and emotions. In actuality, Clarissa has affinities with a variety of acceptable ethics associated with literature that ought to be taken into account. She, paradoxically, is one of the emotional foils of Joe's dependency on rationality and logic. One of the critical questions McEwan raises in *Enduring Love* through their relationship is: what if the "other," whom I am unwilling to subjugate in any way and whom I am open to consider an equal, despite his or her difference, rejects the game of the acceptability of variety and attempts to assert his or her superiority? (Morrison 2010). Under this situation, Joe Rose's Rational approach to life is almost derailed.

On the other edge rests Jed Parry, the third part of this relationship. Being a highly religious man, Parry opposes Rose's scientific mind, the man who only believes in concretes and tends to adherently explain everything through scientific reasoning. Jed, in Joe's words, is:

> crouched in a cell of his own devising, teasing out meanings, imbuing nonexistent exchanges with their drama of hope or disappointment, always scrutinizing the physical world, its random placements and chaotic noise and colours, for the correlatives of his current emotional state – and always finding satisfaction. He

> illuminated the world with his feelings, and the world confirmed him at every turn his feelings took. (143)

In other terms, “Parry listened only to the inner voice of his private God” (153). Despite the fact that Joe's perspective is more powerful than the other's because it is the subject of the majority of the chapters, Clarissa and Parry can only exert control on Joe when given the chance to articulate their own views when granted the chance to be heard. And to maintain your control over others, you need to persuade them to buy your story, which is what makes Joe so anxious, “If you lived in a group, like humans have always done, persuading others of your own needs and interests would be fundamental to your well-being.” (104)

By spotlighting these conflicting perceptions, McEwan examines the tension between science and faith. This leads us to what Brian McHale opined in his book *Postmodernist Fiction (1987)*, McHale argues that postmodernism concerns itself with multiplicity in reality, and how different points of views co-exist within one single reality, he asks: “What happens when different kinds of world are placed in confrontation, or when boundaries between worlds are violated?” (10).In this sense, we observe how Rose struggles to accept Jed Parry's domineering presence almost viscerally. His deeply held sense of solidarity prevents him from effectively resisting, confronting, and fighting the deranged intruder. He initially accepts the neurotic’s rules of the game, showing a clear tendency towards tolerance. Nonetheless, Rose's tolerant postmodern self coexists with a "modern" harsh alter ego, which dominates his consciousness.

Joe Rose, despite his success in defining Jed Parry's bizarre behaviour as a pathological disease, "de Clerambault's syndrome," is left with his partner's perplexity. And even when he was able to save her, when Jed Parry broke into their flat and tried to attack her, the result was the opposite of what was expected (at least what he was expecting), for reasons he can't grasp:

> In a world in which logic was the engine of feeling, this should have been the moment when Clarissa stood, when we moved towards each other and folded into each other's arms with kisses and tears and conciliatory murmurs and words of forgiveness and love. . . .
> But such logic would have been inhuman. . . . The narrative compression of storytelling, especially in the movies, beguiles us with happy endings into forgetting that sustained stress is corrosive of feeling. (McEwan 156)

Ambivalence is, thus, upheld defining the text as postmodernist. "McEwan's fiction might be better characterized in terms of its struggle to articulate the possibility of a narrative voice that is self-conscious in its refusal of full coherence or control and unable or unwilling to disguise the extent of its own instability and unease" (Morrison 266).

#### 2.3.2.2 Fragmentation and paranoia:

In attempting to point out the most presiding characteristics of postmodernist literature, Barry Lewis (2001) in *Postmodernism and Literature*, suggests fragmentation and paranoia as key figures of the peculiar derangements of the postmodern novel. Enduring Love happens to be carrying out both of these characteristic features. The concept of fragmentation in literary writing can be both thematic and formal. Thematically, fragmentation breaks up the text which makes it difficult to determine the given novel's theme. Joe frequently deviates from the conclusion by upsetting the orderly flow of events, especially as he gets to a key part of his story. As a result, when he moves closer to the conclusion of his story, he takes a diversion and even brings it up, "I'm holding back, delaying the information." (McEwan 2) "The postmodernist writer distrusts the wholeness and completion associated with traditional stories, and prefers to deal with other ways of structuring narrative" (Lewis 127). In

postmodernism, the universe, society, and family are all fragmented as a result of the death of God, and this process of fragmentation is ongoing. Accordingly, Ian McEwan successfully evokes a sense of indeterminacy within the reader through Joe Rose's atheism and his constant mockery of the seamless totality of the classical and the Christian worlds.

Moreover, the concept of schizophrenia serves as the framework for the narrative of Enduring Love which opposes the principle of wholeness; a clear conclusion to the narrative of this novel cannot be achieved due to its postmodern orientation. Distortion, therefore, becomes the driving principle of the narrative. "The uncertainty Principle"(127), alluded to by Lewis, doubtlessly belongs to Joe Rose's style of narrating scheme as explained earlier.

Additionally, paranoia, the other pre-eminent notion associated with postmodernism literary criticism, is a hallmark in *Enduring Love*. "The protagonist of the postmodernist novel sometimes suspects that he or she is trapped at the centre of an intrigue, often with some justification" (Lewis 130). Joe Rose constantly feels the menace represented by Jed Parry. He fears being inundated by Parry's persuasiveness. The straits inherent in Rose's endeavour to convince the authorities of Parry's intimidation can be viewed as a connotation of the conspiring society. The police seem to be lenient on Parry's conviction. What is sure, in this respect, is Rose's paranoiac feeling, the feeling of being a victim of a conspiracy prepared by Parry and the officials. He even seems to be aware of his paranoiac feeling, as he admits: "Each time someone came in I felt a cold drop in my stomach. Paranoia constructed an image of him for me, standing across the street from the police station, flanked by the men in coats" (McEwan 139).

### 2.3.3 The Novel's Construction:

The examination of the novel's course can better reveal postmodernist features in *Enduring Love* (1997). The complex structure of the narrative makes the novel typically a

postmodern. And the use of postmodern characteristics such as metafiction, intertextuality and questioning the ultimate truth, all of which will be explored in this analysis. First of all, the suspense of the novel's introductory chapter has been praised by several critics. It has a captivating way of engrossing the reader in the story of the novel. As Sven Birkerts (1987) succinctly states, "the ideal course of the classic novel: complications of character and situation creating a 'rising action' that culminates in a climatic moment" (7) does not entirely apply to *Enduring Love*. What makes the novel so special is that its climactic event is presented at the very beginning of the narrative. This discrepancy should be noted by the reader as instructive. The normality of the novel's format, thus, is to be questioned. In fact, McEwan himself acknowledges: "I think of novels in architectural terms. You have to enter at the gate, and this gate must be constructed in such a way that the reader has immediate confidence in the strength of the building" (qtd, in Čechová 13).

**2.3.2.3 Metafiction:**

The "central balloon scenario" is described in the same chapter as the main character gradually reveals its nature. The first-person narrator of the story is Joe Rose, the principal character. The reader is in some way forewarned by McEwan's use of his narrating character to draw attention to the fact that it is he who is narrating. Rose communicates about his narrative style and offers feedback on his decisions made while narrating. The narrator's lack of professional experience in fiction is apparent to the reader. McEwan develops what is known as metafiction by emphasising the narrator's awareness of the process of writing the novel or presenting the story. Joe Rose marks his awareness of story narration at the outset, "the beginning is simple to mark" (1). In postmodernism, metafiction is when a novel alludes to itself or its technique of composition, demonstrating its detachment from reality; it is one of postmodernism's most highlighting features. Because the author, via the narrator, actively

creates it, the reader is aware that they are reading an artificial construction. In addition to acknowledging the "artifice" of narration, he, also, describes narratives or stories as "the organising principle of human action". (McEwan 22).

Furthermore, Joe, the narrator, deceives the reader into thinking they are close to the story being narrated. Only later in *Enduring Love* will the entire meaning of the first-person narration become clear. Ian McEwan has a justification for giving his main character the divisive first-person voice. He aims to probe and question the existence of an ultimate truth. This, actually, embodies the postmodern philosopher Michel Foucault's argument that the concept of truth is merely an illusion. According to him, "knowledge" and "truth" are constructed by people in positions of authority. We have grown accustomed to what the world appears to be true of. Foucault criticised the notion that society is improving and the world is growing better, arguing that this is only conventional wisdom rather than a universal reality. People typically adopted the version of reality that was imposed by those in positions of authority, which is a significant factor in social discipline and obedience. As a result, their way of thinking was altered, and the concept of truth varied from one community to another. Joe Rose confirms this viewpoint in this episode:

> I've already marked my beginning, the explosion of consequences, with the touch of a wine bottle and a shout of distress. But this pinprick is as notional as a point in Euclidean geometry, and though it seems right, I could have proposed the moment Clarissa and I planned to picnic after I had collected her from the airport, or when we decided on our route, or the field in which to have our lunch, and the time we chose to have it. There are always antecedent causes. A beginning is an artifice, and what recommends one over another is how much sense it makes of what follows. (McEwan 23)

Since he is the text's narrator, Joe Rose has the authority to influence events to suit his preferences. Being instantly subject to Joe Rose's truth is not entirely satisfying for the reader. However, McEwan's goal includes leaving the reader disappointed at the conclusion. This was planned by the author to further destabilize his central character, who also serves as the narrator of the story.

### 2.3.2.4 Subversion and Contradiction:

The divergence concealed in the novel's unconventional beginning with a climax suggests the novel's further destabilization. It entails the tragic death of a man in a balloon disaster. Already, Rose is depicted as someone who engages in a lot of rationalist thought in the first chapter. Consequently, Rose's tendency to view life as a collection of facts is impacted by his encounter with the terrible death. Rose's melancholic remembrance of the aftermath of the tragedy is the focus of the second chapter of the novel.

Rose's partner, Clarissa, is allowed to argue in the third chapter that Rose is actually more hurt from the accident than she is because he is unable to explain this recent experience due to his endeavouring tendency to invariably rationalize what occurs around him. Rose is apparently unable to comprehend his own heightened emotional condition or is unaware of it.

In the fourth chapter, Rose is shown composing and deliberating over the scientific narrative. Although opposing excessive fabulation and narrative exaggeration in science, he discovers that his intuition often prevails above the domain of factual possibility. It is rare for Rose to be so certain that Jed Parry actually tracks him at the library. He cannot base his assumption on fact because he has not "seen" him. But despite this, he continues to think Parry was present. At this point, the can reader notice a contradiction in Rose's thinking. He tries to convince Clarissa of this too:

> ‘Listen. Yesterday he was following me.’
>
> …I told her about the presence in the library, and how I had run out into the square. She interrupted me.
>
> ‘But you didn’t actually see him in the library.’
>
> ‘I saw his shoe as he went out the door. White trainers, with red laces. It had to be him.’
>
> ‘But you didn’t see his face.’
>
> ‘Clarissa, it was him!’
>
> ‘Don’t get angry with me, Joe. You didn’t see his face, and he wasn’t in the square.’ (41)

Rose continues to consider the narrative in science and its shortcomings in the fifth chapter. He won't inform Clarissa about Jed Parry's call from last night. He explains to the reader that this is because he doesn't want to ruin their pleasant evening together. The reader will never learn the real cause, though. This is when Clarissa's anti-postmodernist intolerance first manifests itself. (however, the first-person narrator has the choice of interpretations). Rose describes how, when it comes to Jed Parry, his common rationalist self exceptionally appears to believe in intuition without truly realising that he does so. Rose claims to "know" Jed Parry is dangerous and tries to convince the officials of this. At a crucial development for Enduring Love, the police also have their doubts about Rose's mental stability,

> I walked quickly into my study, picked up the fax phone and called the police…
>
> ‘I’d like to report a case of harassment, systematic harassment’…
>
> ‘Are you the person being harassed?’
>
> ‘Yes. I’ve been . . .’
>
> ‘And is the person causing the nuisance with you now?’
>
> ‘He’s standing outside my place this very minute.’

> ‘Has he inflicted any physical harm on you?’
>
> ‘No, but he . . .’
>
> ‘Has he threatened you with harm?’
>
> ‘No.’ (53)

Now since there are no facts to persuade the police, Rose's autonomy is compromised. Rose is a scientist, though. He would typically concur with the police that the lack of factual support invalidates an assumption. His rationalist thinking has been somersaulted:

> Denied the release of complaint, I tried to take comfort in having my story assimilated into a recognisable public form. Parry’s behaviour had to be generalised into a crime…
>
> I paused. For the first time I was aware of other voices behind the man’s. Perhaps there were banks of police officers like him with headsets, and all day long, muggings, murders, suicides, knife-point rapes. I was in there with the rest – attempted daylight religious conversion. (53-54)

McEwan has constructed an extraordinarily dense yet readable work in which the mind of a person who is faced with a challenge to his normal perspective of the world is followed (Morrison 258-260).

About the eleventh chapter, Rose acknowledges that, despite the possibility that he didn't view it that way at the time, he likely went to meet Jean Logan, the dead man’s widow, to "explain, to establish [his] guiltlessness, [his] innocence of his death" ( McEwan 107). This chapter reveals that Joe Rose isn't fully aware of his guilt, but it is there, although repressed.

The fourteenth chapter expressly discusses the ideas of "moral relativism", and "believing is seeing." It exposes the great contradiction in Joe Rose’s personality. shortly after demonstrating that he did not trust Jean Logan's detailed interpretation of the situation of her husband's death precisely because of the accuracy of her reasoning, Joe Rose arrives at the

idea of "de Clerambault's syndrome," a psychotic concept that somewhat explains the behaviour of Jed Parry. After disparaging Jean Logan's rationalization:

> …That's what he would have done without her, and it's pathetic. He was showing off to a girl, Mr. Rose, and we're all suffering for it now."
>
> This was a theory, a narrative that only grief, the dementia of pain, could devise. "But you can't know this," I protested. "It's so particular, so elaborate. It's just a hypothesis. You can't let yourself believe in it." (123)

He proceeds to provide the reader with a similarly paradoxical rationalization of his own by establishing his "mere hypotheses" as true.

We have Jed Parry's presumptions again in chapter sixteen, among them the idea that Joe Rose has to be freed from "his little cage of reason" ( McEwan 133). Once Rose has allowed other voices to be heard, the reader must begin to scrutinize Rose's interpretation with a skeptical eye. The narration incorporates Parry's letters as well as Rose's memories of Clarissa's statements. The reader's mistrust grows when Clarissa notes that she hasn't seen Parry outside their home, despite Rose's assertion that he's constantly there.

The eighteenth chapter recounts Rose's numerous attempts to convince the police of Parry's danger, all of which were fruitless. It should be observed that Rose's "evidence" in the police station is not "objective" evidence, but rather a thoughtful and practical selection of "revealing" sections from Parry's letters. Rose again contradicts himself in this.

Clarissa, Rose, and Jocelyn Kale discuss how a scientist fell prey to an unsound personal appeal in chapter nineteen. Later, Rose and Clarissa experience another incident that becomes a part of their lives. They are enjoying lunch when an attack occurs in the restaurant, and Rose claims to know the perpetrators intended to target him rather than the person seated at the adjacent table. Again, the problem is a lack of proof. The police have another perspective that is also realistic. Joe Rose succumbs to despair. Nobody trusts his story about Parry

threatening his life. And, as Regina Rudaityte (2004) suggests, “we are tempted to assume that all the story is the deluded narrator’s own invention” (35). At this level, Joe Rose's reliability is undoubtedly questioned by the reader: subversion occurs.

Very strangely, things suddenly start going in Rose's favour at the beginning of chapter twenty-one. Rose's worries "substantiate" themselves. Jed Parry, who is at his flat and threatening Clarissa with a knife, calls him. In the chapter that follows, Jed Parry attempts to commit suicide, but fails, in front of Rose and Clarissa. Rose is then detained but quickly released because he already presented three testimonies at the police station. In chapter twenty-three, the narrator gives Clarissa's viewpoint a chance to be heard. She regrets not believing Rose's assessment of Parry's threat before Parry's acrimonious visit to their house. She imposes a break from Rose because of something she cannot accept.

The twenty-fourth chapter disproves Jean Logan's viewpoint. The appendices that follow only serve to support the notion that Joe Rose was ultimately "right." as Rudiatyte (2004) states: “[T]he reliability of his narrative is finally proved only in Appendix I which is claimed to be reprinted from the medical journal “the British Review of Psychiatry” (35).

The narrative's contradictory inclinations and the emphasis on conflicting meanings are demonstrated in the above description of the chronological flow of the story. *Enduring Love* involves several paradoxical situations. Rose's paranoia is only proven to be true at the very conclusion of the story. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that the reliability of this resolution is uncertain. McEwan has taken steps to guarantee the doubtfulness of his first-person narrator in the narration of *Enduring Love*. By combining Rose's extended philosophising on the dangerous use of narrative in science with the scenario of Jed Parry stalking Joe Rose and the concurrent breakdown of Joe and Clarissa's relationship, McEwan aims to undermine the morality of his characters.

### 2.3.2.5 Intertextuality:

Intertextuality is one of a postmodern literary work's most crucial components. According to Julia Kristeva, a Bulgarian/French theorist who first used this term, intertextuality, broadly speaking, describes a relationship between the texts using various devices and strategies. But, it is not a single mechanical connection; rather, it is a creative transformation of the texts that have been referred to in various linguistic and cultural contexts. According to Julia Kristeva, a literary text is not merely the work of a single author, but also depends on how it interacts with other texts and linguistic systems. In other terms, intertextuality typically involves conscious, direct allusions to other literature. This is done to offer more levels of meaning and provide different interpretations. It entails indirect references too.

Interestingly, intertextuality in *Enduring Love* manifests itself in one of the two appendixes. Written by McEwan himself in the form of a psychiatric report on "de Clerambault's syndrome." The appendix references the kinds of academic work that the scientific community values.

> 'Erotic delusions', 'erotomania' and the associated pathologies of love have produced a rich and varied literature which describes, at one extreme, unusual behaviour or acceptable occurrences without psychopathological implications, and at the other, strange variants encompassed by a schizophrenic psychosis. The earliest references are to be found in Plutarch, Galen and Cicero and, as a review of the literature by Enoch & Trethowan (1979) makes clear, the term 'erotomania' has suffered from the very beginning from a lack of clear definition. (McEwan 169).

It also includes a case study which is a condensed summary of Rose's narrative. Notably, the couple in this case study—which is clearly Rose and Clarissa—reconciles:

> The victims of de Clérambault patients may endure harassment, stress, physical and sexual assault and even death. While in this case R and M were reconciled and later successfully adopted a child, other victims have had to divorce, or emigrate, and others have needed psychiatric treatment because of the distress the patients have caused them. (McEwan 175)

Ironically, *The New York Times* book review (1998) criticized him for "sticking too closely to the facts" thinking that the fictional case study of Erotomania was real.

### 2.3.2.6 Subjective Truth and Perception:

Joe Rose embodies Nietzsche's idea of “will to truth”. Rejecting Kant’s claim that truth is universal, Nietzsche came to consider truth as a mere illusion. We don't all think in the same ways, thus how we understand truth also differs. As per postmodernism, truth is relative and not absolute. There can never be an abiding truth. It is thought that rather than being discovered, truth is generated (Barry 78). Even when he writes, Joe Rose is never truly convinced of his compositions, “I fixed my twelve pages with a paper clip and balanced their weight in my hand. What I had written wasn't true. It wasn’t written in pursuit of truth, it wasn’t science. It was journalism, magazine journalism, whose ultimate standard was readability” (McEwan 50). Another instance is when Joe contemplates the meaning of faith, describing it as a “passionate conviction, the brute strength of single-mindedness […] bringing cohesion and identity, and a sense that you and your fellows were right, even – or especially – when you were wrong” (159). In this sense, the work serves as an illustration of how "believed proofs" are beginning to appear false and how virtually any interpretation can

be proven to be false (Greenberg 2007). The idea that permeates the text in a form of a question is: what proves that my proof is true? Everything is subject to multiple interpretations and debates. Furthermore, "[t]he reader is supposed to be wondering whether he can trust this narrator (Joe)" as McEwan himself states ( qtd, in Čechová 20).

In order to challenge the idea of absolute truth, McEwen purposefully obstructs the plot's linear development. This occurs in the novel when the course of events is not linear but rather interrupted, as our expectations are consistently upset by the introduction of each chapter in a situation that requires first decoding and then following. As readers, we must determine what the acts being recounted correspond to. This generally occurs with the chapters in the second part of the book.

In other words, McEwan consecrates *Enduring Love* to the discussion of the postmodern predicament. Joe Rose's prominence in McEwan's work turns into a study of subjectivity. This character's deliberate use of first-person narrative has a purpose. The text's elevated, but false, subjectivity is an evident outcome. In his entry for the Encyclopedia of Postmodernism (2001) on "subjectivity" in the postmodern era, Tammy Clewell makes the following assumptions:

> The postmodern conception of subjectivity can be distinguished by its opposition to the Cartesian notion of the subject: a strongly bounded agent of rational self-legislation conceived in traditional epistemology (from Descartes to Kant) as the counterpart to the object. Despite diverse and sometimes oppositional formulations, postmodernist and poststructuralist critics share an impulse to 'deconstruct' the humanist subject as the intending source of knowledge and meaning. Such accounts redefine the human self as an entity constructed by, and

> not simply reflected in a culture's social discourses, linguistic structures, and signifying practices. (381-82)

In a distinctly postmodernist manner, McEwan causes Joe Rose's humanist subject to fade. Joe Rose is obviously a contradictory person. Besides that, his authorial power is maintained yet subverted. Overall, the title of the book already alluded to schizophrenia:

> "Indeed, there is a blatant irony in the double meaning of the term *enduring*: the adjective giving a positively toned meaning to love as long-lasting, defying time, the verbal gerund-- suffering an unpleasant, painful or imposed experience—a meaning that negates pleasure. Thus the very title alone seemed to destabilize the meaning of love and the narratives that support it." (qtd, in Čechová 20)

Correspondingly, the destabilization and ambivalence held within the main protagonist, Joe Rose, pervade *Enduring love*. Actually, the book's main problem is appropriately summarized in the twentieth chapter, wherein Joe reflects on the idea of "self-persuasion," or the presence of totalizing, exclusive, and subjective narratives:

> [W]e lived in the mist of half-shared, unreliable perception, and our sense data came warped by a prism of desire and belief, which tilted our memories too. We saw and remembered in our own favor and we persuaded ourselves along the way. Pitiless objectivity, especially about ourselves, was always a doomed social strategy. We're descended from the indignant, passionate tellers of half truths who in order to convince others, simultaneously convinced themselves […] when it didn't suit us we couldn't agree on what was in front of us. Believing is seeing. (180-81)

Joe Rose comes to realise that objectivity is impossible to be maintained. And by pointing out that "all" of us are "tellers of half-truths," he undermines the authority of his own voice.

**Conclusion:**

*Enduring Love* (1997) displays postmodernist features in its sparse stage design, fragmented dialogue, and circumstances that the exotic characters carry out in seemingly meaningless ways. Typical postmodern characteristics such as the questioning of ultimate truth, metafiction and intertextuality have been detected in the novel.

The novel is an examination of the idea of paranoia, which lends itself well to postmodernist literature. Like almost all postmodernist protagonists, The protagonist Joe Rose suspects that he is trapped at the centre of intrigue. Rose is plagued by the possessed character Jed Parry and his homoerotic infatuation. Yet, the viability of rationality is restored at the end of the novel which resolves Rose's "paranoia" as justified. Moreover, the concept of paranoia characterizes the novel's narration. Finally, McEwan makes indications about the unreliability of his narrator before denying it at the conclusion.

In short, the blending of many literary genres and devices together with a strong metafictional drive confirms the novel's postmodern orientation.

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## *Chapter Three :*

## *Exploring Masculinity in Enduring Love (1997*

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## Introduction

The advent of postmodernism called into question notions of unified identities and established new outlooks on masculinity. *Enduring Love* (1997) as a typical postmodern novel echoes the ambiguities and complexities of negotiating a masculine identity in a time highly characterized by incertitude and ambivalence. This chapter's aim, thus, is to investigate the subversive and ambiguous characteristics of masculinity in *Enduring Love*, and to provide an analysis of male characters and the masculinities they represent, both as presented by McEwan and as experienced by the characters.

Following Connell's and Butler's line of reasoning, in addition to other masculinity scholars and critics, this chapter investigates masculinity in *Enduring Love* from a more multilayered perspective rather than looking at it as a static, unchanging, and monolithic category. Both Connell and Butler contend that gender is a fluid, relational, and contextual construct that is continually being negotiated rather than being a static, homogenous, and intrinsic one. The two scholars agree that masculinity is a social construct shaped through performances and interpersonal relationships. It is socially produced and flexible in character, rather than being a natural state. These perspectives help us interpret and comprehend how men and their masculinity in *Enduring Love*, can be impacted by the psychological effects they experience, as well.

### 3.1 The Portrayal of Masculine Failure:

Because *Enduring Love* is set after the two World Wars and does not exclusively revolve around males, the masculine crisis is already expected. The social standards codify a set of guidelines and discourse on how to conduct oneself in a way that represents a man in terms of sexual potency, reason, and intellect. A man who internalises and adheres to traditional gender norms cannot avoid feeling pressure and anxiety when faced with the gap

between the standard male image and his actual character. He will then go to a great extent to compensate for these weaknesses. The main protagonist Joe Rose cannot escape the social expectations of gender roles because he serves as both a key example and a prisoner of such typical masculinities in his relationship with Clarissa. In order to fulfil the ideal male stereotype, Joe shapes himself into a typical male: making the proper choices based on logic, taking charge, and earning money. As a scientific journalist, Joe constantly experiences "this old frustration about not doing original research" (62) and a "sense of failure on science, of being parasitic and marginal" (82). In addition, his heroic persona as a rescuer was destroyed in the balloon catastrophe because of his cowardly and selfish act of giving up hope to save the youngster in danger, and consequently the loss of John Logan (one of the attempted rescuers). Also, in the ensuing mayhem of the incident, he becomes the object of another man's desire, which shatters the very core of his masculine identity. All of them precisely depict how gender norms cause Joe to become mired in a crisis.

The novel starts with a balloon incident that marks Joe Rose's masculine transition and goes on to discuss how perilous homosexuality becomes for him, "At that moment a chapter, no, a whole stage of my life closed" (6). What drives a man towards a masculine crisis is their anxiety about becoming emasculated; in other words, being deprived of power. After the fatal death of John Logan, the sense of weakness and desperate helplessness accompanies him throughout almost the whole narrative. One of the major qualities of masculinity is power, thus, disempowerment inevitably leads to emasculation. In this vein: "Other expressions for losing masculine strength include weakening of masculinity, effeminate and being unmanly. Emasculation is normally used as a negative characterization of other men for not being masculine enough … if they are stripped of their powers and authority. In both cases, masculinity is equated with power" (Flood et al 171).

The dilemma facing Joe Rose goes deeper than the balloon catastrophe, which is merely the beginning. As McEwan himself admits, "The story of the balloon was not \the genesis of the book, but a device to bring disparate people together to explore issues he had been researching" (qtd, in Childs 4). The incident, according to Joe, is both the beginning and the culmination of all of his struggles and the demise of his actual masculinity. Morrison describes this incident as: "the novel opens up with symbolic emasculation of its protagonist, his heroic impulses immediately revealed as banal and redundant in a bungled attempt to save a child from a ballooning accident" (160).

In this incident, Joe rushes towards the falling balloon alongside four other guys to rescue a youngster who is entrapped inside its basket. Instead of saving the youngster in this instance, Joe lets go of the rope in the wake of a strong wind, which results in the death of one of those men, John Logan. Joe constantly refers to how his life and his psyche have changed after the accident. His failure to act as a hero, or at least as a "man," pushes him into a deep crisis: his identity as a man is threatened. He can't stop revising the events in his mind in an attempt to create a new reality, more precisely, another ending where he acts as a hero and a saviour to compensate for his failure: "I still clung to the possibility that there was a technique, a physical law or process of which I knew nothing, that would permit him to survive." (McEwan 27). Joe claims that he was the second person to grab the rope; if he had been the leader, the trauma would not have occurred. He tries hard to portray himself as manly, in fact, all throughout the first three chapters he tries to convince the reader and himself especially, that it was not he who failed to save the guy, but someone else did first, "If the first person had not let go, then surely the rest of us would have stayed in place. And who was this first-person Not me. Not me. I even said the words aloud" (40). He constantly tries to justify his letting go of the rope by claiming it was stupid to have four men die instead of one:

> "But letting go was in our nature too. Selfishness is also written in our hearts. This is our mammalian conflict – what to give to the others, and what to keep for yourself. Treading that line, keeping the others in check, and being kept in check by them, is what we call morality. Hanging a few feet above the Chilterns escarpment, our crew enacted morality's ancient, irresolvable dilemma: us, or me" (14-15).

Rose believes that the scientific explanation will shield him from the oblique feeling of shame and failure. And yet, he has a sneaking suspicion that it won't. Moreover, telling the story again and again to his friends and colleagues at work and attempting to show that he has done his best to save the man, only proves the ambiguous sense of deficiency that has been propelling him since the incident, "By six that evening we were back home…Now it came out in a torrent, a post-mortem, a re-living, a debriefing, the rehearsal of grief, and the exorcism of terror" (21). However, It only shows that he can't stop thinking about his masculine failure for letting go of the rope. "In the novel, the protagonist is primarily obsessed with the guilt of letting go of the rope, and he starts out with this sense of guilt, although delaying and digressing from the main point as much as he can, but somehow tries to find justification, to come to peace with himself with the incident" (qtd in Jahanroshan and Ramin 7). He even tries to convince the reader of this by portraying himself as a strong man who was able to pull himself together in such a terrible situation, and hurried to call the emergency operator, "I reached into my trouser pocket and withdrew…a mobile phone… I was in the world, equipped, capable, connected. When the emergency operator came on I asked for police…" (15).

Clarissa, his partner, on the other hand, managed to overcome the tragedy shortly after the accident. This should prove that, for Joe, it was not a matter of watching a terrible death

scene, nor a matter of morality because simply Clarissa could have felt the same torment. It was indeed a matter of masculine failure. What actually intensifies his sense of defeat is that John Logan, the man who died, did not let go of the rope even after all men did. Joe was somehow comparing himself to him when he recalled the events in his head and measured the possibility of saving the kid without losing anyone, he thinks:

> Yesterday the events of the day before had dimmed. This morning the blustery sunshine illumined and animated the whole tableau. I could feel the rope in my hands again as I examined the welts. I made calculations. If Gadd had stayed in the basket with his grandson, and if the rest of us had hung on, and if we assumed an average weight of a hundred and sixty pounds each, then surely eight hundred pounds would have kept us close to the ground. (39)

He wishes he was as courageous as John Logan not to give up the first instant the danger approached, "how was it possible to tell Mrs Logan of her husband's sacrifice without drawing her attention to our own cowardice? Or was it his folly? He was the hero, and it was the weak who had sent him to his death" (50).

Trying to act like a hero, Joe decided to go down the hill, where John Logan fell, in order to check if there is any chance he could be alive. Nonetheless, his "heroic" takeaway is actually a mere desperate attempt to bury his earlier failure to hang on the rope. Even worse is the fright he felt as he approached the corpse, "as the euphoria lifted, so the fear seeped in. The dead man I did not want to meet was waiting for me in the middle of the field" (16).

The fact that wanted to look back and call out for Clarissa to "support" him reveals his weakness, "I wanted to turn and shout for Clarissa, but they were watching me, I knew, and I had blustered so much up there I was ashamed. This long descent was my punishment" (26). Yet, when he realized that stepping back or calling for Clarissa would most probably be a humiliation in front of the rest of the men, he went on alone. This validates the Butlerian

argument that social standards and ethos determine how people express their gender (Butler 33). He tried to act manly and pushed himself toward the corpse despite his "fear" only because he was confronted by other men and Clarissa. As Kimmel states (2005), "We are under the constant careful scrutiny of other men. Other men watch us, rank us, gram our acceptance into the realm of manhood. Manhood is demonstrated for other men's approval. It is other men who evaluate the performance" (63). yet he attempts to act, to do something to compensate for his early failure, and to avoid failing again:

> As I carried on down, the mania began to subside and I felt trapped and lonely in my decision. Also, there was the fear, not quite in me, but there in the field, spread like a mist, and denser at the core. I was walking into it without choice now, because they were watching me, and to turn back would have meant climbing up the hill, a double humiliation. (26)

### 3.2 Homophobia:

Joe Rose, already propelled by the sense of deficiency and masculine failure, becomes afflicted by Jed Parry's homoerotic infatuation. Even before he talked (Jed), Joe could feel discomfort when they first saw each other after John Logan's death, "I turned away and saw Parry coming towards me across the field. He must have been following me down closely for he was already within talking distance" (17). He perceived him as a threat even without knowing him perhaps because his appearance already suggested that he was a homosexual, which normally would constitute a threat to his "heterosexuality." In this vein, Connell states, "Patriarchal culture has a simple interpretation of gay men: they lack masculinity" (143). A heterosexual man, like Joe Rose, is most likely afraid of having close contact or interaction with another heterosexual man so as to avoid being accused of homosociality, as explained in chapter one; let alone approaching a homosexual man (Jed Parry in this case).

When Joe received a call from Jed Parry the night after the incident, where he declared his love, Joe's worries became a reality. Now his masculine identity was, according to him, literally endangered. The sense of being loved by another man directly threatens his masculinity, which is already in jeopardy due to the balloon disaster. He fears being labelled a homosexual by having a man in love with him. This results in homophobia.

"Homophobia is the fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals. It is the hatred, hostility, or disapproval of homosexual people" ( qtd in Jahanroshan and Ramin 5). The construction of masculinity needs to stand in opposition to homosexuality and femininity. Homophobia, thus, becomes the most crucial weapon for regulating masculinities ( Connell 177). Being an object of affection by a homosexual feminizes and emasculates a heterosexual man in some way. He, thus, won't accept being emasculated for the second time by being labelled as a homosexual. This explains his paranoid behaviours and acute response toward Jed.

Since Joe's masculinity is most threatened by Jed's existence, he actually becomes more obsessed with Jed than Jed is with him. As Clarissa confirms, "You were so intense about him as soon as you met him. It's like you invented him" (McEwan 86). She realizes that what Joe became is not because of Logan's death or Parry's intervention, but because of something within Joe's masculine identity, "You're so alone in all this, even when you speak to me about it. I feel you're shutting me out. There's something you're not telling me. You're not speaking from the heart" (103).

Joe finally settles on the dubious term apprehension, which may signify both comprehension and fear, to describe his sense of emasculation. He is aware of his internal homophobia. He claims that fear has constantly accompanied him and that he was terrified of what it may do to him or what it might cause him to do (McEwan 44). This is homophobia, the fear of homosexuality, or the emasculation of men, which is pervasive. Joe is aware that

he needs to take action or else he will be emasculated. He is aware that Jed Parry is not the one for whom he truly cares and is afraid, but rather the root of a larger problem, it is not a matter of being called homosexual. It is a matter of what homosexuality would cause to a man; the real cause of a masculine crisis. Jed Parry's homosexual obsession plagues his masculinity, he exploded physical and intellectual insecurities within him. He starts viewing himself as a "parasite", "an outsider to [his] own profession" (75, 77), and "an oversized average-looking lump", "oafishly large and coarse" (103, 140), this physical self-portrait, in part, exposes the vulnerabilities that are likely made worse by erroneous masculine norms.

Joe's increasingly feverish, even desperate, efforts to preserve his sanity, his mounting defensiveness, and his interpretation of Jed's actions and discourse as a danger not only to himself but also to his "embattled masculinity" (Morrison 255), contradict his early claim that he has "no feelings to control" (34) and prevent a heteronormative reading of masculinity in *Enduring Love*.

### 3.3 Masculinity of Otherness:

Through Jed Parry's character, the antagonist, McEwan provides a contrasting example of masculinity within the hegemonic society in which he resides. Depicting him as a man with sexual perversities and mental instability already places him on the margin. Since experiences and portrayals of utter insanity, whether in society or literary discourses, are frequently associated with marginalized subjects, they have become a cliché of critical discourse (Palmer 305). McEwan's favouring of his protagonist, Joe Rose, by dedicating the whole narrative to him both as the storyteller and as the centre of the narrative over his counterpart Jed Parry ( however, crucial his role is) suggests that he is quite presented as the very embodiment of the outsider.

In almost every instance Joe Rose refers to him as the "outside (er)," "outside our apartment building, running straight on rising ground, was an avenue of plane trees just

coming into leaf. As soon as I stepped out onto the pavement I saw Parry standing under a tree at the corner" 61). It appears that practically all of Parry's appearances in the narrative begin with the same adverb, "as I turned away from paying off the driver I saw Parry waiting for me outside the apartment building, right by the entrance (71); 'every hour or so I went into the living room to check, and he was always there, staring at the entrance, like a dog tied up outside a shop' (77); and even when he mocks him, "Help! There's a man outside offering me love and the love of God!" (135). In fact, "What the reader is to witness in *Enduring Love* are the projections of one man, Joe Rose, insisting on his authority, sovereignty and influence" (Lea and Schoene 109).

Moreover, Jed's voice was allowed to be heard on very few occasions. For most of the narrative, his voice is confined not only to peripheral spaces but to the fringes of the discourse itself. Joe, who has the exclusive right to the narrative voice and is able to limit Jed's version of the story—expressed through letters—reads Jed's words more frequently than he hears them.

Having a man of reason serving as the main protagonist and maintaining a pivotal position, and a homosexual maniac who is banished to the periphery and largely voiceless and invisible, *Enduring Love* would appear, at first glance, as repeating classic processes of silence and marginalization.

By positioning Jed Parry in such a place within the narrative, McEwan is actually reflecting the real state of being an "other" in British society, in this context. As Connell asserts, "The most important case in contemporary European/ American society is the dominance of heterosexual men and the subordination of homosexual men. This is much more than a cultural stigmatization of homosexuality or gay identity. Gay men are subordinated to straight men by an array of quite material practices" (Connell 78).

### 3.4 Masculinity in the Love Triangle: "A Pathological Love"

Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* is a tale concerned with love, more precisely what Joe and the fictitious writers in Appendix One allude to as "pathological love (170)," as suggested by its interestingly enigmatic title. Appendix One introduced the "De Clérambault's syndrome," commonly known as erotomania, as a mental disorder whose continuous reinterpretation has an effect on conventional presumptions of gender: "As more cases are described, there has been a tendency both to broaden and clarify the defining criteria: not only women suffer, not only heterosexual attraction is involved. At least one of de Clérambault's patients was male, and more male sufferers have been identified since" ( McEwan 170). Jed's pathological love for Joe places both of them in a female position, but each in a very distinct way. A love triangle, as alluded to by Todd Reeser (2010) in chapter one, and in this case, where a heterosexual man (Joe) is the mediator of the relations between Jed, Clarissa and him. Todd Reeser's ideas have great significance in understanding masculinity in a tripartite model of gender relations.

Parry's gaze for Joe "reverses the traditional male/female dichotomy and puts Joe firmly in the object position of the spectacle' and by the end of the narrative, 'has completely penetrated Joe's myth of superiority, sanity and control" (Childes 70-72). In this one-of-a-kind story of male erotomania gender roles are indisputably inverted and conventional subject/object or active/passive dichotomies are disturbed.

Under Parry's gaze, Joe's uneasiness and sporadic restlessness are largely discernible. By confronting Joe with Jed's pathological love, McEwan tends to feminize him which only proves that maintaining a static masculine identity is highly negotiated. As Davies Notes, "McEwan's hero could be diagnosed as suffering from an onslaught of feminization, which not only emasculates him, but moreover threatens to dissolve the very foundation of self." (qtd in Childs 72). Jed's obsessive love for Joe exposes Joe's insecurities about his

masculinity and potency, which he has been repressing for so long in his marriage with Clarissa. He becomes so unconfident in himself as a man who deserves to be with a woman like Clarissa, "my thought was one I used to have when I first knew her: how did such an oversized average-looking lump like myself land this pale beauty?" (103). Jed's intrusion does not seem to alter Joe's masculine self-image only, but it actually unveils his long-buried masculine complexities in his relationship with Clarissa. Apart from dealing with his traumatic failure in the balloon accident and exposing Parry as a real threat, he finds himself confronted by his " new bad thought: was she beginning to think she had a poor deal?" (103). Joe's insecurities grow to such an enormous extent that he suspects his own wife was cheating on him as he realizes he had no control over Parry, just as he had no control over the balloon accident.

Consequently, he becomes so estranged from Clarissa when his self-doubts make him unintentionally ignore her need for love and comfort to recover from the shock of the accident, as it exposes all of her romantic fantasies about their relationship. Although she attempts to strike a balance between the two while also trying to satisfy her husband's demand for understanding, she ultimately lashes out at Joe due to her struggle with his growing hostility and distress, as well as her powerlessness to help him, "You were so intense about him as soon as you met him. It's like you invented him" (86).

If being loved by a homosexual man feminizes Joe, then it somewhat does the contrary to Jed who seems to be establishing "an imagined heterosexuality" (Reeser 55) on his part. Before he met Joe, Parry lived alone and relied solely on his divine connection to fulfil all of his needs for close intimacy. Then the balloon incident occurred, forever altering Parry's life. "Such a transformation, from a 'socially empty' life to intense team-work may have been the dominating factor in precipitating the syndrome, for it was when the drama was over that he became 'aware' of R's love" (174). Joe transforms into the force that can save Parry because

of his love. He reveals so much of himself to Joe in his very first letter, all in the hopes and power of Joe's alleged affection for him.

Jed's mother never showed him any love, he lost touch with his sole sibling, he had an "intense and lonely childhood," he had no father figure to help him throughout his adolescence, and he grew up with an inferiority complex. That's why Joe's appearance in his life on the day of the accident and the few moments he had spent with him may have established a new gender identity within him: a heteronormative one, considering that he actually never spoke of sexual desire for Joe. In their first encounter after the accident, Joe was actually the first to talk about sex, "you keep using the word love. Are you talking about sex? Is that what you want? (48). Jed's Reaction, however, seems to be the contrary, showing "the fear of sexual intimacy" (175). Moreover, the psychiatric report in appendix one, on Erotomania, mentions that the "subjects of erotomania" remain virginal. In the case study of erotomania in appendix two, Jed is evasive and even appears insulted when asked in an interview about his desire to have sexual ambitions with Joe. The argument that having sexual desires is not a requirement for love relationships is supported by the lack of evidence of intrusive sexual intention in Jed's pathological love for his love object, Joe.

Joe feels relieved to be alive after letting go of the rope and falling to the ground. He then observes that Jed, who is standing next to him, is looking at him with a shocked and perplexed expression. "In the second or so that this stranger's [Jed's] clear, gray-blue eyes held mine I [Joe] felt I could include him in the self-congratulatory warmth I felt being alive. It even crossed my mind to touch him comfortingly on the shoulder" (20). Even pragmatic Joe senses the fleeting emotional connections with Jed and feels the need to physically approach him at that exact instant, let alone a solitary and vulnerable guy like Jed.

Consequently, the "intense team-work" (174) he shared with all men, and most importantly Joe, during the accident and the sense of solidarity Joe has shown him, which he

definitely has never experienced, by trying to comfort him, "I honoured Parry with a friendly nod…I said to him in what I thought was a deep and reassuring voice, 'It's all right'" (15), may have established him as the male role model for Jed. Joe Rose the "large, clumsy, balding fellow" (7) and at least twenty-five years older than him may have really displayed to him the figure of the father he never had; and as a successful man, Joe may have appeared to Jed as an idol man to aspire to.

Joe, Parry, and Clarissa, each, are coping with their own worries and experiencing a range of emotions throughout the story. They are all particularly susceptible to damage because of the ongoing struggles they have with one another and with themselves. Jed's obsession with Joe could only lead him to lose himself over his love for Joe. Simultaneously, this obsession lays bare Joe's masculine insecurities which in turn would lead to Clarissa's detachment from him.

### 3.5 Unveiling Masculinity:

While Enduring Love's storyline does reflect masculinity in crisis, critics have widely argued about how much McEwan engages with progressive or transformative gender issues in the novel, and though many critics have labelled him as a masculine writer, they concur that he transcends above merely repeating or re-inscribing clichés. As demonstrated by Morrisson (2001):

> [o]n a simple level, *Enduring Love* narrates the triumph of an orthodox masculinity in restoring the protagonist's own identity and position within the nuclear family. At the same time, however, it also illustrates the breakdown within a text of the narratives of legality and mental health of which the professional, rational, solvent male is supposed to be the subject. (Morrison 258)

Whether or not McEwan's novel *Enduring Love* really triumphs in rehashing masculinities, his non-linear storytelling and his exotic characters partially reveal the concealed machinations of hegemonic masculinity.

When Joe says that Clarissa's brother Luke "must be living inside a hard-on" because he left his wife and twin girls to live with an actress he met three months ago, she promptly responds, "He's living inside a cliché!"(37). This brief excerpt's interactions, in which a typically male behaviour is both praised and denounced, with the stereotype being clearly recognized as such, may certainly mirror one of the novel's primary discursive techniques. McEwan actually critiques the preconceptions of normative masculine standards by implementing clichés and caricatures, as he admitted when talking over his play *The Imitation Game* (1981), 'I think people objected to the idea that it was possible to make stereotypes out of male behaviour. . . . So the cry goes up that you cannot caricature men like this, and that men are more complicated, and my reply is that, of course, I have a polemical purpose' (Roberts 33). Speaking of polemic, another undoubtedly polemical scene is when "all through lunch a colleague complained that her husband was too gentle with her in bed and lacked the necessary sexual aggression to overpower her and deliver the quality of orgasm she knew she deserved" (58). Without exhibiting any discounted or uncorroborated detail, these expressions notably point out one of the major elements in the (e)valuation of virility and highlight how paradoxical this (de)valuation system is, encouraging violence while bemoaning gentleness in male sexual behaviour. This excerpt goes much further than invoking a common cliché, it seems that it serves a deviant rather than a standardized purpose. By highlighting the gap between expectations and experience, it only assists in its destabilization.

### 3.5.1 Parodying Masculinity:

The fact that we read, experience, and examine everything in the novel through Joe Rose's rational male voice may suggest, at first glance, that McEwan does not offer the reader much space to think, interpret and analyze the actions, the behaviours of the characters, and their interactions outside the confines of a hegemonic masculine discourse. It may also establish McEwan as a stereotypical masculine writer, as is the case for his early novels. However, conducting a close introspection into Jed Parry's character reveals the very complicated and multilayered meanings that McEwan conveys to unmask the masculine clichés, through caricature.

In one of their first encounters, and after many sincere and serious supplications and "gasps," "Please don't do this…it doesn't have to be this way, you don't have to do this to me" (55), "Parry crossed his arms and adopted a worldly, man-to-man tone," that made Joe think he "was being parodied" (56). By moving from performing vulnerable femininity to a surprising masculine parody, Parry tries to reflect Joe's harsh masculine ego and suggests that he sees himself through Jed's caricature. By caricaturing him, Jed tends to confront Joe with himself to make him feel what is to be a "very cruel" man who "has got all power" (55). He tries to unveil his masculinity, showing it as fragile, artificial and even vulnerable because even he (Jed) can take on "worldly" masculinity.

Parodying his masculine tone invokes suspicion and doubt within Joe's masculine identity which has been already trembling all through the narrative. Jed does not only parody worldly masculinity, but also reflects the fakeness and contrivance in many masculine performances, especially macho stereotypes, when "he whooped and slapped his thigh," exaggeratedly caricaturing "cowboy style… he was almost shouting in his joy" (95).

Through his infrequent and fleeting performances, and driven by Joe's projections of macho illusions of follies onto him, Jed does indeed "mirror" tropes or clichés of hegemonic masculinity at certain stages in the story. In fact, Parry's insanity, in part, places masculinity under the microscope. It serves as a call to peer through the looking glass and to see what lies under the surface, to see what happens once men pause the performance.

### 3.5.2 Flirting with Homosexuality:

Despite Joe Rose's relentless endeavour to maintain and defend his heteronormative masculinity from Jed Parry's obsessive infatuation, he sometimes goes through critical moments where he falls in contradiction with his harsh alter masculine ego. When examining his interpersonal monologues, we may notice that he ultimately accepts the neurotic gay's rules of the game when admitting that:

> I had started this love affair and I should therefore face my responsibilities towards him. I was playing with him, leading him on, sending him messages of encouragement then turning away from him. I was a tease, a coquette, I was the master of slow torture and my genius was never to admit what I was doing. I no longer seemed to be sending messages via curtain or privet. (McEwan 112)

Comparing his homophobic behaviours with his inexplicitly "aberrant" attitudes, as the above episode suggests, we may argue that Joe's masculine identity is peculiarly contradictory. Hence, his alleged heterosexuality may be occasionally negotiated, this in part explains his homophobia: it is not only the fear of being called a homosexual that is exasperating him, but it is also somewhat the fear of being actually persuaded to be a homosexual. This reminds us of Butler's argument that the normative and the aberrant are intrinsically linked because of gender inconsistency (66), and that "…. what we take to be

"real," what we invoke as the naturalized knowledge of gender is, in fact, a changeable and revisable reality" (Butler 23).

He does not seem reluctant to admit that after Parry's intrusion into his life, he feels he has fallen through a hole in his own reality and into another life with a different set of sexual desires (67), he even marvels at how easily he slips into this different gender role:

> I had fallen into a life in which another man could be saying to me, *We can't talk about it like this*, and *My own feelings are not important*. What also amazed me was how easy it was not to say, *Who the hell are you? What are you talking about?* The language Parry was using set off responses in me, old emotional sub-routines. . . . In part, I was playing along with this domestic drama, even though our household was no more than this turd-strewn pavement. (48)

This in fact brings us back to what both Connell (1995) and Butler (1990) contend about gender identity as a fluid, relational, and contextual construct that is continually being negotiated rather than being a static, homogenous, and intrinsic one. The fact that he used terms like "our household" and "domestic" which are usually parts of a feminine discourse, and the terms like "a tease," and "a coquette" ( already used by Parry in his letter) suggests that he consents to his sexual objectification as well as to his own feminization, no matter how ironical this may seem.

By using a discreetly disruptive linguistic coding of gender all through the narrative, McEwan, thus, brings Joe's masculinity as well as Jed's to a "coalescence with the feminine", which is a trademark of marginalized masculinities when confronted by hegemonic or complicit masculinities, according to Daniel Lea and Berthold Schoene (9).

Jed's aberrance, to conclude uncovers holes in Joe's heteronormative identity as well as deficiencies in his portrayal of himself as a man in charge of his actions, emotions, and desires, and failure in adhering to prescribed masculine ideals, at certain moments.

### 3.6 Masculinity as a Representation of Conflict: When Heroism Becomes Fatal

*Enduring Love's* largely praised introductory chapter echoes notions of male heroism, though in an exceptionally different flavour. It portrays a captivating scene of manly bravery: after hearing someone's shouts and "a child's cry," "five men running silently towards the centre of a hundred-acre field."(2) Among them is Joe Jose, Jed Parry and John Logan, all of them running towards "an enormous balloon filled with helium," (2) in an attempt to catch the ropes and save the boy that got stuck in its basket. Among all of these assumed heroes, showing off their bravery and power, "in John Logan, husband, father, doctor and mountain rescue worker, the flame of altruism must have burned a little stronger" (1) which paradoxically led to his fatal death. This terrible termination of such a hero is anything but a happy ending, thus McEwan doesn't only subvert the conventional storytelling by introducing the climatic event at the very beginning of the narrative, but also subverts the traditional "sacred" male heroism narrative.

In masculinity studies, this kind of fatal heroism has always been part of the masculine persona, as demonstrated by the political philosopher Harvey Mansfield in his *Manliness* (2006). He forwards the notion of embodying conflict as a component of masculine behaviour, asserting that masculinity often involves a tendency to welcome times of conflict, war, and danger. He expounds on the ideas of *Thumos*, of Plato and Aristotle, referring to one's need for recognition which is a characteristic of "spiritedness" that drives people, primarily men, to make foolish and dangerous acts that could potentially lead them to their downfall. This explains why it was five men only, and there was not a single woman to take the risk and save the kid. Not even Clarissa who was there watching the scene too, "By the time it happened … the fall – she had almost caught us up and was well placed as an observer, unencumbered by participation, by the ropes and the shouting" (1-2).

It is very surprising how McEwan destabilizes preconceptions of triumphant heroic masculinity by making the end of action, bravery and altruism so unordinary and obviously shocking. Yet, John Logan's death is only the beginning. Joe Rose's failure and "cowardice," (50), in fact, all men's, further destabilizes the standard narrative of heroic masculinity.

The narrative actually starts "the moment Logan hit the ground" (13). The demise of this vividly allegorical "falling man" (12) debunks clichéd conclusions and supermale rigid (pre)conceptions. The restarting narrative provides a number of unconventional stories of masculinity wherein feelings of "terror, guilt and helplessness" (14), usually considered as opposing to masculinity, become pillars in depicting masculinities based on one's actual experience rather than other's expectations. Joe's entombed fears and insecurities were revived by Logan's death. Instead of demonstrating his fortitude, the incident exposed a weakness he had been suppressing for so long when he once more "experience[s] [the] emotional wash of an old dream," "In the second or two it took for Logan to reach the ground I had a sense of *déjà vu,* and I immediately knew its source. What came back to me was a nightmare I had occasionally in my twenties and thirties from which I used to shout myself awake" (14).

However, Joe does not yet appear willing to accept a masculinity that is mostly driven by feeling, of which Jed presents an illuminating, though extreme, embodiment and example. And despite acknowledging that logic cannot always triumph, he is not capable of letting go of his rational masculinity. On the contrary, by taking on a key role in *Enduring Love*, the marginal maniac exposes the fundamental fragility of the man of reason and action.

### 3.7 Mutating Masculinity: Under the "Uncanny" Effect

Through Jed Parry's character, McEwan brings *Enduring Love* to a whole new dimension. Depicting him as a psycho-neurological patient with sexual aberration creates the "uncanny" effect. As demonstrated in chapter one, "The Uncanny" by Freud (1919) refers to

"a discomforting anxiety, inducing horror or terror', resulting from things and people considered as other. McEwan introduces Jed Parry's character to "achieve uncanny effects that are absent in real life" (Freud 156). Jed's abnormal behaviours, excessive feelings and eccentric perspectives evoke fear and unjustified paranoia (at least at the beginning) within Joe Rose. Consequently, this leads to a paradoxical and ambivalent display of masculine identity not on the part of Joe Rose only, but also within Jed's persona. This manifests McEwan's viewpoint of the faults inherent in perpetuating the idea of masculinity as a homogenous monolithic construct.

### 3.7.1 From Soft Masculinity to Stereotypical Masculinity:

Despite the drastic difference in their thought modes and fields of expertise, one is a popular science writer and the other is a Keats scholar, Joe and Clarissa initially share mutual understanding, and a lot of care for one another. This is, in large part, due to Joe's empathetic and soft masculine nature. He is a man who does not hesitate to write emotional and lyrical love letters, despite his incapacity to create elegant and poetic language, in order to cater to Clarissa's emotional needs, as we learn from the background information Joe provides, "In the months after we met…she had written me some beauties…I had tried to match hers, but all that sincerity would permit me were the facts" (5).

Even the way he talks with her differs from that he uses with others, namely men, "I unclasped Clarissa's arms from my waist and turned…'Let's go down,' I said quietly. 'There may be something we can do.' I heard my softening of tone, the artful lowering of volume. I was in a soap opera. *Now he's talking to his woman*. It was intimacy, a tight twoshot" (16).

Moreover, though he is totally uninterested in poetry or literature, he spends so much time listening and interacting with Clarissa about John Keats, her research subject, instead of discussing his own issues or interests. Joe Rose is not the kind of man who assumes a dominating manly position in their relationship. His treatment of Clarissa is not based on

gender or sex differences, it is rather based on humanity and gender equality (at least before the advent of Parry). Furthermore, he gives Clarissa great support in dealing with her occasional grief about not being able to bear children due to "a routine surgical procedure" (23). He's so empathetic with her that he somewhat seems to be blaming himself for her own infertility.

In addition, unlike the majority of men, who do not really get along with children, Joe is actually very nurturing when it comes to children. "Nephews, nieces, godchildren, the children of neighbours and old friends" (23), all of whom seem to get along very well with him. He even dedicates a special room in their house for them so that they can stay whenever they want. His visit to John Logan's house reveals so much intimacy between him and Logan's two kids. He gets along with them very impressively from the first moment he met them. He Comments:

> Clarissa sometimes told me that I would have made a wonderful father. She would tell me that I had a good way with children, that I levelled with them easily and without condescension…I know all seven of her godchildren well. We've had them for weekends, we've taken some on holiday abroad, and we devotedly cared for two little girls for a week…I was of some use to Clarissa's eldest godchild, an inwardly stormy fifteenyear-old befuddled by pop culture and the oafish codes of street credibility. I took him drinking with me, and talked him out of leaving school. Four years later he was reading medicine at Edinburgh, and doing well. (86)

However, after Parry intrudes into their life, Joe becomes a different man: someone who starts undermining his partner's ability to understand not only him but everything around them. He starts viewing her as "simply unreasonable" and disliking her "clammy emotional logic." (McEwan 161). In other words, what Jed's pathology evokes within Joe is not

masculine insecurities only, but it also leads him to establish a stereotypical male superiority over Clarissa, no matter how paradoxical this may seem.

The fact that he starts keeping secrets from Clarissa (like Parry's first phone call, "it was nothing, wrong number," (37) and then deleting his thirty voice messages) and secretly collecting Jed's letters, reading them cover to cover, highlighting the important portions, then extracts them to create a file of evidence showing Jed's propensity for violence, suggests that he already decided to take on the lead and solve their problems by his own like a typical protective man who does not feel the need to share everything with his partner, which he admits, "…or perhaps my concealment was protective of her, but I know I made my first serious mistake when I turned on my side and said to her…" (37). Turning the issue that involves them both to one that concerns him only by making "the task of getting us back to where we were was going to be mine alone" (151) without any regard for what her decision may be, indicates that Joe starts dominating their relationship, and subsequently Clarissa. As she charges him, "You did the research, you made the logical references and you got a lot of things right, but in the process, you forgot to take me along with you, you forgot how to confide" (172). Subsequently, the two start feeling trapped "in very different mental universes now, with very different needs" (60), particularly Clarissa who no longer recognizes her husband.

The care and understanding she used to receive from Joe was no longer available, the only thing she gets from him instead was a constant moaning with "some kind of accusation, perhaps even anger against her" (59). Consumed by his selfish obsessive thoughts, Joe becomes completely insensitive towards Clarissa (especially since she is plagued by horrible memories of Logan's death, too), "All Clarissa wants to say is, "Where is my kiss? Hug me! Take care of me! But Joe is pressing like a man who has seen other humans for a year" (59). Even their discussions and talks are dominated by him, only his problems, issues, and

thoughts were allowed to be heard. He deprives her of expressing her complaints about the pressure she undergoes at work, or her bad physical condition and how tired she was,

> You're always thinking about him. It never stops. You were thinking about him just then, weren't you? Go on, tell me honestly. Tell me.
>
> I was, yes.
>
> I don't know what's happening with you, Joe. I'm losing you. It's frightening. You need help, but I don't think it can come from me. (148)

And even when she tries to show him her sympathy and compassion, her efforts was not appreciated: "Her careful questions were designed to help him, and now she is being rewarded by hid aggression while her own needs go unnoticed" (85). Jed's presence makes Joe a different man: rigid, dominating, unfamiliarly jealous and to some extent aggressive as marked by Clarissa:

> Are you really saying this had nothing to do with Parry? The same evening you stormed out of the flat, slamming the door on me. Nothing like that had ever happened between us. You became more and more agitated and obsessed. You didn't want to talk to me about anything else. Our sex life dwindled to almost nothing. I don't want to go on about it, but your ransacking my desk was a terrible betrayal. What reason had I given you to be jealous? As the Parry thing grew I watched you go deeper into yourself and further and further away from me. You were manic, and driven, and very lonely. (McEwan 157)

Like a typical dominating man, Joe allows himself to fetch in Clarissa's belongings when she is out in search of a love letter that could prove his suspicions of her having an affair behind his back. This gesture exposes him as a man who does not have any consideration for his wife's feelings, even a man who thinks of his wife as his own property: something that belongs to him. What actually proves this is that he didn't even try to put her

letters back in their place or place them in a way she won't notice someone went through them.

When Clarissa writes him a letter to establish her viewpoint of him, of what he has become and how much he has changed, he insists on his righteousness and criticizes her emotional reaction as though viewing her as a typical dramatic woman versus the logical pragmatic man who knows best, "…But the years harden us into what we are, and her letter appeared to me simply unreasonable. I disliked its wounded, self-righteous tone, its clammy emotional logic, its knowingness that hid behind a highly selective memory." (McEwan 171)

Although we realize that Joe's new stereotypical behaviours are not driven by a sort of malice or an intended repressive tendency, but rather a type of spontaneous impulse that stems from his harsh alter masculine ego, they still alienate him from Clarissa.

### 3.7.2 When the Vulnerable Becomes a "Threat":

Jed's homosexuality and his pathological condition (often more associated with female subjects) do not necessarily place him entirely inside the feminine confines. In fact, his character is a sort of coalescence of the feminine traits of unpredictability and emotional susceptibility with the masculine traits of endurance and aggression. Such anomalous combination in one persona reasserts Butler's (1990) views, according to which the bodies of both men and women could serve as a location for challenging normative gender standards. As Joe notes, "What was so exhausting" about Jed "was the variety of his emotional states and the speed of their transitions. Reasonableness, tears, desperation, vague threat" and "honest supplication" (McEwan *47*).

When he first spoke, Parry's voice was "feely hesitant" with "a whine of Powerlessness" (18), as Joe describes him. Even his look didn't suggest much masculine strength, the one that

would be intimidating because "He appeared smaller, all knobs and bones" (44). Jed shows himself as completely powerless and acts as truly vulnerable which deceives Joe to somewhat underestimates Jed's ability to act manly (or, at least, this is how he really acts). Analyzing his physique and voice tone, Joe describes him as:

> He wouldn't meet my eye as I came up, or rather his eyes made a nervous pass across my face, and then turned down. As I put out my hand I was feeling quite relieved. Clarissa was right, he was a harmless fellow with a strange notion, a nuisance at most, hardly the threat I had made him out to be. He looked a sorry sight now, cringing under the fresh plane leaves. (44)

Moreover, he places himself on the margin by admitting Joe's dominant position and giving him the impression that he (Joe) is the only controller, the only man in this relationship if we may say, he begs, trembles and even cries like a woman hurt in love:

> His lower lip was trembling….At this point, to my great surprise, Parry put his hands over his face and started to cry.
>
> 'I know this gives you power over me, but there's nothing I can do about it'…
>
> 'Please, please,' he said in a gabble. 'You can't leave it like that. Tell me something, give me one little thing. The truth, or just a part of the truth. Just say that you're torturing me… (46-47)

Astonishingly, Jed can easily move from feminine vulnerability to masculine aggression, in simultaneous ways. "And for the first time," Joe finds himself "calculating the physical danger he presented" (47). The fact that Jed with his tiny bony physique and armless can actually present a threat, proves that masculine characteristics are not necessarily linked to male heterosexuality, but rather an "act" performed independently from body and sexual desire.

In their second encounter, Joe notes that "something had shifted in his manner," there was something unfamiliar about Jed: "There was a hardness," (94) and his look no longer deemed a "sorry sight" (44). A radical change in his manner, voice and look, from feminine "whining" to masculine "hardness," leaves Joe with a sense of intimidation. The "pathetic harmless crank" (157) was now evoking horror and dread within the strong rationalist Joe once he changed his manner, his voice tone and adopted a little masculine hardness. This alteration made Joe feel that Jed wasn't a danger to his masculinity only, but in fact to his life as a whole:

> Parry was all around me. I took care to sit facing the door, well away from the only window. Each time someone came in I felt a cold drop in my stomach. Paranoia constructed an image of him for me, standing across the street from the police station, flanked by the men in coats. I went and stood in the station entrance and looked. I felt neither surprise nor relief that he wasn't there. 129

Jed's oscillation between vulnerability and strength, and between femininity and masculinity exemplifies Butler's notions of gender performativity (1990). His ability to adapt to dominant masculine standards and to easily fit within certain stereotypes (however, not for very long) proves that "[g]ender is always a doing," it is not something one is; it is something one does, an act, or more precisely, a sequence of acts" (Butler 25).

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, it should be noted that Ian McEwan meticulously examines various dimensions of masculinity in this work, particularly men's issues and quandaries in late-20th-century British society. The British author creates a complicated, tangled, ambiguous, occasionally challenging, and intriguing men's universe that captivates and holds readers'

interest while compelling us to engage in the reading process by delving into the protagonists' mental universe.

The analysis asserted that masculinity is a social construct whose current state is ostensibly fluid rather than static, as repeatedly highlighted by Connell and Butler. The novel seems to imply that a variety of elements shape and impact how masculinity is performed and constructed. Through Jed's character, McEwan disrupts and undermines the constructions of masculinity that incorporate the conventional masculine prototype by simultaneously reflecting and debunking them.

Finally, McEwan depicts how his characters undergo different levels of mental and psychological states that shift, change and conflict, this in turn reflects the articulation of their masculine identity.

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# *General Conclusion*

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The subject of masculinity has received a great deal of academic attention since the 1990s which made masculinity studies hugely develop to become a significant part of gender discourses. Correspondingly, over the last two decades, the emphasis of masculinity studies has been put on the analysis of masculinity in literary discourses. In this light, this study aimed to explore the representation of masculinity in postmodern fiction, specifically, *Enduring Love* (1997) by the British writer Ian Russell McEwan, within the parameters of gender criticism and masculinity studies.

The study intended to achieve the following objectives: to investigate the characters' performance of masculinity, to demonstrate the irreducible intricacy and plurality of masculinity, to illustrate the impact of the psychological factors on the masculine identity and finally to explore McEwan's viewpoints about masculinity.

In parallel with the research questions, the first chapter established the theoretical background of the study upon which the analysis of masculinity in the case studied has been based. It has pointed out the key theories of masculinity from various disciplinary fields. And because masculinity is addressed within a postmodern context, the second chapter offered an analytical reading of *Enduring Love,* in the light of the major postmodern theories, notions and features. Finally, the last chapter directly inscribed the research questions. It delved into the analysis of male characters' physical and mental worlds to explore the masculine identity in *Enduring Love.*

This study has used a larger cultural and psychological focus on gender concepts to address the gaps in the treatment of masculinity within McEwan's *Enduring Love.* It analyzed masculinity regardless of biological sex and sexual desire in order to break away from heteronormative interpretations.

Because *Enduring Love* is set within a postmodern context, which had a great impact on how gender and masculinity were perceived as it called into question people's commonly held

beliefs (among which notions of gender), a postmodern reading of *Enduring Love* in the light of the major postmodernist theories, notions and writing techniques was provided. This familiarizes the reader with the ambivalence, contradiction and subversion held within *Enduring Love's* text and, thus, it paves the way for understanding the representation of masculinity.

The underlying assertion to change the way science is addressed, the main protagonist's tendency to hold onto the belief of "objective" truth, his tenacious attempts to explain reality and offer it a coherent account, and the accompanying postmodernist interest in challenging concepts of truth and rationality, all of these reveal evident indications of postmodern fiction. The analysis has also revealed McEwan's use of the most prominent postmodernist writing techniques like metafiction and intertextuality. Finally, the subversive nature of *Enduring Love's* events, the contradictions held within the main character and the examination of "paranoia," all lend themselves well to postmodern texts.

The examination of McEwan's male characters, on the other hand, illustrated the amorphous nature of masculinity as it is experienced and expressed by men during the postmodern era, and how it was represented by McEwan. As the analysis revealed, it is a subject that is neither static nor fixed. The results also indicate that masculinity is produced within particular sociocultural contexts and changes according to them. Further results showed that the psychological crises men undergo directly influence the masculine identity which justifies the complications, contradictions and the masculine mutability held within McEwan's male characters.

Basing the analysis on Connell's views of masculinity and Butler's notion of gender performativity, the novel indicated that masculinity does not necessarily operate within a certain type of body or given sexual preferences, in fact, it is more of an act, a performance that can be undertaken by anybody, however, his biological sex or sexual preferences are.

In conclusion, it should be noted that Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* methodically examines various dimensions of masculinity, especially men's issues and conundrums in Britain at the end of the 20th century. The British author creates a complicated, tangled, confusing, occasionally challenging, and intriguing men's universe that captivates and holds readers' interest while also compelling us to actively engage in the reading process by delving into the protagonists' mental universe.

This study's current and engaging analysis of a critically important area of inquiry will be warmly welcomed by readers willing to question preconceived views about what defines masculinity as it offered a thorough grounding in one of the most salient and almost endless debates. This study, also, stimulates the search for new models of masculinity within literature by emphasizing the agency of psychology in the construction of masculinity.

Because studies on literary masculinities are still widely unfamiliar in the academic world. This dissertation suggests a re-examination of literary texts from the perspective of masculinity, which will be very advantageous for several reasons. First, this will open the male experience in literary texts to a variety of interpretations, and proving, therefore, the widely believed assumptions that the male representation is akin to males, are fallacious ones. Approaching literary texts through the prism of masculinity studies reveals the impacts of the cultural ideals of manhood on the daily and personal lives of men by breaking away from analyzing the universal, and rarely palpable, themes. The ability to examine a significant number of literary works as social documents that reflect the ideals of manhood in a given culture is another benefit of revisiting literature through the lens of masculinities studies. Since no culture is homogenous but rather plural, masculinities studies likewise aim to show the diversity of perspectives and representations of males in literature. Moreover, reading a literary text from the perspective of masculinity studies can enrich its interpretation, and how masculinity itself is changing and evolving in different contexts. Finally, revealing the

changing literary portrayals of masculinity is likely to reflect the preconceived cultural meanings of masculinity.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that this research has invariably had limitations because the completion of this research was more challenging than initially anticipated because of the limited researcher experience, first, and the humbly present documents that were adequate with the research's title, secondly.

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# *Appendices*

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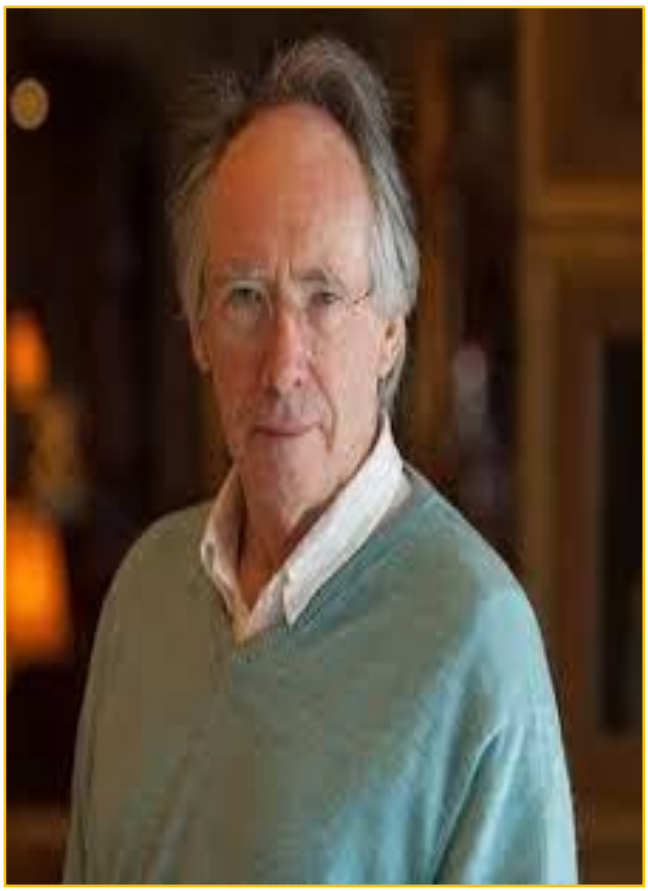
## Appendix 01: Ian McEwan's Biography

Ian Russell McEwan is an English novelist and screenwriter. The son of David McEwan and Rose Lilian Violet, he was born on June 21, 1948, in Aldershot, Hampshire. His father was a Scotsman from the working class who had risen through the ranks of the army to the position of major.



Since his father was stationed in Germany, North Africa (including Libya), and East Asia (including Singapore), McEwan spent a large portion of his childhood there. He was 12 years old when his family left for England. He attended the Suffolk school Woolverstone Hall, the University of Sussex, where he earned a degree in English literature in 1970, and the University of East Anglia, where he pursued a master's degree in literature with the option of submitting creative writing rather than a critical dissertation.

*First Love, Last Rites* (1975), a collection of short stories, was McEwan's debut publication which received the Somerset Maugham Award in 1976. He rose to fame after the BBC halted the staging of his play Solid Geometry in 1979 due to allegations of obscenity. *In Between the Sheets*, his second book of short stories was released in 1978. His first two novels, *The Cement Garden* (1978) and *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981) were both made into films. He was given the moniker "Ian Macabre" due to the subject matter of these

works. These were followed by his first book for children, *Rose Blanche* (1985), and a return to literary fiction with *The Child in Time* (1987), winner of the 1987 Whitbread Novel Award.

A new phase began in McEwan's career with the publication of the mid-Cold War espionage drama *The Innocent* (1990), and *Black Dogs* (1992), a sort of companion piece looking back on the outcomes of the Cold War and the legacy of the Nazi era in Europe. McEwan followed these works with his second book for children, *The Daydreamer* (1994).

His 1997 novel, *Enduring Love* gained huge popularity among readers and critics. In 2004 it was adapted into a film. In 1998, he won the Booker Prize for *Amsterdam*. *Atonement (2001)*, his subsequent novel, was widely praised; Time magazine called it the best book of 2002, and it was included on the Booker Prize shortlist. His next work, *Saturday* (2005), depicts a particularly exciting day in the life of a prosperous neurosurgeon, won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize for 2005. His novel *On Chesil Beach* (2007) was shortlisted for the 2007 Man Booker Prize and was adapted into a film in 2017, for which McEwan wrote the screenplay.

In addition, McEwan has written several screenplays that have been produced, a stage play, children's literature, an oratorio with a libretto called *For You*, and an oratorio with music by Michael Berkeley.

In 2010 he wrote *Solar*. It was followed by McEwan's twelfth novel, *Sweet Tooth*, published in 2012. Then, *The Children Act* (2014) and *Nutshell* (2016).

In April 2019, McEwan released the alternate history/science fiction novel *Machines Like Me* following *Nutshell* (2016). The former deals with artificial intelligence and a different version of history in which Britain loses the Falkland War and Tony Benn's Labour Party go on to win the 1987 general election. McEwan revealed *The Cockroach*, a brief surprise sequel novella, in September 2019.

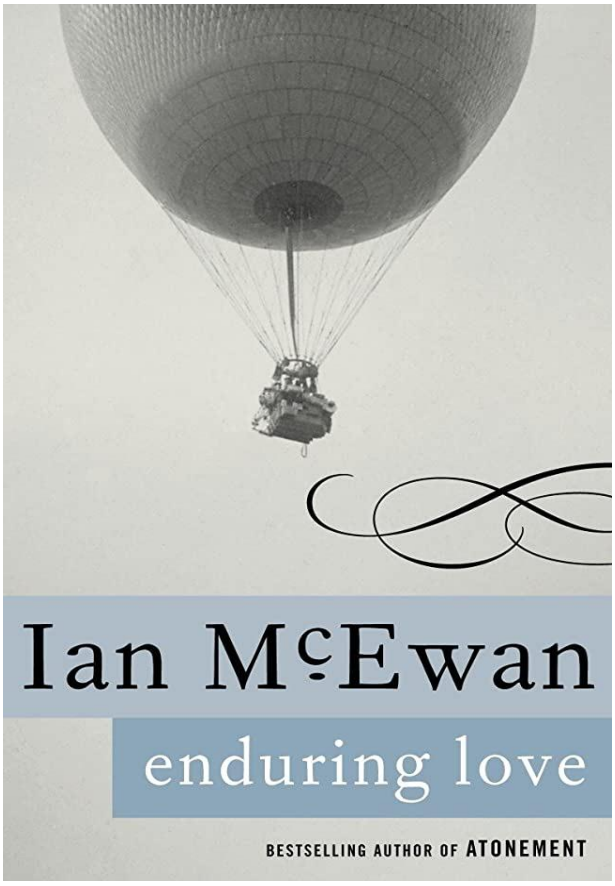
McEwan won the Booker Prize for *Amsterdam* (1998). He was awarded the 1999 Shakespeare Prize, too. The Daily Telegraph listed him as number 19 on its list of the "100 most powerful people in British culture" in 2008, while The Times included him on its list of "The 50 greatest British writers since 1945." The Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award was given to McEwan in 2010. The 2011 Jerusalem Prize followed. And In honour of his literary oeuvre, the University of Sussex awarded him with its 50th Anniversary Gold Medal in 2012.

The literary archives of McEwan were purchased in 2014 for $2 million by the Harry Ransom Centre at the University of Texas. All of his subsequent novels' drafts can be found in the archives. Additionally, McEwan was given the American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award in 2019.

## Appendix 02: Synopsis of the Novel *Enduring Love*

*Enduring Love* was first published in 1997. It was shortlisted for the Whitbread Book Award in 1999. In 2004 it was adapted into a motion picture, starring Daniel Craig, Rhys Ifans and Samantha Morton, directed by Roger Michell and written by Joe Penhall.

Joe and Clarissa Rose are a young married British couple. Joe, a science journalist, is incredibly logical and favours using reasoning to resolve conflicts. On the other side, Clarissa is a professor of English who specializes in Keats. She is more sentimental and favours an empathic approach to problem-solving. The two are having a picnic when they notice a hot air balloon that has taken off and has a frightened boy inside its basket. Running after the balloon and grabbing the ropes are Joe and several other men. However, a strong gust of wind lifts the balloon causing them to let go of the ropes. Only one man, a doctor named John Logan, holds on to the rope and is lifted to the sky. He, then, falls to his death. During the incident the couple also meets a religious man, and one of the attempted rescuers, named Jed Parry who takes a seemingly romantic interest in Joe.




Later, when Joe goes to the library to do research for an article he is writing, he believes he sees Jed Parry there stalking him. Joe expresses concern to Clarissa about Parry's infatuation with him, but she believes he is being overly dramatic. Parry starts writing him letters almost every day. This causes Joe and Clarissa's relationship to become strained.

On Clarissa’s birthday, Joe, Clarissa and her godfather Pr. Kale goes out to have lunch in a restaurant. Two masked men come during the chat and suddenly shoot the man seated next to Joe. Parry steps in and tries to save Joe's life in the meanwhile. Then, Joe informs the police that he believes Parry hired the two men to kill him but mistakenly shot the wrong man. Nevertheless, the police don't take his claims seriously.

Concerned by Parry's increasing aggressiveness, Joe asks an old acquaintance to help him in getting a gun for defence. They go together to bring the gun they purchased. Joe gets a call from Parry on the way home, telling him that Clarissa is being held hostage in Joe's flat. After firing a few practice shots from the gun, Joe drives back home and confronts Parry, who is holding Clarissa at knifepoint. After pleading with Joe for forgiveness, Parry places the knife to his own neck. He drops the knife, though, after Joe shoots him in the elbow. When the police show up, they take Parry away.

Clarissa apologizes and acknowledges that Joe had good reason to be suspicious. However, she later writes him a letter outlining her viewpoint and informing him that everything could have been avoided if Joe had spoken to Parry sooner rather than ignoring him and allowing his affection and rage to grow.

The novel ends with two appendices. In the first, a case study of "Clerambault's syndrome,” the psychotic disease with which Parry is afflicted, is presented, and in the second, Parry writes to Joe from the mental hospital where he is being held, professing that he is still in love with him despite everything.

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## *French/ Arabic Abstracts*

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# Résumé

À la fin du XXe siècle, les études sur la masculinité ont évoluées pour devenir un domaine multidisciplinaire majeur. Aujourd'hui, une grande partie des études sur la masculinité semblent se concentre sur les représentations cinématiques et littéraires de la masculinité. Dans cette optique l'étude en cours visait à examiner de manière critique la représentation de la masculinité dans la fiction postmoderne, notamment, dans *'Enduring Love'* (1997) de l'écrivain Britannique Ian Russell McEwan. L'approche descriptive ainsi que l'approche analytique ont été utilisées pour mener cette étude. Le premier a aidé à établir les fondements conceptuels et théoriques de l'étude, tandis que le second a aidé à trouver des réponses adéquates à certaines questions et problématiques, en examinant les contextes sociaux, culturelles et psychologiques. L'analyse été basé sur les contributions majeurs aux études sur les hommes par les personnalités les plus éminentes du domaine, comme Raewyn Connell et Judith Butler, et en plus d'autre critiques de la masculinité. De la psychologie, la théorie Freudienne de 'l'étrangeté' était d'une importance primordiale. L'étude a finalement révélé que la masculinité est transitoire, flexible et discutable. Elle est construite dans des contextes socioculturels et historiques particuliers et se change selon les circonstances dans lesquelles se situe. Elle a signifiée également le rôle crucial de l'état psychologique de l'individu dans la construction, la déconstruction et l'altération de l'identité masculine. Il est donc fortement recommander de mettre l'accent sur les éléments psychologiques lors de l'examen des masculinités littéraires pour élargir les interprétations.

# ملخص

بحلول أواخر القرن العشرين تطورت دراسات الذكورة لتصبح مجالا اكاديميا متعدد التخصصات. اليوم، يبدو ان الكثير من دراسات الذكورة أصبحت تركز على تحليل التمثيلات السينمائية والأدبية للذكورة. في ضوء ذلك سعت الدراسة الحالية للقيام بفحص نقدي للتصوير الذكوري في ادب عصر ما بعد الحداثة، وبالتحديد في رواية "الحب الدائم" 1997 للكاتب البريطاني ايان راسل ماك ايوان. تم استخدام المنهج الوصفي و كذلك المنهج التحليلي لاجراء هذه الدراسة. حيث ساعد الأول في انشاء الأسس النظرية للدراسة، بينما كان الأخير مفيدا في العثور على إجابات مناسبة لكثير من الاستفسارات من خلال تفحص السياقات الاجتماعية والثقافية و النفسية في "الحب الدائم ". اعتمد في تحليل الرواية على اهم المساهمات في "دراسات الرجال و الذكورة" من قبل ابرز الشخصيات في المجال، مثل راوين كونيل وجوديث باتلر، بالإضافة الى العديد من نقاد الذكورة الاخرين. من علم النفس، كانت نظرية فرويد "الغريب" ذات أهمية كبيرة . كشفت الدراسة في النهاية ان الذكورة مؤقتة و مرنة ومشكوك فيها . كما انها مبنية في سياقات تغيرات اجتماعية وثقافية وتاريخية، وتتغيروفقا للظروف التي تنشا فيها. كما دلت على الدور الحاسم للحالة النفسية للفرد في بناء و تفكيك و تغيير الهوية الذكورية. لذلك يوصى بالتركيز بشدة على العوامل النفسية عند تحليل الذكورة الأدبية.