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The Sense and Sensibility in Later Novels of Ian
McEwan
(Bachelor's thesis)

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I confirm that I wrote this thesis myself and integrated corrections and suggestions of improvement of my supervisor. I also confirm that the thesis includes complete list of sources and literature cited.

In Olomouc

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Introduction

When literary critics write about British novelist Ian McEwan and his novels, they very often focus on the typical topics McEwan deals with. His books are full of politics, problems of gender relations, sex, nature, ecology, love and innocence, ethical conflicts and science.

In this theses, however, we will focus on different topic and that is the relationship of art and nature in Ian McEwan's later novels. For the purpose of this thesis we draw the line at *Amsterdam* (1998), which brought McEwan a prestigious Booker Prize award and is, coincidentally, a seventh out of McEwan's thirteen novels. It is also the last book of the second millennium and the theme of the end resonates in the short novel strongly. We will try to prove that art has a—influence on the rational thinking of the protagonist. The purpose of this thesis, however, is not to psychologically analyse the character, for that we have no qualification to do so, nor have we any experience with it.

In the first chapter, we will introduce the British novelist Ian McEwan and his life. His social and family life, as well as other key elements of his life, will be described. We will give the audience information about the beginning of his career and his works.

In the second chapter, we will focus on Ian McEwan's other works, for he is not only a novelist, but also a screenwriter and writer of children's literature. On the list of his works are two musical pieces to which he wrote the lyrics.

In the third chapter, we will talk about Ian McEwan's literary style and the themes he deals with since the beginning of his career in 1970s. We will start with the early collections of short stories, and will continue with his early and later novels.

The fourth chapter will deal with the protagonists and their relationship to art and science. There are five of them, roughly in the same age, and each comes from a different background and had a different approach to art. We will give the reader a brief account of the main characters of the four novels we chose to analyse. We will look for similarities and differences of their personalities and we will show

the reader that in the process of creating, Ian McEwan gives them something of himself.

In the fifth chapter we will focus on the art and science and their relationship. In the first part of the chapter, we will analyse the novella *Amsterdam* and give the reader a convincing argument that art influenced the rational mind of its protagonists. In the second part, we will deal with the novel *Saturday* and argue, that no matter how intelligent and rational Henry Perowne may seem to be, he is quite ignorant of fiction. In the third part of the fifth chapter, we will concentrate on the novel *Solar* and we will look for any proof that art influences thinking of its main character, Michael Beard. Lastly, in the fourth part of the chapter, we will analyse the last novel of Ian McEwan, *The Children Act*. We will give the reader and insight into mind of a woman whose mind is affected by art the most, out of the five characters.

The primary sources of this thesis are the four novels we analyse, which are *Amsterdam* (1998), *Saturday* (2005), *Solar* (2011), and *The Children Act* (2014). As a secondary sources, we will use reviews by literary critics from British and American broadsheets and literary journals, as well as essays on the novels. To explain McEwan's literary perspective and the period when he started to publish, we used Dominic Head's *The Cambridge Introduction to modern British Fiction, 1950-2000*.

1. Ian McEwan

British novelist, short story writer and screenwriter, Ian McEwan was born on 21 June 1948 in Aldershot to David and Rose McEwan. His father worked as a sergeant major in the British Army and thus McEwan spent his childhood on military bases in England, later in Singapore and Libya¹.

From the age of eleven, Ian McEwan attended Woolverstone Hall School, a government-funded boarding school in Suffolk, which influenced him. When discussing art and nature with Antony Gormley in 2006, McEwan said that the first encounter with the nature was in Suffolk. ‘The ingredients was there—a big tidal river, big skies, mud, trees, salt creeks. But Suffolk, in fact, is a giant garden,’² McEwan said. Later he studied French and English in the undergraduate program at the University of Sussex and after that creative writing and modern fiction at the newly established University of East Anglia. On the national scale, he was the very first student of said course and was taught by Angus Wilson and Malcolm Bradbury³. There he also wrote series of twenty-five short stories, several of them were published in his first collection of short stories *First Love, Last Rites* in 1975 and *In Between the Sheets* in 1978.

In 1972, Ian McEwan completed a journey along the hippie trail, an overland way from Europe to South Asia, to Afghanistan. There he experienced the counter-culture first hand, as Head says. Ian Hamilton, a friend of McEwan from that time, recalls the time as ‘boredom and smoking hash in huge quantities without any real point.’⁴

His career took off in mid-1970s, when two collections of short stories and seven novels were published. He also published one volume of short stories for children in 1995. For the list of the works see the appendix I. During his career, Ian McEwan was four times short-listed for the Man Booker Prize, in 1981 for *The Comfort of Strangers*, in 1992 for *Black Dogs*, in 2001 for *Atonement* and in 2007

¹ David Malcolm. *Understanding Ian McEwan*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press. 2002, p.1

² Ian McEwan. ‘Ian McEwan & Antony Gormley: A Conversation about Art and Nature’. *The Kenyon Review*, New Series, 28:1, 2006, p.105.

³ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.4

⁴ Ian Hamilton. ‘Points of departure’ (interview), *New Review* 5:2, 1978, p.15

for *On Chesil Beach*. He won the prize in 1998⁵ with *Amsterdam*, a novel which got mixed reviews with readers and critics. Dominic Head claims that McEwan was not awarded the prize for the book itself, but rather his previous novels. 'When an established writer is awarded a literary prize for a book that is not representative of his/her best work, there is a suspicion that the award is made for the author's accumulated efforts, rather than for the book in question,'⁶ Head says. He also labels the novel as 'inferior Booker winner'⁷. Sean Matthews thinks that by giving McEwan the Booker prize, the jury signalled that the previously radical writer became somewhat domesticated and mainstream⁸. Ian McEwan was also awarded title of Commander of the Order of Great Britain in 2000.

Ian McEwan was married twice. In 1982 he got married to Penny Allen with whom he has two children, sons. Their marriage fell through in 1995 and Allen and McEwan got divorced. Both signed an agreement which forbade them to reveal information about their marriage and Malcolm notes that McEwan and his lawyers were very strict in enforcing the deal⁹. Allen then moved to France where she prevented McEwan from seeing his sons. Only after the intervention of French legal system, Ian McEwan could see his youngest son again.¹⁰ Since 1997, he is married to a former literary journalist of Financial Times, Annalena McAfee.

⁵ "The Man Booker Prize for Fiction Backlist," The Man Booker Prizes, 2016. Accessed August 18, 2016, <http://themanbookerprize.com/fiction/backlist/1998>.

⁶ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.144.

⁷ Ibid, p.144.

⁸ Sean Matthews. "Ian McEwan". British Council. Accessed on August 2, 2016.

<http://www.literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/ian-mcewan>

⁹ David Malcolm. *Understanding Ian McEwan*, p.3

¹⁰ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.4

2. Other works

Ian McEwan is not only a adult-fiction writer, but he also published a collection of children stories in 1995 called *The Daydreamer*. The main protagonist is a ten-year old boy Peter Fortune who experienced wonderful adventures in which he goes from the world where rules apply to a magical world where everything is possible. McEwan also contributed to a picture book *Rose Blanche* (1985) to which he wrote the text bases upon Christophe Gallaz's story and pictures by Roberto Innocenti which depict war and its cruelties.¹¹

Beside literature for children, McEwan also cooperated on writing an oratorio *Or Shall We Die* with the composer Michael Berkeley for the London Symphony in 1983 and the musical composition was performed at the Royal Festival Hall in London for the first time.¹² To explain what an oratorio is, we will quote the Encyclopaedia Britannica which says that:

‘Oratorio is a large-scale musical composition on sacred or semi-sacred subject, for solo voices, chorus, and orchestra. Its text is usually based on scripture, and the narration necessary to move from scene to scene is supplied by recitatives sung by various voices to prepare the way for airs and choruses.’¹³

The two of them, Ian McEwan and the composer Michael Berkeley, worked together one more time in 2008 when McEwan wrote a libretto *For You*. To use the definition of the Britannica one more time, ‘libretto is a text of an opera and it requires techniques different from those for writing spoken drama, because music moves at a slower pace than speech, and an orchestra can suggest emotions that would need to be made explicit in a play.’¹⁴

In the 1980s Ian McEwan wrote two screenplays and one more in 1993. *The Ploughman's Lunch* (1983) is a theatrical play, later made into a film. It is set during the time of Falkland War and deals with media during the reign of

¹¹ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.187

¹² David Malcolm. *Ian McEwan*, p.184.

¹³ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Oratorio." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed August 2, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/art/oratorio>.

¹⁴ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. "Libretto." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. Accessed August 2, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/art/libretto>.

Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister of Great Britain. In 1988, Ian McEwan wrote a second play *Soursweet*, based on a 1982 novel by Timothy Mo. The comedy drama is set in 1960s and it follows an immigrant from Hong Kong as his wife as they try to make their home in London. The last of the screenplays *The Good Son* is a psychological thriller that tells a story of Mark, who—after a death of his mother—displays fascination with death and threatens his uncle's family.

Lastly, Ian McEwan wrote two television plays - *Jack Flea's Birthday Celebration* (1976) and *The Imitation Game* (1980).

3. Critical perspective

Ian McEwan is most certainly one of the most influential British writers since the beginning of his career in 1970s, and his position seems to be secure. Dominic Head says that Ian McEwan is one of those rare writers who have been received well by the critics and audience.¹⁵

As a writer, McEwan emerged during the reign of Margaret Thatcher as the Prime Minister. His work was also influenced by a variety of social and political changes, such as the end of colonialism, breaking off of the British class structure, changes in education—McEwan himself graduated from newly-established universities of Sussex and East Anglia—changes in the family life or the second wave of feminism in the 1970s¹⁶.

He comes from a generation that has given Britain its most established modern writers, such as Martin Amis, Julian Barnes and Craig Raine. They all were male and born in late Forties and McEwan was the first of them to be published. All of them were involved with Ian Hamilton's *New Review* literary journal. Dominic Head says that the authors of Thatcher era have several things in common. As the most significant he mentions the combination of innovation and continuity.¹⁷

Since his early career, McEwan is known for his perverse, almost macabre style of writing. Due to this, he gained a nickname Ian Macabre. His early works are known for their dark themes and perverse material and they very often deal with paedophilia, extreme violence and murder. 'The secret of his appeal lay in his stylish morbidity, in the elegant detachment with which he chronicled acts of sexual abuse, sadistic torment and pure insanity,'¹⁸ summarised Kiernan Ryan in his book about McEwan in 1994. Into this dark period we can include both volumes of short stories, and the novels *Cement Garden* and *Comfort of Stranger*.

As his career flourishes, the topics about which McEwan writes change. He becomes concerned with social and cultural satire for which he is currently

¹⁵ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.2.

¹⁶ Ibid, p.5.

¹⁷ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.5.

¹⁸ Kiernan Ryan. *Ian McEwan*. Plymouth: Northcote House, 1994, p.34

prized.¹⁹ In the novels from 1980s and 1990s, McEwan explores broader social and political themes, but still in his own, morbid way. He puts his characters in unusual or extreme situations, for example in *The Child in Time*, where the narrator's daughter is kidnapped. The following two novels, *The Innocent* and *Black Dogs*, are set in the post Second World War time. Malcolm points out that McEwan has broadened his concerns for the psychopathological world of his early fiction to achieve new maturity in examination of social issues and that both novels are more engaged with social, political and historical issues than the two previous novels.²⁰

The later novels of Ian McEwan deal further with character and its moral exploration. Dominic Head observes that literary critics of the poststructuralist era 'seemed profoundly antagonistic towards the idea that a moral dilemma could be encoded in the situation confronting a fictional character,'²¹ for the poststructuralism deals primarily with the theory that an individual is made of a network of discourses. The ethical dilemma and the can be described well in *Amsterdam* which two main protagonists fail morally as human beings.

There is Vernon Halliday, a newspaper editor of the *Jugde*, a fictional version of serious British broadsheets. To boost up the daily number of copies, he decides to publish exclusive pictures of his political enemy Julian Garmony, the British Foreign Secretary, in woman clothes. He runs the photograph on the front page with nothing but the picture and title on it. He thrives to humiliate Garmony and would do anything to ruin his career. He breaks the ethical code by allowing his feelings to cloud his professional opinion, for one should not influence the other. Clive Linley, on the other hand, fails differently. As he hikes in the hills of Lake District, he comes to witness a violent scene between a man and a woman, in which the man assaults the woman. Linley, inspired by the nature and landscape, observes the scene and debates whether or not he should help her. However, helping her would mean breaking his concentration on the symphony. He decides against being the knight in shining armour, claiming that 'if he had approached

¹⁹ Patrick Henry. 'Review'. *Modern Language Studies* 38, no. 1 (2008): 75-84. Accessed on August 2, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40346981>.

²⁰ David Malcolm. *Ian McEwan*, p.5.

²¹ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.13.

the couple, a pivotal moment in his career would have been destroyed'²² and that 'the melody could not have survived the psychic flurry' and—finding out his concentration broke off—leaves. Later his friend Vernon tells him he encountered the Lakeland rapist and asks him to report the incident to police, which Clive refuses. He hypocritically uses an excuse of being in the middle of finishing the symphony, a thing he himself frowns upon when other artists use it.

Moral dilemma is presented also in the other three novels. Michael Bears seems to be perfectly fine with accusing an innocent man from a murder, that was really an accident, and considers it a revenge on the man for sleeping with his late wife. He also passes the dead man's research as his own, justifying that it was addressed to him.

²² Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1998, p.88.

4. Characters

4.1. Realness of the characters

In his novels, McEwan brings to life various spectrum of people, and in the thirty years of his career, he created some of the most memorable characters. One is most certainly Briony Tallis from McEwan's 2001 book *Atonement*. The other could be Jack from the 1978 novel *The Cement Garden*. According to William Sutcliffe, McEwan's characters matured as his career progressed. He claims that some literary critics see McEwan's rising success as a digress from his 'edge and ferocity'²³ for which he was known for at the beginning of his career. He also says that 'where his protagonists were once the young, the marginalizes and the plain weird, these days they are more likely to be eminent men living in big houses, an authorial choice that runs the risk of giving his novel an air of complacency.'²⁴ We must agree with Sutcliffe to some degree. Out of seven later novel published since 1998, four—the same four we chose to analyse—have the main protagonists who correspond with this description, except Fiona Maye of *The Children Act* who is not a man but a woman. The characters in the other three are young adults.

In Ian McEwan's novels, we can very often find detailed description of scientific procedures due to which it is easy to believe that McEwan's characters are real. Dominic Head says that 'McEwan's interest in science, and especially in scientific explanation of consciousness and emotional response, has an interesting bearing on the degree of credibility.'²⁵ And really, McEwan invest a lot of time into the credibility of the protagonist. During the process of creation of a novel McEwan shadows real people in their jobs, as he did with *Saturday*, when he followed neurosurgeon Neil Kitchen in the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in Queen Square, London.²⁶ Henry Perowne is a mixture of Neil Kitchen and Ian McEwan. The writer himself says that he:

²³ William Sutcliffe. 'Ian McEwan's Climate-change Comedy'. *The Financial Times*. March 5, 2010. Accessed on August 2, 2016. <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/db777db4-27e0-11df-9598-00144feabdc0.html#axzz4GiyC86RG>

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.18.

²⁶ Daniel Zalweski. 'Ian McEwan's Art of Uneasiness'. *The New Yorker*. February 23, 2009. Accessed on August 1, 2016. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/02/23/the-background-hum>

‘[...] gave him my house. I gave him little bits of my children, of my wife. I gave him in its entirety, a relationship with my mother.[...] And he does share with me something that I felt in the months after the Washington/New York attacks in 2001, a sudden restless urge to know more things.’²⁷

Ian McEwan’s own experience can be also seen in the character of Michael Beard, the physicist of *Solar*. McEwan—as well as Beard in the novel—went on an trip to Spitsbergen with Cape Farewell, an art and climate change organization. McEwan describes Beard as the only scientist among a committed band of artists.²⁸ In the real expedition McEwan was part of, there was also only one scientist, a biologist Tom Wakeford.

Similarly, McEwan created Fiona Maye upon having witnessed several judges, including the respected High Court Judge Sir Alan Ward, discussing their cases at dinner. He noticed—after a book of Ward’s cases landed in his lap—that their writing style was similar. In his blog at the Guardian webpage McEwan writes:

‘I continued to note the parallels between our professions, for these judgments were like short stories, or novellas; the background to some dispute or dilemma crisply summarised, characters drawn with quick strokes, the story distributed across several points of view and, towards its end, some sympathy extended towards those whom, ultimately, the narrative would not favour.’²⁹

Some of Ward’s real cases can be found in *The Children Act* as Maye’s cases, for example the case of the Siamese twins whose highly religious parents refused to have them separated even though it meant death for both.³⁰ In the novel, McEwan also directly quotes Ward in Fiona’s court speeches.

²⁷ David Lynn. “A Conversation with Ian McEwan”. *The Kenyon Review*, New Series, Vol.29, No.3 (2007): 39.

²⁸ Ian McEwan. *Solar*. London: Vintage, 2011, p.61

²⁹ McEwan, Ian. ‘Ian McEwan: the law versus religious belief’. *The Guardian*. September 5, 2014. Accessed on August 2, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/sep/05/ian-mcewan-law-versus-religious-belief>

³⁰ Ibid.

As McEwan gave his own recipe for fish stew and bits of his own life to Henry Perowne, he gives something of himself to Fiona Maye, too. She receives his experience with the Family Division of the Crown Court and High Court from the time he was divorcing his first wife.

There is one character that strongly resembles Ian McEwan himself. It is Clive Linley from *Amsterdam*. He is an artist, like McEwan, his political loyalty is to the left wing. Career of both started in their twenties and made them famous instantly. At one moment, McEwan makes fun about novelists like himself through Linley. Linley believes that novelist and similar types are the worst, for they manage to convince people that they are busy, although they are not.³¹ He himself uses similar excuse later in the novel, which makes him a hypocrite.

4.2. Character differences and similarities

All of the chosen characters are people in high positions. This confirms Sutcliffe's claim about McEwan's characters. Vernon Halliday from the Booker Prize-awarded *Amsterdam* is a chief editor of newspaper and his friend Clive Linley is a music composer who was picked to compose a celebratory symphony. Henry Perowne from *Saturday* is a successful neurosurgeon. Michael Beard, the main character of *Solar*, is a respected and Nobel Prize-winning physicist, and lastly there is Fiona Maye of *The Children Act*, who works as a highly-respected judge in the Family Division of the Royal Court.

There are no two characters with similar family background. We can follow several similarities between the five characters. Out of the group, only Henry Perowne and Michael Beard have a scientific background, one being a neurosurgeon and the other a physicist. Otherwise there is little the two of them have in common. Then there is the similarity between Beard and Clive Linley. Both of them are divorced men with numerous past and current affairs. Beard is divorced five-times, Linley twice, which contrast with the other three characters who are married. The other feature they have in common is the fact that they consider themselves to be genius, despite Linley claiming the right opposite. '...

³¹ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.62.

the thought was, quite simply, that it might not be going too far to say that he was... a genius. A genius,³² he thinks about himself although he seems to feel guilty about thinking such a thing. Linley also considers himself to be ‘Vaughan William’s heir’³³

If we are to continue with Beard and his similarities to other characters, we must mention Vernon Halliday. Both of them do not take interest in art, except knowing basic things. We will analyse their relationship to art later in the thesis. Henry Perowne and Fiona Maye both enjoy classical music. We will not add Clive Linley to them, for he is professional composer, and the two of them are mere amateurs. It also seems that the two of them are the only one who can remain to be faithful to their spouse, as they never had any lover. We will not consider Fiona’s innocent (and unfortunate) kiss to Adam Henry as a mark of unfaithfulness to her husband. Furthermore, Perowne and Maye are the only characters that remain alive at the end of their novel. We could add Michael Beard to the group, were it not for the hint that he suffers heart attack at the end of the book and presumably dies. ‘... he felt in his heart an unfamiliar, swelling sensation, but he doubted as he opened his arms to her [his daughter] that anyone would ever believe him now if he tried to pass it off as love,’³⁴ McEwan describes the final scene of *Solar*.

The similarity between Fiona and Clive is that both are childless, possible by choice on both sides, although Fiona regrets her decision as she gets older. She feels that work prevented her from having children and she compares herself with Johann Sebastian Bach who had twenty children which did not prevent him from having a career. ‘Yes, her childlessness was a fugue in itself,’ Fiona says, ‘a flight - this was the habitual theme she was trying now to resist - a flight from her proper destiny. Her failure to become woman, as her mother understood the term.’³⁵

There is one thing that all five protagonists have in common. It is that fact that they are atheists, as Ian McEwan himself is. Atheism is common feature in

³² Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.133.

³³ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.21.

³⁴ Ian McEwan. *Solar*. London: Vintage, 2011, p.279.

³⁵ Ian McEwan. *The Children Act*. London: Vintage, 2014, p.44.

McEwan's novels. It strongly rings in *The Children Act* where the judge Fiona Maye must act rationally and give rulings in favour of no party. There is a case of Moroccan father who wants to take his daughter from his English wife, or an emotional case of Siamese twins whose overly-religious Christian parent refuse the separation, or the case of two Jewish girl whose parents have different opinion on how they should be raised. She says 'religion, moral systems, her own included, were like peaks in a dense mountain range seen from a great distance, none obviously higher, more important, truer than another,'³⁶ meaning that no religion was worthy more than the other, or one's personal ethics valued more than someone other's.

As he watches the airplane crash in the middle of the night, Henry Perowne of *Saturday* thinks about religion. He believes that:

'if he were inclined to religious feeling, to supernatural explanation, he could play with the idea that he's been summoned; that having woken in an unusual state of mind, and gone to the window for no reason, he should acknowledge a hidden order, an external intelligence which wants to show or tell him something of significance.'³⁷

The first idea he has about the crash is that it is a result on an terrorist attack of some man of faith and he considers the fact that people would commit such horrible thing in name of religion, 'a matter for wonder, human complication beyond the reach of morals.'³⁸ Religion, after all, is supposed to be a set of moral rules according to which people behave. Killing people in name of the religion is surely not the God's aim.

³⁶ Ian McEwan. *Children Act*, p.112.

³⁷ Ian McEwan. *Saturday*. London: Vintage, 2005, p.17.

³⁸ Ian McEwan. *Saturday*, p.18.

5. Nature and Art

To a common man who practices neither art or science it may seem, that the two of them are the right opposites. John Maelda, the president of Rhoda Island School of Design, on a internet blog of prestigious American journal *Scientific American* claims that those involved understand that science and art have a lot in common, pointing out that they ask for the same question ‘What is true and why does it matter?’³⁹ Also, the process of creation in both fields is very similar. Artists and scientist need to have their mind opened to new ideas and theories. In 2011, a new publication about art and science *Art and Science Journal* was established in Canada which ‘promotes, explores and inspires the wonder that occurs when art and science collide.’⁴⁰

The history of co-existence of art and science goes back to renaissance. It was required of men to be educated in various fields of art and science. We call this Renaissance men as polymaths or polyhistorians. The word comes from Greek languages and is composed of prefix poly- which means many, and the root -math which means ‘to know’ according to the *Online Etymological Dictionary*. The word itself was invented in 17th century.⁴¹ One of the most famous polymaths was Leonardo da Vinci.

5.1. When art is all or nothing

In many reviews and essays published about *Amsterdam*, the critics focus on the ethical dilemma, which is central to the novella. In this thesis, we, however, focus on art and its effect on rational mind.

Both Clive Linley, the composer, and Vernon Halliday, the newspaper editor, can be considered rationally thinking men. Halliday needs the rationally to be a good boss to his team, Linley needs it to write good music. What happens, however,

³⁹ John Maelda. ‘Artists and Scientists: More Alike Than Different.’ *Scientific American Blog Network*. July 11, 2013. Accessed August 12, 2016. <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/artists-and-scientists-more-alike-than-different/>.

⁴⁰ ‘About.’ *Art & Science Journal*. Accessed August 12, 2016. <http://www.artandsciencejournal.com/about>.

⁴¹ Douglas Harper. ‘Polymath.’ *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Accessed August 13, 2016. <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=polymath>.

when they are confronted with something bigger than them? In Halliday's case it is the hunger to ridicule his political enemy, the Foreign Secretary, Julian Garmony. In Linley's the inability to act as a compassionate, human being.

If there is an iconic place for a British artist, it is the Lake District in the North-Western England. Since the 19 century, when William Wordsworth and Samuels Coleridge came there and crated the elementary work of Romanticism, *Lyrical Ballads*, it enticed various poets, novelist, musicians and painters to come and create.

Clive Linley, the composer from *Amsterdam*, comes to Lake District to draw new inspiration to finish his Millennium Symphony which will celebrate the upcoming millennium. He has started to work on the symphony in his studio in London, but suddenly reaches the stage where he does not know how to continue. 'He had brought this massive engine of sound to a point where the real work of the finale could begin, and it could only do so now with an inspired invention - the final melody [...] He had reached to core, and felt burdened.'⁴² William Pritchard, the reviewer of the New York Times, believes that 'in thinking of his task as analogous to Beethoven's composing the "Ode to Joy", Clive is surely overreaching, setting himself up for a fall. But McEwan makes you believe that the composer possesses real talent,'⁴³ which, in the end, proves to be right.

Linley should be honoured that the right-wing party let him compose the symphony, for he is inclined to the left-wing. Still, he thinks about the whole affair as 'ridiculous affliction' and 'a bureaucratic intrusion on his creative independence'.⁴⁴ He has high meaning of his life work, although critics consider him to be 'arch-conservative' and 'throwback'. Nevertheless, they agree that 'along with Schubert and McCartney, Linley could write a melody.'⁴⁵ Clive Linley's life, however, was not always so conservative. In his youth, he inherited the house he currently lives in, had it painted purple and was inviting his friends to stay overnight. Even few celebrities had come and stayed. 'John Lennon and

⁴² Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.24.

⁴³ William H. Pritchard, "Publish and Perish," *The New York Times*, December 26, 1998, , accessed August 16, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/12/27/books/publish-and-perish.html>.

⁴⁴ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p .18.

⁴⁵ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, 21.

his wife Yoko Ono spent a week there,⁴⁶ he remembers a suspects that Jimmy Hendrix burn down the banisters when he was in.

The names of hills and walks around the Lake District associate magic within Linley and he claims they sooth him. Having visited the area several times before, he know the names by heart and can recollect them in his mind. He believes that ‘striding out, high on the the ridge, he would be restored, he would see clearly’⁴⁷ and the inspiration will come to him.

The brief visit in the Lake District, however, appears to be a complete waste of time. Clive Linley is burnt out as a composer. At the beginning of the novella, actually, there the first hints of his tiredness. An old man at a funeral tells him, that his great-granddaughter is learning to play one of his composition on piano and the thought of children playing his music makes him feel ‘faintly depressed’.⁴⁸ When the Foreign Secretary tell him his wife know some of his piano pieces, Linley thinks if ‘he was as domesticates and tame a talent as some of his younger critics claimed.’⁴⁹ When the moment of creativity in Lake District actually comes, Linley fails as a human being. In a fit of inspiration, he comes across a scene which we described in the third chapter, and subconsciously, he know he should help the woman in distress. ‘Whatever they [the man and the woman] were about, Clive’s immediate thought was as clear as a neon sign: *I am not here*,’⁵⁰ he thinks as he observed the struggling duo. The music comes first for Clive and he leaves, knowing he lost his concentration and inspiration. He leaves back to London shortly afterwards.

On the other hand, Vernon Halliday does not seem to be inclined towards art. When one of his journalists publishes an article about an exhibition of pottery in Ankara, he cannot believe it. He considers it ‘a complete turn-off’.⁵¹ He would prefer to have the spot filled with gossip or some peculiarity to get more copies sold. Although he seems to orientate in the art field well, it does not interest him much. The fact that he is a friend with a well-known classical music composer

⁴⁶ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.45.

⁴⁷ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.26.

⁴⁸ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.10.

⁴⁹ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.13.

⁵⁰ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.85.

⁵¹ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.35.

makes no difference to him. When their argue over the pictures of the Foreign Secretary Julian Garmony in women clothes, each of them sees something different in them. For Halliday, they are a way to bring the politician down, to ridicule him and make him lose the chair. Linley, on the other hand, sees their artistic value. Of course, he thinks they are ridiculous, but also he understands the photographer was trying to make them artistic.

The two argue about the pictures being published in the newspaper, and later they argue about Linley's inability to report the witnesses crime. Both behave irrationally, as each of them insists on his own truth. Linley also starts to blame Halliday for shattering his concentration on the symphony. 'It was becoming clear that he had been denied his masterpiece, the summit of a lifetime's work,'⁵² he blames his inability to finish the symphony on anyone else but himself.

When Clive Linley leaves to Amsterdam to the rehearsal of thy finished symphony, he knows there is something wrong with the music. He dreads the premier. As he walks in the music hall and hears his music being played, he realises some part should be different. At one point, people start to arrive for the evening performance of Schubert and—no matter that people consider Linley to be in the same league as the dead composer—he looks down on him.⁵³ At the reception, he encounters one of his critics who voices, in the end, becomes the opinion of Linley's symphony and that is that he 'ripped off Beethoven something rotten.'⁵⁴

In the finale of the novella, both Linley and Halliday pay for their behaviour that destroyed their friendship. Acting irrationally upon a pact that they have made at the beginning of the story—that if one becomes deadly ill, the other would bring him to Amsterdam to undergo euthanasia—they managed to kill each other, believing their failing were equal to a deadly disease. What more, Clive Linley's symphony will never be played in front of the audience, as the orchestra refuses to play it, claiming Linley plagiarised Beethoven. 'Shameless copy of Beethoven's Ode to Joy, give or take note or two,' the Foreign Secretary announces in the end.

⁵² Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.142.

⁵³ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.160.

⁵⁴ Ian McEwan. *Amsterdam*, p.164.

Several literary critics think that the mistake that has cost Clive Linley so much was that he insisted on reintroducing an earlier theme to his finale. Dominic Head believes it to be ‘crucial compositional mistake’⁵⁵. Craig Seligman of *Salon* compares Linley with McEwan. According to him ‘McEwan is an aesthete like Clive, seduced by the beauties of symmetry, and he’s undone, in the end, by his own exquisite craftsmanship: Instead of betraying his structure, he betrays his book.’⁵⁶

5.2. Art vs. science: treating the two as opposites

The neurosurgeon Henry Perowne has a strange relationship with literature, mainly fictional literature. He openly celebrates science and in his mind, literature does not occupy an important place. He chose to become a neurosurgeon because brains were much more exciting than anything else. He is well-read on various non-fictional topics, such as literature on violence, sociology, psychology, physics or biology. He has great observational skills, as we may see several times during the novel. He recognizes the symptoms of Huntington’s Disease in a street thug Baxter during their argument in London. He, then, demonstrates his superiority in intelligence. Dominic Head points out that ‘the rejection of the idea of the literary becomes a bald topic’⁵⁷ of *Saturday*. Christina Root supports this claim by saying that literature had the same meaning as religion in Henry’s mind.⁵⁸ Perowne himself openly admits that he has not the patience to read through fictional novels. He does not want to be a spectator of other lives, of imaginary lives.⁵⁹ His daughter Daisy makes him read through *Anna Karenina* and *Madame Bovary* but Perowne does not understand why it is proclaimed a literary genius, he is unmoved by the books. He does not understand the magical realism and a novel for adults where the protagonists have supernatural powers. As a neurologist who attempts to heal the failing mind, he claims that the actual, not the magical, should be the

⁵⁵ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.147.

⁵⁶ Craig Seligman, "Amsterdam," *Salon*, December 9, 1998, , accessed August 16, 2016, http://www.salon.com/1998/12/09/sneaks_2/.

⁵⁷ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.178.

⁵⁸ Christina Root. ‘A Melodiousness at Odds with Pessimism: Ian McEwan’s *Saturday*.’ *Journal of Modern Literature* 35, no. 1 (2011): p.63. doi:10.2979/jmodelite.35.1.60.

⁵⁹ Ian McEwan. *Saturday*, p.66.

challenge of the literature.⁶⁰ ‘When anything can happen, nothing much matter,’⁶¹ he says.

On the other hand, he very much enjoys classical music, even jazz and blues. As he considers fiction flawed, he sees music as pure. He likes Bach, Mozart, Schubert from classical music and Davis and Coltrane from jazz. He also enjoys visual art and architecture, mentions Cezanne and various cathedral he visited during holiday.

Speaking about Perowne’s children, it is curious that both of them turned up to be the right opposites to Perowne. Daisy is a young, emerging poet who published a collection of poems and is about to publish the second. His eighteen-year-old son, Theo, is successful blues musician, proclaimed to walk one day with legends of British blues scene. Henry understands that he would never be able to cultivate his children’s artistic talent himself and is grateful that his father-in-law took care of it. John Grammaticus brought Theo to blues which the boy started love, and introduced him to famous blues artists. ‘Once it became clear that Theo was never going to take more than a polite interest in book, John encouraged him at the piano and taught him simple boogie in C,’⁶² Perowne remembers. He took the boy to concerts, gave him his first guitar and supported him though his lessons. ‘Perowne has to hand it to him, he opened up something in Theo that he, Perowne, might never have known about,’⁶³ Henry says, being aware of his lack of creativity.

The grandfather guided Daisy in her reading and made her learn poems by heart for which he rewarded her with money. At the beginning, she had the same trouble with the texts as Henry. The sentences in *Jane Eyre* were too long for fourteen-year-old girl, the language unfamiliar and she could not picture it in her head. Later, the man and his granddaughter got into argument about Daisy’s own poetry that has won a prize. Henry thinks his father-in-law realized Daisy would never be like him, that the two of them were very different, and that Grammaticus got jealous of her, seeing a rival in her.

⁶⁰ Ian McEwan. *Saturday*, p.67.

⁶¹ Ian McEwan. *Saturday*, p.68.

⁶² Ian McEwan. *Saturday*, p.131

⁶³ Ian McEwan. *Saturday*, p.132

However ignorant Henry seems to be to literature, he enjoys the biography of Charles Darwin which Daisy sent him. It made him ‘comfortably nostalgic for a verdant, horse-drawn, affectionate England’ or ‘faintly depressed by the way of whole life could be contained by a few hundred pages - bottled, like a home-made chutney.’⁶⁴ Also, as a medical practitioner, he has to educate himself on the newest procedures and is required to read a lot of medical journals and books. He also admits that since his studies, up to the time Daisy decided to educate him in fiction literature, he barely touched non-medical book.

There is one central reference point in *Saturday*, and that is the poem ‘Dover Beach’ by a British poet of 19th century, Matthew Arnold. It is as if McEwan tries to show the audience that literature matters, that reading poetry is worthy something. Michiko Kakutani of the New York Times also argues, that Virginia Woolf and her *Mrs. Dalloway* influenced Ian McEwan, for the stream-of-consciousness narrative tells us a story of a upper-middle-class, middle-aged character and his day.⁶⁵ Head, however, argues that instead of producing a modernist ‘slice-of-life’ novel, McEwan made a ‘slice-of-mind’ novel, a literary equivalent of CT scan.⁶⁶

Let us return to Arnold and his “Dover Beach”. In the pivotal moment of the novel, when Henry’s family is threatened by rough Baxter, Daisy is forced to recite one of her poems. To protect his granddaughter from being even more exposed that she already is, Grammaticus encourages Daisy to recite “Dover Beach”, a poem she learn by heart when she was younger, instead of one of her poems, that are most certainly very personal. Baxter, and even Henry, believe that the verses are her own. ‘The lines surprise him. They are unusually meditative, mellifluous and wilfully anarchistic.’⁶⁷ When Grammaticus and Daisy later talk about the poem and mention Arnold’s name, Henry does not know the name, as he does not read poetry and is ignorant of it. He must look up the name and learns that the poem is taught in every school. With this, Perowne shows us his own

⁶⁴ Ian McEwan, *Saturday*, p.6.

⁶⁵ Michiko Kakutani. ‘Books of the Times: A Hero with 9/11 Peripheral Vision’. *The New York Times*. March 18, 2005. Accessed on August 13, 2016.
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E01E0DD103CF93BA25750C0A9639C8B63>

⁶⁶ Dominic Head. *Ian McEwan*, p.192.

⁶⁷ Ian McEwan. *Saturday*, p.220.

arrogance or ignorance towards fiction, no matter how hard he tries to please his daughter. He also envies Baxter that he heard something in the poem, something magical, that Henry did not. In his scientific mind, he knows that pursuing poetry in Baxter's case would be useless, for the Huntington's Disease will render his mind useless. We may think that this fear of his being reduced to nothing—as in case of his mother who suffers from Alzheimer's Disease, or Baxter—he reads nothing which he considers useless.

5.3. Irrelevance of art

Solar, as perceived by most of the reviewers, is a comic novel about ecology and science. Its main character, a bald, short and obese physicist, Michael Beard is not interested in much, except good food, drink and considerably younger women. He believes to 'belong to that class of men - vaguely unprepossessing, often bald, short fat, clever - who were unaccountably attractive to certain beautiful women.'⁶⁸

As a Nobel Prize winner, he is well off, sits on various committees, gives lectures or joins television or radio discussions. He lends his name to various organizations, holds honorary post at university in Genova and is a consultant for several science journals.⁶⁹ He considers himself to be genius, someone the younger generation should look up to, and he is unbelievably proud of his life achievements.

He no longer has time to do his own research. Twenty years has passed since he did so, he admits. It seems like he lacks motivation to pursue science, lacks the spark to pursue new ideas. He works in a government-funded company that is trying to invent new kind of power source, a wind turbine that every house will have on its roof to be energy self-dependent. 'Now he was a bureaucrat and never thought about electrons,'⁷⁰ he says. His latest project, however, which is he passing for his own, is not really his. He stole the idea of a dead post-graduate student that got accidentally killed in Beard's house, and the longer he spends

⁶⁸ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.3.

⁶⁹ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.14.

⁷⁰ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.41.

time on planning and making the theory real, the more he thinks the solar energy project is his own.

William Sutcliffe of Financial Times voices a fear, that this Ian McEwan's novel is not literary enough, that for some literary critics it is no serious enough, that it is too much fun.⁷¹ Indeed, McEwan puts Beard in comic situation. When Beard is at the expedition at the Polar Circle, his penis freezes as he takes a leak in the polar cold. In other humorous situation, Beard experiences something he is later told by a sociologist, is a urban myth—he polishes off a pack of crisps that belong to another passenger on train.

Michael Beard is not very artistically inclined. He likes to listen to BBC World News, a serious news radio station, although he is not much interested in politics. He does not care to hear again and again from various commentators about the United States and their war on al-Qaeda or their inner politics. He is angered that he was obliged to pay the radio fees and listen to such news.

He does not read fiction, or does not have time to read anything beside journal articles he corrects, dissertation thesis and proposals. He is not able to finish, or has never read a full-length book and the best he can do is to read the *Scientific American* to keep himself informed about new and recent developments in science.⁷² He admits he knows lyrics of only one song, and that is “Ten Green Bottles”.

When he is invited to an expedition to Spitsbergen at the Polar Circle, he is the only scientist among ‘committed band of artists’⁷³. The purpose of the expedition is to make the ecology and climate change topics more visible in the society. In the yacht frozen in the ice, Beard is surrounded by famous, not only British artists. They believe him to be active in science, real hero and the only one who does anything to stop the global warming, but the opposite is truth. Beard will never tell them he has not made science in years. When some of the artists make bold proclamation that includes ridiculous science references, he is disgusted and tells them so. He claims that you cannot apply science rules to ethics. Needless to say, he is drunk by that time. This is also the only time he takes interest in art, as he

⁷¹ William Sutcliffe. ‘Ian McEwan’s Climate-change Comedy’. *The Financial Times*.

⁷² Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.59.

⁷³ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.61.

helps the ice sculptor Jesus with his since sculptures, or joins in the dance with others.⁷⁴ He is popular only when he keeps to himself that he does not care about art, or climate change.

He seems to have vague idea about art. He recognizes familiar art works, as Renoir's bather, or Gauguin in his Marquesas phase. Also, he has a connection to art through his latest lady lover. She owns several shops in London in which she sells dance clothets. He does not understand the way new trends come and go and tries to look up a esteemed neuroscientist that would explain why women prefer pink and red colours.⁷⁵

When Beard was a university student, he stayed away from his fellow physics and math students and he also avoided the people from the art department. He admits they intimidated him with their literary references which he did not understand.⁷⁶ In the inability to understand the references, Beard is similar character to *Saturday*'s Henry Perowne. Even him, the great neurosurgeon, fails to recognize famous works.

Because of a girl he wanted to impress at the university, he read the complete work a English poet John Milton. 'He read *Comus* and was astounded by its silliness. He read through *Lycidas*, *Samson Agonistes* and *Il Penseroso* - stilled and rather prissy in parts, he thought,⁷⁷ he remembers. He memorised parts of the poem to impress her. He did not consider Milton an intellectual challenge at that time, as he read much complicated physics paper. One evening, however, he realised, that because he read it, he was able to understand the abstract theories better. 'The Theory was no longer an abstraction, it was sensual, he could *feel* the the way the seamless fabric of space-time might be warped by matter [...]'⁷⁸ he recalls. Later, he is scolded by an English professor for thinking he could understand the literature with only a crash-course and memorising verses. Even forty-odd years later, Beard is able to recall part of the poem, especially when he is drunk.

⁷⁴ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.72.

⁷⁵ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.163.

⁷⁶ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.197.

⁷⁷ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.199.

⁷⁸ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p. 201.

Although Michael Beard is not very loyal to his wives and lovers, he gets angered when they find someone else. His late fifth wife embarks upon a relationship with a carpenter, who is the right opposite of Beard. His current partner admits she dates a orchestra conductor. ‘But she hated classical music as much as he did, no rhythm, she always said, not hot-blooded enough, not Tobagan and Venezuelan enough for her’⁷⁹ he says, yet, Melissa does so, proving attraction does not care about music preferences.

In Michael Beard’s mind, the art does not matter much. In his rational mind of a scientist, he does not give it much importance. The few attempts to get acquainted with it ended in failing miserably. Ian McEwan brings to life a character, that does not care about much except his status, importance and good food. He is ignorant to anything else that is not science, lately even to science.

5.4. When art clouds rational thinking

If there is an opposite character to all male protagonists we analyse in the thesis, it is most certainly Fiona Maye. Not only she is the only woman in the lot, but she seems to be the only one who genuinely enjoys art. For her, it has a form of music, as she is skilled piano player. It is her escape from the world of law and rationality and she is fairly good at playing, for she and her colleague perform for public, but she is not very confident about her talent. It also very often reminds her of certain points in her past or make her think about issues she trying to not to think about. They already have ‘a few encore pieces off by heart’⁸⁰. Their favourite are Schubert, Bach or Berlioz.

As a judge, Fiona is well-respected in the Family Division which she describes as ‘... teemed with strange differences, special pleading, intimate half-truths, exotic accusation.’⁸¹ By other judges in the Family Division, she is ‘praised for crisp prose, almost ironic, almost warm, and for the compact terms in which she laid out a dispute.’⁸² She researches her cases diligently and has knowledge of many

⁷⁹ Ian McEwan. *Solar*, p.228.

⁸⁰ Ian McEwan. *The Children Act*, p.58.

⁸¹ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act* (London: Vintage, 2014), p.3

⁸² Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.13

cultures, religions and other judge's precedential rulings. She considers herself to be 'secular god'⁸³ of the children. As we discovered in the previous chapter, we know she is an atheist and that most of her cases are real cases of the High Court Judge, Sir Allan Ward.

This said, we can assume Fiona Maye is very rational person who does not decide in spur of moment. Lucy Scholes claims that 'from the cases detailed in the first chapter alone it's obvious that Fiona's job is to be the voice of reason in the face of religious short-sightedness,'⁸⁴ which can be best demonstrated on her most recent case of Siamese twins, who needed to be separated but to do so, one child would have to be killed in order to save the other one. 'Their apostolic names, Matthew and Mark, had not encouraged clear thinking in some quarters,'⁸⁵ Fiona noticed. As the judge, she was aware of their poor conditions and commented on how Matthew parasites on Mark to support himself: 'It was Mark's heart that sustained them both' and 'Mark was sucking normally, feeding and breathing for both, doing 'all the work'⁸⁶. The public interest in the case is enormous. The twins' parents, devoted Catholics in love with each other, refuse to save one child at the expense of the other. They claim that 'God gave life and only God could take it away.'⁸⁷ At the end she rules in favour of Mark, condemning Matthew to death.

Walking a thin line between life and death, morals and law, Fiona had to chose the lesser evil and decide for the healthier twin to live, for Matthew had no interest⁸⁸. After all, the surgery was needed to save Mark, not to kill Matthew. This decision of hers argues in favour of Fiona being very reasonable person.

Or it may seem so. In her personal life, she acts sometimes very unreasonably and irrationally. When her husband proposes he would like to have an affair with an assistant Melanie, she act like many other wives when their husband announces such thing. Firstly, she is very angry and feels humiliated, and when he leaves their apartment after their fight, she gets the lock changed the next morning. She

⁸³ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.18

⁸⁴ Lucy Scholes. "The Children's Act Review: Ian McEwan's compelling study of rational versus religious belief".

⁸⁵ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.25

⁸⁶ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.25

⁸⁷ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.26

⁸⁸ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.27

realises that obstructing her husband from rightful access to their home is one of the clichés of marital breakdown⁸⁹ and that life of dealing with absurdity of divorcing people did not make her prone to the same behaviour.

Fiona had quite wild youth. When visiting her uncle and aunt in Newcastle, she and her cousins frequented clubs, drank cherry and cola. ‘She was faithful groupie, tolerated as a novice roadie for an under-equipped, unpaid blues band,’⁹⁰ she remembers, wondering what it would be like if she stayed longer than those three weeks.

As a student of law, she also played theatre. ‘She knew the speech of Enobarbus by heart, having played him once as a law student,’ she says, ‘an all-female affair on a lawn in Lincoln’s Inn Fields one sunny midsummer’s afternoon.’⁹¹ She also quotes a line from Shakespeare’s *Antonio and Cleopatra* as she compares herself and her husband’s possible lover.

She has a piano in her living room and plays it as much as her work allows her. In the moment of the first argument with her husband, the piano has not been played for two weeks. Fiona knows she is not a perfect musician. She claims she cannot play jazz, for she had ‘no pulse, no syncopation, no freedom.’⁹² She needs to obey the timing and notes in the music sheets and that was also the reason she studied and practised law.

When she walks to work the morning after her husband left their home, Fiona keeps replaying an song in her mind, instead of thinking what troubles her, and thinks that ‘above the rush-hour din it was her ideal self she heard, the pianist she could never become, performing selflessly Bach’s second partita.’⁹³ As the rain falls down on various surfaces, she hears a sounds that reminds her of familiar music works, especially a jazz composition she learn by heart for her husband to one of his birthdays. She and Jack share love for music and during their marriage, Fiona supplied him of many music-related presents, such as surprise operas, a trip

89 Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.49

90 Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.146

91 Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.17

92 Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.193

93 Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.41

to Rome to see his favourite musician Keith Jarrett, or a trumpet that belonged to Guy Barker.

Although claiming not to be perfect, she and colleague of hers from the Family court perform occasionally—she on piano, he singing. Together, they can achieve something Fiona describes as ‘horizonless hyperspace of music-making, beyond time and purpose.’⁹⁴ They know a broad scale of song for encore from various composers and they are critically observed by the audience who know their repertoire from the music halls.

When she meets Adam Henry, the Jehovah’s witness, she is surprised by his knowledge of music and poetry. Upon their first encounter, he is trying to learn to play violin and recites his own verses to her. She notices his musical instrument and compliments on them. ‘They are beautiful instruments. I always think they is something so human about the shape.’⁹⁵ She also supplies him with lyrics to a song he is attempting to learn, “the Salley Gardens”.

If “Dover Beach” is a central reference point of *Saturday*, than “the Salley Gardens” are that of *The Children Act*. “Down by the Salley Garden” is a famous poem by Irish poet William Butler Yeats, which was published in 1889.

It is also this song which in the end makes her realise what happened with him. When she plays it at the Christmas concert, the realisation of the boy’s faith disturbs her so much, that she has to leave the hall and go home. Tessa Hadley mentions that for Fiona, the boy has become an emblem, rather than boy.⁹⁶

One day in her office, she receives a blue envelope typical for letters from Adam that contains a poem *the Ballad of Adam Henry* that ended in unfinished line. He is angry with her, comparing her to Satan, but she cannot write him back. She knows it is silly idea, one she should not entertain. ‘Even if we had the room, you could not be our lodger. Such a thing is simply not possible for a judge,’⁹⁷ she reasons and she is right. Certain things are expected of women in her position, and

⁹⁴ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.199

⁹⁵ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.115

⁹⁶ Tessa Hadley. ‘The Children Act by Ian McEwan review – the intricate workings of institutionalised power’. *The Guardian*.

⁹⁷ Ian McEwan, *The Children's Act*, p.181

having a young man living with her—possibly being her lover—was not one of them.

After the concert, she confesses all that happened to her husband, admits she kissed considerably younger boy. Everything comes after the realisation, that Adam Henry died and she did not notice. Reading his ballad again, now finally solving the riddle of the unfinished line. ‘It was guilt that had kept her away,’⁹⁸ she realises. Her guilt that kept her from helping him when he was lost. She confesses to her husband that she suspected that he loved her and that she kissed him. ‘I did something foolish... I kissed him,’ she says to him. She tells him who the boy refused the transfusion when the leukaemia came back. When her husband points out that Adam died for his faith, as he returned to Jehovah’s Witnesses church, Fiona is convinced he committed suicide, refusing to live after she denied him.

Too late Fiona realises what she caused by her ruling. She might have saved him life, but in the same time, she took him away from everything he knew—his parents, friends, community, elders. ‘Without faith, how open and beautiful and terrifying the world must have seemed to him,’⁹⁹ she wonders and ‘is ashamed for her petty fears for her reputation.’¹⁰⁰

The Children’s Act—out of the two other novels—is very similar to *Saturday*. It features a well-respected professional who is morally challenged. Tessa Hadley claims that the climax in *the Children’s Act* is even more palatable than in *Saturday*. She says that the poetry had an opposite effect on Fiona. Instead of boosting her confidence, it erodes her trust in authority as the story unfolds.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Ian McEwan, *The Children’s Act*, p.203

⁹⁹ Ian McEwan, *The Children’s Act*, p.212

¹⁰⁰ Ian McEwan, *The Children’s Act*, p.212

¹⁰¹ Tessa Hadley. ‘The Children Act by Ian McEwan review – the intricate workings of institutionalised power’. *The Guardian*. Accessed on April 7, 2016. www.theguardian.com/books/2014/sep/11/the-children-act-ian-mcewan-review-novel

6. Conclusion

Ian McEwan is one of the most famous modern novelist and his position seems to be more secure with every book published. He is loved by the audience and reviewers equally, and his novels treat various topic in a ways interesting for his audience. In his thirteen novels, he manages to utilize his life experience and include his world views. Although reviewer mainly focus on his ability to shock, we pursued less known way of the relationship of art and mind in his novels, for they are the two topics that are very close to McEwan.

In his novels, Ian McEwan brings to life very different characters. In this thesis, we have got to know five characters, whose rational minds are shaped by arts in various ways. In the group of protagonist, only the judge Fiona Maye was affected by music the most. It brought her to realization that her seemingly reasonable judgement in young man's case had disastrous outcome. She also realised that music can bring people together, as well as divide them.

In Clive Linley's life, art did not matter much, although he was a professional musician. All he cared for was his music and genius. Through the whole novella, he was struggling to complete the Millennium Symphony, and when he was rushed to do so, he plagiarised Beethoven and, after his death, the symphony was frowned upon by critics.

The other three male protagonist, however, remained fairly ignorant of the art, although it shaped their minds, too. We prove that art does not matter much in cultural or social life of a human being, for Michael Beard, Vernon Halliday, and Henry Perowne were fairly successful in their lives.

Ian McEwan gives a lot of himself to his characters. His audience is able to recognize the writer himself in the protagonist and McEwan does not deny that he includes bits of his life in his novels.

7. Resumé

Cílem této bakalářské práce s názvem *Rozum a cit v pozdních románech Iana McEwana* je analýza vztahu umění a mysli hlavních postav v pozdních románech britského spisovatele Iana McEwana.

Tato práce shrnuje celoživotní dílo tohoto britského spisovatele, stejně jako jeho život a tvůrčí styl. Hlavním cílem této práce je analýza čtyř McEwanových románů *Amsterdam*, *Saturday*, *Solar* a *The Children Act*, do češtiny přeložených jako *Amsterodam*, *Sobota*, *Solar* a *Myslete na děti!*. Všechny čtyři romány byly literárními kritiky a čtenáři přijaty kladně, ačkoliv mnozí McEwanovi vyčítají, že s přibývajícím věkem z jeho románů mizí šokující kvalita jeho prvních literárních počinů.

První kapitola této bakalářské práce je věnována Ianu McEwanovi a jeho životu. Ten se do mysli čtenářů vepsal okamžitě po publikování své první sbírky krátkých povídek v sedmdesátých letech dvacátého století, kterými šokoval. Následující sbírka povídek a první román pokračovaly ve stejném, neotřelém stylu a vysloužily McEwanovi přezdívku Ian Macabre neboli Ian Morbidní.

Ve druhé kapitole se zaměříme na méně známá díla Iana McEwana, protože během své kariéry nepublikoval pouze romány a krátké povídky, ale také například knihu pro děti. McEwan se také podílel na psaní scénářů pro televizi, nebo skládání textů k hudbě, což není pro mnohé čtenáře známý fakt.

Ve třetí kapitole čtenářům představíme McEwanův literární styl. Tento britský spisovatel má od začátku své kariéry schopnost šokovat. Kromě typických sociálních témat, McEwanovy romány často obsahují prvky detailně popsané vědy, sexu, morbidnosti, morálních rozporů či historií.

Čtvrtá kapitola nás seznámí s pěti hlavními postavami čtyř románů, které jsme si vybrali k analýze. Těchto pět hrdinů má spoustu podobných charakteristik, ale také se v liší v zásadních věcech. V této kapitole také ukážeme, kolik toho o sobě McEwan ve svých románech o sobě prozrazuje.

Pátá kapitola se zaměřuje na podobnost vědy a umění. Podkapitoly se dělí podle jednotlivých románů, ve kterých se snažíme odhalit to, do jaké míry umění ovlivňuje mysl a racionální myšlení jejich hlavních hrdinů.

V této práci jsem se soustředila na to, do jaké míry umění ovlivňuje myšlení a mysl pěti dospělých osob, kteří stojí profesionálně i osobně na vysoké úrovni. Všech pět je ve středním věku, mají úspěšnou kariéru a patří k vyšší střední třídě.

8. Abstract

Author:	Eva Pudová
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Title:	The Sense and Sensibility in the Later Novels of Ian McEwan
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This theses names The Sense and Sensibility in the Later Novels of Ian McEwan deals with the British author Ian McEwan who is one of the most popular British novelists. The main purpose of this theses is to explain the relationship of art and science and how it influences the minds of the main protagonists in novels we chose to analyse. These are *Amsterdam* (1998), *Saturday* (2005), *Solar* (2001), and *The Children Act* (2014).

9. Anotace

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Tato bakalářská práce s názvem *Rozum a cit v pozdních dílech Iana McEana* se zabývá populárním britským spisovatelem Ianem McEwanem. Hlavním úkolem této práce je vysvětlit vztah umění a vědy, a jak tento vztah ovlivňuje racionální myšlení hlavních protagonistů knih, které jsme zvolili k analýze. Těmito knihami jsou *Amsterdam* (1998), *Sobota* (2005), *Solar* (2011), a *Myslete na děti!* (2014).

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