



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

**“SYMBIOSIS” IN THE WASTELAND****— ON THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF ANDROGYNY IN *THE CEMENT GARDEN***

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*The Cement Garden* is Ian McEwan's first novella, which contains a number of themes. This paper focuses on the analysis of the “masculinity” emanated from the female character Julie and the “femininity” implied by the male character Jack in this work through the application of the “androgyny” theory mainly based on Virginia Woolf. It further illustrates that McEwan tries to maintain the psychological gender balance in the moral wasteland by shaping characters with androgynous characteristics. In the social survival structure, men and women are mutually complementary and dialectically integrated. Only by overcoming their respective one-sided bias and self-sufficiency, can they achieve a perfect combination of masculinity advocating facts, rationality and logic and femininity rich in imagination, emotion and intuition. Its highest ideal is to pursue a “symbiosis” state of “androgyny” and “bisexual harmony” of psychological gender.

**Keywords:** *Ian McEwan, The Cement Garden, androgyny, bisexual harmony.*



## INTRODUCTION

Ian McEwan is known as one of the most influential writers in the current British literary world, and his "prominent status among contemporary British classic novelists is unquestionable" (Möller 9). The content of his works is often absurd and bizarre, which is called "black comedy." Besides, he has been nicknamed "Ian the Terrible" for his delicate and incisive portrayal of modern fears. *The Cement Garden* is an early novella created by McEwan, which tells the story of the disorderly, chaotic, and painful growth of four underage children in a moral wasteland that has lost the guidance of their parents and separated from social norms. The protagonists live in a dilapidated house in the suburbs and rarely interact with outsiders. After their parents die one after another, the four children Julie, Jack, Sue, and Tom hide the news of their mother's death in order to prevent the family from being separated by outsiders, and seal her body in a cellar iron cabinet with cement. Since then, the four children have undergone earth-shaking changes: Julie gradually assumes the role of mother; Jack firstly competes with Julie for the dominance of the family, and then has incestuous behavior with her; Sue, who maintains her reading and writing habits, appears to be relatively normal; Tom, the youngest brother, becomes a transvestist and also wants to be a baby in the cradle. At the end of the story, Julie's boyfriend Derek angrily smashes the concrete grave and reports to the police. What awaits the four children is the police's punishment and the moral trial.

Scholars at home and abroad have deepened *The Cement Garden* from multiple perspectives such as literary ethics criticism, unreliable narration,

Gothic novels, and ecocriticism. However, the concept of androgyny and its significance in this novel have not been deeply explored. Some scholars have noted that the eldest daughter Julie's taking charge of the household while her mother is seriously ill gives her "a taste of freedom and dominance ... she fully enjoys the desire to satisfy the power and command" (Zhang Helong 44), from which we can see that Julie gradually breaks through the bondage of female role and takes the road of controlling family economic power and competing for family dominance. However, scholars do not have a thorough discussion on the historical evolution of androgyny and its specific application in this novel. Therefore, this paper focuses on the analysis of the "masculinity" emanated from the female character Julie and the "femininity" implied by the male character Jack in this work through the application of the "androgyny" theory. It further illustrates that McEwan tries to maintain the psychological gender balance in the moral wasteland by shaping characters with androgynous characteristics. He tries to dissolve the traditional dualistic opposition of "male/female" and subvert the oppressive situation of women in the patriarchal society, and his highest ideal is to pursue a "symbiosis" state of "androgyny" and "bisexual harmony" of psychological gender.

### 1. THE EVOLUTION AND ESSENCE OF "ANDROGYNY"

Androgyny is a basic concept of biological, physiological and psychological significance, which refers to the third kind of person with both masculine and feminine characteristics, guiding a new development level of human gender consciousness. The image of androgyny "originated and ran through human religions and myths, such as Judeo-Christian



in the West, Gnosticism, Kabbalah and the Eastern Tibetan Tantrism" (Wang Zhe, Ma Xin 114), in which the gender of the gods and their great divine power often shone with the light of the integration of masculinity and femininity. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud and the Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung proposed the androgynous nature or tendency of human psychology and personality from a more scientific perspective. For example, Jung found the male mind contained the female archetype (Anima), and the female mind contained the male archetype (Animus), and then "as civilization developed, the androgynous primitive man became a symbol of the unity of personality" (139). As a result, the man with androgynous characteristics has become a person with a complete meaning in personality.

The concept of androgyny has long been regarded as a basic theoretical term in Western feminist literary criticism. In the Victorian era, the British economy and culture were prosperous, however, the "human rights" advertised by the domestic bourgeois democratic reforms only gave men enough freedom and equality, while women could only be "angels at home": docile, selfless, submissive. They had no job opportunities, let alone financial and personal independence. Against this cruel social background, Virginia Woolf, the great pioneer of English feminism, introduced the concept of androgyny into literary criticism for the first time in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), which was regarded as biblical by many feminists, and wrote that "in each of us two powers preside, one male, one female; and in the man's brain the man predominates over the woman, and in the woman's brain the woman

predominates over the man. The normal and comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually co-operating" (*"A Room of One's Own"* 120). Woolf clearly realized that men and women were not mere opposites. This androgynous view "allows free choice of gender roles and people's tendency to express their relative gender" (Yang Yuzhen 85), whose highest ideal was to achieve a harmonious state. Later, French feminist H el ene Cixous proposed "another kind of androgyny" in her book *The Laugh of the Medusa*, that is: "everyone can find the existence of both genders in themselves. This kind of existence differs based on each individual, and the degree of obviousness and persistence is varied, neither excludes differences nor excludes one of the genders" (Zhang Jingyuan 199). Cixous did not advocate completely obliterating differences, but focused on the freedom of differentiation growth on the basis of maintaining each person's own harmony. In addition, Cixous also praised the androgyny of women's consciousness and writing, aiming to open up a new world for women who had been erased in the traditionally patriarchal society and enable them to express themselves. Calvin S. Hall emphasized that, in order to achieve the healthy and harmonious growth of individual personality, female factors in male personality and male factors in female personality should be allowed to be shown in individual consciousness and behavior, otherwise, "the gradual accumulation of these heterosexual factors suppressed to the depths of consciousness will eventually endanger the existence of the subject of life" (53). It was out of this concern that Erich Fromm reminded us that "we must always remember that



there is a mixture of two types of characteristics in every human being, only that 'he' or 'she' corresponds to the gender more frequently" (259). He believed that people should remember and accept the opposite gender in each person, so that each subject of life could flourish and grow freely.

As an important concept in feminism, androgyny points out that everyone has both masculinity and femininity, and its ultimate goal is to make the two genders coexist harmoniously and achieve a balanced state. As Yuan Suhua pointed out that the androgynous view represented by Woolf "subverts the hierarchical mode of binary opposition of male and female roles in the patriarchal society, and challenges the Logocentrism of male culture" (92). Its essence is to oppose gender hegemony and advocate gender equality. We should pay attention to that it is not only against male hegemony of patriarchal culture, but also against extreme female hegemony. It strives to make men and women the subjects of each other, recognizes gender differences, and advocates that both genders live in harmony and advance side by side while giving full play to their respective gender advantages, so as to jointly create a free and equal society for human beings in the true sense. Thus, it can be seen that Woolf's androgynous view, which attempts to eliminate the antagonism between male and female, has a revolutionary significance. In essence, it is "characterized by deconstruction and decentralization" (Tian Ying, Wei Qinhong 209). From the perspective of analyzing literary works, the androgynous interpretation of characters' images no longer emphasizes "the differences and rank advantages between men and women, but turns to the integration of masculine and

feminine characteristics" (Shen Weiju 115). Therefore, understanding the concept of androgyny in *The Cement Garden* is helpful to deeply understand the essence of the work. By analyzing the androgynous temperament of Julie and Jack in the novel, we can appreciate how they can have a relationship of symbiosis in the moral wasteland. What's more, readers can further understand the connotation of androgyny, which has an important enlightenment significance for individuals and society.

## 2. THE MANLY WOMAN: JULIE

Woolf considered that "it is fatal to be a man or woman pure and simple; one must be woman-manly or man-womanly" ("*A Room of One's Own*" 91). This kind of role design requires the separation of psychological gender and physical gender. Women can get involved in the spiritual territory that originally belonged to men, and men can also have traditional femininity. As Guan Hefeng said, the advantage of androgyny lied in that "it can build a more complete and harmonious human being with the advantages of both genders. Androgyny is an ideal human model that transcends traditional gender classification and has more positive potential" (94). Julie in *The Cement Garden* combines the gentleness and kindness of women and the independence and strength of men, who is completely different from the passive and weak female image stipulated by the patriarchal culture, but a proactive woman with a male's subjectivity.

Julie, who values her appearance and cares for her siblings, is a tender and caring figure who represents the figure of "mother" in the whole



family. On the one hand, like all women, Julie has a natural love of beauty. She often dresses herself up to become the center of attention of her classmates; she usually spends hours putting on her makeups before going out with her boyfriend; she also chooses to tan her skin and appreciate her body according to her own aesthetic standards, following the principles of nature, health and comfort. Beauty is Julie's lifelong pursuit, which allows her to see herself getting better and better. On the other hand, Julie takes it upon herself to take care of her younger siblings after their mother's death, from which we can see her evident maternal nature. Her younger brother, Tom, often sits on her laps, resting his head on her breasts and sucking his thumb, while Julie puts her chin on his head and comforts him gently. Her embrace of Tom is as tender and affectionate as the Virgin Mary's embrace of the son of God. After putting Tom in his crib in her room, Julie will talk to him in a gentle voice, for example: "he wanted it in here, didn't you my sweet? "There's a good boy!" and so on (McEwan 120). Julie has gone beyond caring for her brother as an older sister to caring for her own child as a proper mother. In addition to taking care of the "baby" Tom, Julie later considers Jack, who already has mature mind, as her own child. She affectionately refers to Jack and Tom in bed as "two bare babies" (McEwan 146), and they sleep soundly in the arms of "mother" Julie, whose maternal nature they can never resist. Julie's caring and meticulous spirit for family members is an important part of female traditional virtues.

In his "Archetype Theory," Swiss psychologist Jung pointed out that "Persona" "Self" "Anima" and "Animus" were the most important archetypes in the

human psychological structure. The archetype of "Anima" is the female side of a man's heart, and "Animus" is a symbol of the inner male component of a woman. For women, the first projected object of the Animus is often the first male image she comes into contact with in her life, namely: father. The father's words and deeds have a profound impact on the way women will behave and choose their partners in the future. As Zhang Jinquan and Li Ailin pointed out that "women will adopt some of their fathers' behavior patterns, which is shown in the fact that women show a strong side in some social work occasions, reflecting a traditional concept of masculinity" (118). It can be seen that the image of the father has an important influence on the "masculinity" of women. In Julie's childhood, her father established an indestructible hegemony at home with a tough and authoritarian approach, while her mother took care of the children with a meek and soft character. Although there were occasional resistance from her mother, they all ended in failure. Therefore, the male image of his father has subtly shaped the "masculinity" of Julie, and left an indelible mark on her future growth. In getting along with her mother, Julie's Animus had also been reflected. After her mother was seriously ill in bed, Julie became the former's spiritual sustenance, who took on the important task of comforting her mother and showed a certain tenacity. This life experience laid the psychological foundation for Julie to take on the focus of caring for her entire family in the future.

The traditional male strengths of Julie are reflected in her decisive and resolute manner of dealing with things. Her character and responsibilities are not possessed by a weak woman in the definition



of a patriarchal society. In Julie, as a female, we see her masculinity and the consciousness of androgyny contained in herself. First of all, Julie inspires awe among her classmates with her calm, self-confident and rational personality. For example: "she had boyfriends at school, but she never really let them get near her ... she dominated her group and heightened her reputation with a disruptive, intimidating quietness" (McEwan 26). Julie deeply understands that women will not win respect for themselves by anger and yell, but will make themselves faceless. Therefore, she adopts a method that includes masculinity—that is, she uses calmness and rationality to deter others and gain status for herself. Secondly, after her father died and her mother was seriously ill in bed, Julie is given the authority of the "head of the family" and keeps the family running in an orderly manner with her decisive and resolute approach. In terms of her treatment of her younger siblings, she always regulates their words and actions, such as forcefully turning off Jack and Sue's radio to fully ensure their rest time, and ordering Jack sternly to take out the garbage to keep the family tidy. It is such effective management that makes the whole family run in a relatively orderly way. On top of that, Julie's calm and rational approach to the disposal of their mother's body have certainly reassured everyone in the family. Julie is braver and more capable than any man when she buries their mother in cement in a steel cabinet in the cellar: she "had the shovel and had already made up a pile of sand. She split open one of the cement sacks and stood waiting for me to fetch the water. She worked at great speed, turning and folding the huge pile in on itself till it was a stiff, gray sludge"

(McEwan 70). Even in the face of the doubts of a powerful male, Derek, she is unperturbed, saying in a more sober tone than a man: "it's a dead dog ... Jack's dog" (McEwan 133). When dealing with major events related to family's destiny, Julie can often show calmness and alertness that is different from ordinary female, who uses a way of rational thinking like a man to deal with things, even the male Jack in the story feels inferior to her.

Most importantly, after her mother was in bed, Julie begins to take charge of the family's finances. It is well acknowledged that obtaining economic power is a crucial step for women's independence. As Woolf put it in *A Room of One's Own*: "... and women have always been poor, not for two hundred years merely, but from the beginning of time. Women have had less intellectual freedom than the sons of Athenian slaves ... That is why I have laid so much stress on money and a room of one's own" (94-95). In this passage, "money" refers to economic status, and "a room of one's own" refers to freedom of thought. Only by possessing these two things can women not rely negatively on the outside world, and can consciously fulfill their responsibilities and missions, thereby realizing themselves. In *The Cement Garden*, Julie's mother opened an account for her daughter at the post office before her death, leaving Julie with her savings, which means that now Julie officially has the power to control the family finances. Jack, the male who fails in the struggle for the economic power of the family, has no choice but to ask his sister Julie for money whenever he needs it, which shows the subordinate position of the male in this work.



It is worth noticing that Julie's feminist consciousness is also directly reflected in the novel. When Jack taunted Tom about being silly dressed as a girl, Julie criticizes Jack for being demeaning to women: "you think girls look idiotic, daft, stupid ...? You think it's humiliating to look like a girl, because you think it's humiliating to be a girl" (McEwan 55). Julie refutes Jack's view that women's dress and even femininity are inferior, and she bluntly expresses her praise for the charm of women, which reflects her growing feminist consciousness.

To sum up, Julie not only has the feminine characteristics of gentle and delicate, loving to dress up and caring for her family, but at the same time she has the same characteristics as a man's fortitude, determination and ability. In the face of housework and family crisis, she is meticulous, thoughtful, calm, and able to make a decision without hesitation. All of these demonstrate her outstanding characteristics of both male and female. To sum up, Julie can be called a perfect androgynous woman.

### 3. THE WOMANLY MAN: JACK

As the oldest male in the family after the deaths of both his parents, Jack's masculinity is rooted in his childhood's intense desire for adult male authority, which manifests itself later in his desire to conquer Julie and his attitude to fighting for Tom's grievances. In the father-son relationship, Jack's dislike of his father proves to some extent the rebellion of the disadvantaged groups against the hierarchical relationship between the same gender in the society of binary opposition between men and women, which has a profound enlightenment significance to us. But more importantly, in *The Cement Garden*, we

can see the delicate and soft femininity implied by Jack to a great extent. In general, the androgynous temperament of male and female has reached a balance on Jack.

Jack's masculinity is rooted in the desire for male authority, the conquest of women and the attitude to fight for his brother's injustice. First of all, Jack has a deep desire to have supreme male authority like his father. When his father is alive, he often pretends to be a "real man" by the parody of adult males. For example, when the workers transported cement to their home, Jack recalled that he always deliberately followed his father's appearance by saying that "I hooked my thumbs into my pockets, moved my weight onto one foot and narrowed my eyes a little" (McEwan 13-14). This seemingly indifferent behavior just reflects Jack's inner inferiority as a male but without authority. Secondly, when facing his sister Julie, Jack wants to show off his male identity from time to time by giving his oppression towards women. Jack, for example, waited until their mother went to the hospital to play a game with Julie. He deliberately put on a pair of huge and dirty gardening gloves and held out his claws at Julie, subduing her with a single gesture, and then he confessed without evasiveness that "as Julie laughed and laughed, and fought for air, I laughed too, delighted with my power" (McEwan 37). In the absence of his parents, Jack follows the typical "male hegemony," squeezing Julie until she buys into his masculinity. Finally, Jack's masculinity is clearly reflected in the "revenge" for his brother Tom. Seeing Tom's pitiful appearance with a blue nose and swollen face when he came home, Jack was so angry that he made a decisive decision to rush to school the



next day to avenge him. After seeing the red-haired boy who bullied Tom, Jack got rid of the decadent and desolate appearance of the previous day. At this moment, he was not afraid of bully at all by memorizing that "I crossed the playground at great speed and seized him by his lapel with my right hand and, with the other gripped round his throat, banged him hard against the shed and pinned him there," and yelled, "you lay a finger on my brother, and I'll rip your legs off" (McEwan 53). Jack knew that he had both physical and psychological advantages as a mature male. As a result, through intimidation and cruelty, he solved the trouble for Tom completely. Jack's care for Tom and his support in times of trouble are signs of the strong brotherhood, which is also an important part of masculinity that values kinship.

However, deep in Jack's heart, there is a hatred of male hegemony. The endless oppression of his father on his mother prompts him to further think about the unequal relationship between male and female in the family. For example, when his parents quarreled over the cement, his father "used a penknife to scrape black shards from the bowl of his pipe onto the food he had barely touched. He knew how to use his pipe against her" (McEwan 15). The father knew the mother's weakness and understood how to silence her in the face of male bullying. Jack resented this kind of male hegemony and considered that "how self-important and foolish he looked as he took the thing out of his mouth, held it by its bowl and pointed the black stem at my mother" (McEwan 15). So he challenged his father's authority from time to time, as when he and his father were carrying the cement, Jack waited until his father's arm was strong

enough to drag the bag together, pretending to be effortless until his father acknowledged Jack's importance. Jack's dislike of his father to a certain extent confirms the rebellion of the disadvantaged groups of the same gender against the hierarchical relationship in the society of binary opposition between men and women, which has a profound vanguard consciousness and enlightenment significance.

Although Jack appears to be the spokesperson of "masculinity," in fact, the appearance of strength and rebellion conceals his inner delicacy and softness. After careful study, we can see that Jack's "femininity" flashes everywhere in the book.

After his parents' death, Jack thinks that he finally gets the freedom he have been waiting for and now he can do whatever he wanted. However, the truth is that in the empty room, he is often frustrated and lonely, and missed the happy time with his parents from time to time. This is a vivid demonstration of his delicate and tender femininity. As Jack buried his mother, he noticed how thin and pathetic she was: " ... she looked so frail and sad in her nightdress, lying at our feet like a bird with a broken wing" (McEwan 72). Burying his mother means that he will never enjoy her protection again, which touches the soft spot in Jack's heart, so for the first time, he cries for her and not for himself. Later, Jack accidentally turned to Sue's diary. The latter mistakenly thought that Jack was not interested in these delicate words, however, with a very sorrowful mood, Jack took the initiative to ask Sue to read out the fragments about their mother. It can be seen that he buries his memory of his mother deep in his heart, and Sue's diary is just like a switch that touches Jack's





soft heart. Once, Jack recalled his childhood in half asleep and half awake. At that time, he was enjoying unlimited maternal love, and his life was full of happiness and satisfaction: "I saw a crowded beach on a very hot afternoon. It was time to go home. My mother and father were walking ahead of me carrying deck chairs and a bundle of towels ... My crying became a long wail and other children stopped what they were doing to look at me ... My mother gave her deck chair to my father and walked toward me. When she picked me up I found myself looking backward over her shoulder at a girl who held my windmill and stared at me" (McEwan 142). At that time, his mother's arm was his support, no matter how noisy outside, his parents would always shelter him. However, when he woke up from his dream, everything turned into nothing. Without his parents' care, Jack is like a small boat on the sea, confused and helpless. The unquenchable memory of his mother leads him to indulge in the tender, delicate and soft feelings that vividly reveal Jack's femininity.

After the death of his parents, although Jack is a male in the family, he is very dependent on his sister Julie. In front of her, he is willing to remove his disguise and reveal his femininity. First of all, Jack does not resist Julie's dressing of himself as a female. Once, Julie took the ribbon from her fingers and wrapped it around Jack's neck, he did not express disgust, but acquiesced to her to tie a bow around his neck. In fact, Jack enjoyed this kind of feminine dress very much. He constantly stroked the blue ribbon around his neck with his hands, enjoying the atmosphere of being a gentle woman with Julie and Sue. At this moment, he was no longer the greasy and stinking boy, but one "who is tired of being a

grumpy boy" (McEwan 86), even a boy who was more inclined to soft women in his heart. Secondly, he cannot stand Tom's monopoly of Julie. Whenever Tom shows the appearance of a little baby in front of Julie, Jack always shows his disgust. It is not that he hates Tom's words and deeds, but that everything about Tom has attracted Julie's attention, which makes Jack feel that Tom has divided up Julie's love for him. Therefore, he complains to Julie and Sue from time to time, trying to make Julie take him more seriously. Finally, at the end of the story, both Jack and Tom have become Julie's "good baby." They huddled together in the crib, admiring Julie's beautiful maternal body and bathing in her sweet, rich perfume. Later, Jack put his thumb in his mouth and lifted his hand to his face, following whatever Julie said. In the face of Julie, Jack has removed the strong side of the male. At this time he only belongs to the vulnerable group that needs love, and even a "female" who needs care in his heart.

In a closed world where his parents are dead and there is almost no communication with the outside world, one of the important reasons why Jack does not go mad and lose himself is not the masculinity he reveals, but the implied femininity of himself. Just as Jiang Yunfei said, "as a feminist value, androgyny is to clearly promote the belief of 'a fulfilled person' who contains both the excellent qualities of women and men" (34). Jack can be regarded as "a fulfilled man" because of the combination of his delicate, soft femininity and his own masculinity. It can be seen that Jack is also a typical representation of the androgynous consciousness.



#### 4. CONCLUSION

Emma Goldman emphasized in her essay *The Tragedy of Women's Liberation* that "although there are numerous theories about the essential differences between various groups within human beings, despite the distinction between classes and races, and despite the various artificial boundaries established beyond the rights of men and women, I still think that the following state can be reached: all these divisions may meet and merge into a perfect whole" (169). From her words, we can know that an androgynous mind can add harmony and equality to the world. Only when men and women coexist harmoniously and help each other in the category of "human," "women can realize their own value and gain human freedom and dignity" (Wang Yinghong, Yang Baiyan 470).

In *The Cement Garden*, McEwan creates two full characters: the manly-woman Julie and the womanly-man Jack. Julie is gentle and considerate, caring for her relatives, and possesses an innate maternal temperament, but at the same time she is resolute, decisive, and rational, breaking through the image of a "weak woman" in the patriarchal society. Jack, on the one hand, instinctively envies the authority of men; but on the other hand, there is a delicate, soft, and dependent femininity in his heart. As an individual, only when the male and female factors in his/her mind reach a balance, can he/she convey his/her feelings without hindrance and realize effective communication between the two genders. In this novel, Julie and Jack's respective masculinity and femininity are reconciled with each other, shaping them into "fulfilled" people. This also reflects Woolf's ideal pursuit of the relationship between

male and female, as she put forward in *On Novels and Novelists*: "the mind of both genders is resonant and permeable" (55). In the social survival structure, men and women are mutually complementary and dialectically integrated. Only by overcoming their respective one-sided bias and complacency, can they achieve the perfect combination of the two qualities and the two powers.

In addition, the cooperation of female Julie and male Jack is also a way to save the whole family in the novel. Wei Qingqi emphasized that "androgyny guides feminism out of the vicious circle of dualism, and truly liberates itself through cooperation with men rather than confrontation" (152). The concept of androgyny opposes male or female hegemony and emphasizes that both genders are subjects of each other and make progress together. In *The Cement Garden*, Julie and Jack, although sometimes showing gender differences in their approach to the same issues, are generally holding the family together, such as taking care of Sue and Tom, and refusing to let Derek take control of their own family. This kind of gender cooperation allows the whole family to function relatively steadily in the family environment where both parents are dead, and to escape the bad luck of falling apart. Therefore, McEwan's genius lies in the coordination and neutralization of Julie and Jack in this work, so as to find the ideal state of harmonious development of "androgynous temperament" among them. History proves that "there can be no true civilization without the cooperation of the both genders, but there can be no true cooperation between the genders without mutual acceptance of differences and mutual respect for different natures" (Maurois 16). Only by



respecting gender differences, integrating gender advantages, and conducting gender cooperation, can social development be more harmonious and civilized.

However, we cannot ignore at the same time: whether it is Julie or Jack, the androgynous temperament shown in the two has not been developed in a balanced and harmonious manner. It is not hard to see in the work that Julie occasionally shows unreasonable deference to Jack, as if she has stepped uncontrollably into a subordinate position of female inferiority; and Jack often shows the savage temperament of male hegemony and enjoys the pleasure of female subservience. Therefore, such androgyny is incomplete and cannot lead them to get rid of their tragic fate. In addition, androgyny also has its own limitations, which intends to achieve the comprehensive and free development of human beings by diluting the consciousness of gender difference. However, in the deficient male-centered social structure, this is doomed to be just an illusion. As Yang Yuzhen said, "the real liberation of women can only be achieved through the development of social productive forces, the change of production environment and living conditions, the development of human beings and the joint efforts and pursuit of both genders"(86). Therefore, the complete realization of androgyny needs the unremitting efforts of generation after generation, in order to truly realize the harmonious development of both male and female.

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