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Research Paper

Alienation in *Child in Time* and *The Cement Garden*: A Review Based on Melvin Seaman's Theory

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Abstract

Alienation is a significant phenomenon that forms the subject of many psychological, sociological, literary, philosophical, and even physiological studies. Alienation is among the most critical justifications for bringing about internal and external pains and sufferings in life. Emerging as a result of war, persecution, famine, and ruin, alienation terminates unfortunately in suffering, isolation, and sometimes critical disasters. In literature, the alienated protagonist is usually a frequent figure in much of ancient and contemporary fiction. The main issue of alienation refers to the destructive consequence of getting, or feeling of getting separated from people that one is living with them. It refers to becoming useless, or to feel becoming useless in the field of social relations and interactions. It is the outcome of becoming alienated so that one thinks that no longer anyone needs him/her, and/or his / her services. Aiming to review the theme of alienation, and focusing on Melvin Seaman's concepts of alienation in general, the present paper, in particular, will review the manifestation of the term alienation in "The Child in Time," and "The Comfort of Strangers," that are both the well-known novels written by Ian Russell McEwan, one of the greatest British novelists and screenwriters of the twentieth century. By describing the disastrous aftermath of alienation, this article tries to alarm man regarding the catastrophic and destructive consequences of alienation in the life of the existing societies.

Keywords: Complicated; Isolation; Suffering

مروری بر بیگانگی در آثار ایوان مک ایوان در زمانهای کودکی در زمان و باغ سیمانی بر اساس نظریه ملوین سیمن از خود بیگانگی پدیده ای قابل توجه است که موضوع بسیاری از مطالعات روانشناختی، جامعه شناختی، ادبی، فلسفی و حتی فیزیولوژیکی را تشکیل می دهد. از خود بیگانگی یکی از انتقادی ترین توجیهاتی است که دردها و رنج های درونی و بیرونی را در زندگی به همراه دارد. بیگانگی که در نتیجه جنگ، آزار و اذیت، قحطی و ویرانی پدید می آید، متأسفانه به رنج، انزوا و گاهی بلایای بحرانی ختم می شود. در ادبیات، قهرمان داستان از خود بیگانه معمولاً در بسیاری از داستانهای باستانی و معاصر چهره ای مکرر است. موضوع اصلی از خود بیگانگی به پیامد مخرب بدست آوردن یا احساس جدایی از مردمی اشاره دارد که فرد با آنها زندگی می کند. به بی فایده شدن یا احساس بی فایده شدن در زمینه روابط و تعاملات اجتماعی اشاره دارد. این نتیجه از خود بیگانگی است، به طوری که فرد فکر می کند که دیگر کسی به او و یا خدمات او نیاز ندارد. مقاله حاضر با هدف مرور مضمون بیگانگی و تمرکز بر مفاهیم بیگانگی ملوین سیمن به طور خاص، به بررسی تجلی واژه بیگانگی در «کودک در زمان» و «آرامش غریبه ها» می پردازد. که هر دو رمان معروفی هستند که توسط ایوان راسل مک ایوان، یکی از بزرگترین رمان نویسان و فیلمنامه نویسان بریتانیایی قرن بیستم نوشته شده است. این مقاله سعی دارد با تشریح پیامدهای ناگوار بیگانگی، انسان را نسبت به پیامدهای فاجعه بار و مخرب بیگانگی در زندگی جوامع موجود هشدار دهد.

کلمات کلیدی: انزوا، رنج، پیچیده

Introduction

According to Erich Fromm (1900 – 1980), alienation is a mode of experience, in which the person himself experiences as an alien. He has become estranged from himself. He does not experience himself as the center of his world, and as the creature of his acts, but his acts and their consequences become his masters, whom he obeys, or whom he may even worship (Erich Fromm). Although it covers a long and distinguished history, the complex concept of alienation has not had an absolute definition from the past. Nevertheless, the term has long been a popular theme in literature, although its rise to prominence came most sharply in the 20th century since humans moved farther away from the world of nature and came closer to that of machines.

Schacht (1989) believes that in modern, sophisticated, and highly differentiated multi-group societies, an absolute and certain procedure against alienation shall be applied (Geyer, F 1991). Fritz Pappenheim points out that after World War II, the pessimism or prevalence of belief in the greatness of man, the infinities of progress, and the sovereignty of reason brought out the awareness of the alienation in modern man, that is, he cannot be himself, and he remains a stranger in the world where he lives. Hegel, Karl Max, Feuerbach, and many other scholars have also pointed out seriously the fact and the catastrophic consequences of alienation that man cannot get out of it in modern society.

For Marx (1975), the social relations of capitalism alienate human beings from the world around them, from their products, their work, their fellow workers, and their species. The concept of alienation for Marx expressed the separation of individuals from what gives a human life meaning, actions in the world that make that world his / her. Because labor under capitalism is external to the worker, it is not part of his essential being. He does not confirm himself in his work, but denies himself, feels miserable and not happy, does not develop free mental and physical energy, but mortifies his flesh and ruins his mind. (Tim Dant, 2003)

In my opinion, the term has now become much more intensified, and broader, and turned to a prevalent trend, which requires the man to be more careful regarding the trap, which at the first stage requires him to be familiar with the main causes of the phenomenon.

Melvin Seaman, a theorist who made an important modern and postmodern point of view regarding alienation after Marx and Hegel, is one of the first who developed an alienation scale to measure the types and varieties of alienation. He singled out five aspects of alienation, namely powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement. Maintaining Marx's insights, Seaman presented a suitable framework for the analysis of alienation in contemporary modern literature. Applying Seaman's theory of alienation, the present article aims to make a comprehensive study of the term. The authors attempted also to bring the readers more acquainted with the point. To this purpose, "The Child in Time," and "The Cement Garden," two novels written by Ian Russell McEwan, a British well-known novelist and screenwriter, who goes masterfully beyond man's expectations to show his readers the smashing consequences of human estrangement and alienation from the self and society in intelligence and function, is reviewed.

Literature Review

With its roots going back to the ancients, alienation is an important and unavoidable concept. After World War II, while societies started their increasingly accelerated rate of change, and in the meantime, the intellectual elite noticed the first signals of post-modernity, alienation gradually became a section of the societal scenes (BA Senekal, 2008). Srole (1956) was the first theoretician in the 1950s who advanced an alienation scale to measure the types and varieties of alienation. Although in Eastern Europe alienation was completely denied because the laborers owned the means of production, in Western Europe the studies regarding the subject proliferated



after the 1968 student revolutions in Europe and the USA (Dieter Langewiesche, 2015). To herald, the imminent termination of the late capitalism, the existence of alienation in the capitalistic societies of the West was gleefully confirmed. In the USA and Western Europe, the research on alienation got started, and rapidly many scales about the subject were developed by college students and different societal groups (International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2001). Much of the move was following the Marx writings, and his points of view regarding the negative situation in Western society, namely, the alienation of laborer under capitalism, political alienation and indifference, suppression of minority groups, and so on. Nonetheless, the 1970s was characterized by theoretical neo-Marxist promotions involved in alienation, and it was scarcely engaged in empirical research at all. During the 1980s, while the postwar baby boomers grew up, since they were more disappointed as a result of the war condition, the tendencies in research about alienation subsided.

Although some small groups were eager to continue studying regarding the subject, but the concept became less popular and interesting, and willy-nilly the problems denoted by alienation got far from solved (BA Senekal, 2008). Nevertheless a research group of those small groups from the International Sociological Association (ISA), tried to find out the gap between empirical and theoretical approaches regarding alienation (Respectively neo-Marxist and non-Marxist approaches), and concluded that the empiricists knew who were alienated and why, and theoreticians have just repeated the views of Marx regarding alienation, commodity fetishism, and false consciousness, and also, they were eager to engage in empirical research based on Marxist lines. Moreover, the empiricists discovered that the disadvantaged have become alienated (Sidney Finkelstein, 1965).

Nevertheless, different interpreters of alienation have given different definitions. According to Arnold Kaufman, to claim that a person is alienated is to claim that his relation to something else has certain features which result in avoidable discontent or loss of satisfaction. Feur Lewis says that the word alienation is used to convey the emotional tone which accompanies any behavior in which the person is compelled to act self destructively (Abdul Saleem, 2014). According to the views of Keniston, most usages of alienation share the assumption that some relationship or connection that once existed that is natural, desirable, and attractive, has been lost. Sidney Finkelstein defines alienation as “a psychological phenomenon, an internal conflict, a hostility felt towards something seemingly outside oneself which is linked to oneself, a barrier erected which is actually no defense but an impoverishment of oneself (Sidney Finkelstein, 1965). According to Hegel, alienation is of two kinds. The first type of alienation arises due to man’s individuality or incompatibility in his personality and social substance.

The second type of alienation is of the same level as the alienation expounded by Rousseau etc. According to Hegel, the situation arises when a change occurs in man’s concept of ‘self’. The second type of alienation is permanent and from this we can control the first type. Karl Marx however puts forth a very comprehensive and complex idea of alienation that comprises various extrinsic dimensions of human existence in socio-economic context. It is then in 1990s that two new forms of research on alienation converge. In one hand, conditions of postmodernity described and stressed the source of alienation, and in the other hand, ethnic and social differences justified the subject (Abdul Saleem, 2014).

Then Melvin Seaman (1918 – 2020) was a prominent theoretician in the middle of twentieth century when he published his paper, *On the Meaning of Alienation*, *American Sociological Review* in 1959, followed by *Alienation, Membership, and Political Knowledge: A Comparative Study* in 1966. Melvin Seaman defined five features of alienation, namely powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement. He identified powerlessness and self-estrangement with Marxian notions of alienation, and related self-



estrangement to Marx false consciousness, and proposed a more convenient theory to the analysis of alienation in contemporary literature. (H. Sarfraz, 1997)

The Critical Framework

Melvin Seaman (1989) has recently stated that nowadays the concept of alienation carries an antiquated meaning which is quite in contrast to its importance in the 1960s. There seems to be much evidence for a fading romance with alienation in the social sciences.

Melvin Seaman and Alienation

The world changed since Marx wrote his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and The German Ideology. For instance, the addition of the mass media, jet aircraft, and information technology had a profound impact on the world man lives in (Gary K. Browning, 1993). Augusto & Helena (1996) note that each historical moment and each society creates specific types of the human being (BA Senekal, 2008). One of the sociological papers most often cited concerning alienation is Melvin Seaman on the Meaning of Alienation, published in the American Sociological Review in 1959 (On the meaning of alienation, Seaman, M). Although alienation is not a modern phenomenon, it has progressed far beyond what Marx envisaged. Weber (Wexler, 1996) already noted that the total being of man has now been alienated from the organic cycle of peasant life. The situation in which modern man finds himself is one where man attempts to remain an individual against all external onslaughts which reduce him to a number, makes him a gear in a machine (John O'Neill, 1964). According to Melvin Seaman (1966), the following concepts can be concluded:

Powerlessness is the initial scale of alienation noted by Seaman, and it refers to the lack of expectations that an individual believes that he cannot influence the outcomes and consequences of what he seeks. It refers to the uncertainty about the authority someone should have regarding whatever he does. Seaman believes that powerlessness is an aspect of alienation that is originated in the Marxian idea of the laborer's condition in capitalist society. He argues that the rights, prerogative and authorities of the alienated workers are taken away from them by the ruling entrepreneurs (BA Senekal, 2008). Kalkin Fishman (1996) claims that a person suffers from alienation in the form of powerlessness when he is conscious of the gap between what he likes to do, and what he feels capable of doing (Sadeqle Islam, 2019). In literature, the antihero is a depiction of powerlessness. The antihero experiences his role while he/she is usually characterized as a victim to whom everything happens (Author).

The second feature of Seaman's alienation is meaninglessness. Meaninglessness refers to the lack of understanding from something that an individual is engaged (Seaman, 1966). Showers described humans as creatures that they need a meaningful existence. He pointed out that without some form of meaning, it is impossible for people to keep on living (T Wodaj, 2019). Weber defines the personality as a concept that requires a regular relation to specific meanings of life, which defines the purposes of living (T Burger, 1993).

Seaman (1959) argues that meaninglessness occurs when the individual is unclear about what he ought to believe - when the individuals' minimum standards for clarity in decision making are not met. He notes also that in postmodern society, the man is confused with a world of horror, opposing views, puzzling phenomena, and a background of history that is constantly rewritten (T Wodaj, 2019). Seaman (Ibid) argues that a low expectancy depicts meaninglessness, that in that case, satisfactory predictions regarding the ongoing effects of behavior cannot be made. In the other word, while powerlessness refers to the individual's hesitations about his ability to control the outcomes of function, meaninglessness refers to that hesitation he has regarding the behavioral prediction of those outcomes (Seaman, 1959).



Normlessness or anomia is a situation when the social norms forming the people's manners of life have broken down, or are no longer effectual as rules of behavior. It is a type of alienation that the people in contemporary modern society have to cope with it (Charlotte Nickerson, 2021). Neal & Collas state that normlessness stems from the conditions of complexity and conflict, in which the people become bewildered about the norms of their community. For instance, the mentioned problem can be observed in male / female relationships, where, normlessness is prevalent and frequently current and common in the behavior of the couples. One consists of intentional use of misrepresentation and cunning, and the other of the use of pressure and power (Neal & Collas, 2000).

The next feature of Seaman's alienation is social isolation that refers to the feeling of becoming segregated from the community. Social isolation occurs when a person feels that he is detached from the social activities and participations in his own society. He therefore becomes gradually disappointed, and alienation results due to that disappointment. More individual and characteristic, Seaman's last aspect of alienation is self-estrangement (H Sarfraz, 1997). Self-estrangement is the psychological state of seeking out extrinsically rather than intrinsically satisfying activities. Seaman admits that what is being postulated here is some ideal human condition from which the individual is estranged (M Seaman, 1959).

Melvin Seaman is a theorist whose decades of work covers a multitude of types of alienation, and has provided the human with an extended range of subject, and since the present paper aims to study the subject of alienation, the named theorist is an appropriate case for analysis (Authors). This paper focuses on the social aspects of alienation in "The Cement Garden" & "The Child in Times" characters. In terms of sociology, the most influential concepts of alienation in the novels will be analyzed. The main causes of alienation, namely powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation and self-estrangement will be also discussed based on Melvin Seaman's ideas and definitions (Authors). Attempt is to prove that all the catastrophic and destroying effects of the conditions are due to feeling of isolation and alienation which is imposed from society, family, and self in the forms of abnormality and failure. Seaman's conception of alienation was developed in the 1950s, and still is basically valid and workable, but shall be reinterpreted in the post-modern world as per the new conditions that have been changed along with an ever-changing society. (Authors)

Melvin Seaman's classification of powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement are as applicable in the post-modern context as they were when Seaman first published *On the Meaning of Alienation*, 1959 (T Wodaj, 2019). Powerlessness involves whether or not the individual feels he is capable of controlling his circumstances. In the contemporary world, the individual is situated in a global economic and political environment, where increased complexity and larger control-structures create the impression that the individual is less likely to control his surroundings. That says changing social norms and a political climate which emphasizes human rights have given the individual more freedom to choose than was possible under colonialism, monarchies and the domination of the church in previous centuries, in the opposite of alienations. Powerlessness is depicted in Mc-Ewan's *The Child in Time* in terms of Stephen's inability to locate his missing daughter, a search which not only drives a wedge between himself and his wife, but also undermines the masculine norm of action (S. Jahanroshan, 2015).

Meaninglessness, leading to social alienation, refers to the individual's ability to make sense of his environment. This aspect has changed considerably since Seaman's original study, with the introduction of the internet and the expansion of the mass media. The information age has changed meaninglessness from the inability to gather enough control-relevant information, to an overflow of information from which it is difficult to select the appropriate, applicable information for his specific circumstances (M.H Lystad, 1972). With meaning in particular being constructed



within a communal network, the decline in emotional intimacy between people living in urban environments creates further problems for constructing a meaningful narrative of the individual's place within society.

Normlessness has been influenced by the degradation of authority in the twentieth century, in particular the Church's loss of dominance and the resulting decline in traditional moral behavior (F Samadi, 2019). In the contemporary setting, it is therefore up to the individual to construct his own norms and values, but the Western world is adapting and creating its own values. The youth, however, do not seem to share this adaptation, and as Mayer indicates, normlessness is rising (Ibid).

Social isolation has been compounded by the increase in urbanization over the course of the twentieth century. Cities tend to herd people into physical proximity, while encouraging emotional distance. There is no return to rural habitation with the world's expanding population. Hence social isolation is bound to increase. This has bearing on the other aspects of alienation, as meaning and norms are constructed within a communal context, and the loss of identification with others will inevitably affect these as well (B.A. Senekal, 200[^]). It seems reasonably clear that alienation is more clearly visible in less democratic societies, and among the working class and minorities. Nevertheless, a case could be made for the view that the dimensions of alienation described here are alive and well in contemporary analysis (P. Gilabert, 2020).

The time now is being more sanguine than the post. By depression due to World War era, alienation appears now under other names and in more positive guises. Thus, we now see the prevalence of social isolation rather than powerlessness, and it hardly matters what language is used, so long as at the same time the spirit and the classical significance of the idea of alienation is not lost (F Samadi, 2019).

Materiel Studied

Alienation is a sociological concept that is developed by several classical and contemporary theorists. It is a condition in social relationships reflected by a low degree of integration or common values and a high degree of distance or isolation between individuals, or between an individual and a group of people in a community or work environment that has many effects in life and society. The subject is studied in two following novels.

Alienation in “The Child in Time”

McEwan's *The Child in Time* highlights social isolation, in particular with the dissolution of the heterosexual dyad after the couple's child is abducted, and shows how meaninglessness resulting in alienation manifests itself when different genders attach different meanings to actions (Author). *The Child in Time* narrates the event of disappearance of Stephen's three years old daughter, Kate (<https://www.supersummary.com/the-child-in-time/summary/>). Alienation in the novel is observed in the forms of different types of definitions as per the theory of Melvin Seaman, and the most obvious element is meaninglessness.

Meaninglessness shows itself specifically while Stephen and Julie are incapable of understanding the other's gender-specific type of dealing with the loss of Kate. They don't understand one another, and also they are blind to each other's different views (Author). Social isolation is also depicted in the story of *The Child in Time* via the distance that Stephen perceives from those around him after Kate's disappearance (Mc Ewan, 1988). The aspect of alienation is intensified as well by normlessness, meaninglessness and powerlessness, and the estrangement between the couple (husband and wife) is still clearly depicted (Author). The novel starts while Stephen, the husband, leaves his wife Julie, at home one morning, and goes shopping in a supermarket taking her daughter along with him. In a kidnapping, an unknown person abducts



her daughter in supermarket, and the novel progresses in search of the daughter by her father. Stephen at last cannot find his daughter, and so, he loses faith in his ability to find her, and gradually his powerlessness exposes (Mc Ewan, 1988). Modern man's helplessness (powerlessness) can be perceived very clearly in Stephen's desperate needle in a haystack search for Kate, which amounts to absolutely nothing (BA Senekal, 2008). We can explain this event as an emblematic symbol of the postmodern age, a symbol that can be applied as a monument to show the perceptions of man's position within the contemporary world. From the story we conclude that, with the absence of faith and hope to catch something, step by step alienation in the forms of powerlessness and helplessness takes place, and this is something that is very clear in Stephen's behavior (Author). Thereafter, when he cannot find her daughter after a period of time for searching, he is then very cold and uncaring about his wife. In contrast to this, his wife, Julie, also sits unmoving at home, in front of the fire, and we can see that relation between the couple starts to drift apart (Mc Ewan, *The Child in Time*, p.76). They move hopelessly like figures in a quagmire, and they feel no strength for confrontation. Going their different ways, they have no mutual consolation, no touching, and no love. Their old intimacy, their faith (in which they were one soul in two bodies), and also their lovely relation is now dead and cold (Mc Ewan, *The Child in Time*, p.63). As a result of powerlessness, Stephen experiences isolation, and this alienation results in separation from the self and others. By comparing the protagonist of the story with the man of modern age which is also engaged permanently with the items of meaninglessness, powerlessness, and self-estrangement, one can perceive that like alienation in *The Child in Time*, modern man is alienated with the self and from society, and the fact is that, it is not only Stephen, but all other people, who are just intimate strangers to themselves and their societies (author).

Alienation in “THE Cement Garden”

The Cement Garden, a novel written by the famous British Ian Russell Mc Ewan, is a novel which leaves the reader pondering profoundly about all the sorrow things, about the children's fate, and also about the society within which such disastrous events can happen (Mc Ewan, 1978). Mc Ewan's artistic power lies in the fact that he lets the reader to experience a serious critical event, and then he tries to convey the way to redemption or perdition (Andrea K o b r l o v a *Critical Events and Their Subsequent Development in the Novels of Ian McEwan Bachelor's Diploma Thesis*). The novel narrates the story of four children that they become distorted even before the death of their father, and shows how the alienation deforms the unity and combination of a family. The novel starts with a sense of guilt, misconduct, and a feeling of miserable self-containment that manifests the prevailing atmosphere of *The Cement Garden*. Jack, the fifteen year-old protagonist, with his lack of personal attitude, is attached with his father's mostly inaccurate behavior, and so, his story initiates with his hatred towards his patriarchal and overruling father, who is the basic source of all the ensuing events of the novel. The corruption in the family relations leads Jack to abnormal sexual behaviors among siblings, and results also in his alienation from the family after his parents' death (*The cement garden*, Mc Ewan).

Lonely Jack, with no friends, is the main protagonist, and an adolescent narrator, who attempts to further the affairs as usual even after the death of both his parents (<https://postcardsfrompurgatory.com/2015/04/11/a-review-of-ian-mcewans-the-cement-garden-by-bethany/>). By reading the novel, the reader feels the loneliness and grief of the children, and the catastrophic tragedy of the alienated society in which such events can happen (Author). All is presented through Jack's lonely and isolated perception. The family, even before the parents' death, is broken up within itself, and it is isolated from other people in society. The destroyed garden and the degenerated air of modern city note the reader of an atmosphere of a postmodern pile of weeds, modern high flats, and dark environment. In family circle, no sense of community



and progress can be seen. Shadowy shops, schools, and affairs imply sense of alienation that reflects Jack's isolation and alienation following his father's death (Ian McEwan. *The Cement Garden Shadows on the mind: Urban alienation and the mental landscape of the children in The Cement Garden* by Nick Ambler).

The whole novel is narrated by the oldest son of the family, Jack, who is fifteen at the inception of the story. Jack's wish is to act as and to be like an adult man and his narrative style is also a proof for his imitation of adult speech (*The cement garden*). *The Cement Garden* begins with an amazing depiction of Jack's inner hatred of his father, and this is due to the complex that is made by the father himself. Jack's opening line is unabashed and reveals Jack's indifference and callousness to his father's death. In the course of the novel, except a few initial pages, we never hear anything very special about the father and it is clear that he is totally veiled by Jack's narration. His hatred is also delineated in his smoothing the concrete in which his father was laid dying, and by doing this he wants to erase all his traces within the family and this hatred is totally unconscious. Jack's obsession with his father's possession of his mother, and also the way of his mistreat in family that makes Jack to feel powerless in the family filed, brings the complex in Jack that results in his alienation which is the main issue of the present paper. His father's patriarchal posing of power which controls every aspect of his children's lives, and the father's error in not letting anyone to act on his / her own, ends in the children's, in particular Jack's, alienation and isolation from the family, specially from the father.

Father, as the patriarchal ruler of the family, exerts his authority and power over family members in different wrong methods. The first example of his power exertion reveals itself in behavior when he is enclosing the garden with cement just in order to gain his area of authority and dominance, separated from the outside world he is living, and to rule in his own territory. He orders that cement to be located around the garden in order to fulfill his gender expectation of dominance which makes his wife very angry because she believes that they need money in priority for much more important matters in life (<https://postcardsfrompurgatory.com/2015/04/11/a-review-of-ian-mcewans-the-cement-garden-by-bethany/>). Although this is the right of his wife to ask, but his reaction to her objection is nothing, but to refrain from eating supper, and using a penknife that with it he scrapes black shards from the bowl of his pipe into the food. Jack says that 'While my mother talked, my father used a penknife to scrape black shards from the bowl of his pipe on to the food he had barely touched (*The cement garden*, Mc Ewan). He knew how to use his pipe against her...He replaced the pipe between his teeth like a missing section of his own anatomy and interrupted to say it was 'out of the question' sending the bags back and that was the end of it (configuring masculinity in theory and literary practice). Here we can see that the father's solid and serious patriarchal behavior toward his own children, especially Jack and Tom, is the trigger that at last results in their depression, isolation, and alienation (Author). The problem is badly fortified when the father continues his rivalry with his children, and does not act as a support to his sorrowing children who are mournful because of their mother's dead. In the stage of their development, they are separated from their mother and it's the starting point of their alienation (Author).

The father likes law and neatness, and his use of concrete around the garden symbolizes his desire and wish to make his area of territory clean and tidy, but in the meantime nobody had the courage to oppose his decision. 'It will be tidier,' he says. 'I won't be able to keep up the garden now' he adds while he taps his left breast with his pipe. Against his wish to make the garden and his territory clean and neatness is children's desire to be completely the opposite. The father's stubborn treats in different ways control all members' behavior, and it is only his death that ends everything, and opens up the space for all the transgressions and corruption such as incest in



home they are living with each other (<https://postcardsfrompurgatory.com/2015/04/11/a-review-of-ian-mcewans-the-cement-garden-by-bethany/>).

Starting from the beginning lines of the story it is dead clear that the family relationships do not go on very well. The initiating paragraphs of the novel deals with the expected gender roles, and needs the parents to allow children to feel that they have the right to gain the power and authority over the life's matters, and that they will be future parents themselves, but their father acts as a preserver of these expectations (Author). The father also had some running jokes about the other family members, but nobody could utter any jokes against him or even if anybody could make jokes about him, it remained unheard and unheeded by other members. During the father and mother's quarrel on cement, the children do nothing but just they leave the parents alone, and they slip away to Julie's room (BA Senekal, 2008). This moment is one of the most critical points of the novel that reveals the conditions of squalor and also the looseness of the family bonds. It is the initial moments that we notice the opening steps toward incestuous relationship between siblings (Author). The incestuous wish, says Legendre, is a wish to be omnipotent: it desires what is impossible and the prohibition against incest is there to place a limit on this absolute desire (Mc Ewan, *The Cement Graden*, 1978). The novel is then full of points in which Jack starts to show that he is the ruler of the family after the parent's death. His desire to rule and gain the power in family in that form, reveals the disastrous consequences of alienation which is obtained because of the father's abnormality and mistreat with the family members specially children. Totally, meaninglessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement result in alienation in Jack, the protagonist of the novel (Author).

Conclusion

Alienation is a complex phenomenon that forms the subject of many psychological, sociological, literary, philosophical, and even physiological studies. Emerging as a natural consequence of war, persecution, famine and ruin, divorce, senses of powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, social isolation, and self-estrangement, alienation results in loss of identity, depression, deterioration, terror, violence, evil and destructive complexes, ..., pain and suffering in life. While admittedly Marxist and Freudian types of alienation are still abounding in many societies, and should be seriously combatted with, Melvin Seaman's new types of alienation have entered the current modern, complex, and highly differentiated humanity. What is clear is that the emergence of these modern types of alienation will affect the increasing number of people in the developed world, and so the struggle against the event shall be more seriously continued with the prominent priority. The study aimed to alarm the modern man regarding the catastrophic aftermath of alienation. To make him more acquainted with the concept of the subject, a short review on Ian Russell McEwan's "The Child in Time" and "The Cement Garden" was performed.

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