

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Redrawing the Naturalized Boundaries in Ian McEwan's

On Chesil Beach

**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in English**

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Letter to Recommendation

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Redrawing the Naturalized Boundaries in Ian McEwan’s *On Chesil Beach*” by Sanjeeb Regmi submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

Ian McEwan's novel *On Chesil Beach*, explores, the tension inherent in human sex, sexuality and gender identity. It not only measures the effect of cataclysmic moment in personal lives but also points to women's new identity formed by their own capacity by subverting the male imposed identity. Florence who is the victim of male supremacy, later proposing her husband to live sexless life, attempts to form her own identity herself and denaturalizes the heterosexual, patriarchal norms and values. Her father's inhuman attempt to rape her and her husband's practice to control her feelings even in their honeymoon night are the extremes of male's thinking about women as mere sex-object. Her inclination to her career, and readiness to be separate from her husband and willingness to live with her mother shows as Judith Butler refers by these words: 'denaturalization,' 'resignification' and the 'practice of parody' in *Gender Trouble*.

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I. Denaturalization of So-called Naturalized in *On Chesil Beach*

This project inquires female consciousness and the formation of female identity through their attempt to denaturalize the hierarchically naturalized identity with the concepts of radical feminists especially of Judith Butler, Kate Millet and Shulamith Firestone. As Firestone claims that 'the dialectic of sex' is the prototype for all the oppression instead of class, Kate Millett focuses on 'personal is political' that flashes the location of the root cause of woman's oppression in patriarchal institutions such as heterosexuality, marriage, domestic labor, childbearing, etc., which are used to rape, batter and violate against females by male. Butler expresses that the binary framework for both sex and gender is itself the product of regular signification with patriarchal thinking that has consolidated and naturalized the power of masculine and heterosexist oppression. If something is naturalized by regular signification, there is also a chance of resignification of it. That means naturalized can be denaturalized. She clarifies in her popular book, *Gender Trouble* that through "the practice of repetitive signifying [. . .] subversion of identity becomes possible" (185).

Ian McEwan's popular novel *On Chesil Beach* dives into the relationship between two sexes or two gender identities. Though it has been written in twenty first century, it sets on the Victorian culture. The time which is the brink of the 1960s seems a remnant of Victorian times rather than anticipating the free and easy sexuality of the decade to come. The 60s have not quite ignited. Divorce is not infrequent. Homosexuality and abortion are still illegal and the gallows are still operated in British prisons.

In order to underline and emphasize all these, both Edward Mayhew and Florence Ponting are facing first night of their honeymoon as virgins on the first floor of a Georgian inn at Dorchester which lies beside Chesil Beach. They have married at

St Mary's, Oxford. The wedding has gone well; the service has been decorous, and "the reception jolly, the send-off from [their] school and college friends raucous and up-lifting" (3). The young and sexually inexperienced couple, now, dread their wedding night with the feelings of both fear of inability and the joy of wedding. Both are engaged to prove their sexuality as patriarchy has prescribed for both gender. While they are trying to touch each other and especially Edward who is trying to enter-touch her in a four-poster bed, Florence, to punch male supremacy that takes male as able-being and woman as disable-being, tries to "guide the man in" (104). As she pulls his testicles downwards to her labia, he gives "out a wail, a complicated series of agonized, rising vowels, the sort of sound" (104). Florence in horror lets go and the viscous fluid fills her navel, coats her body including her chin-she rushes towards beach to get ride of the calamity. Though the fuss was caused by Edward's inability, he becomes angry with her. Patriarchy never looks its own face on a mirror but points woman as weak and blames of the fuss in bed. The cataclysmic moment under such normal circumstance, the incident that may have been a minor glitch in their marital history proves catastrophic to the marriage. Florence proposes him to live sexless life with her and shows her actual feelings about her life that she wants to be first violinist in any cost. That germinates her new life thereafter with her mother who, at first, has been hostile but later, welcomes Florence warmly.

For Florence, rejection of heterosexuality, which is the mean through which male enter into the female and derives pearls for his own sake as from the mine, leaving it empty, and invitation of new way of life, becomes the way of her freedom from male-net. Thinking women's separate sphere that can be retreat, a resource, a place of safety for women, an entirely separate culture, she wakes up to reinvent her

self or transform with time locating the root cause of her oppression in patriarchal gender relation.

As the title suggests the whole plot of the novel revolves around an event on Chesil Beach. With flashbacks and juxtapositions of the events, the novel develops playing with the fear of inability that is felt by both Florence and Edward. Edward's fear is if his weaknesses come out or is about 'arriving too soon' and Florence's fear is whether she is surrendering to male instead of pursuing her career to be a first violinist. The omniscient narrator presents every detail of the situations. Sometimes he tries to critique on the activities of the characters. The design of the plot of the novel is such that delays our movement to make us pause and see. Though the plot is based on an honeymoon night activities, the cause of the night's event has roots in long past of the characters. Florence grows like other girls in patriarchal society. She is beautiful. At the age of twelve, she is tried to rape not by others but by her own father who is businessman. The event damages not only family relations but also makes her to hate heterosexual practices. Intelligent, interested to the music, Florence wants to be successful in life as first violinist. Her parents who are patriarchally colored don't like her commitment to her career. She falls in love with Edward who is from village but is educated and is interested to the history as well as shows interest to music. He proposes her to marry and both marry, and now, spending their honeymoon night. But a plague suddenly blows in bed and she rushes out to the beach. Edward follows her and abuses her by hiding his own mistakes. That further adds ghee in her burnt heart. She proposes him to live together without sex allowing him to have sex with other women if he likes. And later, as she comes to know that Edward has hid his own weaknesses and blamed her, she begins to hate male and walks to her mother to celebrate womanhood forming their own culture. The one night event is connected by

different related events. For example, she remembers her father's rape attempt when Edward was undressing for intercourse.

The tone of the novel, from beginning, is emotive full of passions as both Edward and Florence are celebrating their honeymoon night. As the narrator reveals the picture of the night like this, "They had just sat down to supper in a tiny sitting room on the first floor of a Georgian inn. In the next room, visible through the open door, was a four-poster bed, rather narrow, whose bed cover was pure white and stretched startlingly smooth, as though by no human hand" (3).

The main objectives of the study are to derive knowledge about female identity under men's power, naturalization of male supremacy, their realization of 'private as political, their attempt to denaturalize the naturalized and the practice of parody to subvert the heterosexual practice to create their own identity themselves, as well as to explore traditional concepts of female and changing perspectives towards women portrayed in the novel, *On Chesil Beach*. The study lays emphasis on radical feminism that attracts different critic's eyes to look it again.

Since the publication of Ian McEwan's *On Chesil Beach*, critics have been trying to interpret it from various perspectives. Some call it an anti-romantic love story focusing on separation of Edward and Florence at the time when they are trying to feel the taste of love in bed. The romantic feeling aroused from beginning of the novel, by the activities of the young and newly married couple in the novel, *On Chesil Beach*, is shattered suddenly by the cataclysmic moment of their love fulfillment. Critics, who have tried to critique the novel with the anti-romantic spectacles, have focused the cataclysmic moment. The moment when the fuss in bed occurs is the main cause to separation. But when they express that, it seems they are overlooking the hidden channels of causes that have caused the separation. For enstance, florence's

hesitation to have sex, their virginity, role and duties prescribed by the patriarchal society etc. However, the young couple married in Oxford, have driven to Chesil Beach on the Dorchester coast where they are going to spend their honeymoon night. Edward's excitement to have sex is uttered by his hand that goes beneath Florence's panty. But one thing, he is frightened by his own inexperience about the sex. Thus his fear is whether he arrives soon. Florence is also excited to have sex outwardly, though inwardly wants to avoid it. Both are driven by sex but feel difficulties to express their desire instead divert to talk about history events intellectually even in the honeymoon night. Christopher Hitchens writes, "Edward and Florence have not come to the altar too late to take advantage of the emancipation of the libido; they have turned up very slightly too early. McEwan's opening sentence is almost deliberately awkward" (136). Both are willing to prove their adulthood. And they desire to have sex but at the same time they are conscious about their own virginity and potential failure in sexual intercourse.

Florence's hesitation to have sex and her unusual proposal about living together without sex is also looked with the eyes of class distinction. The question of class is raised by different critics in the novel. Florence, who is from high class, whose father is a prosperous businessman and whose mother is professor of philosophy, is portrayed as oppressor. Edward, who is from a village or a lower class, whose father is the head master of a village school and whose mother is brain-damaged, is portrayed as oppressed. Hitchens expresses, "Florence's family is richer than Edward's and had paid for the wedding and much besides, and the critical moment she is not above reminding him of this" (137-198). The young from unequal background have different feelings about life too. In this context, Colm Toibin's view also can be suitable. We can find the distinct feeling of both characters in these lines

of Toibin: "a young man from a class background about which he is very uneasy, who has an ailing mother, an interest in history, and wishes to write book, falls for a girl, from an upper-middleclass, bohemian family, only to find that she will not sleep with him" (63). Here he tries to take Edward as oppressed and Florence as oppressor who has high class superiority that minorized lower class. Here, it is necessary to state who the oppressor is. This project takes that Edward, in general, male, oppresses Florence and to be free from the oppression she takes herself out from heterosexual practice with him.

The descriptions of Edward's physicality in the novel have taken as their supporting facts for proving their point. Fearful symmetry which has an area in Florence's mind to be thought. For Toibin, when Edward kisses her, her reluctance to respond shows it, too:

Florence finds the idea of sex deeply disturbing. It is not simply that she is nervous about it the idea of herself being touched "down there" by some else, even someone she loved, was a repulsive as, say, a surgical procedure on her eye, Even kissing makes her nauseous, and McEwan makes Edward's tongue into a most invasive object as it makes is insistent way into Florence's prim, unready mouth. (4)

The high class mentality could not let lower class people to the touch easily. When he kisses, she is reluctant to it. Not only this, she has different feelings from Edward about the sex. Florence, daughter of businessman and a teacher of philosophy, as some critics express, exposes traits of high class superiority over lower class. While, Edward, from a village, whose father is head master of a village school and mother, brain-damaged, sinks in inferiority complex.

Rachel Aspden tries to analyze the text connecting to the historical events. While Florence and Edward are having dinner, they talk about events that are going on at the time instead of their honeymoon talks. Critics like Barbara Beckerman Davis tries to find similarities between beach pebbles and the couple as expressed in these lines: "Chesil Beach is composed of singles or pebbles; each pebble is singular yet participates in the special pattern of the whole, just as each word and gesture of these two young lovers drives them together on their wedding night or irrevocably apart" (188). Since these lines seem to be expressing the feelings of existentialism that focuses on the existence of the self characters of the novel also are striving to save their existence. Florence is engaged to create new self as first violinist at any cost. Though people from different background, gender unite in certain occasion but due to the course of life they are single; the singleness makes a unit making relation with others. As Florence separates from Edward and becomes single as she was before her marriage, the same separation or singleness provides a chance to unite with woman, her mother, to share women's feelings and sufferings.

Though Earl G. Ingersoll has tried to look the text with the eyes of sexuality, the analyzation has put male on the high status and female in the lower status. The separation has been described as Florence's weakness or over confidence about sex. But in reality it is not so. This project tries to inquire the actual status of women and their practice of parody.

Since different critics read the text with different perspectives but representation of women and the creation of their own identity themselves and parody of tradition in the text have not been throughly analyzed.

Basically, the study has used the ideas of radical feminism. Since radical feminists seek to break down traditional gender roles, and to revisit social concepts of

femininity and masculinity, and in specific to abolish patriarchy taking it that that primarily oppresses women, as opposed to legal system for liberal feminists or class conflict for socialist feminism, and Marxist feminism and will for a radical reordering of society, the concepts and the ideas of radical feminists like Shulamith Firestone's 'dialectic of sex,' Kate Millet's 'sexual politics' and Judith Butler's 'resignification,' 'gender identity' and 'practice of parody' are the tools of analysis of Ian McEwan's *On Chesil Beach*.

Radical Feminism being a movement that arose in late 1960s are committed to revolution and to building a mass movement. But unlike other leftists, they see what Firestone called 'the dialectic of sex', not class, as the prototype for all other oppression. Firestone believes, the seeds of women's oppression germinate even within the family where discrimination between girls and boys seem playing the drama. The expression can be found in these lines by Shulamith Firestone: "Family contained within itself in miniature all the antagonisms that late develop on a wide scale within the society and the state" (186). In *On Chesil Beach*, Florence also Passes through such situation in her family while her parents are opposing her political beliefs as well as her commitments to her own career.

Moreover, radical feminists have suggested that women's separate sphere can be a retreat, a resource, a place of safety for women, an entirely separate culture. Locating the root cause of women's oppression in patriarchal gender relation, they step for a radical reordering of society. Ynestra Kin in her writing about feminism writes, "It [Radical Feminism] sees patriarchy (the systematic dominance of me) preceding and lying the foundation for other forms of oppression and exploitation" (313). Thus radical feminists view that women should reinvent themselves or transform with time.

While seeking change in the public sphere, radical feminists also have popularized the expression 'the personal is political', by which they mean that marriage, domestic labor, childrearing, heterosexuality, are not private activities as patriarchy considers but patriarchal institutions and additional targets of political activism. In this context, Kolmar and Bratkowski write, "This is one of the many things meant by Kate Millett's notion of 'sexual politics' that male dominance suffuses our most local and intimate lives" (44). Thus their strategies ranged from public demonstrations, such as the famous protest at 1968 Miss America Contest, to 'consciousness-raising groups,' in which personal experience were recognized as part of larger pattern of sexism.

Radical feminism, like other forms of feminism, is about promoting a world in which women enjoy an equal sphere of the right and power. It focuses on the theory of patriarchy as a system of power that organizes society not a complex of relations based on an assumption of 'male supremacy' that is used to oppress women.

It has been said that radical feminist's tactics and their philosophy are inseparable. Their aim of cultural awakening to challenge and to overthrow patriarchy by opposing so called standard gender roles and the male oppression of women, punches men, who objectifies, subordinates and exploits women, accusing as oppressors. Radical feminists seek to abolish this patriarchy because of which women have come to be viewed as the 'other' to the male norms and as such have been systematically oppressed and marginalized.

This feminism is radical in both a political sense because it implies extremism, and in the sense of seeking the root cause of the oppression of women. Radical feminism claims that the totalizing ideology and social formation-patriarchy-dominates women in the interest of men and draws the conclusion that ending

patriarchy is the most necessary step towards a truly free society. 'The personal is political' and 'sisterhood is powerful' are emphasized by radical feminism. Judith Butler while talking about politics expresses that sex, sexuality and gender begets theory that shapes politics itself. She writes, "Categories of true sex, discrete gender, and specific sexuality have constituted the stable point of reference for a great deal of feminist theory and politics. These constructs of identity serve as the points of epistemic departure from which theory emerges and politics itself is shaped" (163-164).

Traditionally, sex refers to the biological characteristics that distinguish women and men: sex chromosomes, reproductive organs sex specific hormones, and physical characteristics. Gender refers to the social characteristics that distinguish women from men. Moreover, some feminists have sometimes distinguished between 'sex' as the anatomical difference between male and female bodies, and gender as the meaning attached to those bodily differences in various cultures. However, radical feminists argue that all the gender differences are of cultural origin and have been socially constructed not biologically. They assert that cultural differences are in ways that maintain power of men over women. Judith Butler while writing about sex and gender expresses:

'Sex' is as culturally constructed as gender; indeed perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all [. . .].

Gender ought not to be conceived merely as the cultural inscription of meaning on a pre-given sex (a juridical conception); gender must also designate the very apparatus of production whereby the sexes themselves are established. As a result, gender is not to culture as sex

is to nature; gender is also the discursive/cultural means by which "sexed nature" or "a natural sex" is produced and established as "prediscursive," prior to culture, a politically neutral surface on which culture acts. (11)

Butler argues that even anatomical differences can be experienced only through the categories and expectations set out by the culture's signifying order. Anatomical differences are mapped to expectations about sexual desires which are directed from one sex to another especially in society's compulsory heterosexuality. Therefore, sex, as gender, gender identity, sexual desire and fantasy or the concepts of childhood, is itself a social product.

Radical feminists focusing widespread cultural awakening rather than scholarly debate take men, who believe myths regarding their own sexuality: that men need more sex than women and that they are genetically the stronger sex and therefore should be dominant in relationship with women, as oppressor. His role as the 'dominant' sex is reinforced in his mind as something very real, when in fact it is not. The feminist sees otherwise, viewing the source of man's sexuality as deriving in part from the culture and not exclusively from biology. Men are socialized to have sexual desires and to feel entitled to have to those desires met, whereas women are socialized to meet those desires and to internalize accepted definitions of femininity and sexual objectification. As men cling to the idea that their sexuality is an absolute expression of their need and dominance, they prevent women from effecting new attitudes, self-realizations, and behaviors that reinforces and perpetuates a cruel fantasy of women as weak and submissive.

In Butler's view, both sex and gender are cultural traits that prescribe one's role in society. In particular society, gender or the role of one is considered prior to

cultural that means one's role is naturalized but actually it is not; it is cause of repetitive signification for provision that can be reconfigured. But anatomical differences are mapped to expectations about sexual desire, specifically to society's compulsory heterosexuality, which posits that there are two sexes and that desire runs from one sex to the other. Our culture's understanding of sexuality is ill-equipped, therefore, to recognize bodies that confound the strict binary division between male and female, or desires that cross, combine or otherwise fail to conform to a fairly narrow understanding of sex as genital intercourse between two people, one naturally female, and the other naturally male. The sexual practices that relates one to certain class such as homosexual, heterosexual or biosexual has also pull the focus of radical feminism. Kolmar and Bartkowski express that "contemporary feminists theorize multiple possibilities for sexual identity, sexual orientation, and sexual expression, which have been defined through feminist theory as well as through gay and lesbian theory and queer theory. Feminists have theorized sexuality as both a site of women's domination and a potential resource for resistance, self – definition, and subjectivity" (48).

Female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters. Thus the opposition between “masculine” clitoral activity and “Feminine” vaginal passivity, an opposition which Freud - any mans others - saw as stages, or alternatives in the development of a sexually “normal” woman, seems rather too clearly required by the practice of male sexuality. Doing gender, though starts with assignment to a sex category on the basis of what the genitalia look like at birth, is related to the society's entire set of values. Gender, creates the social differences that define 'woman' and 'man' assigning distinguishable social status for rights and responsibilities. Gender differences are deeply imbeded in the way society is

organized with its hierarchies of dominance and power system. As Nancy Jay expresses, "That which is defined, separated out, isolated from all else is A and pure. Not-A is necessarily impure, a random catchall, to which nothing is external except A and the principle of order that separates it from not- A" (45).

In patriarchal society 'man' is A, 'wo-man' is Not- A. Men are taken as touchstone, the normal, the dominant, and women are supposed to be as different, deviant and subordinate. More specifically inequalities between women and men are said to be built into their social systems through patriarchy which is a social order based on the domination of women by men. J. Butler says: "The very injunction to be a given gender takes place through discursive routes : to be a good mother, to be a heterosexually desirable object, to be a fit worker, in sum, to signify a multiplicity of guarantees in response to a variety of different demands all at once" (185). Women and men could be different but equal. In practice gender ranks men above women of the same race and class. Gender divides work in the home and in economic production, legitimates those in authority, and organizes sexuality and emotional life. Emergent sexuality is shaped by heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and sadomasochistic patterns that are gender- different for girls and boys, and for women and men – so that sexual statuses reflect gender status.

Gender inequality is produced and maintained by identifiable social processes and built into the general social structure and individual identities deliberately and purposefully but it is not the result of psychology, anatomy, hormones, or genetic predispositions. Radical feminist has assumed that there is some existing identity that constitutes the subject for whom political representation is pursued. Whereas Butler expresses:

The identity of the feminist subject ought not to be the foundation of feminist politics, if the formation of the subject takes place within a field of power regularly buried through the assertion of that foundation. Perhaps, paradoxically, “representation” will be shown to make sense for feminism only when the subject of “women” is nowhere presumed.

(9)

It is said that identity formation is the result of the complex interplay among individual decisions and the choices, particular life events, community recognition and expectations, and social categorization, classification, and socialization. It is an on going process.

Whereas, Mary Daly believes that women should identify with nature against men, and that whatever we do, we should do it separately from men. For her the oppression of women under patriarchy and the pillage of the natural environment are basically the same phenomenon (Yenestra King, 313). Butler believes identity is a trap, a hardening into rigid, binarized categories of much more fluid and heterogeneous possibilities. She calls for a loosening of the categories, a relaxation of our fixation on identity. She says:

Sexuality is always constructed within the terms of discourse and power, where power is partially understood in terms of heterosexual and phallic culture conventions. [. . .]. If sexuality is culturally constructed within existing power relations, than the postulation of a normative sexuality that is “before,” “outside,” or “beyond” power is a cultural impossibility and a politically impracticable dream, one that postpones the concrete and contemporary task of rethinking subversive possibilities for sexuality and identity within the terms of power itself.

(40)

Power uses identity to latch onto us, and normative identity calls for a homogeneity too difficult to live. Butler believes identity is not something planted in us to be discovered, but something that is performatively produced by acts that effectively constitute the identity they are said to express or reveal. Butler has devoted to clarifying and revising the of theory performativity that is outlined in *Gender Trouble*. She herself views changeable attitude of performativity as other formulated in response to the performativity of gender.

To Foucault's account of power's micro-physics and Lacan's description of subject formation, Butler, adding Derrida's understanding of "performative speech acts," concludes that "the preformative" offers a model of action with in theories that often seem to allow subjects no room for resistance to power. As she expresses:

Performativity of gender revolves around [the] metalepsis, the way in which the anticipation of a gendered essence produces that which it posits as outside itself. [. . .] Performativity is not a singular act but a repetition and a ritual, which achieves its effects through its naturalization in the context of a body [woman], understood, in part as a culturally sustained temporal duration. (XIV)

Her conception of gender as performative allows and requires us to think of gender and sexuality more fluidly than rigid categories permit. Butler again notes that people who fail to do their gender right by standards held to be appropriate in specific contexts and at particular times, may be punished for it, through name calling, discrimination, hate, and outright violence.

Patriarchy believes women's sexuality as passive and accommodating. As sex objects, women are commonly portrayed as child like or doll-like playthings. Heterosexuality is prescribed for women and men. Men are initiators in heterosexual encounters, and men's sexuality is assumed to be assertive and in need of regular

release. Women are expected to be modest and virtuous, to look beautiful, and, simultaneously, to lure men and to feed them off. Men's sexual activity is accepted but sexually active women and girls are likely to be condemned as "sluts." Given the cultural construction of women as objects of masculine sexual desire. Traditionally, a woman has been expected to remain a virgin until marriage, untouched except by her husband. Marilyn Frye (1992) notes, "The word 'virgin' did not originally mean a woman whose vagina was untouched by any penis, but a free woman, one not betrothed, not married, not bound to, not possessed by any man. It meant a female who is sexually and hence socially her own person" (133). Indeed women's virginity is also conceptualized by culture in which she lives.

Women perceive that they have historically been-and still are-victims of both direct and subtle forms of male oppression. Many men believe their sexual inclinations are inherited traits, and therefore a birthright. This belief serves to perpetuate the myth of their natural dominance. Butler writes:

The category of sex belongs to a system of compulsory heterosexuality that clearly operates through a system of compulsory sexual reproduction. In Witting's view, to which we now turn, "masculine" and "feminine," "male" and "female" exist only within the heterosexual matrix; indeed, they are the naturalized terms that keep that matrix concealed and, hence, protected from a radical critique.

(141)

Our sex and our sexual desires and activities are profound indices of who we are. Butler hopes-like many contemporary critical theorists to reveal that the seemingly "natural" is actually socially constructed and, thus, contingent. The binary framework for both sex and gender to be regulatory fictions that consolidates and naturalizes the power of masculine and heterosexist oppression. Men's aggressive sexual nature is

not biological, but rather culturally engendered and therefore capable of being modified. The pervasive cultural climate of immorality (cheating, lying, manipulating and exploiting others to serve one's own ends) contributes to the oppressions that radical feminists condemn.

Sex, sexuality, and gender govern our lives in the most profound and pervasive ways that manifest cultural meaning, social relationships and power politics; not biology, but culture, becomes destiny. There is no bedrock in human nature below these endlessly looping process of the social production of sex and gender, self and other, identity and psyche, each of which is a complex cultural' construction. Butler insists that nothing is natural, not even sexual identity. She writes:

I have tried to suggest that the identity categories often presumed to be foundational to feminist politics, that is, deemed necessary in order to mobilize feminism as an identity politics, simultaneously work to limit and constrain in advance the very cultural possibilities that feminism is supposed to open up. The tacit constraints that produce culturally intelligible "sex" ought to be understood as generative political structures rather than naturalized foundations. (187)

She believes that feminism has been hurt by its attempt to find an identity that would designate something common to everyone in the movement. She calls instead for a coalitional politics that avoids the fights over purity that often tear apart movements dependent on complete agreement among members over long periods of time she again writes, "effects of gender hierarchy and compulsory heterosexuality are not only mis-described as foundations, but the signifying practices that enable this metaleptic misdescription remain outside the purview of a feminist critique of gender relations" (189).

Butler believes there is no self prior to the conflicted cultural field; means cultural practice creates the self or subject. Identity is a result of repetitive as signifying practices and it is conventionally believed as naturalized in patriarchal cultural system. As a signifying practices there is also the possibility of denaturalized identity formation which if used repetitively at last may become naturalized. Gender identity is not fixed it is fluid. It can also be reconstructed by denaturalizing the privileged and naturalized gender. Thus subversion of patriarchal norms and so called naturalized identifying system is possible through the repetitive “practice of parody”. Butler advocates parody in general and drag performances in particular because such “subversive” performances “destabilize the naturalized categories of identity and desire.”

The study has based on textual analysis taking radical feminist’s perspectives in mind welcoming warmly the advices of the professors, teachers and related topics from other texts. This study has been organized into three chapters. The current chapter introduces the project, its objectives, the views of different critics about the text and the tools used to analyze the text. The next chapter analyses the text, using the tools introduced in the first chapter taking out the evidences that support the arguments of the study from the text. The last chapter presents the findings of the study.

II. Redrawing the Naturalized Gender Boundaries in Ian McEwan's *On Chesil Beach*

Ian McEwan's novel *On Chesil Beach* presents a failed relationship between male and female as well as women's integration for their own identity that is different from male-imposed identity. It has tried to expose the beginning of women's voice at the time of male-insurgency. Florence, the main character, with masterful spirit proves her self to be dominant rather than to be submissive to patriarchal norms. Since, to talk about the representation of women in the novel is to find out the relation between women and politics, adequately representation of women is thought to be necessary to foster the political visibility of women.

Florence is the character who wavers between the subject one who is forced to be and the one she becomes later. First seem naturalized but later tries to denaturalize the naturalized. Florence's departure from whom she loves most is denaturalizing journey in search of self-respect, apprenticeship to life and create her own 'Self' herself.

Being intelligent, educated she is working hard for her career as the first violinist. She is so determined to realize her full potential and grow to her career and do not like to be disturbed when even her mother feels bored with her determination. As the narrator says, "her mother's disapproval of her career and hostility to music in general and therefore to Florence herself" (49), becomes weak near her commitment. Her sister, Ruth, is friendly. Her father, the patriarchal lion, who not only is hostile towards her, he is so inhuman who tries to rape his own daughter. Now, they even hesitate to talk and look each other because of his inhuman attempt. As a victim of male sexuality, she is pretending passive, dutiful towards her husband, Edward.

Through she feels extremely hopeless about sex caused by her father's attempt to derive pearls from her twelve years virgin land for his pleasure, she falls in love with Edward and again gets enlightened about 'male supremacy' in the first night of their marriage. Edward hegemonically inflates her that woman should be submissive, passive and dutiful to her husband as he praises her body to get milked for his own sake:

To her relief, he caught the prompt and resorted to the familiar form of stupidity. He said solemnly, 'You have a lovely face and a beautiful nature, and sexy elbows and ankles, and a clavicle, a putamen and a vibrato all men must adore, but you belong entirely to me and I'm very glad and proud.' (102-103)

He praises her beauty for his own sake. Her beautiful physical structure, as he expresses, is enchanting him. Her lovely face, sexy elbows and ankles, and a clavicle, Putamen and a vibrato are so beautiful that that all men are enchanted. Flattering about her body's beauty he comes to climb upon her and tries to enter inside her but becomes unsuccessful when she forcefully pushes him and rushes toward the beach.

He believe myths regarding his own sexuality: that he needs more sex than Florence and that he is genetically the stronger sex and therefore should be dominant in relationship with her. His role as the 'dominant' sex is reinforced in his mind as something very real, when in fact it is not:

He wanted to engage her tongue in some activity of its own, coax it into a hideous mute duet, but she could only shrink and concentrate on not struggling, not gagging, not panicking. If she was sick into his mouth, was one wild thought, there marriage would be instantly over, and she would have to go home and explain herself to her parents. She

understood perfectly that his business with tongues, this penetration, was a small scale enactment, a ritual 'tableau vivant', of what was still to come, like a prologue before an old play that tells you everything that must happen. (29-30)

His kiss is also very much invasive, though she is reluctant to kiss; his tongue in her mouth tries to violate peaceful self contained her tongue. Endurance is the way to walk on for females in patriarchal society. She is so disturbed and can not stand his tongue inside her mouth but does not resist it. She understands the inner politics inherent in male-mind through the kiss. She is in turmoil whether to engage her tongue with his or keep aside from his invasive tongue. If she resists or shows any signs of dislike or disgust the marriage may instantly be over but she still tries to tolerate for his pleasure being passive as patriarchy demands. She seems to be striving to assimilate but indirectly challenging the patriarchy itself. Feeling suffocated by the male invasion, she has even dared to tolerate even further invasive power and has led him to the bed challenging male sexuality which believes woman as receptive.

Though, she is dutiful, submissive and passive as male supremacy wishes to be, she is demanded more. The more she tries to provide, the more male ego demands. And at last the point comes when she can bear no more than that:

She was not sure, but she knew it was the route she was taking.

'You're always pushing me, pushing me, wanting something out of me.

We can never just be. We can never just be happy. There's this constant pressure. There's always something more that you want to out of me. This endless wheedling.' (145)

Her voice in high pitch directs her new way of life. She is protesting the traditionally conceptualized gender roles and speaking loudly before male-power. She is not afraid

of anything that may happen to her. She is ready to tolerate anything that may befall while rejecting passivity. She, deriving the courage from her commitment to her career, complains that Edward is pushing her, pushing her, wanting something out of her. He further demands without thinking her even once. She then says if the acts like that go on, they cannot live together. His constant pressure for something more that he wants to out of her is the endless wheedling as Florence thinks. This attempt to raise her voice before her husband is directing to the voice of women in public. As it is said that identity formation is the result of the complex interplay among individual decisions and the choices, particular life events, community recognition and expectations, and social categorization, classification, and socialization, Florence walks on the path of new identity.

The narrator says, “She was two selves-the one who flung the pillow down in exasperation, the other who looked on and hates herself for it” (106), but it seems there is another most vital self who hated Edward and her father or male sexuality, and tries to get away from it and runs towards the beach and did not stop running until she reach her destined career. Florence emerges as a radical woman who tries to create her own self violating the male given gender identity: passive, dutiful, submissive, heterosexually desirable object and accepting even homosexuality as a positive identity walks to her mother who is, first, hostile to her but not now, to celebrate womanhood.

As Firestone believes that family contained within itself in miniature all the antagonisms that later develop on a wide scale within the society and the state, Florence finds her family life very distressing and oppressive that spread in the society, and feels traditional social norms and values are abstacles in her aim to be a violinist. Beside the male oppressors, her mother, at the beginning, seem hostile to her.

Though educated, intelligent, who herself is professor of philosophy could not realize woman's feelings and emotions. She calls 'Screeching' that expresses the sense of annoying feeling to the Florences's "repeated scales and arpeggios, double-stopping exercises, memory tests" (49). The narrator further says, "Florence was finding home life minutely oppressive and could not muster her sympathies" (49). Her mother was physically distant. She was busy on her work like men in patriarchal myths that describes men as stronger to work than women. The same thing also is expressed in the line, "She had never kissed or embraced Florence, even when she was small" (55). It seems her own experiences when getting her better career may have inflated her to prevent her daughter pursue her career. There can also be found some traits of so called naturalized patriarchal culture in her mother when "Violet did not particularly approve of the way her daughter [Florence] used the washing machine" (54). Her husband, being a businessman could not find attention to the family. She manages the households. Later she realizes, her duty as to look after her husband's property and comes to know how important is the career and uncomplainingly accepts or welcomes and supports her daughter's career when Florence comes back from Edward breaking "her promises, made in public, in a church" (157).

As it is said that woman knows the feelings of woman; though at first they seem hostile ultimately unite for their own culture. Mrs Ponting has, once, told her about two homosexuals who lived "in a flat together, like man and wife" [being] "quiet about it" (154). It hints Mrs. Ponting has been actually in favour of creating new identity of woman rather than accepting male gendered identity. Thus, Florence's mother herself is courageous and challenging figure in the time when patriarchy rooted so deep in the society and culture.

Edward's mother, 'brain damaged' by an accident in railway station, is different from other characters in the novel. Her twin daughters, Edward's sisters always seem walking and playing together not with others and that shows the traits of woman's development to respect each other. Later they inherited the cottage when his both father and mother died.

Florence, at first has been tried to be naturalized in patriarchal society in which she has to be what it prescribes her but later as the patriarchal demands tried to suffocate her she raises her voice against the demand. Her mother also realizes her mistake and welcomes her daughter. *On Chesil Beach* reveals women as passive, submissive, dutiful, oppressed, hegemonised and heterosexually desirable objects to male supremacy in the first but develop toward the active and subversive to the heterosexual gender norms in the end, as our history exposes.

As Judith Butler, in *Gender Trouble*, expresses that we understand sex and gender as citation relations, various cultural discourses converge in a prevailing understanding of what 'boy' and 'girl,' 'man' and 'woman' signify. Individual actions than 'cite' these meanings, playing off them in various ways- power functions pervasively through these meanings. The little boy learns that his crying is not masculine; he must grow into his masculinity by imitating the behavior designed as 'male' to the point that such behavior becomes 'second nature'. The little girl learns that some ways of acting makes her a tomboy and she is encouraged to address the part of 'femininity' like Florence who becomes happy when she feels something sprouting on her chest as two balls.

When she was a late-developing fourteen in despair that all her friends had breasts while she still resembled a giant nine year old, she had a similar moment of revolution in front of the mirror the evening she

first discerned and probed a novel tight swelling around her nipples. If her mother had not been preparing her Spinoza lecture on the floor below, Florence would have shouted in delight. [. . .]In triumph, she belonged among the generality. (88)

Florence feels her way into the patriarchal heterosexual gender roles, slowly establishing, under the watchful eyes of powerful social forces, the way she will occupy them. She becomes so happy to get license to perform feminine role in society otherwise she had to be thought as third-gender. In society, Florence is constantly reminded where her 'place' is and that she is put back in her place. Patriarchal social beliefs serves as the most common means of social control employed against women. By being continually reminded of her inferior status in her interaction with others, and continually compelled to acknowledge that status in her own patterns of behavior, she learns to internalize heterosexual society's definition of women as inferior so thoroughly that she is often unaware of what her status is. Inferiority becomes habitual thus she becomes very happy when she discovers two balls on her chest. Given prevailing categories of 'male' and 'female,' they experience this process as discovering their identity.

Though Edward is inexperienced and worried whether about 'arriving too soon' does not show the sign in his face and suppresses his libido cautiously as he is socialized in the society in that way. Florence as socialized in patriarchal society, her behaviors and activities are relatively different from Edward, the male. She is conscious about her beauty as expected to be by patriarchy. "Her going-away dress was of a light summer cotton in cornflower blue, a perfect match for her shoes" (81), shows the naturalized activity in male centered society that encourages women to be beautiful for the sake of male. Not only this, she seemed to be dutiful to her husband

even in the time of her own difficulties. As the narrator says, “Her sense of duty was painfully strong and she could not resist it. She could not bear to let Edward down” (32-33). Her passivity and dutifulness to her husband is ‘cited’ from the previously used social norms and conventions with slight variations caused by different context, conscious or unconscious purposes:

She would never let him know that what a struggle it was, what it cost her, to appear calm. She was without any other desire but to please him and make this night a success, and without any other sensation beyond an awareness of the end of his penis, strangely cool, repeatedly jabbing and bumping into and around her urethra. Her panic and disgust, she thought, were under control, she loved Edward, and all her thoughts were on helping him have what he so dearly wanted and to make him love her all the more. It was in this spirit that she slid her right hand between his groin and hers. [. . .]. She was pleased with herself for remembering that the red manual advised that it was perfectly acceptable for the bride to ‘guide the man in.’ (103-104)

Florence is a more or less obliging prop for the enactment of man’s fantasies, that, she may find pleasure there in that role, by proxy, is possible, even certain. But such pleasure is above all a masochistic prostitution of her body to a desire that is not her own, and it leaves her in a familiar state of dependency upon Edward. Not knowing that she wants, ready for anything, even asking for more as she herself suggested to lie in bed and ‘led him towards the bed,’ so long as she will ‘take’ her as her ‘object’ when Edward seeks his own pleasure. Thus she will not say what she herself wants; moreover, she does not know, or no longer knows, what she wants and she catches his penis and tries ‘to guide the man in’.

Sexuality is always constructed within the terms of discourse and power, where power is partially understood in terms of heterosexual and phallic cultural conventions. Women, in heterosexual society, are considered as mere sexual objects and stripped of with dehumanizing actions like so many flies pinned to a board for an entomologist to study: “[Florence was] obliged on the night to transform herself for Edward into a kind of portal or drawing room through which he might process” (8). Florence who pretends to perform as her husband demands, seem passive and dutiful. She is forced to be submissive and not to deny anything and allow Edward to do what he wants, by hegemonic male culture.

Tragic aura of their lives, women whose greatest value is to be pawned in a game of political chess for the empowerment of one political group over another. The naturalization of so called naturalized values such as women are weak, must be submissive, dutiful toward male and accept the male-inscribed identity is oppressive to the woman whose lives are trodden deeper into the dark ditch. At the Wigmore Hall “she was given a part-time job backstage, making tea for the performers in the spacious green room” (41) which she has to tidy though she was intelligent and educated. It is the practice of patriarchy that women should work indoor. Female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters. Gender differences are deeply imbedded in the way society is organized with its hierarchies of dominance and power system. More specifically inequalities between women and men are said to be built into their social systems through patriarchy which is a social order based on the domination of women by men.

'Personal is political,' which means power relations operate in personal as in public life, is one of the many things meant by Kate Millett's notion of 'sexual politics'- that male dominance suffuses women's most local and intimate lives.

Heterosexuality, marriage, domestic labor, childrearing, etc., which are taken as private activities in male gendered culture are not private in reality but patriarchal institutions used to rape, batter and or violate against women. In other words the so called private activities are culturally constructed. Women are an oppressed class in which oppression is total, affecting every facet of their lives. *On Chesil Beach's* Florence is the victim of male's personal desire. She is exploited as sex object not only by her husband, Edward but also by her father who tried to loot her sexual treasure in a trip when she was about twelve years old:

She was twelve years old, lying still like this, waiting, shivering in the narrow bunk with polished mahogany sides. Her mind was a blank, she felt she was in disgrace. After a two-day crossing, they were once more in the calm of Carteret harbor, south of Cherbourg. It was late in the evening and her father was moving about the dim cramped cabin, undressing, like Edward now. She remembered the rustle of clothes, the clink of a belt unfastened or of keys or loose change. Her only task was to keep her eyes closed and to think of a tune she liked or any tune. She remembered the sweet scent of almost rotten food in the closed air of a boat after a rough trip. She was usually sick many times on the crossing, and of no use to her father as a sailor, and that surely was the source of her shame. (99-100)

The event that was happened when she was in twelve is haunting her even now. Her mental touch to her father's attempt to rape her or his inhuman attempt to knife his daughter while Edward is undressing exposes one of the various forms of heterosexual patriarchal oppression. Male extremity hunts her in such a way that she is afraid even with her lover whom she believes, "he was kind, sensitive, he loved her

and could do her no harm” (28). Actually the word 'no harm' hints the doubt that has housed in her mind since her father's inhuman attempt. The same thing we discover from the line, “She had to know he was with her on her side, and was not going to use her” (102). Here, the words 'was not going to use her' pour the doubt housed in her mind to the male who actually going to harm her. Patriarchy believes women's sexuality as passive and accommodating. As sex objects, women are commonly portrayed as child-like or doll-like playthings.

As heterosexuality is prescribed for both men and women, men are thought to be initiators and women thought to be receptive in heterosexual encounters. The cultural construction of women as objects of masculine sexual desire accepts men's sexual activity while sexually active women and girls are likely to be condemned as “sluts.” Florence's own fathers attempt to rape her exposes how inhuman the heterosexual practice is. Indeed, her hopelessness about sex is the cause of her father's rape-attempt. Whenever she sees her father, she is distracted as expressed in these lines:

Her father aroused in her conflicting emotions. There were times when she found him physically repellent and she could hardly bear the sight of him- his gleaming baldness, his tiny white hands [. . .]. And the high tenor voice, both wheedling and commanding, with its eccentrically distributed stresses. She hated hearing his enthusiastic reports about the boat. It grated on her. He used to take her out with him [. . .]. They never talked about those trips. He had never asked her again, and she was glad. But sometimes in a surge of protective feeling and guilty love, she would come up [. . .] kiss the top of his head and nuzzle him. She would do all this, then loathe herself for it later. (49-50)

Because of his bad behavior with her their relation has become bad too. She not only hates to hear his voice, even does not like to see him. They have never talked about those trips. But sometimes with full of guilty feelings she comes up behind him and entwine her arms around his neck and kisses him but that can later loathe her. She has been behaved as doll-like heterosexual object not by others by her own father. What a smell of sex is! The system of power based on an assumption of 'male supremacy' can not identify who she is and father even to his own daughter does not hesitate to exploit as a result Florence can hardly bear the sight of her father!

Florence finds the ideas of sex deeply disturbing. It is not simply that she is nervous about it. The effect of gender hierarchy and compulsory heterosexuality in female sexuality is so disturbing that even kissing makes her nauseous:

He wanted to engage her tongue in some activity of its won, coax it into a hideous mute duet, but she could only shrink and concentrate on not struggling, not gagging, not panicking. If she was sick into his mouth, was one wild thought, their marriage would be instantly over and she would have to go home and explain herself to her parents. She understood perfectly that his business with tongues, this penetration, was a small scale enactment, a ritual tableau vivant, of what was still to come, like a prologue before an old play that tells you everything that must happen. (29-30)

Edward's tongue like an invasive object that makes its insistent way into Florence's prim, unready mouth gives the bitter taste of so called private activities. She understands perfectly that the business with tongues. She even knows what will happen if she refuses or agrees like a prologue before the play. Here the word 'prologue' directs the coming way of her life on which she has to walk. Florence

comes to realize in her eight hours marital life that the purpose of a woman is to please her husband forgetting her own 'self'. Marriage, as a trap in binarised society, considering Florence as sex object or plaything forces her to please Edward.

As heterosexuality is prescribed for both male and female, men's sexuality is assumed to be assertive and in need of regular release while women are expected to be modest and virtuous, to look beautiful, and, simultaneously, to lure men and to feed them off. Edward's aggressive sexual behavior is derived from the society in which he is socialized. He tries to be calm while inwardly burning with the desire to have intercourse. His anxiety was to arriving too soon. Moreover when the catastrophe satisfies its thirst in bed, Edward tries to hide his fault and argues aggressively with Florence. When she rushes to the beach he tries to heap up all the blames on her:

He rejected his humiliation, he did not recognize it. It was outrageous of her to cry out in disappointment, to flounce from the room, when the fault was hers. He should accept the fact, she did not like kissing and touching, she did not like their bodies to be close, she had no interest in him. She was unsensual, utterly without desire. She could never feel what he felt. Edward took the next steps with fatal ease: she had known all his- how could she not?- and she had deceived him. She wanted a husband for the sake of respectability, or to please her parents, or because it was what everyone did. Or she thought it was a marvelous game. (134-135)

When Florence rushes out of the room, Edward feels ashamed or insulted. He thinks it is she who actually has caused the disorder in their love-making. He thinks she has done the mistake and flounced from the room. He contemplates that she was not

interested to him. She has no desires. She is different in nature regarding the sexual pleasure. He feels as if he was deceived by her. She has played a game with him. The patriarchy never looks its own face in mirror but always looks female's face and says whatever he likes.

Marriage, which is the institution of heterosexual society, is itself the cause of women's oppression because most of the lovers become aggressive after marriage; whereas before marriage they seem busy in praising beloved like Edward in *On Chesil Beach*. He praises her beautiful body [her passivity]: "Her beautiful light brown eyes, bright with undeniable passion, and the faint trembling in her lower lip, which [. . .] she wetted with her tongue" (27), that enchant him and impulse him to have sex for that he flatters to have them as his possession. There is something hidden in the marriage, that is patriarchal politics to dominate female and exploit them for their various purposes:

Florence's anxieties were more serious, and there were moments during the journey from Oxford when she thought she was about to draw on all her courage to speak her mind. But what troubled her was unutterable, and she could barely frame it for herself. Where he merely suffered conventional first-night nerves, she experiences a visceral dread, a helpless disgust as palpable as seasickness. [. . .]. Was she obliged on the night to transform her self for Edward into a kind of portal or drawing room through which he might process? Almost as frequent was a word that suggested to her nothing but pain, flesh parted before a knife: penetration. (7-8)

The knife like penis bleeds woman for his pleasure giving pain to her no more than that. Being in turmoil about her identity or self, she is obliged on the night to

transform her as Edward wishes. Florence's duty towards her husband, Edward, is so obliging than her career that she even tries to forget her career for the sake of happy honeymoon for Edward not for herself because she is distracted by sex.

Sexuality, as men cling, is an absolute expression of men's need and dominance. They believe themselves as genetically the stronger sex and therefore should be 'dominant' in relationship with women. On beach, Edward's aggressive behavior is the exposition of patriarchal social traits that posits men's sexuality in high position over women's sexuality. His role as the 'dominant' sex is reinforced in his mind as something very real when in fact it is not. It seems he is guided by cruel fantasy of Florence as weak and submissive:

'Look, this is ridiculous. It was unfair of, you to run out like that'. [. . .]

In fact, it was bloody unpleasant'. [. . .] Edward came out swinging.

'You don't have the faintest idea how to be with a man. If you did, it would never happen. You've never let me near you. You don't know a thing about any of it, do you? You carry on as if it's eighteen sixty-two.

You don't even know how to kiss.' (144)

Both are virgins, but he is aggressive towards her, hiding his own weakness, and scolds, and accuses her for the mess in the bed and the result afterwards. Furthermore, he goes so far with his words that Florence herself could not bear it and then speaks in response. Traditionally, a woman has been expected to remain virgin until marriage, untouched except by her husband. Now, the questions arise: was it the fault of him or her? Is woman's virginity good or bad? These questions itself criticizes the patriarchy.

Sexuality is constructed within the terms of discourse and power, where power is partially understood in terms of heterosexual and phallic cultural conventions.

Marriage, one of the institutions of gendering society operates within the power relations between husband and wife.

The pervasive cultural climate of immorality considers sexuality as a fundamental constituent of identity. Our sex and sexual desires, and activities are profound indices of who we are. The binary framework for both sex and gender is to be regulatory fictions that consolidate and naturalize the power of masculine and heterosexist oppression. The established and conventional connections between anatomy and desire, and between sexual activities and ascriptions of identity, are not inevitable; they have been different in other cultures and in other historical eras, and they are open to revision, or to use one of Butler's favorite words, 'resignification'. The meanings and categories by which we understand and live our daily existence can be altered. The seemingly natural is actually socially constructed and, thus, contingent. In *On Chesil Beach*, Florence tries to reorder the society by showing her capacity not only in exams but in every facet of gender roles. She is challenging male. Edward has once peeped into her school report folder and seen her intelligence tests results: one hundred and fifty-two, seventeen points above his own score. Florence is talent, intelligent and educated, and wants to develop her career herself:

When he sat in on a rehearsal with the quartet, and she had a difference of opinion on a phrasing or tempo or dynamic with Charles, the chubby and assertive cellist whose face shone with late-flowering acne, Edward was intrigued by how cool Florence could be. She did not argue, she listened calmly, then announced her decision. No sign then of the little hair-brushing action. She knew her stuff, and she was determined to lead, the way the first violin should. She seemed to be able to get her rather frightening father to do what she wanted. (16-17)

Her determination to her career can be taken as a blow to the patriarchal belief that women are weak to have decision and commitment. Her parent's hostile eyes to her career could not stop her from steps for development. Indeed, Florence, since her father's attempt of sexual exploitation, she has been involved in the process of defining and clarifying her politics that she actively committed to struggling against sexual, heterosexual oppression.

Florence thinks her liberation is a necessity not as an adjunct to somebody else's but because of her need as human person for autonomy. The passive becomes active after realizing the actual nature of male. Edward, now, feels insulted when she rushes out to beach from the bed room after the mess:

And what an insult it was, what contempt she showed for him with her cry of revulsion and the fuss with the pillow, what a twist of the scalpel, to run from the room without a word, leaving him with the disgusting taint of shame and all the burden of failure [. . .]. He was contemptible to her, she wanted to punish him, to leave him alone to contemplate his inadequacies without any thought for her own part.

[. . .] He had found his theme, and he pushed on. He sensed there was a weightier matter just ahead, and here it was, he had it at last, he burst into it. (133-134)

The activities that she shows to him in the first night of their marriage after the mess in bed prove her disgust to the heterosexuality and her urge to prove her the equal of any man, or to be dominant rather than follow the male-imposed gender roles and identity. As she comes out of the room where they are making love, Edward startled can not think whether it is the result of his own or her. But later becomes angry with her hiding his own fault. She knows patriarchal politics and tries to reconstruct it. As

expressed in the line, “She was not sure, but she knew it was the route she was taking (145). Florence who has been behaved as sex object, inferior being whose only purpose is to enhance Edward’s pleasure or life, whose humanity is denied, who faces different threat of physical violence, later becomes first violinist and creates her own identity herself rejecting male-imposed identity.

Gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time and space, instituted in an exterior space through a 'stylized repetition of acts.' Butler believes identity is not something planted in us to be discovered, but something that is per formatively produced by acts that effectively constitute the identity they are said to express or reveal. Passive, accommodating and loyal to her husband, bearing the tortures given by her husband or other males, thought to be good for woman in gendered sexual society that Florence at first, tries to adopt but it comes to the such extreme condition that she could not bear more than that, then she bursts out to the beach for both mental and physical relaxation. Even there comes the aggressive male power dogging her to torment further:

But Edward came out swinging. 'You don't have the faintest idea how to be with a man. If you did, it would never have happened. You've never let me near you. You don't know a thing about any of it, do you? You carry on as if its eighteen sixty-two. You don't even know how to kiss. (144)

How much accusation is she supposed to bear in one small speech? It seems his anger directed toward her is actually the veil that tries to cover his own weaknesses.

Patriarchy never let males to expose its own real face but the more it tries to hide, the more clear figure it exposes. As Edward scolds and blames her to hide his own faults,

the blaming itself reflects the hidden nature or politics of patriarchy. His repeated 'you's further encourages Florence to walk on her new way for new identity.

Gender differences, are deeply imbedded in the way society is organized with its hierarchies of dominance and power system. Sex, sexuality, and gender govern our lives in the most profound and pervasive ways that manifest cultural meaning, social relationships and power politics. Women and men can be different but equal. In patriarchal gender ranks men above women. Florence, being bold and dauntless tries to question the politics of heterosexual male carved cultural values, norms and regulations, and “thought she was rather wise” (142). When Edward becomes aggressive, in response, she defends herself raising questions about his own nature:

She was not sure, but she knew it was the route she was taking. ‘You are always pushing me, pushing me, wanting something out of me. We can never just be. We can never just be happy. There's this constant pressure. There's always something more that you want out of me.

This endless wheedling.’ (145)

Edward demands what she does not want to provide. Her tone, different from before, hints the way she may take as “she felt as though she were trying to re-invent existence itself” (152). Her suppressed ‘self’ or identity seem poking its denaturalizing head out of her emotions. She is conscious about her identity and about her own status in the hierarchy constructed by ‘power of knife’. She has courage to raise her voice to the naturalized identifying system for denaturalizing the system. Her revulsion and the fuss with the pillow, twist of the scalpel, run from the room without a word, are subversive traits of the male centered gender identity.

As Kate Millett in her “Theory of sexual politics” says sex is a status category with political implications and it is the scheme for the domination of one birth group

by another, in the area of sex where male, with the political mind, try to control women. Heterosexuality plays a great role to impose patriarchal supremacy over women. But everything has its limit. Here in *On Chesil Beach* when Edward tries to cross the limit, Florence raises her voice to question male supremacy:

The Florence who led her quartet, who coolly imposed her will, would never meekly submit to conventional expectations. She was no lamb to be uncomplainingly knifed or penetrated. She would demand of herself what it was exactly she wanted and did not want from her marriage, and she would say so out loud to Edward, and expect to discover some form of compromise with him [. . .]. The point was to love, and set each other free. (81)

The Florence who blames herself in believing "red manual" that encourages her to "guide the man in," who herself accepts as inept, ignorant and stupid, who can not sleep in night if she speaks loud with other, now provoked by the sense of urgency to create her respectable identity or to reinvent herself or transform with time, she tries to find a world in which women enjoy an equal sphere of the right and power.

When Edward, being male, tries to control her from effecting new attitudes, self-realizations, and behaviors for his dominance even thorough abuse as he calls her 'bitch,' the deep gulf between husband and wife becomes transparent:

They had been frightened of ever disagreeing, and now his anger was setting her free. She wanted to hurt him, punish him in order to make herself distinct from him. It was such an unfamiliar impulse in her, towards the thrill of destruction, that she had no resistance against it. Her heart beat hard and she wanted to tell him that she hated him, and

she was about to say these harsh and wonderful words that she had never uttered before in her life when he spoke first. (148)

Her raised impulse is actually caused by the attitude and behavior of heterosexual society upon women. When she comes into conclusion that the heterosexual society will never give freedom, will always tie her on a post like a cow which is milked whenever man likes, she proposes him to have sex with others, and not with her and live sexless life with her. The woman who was dutiful towards her husband even in the time of her difficulties, now speaking loud, and emerging as a dominant.

Both, sex and gender are cultural traits that prescribe one's role in society. In patriarchal society gender or the role of one is considered prior to culture that means one's role is naturalized but actually it is not; it is cause of repetitive signification for provision that can be reconfigured, as Florence steps towards denaturalizing performances of naturalized performances.

As Butler says, identity is a practice of signification that is provisional construction of the culture that can be subverted because subject is not determined by the rules through which it is generated because signification is not a founding act, but rather a regulated process of repetition. Women's freedom and prohibitions are determined by male governed repetitive signifying process thus it is necessary to subvert this and reconstruct new signifiers for women's culture and because of repetitive use it becomes the new identity for women who would enjoy with newly formed identity. Florence, like her mother who is professor of philosophy in the time of male insurgency, tries to create her own identity as first violinist, and enjoy the identity created by herself without depending on male governed cultural practices. She repeats her mother's courage to prove women have no less capacity than men. Florence's proposal is the great step toward the formation of new identity.

‘We love each other- that’s a given. Neither of us doubts it. We already know how happy we make each other. We’re free now to make our own choices, our own lives. Really, no one can tell us how to live. Free agents! And people live in all kinds of ways now, they can live by their own rules and standards without having to ask anyone else for permission. Mummy knows two homosexuals, they live in a flat together, like man and wife. Two men, in Oxford, in Beaumont Street. They’re very quiet about it they both teach at Christ Church. No one bothers them. We can make our own rules too.’ (154-155)

Her proposal to live sexless life together with Edward is the parody of heterosexual structure that binds women in one-to-one-relationship with their oppressors. Her desire to be physically distant from the ‘knife’ that bleeds her is also a step forward to the opposition of male supremacy. It is the primacy of woman relating to woman, of woman creating a new consciousness of and with each other, which is at the heart of women’s liberation from the basic discriminatory culture. Only women can give to each other a new sense of self. The identity they have to develop with reference to themselves, and not in relation to men. This consciousness is the revolutionary force from which all else will follow. For this they must be available and supportive to one another, give their commitment and their love, and give the emotional support necessary to sustain the awakening. Florence’s mother, who had never kissed or embraced Florence, even when she was small had efficiently arranged the return of all the wedding presents to Edward. Women know the pain of women. She welcomes her daughter without complaining and supports for her career as violinists.

Florence’s attempt, to question not only the heterosexual frame but the whole culture by breaking “her promises, made in public, in a church” (157), to walk alone

to her career though there is great chance to develop even with Edward, is revolutionary. In short she rejects the place in naturalized gender and acts accordingly as Judith Butler says, “Practice of Parody.”

Identity is not something planted in us to be discovered, but something that is performatively produced, as Florence, by acts that effectively constitute the identity. Parody in general is such “subversive” performance as Florence, that denaturalizes the naturalized categories of identity. The preexisting signifying practice has been dismantled because of her courage to create her own identity.

III. Florence Parodises the So-Called Naturalized Gender

The novel takes place on the honeymoon night and develops with many flashbacks, and at the end a great flash-forward, and at the core an enormous misunderstanding to Edward but understanding to Florence. Edward's misunderstanding is about his own sexuality that he is dominant than any women in society and Florence's understanding is about her own capacity that is being trodden by male-prescribed gender roles. When hegemonially naturalized heterosexual culture, sometime as her own father and sometimes as her own husband, tries her to exploit as mere sex-object, she walks to displace the very gender norms questioning the heterosexuality itself.

She goes back to her mother rejecting heterosexual practice, actually, because of her commitment to her career as well as her mother's intimate relationship with her. Her mother, once, has told her about two homosexuals living together enjoying their lives. Later she welcomes her though before marriage she has seemed hostile to her daughter's busy-work. Her hostility, at the beginning to her commitment is because of her inner desire that she could not express her daughter plainly in heterosexual society.

Florence's shock with heterosexual practice is caused by her own father's inhuman practice to have sex in a ship while they are traveling in the sea. The 'shock' is further contaminated by Edward's aggressive behavior to her. Actually, the mess in bed is because of his own weakness and his own lack of knowledge about sexual practice. Both are virgins but Edward tries to dominate her accusing by saying that she even does not know how to kiss and be with a man. Moreover, he himself does not know how he should step his action in bed. In patriarchy, women's virginity is demanded but, here Florence, who controls herself only for her husband's sake, is blamed because of her virginity.

Florence wants to prove that she is not having less capacity than any male that is proved by her commitment to be the first violinist what she proves later, as well as her college marks. She rejects him, though there is possibility to develop her career living together with Edward because of male's oppressive behavior. The gender identity which she is laded with in patriarchy, later, is tried to be broken by her own attempt. Her high-pitched voice that is pinching Edward, on Chesil Beach where she is talking with Edward, who has accused her for the mess in the bed, is the basic step of the ladder to reach her mother to celebrate womanhood.

As Butler stresses the culture sees sexuality as a fundamental constituent of identity of what profound indices are the sex, sexual desires and activities, the established and conventional connection between anatomy and desire, and between sexual activities and ascriptions of identity are open to 'resignification'. Florence suffocated by the male inhuman gendered duties jumps for her career to her mother to create her self celebrating womanhood by denaturalizing the patriarchally naturalized gender roles.

Kate Millet's 'personal is political' that means marriage, domestic labor, heterosexuality, rape are not private activities but patriarchal institutions that Florence comes to face in the time of father's rape to her and to realize in her marital eight hour's life, increases its proofs through this novel, *On Chesil Beach*. Florence's determination to reconstruct her identity by denaturalizing the privileged and naturalized gender comes out when she tells Edward that they are free now to make their own choices, their own lives. Really, no one can tell them how to live. Free agents! And people live in all kinds of ways now, they can live by their own rules and standards without having to ask anyone else for permission.

Florence, though, latched by male supremacy, with master spirit, proposes her husband, Edward Mayhew, to live sexless life with her, dauntlessly speaks and argues, and then walks towards her mother to celebrate womanhood and to create her identity herself far from the touch of male 'Knife' that bleeds women. Mrs Ponting's Struggle for her identity as professor of philosophy in the time of male supremacy and Florence's struggle for her identity as first violinist are the practice of parody to denaturalize the naturalized patriarchal beliefs.

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