Intramental Fictional Minds in Ian McEwan's *Amsterdam* and *On Chesil Beach*[1]

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Abstract This paper examines the fictional minds' mental functioning in Ian McEwan's *Amsterdam* and *On Chesil Beach*. The study primarily depends on the terminology offered by Alan Palmer considering the operation of fictional minds. The paper argues that the initial fragile intermental units within the selected narratives disappear towards their ends because, encountering conflicts, the fictional minds tend to dissent intramentally. Therefore, these narratives can be read as representations of the breakdown process of the intermental units among the fictional minds. In *Amsterdam*, the incipient intermentality between Clive Linely and Vernon Halliday comes to its end when the two old friends' strong egocentrism and aspectuality lead them fundamentally towards disrupting intramental thoughts and actions. And in *On Chesil Beach*, the development of Edward Mayhew's and Florence Ponting's small intermental unit halts when their intermental or shared thoughts are replaced by their inflexible intramental dissents. In both cases, the fictional minds are presented as being unable of going beyond their own perspectives, which are essential for the formation and maintenance of the intermental units. Accordingly, this paper analyses the breakdown processes of the small intermental systems in the chosen narratives.
Key Words fictional minds, intramental/intermental thought, *Amsterdam*, *On Chesil Beach*, Ian McEwan

Ian McEwan and Consciousness Representation

Ian McEwan is one of the "highly respected professional" (Malcom 6) contemporary British novelists, who has paid close attention to the presentation of fictional minds in his works. In his later novels, McEwan primarily explores his characters' individual psychology illuminating "the cavernous makeup of the mind" (Cochran 407). Moreover, according to Lynn Wells, "in all his fiction, McEwan combines a contemporary sensibility about the power and limitations of narrative with a keen

sense of his characters' inner lives and their struggles to deal morally with one another" ("Ian" 252). Therefore, in McEwan's narratives, as it is the case with the selected narratives in this paper, presentation of characters' *inner lives* is considered as one of the central concerns showing the mode of fictional minds' mental workings as well as the way(s) they deal with each other or with the other fictional minds. That is so because, as Matt Ridley states, "The novelist's privilege, according to Ian McEwan, is to step inside the consciousness of others, and to lead the reader there like psychological Virgil" (vii). A particular concern about presentation of the characters' internal or psychological states seems to be dominant in McEwan's *Amsterdam* (1998, hereafter *AM*) and *On Chesil Beach* (2007, hereafter *CB*) where the reader encounters with the fictional event sequences mostly through the representation of the experiencing characters' or focalizer's consciousness although an omniscient narrator orients the transition of information wherever the focalization shifts.

Cognitive Narratology

Cognitive narratology (hereafter CN), according to David Herman, is considered as the "study of mind-relevant aspects of storytelling practices" ("Cognitive" 31). It is so because in CN "representation of minds are fundamental to stories" since "stories both shape and are shaped by what minds perceive, infer, remember, and feel" (Herman, "Cognition" 257). Herman therefore considers narrative as a "cognitive activity" (*Basic* 98) since its "meaning potential requires the cognitive activity of readers" ("Cognitive" 33). CN is furthermore concerned with questions that in general deal with narrative production, the fictional minds' mental workings together with their presentation in narrative and narrative comprehension. Moreover, as Alan Palmer points out, "One of the concerns of cognitive narratalogy is the relationship between consciousness and narrative" ("Attributions" 292), since it intends to evaluate narrative as "tools for thinking"[2] (Herman, "Cognitive" 32), as a medium of *experience* representation — or as Fludernik proposes, as a function which "*centres on experientiality of ananthropomorphic nature*" (19) — and also representation of the *impact* of narrative events and situations on fictional minds' consciousness (Herman, *Basic* 137-160). Likewise, in the chosen narratives, the central concern seems to be the fictional minds' reactions to the challenging situations and events or their mental functioning in different situations as they primarily both "replicate consciousness in text" (Ridley vii). CN, moreover, intends to connect the storyworlds to the readers' actual world knowledge and experiences treating fictional minds as "the parallel discourses on real minds" (Palmer, "The Lydgate" 152).

Fictional Minds and Cognitive Reader

In CN, characters' cognitive activities are considered as the focus of narrative analysis since plot is primarily shaped by what happens to them within the storyworlds or by the events that become their experiences. Therefore, narrative is in fact representation, as well as analysis, of the impact of some events and situations on fictional minds (Palmer, "The Lydgate" 156). Thus, the question "how fictional minds work within the context of the storyworlds to which they belong" ("Construction" 29), lies at the centre of Palmer's research. Following that and calling his approach to the fictional minds "criss-crossing of the field […] an interdisciplinary project" (*Fictional* 3-4), Palmer contends that the same techniques people apply in order to understand other people's minds are applied when they, as readers, try to understand fictional minds through attributing mental states to them. That is so, because from both Herman's and Palmer's perspectives — which are also congruent with the general inclination of the postclassical contextual approaches to narrative — a reader is supposed to unfold the possible meanings of narrative by the help of her/his non-literary or anthropomorphic experiences stored mostly in the forms of scripts and frames s/he uses in everyday communications. Moreover, proposing "an excellent representational model of how readers conceptualize characters' psychological states and traits" (Caracciolo 46), Herman and Palmer attempt to show how readers utilize their everyday cognitive frames, which have default values too, and scripts, or their world knowledge, in order to interpret the fictional minds or "to fill gaps in storyworlds" (Palmer, "The Lydgate" 154). Their approaches moreover highlight some of those universal frames that "enable the reader to construct continually conscious minds from the text" (Palmer, *Fictional* 176). Therefore, the questions such as how readers understand stories and how they utilize their cognitive tools in order to access the characters' mental workings are central to CN.

Alan Palmer's Approach to Fictional Minds' Mental Functioning

Palmer in *Fictional Minds* gives an outline of his "newly expanded, postclassical narratology of the fictional mind" approach which relates "some cognitive science notions to the specific area of reader comprehension of fictional minds" (*Fictional* 17, 175). Building his approach on the main previous concepts within narrative theory, Palmer however finds their attention to fictional minds, which "adjuncts to those other fields," insufficient (*Fictional* 2). Accordingly, he theorizes about some techniques that readers can apply in order to figure out the workings of fictional minds in narrative. Readers, according to Palmer, obtain dispersed information from different parts of narrative mainly by applying three techniques, which he calls subframes, in order to construct the fictional minds' embedded narratives or their continuing consciousness frame defined as the "process whereby readers create a continuing consciousness for

a character out of the scattered, isolated mentions of that character in the text" (*Social* 40). These subframes — the relationship between thought and action, intermental or group/shared thinking and doubly embedded narratives — "utilize fundamental aspects of our real-world knowledge of the mental functioning both of ourselves and of others" (*Fictional* 205). Emphasizing that intermental thought does not have preference over intramental one or the vice versa, Palmer however argues that it has been ignored or superseded by the intramental approach within narrative studies. Therefore, Palmer discusses intermental or joint thought as opposed to intramental or individual thought focusing on the communicative action, relationships with intramental thinking and group norms.

Intermental/Intramental Thought and Fictional Minds

In Palmer's externalist approach to fictional minds thought is basically considered "intermental" or "intersubjective first" before being "intramental" or "subjective first" (*Fictional* 5). Intermental thought is considered fundamental to the workings of fictional, as well as real, minds and hence "intermental units are to be found in nearly all novels" (Palmer, *Social* 41). Palmer defines intermental thought in comparison with intramental thought as following:

> *Intermental* […] thinking is joint, group, shared, or collective, as opposed to *intramental*, or individual or private thought. It is also known as *socially distributed*, *situated*, or *extended cognition*, and also as *intersubjectivity*. Intermental thought is a crucially important component of fictional narrative because, just as in real life, where much of our thinking is done in groups, much of the mental functioning that occurs in novels is done by large organizations, small groups, work colleagues, friends, families, couples, and other intermental units. (*Social* 41)

The stability of intermental units nevertheless is not certain or guaranteed since "a large amount of the subject matter of novels is the formation, development, maintenance, modification, and breakdown of these intermental systems." Moreover, although intermental units are made up of individuals or individual thoughts but "the whole […] is different from the sum of its parts" (Palmer, *Social* 41, 44) because it belongs to all rather than to any particular individual or, to put it in other words, "intermental minds consist simply of individual minds pooling their resources and producing different results" (*Social* 50). In other words, intermental thought combines intramental thoughts but it is different from them. To examine intermental activities of fictional minds, Palmer proposes what he calls a "basic typology"

which includes "intermental encounters," "small intermental units," "medium-sized intermental units," "large intermental units," and "intermental minds" (*Social* 46-48). Nevertheless, as Lisa Zunshine points out, "No all works of fiction cultivate intermental units" (20). Likewise, the small intermental units at the onset of the selected narratives in this study are transitory and prone to imbalance in a way that the overall narratives, instead of cultivating intermental bonds, are presentations of the intermental breakdowns. As it will be shown, to represent the destructive consequences of the breakdown of the intermental units is seemingly the main concern in both *AM* and *CB* — Clive's and Vernon's double murder at the end of *AM* as well as Florence's and Edward's separation before consummation of their marriage in *CB*.

***Amsterdam*, *On Chesil Beach* and Intramental Characterization**

The present paper examines two narratives both of which, according to Wells, "focus on a small number of characters engaged in tightly formed relationships and lead to intense dramatic action and climactic endings" (*Ian* 84). In *AM* the communication among fictional minds fails mostly because the intramental side of their mental functioning overcomes the intermental one or the balance between them is disrupted. Moreover, in each of these narratives, "As the novel proceeds, the reader enters the minds of the two protagonists and some other characters, too, and follows their moods, uncertainties, and intimations of mortality and immortality" (Malcolm 192). In other words, "In both books, the characters are either unwilling or unable to recognize the needs of others, and remain trapped within modes of self-serving behaviour that ultimately harm them as well" (Wells, *Ian* 85). Accordingly, the character presentation seems to be the primary focus of the narratives but, to quote Palmer, "characters" in these narratives "face sharp and painful dilemmas relating to attempts to exercise control over other minds and the motives in trying to doing so" (*Social* 64). This characteristic, presentation of characters' or selves' relationships with the others, is in fact in line with McEwan's style too since, as Pascal Nicklas argues, "At the heart of McEwan's poetology is the desire to look through the eyes of someone else. The confusion of the self and the other […] in general opens up for Ian McEwan the ethical dimension of literature" (9). Further, the main problem in these narratives appears when the rift between the characters' intermental units and their intramental thoughts, which cause disequilibrium in the narratives, grows dramatically preventing the central characters from either coming to terms with their own problems or, recognizing them, resolving them through maintaining a balance between their private selves and the social cognitive networks. Fictional minds in the selected narrative fail to do so. Thus, taking into account that "the Ian McEwan we have seen emerging

over the past fifteen years is a complex figure requiring rigorous narratological focus" (James 81), this paper, applying a cognitive narratological approach, explores the fictional minds' mental workings in *AM* and *CB*.

Dissenting Fictional Minds in *Amsterdam*: Clive Linely vs. Vernon Halliday

Highlighting "an escalating conflict between two friends [...] both of whom are ruthlessly self-promoting" (Wells, *Ian* 84), *AM*, in five parts, recounts the disintegration process of an old friendship between Clive Linely, an eminent composer, and Vernon Halliday, a famous newspaper editor, in the mid-1990s. Having "strong elements of the psychological novel," McEwan's Booker Prize winning novella is "part psychological novel and part social satire" (Malcolm 192, 194). The narrative, as put by Wells, primarily illustrates the way two friends are deteriorated by their own "greed, corruption, self-interest [...and] masculine egotism." Representing two fictional minds who pursue their intramental thoughts without "compassion" ("Ian" 251) for the other(s), the narrative ending in *AM* brings about their final calamity or the total breakdown of any potential intermental units in the storyworld. According to Earl G. Ingersoll, "The narrative focuses on Clive's consciousness so extensively that in the end his entrapment in the isolate's hell of solipsism may come as a major shock to readers. Unlike Vernon who is motivated by shabby self-aggrandizement, Clive has the luxury of longer reader sympathy, one suspects, because his obsessive aspirations are culturally legitimated through his art" ("City" 128). Furthermore, according to Helga Schwalm, "In *Amsterdam*, empathy as a projection of oneself into the minds of others operates on various levels of plot and narration" (175).

At the beginning of the narrative, while Molly's crematorium ceremony is advancing, her two former lovers, Clive and Vernon, are talking about the immediate nature of her death, their memories of her and her other two lovers — George Lane, her husband, and the right-wing foreign secretary, Julian Garmony — intermentally despising them. They furthermore agree to make a pact of euthanasia in case of being afflicted by a fatal disease. Their later perceptions and ensuing actions however deadly affect their friendship since they both have "delusions of grandeur of the Ego" (Nicklas 13). They primarily disagree about Vernon's decision to defame Garmony through publishing his transvestite photographs in his newspaper, *The Judge*, in order to *apparently* prevent him from running for the leadership. Their second deadly confrontation refers to Clive's decision of non-intervention in a row between a woman and a man, later identified as the Lake Land rapist, while hiking in the Lake District under the pretext of being absorbed in his *genuinely* artistic creation at that moment. Accordingly, their already established intermental unit finally ends in their mutual murder since "Each friend understands the 'sinister direction' the other has

taken for the 'salvation' of his career, warns him of the dangers, but these 'parting gift[s'] are ignored" (Kohn 93). The two disagreements thus exacerbate the already diverging rift in the old friends' intermental unit bringing their conventionalized cooperation into an unfair competition. The event sequences moreover are unfolding through the strong aspectuality of the two friends revealing their dissenting intramental preferences as well as representing the way they mutually misuse their euthanasia pact poisoning each other in the city Amsterdam.

Being a "quintessentially 'scriptible' novel" (Kohn 89), *AM* is mostly a narrative of subjectivity since it is strongly focalized through Clive's and Vernon's internal perspectives and, as Nicholas Lezard put, "the book's deeper subject matter: deception, both of others and of the self" (qtd. in Childs125). Clive and Vernon are presented as being at war with themselves and at the same time with the other(s) because as far as they are controlled by their rational or controllable thoughts and actions they are also prone to their uncontrollable thoughts and desires which invigorate their dissents. Thus, "narcissistic" (Tsai 15) self-centeredness together with "reciprocal misrecognition" (Schwalm 176) can be considered as primary ethical problems of the central fictional minds' in the narrative. Furthermore, according to Tsai, McEwan criticises both Clive and Vernon for "their pursuit of self-interest encouraged under Thatcherism" (11). The characters' "irrational" (Malcolm 14) thoughts and actions moreover refer to their "egoistic" inclinations as "Garmony has uncontrollable transvestite desires that destroy his career, while Clive is an egoist who cannot place a woman's life above his own artistic aims. Vernon's case is more complex, but even he is driven by a desire for success that makes him deaf to rational argument" (Malcolm 15). Nevertheless, Clive and Vernon endeavour to frame their egoistic thoughts and actions within a strongly aspectual moral understanding turning "each into the cruel analyst of the other's moral depravity" (Ingersoll, "City" 133). For example, while hiking in the Lake District, Clive pretentiously considers focusing on his music as his "moral duty" rather than interposing in the row scene. Vernon however accuses Clive for ignoring his moral duty by putting his self-interest higher than his human duties. Likewise, when Clive is unable of persuading Vernon, who "constructs himself as a liberal warrior" (Ingersoll, "City" 127), to stop blackmailing Garmony, he accuses him of being an egoist person ignoring the impact of his action on another person's real life. Their moral perspectives therefore are totally opposing each other. Moreover, in spite of their loyalty to their promises — reciprocal euthanasia — their double murder at the end of narrative, according to Schwalm, "exhibits both friends in a kind of parody of intersubjectuive reciprocity. Cold-heartedly anticipating and calculating the actions of the other, they both fail to recognize their opposite's equally nasty schemes" (176). Thus, the two old friends not only cannot agree with each other as

well as with the others to be friends in spite of their disagreements, but also their self-centeredness together with intramental dissents lead them to their annihilation.

In the early part of the narrative, we encounter "two old friends" who have some shared, joint or intermental communions. Looking at Molly's husband, George, for example, they both share the same thoughts as the passage, focalized through their perspectives, shows: "Her death had raised him from general contempt. […] Clive and Vernon were strictly rationed because they were considered to make her excitable […] Clive and Vernon, however, continued to enjoy loathing him" (*AM* 5). They *loathe* George only because he was an obstacle on their way to the attracting Molly. They, in other words, loath him since he did not support them in their self-centred plans keeping them away from his own wife. Presentation of their extremely egoistic expectations therefore reveals the shared manner that their thoughts function in the early parts of the narrative. Furthermore, they are intermental considering Garmony since they both take him as an enemy although in this case Vernon is much more confident than Clive. For example, when Clive is asked to go to Garmony in Molly's crematorium ceremony, Vernon warns him: "'Hey, Linley. No talking to the enemy!'" Clive's unvoiced reflection indicates their difference in this case although his discourse is closely overlapped with the narrator's: "The enemy indeed. What had attracted her?" (*AM* 13). Vernon's internal ironic assessment of the word *enemy*, indicates their different perspectives on an issue crucial to their friendship and that finally brings about their firstly proclaimed diverging thoughts in case of Vernon's greedy insistence on publishing Molly-Garmony photographs. The unsaid manner of the initial conflicts nevertheless changes into open confrontations in the later scenes. Although the more Clive evaluates Molly-Garmony relationship, the more he finds it "a mistake" and therefore "unbearable" (*AM* 15), nevertheless, this sense of loathing does not take him to an agreement with Vernon in terms of disgracing Garmony through publishing his transvestite photographs with Molly. Unlike Garmony's recommendation, "To air differences and remain friends, the essence of civilized existence, don't you think?"[3](*AM* 21), the two old friends, despite their differences, are not able to maintain their friendship which can act as an instigator of constructing intermental units. Nevertheless, they are some mutual sympathies in the earlier scenes.

The intermental relationship between Vernon and Clive is not broken until their first confrontation after Vernon shows Molly-Garmony's three photographs to Clive. When Vernon shows him the photographs while recounting eagerly all about injunction, we are told that Clive "showed no curiosity about the photographs and the injunction and seemed to be only half listening" (*AM* 48). Nevertheless, Clive confides in Vernon his intimate request, "help me to die […] Just as we might have helped Molly if we'd been able." Vernon's answer to his close friend's request is

careful and calculated, “It needs some thought” (*AM* 49). This double feeling of intimacy never recurs in their future interactions. The impact of Clive’s proposal on Vernon’s consciousness and the reciprocal effects on his own mind are represented as experiencing the “emotional proximity” but its “uncomfortable” (*AM* 50) nature forces them to leave each other for a while. Such converging or intermental reactions to the same situation moreover indicate the deep level of their engagement which is even more displayed when Vernon, on his way back from George’s home, scribbles a note and pushes it through the front door of Clive’s house — “Yes, on one condition only: that you’d do the same for me” (*AM* 57). The teleological implications of this pact however change their intermental friendship as well as their fate.

Vernon’s reasoning for publishing Molly-Garmony’s three photographs moreover does not persuade Clive as he asks him: “Do you think it’s wrong in principle for men to dress up in women’s clothes?” (*AM* 73). Unlike Vernon’s perceptions revealed through his “watching hungrily, waiting for a reaction,” Clive consciously turns his expectation down: “it was partly to conceal his thoughts that Clive continued to gaze into the picture” (*AM* 70). While looking at the photographs, Clive is represented as a mind reader of both Vernon’s and Molly’s intentions although he tries not to betray his inferences and mental states to Vernon. Comparably, he thinks of Molly-Garmony relationship finding out a connection not between two social selves but between two private selves lying below the visible ones: “For the first time Clive considered what it might be like to feel kindly toward Garmony. It was Molly who had made it possible” (*AM* 71). This change seems possible because of Clive’s intermental perceptions about Molly-Garmony relationship. That happened because for a short time Clive, pondering on the pictures, reached an intermental bond with Molly as he was able to consider Garmony’s case from her perspective. In other words, going beyond the restrictions of his own narrow perspective, Clive imagines the bond between them from Molly’s perspective too. Garmony, who once was their joint distaste or “pure poison, […] Vile, […and] Terrible for the country” (*AM* 73), changes into the basis of their disagreement provoking one of the two deadly conflicts in the storyworld. Compared to that, Vernon is considering the case only from his own benefit-seeking personal perspective putting his career advantages and benefits higher than those of the others, including Molly’s. What Vernon considers as the right act — publishing the photographs in *The Judge* in order to disgrace Garmony — is considered an immoral act from Clive’s perspective because he not only considers the events from his own perspective but from the others’ perspectives too (*AM* 73). Therefore, Clive is aware that Vernon’s intention to stay in *The Judge* as its editor and his dislike of Garmony are the main reasons of his decision to publish Molly-Garmony photographs. In other words, as Wells notes, Vernon’s “real motivations

are completely self-serving" (*Ian* 90). Following that, Clive's intermental bond with Molly and through that his flexibility towards Garmony has no other reason than his tendency to intermentality: "Because of Molly. We don't like Garmony, but she did. He trusted her, and she respected his trust. It was something private between them. These are her pictures, nothing to do with me or you or your readers. She would have hated what you're doing. Frankly, you're betraying her" (*AM* 75). Clive's disposition to aspectuality and intermental thought here however is not the general trend of his thought. He, for example, cannot imagine himself in Vernon's place as Vernon accuses him: "You know nothing, Clive. You live a privileged life and you know fuck-all about anything." Vernon needs a story to save his newspaper more than anything else, otherwise he will be sacked. Therefore, he grabs to whatever at hand in order to stand upright. Their main difference however seems to derive from their different understanding of morality. After his return to London, Clive himself is accused of ignoring his "moral duty" (*AM* 119) in terms of not saving a woman while he was hiking in the rocks. Their mutual accuses accordingly show the breach in their already intermental friendship. When Vernon says: "There are certain things more important than symphonies. They're called people," Clive accuses him on the same basis: "And are these people as important as circulation figures, Vernon?" As it is clear, their different understandings of the same issues reveal their strong aspectualities as well as their intramental or subjective first characters. Following these mutual charges, they articulate their carefully kept inner feelings making the invisibles visible to each other. The contribution of this scene to the general plot of the narrative is considerable because it afflicts the intermental aspects of their friendship. They equally accuse each other for ignoring the other(s) by putting their self-interests higher than those of the others. Vernon accuses Clive of pursuing his own goals while Clive accuses him of not doing "journalism" but pursuing people restlessly from his own office (*AM* 119-120). Thus, Clive and Vernon both attempt to manifest their perspectives reasonable although they never get rid of their unmatched and "self-absorbed" (Malcolm 194) interpretations of their shared subjects.

The incomplete nature of the two old friends' interpretations of the same issues is revealed by the narrator's explanatory comment on the disastrous point they reach. Ascribing the possibilities of misreading to language itself, the omniscient narrator points to the limited nature of the two friends' perspectives reminding us that "It can happen sometimes, with those who brood on an injustice, that a taste for revenge can usefully combine with a sense of obligation" (*AM* 148-149).The narrator's comment shows how the two friends' perceptions of obligation for doing something against what they consider as *injustice*, are afflicted with their personal desires to take *revenge* against each other. To put the same point in other words, it points out the manner they

both pretend to be concerned primarily with justice while they are in fact following their dissenting intramental goals. In this way, Clive's and Vernon's mutual egocentric thoughts that incite their actions bring about the deadly imbalance, on the one hand, to their private selves and, on the other hand, to their public selves because internally and externally they give themselves totally to the intramental thoughts which give rise both to the destruction of themselves and the breakdown of their friendship too.

Unfortunate Misreadings in *On Chesil Beach*: The Imbalance in the Intermental Unit between Edward and Florence

CB is the narrative of Florence Ponting's and Edward Mayhew's failure in consummating their marriage "delineated in painstaking detail" (Mathews 82). It begins with their arrival at one hotel on Chesil beach in 1962 and ends with Edward's retrospective re-evaluation of his treatment with Florence at that night of their separation after forty years. Applying a complicated plot, the narrative, in five parts, merges into each other the events of their entire lives although focusing primarily on their diverging perceptions. The newlyweds' (un)consciously mutual pursuing of intramental drives as well as their dissents over them, as mostly revealed through their consciousness representation, can be considered as the most important reasons of their failure at that night since, as shown in their own embedded and doubly embedded narratives, there intramental thoughts lack any dialogic relationship between them.

Florence and Edward are unable of consummating their marriage since above all their attributions of mental states to each other are incongruent with their true feelings and thoughts; therefore, in *CB* there are elements of "couple's dilemma paralleling the difficulties of 'reading' the other" (Wells, "Ian" 252). Furthermore, this narrative, like *AM*, anchors itself strongly to the reader's world models by presenting a worldly known script — the difficulties of a wedding night. Edward and Florence, according to Wells, "have no socially acceptable way of communicating with one another," and "their relationship […] represents the coming together of two very different worlds." Wells moreover believes that they "are guilty of poor interpretation of the other: Florence cannot perceive how her imagined scenario excludes a very important form of intimacy for him, and he believes he can represent her entire, complex problem with a single word [frigid]" (*Ian* 85, 92, 96). Wells nevertheless does not seemingly take into account the last confrontation scene on the beach when Edward remains passive while Florence, expecting him to do something, is leaving him forever. What he lacked then was in fact the "imaginary identification with other(s) [Florence]," which according to Nicklas, "becomes such an important ingredient of McEwan's poetics" (11). Furthermore, the impact of the "particular moment in history and the

history of the moment" (Ingersoll, "The" 131) on the newlyweds' mental functioning moulds their intramental dissents. That is so because, according to Ingersoll, "Recently McEwan has focused on narratives in which the impulse of the moment can chart the course of life" ("The" 132) and *CB* is considered as one of those narratives which engages readers deeply since "One consequence of telling the couple's story on their wedding night in something close to 'real time,' to borrow John Lethem's term, is an intensification of the reader's psychological investment in this narrative" (Ingersoll, "The" 137).

Moreover, since the bedroom and the beach scenes are presented alternately through Edwards's and Florence's perspectives, *CB* "is considered a realistic portrayal of the workings of interpersonal relationships by many readers" (Spitz 197). This technique makes the characters' internal perceptions of the other(s) and themselves available for the readers in order to build their embedded narratives. Ascribing this technique to the omniscient narrator of the narrative, McEwan points out that: "it is a presence which assumes the aesthetic task of describing the inside of two people's minds. Then the reader can make a judgement" ("Journeys" 133). Therefore, because of the availability of the inside or content of the two characters' minds, *CB* reader, as well as *AM* reader, "can make his own judgement after the writer had fulfilled the aesthetic task of describing the inside of people's minds" (Puschmann-Nalenz 208) analysis of which becomes feasible using Palmer's terminologies.

Edward's and Florence's inchoate intermental units change into highly growing intramental dissents only during some hours. Edward is represented as being primarily absorbed in his own imagination of possessing Florence, partly regardless of her feelings at that moment, while Florence is represented as experiencing an internal conflict between her own feelings and Edward's expectations that she tries to read or perceive from his behaviours. Although she desperately struggles to maintain their delicate intermental unit, still she finally loses the capacity to overcome her internal conflicts. Thus, they both are to blame in doing so because their narrative, in similar manner to Clive's and Vernon's narrative in *AM*, is not more than presentation of "ascriptions of reasons for acting" since, according to Herman, narratives in general "are bound up with ascriptions of reasons for acting that consist of clusters of beliefs, intentions, goals, motivations, emotions, and other related mental states, capacities, and dispositions" (*Storytelling* 23). Accordingly, Herman believes that "texts like McEwan's [*CB*] may help explain the special fitness of storytelling for folk-psychological purposes" (*Storytelling* 300) in the same way folk psychology can help narrative understanding. Thus, Herman finds *CB* a sample narrative which "enable[s] storytellers and story-interpreters to assess the motivations, structure, and consequences of actions by varying perspectival and attitudinal stances towards those

actions and the situations in which they occur" (*Storytelling* 294).

At the beginning of *CB*, there is an intermental unit between Edward and Florence without revealing any sign of their imminent separation. The newlyweds "seem the closest of friends, trusting and needing one another. Their story is ominous from the onset" (Henry 82). However, this intermental bond is "superficial," as suggested by the omniscient narrator: "superficially, they [Edward and Florence] were in fine spirits" (*CB* 3), which cues in readers' mind a possible distance between the characters' thoughts and their actions. Edward is represented as imagining Florence's thoughts in the early part of the narrative. These intermental thoughts and actions are nevertheless prone to the characters' dissenting intramental orientations and their egoistic behaviours (*CB* 4). Furthermore, although Edward and Florence are reported as sharing some internal feelings, for example, they are "desperate for the waiters to leave;" nevertheless, their shared thoughts and plans are not certain but "giddy" (*CB* 5). They moreover are represented as being in agreement about their "parental errors," their childhoods and their marriage which they intermentally believe is going to be the "beginning of a cure" from the "social encumbrances" (*CB* 6). Therefore, they hope their marriage will be a marriage of minds. At their wedding night nevertheless they are reported as being "Almost strangers, they stood, strangely together" (*CB* 6). Moreover, the disparity between their mental functioning is shown in the following passage: "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" (*CB* 29). Such different perceptions bring finally about the breakdown of their small intermental unit. Likewise, Edward's inferences from Florence's "moan" and her gestures in the bedroom indicate his overwhelmed state or his "unfamiliar ecstasy." This state coaxes him into imagining further intimacy with Florence. At the same time, remembrance of his own problem, "real danger of arriving too soon," prevents him from further broodings about Florence (*CB* 30-31).

Edward and Florence in some other scenes are presented as totally two different persons. For example, they have totally different music tastes. While rock and roll is Edward's favourite music, classical music has always been Florence's interest and profession (*CB* 38). Considering the impact of his favourite music on Edward's personality, the narrator, changing the time of story, reports that "for years to come he considered that this was the music that formed his tastes, and even shaped his life" (*CB* 38-39). The defining effects of this *taste* on Edward's thought and action, or his life as a whole, becomes more considerable when we find out Florence, the would-be musician "revered the ancient types" (*CB* 41), as a practitioner of the classical music and its impact on her calm, introvert and speculative self. Moreover, lack of a strong mental bond with their parents brings about their obligatory formation of a hidden

self, or "the emergence of a new sense of self" (Head 119), which is a stubborn self, pursuing solely its concealed intramental goals. The aftereffects of their historical selves as well as the need to an intermental mind, in order to share their loneliness, bring about a mutual longing in them for an intermental relationship upon which they both act in their first meetings. Nevertheless, they fail to do so since "They are more complex creations […] with private lives that make the novella's crisis an emotional (rather than a historical) inevitability" (Head 121) which, according to the present study, leads to the total disintegration of the characters' intermentality.

Part three is strongly focalized through the couple's competing perspectives. The narrative perspective, for the second time in this part, changes to Florence and the remaining events in the bedroom are recounted totally from her perspective although the events are recounted retrospectively from E's perspective later. With the presentation of events through both perspectives, "What had been suppressed (by conventions of politeness and fear of humiliation) now rushes to the surface with a force that overwhelms both characters" (Spitz 201). At the time of their open confrontation on the beach, one can see the distance between what they think (or thought before that time) or their state of minds and what they say. For example, the word "revolting" incites some retaliatory words from Edward's side (*CB* 144) and their mutual "accusations tend to initiate conflict sequences" (Spitz 210). Edward's response to Florence's accusation is more fatal: "'You don't have the faintest idea how to be with a man.'" These accusations are more than she can bear or, as the narrator puts, "How much accusation was she supposed to bear in one small speech?" They exchange accusations using offending words or phrases such as "bullying," ridiculous," "wheedling" etc. (*CB* 144-145).

In spite of their mutual misreadings, Florence is represented as a shrewd character. Although she evades acknowledging her real problem to Edward since she does not know how to say it, still she unavoidably gives herself into making the rift between them grow. That is because, on the one hand, she tries to be herself *or tollow her own character* without being forced into a "disgusting" life and, on the other hand, to be in love: "She wanted to be in love and be herself. But to be herself, she had to say no all the time. And then she was no longer herself" (*CB* 146). Florence's internal dilemmas can be read as the conflicts between her intramental and intermental orientations: "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" (*CB* 149). The desire to be *distinct* could be controlled by Edward if he, getting out of his own narrow perspective, could take into account their problem from her perspective too. Therefore, they act mostly based on invalid inferences and ascriptions. For example, when Edward says: "'You were

wanting to humiliate me.'" The word *humiliate* stirs in her mind a chance to play a card towards her intention (*CB* 148-149). The more their conversation continues, the more they both dare to speak already unspeakable issues. Along their conversation, Florence reconstructs her already conventionalized perceptions as for the first time she finds out that their fundamental problem has already been their politeness and this revealing leads to some conflict sequences and "once the conflict frame has gained momentum, the characters orient towards the expectation of dissent" (Spitz 206).

Although Florence is aware of Edward's regret after his accusing statements, nevertheless, the moment she thinks about their reunion she finds it unacceptable and finally she takes courage to propose her suggestion to him. Nevertheless, she does not prefer to speak her mind; instead, she reacts to Edward's statements. While, Edward, in a confessing mode, talks about their relationship using past tense, "'I loved you, but you make it so hard.'" Florence immediately finds out the intentional application of the past tense while Edward continues his speech: "'We could be so free with each other, we could be in paradise. Instead we're in this mess'" (*CB* 150). The word "mess," we are told, "brought back to her the vile scene in the bedroom, the tepid substance on her skin drying to a crust that cracked. She was certain she would never let such a thing happen to her again" (*CB* 151) although, through looking at herself from his perspective, she finds herself and Edward unpredictable and therefore difficult to read. Such dual states are the driving force for the progression of the frame narrative plot and when she finally stoops to one of them, the intramental one, the denouement appears as a solid fact in front of them. In other words, Florence can be considered as the central controlling force of *CB* plot.

Florence growingly pursues her private or individual self rather than the social or communal one while Edward endeavours to maintain it from the very beginning. Through her proposal, she is in fact following a consciously built intermental unit expecting Edward to agree with her in terms of her proposal, to accept that they can be free and at the same time remain lovers: "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" (*CB* 154). Her unorthodox proposal, offered under the veil of words, is centrifugal and non-canonical while Edward tends to centripetal and canonical conventions. This disrupting proposal brings Florence's long internal conflicts to end destroying their apparent intermental unit too. Edward's reaction to her proposal nevertheless is mutually egoistic and intramental whose emphasis on dissenting rather than assenting brings about the total breakdown of their already constructed intermentality. Yielding to his already established and unavoidable trait, anger, Edward accuses Florence of insulting and tricking him. Since it he calls, he

calls her a *frigid*, an accusation which legitimizes for Florence her mutual accusations and these exchanges bring their cooperative intermentality to its complete end (*CB* 156). After their last exchanges, Florence, aware of the degree she offended him, excuses for her words, "'I am sorry, Edward. I am most terribly sorry,'" nevertheless, Edward remains silent and motionless: "She paused a moment, she lingered there, waiting for his reply, then she went on her way" (*CB* 157). As it is obvious, she expects Edward to say or do something in order to dissuade her from going away while Edward, not being able to overcome his own egoist pride, remains passive. Accordingly, presentation of Edward's and Florence's passage from intermentality to intramentality while representing their mutual impact on each other's thoughts and actions, as Palmer and Herman argues, are the central concerns in *CB*.

Conclusion

This paper argues that CN and Palmer's theories can help the reader to examine the breakdown processes of the intermental units in *AM* and *CB*. Palmer considers characters' mental workings as the fundamental aspect of narrative understanding. Moreover, narratives, according to him, largely represent the formation, (re) construction or breakdown processes of the intermental units which are different from their constituent parts. The *discrete* cognitive units between Clive and Vernon as well as Edward and Florence are not obtained because they are unable of merging their intramental thoughts in order to gain access to a sustainable intermental unit which could help them to solve their problems. The analysis of these narratives suggests that the intramental orientation of the central characters' mental workings makes them unable of going beyond their narrow perspectives although the four central characters desperately struggle to maintain the fragile intermental units among themselves. Accordingly, Palmer, like the other cognitive narratologists, consider reader central to narrative understanding since s/he, drawing on her/his real world experiences or models, attempts to unfold the manner fictional minds are functioning either intramentally or intermentally. Likewise, *AM* and *CB* not only present the cognitive activities of the fictional minds but also they display what it's like for them, breaking their intermental minds, to change into enemies. Encountering such narratives, the terminologies of cognitive approach therefore can help the reader to draw on their "real life experiences," or as cognitive narratologists call them frames and scripts, in order to understand the operation of fictional minds (Neumann and Nüning 156-159).

Notes

1.This article is developed based on my PhD research (2012-2014) at the department of English

Language and Literature in Karadeniz Technical University (KTU), Turkey. I would like to thank my thesis advisor Assist Prof Dr Mustafa Zeki Çıraklı for all his comments and suggestions through out my Ph D period research.

2. McEwan also "uses fiction to understand the mind and to explore human nature, as well as uses words to alter readers' consciousness" (Ridley viii).

3. Garmony's civil proposal to Clive is similar to Florence's proposal to Edward in CB. They both ask for an intermental unit taking into account their mutual thoughts although at that moment no one finds them acceptable.

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